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Commentary  
on the  
OLD TESTAMENT





Commentary  
on the  
**OLD TESTAMENT**

C. EXELL and E. DELITZSCH

VOLUME III


I & II Kings, I & II Chronicles, Ezra,  
Nehemiah, Esther

by C. EXELL

*Three Volumes in One*

WILLIAM B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING COMPANY  
Grand Rapids, Michigan





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IN TEN VOLUMES

by

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COMMENTARY ON THE OLD TESTAMENT

by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch

Translated from the German

*Volumes translated by James Martin*

THE PENTATEUCH

JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH

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THE BOOKS OF THE KINGS

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# BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

ON

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

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### THE BOOKS OF KINGS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

CONTENTS AND CHARACTER, ORIGIN AND SOURCES, OF THE  
BOOKS OF THE KINGS.



THE books of the Kings, which were but one book originally like the books of Samuel, and which, like the latter, were divided into two books by the Alexandrian translators (see the Introduction to the books of Samuel), contain, in accordance with their name (מלכים), the history of the Israelitish theocracy under the kings, from the accession of Solomon to the extinction of the monarchy on the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldæans and the people were carried away into exile in Babylon. They embrace a period of 455 years, from 1015 to 560 B.C., that is to say, to the reign of the Babylonian king Evil-merodach. And as every kingdom culminates in its king, and the government of the kings determines the fate of the kingdom, the contents of the books before us, which are named after the kings of Israel, consist for the most part of a history of those kings; inasmuch as, whilst on the one hand the reigns of the several kings form the historical and chronological framework for the description of the historical development of the people and kingdom, on the other hand the leading phases which the monarchy assumed furnish the basis of the three periods, into which the history of this epoch and the contents of our books are divided.

The *first* period (1015–975 B.C.) embraces the forty years of



Solomon's reign over the undivided kingdom of the twelve tribes of Israel, when the Israelitish kingdom of God stood at the summit of its earthly power and glory; though towards the end of this period it began to decline, inasmuch as the rebellion of Solomon against the Lord in the closing years of his reign prepared the way for the rebellion of the ten tribes against the house of David.—The *second* period commences with the division of the one kingdom into the two kingdoms, Israel (or the ten tribes) and Judah, and stretches over the whole period during which these two kingdoms existed side by side, terminating with the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes by the Assyrians, i.e. from 975 to 722 a.d.—The *third* period embraces the still remaining years of the continuance of the kingdom of Judah, until its eventual dissolution by the Chaldeans and the carrying away of the people into exile in Babylon, viz. from 722 to 586 a.c.

The *first* part of our books (I Kings i.-xi.) therefore contains a description of the reign of Solomon, (a) in its commencement, viz. his ascent of the throne and the consolidation of his power (ch. i. and ii.); (b) in the gradual development of the strength and glory of his government, by his marriage, his sacrifice and prayer at Gibeon, his judicial wisdom, and his court (iii. 1-v. 14),—also by the building of the temple and royal palace and the dedication of the temple (v. 15-ix. 9), by the erection of his other edifices and the introduction of navigation and commerce (ix. 10-28), by the spreading abroad of the fame of his wisdom, and by the increase of his wealth (ch. x.); and (c) in its eventual decline in consequence of the sin into which the aged monarch fell through his polygamy and idolatry (ch. xi.). The *second* part opens with an account of the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal family of David, and relates in a synchronistic narrative the history of the two kingdoms in the three stages of their development: viz. (a) the early enmity between the two, from Jeroboam to Omri of Israel (xii. 1-xvi. 28); (b) the establishment of friendship and intermarriage between the two royal houses under Ahab and his sons, down to the destruction of the two kings Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah by Jehu (xvi. 29-2 Kings x.); (c) the renewal of hostilities between the two kingdoms, from Jehu's ascent of the throne in Israel and Athaliah's usurpation of the throne in Judah to the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign in Judah



(xi-xvii). And, lastly, the *third* part contains the history of the kingdom of Judah from Hezekiah to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and carries it down to the thirty-seventh year of the imprisonment of king Jehoiachin in exile (ch. xviii-xxv.).

Now, although the history of the kings, or the account of both the duration and character of their reigns, and also of their various enterprises, so far as they promoted or hindered the progress of the kingdom of God, forms the principal substance of these books, they do not consist of a mere chronicle of the deeds and fortunes of the several kings, but describe at the same time the ministry of the prophets in the two kingdoms, and that to some extent in so elaborate a manner, that whilst some have discovered in this a peculiarly "prophetic-didactic purpose" (Havernick, De Wette, etc), others regard it as an endeavour "to set forth the history of the Israelitish and Jewish kings in its relation to the demands, the doings, the proclamations, and the predictions of the prophets, from Solomon to the Babylonian exile" (Kern). But however unmistakeable the prophetic-didactic character may be, which the books of Kings have in common with the whole of the historical writings of the Old Testament, a closer investigation of their character will show that there is no ground for the assertion that there is any prophetic-didactic purpose in the mode in which the history is written. For the account of the ministry of the prophets is introduced into the history of the kings as the spiritual leaven which pervaded the Israelitish monarchy from the beginning to the end, and stamped upon its development the character of the theocracy or divine rule in Israel. Jehovah, as the invisible but yet real King of the covenant nation, had created the peculiar instruments of His Spirit in the prophets who maintained His law and right before the kings, standing by their side to advise and direct, or to warn and punish, and, wherever it was necessary, proving their utterances to be words of God by signs and wonders which they did before the people. Thus the Lord directed the prophet Samuel to anoint Saul and David princes over His people, and the prophet Nathan to communicate to David the promise of the everlasting endurance of his throne (2 Sam. vii.). But when at a later period David sinned (2 Sam. xi. and xxiv.), it was the prophets Nathan and Gad who threatened him with punishment from God, and on his confession of sin and repentance announced the forgiveness and

favour of God (2 Sam. xii. 1-15, xxiv. 11-19). Through the medium of the prophet Nathan, Solomon was also appointed the successor of David upon the throne (2 Sam. xii. 25), and not only anointed king, but installed in defiance of the machinations of Adonijah (1 Kings i.). But since the monarchy was transmitted from Solomon in a direct line through his descendants by virtue of the divine promise in 2 Sam. vii., it is only in connection with important enterprises, or when the kingdom is involved in difficulties, that we find the prophets coming forward in after times to help or advise those kings who walked in the ways of the Lord; whereas under the idolatrous and godless rulers they offer, in the power of God, such energetic resistance to idolatry and to everything evil and ungodly, that princes and people are compelled to bow before them and succumb to their divine words. In this way the prophets accompanied the monarchy in all its course from Solomon to the captivity as guardians of the rights of the God-King, and as interpreters of His counsel and will. Under Solomon, indeed, there was apparently a long period, during which prophecy fell into the background; since the Lord Himself not only appeared to this king in a dream at Gibeon shortly after he ascended the throne, but also appeared to him a second time after the dedication of the temple, and promised him the fulfilment of his prayers, and the glorification and eternal continuance of his kingdom, on condition of his faithful observance of the divine commands (1 Kings iii. 5 sqq., ix. 1 sqq.). But towards the end of his reign it rose up again in all the more threatening attitude, against the king who was then disposed to fall away from Jehovah. It was no doubt a prophet who announced to him the separation of ten parts of his kingdom (1 Kings xi. 11 sqq.),—possibly the same Ahijah who promised Jeroboam the government over ten tribes (xi. 29 sqq.). But after the division of the kingdom, when Jeroboam proceeded, in order to fortify his throne, to make the political division into a religious one, and to this end exalted the image-worship into the state religion, the prophets continued to denounce this apostasy and proclaim to the sinful kings the destruction of their dynasties. And when at a still later period Ahab the son of Omri, and his wife Jezebel, endeavoured to make the Phœnician worship of Baal and Asherah into the national religion in Israel, Elijah the Tishbite, “the prophet as fire, whose



words burned as a torch" (Eccles. xlviii. 1), came forward with the irresistible power of God and maintained a victorious conflict against the prophets and servants of Baal, warding off the utter apostasy of the nation by uniting the prophets into societies, in which the worship of God was maintained, and the godly in Israel were supplied with a substitute for that legal worship in the temple which was enjoyed by the godly in Judah. And in the kingdom of Judah also there were never wanting prophets to announce the judgments of the Lord to idolatrous kings, and to afford a vigorous support to the pious and God-fearing rulers in their endeavours to promote the religious life of the nation, and to exalt the public worship of God in the temple. But since the kingdom of Judah possessed the true sanctuary, with the legal worship and an influential body of priests and Levites; and since, moreover, the monarchy of the house of David was firmly established by divine promises resting upon that house, and among the kings who sat upon the throne, from Rehoboam onwards, there were many godly rulers who were distinguished for their lofty virtues as governors; the labours of the prophets did not assume the same prominent importance here as they did in the kingdom of the ten tribes, where they had to fight against idolatry from the beginning to the end.

This explains the fact that the ministry of the prophets assumes so prominent a position in the books of the Kings, whereas the history of the kings appears sometimes to fall into the background in comparison. Nevertheless the historical development of the monarchy, or, to express it more correctly, of the kingdom of God under the kings, forms the true subject-matter of our books. It was not a prophetic-didactic purpose, but the prophetic-historical point of view, which prevailed throughout the whole work, and determined the reception as well as the treatment of the historical materials. The progressive development of the kingdom was predicted and described by the Lord Himself in the promise communicated to David by the prophet Nathan: "And when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name; and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son, that if he go astray, I may chasten him with man's rod, and with stripes of the children of



men; but my mercy will not depart from him, as I caused it to depart from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be for ever before thee, thy throne will be established for ever" (2 Sam. vii. 12-16). This thoroughly glorious promise forms the red thread which runs through the history of the kings from Solomon to the Babylonian captivity, and constitutes the leading idea in the record of this history in our books. The author's intention is to show in the history of the kings how the Lord fulfilled this gracious word, how He first of all chastised the seed of David for its transgressions, and then cast it off, though not for ever. To this end he shows in the history of Solomon, how, notwithstanding the usurpation of the throne attempted by Adonijah, Solomon received the whole of his father's kingdom, as the seed of David promised by the Lord, and established his power; how the Lord at the very beginning of his reign renewed to him at Gibeon the promise made to his father on the condition of his faithful observance of His law, and in answer to his prayer gave him not only a wise and understanding heart, but also riches and honour, so that his equal was not to be found among all the kings of the earth (1 Kings i. 1-v. 14); how Solomon then carried out the work of building the temple, entrusted to him by his father according to the will of the Lord; and how, after it was finished, the Lord again assured him of the fulfilment of that promise (ch. v. 15-ix. 9); and, lastly, how Solomon, having attained to the highest earthly glory, through the completion of the rest of his buildings, through the great renown of his wisdom, which had reached to nations afar off, and through his great riches, acquired partly by marine commerce and trade, and partly from tributes and presents, forgot his God, who had bestowed this glory upon him, and in his old age was led astray into unfaithfulness towards the Lord through his numerous foreign wives, and had at last to listen to this sentence from God: "Because thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant: notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all thy kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen" (ch. ix. 10-xi. 13). Thus, because God had promised to the seed of David the

eternal possession of the throne (2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq.), one portion of the kingdom was to be left to the son of Solomon, with the chosen city of Jerusalem, and his servant (Jeroboam, ch. xi. 26—40) was only to obtain dominion over ten tribes. The historical realization of this prophecy is shown in the history of the two divided kingdoms.

In the synchronistic account of these kingdoms, according to the principle already adopted in the book of Genesis, of disposing of the subordinate lines of the patriarchs before proceeding with the main line (see *Comm. on Pent.* vol. i. p. 37), the reigns of the kings of Israel are described before those of the contemporaneous kings of Judah, and to some extent in a more elaborate manner. The reason of this, however, is, that the history of the kingdom of Israel, in which one dynasty overthrew another, whilst all the rulers walked in the sin of Jeroboam, and Ahab even added the worship of Baal to that sin, supplied the author with more materials for the execution of his plan than that of the kingdom of Judah, which had a much quieter development under the rule of the house of David, and of which, therefore, there was less to relate. Apart from this, all the events of the kingdom of Judah which are of any importance in relation to the progress of the kingdom of God, are just as elaborately described as those connected with the kingdom of Israel; and the author does equal justice to both kingdoms, showing how the Lord manifested Himself equally to both, and bore with them with divine long-suffering and grace. But the proof of this necessarily assumed different forms, according to the different attitudes which they assumed towards the Lord. Jeroboam, the founder of the kingdom of Israel, when told that he would be king over the ten tribes, had received the promise that Jehovah would be with him, and build him a lasting house as He built for David, and give Israel to him, on condition that he would walk in the ways of God (1 Kings xi. 37, 38). This implied that his descendants would rule over Israel (of the ten tribes) so long as this kingdom should stand; for it was not to last for ever, but the separation would come to an end, and therefore he is not promised the everlasting continuance of his kingdom (see at 1 Kings xi. 38). But Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, nor did any of the rulers of Israel who succeeded him. Nevertheless the Lord had patience with the kings and tribes who were unfaithful to His law, and not only warned



them continually by His prophets, and chastised them by threats of punishment and by the fulfilment of those threats upon the kings and all the people, but repeatedly manifested His favour towards them for the sake of His covenant with Abraham (2 Kings xiii. 23), to lead them to repentance—until the time of grace had expired, when the sinful kingdom fell and the ten tribes were carried away to Media and Assyria.—In the kingdom of David, on the contrary, the succession to the throne was promised to the house of David for all time: therefore, although the Lord caused those who were rebellious to be chastised by hostile nations, yet, for His servant David's sake, He left a light shining to the royal house, since He did not punish the kings who were addicted to idolatry with the extermination of their family (1 Kings xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19); and even when the wicked Athaliah destroyed all the royal seed, He caused Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah, to be saved and raised to the throne of his fathers (2 Kings xi). Consequently this kingdom was able to survive that of the ten tribes for an entire period, just because it possessed a firm political basis in the uninterrupted succession of the Davidic house, as it also possessed a spiritual basis of no less firmness in the temple which the Lord had sanctified as the place where His name was revealed. After it had been brought to the verge of destruction by the godless Ahaz, it received in Hezekiah a king who did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah, as his father David had done, and in the severe oppression which he suffered at the hands of the powerful army of the proud Sennacherib, took refuge in the Lord, who protected and saved Jerusalem, "for His own and His servant David's sake," at the prayer of the pious king of Jerusalem (2 Kings xix. 34, xx. 6). But when at length, throughout the long reign of Manasseh the idolater, apostasy and moral corruption prevailed to such an extent in Judah also, that even the pious Josiah, with the reformation of religion which he carried out with the greatest zeal, could only put down the outward worship of idols, and was unable to effect any thorough conversion of the people to the Lord their God, and the Lord as the Holy One of Israel was obliged to declare His purpose of rejecting Judah from before His face on account of the sins of Manasseh, and to cause that purpose to be executed by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27, xxiv. 3, 4); Jehoiachin was led away captive to Babylon, and under Zedekiah the



kingdom was destroyed with the burning of Jerusalem and the temple. Yet the Lord did not suffer the light to be altogether extinguished to His servant David; but when Jehoiachin had pined in captivity at Babylon for thirty-seven years, expiating his own and his fathers' sins, he was liberated from his captivity by Nebuchadnezzar's son, and raised to honour once more (2 Kings xxv. 27-30).—The account of this joyful change in the condition of Jehoiachin, with which the books of the Kings close, forms so essential a part of their author's plan, that without this information the true conclusion to his work would be altogether wanting. For this event shed upon the dark night of the captivity the first ray of a better future, which was to dawn upon the seed of David, and with it upon the whole nation in its eventual redemption from Babylon, and was also a pledge of the certain fulfilment of the promise that the Lord would not for ever withdraw His favour from the seed of David.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the books of the Kings bring down the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God, according to the divine plan of the kingdom indicated in 2 Sam. vii., from the close of David's reign to the captivity; and the fact that in 1 Kings i. 1 they are formally attached to the books of Samuel is an indication that they are a continuation of those books. Nevertheless there is no doubt that they formed from the very first a separate work, the independence and internal unity of which are apparent from the uniformity of the treatment of the history as well as from the unity of the language. From beginning to end the author quotes from his original sources, for the

<sup>1</sup> Stähelin makes the following remark in his *Einleitung* (p. 122): "The books of the Kings form an antithesis to the history of David. As the latter shows how obedience to God and to the utterances of His prophets is rewarded, and how, even when Jehovah is obliged to punish, He makes known His grace again in answer to repentance; so do the books of the Kings, which relate the overthrow of both the Hebrew states, teach, through the history of these two kingdoms, how glorious promises are thrown back and dynasties fall in consequence of the conduct of individual men (compare 1 Kings xi. 38 with xiv. 10, and still more with 2 Kings xxi. 10 sqq. and xxiii. 27). The sins of one man like Manasseh are sufficient to neutralize all the promises that have been given to the house of David." There is no need to refute this erroneous statement, since it only rests upon a misinterpretation of 2 Kings xxi. 10 sqq., and completely misses the idea which runs through both books of the Kings; and, moreover, there is no contradiction between the manifestation of divine mercy towards penitent sinners and the punishment of men according to their deeds.

most part with certain standing formulas; in all important events he gives the chronology carefully (1 Kings vi. 1, 37, 38, vii. 1, ix. 10, xi. 42, xiv. 20, 21, 25, xv. 1, 2, 9, 10, etc.); he judges the conduct of the kings throughout according to the standard of the law of Moses (1 Kings ii. 3, iii. 14; 2 Kings x. 31, xi. 12, xiv. 6, xvii. 37, xviii. 6, xxi. 8, xxii. 8 sqq., xxiii. 3, 21, etc.); and he nearly always employs the same expressions when describing the commencement, the character, and the close of each reign, as well as the death and burial of the kings (compare 1 Kings xi. 43, xiv. 20, 31, xv. 8, 24, xxii. 51; 2 Kings viii. 24, xiii. 9, xiv. 29; and for the characteristics of the several kings of Judah, 1 Kings xv. 3, 11, xxii. 43; 2 Kings xii. 3, xiv. 3, xv. 3, etc.; and for those of the kings of Israel, 1 Kings xiv. 8, xv. 26, 34, xvi. 19, 26, 30, xxii. 53; 2 Kings iii. 2, 3, x. 22, 31, xiii. 2, 11, etc.). And so, again, the language of the books remains uniform in every part of the work, if we except certain variations occasioned by the differences in the sources employed; since we find throughout isolated expressions and forms of a later date, and words traceable to the Assyrian and Chaldean epoch, such as  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  for  $\text{בְּנֵי}$  in 1 Kings v. 2, 26;  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  in 1 Kings xi. 33;  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  in 2 Kings xi. 13;  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  in 1 Kings xx. 14, 15, 17, 19;  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  in 2 Kings xv. 10;  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  in 1 Kings xv. 20, 2 Kings xxv. 25, 26;  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  in 2 Kings xxv. 8;  $\text{לִבְנֵי}$  in 1 Kings x. 15, xx. 24, 2 Kings xviii. 24; and many others, which do not occur in the earlier historical books.—The books of the Kings are essentially distinguished from the books of Samuel through these characteristic peculiarities; but not so much through the quotations which are so prominent in the historical narrative, for these are common to all the historical books of the Old Testament, and are only more conspicuous in these books, especially in the history of the kings of the two kingdoms, because in the case of all the kings, even of those in relation to whom there was nothing to record of any importance to the kingdom of God except the length and general characteristics of their reign, there are notices of the writings which contain farther information concerning their reigns.—The unity of authorship is therefore generally admitted, since as De Wette himself acknowledges, "you cannot anywhere clearly detect the interpolation or combination of different accounts." The direct and indirect contradictions, however, which Thienius imagines that he has discovered, prove to



be utterly fallacious on a closer inspection of the passages cited as proofs, and could only have been obtained through misinterpretations occasioned by erroneous assumptions. (See, on the other hand, my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das A. T.* p. 184 sqq.)

All that can be determined with certainty in relation to the *origin* of the books of Kings is, that they were composed in the second half of the Babylonian captivity, and before its close, since they bring the history down to that time, and yet contain no allusion to the deliverance of the people out of Babylon. The author was a prophet living in the Babylonian exile, though not the prophet Jeremiah, as the earlier theologians down to Hävernicks have assumed from the notice in the Talmud (*Baba bathra*, f. 15, 1): *Jeremias scripsit librum suum et librum Regum et Threnos*. For even apart from the fact that Jeremiah ended his days in Egypt, he could hardly have survived the last event recorded in our books, namely, the liberation of Jehoiachin from prison, and his exaltation to royal honours by Evil-merodach. For inasmuch as this event occurred sixty-six years after his call to be a prophet, in the thirteenth year of Josiah, he would have been eighty-six years old in the thirty-seventh year after Jehoiachin had been carried away into exile, even if he had commenced his prophetic career when only a young man of twenty years of age. Now, even if he had reached this great age, he would surely not have composed our books at a later period still. Moreover, all that has been adduced in support of this is seen to be inconclusive on closer inspection. The similarity in the linguistic character of our books and that of the writings of Jeremiah, the sombre view of history which is common to the two, the preference apparent in both for phrases taken from the Pentateuch, and the allusions to earlier prophecies,—all these peculiarities may be explained, so far as they really exist, partly from the fact that they were written in the same age, since all the writers of the time of the captivity and afterwards cling very closely to the Pentateuch and frequently refer to the law of Moses, and partly also from the circumstance that, whilst Jeremiah was well acquainted with the original sources of our books, viz. the annals of the kingdom of Judah, the author of our books was also well acquainted with the prophecies of Jeremiah. But the relation between 2 Kings xxiv. 18 sqq. and Jer. lii. is not of such a nature, that these



two accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the remnant of the people could have emanated from the hand of Jeremiah; on the contrary, a closer inspection clearly shows that they are extracts from a more elaborate description of this catastrophe (see at 2 Kings xxiv. 18 sqq.).

As *sources* from which the author has obtained his accounts, there are mentioned, for the history of Solomon, a סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי יְשֻׁלָּם, or book of the acts (affairs) of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 41); for the history of the kings of Judah, סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה, book of the daily occurrences of the kings of Judah (1 Kings xiv. 29, xv. 7, 23, xxii. 46; 2 Kings viii. 23, xii. 20, etc.); and for that of the kings of Israel, סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, book of the daily occurrences of the kings of Israel (1 Kings xiv. 19, xv. 31, xvi. 5, 14, 20, 27, xxii. 39; 2 Kings i. 18). These are quoted as writings in which more is written concerning the life, the deeds, and the particular undertakings, buildings and so forth, of the several kings. The two last-named works were evidently general annals of the kingdoms: not, indeed, the national archives of the two kingdoms, or official records made by the סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי of the reigns and acts of the kings, as Jahn, Movers, Stähelin, and others suppose; but annals composed by prophets, and compiled partly from the public year-books of the kingdom or the national archives, and partly from prophetic monographs and collections of prophecies, which reached in the kingdom of Israel down to the time of Pekah (2 Kings xv. 31), and in that of Judah to the time of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 5). Moreover, they were not written successively by different prophets, who followed one another, and so carried on the work in uninterrupted succession from the rise of the two kingdoms to the death of the two kings mentioned; but they had been worked out into a "*Book of the history of the times of the Kings*" for each of the two kingdoms, a short time before the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, by collecting together the most important things that had been written both concerning the reigns of the several kings by annalists and other historians who were contemporaneous with the events, and also concerning the labours of the prophets, which were deeply interwoven with the course of public affairs, whether composed by themselves or by their contemporaries. And in this finished form they lay before the author of our work. This view of the annals of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel follows unquestionably from the

agreement which exists between our books of the Kings and the second book of the Chronicles, in the accounts common to both, and which can only be explained from the fact that they were drawn from one and the same source. But in the Chronicles there are different writings of individual prophets quoted, beside the day-books of the kings of Judah and Israel; and it is expressly stated in relation to some of them that they were received into the annals of the kings (compare 2 Chron. xx. 34 and xxxii. 32, and the Introduction to the books of the Chronicles). Moreover, there are no historical traces of public annalists to be found in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and their existence is by no means probable, on account of the constant change of dynasties. The fact, however, that the frequently recurring formula "to this day" (1 Kings ix. 13, x. 12; 2 Kings ii. 22, x. 27, xiv. 7, xvi. 6, [xvii. 23, 34, 41,] xx. 17, xxi. 15) never refers to the time of the captivity, except in the passages enclosed in brackets, but always to the time of the existing kingdom of Judah, and that it cannot therefore have emanated from the author of our books of the Kings, but can only have been taken from the sources employed, is a proof that these annals of the kingdom were composed towards the close of the kingdom of Judah; and this is placed beyond all doubt, by the fact that this formula is also found in many passages of the books of the Chronicles (compare 1 Kings viii. 8 with 2 Chron. v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 21 with 2 Chron. viii. 8; 1 Kings xii. 19 with 2 Chron. x. 19; and 2 Kings viii. 22 with 2 Chron. xxi. 10).—In a similar manner to this must we explain the origin of the *סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה*, since three prophetic writings are quoted in 1 Chron. xxix. 29 in connection with Solomon's reign, and their account agrees in all essential points with the account in the books of the Kings. Nevertheless this "history of Solomon" never formed a component part of the annals of the two kingdoms, and was certainly written much earlier.—The assumption that there were other sources still, is not only sustained by no historical evidence, but has no certain support in the character or contents of the writings before us. If the annals quoted were works composed by prophets, the elaborate accounts of the working of the prophets Elijah and Elisha might also have been included in them.—Again, in the constant allusion to these annals we have a sure pledge of the historical fidelity of the accounts that have been taken from them. If in his work



the author followed writings which were composed by prophets, and also referred his readers to these writings, which were known and accessible to his contemporaries, for further information, he must have been conscious of the faithful and conscientious employment of them. And this natural conclusion is in harmony with the contents of our books. The life and actions of the kings are judged with unfettered candour and impartiality, according to the standard of the law of God; and there is no more concealment of the idolatry to which the highly renowned Solomon was led astray by his foreign wives, than of that which was right in the eyes of God, when performed by the kings of the ten tribes, which had fallen away from the house of David. Even in the case of the greatest prophet of all, namely Elijah, the weakness of his faith in being afraid of the vain threats of the wicked Jezebel is related just as openly as his courageous resistance, in the strength of the Lord, to Ahab and the prophets of Baal.—Compare my *Eisführung in das Alte Test.* §§ 56–60, where adverse views are examined and the commentaries are also noticed.



# EXPOSITION.

## FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

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### L—HISTORY OF SOLOMON'S REIGN.

#### CHAPS. I.-XI.



**D**AVID had not only established the monarchy upon a firm basis, but had also exalted the Old Testament kingdom of God to such a height of power, that all the kingdoms round about were obliged to bow before it. This kingdom was transmitted by divine appointment to his son Solomon, in whose reign Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea-shore, and dwelt in security, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree (ch. iv. 20, v. 5). The history of this reign commences with the account of the manner in which Solomon had received the kingdom from his father, and had established his own rule by the fulfilment of his last will and by strict righteousness (ch. i. and ii.). Then follows in ch. iii.-x. the description of the glory of his kingdom, how the Lord, in answer to his prayer at Gibeon, not only gave him an understanding heart to judge his people, but also wisdom, riches, and honour, so that his equal was not to be found among the kings of the earth ; and through his wise rule, more especially through the erection of the house of Jehovah and of a splendid royal palace, he developed the glory of the kingdom of God to such an extent that his fame penetrated to remote nations. The conclusion, in ch. xi, consists of the account of Solomon's sin in his old age, viz. his falling into idolatry, whereby he brought about the decay of the kingdom, which manifested itself during the closing years of his reign in the rising up of opponents, and at his death in the falling away of ten tribes from his son Rehoboam. But notwithstanding this speedy decay, the

glory of Solomon's kingdom is elaborately depicted on account of the typical significance which it possessed in relation to the kingdom of God. Just as, for example, the successful wars of David with all the enemies of Israel were a prelude to the eventual victory of the kingdom of God over all the kingdoms of this world; so was the peaceful rule of Solomon to shadow forth the glory and blessedness which awaited the people of God, after a period of strife and conflict, under the rule of *Shiloh* the Prince of peace, whom Jacob saw in spirit, and who would increase government and peace without end upon the throne of David and in his kingdom (Isa. ix. 5, 6; Ps. lxxii.).

#### CHAP. I. ANOINTING AND ACCESSION OF SOLOMON.

The attempt of Adonijah to seize upon the throne when David's strength was failing (vers. 1-10), induced the aged king, as soon as it was announced to him by Bathsheba and the prophet Nathan, to order Solomon to be anointed king, and to have the anointing carried out (vers. 11-40); whereupon Adonijah fled to the altar, and received pardon from Solomon on condition that he would keep himself quiet (vers. 41-53).

Vers. 1-4. When king David had become so old that they could no longer warm him by covering him with clothes, his servants advised him to increase his vitality by lying with a young and robust virgin, and selected the beautiful Abishag of Shunem to perform this service. This circumstance, which is a trivial one in itself, is only mentioned on account of what follows,—first, because it shows that David had become too weak from age, and too destitute of energy, to be able to carry on the government any longer; and, secondly, because Adonijah the pretender afterwards forfeited his life through asking for Abishag in marriage.—The opening of our book, *וַיָּמָן* (*and the King*), may be explained from the fact that the account which follows has been taken from a writing containing the earlier history of David, and that the author of these books retained the *Vaz cap.* which he found there, for the purpose of showing at the outset that his work was a continuation of the books of Samuel. *וַיָּמָן* as in Josh. xiii. 1, xxiii. 1, Gen. xxiv. 1, etc. “*They covered him with clothes, and he did not get warm.*” It follows from this that the king was bedridden, or at least that when lying down he could no longer be kept warm with bed-



clothes. כְּנָדִים does not mean clothes to wear here, but large cloths, which were used as bed-clothes, as in 1 Sam. xix. 13 and Num. iv. 6 sqq. יָהִם is used impersonally, and derived from חָסַם, cf. Ewald, § 193, *b*, and 138, *b*. As David was then in his seventieth year, this decrepitude was not the natural result of extreme old age, but the consequence of a sickly constitution, arising out of the hardships which he had endured in his agitated and restless life. The proposal of his servants, to restore the vital warmth which he had lost by bringing a virgin to lie with him, is recommended as an experiment by Galen (*Method. medic.* viii. 7). And it has been an acknowledged fact with physicians of all ages, that departing vitality may be preserved and strengthened by communicating the vital warmth of strong and youthful persons (compare Trusen, *Sitten Gebräuche u. Krankheiten der Hebräer*, p. 257 sqq.). The singular suffix in לְאִדְנִי is to be explained on the ground that one person spoke. נַעֲרָה בְּתוּלָה, a maid who is a virgin. עָמַד לְפָנַי, to stand before a person as servant = to serve (cf. Deut. i. 38 with Ex. xxiv. 13). סִכְנֶת, an attendant or nurse, from שָׁכַן = סָבַן, to live with a person, then to be helpful or useful to him. With the words "that she may lie in thy bosom," the passage passes, as is frequently the case, from the third person to a direct address.—Vers. 3, 4. They then looked about for a beautiful girl for this purpose, and found Abishag of Shunem, the present Sulem or Solam, at the south-eastern foot of the Duhy or Little Hermon (see at Josh. xix. 18), who became the king's nurse and waited upon him. The further remark, "and the king knew her not," is not introduced either to indicate the impotence of David or to show that she did not become David's concubine, but simply to explain how it was that it could possibly occur to Adonijah (ch. ii. 17) to ask for her as his wife. Moreover, the whole affair is to be judged according to the circumstances of the times, when there was nothing offensive in polygamy.

Vers. 5-10. Adonijah seized the opportunity of David's decrepitude to make himself king. Although he was David's fourth son (2 Sam. iii. 4), yet after the death of Ammon and Absalom he was probably the eldest, as Chileab, David's second son, had most likely died when a child, since he is never mentioned again. Adonijah therefore thought that he had a claim to the throne (cf. ch. ii. 15), and wanted to secure it before his father's death. But in Israel, Jehovah, the God-King of His

people, had reserved to Himself the choice of the earthly king (Deut. xvii. 15), and this right He exercised not only in the case of Saul and David, but in that of Solomon also. When He gave to David the promise that his seed should rule for ever (2 Sam. vii. 12-16), He did not ensure the establishment of the throne to any one of his existing sons, but to him that would come out of his loins (*i.e.* to Solomon, who was not yet born); and after his birth He designated him through the prophet Nathan as the beloved of Jehovah (2 Sam. xii. 24, 25). David discerned from this that the Lord had chosen Solomon to be his successor, and he gave to Bathsheba a promise on oath that Solomon should sit upon the throne (vers. 13 and 30). This promise was also acknowledged in the presence of Nathan (vers. 11 sqq.), and certainly came to Adonijah's ears. Adonijah said, "I will be king," and procured chariots and horsemen and fifty runners, as Absalom had done before (2 Sam. xv. 1). רֶכֶב, in a collective sense, does not mean fighting or war chariots, but state carriages, like סִרְיָנָה in 2 Sam. xv. 1; and פָּרָשִׁים are neither riding nor carriage horses, but riders to form an escort whenever he drove out.—Ver. 6. "And (=for) his father had never troubled him in his life (כָּל יָמָיו, *a diebus suis*, *i.e.* his whole life long), saying, Why hast thou done this?" Such weak oversight on the part of his father encouraged him to make the present attempt. Moreover, he "was very beautiful," like Absalom (see at 2 Sam. xiv. 25), and born after Absalom, so that after his death he appeared to have the nearest claim to the throne. The subject to יָלֵדָהּ is left indefinite, because it is implied in the idea of the verb itself: "she bare," *i.e.* his mother, as in Num. xxvi. 59 (*vid.* Ewald, § 294, b). There was no reason for mentioning the mother expressly by name, as there was nothing depending upon the name here, and it had already been given in ver. 5.—Ver. 7. He conferred (for the expression, compare 2 Sam. iii. 17) with Joab and Abiathar the priest, who supported him. עָזַר לְיָדָיו, to lend a helping hand to a person, *i.e.* to support him by either actually joining him or taking his part. Joab joined the pretender, because he had fallen out with David for a considerable time (*cf.* ii. 5, 6), and hoped to secure his influence with the new king if he helped him to obtain possession of the throne. But what induced Abiathar the high priest (see at 2 Sam. viii. 17) to join in conspiracy with Adonijah, we do not know. Possibly jealousy of Zadok, and the fear that under



Solomon he might be thrown still more into the shade. For although Zadok was only high priest at the tabernacle at Gibeon, he appears to have taken the lead; as we may infer from the fact that he is always mentioned before Abiathar (cf. 2 Sam. viii. 17, xx. 25, and xv. 24 sqq.). For we cannot imagine that Joab and Abiathar had supported Adonijah as having right on his side (Thenius), for the simple reason that Joab did not trouble himself about right, and for his own part shrank from no crime, when he thought that he had lost favour with the king.—Ver. 8. If Adonijah had powerful supporters in Joab the commander-in-chief and the high priest Abiathar, the rest of the leading officers of state, viz. Zadok the high priest (see at 2 Sam. viii. 17), Benaiah, captain of the king's body-guard (see at 2 Sam. viii. 18 and xxiii. 20, 21), the prophet Nathan, Shimei (probably the son of Elah mentioned in ch. iv. 18), and Rei (unknown), and the Gibborim of David (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 sqq.), were not with him.—Vers. 9 sqq. Adonijah commenced his usurpation, like Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 2), with a solemn sacrificial meal, at which he was proclaimed king, "at the stone of *Zocheleth* by the side of the fountain of *Rogel*," i.e. the spy's fountain, or, according to the Chaldee and Syriac, the fuller's fountain, the present fountain of Job or Nehemiah, below the junction of the valley of Hinnom with the valley of Jehoshaphat (see at 2 Sam. vii. 17 and Josh. xv. 7). E. G. Schultz (*Jerusalem, eine Vorlesung*, p. 79) supposes the stone or rock of *Zocheleth* to be "the steep, rocky corner of the southern slope of the valley of Hinnom, which casts so deep a shade." "This neighbourhood (*Wady el Rubâb*) is still a place of recreation for the inhabitants of Jerusalem." To this festal meal Adonijah invited all his brethren except Solomon, and "all the men of Judah, the king's servants," i.e. all the Judæans who were in the king's service, i.e. were serving at court as being members of his own tribe, with the exception of Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, and the Gibborim. The fact that Solomon and the others mentioned were not included in the invitation, showed very clearly that Adonijah was informed of Solomon's election as successor to the throne, and was also aware of the feelings of Nathan and Benaiah.

Vers. 11-31. Adonijah's attempt was frustrated by the vigilance of the prophet Nathan.—Vers. 11 sqq. Nathan informed Solomon's mother, Bathsheba (see at 2 Sam. xi. 3), that Adonijah

was making himself king (כִּי מָלַךְ), that he had become [as good as] king: Thenius), and advised her, in order to save her life and that of her son Solomon (וַיִּשְׁלַח, and save = so that thou mayest save; cf. Ewald, § 347, *a*), to go to the king and remind him of his promise on oath, that her son Solomon should be king after him, and to inquire why Adonijah had become king. If Adonijah had really got possession of the throne, he would probably have put Solomon and his mother out of the way, according to the barbarous custom of the East, as his political opponents.—Ver. 14. While she was still talking to the king, he (Nathan) would come in after her and confirm her words. מָלֵא דָבָר, to make a word full, *i.e.* not to supply what is wanting, but to make full, like πληροῦν, either to fill by accomplishing, or (as in this case) to confirm it by similar assertion.—Vers. 15–21. Bathsheba followed this advice, and went to the king into the inner chamber (הַפְּתִיחַ), since the very aged king, who was waited upon by Abishag, could not leave his room (מִבֵּיתוֹ for מִבֵּיתָה; cf. Ewald, § 188, *b*, p. 490), and, bowing low before him, communicated to him what Adonijah had taken in hand in opposition to his will and without his knowledge. The second וְעַתָּה is not to be altered into וְאַתָּה, inasmuch as it is supported by the oldest codices and the Masora,<sup>1</sup> although about two hundred codd. contain the latter reading. The repetition of וְעַתָּה ("And now, behold, Adonijah has become king; and now, my lord king, thou knowest it not") may be explained from the energy with which Bathsheba speaks. "And Solomon thy servant he hath not invited" (ver. 19). Bathsheba added this, not because she felt herself injured, but as a sign of Adonijah's feelings towards Solomon, which showed that he had reason to fear the worst if Adonijah should succeed in his usurpation of the throne. In ver. 20, again, many codd. have וְעַתָּה in the place of וְאַתָּה; and Thenius, after his usual fashion, pronounces the former the "only correct" reading, because it is apparently a better one. But here also the appearance is deceptive. The antithesis to what Adonijah has already done is brought out quite suitably by וְאַתָּה: Adonijah has made himself king, etc.; but thou my lord king must decide in the matter. "The eyes of all Israel are turned towards thee,

<sup>1</sup> Kimchi says: "*Plures scribæ errant in hoc verbo, scribentes וְאַתָּה cum Aleph, quia sensui hoc conformius est; sed constat nobis ex correctis MSS. et masora, scribendum esse וְעַתָּה cum Ain.*" Hence both Norzi and Bruns have taken וְעַתָּה under their protection. Compare de Rossi, *variaz lectt. ad h. l.*



to tell them who (whether Adonijah or Solomon) is to sit upon the throne after thee." "The decision of this question is in thy hand, for the people have not yet attached themselves to Adonijah, but are looking to thee, to see what thou wilt do; and they will follow thy judgment, if thou only hastenest to make Solomon king."—Seb. Schmidt. To secure this decision, Bathsheba refers again, in ver. 21, to the fate which would await both herself and her son Solomon after the death of the king. They would be חַטָּאִים, *i.e.* guilty of a capital crime. "We should be punished as though guilty of high treason" (Clericus).—Vers. 22 sqq. While Bathsheba was still speaking, Nathan came. When he was announced to the king, Bathsheba retired, just as afterwards Nathan went away when the king had Bathsheba called in again (cf. ver. 28 with ver. 32). This was done, not to avoid the appearance of a mutual arrangement (Cler., Then., etc.), but for reasons of propriety, inasmuch as, in audiences granted by the king to his wife or one of his counsellors, no third person ought to be present unless the king required his attendance. Nathan confirmed Bathsheba's statement, commencing thus: "My lord king, thou hast really said, Adonijah shall be king after me . . . ? for he has gone down to-day, and has prepared a feast, . . . and they are eating and drinking before him, and saying, Long live king Adonijah!" And he then closed by asking, "Has this taken place on the part of my lord the king, and thou hast not shown thy servants (Nathan, Zadok, Benaiah, and Solomon) who is to sit upon the throne of my lord the king after him?" The indirect question introduced with אֲנִי is not merely an expression of modesty, but also of doubt, whether what had occurred had emanated from the king and he had not shown it to his servants.—Vers. 28-30. The king then sent for Bathsheba again, and gave her this promise on oath: "As truly as Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all distress (as in 2 Sam. iv. 9), yea, as I swore to thee by Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Solomon thy son shall be king after me, . . . yea, so shall I do this day." The first and third אֲנִי serve to give emphasis to the assertion, like *imo*, yea (cf. Ewald, § 330, b). The second merely serves as an introduction to the words.—Ver. 31. Bathsheba then left the king with the deepest prostration and the utterance of a blessing, as an expression of her inmost gratitude. The benedictory formula, "May the king live for ever," was only

used by the Israelites on occasions of special importance : whereas the Babylonians and ancient Persians constantly addressed their kings in this way (cf. Dan. ii. 4, iii. 9, v. 10, vi. 22 ; Neh. ii. 3. *Adiani var. hist.* i. 32, and *Curtius de gestis Alex.* vi. 5).

Vers. 32-40. David then sent for Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, and directed them to fetch the servants of their lord (אֲרֵיכָם, a *pluralis majestatis*, referring to David alone), and to conduct Solomon to Gihon riding upon the royal mule, and there to anoint him and solemnly proclaim him king. The servants of your lord (עֲבָדֵי אֲרֵיכָם) are the *Crothi* and *Plathi*, and not the *Gilborim* also (Thenius), as ver. 38 clearly shows, where we find that these alone went down with him to Gihon as the royal body-guard. עָלַיְכֶם אֲשֶׁר לִי, upon the mule which belongs to me, i.e. upon my (the king's) mule. When the king let any one ride upon the animal on which he generally rode himself, this was a sign that he was his successor upon the throne. Among the ancient Persians riding upon the king's horse was a public honour, which the king conferred upon persons of great merit in the eyes of all the people (cf. Esth. vi. 8, 9). פָּרָה, the female mule, which in Kahira is still preferred to the mule for riding (see Rosenmüller, *bibl. Althk.* iv. 3, p. 56). *Gihon* (גִּיחֹן) was the name given, according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 30 and xxxiii. 14, to a spring on the western side of Zion, which supplied two basins or pools, viz. the upper watercourse of Gihon (2 Chron. xxxii. 30) or upper pool (2 Kings xviii. 17 ; Isa. vii. 3, xxxvi. 2), and the lower pool (Isa. xxii. 9). The upper Gihon still exists as a large reservoir built up with hewn stones, though somewhat fallen to decay, which is called by the monks *Gihon*, by the natives *Birket el Mamilla*, about 700 yards W.N.W. from the Joppa gate, in the basin which opens into the valley of Hinnom. The lower pool is probably the present *Birket es Sultan*, on the south-western side of Zion (see Robinson, *Palestine*, i. p. 485 sqq., 512 sqq., and *Biblical Researches*, p. 142 sqq.). The valley between the two was certainly the place where Solomon was anointed, as it is not stated that this took place at the fountain of Gihon. And even the expression הֵרָדָם מִן הַגִּיחֹן (take him down to Gihon) agrees with this. For if you go from Zion to Gihon towards the west, you first of all have to descend a slope, and then ascend by a gradual rise ; and this slope was probably a more considerable one in ancient



times (*Rob. Pal.* i. p. 514, note).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 34. The blowing of the trumpet and the cry “Long live the king” (cf. 1 Sam. x. 24) were to serve as a solemn proclamation after the anointing had taken place.—Ver. 35. After the anointing they were to conduct Solomon up to Zion again; Solomon was then to ascend the throne, as David was about to appoint him prince over Israel and Judah in his own stead. Both the anointing and the appointment of Solomon as prince over the whole of the covenant nation were necessary, because the succession to the throne had been rendered doubtful through Adonijah’s attempt, and the aged king was still alive. In cases where there was no question, and the son followed the father after his death, the unanimous opinion of the Rabbins is, that there was no anointing at all. Israel and Judah are mentioned, because David had been the first to unite all the tribes under his sceptre, and after the death of Solomon Israel fell away from the house of David.—Vers. 36, 37. Benaiah responded to the utterance of the royal will with a confirmatory “Amen, thus saith Jehovah the God of my lord the king;” *i.e.* may the word of the king become a word of Jehovah his God, who fulfils what He promises (*Ps.* xxxiii. 9); and added the pious wish, “May Jehovah be with Solomon, as He was with David, and glorify his throne above the throne of David,”—a wish which was not merely “flattery of his paternal vanity” (Thenius), but which had in view the prosperity of the monarchy, and was also fulfilled by God (cf. *iii.* 11 sqq.).—Vers. 38-40. The anointing of Solomon was carried out immediately, as the king had commanded. On the *Crethi* and *Plethi* see at 2 Sam. viii. 18. “The oil-horn out of the tent” (*i.e.* a vessel made of horn and containing oil) was no doubt one which held the holy anointing oil, with which the priests and the vessels of the sanctuary were anointed (see *Ex.* xxx. 22 sqq.). The tent (הֶאֱתָר), however, is not the tabernacle

<sup>1</sup> The conjecture of Thenius, that הֶאֱתָר should be altered into הַבְּעֵינִי, is hardly worth mentioning; for, apart from the fact that all the ancient versions confirm the correctness of הֶאֱתָר, the objections which Thenius brings against it amount to mere conjectures or groundless assumptions, such as that Zadok took the oil-horn out of the tabernacle at Gibeon, which is not stated in ver. 39. Moreover, Gibeon was a three hours’ journey from Jerusalem, so that it would have been absolutely impossible for the anointing, which was not commanded by David till after Adonijah’s feast had commenced, to be finished so quickly that the procession could return to Jerusalem before it was ended, as is distinctly recorded in ver. 41.

at Gibeon, but the tent set up by David for the ark of the covenant upon Mount Zion (2 Sam. vi. 17). For even though Zadok was appointed high priest at the tabernacle at Gibeon, and Abiathar, who held with Adonijah, at the ark of the covenant, the two high priests were not so unfriendly towards one another, that Zadok could not have obtained admission to the ark of the covenant in Abiathar's absence to fetch away the anointing oil—Ver. 40. All the people, *i.e.* the crowd which was present at the anointing, went up after him, *i.e.* accompanied Solomon to the citadel of Zion, with flutes and loud acclamation, so that the earth nearly burst with their shouting. *וַתִּרְעַד*, "to burst in pieces" (as in 2 Chron. xxv. 12), is a hyperbolical expression for quaking.

Vers. 41–53. The noise of this shouting reached the ears of Adonijah and his guests, when the feast was just drawing to a close. The music, therefore, and the joyful acclamations of the people must have been heard as far off as the fountain of Rogel. When Joab observed the sound of the trumpet, knowing what these tones must signify, he asked "wherefore the sound of the city in an uproar" (*i.e.* what does it mean)? At that moment Jonathan the son of Abiathar arrived (see 2 Sam. xv. 27, xvii. 17 sqq.). Adonijah called out to him: "Come, for thou art a brave man and bringest good tidings;" suppressing all anxiety with these words, as he knew his father's will with regard to the succession to the throne, and the powerful and influential friends of Solomon (see vers. 5, 19, 26)—Vers. 43 sqq. Jonathan replied: *לֵכָה*, "yea but," corresponding to the Latin *imo vero*, an expression of assurance with a slight doubt, and then related that Solomon had been anointed king by David's command, and the city was in a joyous state of excitement in consequence (*וַתִּרְעַד* as in Ruth i. 19), and that he had even ascended the throne, that the servants of the king had blessed David for it, and that David himself had worshipped and praised Jehovah the God of Israel that he had lived to see his son ascend the throne. The repetition of *וַתִּרְעַד* three times (vers. 46–48) gives emphasis to the words, since every new point which is introduced with *וַתִּרְעַד* raises the thing higher and higher towards absolute certainty. The fact related in ver. 47 refers to the words of Benaiah in vers. 36 and 37. The *Chetib* *וַתִּרְעַד* is the correct reading, and the *Keri* *וַתִּרְעַד* an unnecessary emendation. The prayer to God, with thanksgiving for the favour granted to him, was offered by David after the



return of his anointed son Solomon to the royal palace ; so that it ought strictly to have been mentioned after ver. 40. The worship of the grey-headed David upon the bed recalls to mind the worship of the patriarch Jacob after making known his last will (Gen. xlvii. 31).—Vers. 49, 50. The news spread terror. All the guests of Adonijah fled, every man his way. Adonijah himself sought refuge from Solomon at the horns of the altar. The altar was regarded from time immemorial and among all nations as a place of refuge for criminals deserving of death ; but, according to Ex. xxi. 14, in Israel it was only allowed to afford protection in cases of unintentional slaying, and for these special cities of refuge were afterwards provided (Num. xxxv.). In the horns of the altar, as symbols of power and strength, there was concentrated the true significance of the altar as a divine place, from which there emanated both life and health (see at Ex. xxvii. 19). By grasping the horns of the altar the culprit placed himself under the protection of the saving and helping grace of God, which wipes away sin, and thereby abolishes punishment (see Bahr, *Symbolik des Mos. Cult.* i. p. 474). The question to what altar Adonijah fled, whether to the altar at the ark of the covenant in Zion, or to the one at the tabernacle at Gibeon, or to the one built by David on the threshing-floor of Araunah, cannot be determined with certainty. It was probably to the first of these, however, as nothing is said about a flight to Gibeon, and with regard to the altar of Araunah it is not certain that it was provided with horns like the altars of the two sanctuaries.—Vers. 51, 52. When this was reported to Solomon, together with the prayer of Adonijah that the king would swear to him that he would not put him to death with the sword (אֶם before יָמִית, a particle used in an oath), he promised him conditional impunity : “ If he shall be brave (בְּרוּרִיל, *vir probus*), none of his hair shall fall to the earth,” equivalent to not a hair of his head shall be injured (cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 45) ; “ but if evil be found in him,” *i.e.* if he render himself guilty of a fresh crime, “ he shall die.”—Ver. 53. He then had him fetched down from the altar (הוֹרִיד, inasmuch as the altar stood upon an eminence) ; and when he fell down before the king, *i.e.* did homage to him as king, he gave him his life and freedom in the words, “ Go to thy house.” The expression לֵךְ לְבֵיתֶךָ does not imply his banishment from the court (compare ch. ii. 13 and 2 Sam. xiv. 24). Solomon did not wish to commence his own ascent of the throne by

infliction of punishment, and therefore presented the usurper with his life on the condition that he kept himself quiet.

CHAP. II. DAVID'S LAST INSTRUCTIONS AND DEATH. SOLOMON  
ASCENDS THE THRONE AND FORTIFIES HIS GOVERNMENT.

The anointing of Solomon as king, which was effected by David's command (ch. i.), is only briefly mentioned in 1 Chron. xxiii. 1 in the words, "When David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel;" which serve as an introduction to the account of the arrangements made by David during the closing days of his life. After these arrangements have been described, there follow in 1 Chron. xxviii and xxix. his last instructions and his death. The aged king gathered together the tribe-princes and the rest of the dignitaries and superior officers to a diet at Jerusalem, and having introduced Solomon to them as the successor chosen by God, exhorted them to keep the commandments of God, and urged upon Solomon and the whole assembly the building of the temple, gave his son the model of the temple and all the materials which he had collected towards its erection, called upon the great men of the kingdom to contribute to this work, which they willingly agreed to, and closed this last act of his reign with praise and thanksgiving to God and a great sacrificial festival, at which the assembled states of the realm made Solomon king a second time, and anointed him prince in the presence of Jehovah (1 Chron. xxix. 22).—A repetition of the anointing of the new king at the instigation of the states of the realm, accompanied by their solemn homage, had also taken place in the case of both Saul (1 Sam. xi.) and David (2 Sam. ii. 4 and v. 3), and appears to have been an essential requirement to secure the general recognition of the king on the part of the nation, at any rate in those cases in which the succession to the throne was not undisputed. In order, therefore, to preclude any rebellion after his death, David summoned this national assembly again after Solomon's first anointing and ascent of the throne, that the representatives of the whole nation might pay the requisite homage to king Solomon, who had been installed as his successor according to the will of God.—To this national assembly, which is only reported in the Chronicles, there are appended the last instructions which David gave, according to vers. 1-9 of our



chapter, to his successor Solomon immediately before his death. Just as in the Chronicles, according to the peculiar plan of that work, there is no detailed description of the installation of David on the throne; so here the author of our books has omitted the account of this national diet, and the homage paid by the estates of the realm to the new king, as not being required by the purpose of his work, and has communicated the last personal admonitions and instructions of the dying king David instead.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 1-11. DAVID'S LAST INSTRUCTIONS AND DEATH.—Vers. 1-4. When David saw that his life was drawing to a close, he first of all admonished his son Solomon to be valiant in the observance of the commandments of God. "I go the way of all the world" (as in Josh. xxiii. 14), *i.e.* the way of death; "be strong and be a man,"—not "bear my departure bravely," as Thenius supposes, but prove thyself brave (cf. 1 Sam. iv. 9) to keep the commandments of the Lord. Just as in 1 Sam. iv. 9 the object in which the bravery is to show itself is appended simply by the copula *Vae*; so is it here also with 'שָׁמַרְתָּ וְנָתַתָּ. The phrase 'שָׁמַר אֶת־מִצְוֹתָיָהּ, to keep the keeping of Jehovah, which so frequently occurs in the *Thorah*, *i.e.* to observe or obey whatever is to be observed in relation to Jehovah (cf. Gen. xxvi. 5, Lev. viii. 35, xviii. 30, etc.), always receives its more precise definition from the context, and is used here, as in Gen. xxvi. 5, to denote obedience to the law of God in all its extent, or, according to the first definition, to walk in the ways of Jehovah. This is afterwards more fully expanded in the expression 'לְשָׁמַר הַקְּטָוִי וְנָתַתָּ, to keep the ordinances, commandments, rights, and

<sup>1</sup> To refute the assertion of De Wette, Gramberg, and Thenius, that this account of the Chronicles arises from a free mode of dealing with the history, and an intention to suppress everything that did not contribute to the honour of David and his house,—an assertion which can only be attributed to their completely overlooking, not to say studiously ignoring, the different plans of the two works (the books of Kings on the one hand, and those of Chronicles on the other),—it will be sufficient to quote the unprejudiced and thoughtful decision of Bertheau, who says, in his Comm. on 1 Chron. xxiii. 1: "These few words (1 Chron. xxiii. 1) give in a condensed form the substance of the account in 1 Kings i., which is intimately bound up with the account of the family affairs of David in the books of Samuel and Kings, and therefore, according to the whole plan of our historical work, would have been out of place in the Chronicles."

testimonies of Jehovah. These four words were applied to the different precepts of the law, the first three of which are connected together in Gen. xxvi. 5, Deut. v. 28, viii. 11, and served to individualize the rich and manifold substance of the demands of the Lord to His people as laid down in the *Thorah*. לִמְעַן תִּשְׁכַּח, that thou mayest act wisely and execute well, as in Deut. xxix. 8, Josh. i. 7.—Ver. 4. Solomon would then experience still further this blessing of walking in the ways of the Lord, since the Lord would fulfil to him His promise of the everlasting possession of the throne. לִמְעַן יָקִים ו' is grammatically subordinate to לִמְעַן תִּשְׁכַּח in ver. 3. The word which Jehovah has spoken concerning David (דָּוִד קָלָה) is the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq., the substance of which is quoted here by David with a negative turn, לֹא יִכָּרֵת ו', and with express allusion to the condition on which God would assuredly fulfil His promise, viz. if the descendants of David preserve their ways, to walk before the Lord in truth. בְּאֵמֶת is more precisely defined by בְּכָל . . . נְפִשָּׁם. For the fact itself see Deut. v. 5, xi. 13, 18. The formula לֹא יִכָּרֵת ו' is formed after 1 Sam. ii. 33 (compare also 2 Sam. iii. 29 and Josh. ix. 23). "There shall not be cut off to thee a man from upon the throne of Israel," i.e. there shall never be wanting to thee a descendant to take the throne; in other words, the sovereignty shall always remain in thy family. This promise, which reads thus in 2 Sam. vii. 16, "Thy house and thy kingdom shall be continual for ever before thee, and thy throne stand fast for ever," and which was confirmed to Solomon by the Lord Himself after his prayer at the consecration of the temple (ch. viii. 25, ix. 5), is not to be understood as implying that no king of the Davidic house would be thrust away from the throne, but simply affirms that the posterity of David was not to be cut off, so as to leave no offshoot which could take possession of the throne. Its ultimate fulfilment it received in Christ (see at 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq.). The second וְאֵלֶּיךָ in ver. 4 is not to be erased as suspicious, as being merely a repetition of the first in consequence of the long conditional clause, even though it is wanting in the Vulgate, the Arabic, and a Hebrew codex.

After a general admonition David communicated to his successor a few more special instructions; viz., first of all (vers. 5, 6), to punish *Joab* for his wickedness. "What *Joab* did to me:"—of this David mentions only the two principal crimes of *Joab*,



by which he had already twice deserved death, namely, his killing the two generals, Abner (2 Sam. iii. 27) and Amasa the son of Jether (2 Sam. xx. 10). The name יִתֵּר is written יִתְרָא in 2 Sam. xvii. 25. Joab had murdered both of them out of jealousy in a treacherous and malicious manner; and thereby he had not only grievously displeased David and bidden defiance to his royal authority, but by the murder of Abner had exposed the king to the suspicion in the eyes of the people of having instigated the crime (see at 2 Sam. iii. 28, 37). וַיַּשְׂם דָּמַי מְ, "and he made war-blood in peace," i.e. he shed in the time of peace blood that ought only to flow in war (דָּם in the sense of making, as in Deut. xiv. 1, Ex. x. 2, etc.), "and brought war-blood upon his girdle which was about his loins, and upon his shoes under his feet," sc. in the time of peace. This was the crime therefore: that Joab had murdered the two generals in a time of peace, as one ought only to slay his opponent in time of war. *Girdle and shoes*, the principal features in oriental attire when a man is preparing himself for any business, were covered with blood, since Joab, while saluting them, had treacherously stabbed both of them with the sword. David ought to have punished these two crimes; but when Abner was murdered, he felt himself too weak to visit a man like Joab with the punishment he deserved, as he had only just been anointed king, and consequently he did nothing more than invoke divine retribution upon his head (2 Sam. iii. 29). And when Amasa was slain, the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba had crippled the power of David too much, for him to visit the deed with the punishment that was due. But as king of the nation of God, it was not right for him to allow such crimes to pass unpunished: he therefore transferred the punishment, for which he had wanted the requisite power, to his son and successor.—Ver. 6. "Do according to thy wisdom ("mark the proper opportunity of punishing him"—Seb. Schmidt), and let not his grey hair go down into hell (the region of the dead) in peace (i.e. unpunished)." The punishment of so powerful a man as Joab the commander-in-chief was, required great wisdom, to avoid occasioning a rebellion in the army, which was devoted to him.—Ver. 7. If the demands of justice required that Joab should be punished, the duty of gratitude was no less holy to the dying king. And Solomon was to show this to the sons of *Barzillai* the Gileadite, and make them companions of his table; because Barzillai had

supplied David with provisions on his flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xvii. 27 sqq., xix. 32 sqq.). וְהָיוּ בְּאֶמְלֵי יִשְׁלָהֶנָּה. "let them be among those eating of thy table;" i.e. not, "let them draw their food from the royal table,"—for there was no particular distinction in this, as all the royal attendants at the court received their food from the royal kitchen, as an equivalent for the pay that was owing,—but, "let them join in the meals at the royal table." The fact that in 2 Sam. ix. 10, 11, 13, we have אָכַל עַל-שֻׁלְחָן to express this, makes no material difference. According to 2 Sam. xix. 38, Barzillai had, it is true, allowed only one son to follow the king to his court. "For so they drew near to me," i.e. they showed the kindness to me of supplying me with food; compare 2 Sam. xvii. 27, where Barzillai alone is named, though, as he was a man of eighty years old, he was certainly supported by his sons.—Ver. 8. On the other hand, *Shimei* the Benjamite had shown great hostility to David (cf. 2 Sam. xvi. 5-8). He had cursed him with a vehement curse as he fled from Absalom (נִסְתַּחֲזַק, vehement, violent, not ill, *hoolies*, from the primary meaning to be sick or ill, as *Thenius* supposes, since it cannot be shown that שָׁרַץ has any such meaning); and when David returned to Jerusalem and *Shimei* fell at his feet, he had promised to spare his life, because he did not want to mar the joy at his reinstatement in his kingdom by an act of punishment (2 Sam. xix. 19-24), and therefore had personally forgiven him. But the insult which *Shimei* had offered in his person to the anointed of the Lord, as king and representative of the rights of God, he could not forgive. The instruction given to his successor (אַל-תִּנָּקֶה, let him not be guiltless) did not spring from personal revenge, but was the duty of the king as judge and administrator of the divine right.<sup>1</sup> It follows from the expression עִמָּךְ, with thee, i.e. in thy neighbourhood, that *Shimei* was living at that time in Jerusalem (cf. ver. 36).—Vers. 10, 11. After these instructions David died, and was buried in the

<sup>1</sup> "Shimei is and remains rather a proof of David's magnanimity than of vengeance. It was not a little thing to tolerate the miscreant in his immediate neighbourhood for his whole life long (not even banishment being thought of). And if under the following reign also he had been allowed to end his days in peace (which had never been promised him), this would have been a kindness which would have furnished an example of unpunished crimes that might easily have been abused." This is the verdict of J. J. Hess in his *Geschichte Davids*, ii. p. 221.



city of David, *i.e.* upon Mount Zion, where the sepulchre of David still existed in the time of Christ (Acts ii. 29).<sup>1</sup> On the length of his reign see 2 Sam. v. 5.

Vers. 12-46. ACCESSION OF SOLOMON AND ESTABLISHMENT OF HIS GOVERNMENT.—Ver. 12 is a heading embracing the substance of what follows, and is more fully expanded in 1 Chron. xxix. 23-25. Solomon established his monarchy first of all by punishing the rebels, Adonijah (vers. 13-25) and his adherents (vers. 26-35), and by carrying out the final instructions of his father (vers. 36-46).

Vers. 13-25. *Adonijah forfeits his life.*—Vers. 13-18. Adonijah came to Bathsheba with the request that she would apply to king Solomon to give him Abishag of Shunem as his wife. Bathsheba asked him, "Is peace thy coming?" *i.e.* comest thou with a peaceable intention? (as in 1 Sam. xvi. 4), because after what had occurred (ch. i. 5 sqq.) she suspected an evil intention. He introduced his petition with these words: "Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and all Israel had set its face upon me that I should be king, then the kingdom turned about and became my brother's; for it became his from the Lord." The throne was his, not because he had usurped it, but because it belonged to him as the eldest son at that time, according to the right of primogeniture. Moreover it might have been the case that many of the people wished him to be king, and the fact that he had found adherents in Joab, Abiathar, and others, confirms this; but his assertion, that all Israel had set its eyes upon him as the future king, went beyond the bounds of truth. At the same time, he knew how to cover over the dangerous sentiment implied in his words in a very skilful manner by adding the further remark, that the transfer of the kingdom to his brother had come from Jehovah; so that Bathsheba did not detect the artifice, and pro-

<sup>1</sup> The situation of the tombs of the kings of Judah upon Zion, Thenius has attempted to trace minutely in a separate article in Illgen's *Zeitschrift für die histor. Theol.* 1844, i. p. 1 sqq., and more especially to show that the entrance to these tombs must have been on the eastern slope of Mount Zion, which falls into the valley of *Tyropæon*, and obliquely opposite to the spring of Siloah. This is in harmony with the statement of Theodoret (*quæst.* 6 in iii. Reg.), to the effect that Josephus says, τὸ δὲ μνημα (τῆς ταφῆς) παρὰ τὴν Σιλοάμ εἶναι ἀντροειδὲς ἔχον τὸ σχῆμα, καὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν δηλοῦν πολυτέλειαν; although this statement does not occur in any passage of his works as they have come down to us.

mised to fulfil his request (vers. 16 sqq.) to intercede with king Solomon for Abishag to be given him to wife. אֲשֶׁר־אֶפְדֶּה, "do not turn back my face," i.e. do not refuse my request.—Ver. 19. When Bathsheba came to Solomon, he received her with the reverence due to the queen-mother: "he rose up to meet her" (a pregnant expression for "he rose up and went to meet her"), made a low bow, then sat upon his throne again, and bade her sit upon a throne at his right hand. The seat at the right hand of the king was the place of honour among the Israelites (cf. Ps. cx. 1), also with the ancient Arabian kings (cf. Eichhorn, *Monumenta Antiq. Hist. Arab.* p. 220), as well as among the Greeks and Romans.—Vers. 20 sqq. To her request, "Let Abishag of Shunem be given to Adonijah thy brother for a wife" (וְאִשָּׁה, cf. Gen. § 143, 1, a), which she regarded in her womanly simplicity as a very small one (וְאִשָּׁה), he replied with indignation, detecting at once the intrigues of Adonijah: "And why dost thou ask Abishag of Shunem for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom, for he is my elder brother, and indeed for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah." The repetition of וְ for him, and for Abiathar and Joab, for the purpose of linking on another clause, answers entirely to the emotional character of the words. "For him, and for Abiathar and Joab!"—Solomon said this, because these two men of high rank had supported Adonijah's rebellion and wished to rule under his name. There is no ground for any such alterations of the text as Thenius proposes.—Although Abishag had been only David's nurse, in the eyes of the people she passed as his concubine; and among the Israelites, just as with the ancient Persians (Herod. iii. 68), taking possession of the harem of a deceased king was equivalent to an establishment of the claim to the throne (see at 2 Sam. xii. 8 and iii. 7, 8). According to 2 Sam. xvi. 21, this cannot have been unknown even to Bathsheba; but as Adonijah's wily words had dismissed all suspicion, she may not have thought of this, or may perhaps have thought that Abishag was not to be reckoned as one of David's concubines, because David had not known her (ch. i. 4).—Vers. 23 sqq. Solomon thereupon solemnly swore (the formula of an oath, and the וְ introducing the oath, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 44, etc.), "Adonijah has spoken this word against his own life" (וְעַל־נַפְשׁוֹ, at the cost of his life, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 17, i.e. at the hazard of his life, or to his destruction. Ver. 24. "And now, as truly as Jehovah liveth, who hath established me



and set me on the throne of my father David, and hath made me a house, as He said (*verbatim*, 2 Sam. vii. 11): yea, to-day shall Adonijah be put to death." Jehovah established Solomon, or founded him firmly, by raising him to the throne in spite of Adonijah's usurpation. In וַיִּשְׁכְּנֵנִי the central י has got into the text through a copyist's error. עָשָׂה לִי בֵית, *i.e.* He has bestowed upon me a family or posterity. Solomon had already one son, viz. Rehoboam, about a year old (compare xi. 42 with ch. xiv. 21 and 2 Chron. xii. 13).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 25. Solomon had this sentence immediately executed upon Adonijah by Benaiah, the chief of the body-guard, according to the oriental custom of both ancient and modern times. The king was perfectly just in doing this. For since Adonijah, even after his first attempt to seize upon the throne had been forgiven by Solomon, endeavoured to secure his end by fresh machinations, duty to God, who had exalted Solomon to the throne, demanded that the rebel should be punished with all the severity of the law, without regard to blood-relationship.

Vers. 26, 27. *Deposition of Abiathar*.—The conduct of Solomon towards the high priest Abiathar is a proof how free his actions were from personal revenge or too great severity. Abiathar had also forfeited his life through the part he took in Adonijah's conspiracy; but Solomon simply sent him to Anathoth (*i.e.* Anata; see at Josh. xviii. 24), to his own fields, *i.e.* to his property there, telling him, "Thou art indeed a man of death," *i.e.* thou hast deserved to die, "but I will not put thee to death to-day, because thou hast borne the ark of Jehovah," namely, both on the occasion of its solemn conveyance to Jerusalem (1 Chron. xv. 11 sqq.) and also on David's flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 24, 29), that is to say, because of his high-priestly dignity, and because thou didst endure all that my father endured, *i.e.* thou didst share all his afflictions and sufferings, both in the period of Saul's persecution (1 Sam. xxii. 20 sqq., xxiii. 8 sqq.), and during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 24 sqq.). בְּיוֹם הַהוּא (to-day) puts a limit upon the pardon, because Solomon could not foresee whether Abiathar would

<sup>1</sup> When Thenius denies this, and maintains that Rehoboam cannot have been 41 years old when he began to reign, referring to his discussion at ch. xiv. 21, he answers himself, inasmuch as at ch. xiv. 21 he demonstrates the fallacy of the objections which Cappellus has raised against the correctness of the reading "41 years."

always keep quiet, and not forfeit his life again by fresh crimes.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 27. The banishment of Abiathar to his own private possession involved his deposition from the priesthood. And, as the historian adds, thus was the word of the Lord concerning the house of Eli fulfilled (1 Sam. ii. 30–33). אֶלִיָּא corresponds to the New Testament *ἡ αὐτοῦ κληρονομία*. For further remarks on this prophecy and its fulfilment, see at 1 Sam. ii. 30 sqq.<sup>2</sup> Thus was the high-priesthood of the house of Eli extinguished, and henceforth this dignity passed through Zadok into the sole possession of the line of Eleazar.

Vers 28–34. *Execution of Joab*.—When the report (of the execution of Adonijah and the deposition of Abiathar) came to Joab, he fled to the tent of Jehovah (not to the tabernacle, but to the holy tent upon Zion) to seek protection at the altar (see at ch. i. 50). The words אֲנִי יָסָבִיתִי אֵצֶל יְהוָה are introduced as a parenthesis to explain Joab's flight: "for Joab had leaned after Adonijah," i.e. taken his side (נָטָה אַחֲרָיו, as in Ex. xxiii. 2, Judg. ix. 3), "but not after Absalom."<sup>3</sup> There is

<sup>1</sup> There is no meaning in the objection of Thenius, that Abiathar did not carry the ark himself, since this was not the duty of the high priest. For, in the first place, it is questionable whether Abiathar did not lend a helping hand at the removal of the ark during Absalom's conspiracy. And, secondly, the duty binding upon the high priest, to superintend and conduct the removal of the ark, might very well be called carrying the ark. The conjecture, that for אֶלִיָּא we should read אֶלִיָּא, founders on the preterite אֶלִיָּא; for Abiathar had not only worn the ephod once before, but he wore it till the very hour in which Solomon deposed him from his office.

<sup>2</sup> Nothing is related concerning the subsequent fate of Abiathar, since the death of a high priest who had been deprived of his office was a matter of no importance to the history of the kingdom of God. At any rate, he would not survive his deposition very long, as he was certainly eighty years old already (see *Comm. on Sam.* p. 267).—The inference which Ewald (*Greek* iii. pp. 269, 270) draws from 1 Sam. ii. 31–36 as to the manner of his death, namely, that he fell by the sword, is one of the numerous fictions founded upon naturalistic assumptions with which this scholar has ornamented the biblical history.

<sup>3</sup> Instead of אֶלִיָּא the LXX. (Cod. Vat.), Vulgate, Syr., and Arab. have adopted the reading אֶלִיָּא, and both Thenius and Ewald propose to alter the text accordingly. But whatever plausibility this reading may have, especially if we alter the preterite נָטָה into the participle נֹטֶה after the ἵσταντες of the LXX., as Thenius does, it has no other foundation than an arbitrary rendering of the LXX., who thought, but quite erroneously, that the allusion to Absalom was inapplicable here. For נָטָה אַחֲרָיו, to take a



no foundation in the biblical text for the conjecture, that Joab had given Adonijah the advice to ask for Abishag as his wife, just as Ahithophel had given similar advice to Absalom (2 Sam. xvi. 21). For not only is there no intimation of anything of the kind, but Solomon punished Joab solely because of his crimes in the case of Abner and Amasa. Moreover, Abiathar was also deposed, without having any fresh machinations in favour of Adonijah laid to his charge. The punishment of Adonijah and Abiathar was quite sufficient to warn Joab of his approaching fate, and lead him to seek to save his life by fleeing to the altar. It is true that, according to Ex. xxi. 13, 14, the altar could afford no protection to a man who had committed two murders. But he probably thought no more of these crimes, which had been committed a long time before, but simply of his participation in Adonijah's usurpation; and he might very well hope that religious awe would keep Solomon from putting him to death in a holy place for such a crime as that. And it is very evident that this hope was not altogether a visionary one, from the fact that, according to ver. 30, when Joab refused to leave the altar at the summons addressed to him in the name of the king, Benaiah did not give him the death-blow at once, but informed Solomon of the fact and received his further commands. Solomon, however, did not arrest the course of justice, but ordered him to be put to death there and afterwards buried. The burial of the persons executed was a matter of course, as, according to Deut. xxi. 23, even a person who had been hanged was to be buried before sunset. When, therefore, Solomon gives special orders for the burial of Joab, the meaning is that Benaiah is to provide for the burial with distinct reference to the services which Joab had rendered to his father. "And take away the blood, which Joab shed without cause, from me and my father's house." So long as Joab remained unpunished for the double murder, the blood-guiltiness rested upon the king and his house, on whom the duty of punishment devolved (cf. Num. xxxv. 30, 31; Deut. xix. 13). דָּמִי בְּחֵינִי, blood without cause, *i.e.* blood shed in innocence. On the connection of the adverb with the substantive, at which Thenius takes offence, comp. Ges. § 151, 1, and Ewald, § 287, *d* person's side, would suit very well in the case of Adonijah and Absalom, but not in that of Solomon, whose claim to the throne was not a party affair, but had been previously determined by God.

—For ver. 32, compare ver. 5. The words of Solomon in ver. 33a point back to the curse which David uttered upon Joab and his descendants after the murder of Abner (2 Sam. iii. 28, 29). “But to David, and his seed, and his house, and his throne, let there be salvation for ever from Jehovah.” This wish sprang from a conviction, based upon 2 Sam. vii. 14, that the Lord would not fulfil His promise to David unless his successors upon the throne exercised right and justice according to the command of the Lord—Ver. 34. Benaiah went up (<sup>522</sup>), inasmuch as the altar by the ark of the covenant stood higher up Mount Zion than Solomon’s house. Joab was buried “in his house” (i.e. in the tomb prepared in his house, either in the court or in the garden: cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 1), “in the desert,” probably the wilderness of Judah, as Joab’s mother was a step-sister of David, and therefore probably dwelt in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem—Ver. 35. Solomon appointed Benaiah commander-in-chief in the place of Joab, and put Zadok in Abiathar’s place (cf. ch. i. 8, 9).

Vers. 36–45. *Punishment of Shimei*—Solomon thereupon ordered Shimei to come, probably from Bahurim, where his home was (2 Sam. xvi. 5), and commanded him to build himself a house in Jerusalem to dwell in, and not to leave the city “any whither” (<sup>728</sup> <sup>728</sup>), threatening him with death if ever he should cross the brook Kidron. The valley of Kidron is mentioned as the eastern boundary of the city with an allusion to the fact, that Bahurim was to the east of Jerusalem towards the desert—Ver. 38. Shimei vowed obedience, and that on oath, as is supplementarily observed in ver. 42, though it has been arbitrarily interpolated by the LXX. here: and he kept his word a considerable time—Vers. 39, 40. But after the lapse of three years, when two slaves fled to Gath to king Achish, with whom David had also sought and found refuge (1 Sam. xxvii. 2, compare ch. xxi. 11 sqq.), he started for Gath as soon as he knew this, and fetched them back—Vers. 41 sqq. When this was reported to Solomon, he sent for Shimei and charged him with the breach of his command: “Did I not swear to thee by Jehovah, and testify to thee, etc.? Why hast thou not kept the oath of Jehovah (the oath sworn by Jehovah) . . .?”—Ver. 44. He then reminded him of the evil which he had done to his father: “Thou knowest all the evil which thy heart knoweth (i.e. which thy conscience must tell thee); and now Jehovah



returns the evil upon thy head," namely, by decreeing the punishment of death, which he deserved for blaspheming the anointed of the Lord (2 Sam. xvi. 9).—Ver. 45. "And king Solomon will be blessed, and the throne of David be established before Jehovah for ever," namely, because the king does justice (compare the remark on ver. 33).—Ver. 46. Solomon then ordered him to be executed by Benaiah. This punishment was also just. As Solomon had put Shimei's life in his own hand by imposing upon him confinement in Jerusalem, and Shimei had promised on oath to obey the king's command, the breach of his oath was a crime for which he had no excuse. There is no force at all in the excuses which some commentators adduce in his favour, founded upon the money which his slaves had cost him, and the wish to recover possession of them, which was a right one in itself. If Shimei had wished to remain faithful to his oath, he might have informed the king of the flight of his slaves, have entreated the king that they might be brought back, and have awaited the king's decision; but he had no right thus lightly to break the promise given on oath. By the breach of his oath he had forfeited his life. And this is the first thing with which Solomon charges him, without his being able to offer any excuse; and it is not till afterwards that he adduces as a second fact in confirmation of the justice of his procedure, the wickedness that he practised towards his father.—The last clause, "and the kingdom was established by (72) Solomon," is attached to the following chapter in the Cod. Al. of the LXX. (in the Cod. Vat. it is wanting, or rather its place is supplied by a long interpolation), in the Vulgate, and in the Syriac; and indeed rightly so, as Thenius has shown, not merely because of the 72 in ch. iii. 2, but also because of its form as a circumstantial clause, to which the following account (ch. iii. 1 sqq.) is appended.

CHAP. III. SOLOMON'S MARRIAGE; WORSHIP AND SACRIFICE AT  
GIBEON; AND WISE JUDICIAL SENTENCE.

The establishment of the government in the hands of Solomon having been noticed in ch. ii., the history of his reign commences with an account of his marriage to an Egyptian princess, and with a remark concerning the state of the kingdom at the beginning of his reign (vers. 1-3). There then follows a de-

scription of the solemn sacrifice and prayer at Gibeon, by which Solomon sought to give a religious consecration to his government, and to secure the assistance of the Lord and His blessing upon it, and obtained the fulfilment of his desire (vers. 4-15). And then, as a practical proof of the spirit of his government, we have the sentence through which he displayed the wisdom of his judicial decisions in the sight of all the people (vers. 16-28).

Vers. 1-3. *Solomon's marriage and the religious state of the kingdom.*—Ver. 1. When Solomon had well secured his possession of the throne (ch. ii. 46), he entered into alliance with Pharaoh, by taking his daughter as his wife. This Pharaoh of Egypt is supposed by Winer, Ewald, and others to have been *Pausanex*, the last king of the twenty-first (Tanitic) dynasty, who reigned thirty-five years; since the first king of the twenty-second (Bubastie) dynasty, *Sesenchis* or *Sheshonk*, was certainly the Shishak who conquered Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (ch. xiv. 25, 26). The alliance by marriage with the royal family of Egypt presupposes that Egypt was desirous of cultivating friendly relations with the kingdom of Israel, which had grown into a power to be dreaded; although, as we know nothing more of the history of Egypt at that time than the mere names of the kings (as given by Manetho), it is impossible to determine what may have been the more precise grounds which led the reigning king of Egypt to seek the friendship of Israel. There is, at any rate, greater probability in this supposition than in that of Thienius, who conjectures that Solomon contracted this marriage because he saw the necessity of entering into a closer relationship with this powerful neighbour, who had a perfectly free access to Palestine. The conclusion of this marriage took place in the first year of Solomon's reign, though probably not at the very beginning of the reign, but not till after his buildings had been begun, as we may infer from the expression *וְעַד שֶׁיֵּבֶן* (until he had made an end of building). Moreover, Solomon had already married Naamah the Ammonitess before ascending the throne, and had had a son by her (compare ch. xiv. 21 with xi. 42, 43).—Marriage with an Egyptian princess was not a transgression of the law, as it was only marriages with Canaanitish women that were expressly prohibited (Ex. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3), whereas it was allowable to marry even foreign women taken in war (Deut. xxi. 10



sqq.). At the same time, it was only when the foreign wives renounced idolatry and confessed their faith in Jehovah, that such marriages were in accordance with the spirit of the law. And we may assume that this was the case even with Pharaoh's daughter; because Solomon adhered so faithfully to the Lord during the first years of his reign, that he would not have tolerated any idolatry in his neighbourhood, and we cannot find any trace of Egyptian idolatry in Israel in the time of Solomon, and, lastly, the daughter of Pharaoh is expressly distinguished in ch. xi. 1 from the foreign wives who tempted Solomon to idolatry in his old age. The assertion of Seb. Schmidt and Thenius to the contrary rests upon a false interpretation of ch. xi. 1.—“And he brought her into the city of David, till he had finished the building of his palace,” etc. Into the city of David: *i.e.* not into the palace in which his father had dwelt, as Thenius arbitrarily interprets it in opposition to 2 Chron. viii. 11, but into a house in the city of David or Jerusalem, from which he brought her up into the house appointed for her after the building of his own palace was finished (ch. ix. 24). The building of the house of Jehovah is mentioned as well, because the sacred tent for the ark of the covenant was set up in the palace of David until the temple was finished, and the temple was not consecrated till after the completion of the building of the palace (see at ch. viii. 1). By the building of “the wall of Jerusalem” we are to understand a stronger fortification, and possibly also the extension of the city wall (see at ch. xi. 27).—Ver. 2. “Only the people sacrificed upon high places, because there was not yet a house built for the name of Jehovah until those days.” The limiting רק, *only*, by which this general account of the existing condition of the religious worship is appended to what precedes, may be accounted for from the antithesis to the strengthening of the kingdom by Solomon mentioned in ch. ii. 46. The train of thought is the following: It is true that Solomon's authority was firmly established by the punishment of the rebels, so that he was able to ally himself by marriage with the king of Egypt; but just as he was obliged to bring his Egyptian wife into the city of David, because the building of his palace was not yet finished, so the people, and (according to ver. 3) even Solomon himself, were only able to sacrifice to the Lord at that time upon altars on the high places, because the temple was not yet built. The participle מִזְבְּחִים denotes the continuation of this religious

condition (see Ewald, § 168, c). The *בָּמֹת*, or high places,<sup>1</sup> were places of sacrifice and prayer, which were built upon eminences or hills, because men thought they were nearer the Deity there, and which consisted in some cases probably of an altar only, though as a rule there was an altar with a sanctuary built by the side (*בַּיִת בָּמֹת*, ch. xiii. 32; 2 Kings xvii. 29, 32, xxiii. 19), so that *בָּמֹת* frequently stands for *בַּיִת בָּמֹת* (e.g. ch. xi. 7, xiv. 23; 2 Kings xxi. 3, xxiii. 8), and the *בָּמֹת* is also distinguished from the *מִזְבֵּחַ* (2 Kings xxiii. 15; 2 Chron. xiv. 2). These *high places* were consecrated to the worship of Jehovah, and essentially different from the high places of the Canaanites which were consecrated to Baal. Nevertheless sacrificing upon these high places was opposed to the law, according to which the place which the Lord Himself had chosen for the revelation of His name was the only place where sacrifices were to be offered (Lev. xvii. 3 sqq.); and therefore it is excused here on the ground that no house (temple) had yet been built to the name of the Lord.—Ver. 3. Even Solomon, although he loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, *i.e.* according to ch. ii. 3, in the commandments of the Lord as they are written in the law of Moses, sacrificed and burnt incense upon high places. Before the building of the temple, more especially since the tabernacle had lost its significance as the central place of the gracious presence of God among His people, through the removal of the ark of the covenant, the worship of the high places was unavoidable; although even afterwards it still continued as a forbidden *cultus*, and could not be thoroughly exterminated even by the most righteous kings (ch. xxii. 24; 2 Kings xii. 4, xiv. 4, xv. 4, 35).

<sup>1</sup> The opinion of Bottcher and Thenius, that *בָּמֹת* signifies a "sacred coppice," is only based upon untenable etymological combinations, and cannot be proved. And Ewald's view is equally unfounded, viz. that "high places were an old Canaanæan species of sanctuary, which at that time had become common in Israel also, and consisted of a tall stone of a conical shape, as the symbol of the Holy One, and of the real high place, viz. an altar, a sacred tree or grove, or even an image of the one God as well" (*Gesch.* iii. p. 390). For, on the one hand, it cannot be shown that the tall stone of a conical shape existed even in the case of the Canaanitish *bamoth*, and, on the other hand, it is impossible to adduce a shadow of a proof that the Israelitish *bamoth*, which were dedicated to Jehovah, were constructed precisely after the pattern of the Baal's-*bamoth* of the Canaanites.



Vers. 4-15. SOLOMON'S SACRIFICE AND DREAM AT GIBEON (cf. 2 Chron. i. 1-13).—To implore the divine blessing upon his reign, Solomon offered to the Lord at Gibeon a great sacrifice—a thousand burnt-offerings; and, according to 2 Chron. i. 2, the representatives of the whole nation took part in this sacrificial festival. At that time the great or principal *bamah* was at Gibeon (the present *el Jib*; see at Josh. ix. 3), namely, the Mosaic tabernacle (2 Chron. i. 3), which is called *הַבְּמָה*, because the ark of the covenant, with which Jehovah had bound up His gracious presence, was not there now. “Upon that altar,” *i.e.* upon the altar of the great *bamah* at Gibeon, the brazen altar of burnt-offering in the tabernacle (2 Chron. i. 6).—Vers. 5 sqq. The one thing wanting in the place of sacrifice at Gibeon, *viz.* the ark of the covenant with the gracious presence of Jehovah, was supplied by the Lord in the case of this sacrifice by a direct revelation in a dream, which Solomon received in the night following the sacrifice. There is a connection between the question which God addressed to Solomon in the dream, “What shall I give thee?” and the object of the sacrifice, *viz.* to seek the help of God for his reign. Solomon commences his prayer in ver. 6 with an acknowledgment of the great favour which the Lord had shown to his father David, and had continued till now by raising his son to his throne (*בְּיוֹם הַיּוֹם*, as it is this day: cf. 1 Sam. xxii. 8, Deut. viii. 18, etc.); and then, in vers. 7-9, in the consciousness of his incapacity for the right administration of government over so numerous a people, he asks the Lord for an obedient heart and for wisdom to rule His people. *וְעַתָּה* introduces the petition, the reasons assigned for which are, (1) his youth and inexperience, and (2) the greatness or multitude of the nation to be governed. I am, says he, *נַעַר קָטָן*, *i.e.* an inexperienced youth (Solomon was only about twenty years old); “I know not to go out and in,” *i.e.* how to behave myself as king, or govern the people (for *צֵאת וּבֹא* compare the note on Num. xxvii. 17). At ver. 8 he describes the magnitude of the nation in words which recall to mind the divine promises in Gen. xiii. 16 and xxxii. 13, to indicate how gloriously the Lord has fulfilled the promises which He made to the patriarchs.—Ver. 9. *וְנָתַתָּה*, therefore give. The prayer (commencing with *וְעַתָּה* in ver. 7) is appended in the form of an apodosis to the circumstantial clauses *וְאֵלֹהֵי וְנִי* and *וְעַבְדְּךָ וְנִי*, which contain the grounds of the petition. *לֵב שֹׁמֵעַ*, a hearing heart, *i.e.* a heart

giving heed to the law and right of God, "to judge Thy people, (namely) to distinguish between good and evil (*i.e.* right and wrong)." "For who could judge this Thy numerous people," *sc.* unless Thou gavest him intelligence? כָּבֵד, *heavy* in multitude: in the Chronicles this is explained by נִדָּן.—Vers. 10 sqq. This prayer pleased God well. "Because thou hast asked this, and hast not asked for thyself long life, nor riches, nor the life (*i.e.* the destruction) of thy foes," all of them good things, which the world seeks to obtain as the greatest prize, "but intelligence to hear judgment (*i.e.* to foster it, inasmuch as the administration of justice rests upon a conscientious hearing of the parties), behold I have done according to thy word" (*i.e.* fulfilled thy request: the perfect is used, inasmuch as the hearkening has already begun; for שָׁמַע in this connection compare Ewald, § 307, c), "and given thee a wise and understanding heart." The words which follow, "so that there has been none like thee before thee," etc., are not to be restricted to the kings of Israel, as Clericus supposes, but are to be understood quite universally as applying to all mankind (*cf.* ch. v. 9–11).—Vers. 13, 14. In addition to this, according to the promise that to him who seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness all other things shall be added (Matt. vi. 33), God will also give him the earthly blessings, for which he has not asked, and that in great abundance, *viz.* riches and honour such as no king of the earth has had before him; and if he adhere faithfully to God's commandments, long life also (אֶרְאֶה, in this case I have lengthened). This last promise was not fulfilled, because Solomon did not observe the condition (*cf.* ch. xi. 42).—Ver. 15. Then Solomon awoke, and behold it was a dream; *i.e.* a dream produced by God, a revelation by dream, or a divine appearance in a dream. חֲלֹם as in Num. xii. 6.—Solomon thanked the Lord again for this promise after his return to Jerusalem, by offering burnt-offerings and thank-offerings before the ark of the covenant, *i.e.* upon the altar at the tent erected for the ark upon Zion, and prepared a meal for all his servants (*viz.* his court-servants), *i.e.* a sacrificial meal of the זֶשֶׁלֶם.—This sacrificial festival upon Zion is omitted in the Chronicles, as well as the following account in vers. 16–28; not, however, because in the chronicler's opinion no sacrifices had any legal validity but such as were offered upon the altar of the Mosaic tabernacle, as Thenius fancies, though without observing the account in 1 Chron. xxi.



26 sqq., which overthrows this assertion, but because this sacrificial festival had no essential significance in relation to Solomon's reign.

Vers. 16-28. SOLOMON'S JUDICIAL WISDOM.—As a proof that the Lord had bestowed upon Solomon unusual judicial wisdom, there is appended a decision of his in a very difficult case, in which Solomon had shown extraordinary intelligence. Two harlots living together in one house had each given birth to a child, and one of them had “overlaid” her child in the night while asleep (אִשָּׁר נִשְׁכְּבָה עָלָיו), because she had lain upon it), and had then placed her dead child in the other one's bosom and taken her living child away. When the other woman looked the next morning at the child lying in her bosom, she saw that it was not her own but the other woman's child, whereas the latter maintained the opposite. As they eventually referred the matter in dispute to the king, and each one declared that the living child was her own, the king ordered a sword to be brought, and the living child to be cut in two, and a half given to each. Then the mother of the living child, “because her bowels yearned upon her son,” i.e. her maternal love was excited, cried out, “Give her (the other) the living child, but do not slay it;” whereas the latter said, “It shall be neither mine nor thine, cut it in pieces.”—Ver. 27. Solomon saw from this which was the mother of the living child, and handed it over to her.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 28. This judicial decision convinced all the people that Solomon was endowed with divine wisdom for the administration of justice.

#### CHAP. IV.-V. 14. SOLOMON'S MINISTERS OF STATE. HIS REGAL SPLENDOUR AND WISDOM.

Ch. iv. contains a list of the chief ministers of state (vers. 2-6), and of the twelve officers placed over the land (vers. 7-20), which is inserted here to give an idea of the might and glory of

<sup>1</sup> Grotius observes on this: “The ἀρχίβοια of Solomon was shown by this to be very great. There is a certain similarity in the account of Ariopharnis, king of the Thracians, who, when three persons claimed to be the sons of the king of the Cimmerii, decided that he was the son who would not obey the command to cast javelins at his father's corpse. The account is given by Diodorus Siculus.”

the kingdom of Israel under Solomon's reign. So far as the contents are concerned, this list belongs to the middle portion of the reign of Solomon, as we may see from the fact that two of the officers named had daughters of Solomon for their wives (vers. 11, 15), whom they could not possibly have married till the later years of Solomon's life.

Vers. 1-6. THE CHIEF MINISTERS OF STATE.—The list is introduced in ver. 1 by the general remark, that "king Solomon was king over all Israel."—Ver. 2. The first of the *אֲדָרִים*, princes, *i.e.* chief ministers of state or dignitaries, mentioned here is not the commander-in-chief, as under the warlike reign of David (2 Sam. viii. 16, xx. 23), but, in accordance with the peaceful rule of Solomon, the administrator of the kingdom (or prime minister): "*Azariah* the son of Zadok was *אֲדָרִי*," *i.e.* not the priest, but the administrator of the kingdom, the representative of the king before the people; like *אֲדָרִי* in ver. 5, where this word is interpreted by *רִעַה קִבְלָהּ*, with this difference, however, arising from the article before *אֲדָרִי*, that *Azariah* was the *Kohen par excellence*, that is to say, held the first place among the confidential counsellors of the king, so that his dignity was such as befitted the office of an administrator of the kingdom. Compare the explanation of *אֲדָרִי* at 2 Sam. viii. 16. The view of the Vulgate, Luther, and others, which has been revived by Thénius, namely, that *אֲדָרִי* is to be connected as a genitive with *בְּקִצְרֹת* in opposition to the accents, "*Azariah* the son of Zadok the priest," is incorrect, and does not even yield any sense, since the connection of those words with the following *Eliohoreph*, *etc.*, is precluded by the absence of the copula *וְ*, which would be indispensable if *Azariah* had held the same office as the two brothers *Eliohoreph* and *Achijah*.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, *Azariah* the son of Zadok cannot be a grandson of Zadok the high priest, *i.e.* a son of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, as many infer from 1 Chron. v. 34, 35 (vi. 8, 9); for, apart from the fact that Zadok's grandson can hardly have been old enough at the time for Solomon to invest him with

<sup>1</sup> The objection by which Thénius tries to set aside this argument, which has been already advanced by *Houbigant*, viz. that "if the first (*Azariah*) was not also a state scribe, the copula would be inserted, as it is everywhere else from ver. 4 onwards when a new office is mentioned," proves nothing at all, because the copula is also omitted in ver. 3, where the new office of *סֹכֵרִי* is introduced.



the chief dignity in the kingdom, which would surely be conferred upon none but men of mature years, we can see no reason why the Azariah mentioned here should not be called the son of Ahimaaz. If the Zadok referred to here was the high priest of that name, Azariah can only have been a brother of Ahimaaz. And there is no real difficulty in the way, since the name Azariah occurs three times in the line of high priests (1 Chron. v. 36, 39), and therefore was by no means rare.—Ver. 3. *Elichoreph* and *Achijah*, sons of *Shisha*, who had held the same office under David, were secretaries of state (ספרים: see at 2 Sam. viii. 17 and xx. 25, where the different names שִׁשַׁי = שִׁשַׁי and שִׁרְיָה are also discussed).—*Jehoshaphat* the son of Ahilud was the chancellor, as he had already been in the time of David (2 Sam. viii. 17 and xx. 24). The rendering of Thenius, “whilst Jehoshaphat was chancellor,” is grammatically impossible.—Ver. 4. On *Benaiah*, compare ch. ii. 35 and the Commentary on 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. On *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, see at 2 Sam. viii. 17. It appears strange that Abiathar should be named as priest, i.e. as high priest, along with Zadok, since Solomon had deposed him from the priestly office (ch. ii. 27, 35), and we cannot imagine any subsequent pardon. The only possible explanation is that proposed by Theodoret, namely, that Solomon had only deprived him of the ἀρχή, i.e. of the priest’s office, but not of the ἱερωσύνη or priestly dignity, because this was hereditary.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 5. *Azariah* the son of Nathan was over the נָצְבִים, i.e. the twelve officers named in vers. 7 sqq. *Zabud* the son of Nathan was בֶּהֱן (not the son of “Nathan the priest,” as Luther and many others render it). בֶּהֱן is explained by the epithet appended, רֵעֵה הַפְּלִיָּה: privy councillor, i.e. confidential adviser of the king. Nathan is not the prophet of that name, as Thenius supposes, but the son of David mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 14. Azariah and Zabud were therefore nephews of Solomon.—Ver. 6. *Ahishar* was עַל הַבַּיִת, over the palace, i.e. governor of the palace, or minister of the king’s household (compare ch. xvi. 9, 2 Kings xviii. 18, and Isa. xxii. 15), an office met with for the first time under Solomon. *Adoniram*, probably the same person as *Adoram* in 2 Sam. xx. 24, was chief overseer of the tributary service. He was so in the time of David also.

<sup>1</sup> Τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀφείλατο, οὐ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἐγύμνωσεν· τὴν γὰρ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἀξίαν οὐκ ἐκ χειροτονίας, ἀλλ’ ἐκ γονικῆς εἶχον διαδοχῆς.—THEODORET.

Vers. 7-19. SOLOMON'S OFFICIAL PERSONS AND THEIR DISTRICTS.—Ver. 7. Solomon had (appointed) twelve מְלָכִים over all Israel, who provided (סָבְבוּ) for the king and his house, i.e. supplied provisions for the necessities of the court. These prefects are not to be regarded as “chamberlains,” or administrators of the royal domains (Michaelis and Ewald), for these are mentioned in 1 Chron. xxvii. 25 sqq. under a different title. They are “general receivers of taxes,” or “chief tax-collectors,” as Rosenmüller expresses it, who levied the king's duties or taxes, which consisted in the East, as they still do to the present time, for the most part of natural productions, or the produce of the land, and not of money payments as in the West, and delivered them at the royal kitchen (Rosenmüller, *A. und N. Morgenland*, iii. p. 166). It cannot be inferred from the explanation given by Josephus, ἡγεμόνες καὶ στρατηγοί, that they exercised a kind of government, as Thénius supposes, since this explanation is nothing but a subjective conjecture. “One month in the year was it every one's duty (יָחַד לְכָל יוֹמָם) to provide.” The districts assigned to the twelve prefects coincide only partially with the territories of the tribes, because the land was probably divided among them according to its greater or smaller productiveness. Moreover, the order in which the districts are enumerated is not a geographical one, but probably follows the order in which the different prefects had to send the natural productions month by month for the maintenance of the king's court. The description begins with Ephraim in ver. 8, then passes over in ver. 9 to the territory of Dan to the west of it, in ver. 10 to the territory of Judah and Simeon on the south, in vers. 11 and 12 to the territory of Manassah on this side from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, then in vers. 13 and 14 to the territory of Manassah on the other side of the Jordan, thence back again in vers. 15 and 16 to the northern parts of the land on this side, viz. the territories of Naphtali and Asher, and thence farther south to Issachar in ver. 17, and Benjamin in ver. 18, closing at last in ver. 19 with Gilead.—Vers. 8 sqq. In the names of the prefects we are struck with the fact, that in the case of five of them the names given are not their own but their fathers' names. It is very improbable that the proper names should have dropped out five times (as Clericus, Michaelis, and others suppose); and consequently there is simply the assumption left, that the persons in question bore their fathers' names with *Ben*



prefixed as their own proper names: *Benhur*, *Bendeker*, etc., after the analogy of *Benchanan* in 1 Chron. iv. 20 and others, although such a proper name as *Ben-Abinadab* (ver. 11) appears very strange. *Benhur* was stationed on the mountains of Ephraim. These mountains, here only the mountainous district of the tribe of Ephraim, were among the most fruitful portions of Palestine (see at Josh. xvii. 14, 15).—Ver. 9. *Bendeker* was in *Makuz*, a city only mentioned here, the situation of which is unknown, but which is at any rate to be sought for in the tribe of Dan, to which the other cities of this district belong. *Shaalbim* has probably been preserved in the present *Selbit*, to the north-west of *Yalo* (see at Josh. xix. 42). *Bethshemesh*, the present *Ain-Shems* (see at Josh. xv. 10). *Elon* (עֵלֹן), which is distinguished from *Ajalon* (Josh. xix. 42 and 43) by the epithet *Bethchanan*, and belonged to the tribe of Dan, has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xix. 43). The LXX. have arbitrarily interpolated *ἔως* before *Bethchanan*, and Thenius naturally takes this under his protection, and consequently traces *Bethchanan* in the village of *Beit Hunûn* (Rob. Pal. ii. p. 371), but without considering that *ἔως* yields no reasonable sense unless preceded by *מן*, *ἐκ* (from; cf. ver. 12).—Ver. 10. *Benhesed* was in *Arubboth*, which does not occur again, so that its situation, even if it should be identical with *Arab* in Josh. xv. 52, as Böttcher conjectures, can only be approximatively inferred from the localities which follow. To him (לֵה), i.e. to his district, belonged *Sochok* and all the land of *Hepher*. From *Sochok* we may see that Benhesed's district was in the tribe of Judah. Of the two *Sochoks* in Judah, that still exist under the name of *Shuweikeh*, it is impossible to determine with certainty which is intended here, whether the one upon the mountains (Josh. xv. 48) or the one in the plain (Josh. xv. 35). The fact that it is associated with the land of *Hepher* rather favours the latter. The land of *Hepher*, which must not be confounded with the city of *Gath-Hepher* in the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 13; 2 Kings xiv. 25), but was the territory of one of the Canaanitish kings who were defeated by Joshua, was probably situated in the plain (see at Josh. xii. 17).—Ver. 11. *Ben-Abinadab* had the whole of the high range of *Dor* (נַפְתְּ דֹר, Josh. xii. 23), i.e. the strip of coast on the Mediterranean Sea below the promontory of Carmel, where the city of *Dor*, which has been preserved in the village of *Tantura* or *Tortura*, nine miles to the north of Cæsarea, was situated (see

at Josh. xi. 2). Whether this district embraced the fruitful plain of Sharon is not so clearly made out as Thenius supposes. בְּנֵי־אֲבִינָדָב stands at the head absolutely, without any grammatical connection with בְּלִי־נָפֶחַ: "Abinadab: the whole of the high range of Dor," etc. The person named was probably a son of David's eldest brother but one (1 Sam. xvi. 8, xvii. 13), and therefore Solomon's cousin; and he had married Solomon's daughter.—Ver. 12. *Baana* the son of Ahilud was most likely a brother of Jehoshaphat the chancellor (ver. 3). This district embraced the cities on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, and extended to the Jordan. *Tuanach* and *Megiddo*, which have been preserved in the villages of *Taanuk* and *Lejun*, were situated on the south-western border of this plain, and belonged to the Manassites (see at Josh. xii. 21, xvii. 11). "And all Bethshean," in other words, the whole of the district of Bethshean, *i.e.* Beisan, at the eastern end of the valley of Jezreel, where it opens into the Jordan valley (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 740 sqq.), "which (district was situated) by the side of Zarthan below Jezreel, from (the town of) Bethshean (see at Josh. xvii. 11) to Abel-Mecholah, on the other side of Jokmeam." *Zarthan*, also called *Zeroda* (compare ch. vii. 46 with 2 Chron. iv. 17), has probably been preserved, so far as the name is concerned, in *Kurn Sartabeh*, in the neighbourhood of which the old city probably stood, about five miles to the south of Beisan, at a point where the Jordan valley contracts (see at Josh. iii. 16). The expression "below Jezreel" refers to "all Bethshean," and may be explained from the elevated situation of Jezreel, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18). According to Rob. iii. p. 163, this is "comparatively high, and commands a wide and noble view, extending down the broad low valley on the east of Beisan and to the mountains of Ajlun beyond the Jordan." The following words, "from Bethshean to Abel-Mecholah," give a more precise definition of the boundary. The LXX. have erroneously inserted *et* before אֶבֶל־מֶכֹּחַלָּה, and Thenius and Bottcher defend it on the strength of their erroneous interpretations of the preceding statements. *Abel-Mecholah* was in the Jordan valley, according to the *Onomast.*, ten Roman miles to the south of Beisan (see at Judg. vii. 22). The last clause is not quite intelligible to us, as the situation of the Levitical city *Jokmeam* (1 Chron. vi. 53, or *Kibsaïm*, a different place from the *Jokneam* on Carmel, Josh. xii. 22, xxi. 34) has not yet been discovered



(see at Josh. xxi. 22). According to this, Baanah's district in the Jordan valley did not extend so far as *Kurn Sartabeh*, but simply to the neighbourhood of Zarthan, and embraced the whole of the tribe-territory of Manasseh on this side of the Jordan.—Ver. 13. Bengeber was in *Ramoth* of Gilead in the tribe of Gad (Josh. xx. 8), probably on the site of the modern *Szalt* (see at Deut. iv. 43). "To him belonged the *Havvoth Jair* (Jair's-lives) in Gilead, to him the region of *Argob* in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and brazen bolts." If we look at this passage alone, the region of Argob in Bashan appears to be distinct from the Havvoth Jair in Gilead. But if we compare it with Num. xxxii. 40, 41, Deut. iii. 4, 5, and 13, 14, and Josh. xiii. 30, it is evident from these passages that the Jair's-lives are identical with the sixty large and fortified cities of the region of Argob. For, according to Deut. iii. 4, these sixty fortified cities, with high walls, gates, and bars, were all fortified cities of the kingdom of Og of Bashan, which the Israelites conquered under Moses, and to which, according to Num. xxxii. 41, Jair the Manassite, who had conquered them, gave the name of *Havvoth Jair*. Hence it is stated in Josh. xiii. 30, that the sixty Jair-towns were situated in Bashan. Consequently the 'לֹא הָבֵל אֶרֶץ' in our verse is to be taken as a more precise definition of 'לֹא הָיָה יָאִיר וְגו'', or a clearer description of the district superintended by *Bengeber*, so that *Gilead* is used, as is frequently the case, in the broader sense of *Peræa*. Compare with this the Commentary on Deut. iii. 4 and 13, 14, where the names אֶרֶץ and הָיָה are explained, and the imaginary discrepancy between the sixty Jair's-towns in the passages cited, and the twenty-three and thirty cities of Jair in 1 Chron. ii. 22 and Judg. x. 4, is discussed and solved. And when Thenius objects to this explanation on the ground that the villages of Jair cannot be identical with the sixty fortified cities, because villages of nomads and strongly fortified cities could not be one and the same, this objection falls to the ground with the untenable interpretation of הָיָה as applying to nomad villages.—Ver. 14. *Ahinadab* the son of Iddo received as his district *Mahanaim*, a fortified and probably also a very important city to the north of the Jabbok, on the border of the tribe of Gad, which may perhaps have been preserved in the ruin of *Mahneh* (see at Josh. xiii. 26 and Gen. xxxii. 3). מַחֲנֵימָה, to Mahanaim (cf. Ewald, § 216, *a*, note), with ה local, probably referring to the fact that Ahinadab

was sent away to Mahanaim.—Ver. 15. *Ahimaaz*, possibly Zadok's son (2 Sam. xv. 27, xvii. 17 sqq.), in *Naphtali*. This does not denote generally "the most northern portion of the land, say from the northern end of the lake of Gennesaret into Coele-Syria," as Thenius supposes; for the tribe-territory of Asher, which had a prefect of its own, was not situated to the south-west of Naphtali, but ran along the west of Naphtali to the northern boundary of Canaan (see at Josh. xix. 24–31). He also (like Ben-Abinadab, ver. 11) had a daughter of Solomon, Basmath, as his wife.—Ver. 16. *Baanah* the son of *Hushai*, probably the faithful friend and wise counsellor of David (2 Sam. xv. 32 sqq., xvii. 5 sqq.), was in *Asher* and בְּעֵלֹת, a name quite unknown. If ב forms part of the word (*Baaloth*, according to the LXX., Vulg., Syr., and Arab.), we must take it as a district, since the preposition ב would necessarily have been repeated if a district (*Asher*) had been connected with a town (*Baaloth*). In any case, it is not the city of Baaloth in the Negeb of Judah (Josh. xv. 24) that is intended.—Ver. 17. *Jehoshaphat* the son of Paruah, in *Issachar*; i.e. over the whole of the territory of that tribe in the plain of Jezreel, with the exception of the cities of Taanach, Megiddo, and Bethshean, which were in the southern portion of it, and were allotted to the Manassites, and, according to ver. 12, were put under the care of Baanah; and not merely in the northern part of Issachar, "with the exception of the plain of Jezreel," as Thenius erroneously maintains. Zebulun may possibly have also formed part of his district, if not entirely, yet in its southern portion, provided that the northern portion was assigned to Ahimaaz in Naphtali, since Zebulun had no prefect of its own.—Ver. 18. *Shimei* the son of Elah, possibly the one mentioned in ch. i. 8, in *Benjamin*.—Ver. 19. *Geber* the son of Uri, in the land of *Gilead*, i.e., as the apposition "the land of Sihon . . . and of Og . . ." clearly shows, the whole of the Israelitish land on the east of the Jordan, as in Deut. xxxiv. 1, Judg. xx. 1, etc., with the simple exception of the districts placed under Bengeber and Ahinadab (vers. 13 and 14). גִּבֵּר, "one president was it who (was) in the land (of Gilead)." גִּבֵּר cannot signify a military post or a garrison here, as in 1 Sam. x. 5, xiii. 3, etc., but is equivalent to נָצִיב, the president (ver. 7). The meaning is, that notwithstanding the great extent of this district, it had only one prefect.



In ver. 20 the account of Solomon's officers is closed by a general remark as to the prosperous condition of the whole nation; though we miss the copula *Vav* at the commencement. The words, "Judah and Israel were numerous as the sand by the sea," indicate that the promise given to the patriarchs (Gen. xxii. 17, cf. xxxii. 13) had been fulfilled. To this there is appended in ch. v. 1 the remark concerning the extent of Solomon's sway, which prepares the way for what follows, and shows how the other portion of the promise, "thy seed will possess the gates of its enemies," had been fulfilled.—The first fourteen verses of ch. v. are therefore connected by the LXX., Vulg., Luther, and others with ch. iv. It is not till ch. v. 15 that a new section begins.

CHAP. IV. 21-28 (v. 1-8). SOLOMON'S REGAL SPLENDOR.—Ver. 21. "Solomon was ruler over all the kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) onwards, over the land of the Philistines to the border of Egypt, who brought presents and were subject to Solomon his whole life long." Most of the commentators supply *וְעַד* before *אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים* (even to the land of the Philistines) after the parallel passage 2 Chron. ix. 26, so that the following *וְעַד נָבֹל* would give a more precise definition of the *terminus ad quem*. But it is by no means probable that *וְעַד*, which appears to be indispensable, should have dropped out through the oversight of a copyist, and it is not absolutely necessary to supply it, inasmuch as *כִּי* may be repeated in thought before *אֶרֶץ פ'* from the preceding clause. The participle *מִנְשִׁים* is construed *ad sensum* with *מִמְלָכוֹת*. Bringing presents is equivalent to paying tribute, as in 2 Sam. viii. 2, etc.—Vers. 22 sqq. The splendour of the court, the consumption in the royal kitchen (vers. 22-25), and the well-filled stables (vers. 26-28), were such as befitted the ruler of so large a kingdom.—Vers. 22, 23. The daily consumption of *לֶחֶם* (food or provisions) amounted to thirty *cors* of fine meal (*סֶלֶת חֲטִיִּם* = *סֶלֶת*, fine sifted meal, Ex. xxix. 2; for *סֶלֶת* see also Lev. ii. 1) and sixty *cors* of *קֹמַח*, ordinary meal, ten fattened oxen, twenty pasture oxen, which were brought directly from the pasture and slaughtered, and a hundred sheep, beside different kinds of game. *בֵּר*, *κορός*, the later name for *חֹמֶר*, the largest dry and also liquid (ch. v. 11) measure of capacity, contained ten ephahs or baths, *i.e.*, according to the calculation made by Thenius, 15,300 cubic inches (Dresden) = about

17½ *scheffel*;¹ so that ninety cors would amount to 171 *scheffel*, from which 28,000 lbs. of bread could be baked (*Theol. Stud. und Krit.* 1846, pp. 132, 133). And "if we reckon 2 lbs. of bread to each person, there would be 14,000 persons in Solomon's court." The consumption of flesh would be quite in proportion to that of bread; for ten fattened oxen, twenty oxen from the pasture, and a hundred sheep, yield more than 21,000 lbs. of meat, that is to say, a pound and a half for each person, "assuming, according to the statements of those who are acquainted with the matter, that the edible meat of a fat ox amounts to 600 lbs., that of an ox from the pasture to 400 lbs., and that of a sheep to 70 lbs." (Thenius *ut sup.*). This daily consumption of Solomon's court will not appear too great, if, on the one hand, we compare it with the quantity consumed at other oriental courts both of ancient and modern times,² and if, on the other hand, we bear in mind that not only the numerous attendants upon the king and his harem, but also the royal adjutants and the large number of officers employed about the court, were supplied from the king's table, and that their families had also to be fed, inasmuch as the wages in oriental courts are all paid in kind. In addition to this, game was also supplied to the king's table: viz. אֵיל stags, צִבִּי gazelles, יֶחָסִיד fallow-deer, and כִּרְבָּרִים אֲבוֹסִים "fattened fowl." The meaning of כִּרְבָּרִים is doubtful. The earlier translators render it birds or fowl. Kimchi adopts the rendering "capons;" *Tanach. Hieros* "geese," so called from their pure (כָּרִי) white feathers; and both Gesenius and Dietrich (*Lex.*) decide in favour of the latter. The word must denote some special kind of fowl, since edible birds in general were called צִפְרִים (Neh. v. 18).—Vers. 24, 25. Solomon was able to appropriate all this to his court, because (כִּי) he had dominion, etc.; . . . and (ver. 25) Israel and Judah enjoyed the blessings of peace during the whole of his reign. בְּכָל-עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר, "over all the other side of the river (Euphrates)," i.e. not the land on the east, but that on the west of the river. This usage of speech is to be explained from the fact that the author of our books, who was living in exile on the other side of the Euphrates, describes the

¹ The *scheffel* is about an English sack (*vid.* Flügel's *Dict.*).—TR.

² According to Athen. *Deipnas.* iv. 10, the kings of Persia required a thousand oxen a day; and according to Tavernier, in Rosenmüller's *A. u. N. Morgenland*, iii. pp. 166, 167, five hundred sheep and lambs were slaughtered daily for the Sultan's court.



extent of Solomon's kingdom taking that as his starting-point. Solomon's power only extended to the Euphrates, from *Tiphsach* in the north-east to *Gaza* in the south-west. תַּפְסַח (crossing, from פָּסַח) is *Thapsacus*, a large and wealthy city on the western bank of the Euphrates, at which the armies of the younger Cyrus and Alexander crossed the river (Xen. *Anab.* i. 4; Arrian, *Exped. Alex.* iii. 7). *Gaza*, the southernmost city of the Philistines, the present *Guzzeh*; see at Josh. xiii. 3. The מְלִכֵי עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר are the kings of Syria who were subjugated by David (2 Sam. viii. 6 and x. 19), and of the Philistines (2 Sam. viii. 1). "And he had peace on all sides round about." This statement does not "most decidedly contradict ch. xi. 23 sqq.," as Thenius maintains; for it cannot be proved that according to this passage the revolt of Damascus had taken place before Solomon's reign (Ewald and others; see at ch. xi. 23 sqq.).—Ver. 25. "Judah and Israel sat in safety, every one under his vine and his fig-tree." This expresses the undisturbed enjoyment of the costly productions of the land (2 Kings xviii. 31), and is therefore used by the prophets as a figure denoting the happiness of the Messianic age (Mic. iv. 4; Zech. iii. 10). "From Dan to Beersheba," as in Judg. xx. 1, etc.—Ver. 26. This verse is not to be regarded "as a parenthesis according to the intention of the editor," but gives a further proof of the peace and prosperity which the kingdom and people enjoyed under Solomon. Solomon had a strong force of war chariots and cavalry, that he might be able to suppress every attempt on the part of the tributary kings of Syria and Philistia to revolt and disturb the peace. "Solomon had 4000 racks of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 riding horses," which were kept partly in Jerusalem and partly in cities specially built for the purpose (ch. ix. 19, x. 26; 2 Chron. i. 14, ix. 25). אַרְבָּעִים (40) is an old copyist's error for אַרְבָּעָה (4), which we find in the parallel passage 2 Chron. ix. 25, and as we may also infer from ch. x. 26 and 2 Chron. i. 14, since according to these passages Solomon had 1400 רָכָב or war chariots. For 4000 horses are a very suitable number for 1400 chariots, though not 40,000, since two draught horses were required for every war chariot, and one horse may have been kept as a reserve. אֲרָה does not mean a team (Ges.), but a rack or box in a stable, from אָרָה, *carpere*. According to Vegetius, i. 56, in Bochart (*Hieroz.* i. p. 112, ed. Ros.), even in ancient times every horse had its own

crib in the stable just as it has now. Botcher (*n. ex. Krit. Achrenl.* ii. p. 27) is wrong in supposing that there were several horses, say at least ten, to one rack. מִרְכָּבֹת is used collectively for "chariots."—Ver. 27. "And" = a still further proof of the blessings of peace—"those prefects (vers. 7 sqq.) provided for king Solomon, and all who came to the king's table, *i.e.* who were fed from the royal table, every one his month (see at ver. 7), so that nothing was wanting (ver. 28), and conveyed the barley (the ordinary food of cattle in Palestine and the southern lands, where oats are not cultivated) and the straw for the horses and coursers to the place where it ought to be. To אֶשֶׁר עַם הַמֶּלֶךְ the LXX., Vulg., and others supply הַמִּלְחָמָה as the subject: wherever *the king* might stay. This is certainly more in harmony with the imperfect יָהָיָה than it would be to supply הַמִּלְחָמָה, as Bochart and others propose; still it is hardly correct. For in that case מִרְכָּבֹת וְכִסְיֵיהֶם could only be understood as referring to the chariot horses and riding horses, which Solomon kept for the necessities of his court, and not to the whole of the cavalry: since we cannot possibly assume that even if Solomon changed his residence according to the season and to suit his pleasure, or on political grounds, as Thenius supposes, though this cannot by any means be inferred from ch. ix. 18 and 19, he took 16,000 horses about with him. But this limitation of the clause is evidently at variance with the context, since מִרְכָּבֹת וְכִסְיֵיהֶם too plainly refer back to ver. 6. Moreover, "if the king were intended, he would certainly have been mentioned by name, as so many other subjects and objects have come between." For these reasons we agree with Botcher in taking יָהָיָה indefinitely: "where it (barley and straw) was wanted, according to the distribution of the horses." רָכֵשׁ probably denotes a very superior kind of horse, like the German *Renner* (a courser or race-horse). כָּסִי אֶשֶׁר כָּסִי, every one according to his right, *i.e.* whatever was appointed for him as right.

Vers. 29-34. SOLOMON'S WISDOM.—Ver. 29. According to His promise in ch. iii. 12, God gave Solomon wisdom and very much insight and רָחֵב לֵב, "breadth of heart," *i.e.* a comprehensive understanding, as sand by the sea-shore,—a proverbial expression for an innumerable multitude, or great abundance (cf. ch. iv. 20, Gen. xli. 49, Josh. xi. 4, etc.). חָכְמָה signifies rather practical wisdom, ability to decide what is the judicious



and useful course to pursue ; חֲבוּנָה, rather keenness of understanding to arrive at the correct solution of difficult and complicated problems ; רֹחַב לֵב, mental capacity to embrace the most diverse departments of knowledge.—Ver. 30. His wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the sons of the East, and all the wisdom of the Egyptians. בְּנֵי קָדִם (sons of the East) are generally the Arabian tribes dwelling in the east of Canaan, who spread as far as to the Euphrates (cf. Judg. vi. 3, 33, vii. 12, viii. 10, Job i. 3, Isa. xi. 14, etc.). Hence we find אֶרֶץ קָדִם used in Gen. xxv. 6 to denote Arabia in the widest sense, on the east and south-east of Palestine ; whereas in Gen. xxix. 1 אֶרֶץ בְּנֵי קָדִם signifies the land beyond the Euphrates, viz. Mesopotamia, and in Num. xxiii. 7, הַרְרֵי קָדִם, the mountains of Mesopotamia. Consequently by “the sons of the East” we are to understand here primarily the Arabians, who were celebrated for their gnomie wisdom, more especially the Sabæans (see at ch. x.), including the Idumæans, particularly the Temanites (Jer. xlix. 7 ; Obad. 8) ; but also, as כָּל requires, the Chaldeans, who were celebrated both for their astronomy and astrology. “All the wisdom of the Egyptians,” because the wisdom of the Egyptians, which was so greatly renowned as almost to have become proverbial (cf. Isa. xix. 11, xxxi. 2, and Acts vii. 22 ; Joseph. *Ant.* viii. 2, 5 ; Herod. ii. 160), extended over the most diverse branches of knowledge, such as geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and astrology (Diod. Sic. i. 73 and 81), and as their skill in the preparation of ointments from vegetable and animal sources, and their extensive acquaintance with medicine, clearly prove, embraced natural science as well, in which Solomon, according to ver. 33, was very learned.—Ver. 31. “He was wiser than all men (of his time), than Ethan the Ezrachite and Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Machol.” These four persons are most probably the same as the “sons of Zerach” (Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara) mentioned in 1 Chron. ii. 6, since the names perfectly agree, with the exception of דָּרַע for דָּרַע, where the difference is no doubt attributable to a copyist’s error ; although, as the name does not occur again, it cannot be decided whether *Dara* or *Darda* is the correct form. *Heman* and *Ethan* are also called Ezrachites (הַעֲזַרְחִי) in Ps. lxxxviii. 1 and lxxxix. 1 ; and אֲזַרְחִי is another form of עֲזַרְחִי, the name of the family of *Zerach* the son of Judah (Num. xxvi. 13, 20), lengthened by *prosthet.* But they were both Levites—*Heman* a Korahite of the line of

Kohath and a grandson of Samuel (1 Chron. vi. 18, 19), and *Ethan* a Merarite (1 Chron. vi. 29-32, xv. 17) and the president of the Levitical vocal choirs in the time of David (1 Chron. xv. 19); and *Heman* was also "the king's seer in the words of God" (1 Chron. xxv. 5). Their Levitical descent is not at variance with the epithet *Ezrachite*. For as the Levite in Judg. xvii. 7 is spoken of as belonging to the family of Judah, because he dwelt in Bethlehem of Judah, and as Samuel's father, Elkanah the Levite, is called an Ephraimite in 1 Sam. i. 1, because in his civil capacity he was incorporated into the tribe of Ephraim, so *Heman* and *Ethan* are called *Ezrachites* because they were incorporated into the Judæan family of *Zerach*. It by no means follows from 1 Chron. ii. 6 that they were lineal descendants of *Zerach*. The whole character of the genealogical fragment contained in 1 Chron. ii. 6 sqq. shows very clearly that it does not give the lineal posterity of *Zerach* with genealogical exactness, but that certain persons and households of that family who had gained historical renown are grouped together without any more precise account of their lineal descent. *Calcol* and *Darda* (or *Dard*) are never met with again. It is no doubt to these two that the expression *בְּנֵי דָוָד* refers, though it cannot be determined whether *בְּנֵי* is a proper name or an appellative noun. In support of the appellative meaning, "sons of the dance," in the sense of *accras chorus ducendi periti*, Hiller (in the *Onomast.* p. 372) appends to Eccles. xii. 4, "daughters of song" — "And his name was," i.e. he was celebrated, "among all the nations round about" (cf. ch. x. 1, 23, 24) — Ver. 32. "He spoke three thousand proverbs, and there were a thousand and five of his songs." Of these proverbs we possess a comparatively small portion in the book of Proverbs, probably a selection of the best of his proverbs; but of the songs, besides the *Song of Songs*, we have only two psalms, viz. Ps. lxxii. and cxxvii., which have his name, and justly bear it — Ver. 33. "And he spoke of trees, from the cedar on Lebanon to the hyssop which grows upon the wall." The cedar and hyssop are placed in antithesis, the former as the largest and most glorious of trees, the latter as the smallest and most insignificant of plants, to embrace the whole of the vegetable kingdom. Thenius maintains that by *בְּנֵי* we are not to understand the true hyssop, nor the *Wohlgemuth* or *Dostea* (*ὀρίγανον*), according to the ordinary view (see at Ex. xii. 22), because they are neither of them such small



plants as we should expect in antithesis to the cedar, but "one of the wall-mosses growing in tufts, more especially the *orthotrichum saxatile* (Oken), which forms a miniature hyssop with its lancet-shaped leaves, and from its extreme minuteness furnishes a perfect antithesis to the cedar." There is much to favour this view, since we can easily imagine that the Hebrews may have reckoned a moss, which resembled the hyssop in its leaves, as being itself a species of hyssop.—"And of beasts and birds, of creeping things and fishes;" the four principal classes into which the Hebrews divided the animal kingdom. *Speaking* of plants and animals presupposes observations and researches in natural science, or botanical and zoological studies.—Ver. 34. The widespread fame of his wisdom brought many strangers to Jerusalem, and all the more because of its rarity at that time, especially among princes. The coming of the queen of Sheba to Jerusalem (ch. x.) furnishes a historical proof of this.<sup>1</sup>

#### CHAP. V. (v. 15-32). PREPARATIONS FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

Immediately after the consolidation of his kingdom, Solomon commenced the preparations for the building of a temple, first of all by entering into negotiations with king Hiram of Tyre, to procure from him not only the building materials requisite, viz. cedars, cypresses, and hewn stones, but also a skilled workman for the artistic work of the temple (vers. 1-12); and, secondly, by causing the number of workmen required for this great work to be raised out of his own kingdom, and sending them to Lebanon to prepare the materials for the building in connection with the Tyrian builders (vers. 13-18).—We have

<sup>1</sup> Greatly as the fame of Solomon's wisdom is extolled in these verses, it was far outdone in subsequent times. Even Josephus has considerably adorned the biblical accounts in his *Antiqq.* viii. 2, 5. He makes Solomon the author not only of 1005 βιβλία περὶ ὧδῶν καὶ μελῶν, and 300 βιβλίου παραβόλων καὶ εἰχόνων, but also of magical books with marvellous contents. Compare the extracts from *Eupolemus* in Eusebii *præp. Ev.* ix. 31 sqq., the remnants of Solomon's apocryphal writings in Fabricii *Cod. apocr. V. T.* i. pp. 914 sqq. and 1014 sq., the collection of the Talmudical Sagas in Othonis *Lex. rabb. philol.* pp. 668 sq., and G. Weil, *bibl. Legenden der Mussulmänner*, pp. 225-279. According to the Koran (*Sure* xxvii. vers. 17 sqq.), Solomon understood the languages not only of men and demons, but also of birds and ants. The Turkish literature contains a "Book of Solomon," *Suleimanname*, consisting of seventy volumes, from which v. Hammer (*Rosenöl*, i. p. 147 sqq.) has given extracts.

a parallel passage to this in 2 Chron. ii., which agrees with the account before us in all the leading points, but differs in many of the details, omitting several things which were not essential to the main fact, and communicating others which are passed over in our account, *e.g.* Solomon's request that a Tyrian workman might be sent. This shows that the two accounts are extracts from a common and more elaborate source, the historical materials being worked up in a free and independent manner according to the particular plan adopted by each of the two authors. (For further remarks on the mutual relation of the two narratives, see my *apologetischer Versuch über die Bücher der Chronik*, pp. 216 sqq.)

Vers. 1-12. *Solomon's negotiations with Hiram of Tyre.*—Ver. 1. When king Hiram of Tyre heard that Solomon had been anointed king in the place of David, he sent his servants, *i.e.* an embassy, to Solomon, to congratulate him (as the Syriac correctly explains) on his ascent of the throne, because he had been a friend of David the whole time (כִּי־יָמֵי־דָוִד, *i.e.* as long as both of them (David and Hiram) were kings). On *Hiram* and the length of his reign, see the remarks on 2 Sam. v. 11. This is passed over in the Chronicles as having no essential bearing upon the building of the temple.—Vers. 2-6. Solomon thereupon communicated to Hiram, by means of an embassy, his intention to carry out the building of the temple which his father projected, and asked him for building wood from Lebanon for the purpose. From the words, "Thou knowest that my father David could not build," etc., it is evident that David had not only been busily occupied for a long time with the plan for building a temple, but that he had already commenced negotiations with Hiram on the matter; and with this 1 Chron. xxii. 4 agrees. "To the name of Jehovah:" this expression is based upon Deut. xii. 5 and 11: "the place which the Lord shall choose to put His name there, or that His name may dwell there." The name of Jehovah is the manifestation of the divine nature in a visible sign as a real pledge of His presence (see at xii. 5), and not merely *numen Jovæ quatenus ab hominibus cognoscitur, colitur, celebratur* (Winer, Thesaurus). Hence in 2 Sam. vii., to which Solomon refers, כִּי־לֹא־בָנִיתִי (vers. 5 and 7) alternates with בָּנִיתִי כִּי־לֹא־בָנִיתִי (ver. 13). On the obstacle which prevented it, "because of the war, with which they (the enemies) had surrounded me," see at 2 Sam. vii. 9 sqq. On the construction,



כָּבֹב with a double accusative, compare the very similar passage, Ps. cix. 3, which fully establishes the rendering we have given, so that there is no necessity to assume that מִלְחָמָה, war, stands for enemies (Ewald, § 317, *b*).—Ver. 4. “And now Jehovah my God has given me rest round about,” such as David never enjoyed for a permanency (cf. 2 Sam. vii. 1). “No adversary is there.” This is not at variance with ch. xi. 14, for Hadad’s enterprise belonged to a later period (see the comm. on that passage). “And no evil occurrence:” such as the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba, the pestilence at the numbering of the people, and other events which took place in David’s reign.—Ver. 5. “Behold, I intend to build.” בָּנֵה followed by an infinitive, as in Ex. ii. 14, 2 Sam. xxi. 16. “As Jehovah spake to David;” viz. 2 Sam. vii. 12 and 13.—Ver. 6. “And now command that they fell me cedars from Lebanon.” We may see from ver. 8 that Solomon had also asked for cypresses; and according to the parallel passage 2 Chron. ii. 6 sqq., he had asked for a skilful artist, which is passed over here, so that it is only in ch. vii. 13, 14 that we find a supplementary notice that Hiram had sent one. It is evident from this request, that that portion of Lebanon on which the cedars suitable for building wood grew, belonged to the kingdom of Hiram. The cedar forest, which has been celebrated from very ancient times, was situated at least two days’ journey to the north of Beirut, near the northernmost and loftiest summits of the range, by the village of *Bjerreh*, to the north of the road which leads to Baalbek and not far to the east of the convent of *Canobin*, the seat of the patriarch of the Maronites, although Seetzen, the American missionaries, and Professor Ehrenberg found cedars and cedar groves in other places on northern Lebanon (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 440, 441, and *Bibl. Res.* pp. 588 sqq.). The northern frontier of Canaan did not reach as far as *Bjerreh* (see at Num. xxxiv. 8, 9). “My servants shall be with thy servants,” *i. e.* shall help them in the felling of the wood (see at vers. 28, 29). “And the wages of thy servants will I give to thee altogether as thou sayest” (see at vers. 25, 26). “For thou knowest that no one among us is skilful in felling trees like the Sidonians.” This refers to the knowledge of the most suitable trees, of the right time for felling, and of the proper treatment of the wood. The expression *Sidonians* stands for Phœnicians generally, since Sidon was formerly more powerful than Tyre, and that portion of Lebanon

which produced the cedars belonged to the district of Sidon. The inhabitants of Sidon were celebrated from time immemorial as skilful builders, and well versed in mechanical arts (compare Rob. *Pal.* iii. 421 sqq., and Movers, *Phœnicier*, ii. 1, pp. 86 sqq.).

Hiram rejoiced exceedingly at this proposal on the part of Solomon, and praised Jehovah for having given David so wise a son as his successor (ver. 21). It must have been a matter of great importance to the king of Tyre to remain on good terms with Israel, because the land of Israel was a granary for the Phœnicians, and friendship with such a neighbour would necessarily tend greatly to promote the interests of the Phœnician commerce. The praise of Jehovah on the part of Hiram does not presuppose a full recognition of Jehovah as the only true God, but simply that Hiram regarded the God of Israel as being as real a God as his own deities. Hiram expresses a fuller acknowledgment of Jehovah in 2 Chron. ii. 11, where he calls Jehovah the Creator of heaven and earth; which may be explained, however, from Hiram's entering into the religious notions of the Israelites, and does not necessarily involve his own personal belief in the true deity of Jehovah.—Vers. 8, 9. Hiram then sent to Solomon, and promised in writing (בכתב, 2 Chron. ii. 10) to comply with his wishes. אֲנִי אֶשְׁלַח אֶלֶּיךָ אֲנִי, "that which thou hast sent to me," i.e. hast asked of me by messenger. עֲצֵצִים are not firs, but cypresses. "My servants shall bring down (the trees) from Lebanon to the sea, and I will make them into rafts (i.e. bind them into rafts and have them floated) upon the sea to the place which thou shalt send (word) to me, and will take them (the rafts) to pieces there, and thou wilt take (i.e. fetch them thence)." The Chronicles give *Yafô*, i.e. Joppa, Jaffa, the nearest harbour to Jerusalem on the Mediterranean Sea, as the landing-place (see at Josh. xix. 46). "And thou wilt do all my desire to give bread for my house," i.e. provisions to supply the wants of the king's court. "The  $\text{נָדָר}$  mentioned in ver. 6 was also to be paid" (Thénius). This is quite correct; but Thénius is wrong when he proceeds still further to assert, that the chronicler erroneously supposed this to refer to the servants of Hiram who were employed in working the wood. There is not a word of this kind in the Chronicles; but simply Solomon's promise to Hiram (ver. 9): "with regard to the hewers (the fellers of the trees), I give thy servants wheat 20,000 cors, and barley 20,000 cors, and wine



20,000 baths, and oil 20,000 baths." This is omitted in our account, in which the wages promised in ver. 6 to the Sidonian fellers of wood are not more minutely defined. On the other hand, the payment for the wood delivered by Solomon to Hiram, which is not mentioned in the Chronicles, is stated here in ver. 11. "Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors of wheat as food (מַכְלֵת, a contraction of מִמְכָּלֶת, from מַכָּל; cf. Ewald, § 79, b) for his house (the maintenance of his royal court), and 20 cors of beaten oil; this gave Solomon to Hiram year by year," probably as long as the delivery of the wood or the erection of Solomon's buildings lasted. These two accounts are so clear, that Jac. Capp., Gramb., Mov., Thenius, and Bertheau, who have been led by critical prejudices to confound them with one another, and therefore to attempt to emend the one from the other, are left quite alone. For the circumstance that the quantity of wheat, which Solomon supplied to Hiram for his court, was just the same as that which he gave to the Sidonian workmen, does not warrant our identifying the two accounts. The fellers of the trees also received barley, wine, and oil in considerable quantities; whereas the only other thing which Hiram received for his court was oil, and that not common oil, but the finest olive oil, namely 20 cors of שֶׁמֶן כֹּתֵת, i.e. beaten oil, the finest kind of oil, which was obtained from the olives when not quite ripe by pounding them in mortars, and which had not only a whiter colour, but also a purer flavour than the common oil obtained by pressing from the ripe olives (cf. Celsii *Hierobot.* ii. pp. 349 sq., and Bähr, *Symbolik*, i. p. 419). Twenty cors were 200 baths, i.e., according to the calculations of Thenius, about ten casks (1 cask = 6 pails; 1 pail = 72 cans). If we bear in mind that this was the finest kind of oil, we cannot speak of disproportion to the quantity of wheat delivered. Thenius reckons that 20,000 cors of wheat were about 38,250 Dresden *scheffeln* (? sacks).—Ver. 12. The remark that "the Lord gave Solomon wisdom" refers not merely to the treaty which Solomon made with Hiram, through which he obtained materials and skilled workmen for the erection of the house of God (Thenius), but also to the wise use which he made of the capacities of his own subjects for this work. For this verse not only brings to a close the section relating to Solomon's negotiations with Hiram, but it also forms an introduction to the following verses, in which the intimation given by Solomon in ver. 6, concerning the labourers who were to fell

wood upon Lebanon in company with Hiram's men, is more minutely defined.

Vers. 13-18. *The tributary labourers out of Israel.*—Vers. 13, 14. Solomon raised a tribute (עֲבָדִים, tribute-labourers, as in ch. iv. 6) out of all Israel, *i.e.* out of the whole nation (not "out of the whole territory of Israel," as Ewald supposes), 30,000 men, and sent them up to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in rotation; one month they were on Lebanon (doing tribute work), two months at home (looking after the cultivation of their own ground). עָבַד, from עָבַדְתִּי, does not mean *in tabulas referre*, in support of which appeal is made to 1 Chron. xxvii. 24, though on insufficient ground, but *ascendere fecit*, corresponding to the German *anschieben* (to raise). He raised them out of the nation, to send them up Lebanon (cf. ch. ix. 25). These 30,000 Israelitish labourers must be distinguished from the remnants of the Canaanites who were made into tribute-slaves (ver. 15 and ch. ix. 20). The latter are called עֲבָדֵי עֲבָדִים, tribute-slaves, in ch. ix. 21 as in Josh. xvi. 10. That the Israelites were not to render the service of bondsmen is evident from the fact, that they only rendered tribute for four months of the year, and were at home for eight months; and the use of the epithet עֲבָדִים is not at variance with this. For even if this word is applied elsewhere to the Canaanitish bondsmen (*e.g.* Josh. xvii. 13, Judg. i. 28, 30, and 2 Chron. viii. 8), a distinction is decidedly made in our account of Solomon between עֲבָדִים and עֲבָדֵי עֲבָדִים, inasmuch as in ch. ix. 22, after the Canaanitish bondsmen have been mentioned, it is expressly stated that "of Israel Solomon made no one a slave" (עֲבָדִים). The 30,000 Israelitish tribute-servants are "to be thought of as free Israelites, who simply performed the less severe work of felling trees in fellowship with and under the direction of the subjects of Hiram (see at ver. 6), according to the command of the king, and probably not even that without remuneration" (Thenius). For *Adoniram* see at ch. iv. 6.—Ver. 15. And Solomon had 70,000 bearers of burdens and 80,000 hewers of stone on the mountains (of Lebanon). עֲבָדִים is understood by the older translators as referring simply to hewers of stone. This is favoured both by the context, since ver. 18 speaks of stone-mason's work, and also by the usage of the language, inasmuch as עֲבָדִים is mostly applied to the quarrying and cutting of stones (Deut. vi. 11; Isa. v. 2; Prov. ix. 1; 2 Kings xii. 13), and only occurs in Isa. x. 15 in



connection with the cutting of wood. The hewing and preparing of the wood were amply provided for by 30,000 Israelites. That the 150,000 bearers of burdens and hewers of stone were not taken from the Israelites, is evident from the fact that they are distinguished from the latter, or at all events are not described as Israelites. We obtain certainty on this point from the parallel passages, ch. ix. 20, 21, 2 Chron. ii. 16, 17, and 2 Chron. viii. 1-9, according to which Solomon pressed the Canaanites who were left in the land to this bond-service.—Ver. 16. “Beside (לְבַר), *i.e.* without reckoning, the princes, Solomon’s officers, who were over the work (*i.e.* the chiefs appointed by Solomon as overlookers of the work), 3300, who ruled over the people who laboured at the work.” שָׂרֵי הַנְּעָבִים, as Thenius correctly observes, cannot be the chief of the overlookers, *i.e.* the head inspectors, as there is no allusion made to subordinate inspectors, and the number given is much too large for head inspectors. נְעָבִים, which is governed by שָׂרֵי in the construct state, is to be taken as defining the substantive: *principes qui praefecti erant* (Vatabl.; cf. Ewald, § 287, *a*). Moreover, at the close of the account of the whole of Solomon’s buildings (ch. ix. 23), 550 more שָׂרֵי הַנְּעָבִים are mentioned as presiding over the people who did the work. The accounts in the Chronicles differ from these in a very peculiar manner, the number of overseers being given in 2 Chron. ii. 17 as 3600, and in 2 Chron. viii. 10 as 250. Now, however natural it may be, with the multiplicity of errors occurring in numerical statements, to assume that these differences have arisen from copyists’ errors through the confounding together of numerical letters resembling one another, this explanation is overthrown as an improbable one, by the fact that the sum-total of the overseers is the same in both accounts ( $3300 + 550 = 3850$  in the books of Kings, and  $3600 + 250 = 3850$  in the Chronicles); and we must therefore follow J. H. Michaelis, and explain the differences as resulting from a different method of classification, namely, from the fact that in the Chronicles the Canaanitish overseers are distinguished from the Israelitish (*viz.* 3600 Canaanites and 250 Israelites), whereas in the books of Kings the *inferiores et superiores praefecti* are distinguished. Consequently Solomon had 3300 inferior overseers and 550 superior (or superintendents), of whom 250 were selected from the Israelites and 300 from the Canaanites. In 2 Chron. ii. 16, 17,

it is expressly stated that the 3600 were taken from the נָרִים, i.e. the Canaanites who were left in the land of Israel. And it is equally certain that the number given in ch. ix. 23 and 2 Chron. viii. 10 (550 and 250) simply comprises the superintendents over the whole body of builders, notwithstanding the fact that in both passages (ch. v. 16 and ch. ix. 23) the same epithet עֲרֵי הַנִּצָּבִים is used. If, then, the number of overseers is given in ch. ix. 23 as 550, i.e. 300 more than in the parallel passage of the Chronicles, there can hardly be any doubt that the number 550 includes the 300, in which the number given in our chapter falls short of that in the Chronicles, and that in the 3300 of our chapter the superintendents of Canaanitish descent are not included.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 17. And the king had large, costly stones broken, “to lay the foundation of the house with hewn stones.” קִרְוֹת does not mean heavy (Thenius), for this would be a perfectly superfluous remark, inasmuch as large stones are always heavy, but costly, valuable stones, *qui multa pecunia constabant* (Cler.); compare ch. x. 2, where the word stands for precious stones. לָאֶבֶן, i.e. to lay the foundation for the temple, by which we are to understand not merely the foundation for the temple-house, but the magnificent substructions for the whole of the temple area, even though the strong walls which surrounded the temple mountain, and which Josephus describes in his *Antiquities*, viii. 3, 9, and xv. 11, 3, and in his *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, may not have been all completed by Solomon, but may have been a work of centuries. For further remarks on this subject, see at ch. vi. 38. אֲבָנֵי טִיט are squared stones, according to ch. vii. 10, of ten and eight cubits.

With ver. 18 the account of the preparations for the building of the temple, which were the object of Solomon's negotiations with Hiram, is brought to a close. “Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders, even the Gilelites, hewed and prepared the wood and the stones for the building of the house.” The object to אֲבָנֵי is not the square stones mentioned before, but the trees

<sup>1</sup> Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 292) assumes that “by the 550 (1 Kings ix. 23) we are to understand the actual superintendents, whereas the 3300 (1 Kings v. 30) include inferior inspectors as well; and of the 550 superintendents, 300 were taken from the Canaanites, so that only 250 (2 Chron. viii. 10) were native Hebrews;” though he pronounces the number 3600 (2 Chron. ii. 17) erroneous. Bertheau, on the other hand, in his notes on 2 Chron. viii. 10, has rather complicated than elucidated the relation in which the two accounts stand to one another.



(beams) and stones mentioned after וַיְכִינוּ הַגִּבְלִים is to be taken as explanatory, "even the Giblites," giving a more precise definition of "Hiram's builders." The Giblites are the inhabitants of the town of *Gebal*, called Byblos by the Greeks, to the north of Beirut (see at Josh. xiii. 5), which was the nearest to the celebrated cedar forest of the larger Phœnician towns. According to Ezek. xxvii. 9, the Giblites (Byblians) were experienced in the art of shipbuilding, and therefore were probably skilful builders generally, and as such the most suitable of Hiram's subjects to superintend the working of the wood and stone for Solomon's buildings. For it was in the very nature of the case that the number of the Phœnician builders was only a small one, and that they were merely the foremen; and this may also be inferred from the large number of his own subjects whom Solomon appointed to the work.<sup>1</sup>

#### CHAP. VI. BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

The account of the building of the temple commences with a statement of the date of the building (ver. 1); and this is followed by a description of the plan and size of the temple-house (vers. 2-10), to which there is also appended the divine promise made to Solomon during the erection of the building (vers. 11-13). After this we have a further account of the internal fittings and

<sup>1</sup> Without any satisfactory ground Thenius has taken offence at the word וַיְכִינוּ הַגִּבְלִים, and on the strength of the critically unattested καὶ ἐβαλον αὐτοὺς of the LXX. and the paraphrastic ἀρμόσαντας καὶ συνδήσαντας of Josephus, which is only introduced to fill in the picture, has altered it into וַיְגַבְלוּ, "they bordered them (the stones)." This he explains as relating to the "bevelling" of the stones, upon the erroneous assumption that the grooving of the stones in the old walls encircling the temple area, which Robinson (*Pal.* i. 423) was the first to notice and describe, "occurs nowhere else in precisely the same form;" whereas Robinson found them in the ancient remains of the foundations of walls in different places throughout the land, not only in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, viz. at Bethany, but also at Carmel on the mountains of Judah, at Hebron, Semua (Esthemoa), Beit Nusib (Nezib), on Tabor, and especially in the north, in the old remains of the walls of the fortifications *es Shukif*, *Hunin*, *Banias*, *Tyrus*, *Jebail* (Byblus), *Baalbek*, on the island of *Ruwad* (the ancient *Aradus*), and in different temples on Lebanon (see *Rob. Pal.* ii. 101, 198, 434, 627; iii. 12, 213, 214; and *Bibl. Researches*, p. 229). Böttcher (*n. ex. Krit. Aehrenl.* ii. p. 32) has therefore properly rejected this conjecture as "ill-founded," though only to put in its place another which is altogether unfounded, namely, that before וַיְכִינוּ הַגִּבְלִים the word

decorations of the sanctuary (vers. 14-36), and in ch. vii. 1-12 a description of the royal palace which was built after the temple; and, finally, a description of the pillars of the court which were executed in metal by the Tyrian artist, and of the different vessels of the temple (ch. vii. 13-51).<sup>1</sup> We have a parallel to this in 2 Chron. iii. and iv., though here the description is differently arranged. In the Chronicles the external building of the temple-house is not separated from the internal decoration and furnishing; but after the period of erection and the size of the temple-house have been given in ch. iii. 1-3, there follows a description, *a.* of the court (ver. 4); *b.* of the Holy Place with its internal decorations (vers. 5-7); *c.* of the Most Holy Place, with special reference to its size and decorations, also of the colossal cherubim placed therein and the curtain in front of it, which is not mentioned in our account (vers. 8-14); *d.* of the brazen pillars in front of the court (vers. 15-17); *e.* of the altar of burnt-offering (ch. iv. 1), which is passed over in the account before us; *f.* of the brazen sea (vers. 2-5); *g.* of the brazen lavers, the golden candlesticks, the tables of shew-bread, and the golden basons (vers. 6-8); and *h.* of the courts (ver. 9). The account is then closed with a summary enumeration of the different vessels of the temple (vers. 10-22), which agrees almost word for word with 1 Kings vii. 40-50.

Vers. 1-10. THE OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING.—Ver. 1. The building of the temple, a fixed and splendid house of Jehovah as

הַצִּירִים ("the Tyrians") has dropped out. For this has nothing further in its favour than the most improbable assumption, that king Hiram gathered together the subjects of his whole kingdom to take part in Solomon's buildings.—The addition of *εἰς τὴν*, which is added by the LXX. at the end of the verse, does not warrant the assumption of Thénius and Bottcher, that טֶבֶטֶט has dropped out of the text. For it is obvious that the LXX. have merely made their addition *e conjectura*, and indeed have concluded that, as the foundation for the temple was laid in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, the preliminary work must have occupied the first three years of his reign.

<sup>1</sup> Of the special works on the subject of the temple, see my pamphlet, *Der Tempel Salomons, eine archäologische Untersuchung* (Dorp. 1839); and Carl Chr. W. F. Bahr, *Der Salomonische Tempel mit Berücksichtigung seines Verhältnisses zur heil. Architektur überhaupt* (Karlsr. 1848). In both of these there are critical notices of the earlier investigations and monographs on this subject, which have now simply a historical interest. See also the short description of the temple in my *Bibl. Archäologie*, i. § 23 sqq., with sketches of the temple building and the principal vessels on Plates 2 and 3, and the most recent notice by H. Merz in Herzog's *Cyclopædia* (Art. *Temple*).



the dwelling-place of His name in the midst of His people, formed an important epoch so far as the Old Testament kingdom of God was concerned, inasmuch as, according to the declaration of God made through the prophet Nathan, an end would thereby be put to the provisional condition of the people of Israel in the land of Canaan, since the temple was to become a substantial pledge of the permanent possession of the inheritance promised by the Lord. The importance of this epoch is indicated by the fact, that the time when the temple was built is defined not merely in relation to the year of Solomon's reign, but also in relation to the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt. "In the 480th year after the exodus of the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, in the second month of the year, Solomon built the house of the Lord." The correctness of the number 480, as contrasted with the 440th year of the LXX. and the different statements made by Josephus, is now pretty generally admitted; and we have already proved at Judg. iii. 7 that it agrees with the duration of the period of the Judges when rightly estimated.<sup>1</sup> The name of the month *Ziv*, brilliancy, splendour, probably so called from the splendour of the flowers, is explained by the clause, "that is, the second month," because the months had no fixed names before the captivity, and received different names after the captivity. The second month was called *Jyar* after the captivity.—The place where the temple was built is not given in our account, as having been sufficiently well known; though it is given in the parallel

<sup>1</sup> In opposition to the hypothesis of Böttcher, which has been repeated by Bertheau, viz. that the number 480 merely rests upon the computation of  $12 \times 40$  years, or twelve generations of forty years each, Thenius himself has observed with perfect justice, that "where both the year and the month of the reign of the king in question are given, the principal number will certainly rest upon something more than mere computation; and if this had not been the case, the person making such a computation, if only for the purpose of obtaining the appearance of an exact statement, would have made a particular calculation of the years of Solomon's reign, and would have added them to the round number obtained, and written 'in the year 484.' Moreover, the introduction to our chapter has something annalistic in its tone; and at this early period it would be undoubtedly well known, and in a case like the present a careful calculation would be made, how long a time had elapsed since the most memorable period of the Israelitish nation had passed by." Compare with this Ed. Preuss (*Die Zeitrechnung der LXX.*, p. 74 sqq.), who has endeavoured with much greater probability to show that the alteration made by the LXX. into 440 rests upon nothing more than a genealogical combination.

text, 2 Chron. iii. 1, namely, "Mount *Moriah*, where the Lord had appeared to David" at the time of the pestilence, and where David had built an altar of burnt-offering by divine command (see at 2 Sam. xxiv. 25).

Vers. 2-4. *Plan and dimensions of the temple-house*.—The measures of the temple-house and its several subdivisions are all given in the clear, *i.e.* as the spaces were seen. The *house*, *i.e.* the main building of the temple (lit. as for the house, or shell of the building), its length was sixty cubits, its breadth twenty cubits, and its height thirty cubits, and that, according to 2 Chron. iii. 3, "after the earlier measure," *i.e.* after the old Mosaic or sacred cubit, which was a hand-breadth longer, according to Ezek. xl. 5 and xlii. 13, than the civil cubit of the time of the captivity. The Mosaic cubit, according to the investigations of Thenius, was 214,512 Parisian lines long, *i.e.*  $20\frac{1}{2}$  Dresden inches, or  $18\frac{1}{2}$  Rhenish inches (see at Gen. vi. 10).—Ver. 3. The *porch* (lit. *hall*) in the face of (פָּנֵי־הַבַּיִת, *i.e.* before) the Holy Place of the house was twenty cubits long, before (פָּנֵי־הַבַּיִת) the breadth of the house, *i.e.* it was just the same breadth as the house. The longer line, which ran parallel to the breadth of the house, is called here אָרְצוֹת, the length, though from our point of view we should call it the width. And ten cubits was its breadth, *i.e.* its depth in front of the house. The height of the court is not given in our text; but in 2 Chron. iii. 4 it is said to have been 120 cubits. This is certainly an error, although Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 300) still joins with Stieglitz (*Paulusnat.* p. 126, and *Beitr. zur Gesch. der Bauk.* i. p. 70) in defending its correctness. For an erection of such a height as this could not possibly have been designated as אָרְצוֹת (a hall or porch), but would have been called מִגְדָּל, a *tower*. But even a tower of 120 cubits in height in front of a temple which was only thirty cubits high, would have shown a greater disproportion than our loftiest church towers;<sup>1</sup> and such a funnel-like erection with a base of only ten

<sup>1</sup> In the Strashurg cathedral and that at Freiburg in Breisgau the proportion between the height of the tower and that of the church, together with the roof, is about  $3\frac{1}{4}$  to 1; it is only in the cathedral at Rouen that the proportion would have been almost 4 to 1 if it had been carried out to the very top. At the same time, in making this comparison it must be borne in mind that these Gothic towers taper off into slender points, whereas in the case of Solomon's temple we must assume that if the porch was carried up to the height supposed, it finished in a flat truncated tower; and it is this which would chiefly occasion the disproportion.



cubits in breadth or depth would hardly have possessed sufficient stability. We cannot certainly think of an intentional exaggeration of the height in the Chronicles, since the other measures agree with the account before us; but the assumption that there has been a corruption of the text is rendered natural enough by many other errors in the numerical statements. This still leaves it undecided whether the true height was twenty or thirty cubits; for whereas the Syriac, Arabic, and LXX. (Cod. Al.) have twenty cubits, the height of thirty cubits is favoured partly by the omission of any statement of the height from our text, which is much easier to explain if the porch was of the same height as the temple-house than if the heights were different, and partly by the circumstance that the side building had an external height of twenty cubits, and therefore the porch would not have stood out with any especial prominence if its elevation had been just the same.—Ver. 4. After the account of the proportionate spaces in the temple-house, the windows through which it received light and air are mentioned. חלונֵי שַׁקְפִּים אֲטֻמִּים does not mean *fenestræ intus latæ, foris angustæ* (Chald., Ar., Rabb., Luther, and others), but windows with closed beams, *i.e.* windows the lattice-work of which could not be opened and closed at pleasure, as in ordinary dwelling-houses (2 Kings xiii. 17; Dan. vi. 11). For שַׁקְפִּים signifies beams overlaid in ch. vii. 4, and שַׁקְפֵי beams in ch. vii. 5. The opening of the windows was probably narrower without than within, as in the older Egyptian buildings, as the walls were very strong; and in that case such windows would more thoroughly answer their purpose, *viz.* to admit light and air, and let out the smoke, so that the interpretation given by the Chaldee is most likely founded upon an ancient tradition, and is in accordance with the fact, though not with the words. It is a disputed point among the commentators where the windows were placed: whether merely in the front over the porch, provided, that is to say, that this was ten cubits lower than the temple-house, or on the side walls above the side stories, which were at the most about twenty cubits high, in which case the Most Holy Place, which was only twenty cubits high, remained quite dark, according to ch. viii. 12. We regard the latter view as the correct one, inasmuch as the objections to it rest upon assumptions which can be proved to be false.

Vers. 5-8. *The side building.*—Ver. 5. “He built against the wall of the house an outwork round about (*i.e.* against the two

longer sides and against the hinder wall, and not against the front also, where the porch was built), against the walls of the house round about, against the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, and he made side chambers round about." פִּיטָּ (written constantly פִּיטָּ in the *Keri*) signifies literally *stratum*, here the lower building or outwork erected against the rooms mentioned. The word is *gen. comm.*, but so construed that the masculine is used in a collective sense to denote the whole of the outworks, consisting as they did of three stories, whereas the feminine is used for one single story of the building (ver. 6). On this use of the masculine and feminine genders to distinguish the whole mass and the individual parts, which is very common in Arabic, though it is rare in Hebrew, in which the distinction is generally expressed by a peculiar feminine form, as for example פִּיטָּ a fleet, and פִּיטָּ a single ship, compare Ewald, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Spr.* § 175, *d*, and 176, *a*, and *gramm. crit. diag. arab.* i § 295. פִּיטָּ does not mean *ram parietalis* (Sch. Schmidt and J. H. Michaelis), but פִּיטָּ is a sign of the accusative, "as for the walls," and introduces the more precise definition. פִּיטָּ signifies, both here and in Exod. xli 6 seqq., side chambers or side stories, from פִּיטָּ, to incline to one side, hence to limp, i.e. to lean constantly to one side. From this there were derived for פִּיטָּ the meanings side, side piece or side wall, e.g. of the ark, Ex. xxv. 12, 14, etc., of the dwelling, Ex. xxvi. 20, 26, etc., of the altar, Ex. xxvii. 7, 30, etc., the side wall or slope of a mountain, 2 Sam. xvi. 13, the side portion of the human body, i.e. the rib, Gen. ii. 21, 22, the sides or leaves of a door in ver. 34 of the present chapter, and when used of buildings, the side pieces or portions built out which lean against the main building; and lastly, the idea of a piece which shows a large side, i.e. a broad plank (ch. vi. 15, 16). The meaning planks or beams, as if were ribs or rib-work, is unfounded.—Ver. 6. The (internal) breadth of the lower side story was five cubits, that of the middle one six, and that of the third seven cubits; "for he (they) had made shortenings (i.e. rebates) against the house round about on the outside, that (there might be) no insertion into the walls of the (temple-) house." The meaning is that rebates were attached against the temple wall, at the point where the lower beams of the different side stories were to be placed, so that the heads of these beams rested upon the rebates and were not inserted in the actual wall of the temple-



house. These rebates are called very descriptively **מִנְעוּת**, deductions or contractions of the thickness of the wall. We may assume that there were four such rebates: three for the three floors of the side stories, and one for the roof. It still remains doubtful, however, whether these rebates were merely laid along the temple wall, or along the outer wall of the side building as well, so as to ensure symmetry and make each of the two walls half a cubit thinner or weaker at every rebate. The former is the more probable. And accordingly the temple wall was one cubit weaker at each rebate, that is to say, in four places. If, therefore, it still remained two cubits thick at the top, it must have been six cubits thick below. This extraordinary thickness, however, would be quite in keeping with the remains of buildings of great antiquity, the walls of which have generally a colossal thickness, and also with the size of the square stones of which the wall was constructed, as described in ch. vii. 10. —Ver. 7 contains a circumstantial clause, inserted as an explanation of ver. 6: “The house, (namely) when building, was built of perfectly finished stones of the quarry, and hammer and axe; no kind of instrument whatever was heard at the house when it was building.” **אֲבֵן שְׁלֵמָה מִסֵּעַ** (on the construction see Ges. § 114, 1, Erl., and Ewald, § 339, b) does not mean stones quite unhewn, which God had so caused to grow that they did not require to be hewn (Theodoret); for although **אֲבָנִים שְׁלֵמוֹת** is used in Deut. xxvii. 6 (compare with Ex. xx. 25) to signify uninjured, *i.e.* unhewn stones, yet this meaning is precluded here by the context (cf. v. 32). **שְׁלֵם** signifies finished here, that is to say, stones which were so perfectly tooled and prepared when first broken in the quarry, that when the temple walls were built no iron instruments were required to prepare them any further. **זֶרֶן**, an axe, here a stone-mason’s cutting tool corresponding to the axe.—In ver. 8 the description of the side building is continued. “A door (**פֶּתַח**, an opening for the entrance) to the middle side chamber (of the lower story) was on the right side (the southern side) of the house, and a winding staircase led up into the middle (room of the middle story) and out of the middle into the third rooms,” *i.e.* the rooms of the third story. This is the rendering according to the Masoretic text; and the only thing that appears strange is the use of **הַתִּיכְנָה** first of all for the middle room of the lower story and then for the middle story; and the conjecture is a very natural

one, that the first הַתִּיכָנָה may have been an error of the pen for הַתְּחִתָּנָה, in which case הַצֵּיִעַ does not signify the side room, but is used in a collective sense for the row of side rooms in one story, as in Ezek. xli. 5, 9, 11. That this door was made from the outside, *i.e.* in the outer wall of the side building, and did not lead into the side rooms "from the interior of the Holy Place," would hardly need a remark, if Bottcher (*Proben alttestl. Schrifterkl.* p. 339) and Schnaase (*Gesch. der bildenden Künste*, Bd. 1) had not really supported this view, which is so thoroughly irreconcilable with the dignity of the sanctuary.<sup>1</sup> The only question is, whether it was made in the middle of the right side or in the front by the side of the porch. If the Masoretic text is correct, there is no doubt about the former. But if we read הַתְּחִתָּנָה, the text leaves the question undecided. The winding staircase was not constructed in the outer wall itself, because this was not thick enough for the purpose, and the text states pretty clearly that it led from the lower story into the middle one, and thence still higher, so that it was in the centre of the building.

In vers. 9 and 10 the description of the exterior of the temple building is brought to a close. "So he built the house, and finished it, and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar." כִּסָּה is not to be understood as relating to the internal panelling of the temple-house, for this is spoken of first in the section which follows (ver. 15), but to the roofing; כִּסָּה means to conceal (Deut. xxxiii. 21) and cover in all the other passages, even in Hag. i. 4 and Jer. xxii. 14, where כִּסָּה is generally, though incorrectly, translated "panelled." As a verb signifying clothing, it is construed with the accusative. נֹכֶחַ does not mean boards, but beams, though not "an arched covering" (Thenius), because beams cut in the form of an arch would have been too weak in the middle, nor yet rafters (Bottcher), because the roofs of oriental buildings are flat. שְׂדֵה כְּאֵזִים, "rows, *i.e.* tablets (consisting) of cedars," *i.e.* cedar tablets, which were inserted in rows between the beams. This cedar-work was certainly provided with a strong covering to protect the roof and the building itself against rain; and at the sides it had no doubt a parapet, as in the case of dwelling-houses (Deut. xxii. 8).—

<sup>1</sup> The perfectly groundless assumption of Thenius, that the outer building had most probably an inner door as well, which connected it with the temple, does just as much violence to the decorum of the Holy Place.



Ver. 10. "And he built the outbuildings to the whole house (*i.e.* all round the temple-house, with the exception of the front: see ver. 5); five cubits was its height," *i.e.* the height of each story, the suffix in קומתו being made to agree with הַיְצִיץ through an inaccuracy which has arisen from condensation, although, as in ver. 5, it denotes the whole of the side buildings, which consisted of three stories. The height given must also be understood as referring to the height within. Consequently the side buildings had an internal height of  $3 \times 5$  cubits, and reckoning the floorings and the roof of the whole building an external height of 18 or 20 cubits; so that the temple-house, which was thirty cubits high within and about thirty-two without, rose about twelve or fourteen cubits above the side building, and there was plenty of room for the windows in the side walls. וַיֵּצֶר לוֹ: "and it (the side building) held to the house with cedar beams." The meaning is, that the building was fastened to the house by the joists of the cedar beams belonging to the different stories, which rested upon rebates of the temple wall, so that it was firmly attached to the temple-house, without any injurious insertions into the sanctuary itself. This is apparently the only explanation, that can be grammatically sustained, of words that have received such different interpretations. For the translation given by Thenius, which coincides with this,—viz. "he fastened it (each separate story of the building) to the temple-house with cedar wood, namely, with the cedar beams which formed the flooring and roofing of the three stories,"—is exposed to this grammatical objection, that the suffix is wanting in וַיֵּצֶר, and that וַיֵּצֶר is never followed by וְעִם in the sense of *with*. All the other explanations are unsuitable. וַיֵּצֶר signifies neither "he covered the house" (Chald., Vulg., Luther), nor "he overlaid the house;" moreover, the roofing of the house has been already mentioned in ver. 9, and there is no trace to be found of any overlaying or covering of the outside with cedar wood.

If, therefore, we reckon the thickness of the temple wall at six cubits, and that of the outer wall of the side building and the front wall of the porch at three cubits each, the whole building would be ninety-three cubits long (externally) and forty-eight cubits broad. The height of the temple-house was about thirty-two cubits externally, and that of the side stories from eighteen to twenty cubits, without the socle upon which the whole building rested. This is not mentioned indeed, as being a subordinate

matter, but would certainly not be omitted.<sup>1</sup> The number of rooms in the side buildings is not given, but may be set down at thirty in each story, if their length corresponded to their breadth in the lower story. These rooms had of course windows, although they are not mentioned in the account, but each one would have only a small window sufficient to give it the requisite light. And as to the number of the temple windows also, we can simply make conjectures. We can hardly assume that there were more than six on each side, and there were probably none at the back.

Vers. 11-13. PROMISE OF GOD DURING THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.—In what way this promise was communicated to Solomon is not more precisely stated. But the expression "And the word of Jehovah came" seems to point to a prophetic medium. And this is in harmony with ch. ix. 2, according to which Jehovah only revealed Himself to Solomon twice by an actual appearance. —Ver. 12. *וְכַדְבָּרִי* is placed at the head absolutely: "As for the house which thou art building (*בְּנֶה*, a participle), if thou walkest in my statutes, . . . I will set up my word, which I spake to thy father David." The reference is to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq. of the everlasting establishment of his throne. God would fulfil this for Solomon if he would walk in the commandments of the Lord, as his father had already urged upon him when he handed over the kingdom (ch. ii. 3). The promise in ver. 13, "I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel," does not contain a second promise added to the one given in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq., but simply a special application of it to the building of the temple which had already been commenced. The eternal establishment

<sup>1</sup> Thenius, on the other hand, reckons the length of the whole building at a hundred cubits and its breadth at fifty-two, because, on the unfounded assumption that the temple in Ezekiel's vision was simply a copy of Solomon's temple, he sets down the thickness of the temple wall in front and along the two sides at six cubits, and that of the hinder wall at seven. Moreover, he not only reckons the internal length of the house at sixty-two cubits, in opposition to the statement in the text, that the length of the house (which was divided into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies) was sixty cubits; but in opposition to ver. 16, according to which the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies were separated by boards of cedar, he assumes that there was a wall of two cubits in thickness between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, according to Ezek. xli. 3; and, lastly, for no other reason than the wish to get the round number 100, he takes for granted that the hinder wall of the temple was a cubit thicker than that on the other sides.



of the throne of David involved the dwelling of God among His people, or rather is founded upon it. This dwelling of God is now to receive a new and lasting realization. The temple is to be a pledge that the Lord will maintain for His people His covenant of grace and His gracious presence. In this respect the promise, "I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel, and not forsake my people Israel," is a confirmation of the word which Jehovah had spoken to David, although, so far as the actual words are concerned, it is more closely connected with Lev. xxvi. 11, when the highest blessing attendant upon the faithful observance of the commandments of God is summed up in the promise, "I will make my abode among you, and my soul will not despise you."

Vers. 14-35. THE INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE TEMPLE-HOUSE.—Vers. 14-22. *Internal covering of the house, and division into Holy and Most Holy.*—Ver. 14 (cf. ver. 9) resumes the description of the building of the temple, which had been interrupted by the divine promise just communicated.—Ver. 15. "He built (*i.e.*, so far as the sense is concerned, he covered) the walls of the house within with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the walls of the ceiling he overlaid it with wood within, and overlaid the floor with cypress boards." The expression קירות הפסן, "walls of the ceiling," is very striking here, and renders it probable that קירות is only a copyist's error for קורות, "beams of the ceiling." The whole of the inside of the house was covered with wood, so that nothing was to be seen of the stone wall (ver. 18). On the other hand, the biblical text knows nothing of any covering of the outer walls also with wood, as many have assumed.—Vers. 16, 17. "And he built אֶת-עֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה, the twenty cubits (*i.e.* the space of twenty cubits), of the hindermost side of the house with boards of cedar," from the floor to the beams (of the roof). עַד-הַקִּירוֹת is to be explained from עַד קירות הפסן in ver. 15. "And built them for it (the house—לוֹ pointing back to הַבַּיִת) into the hinder room, into the Most Holy." קֹדֶשׁ is more precisely defined by the apposition הַקִּדְשִׁים, and therefore denotes the Most Holy Place. But there is a doubt as to its derivation and true meaning. Aquila and Symmachus render it χρηματιστήριον, Jerome λαλητήριον, or in the Vulg. *oraculum*, so that they derive it from דָּבַר, to speak; and Hengstenberg adopts this derivation in Ps. xxviii. 2: דָּבַר, lit. that which is spoken, then the place where the speaking

takes place. Most of the more recent commentators, on the other hand, follow the example of C. B. Michaelis and J. Simonis, and render it, after the Arabic, the hinder portion or back room, which is favoured by the antithesis **הַיִּזְבֵּל לְפָנָי**, the front sanctuary (ver. 17). The words of the text, moreover, are not to be understood as referring to a cedar wall in front of the Most Holy Place which rose to the height of twenty cubits, but to all four walls of the Most Holy Place, so that the wall which divided the hinder room from the Holy Place is not expressly mentioned, simply because it is self-evident. The words also imply that the *whole* of the hinder space of the house to the length of twenty cubits was cut off for the Most Holy Place, and therefore the party wall must also have filled the whole height of the house, which was as much as thirty cubits, and reached, as is expressly stated, from the floor to the roof. There remained therefore forty cubits of the house (in length) for **הַיִּזְבֵּל לְפָנָי**, the front palace, i.e. the Holy Place of the temple (ver. 17). **אֲחֵרִי**, *anterior*, formed from **אָחַר** (cf. Ewald, § 164, a).—In ver. 18 there is inserted in a circumstantial clause the statement as to the internal decoration of both rooms; and the further description of the Most Holy Place is given in vers. 19 sqq. “And cedar wood was (placed) against the house inside, sculpture of gourds (*colocynthis*) and open buds.” **סִלְעָתָא** is in apposition to **אֲחֵרִי**, containing a more minute description of the nature of the covering of cedar. **סִלְעָתָא** signifies sculpture, half-raised work (*bas-relief*): not, however, “that kind of bas-relief in which the figures, instead of rising above the surface on which they are wrought, are simply separated from it by the chiselling out of their outlines, and their being then rounded off according to these outlines” (Thenius). For although the expression **מִסְכָּתָא מְחֻצָּתָא** (ver. 29) appears to favour this, yet “merely engraved work” does not harmonize with the decorations of the brazen stands in ch. vii. 31, which are also called **סִלְעָתָא**. **מִסְכָּתָא** are figures resembling the **פְּקֻעָא**, or wild gourds (2 Kings iv. 39), i.e. oval ornaments, probably running in straight rows along the walls. **פְּתֻלָּא** are open flower-buds; not hangings or garlands of flowers (Thenius), for this meaning cannot be derived from **פָּתַר** in the sense of loosening or setting free, so as to signify flowers loosened or set free (= garlands), which would be a marvellous expression! The objection that, “according to Num. xvii. 23, flowers not yet opened, i.e. flower-buds, were not **פְּתֻלָּא**, but **פְּרָחִים**,” rests upon a



false interpretation of the passage referred to.—Ver. 19. “And (= namely) he prepared a hinder room in the house within, to place the ark of the covenant of Jehovah there.” *וַתֵּחַ*, as ch. xvii. 14 shows, is not a future (*ut reponeres*), but the infinitive *וַתֵּחַ* with a repeated syllable *וַתֵּחַ* (see Ewald, § 238, c).—Ver. 20. “And the interior of the hinder room was twenty cubits the length, twenty cubits the breadth, and twenty cubits its height.” The word *לִפְנֵי* I agree with Kimchi in regarding as the construct state of the noun *לִפְנֵי*, which occurs again in ver. 29 in the sense of the inner part or interior, as is evident from the antithesis *לְחִיצוֹן* (on the outside). “And he overlaid it with fine gold.” *וְזָהָב כָּסוּת* (= *כָּסוּת* in Job xxviii. 15) unquestionably signifies fine or costly gold, although the derivation of this meaning is still questionable; viz. whether it is derived from *כָּסַר* in the sense of to shut up, *i.e.* gold shut up or carefully preserved, after the analogy of *כָּתַם*; or is used in the sense of taking out or selecting, *i.e.* gold selected or pure; or in the sense of closed, *i.e.* gold condensed or unadulterated (Fürst and Delitzsch on Job xxviii. 15).

The Most Holy Place had therefore the form of a perfect cube in the temple as well as in the tabernacle, only on an enlarged scale. Now, as the internal elevation of the house, *i.e.* of the whole of the temple-house, the hinder portion of which formed the Most Holy Place, was thirty cubits, there was a space of about ten cubits in height above the Most Holy Place and below the roof of the temple-house for the upper rooms mentioned in 2 Chron. iii. 9, on the nature and purpose of which nothing is said in the two accounts.<sup>1</sup> “And he overlaid (clothed) the altar with cedar wood.” There is something very striking in the allusion to the altar in this passage, since the verse itself treats simply of the Most Holy Place; and still more striking is the expression *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר לְדִבְרִי*, “the altar belonging to the *Debir*,” in ver. 22, since there was no altar in the Most Holy

<sup>1</sup> This upper room does not presuppose, however, that the party wall, which follows as a matter of course from ver. 16, was not merely a cedar wall, but a wall two cubits thick. The supposed difficulty of setting up a cedar wall thirty cubits high is not so great as to necessitate assumptions opposed to the text. For we cannot possibly see why it could not have been made secure “without injuring the temple wall.” The wood panelling must have been nailed firmly to the wall without injuring the wall itself; and therefore this could be done just as well in the case of the cedar beams or boards of the party wall.

Place. We cannot remove the strangeness of these sentences by such alterations as Thenius and Bottecher propose, because the alterations suggested are much too complicated to appear admissible. The allusion to the altar in both these verses is rather to be explained from the statements in the Pentateuch as to the position of the altar of incense; viz. Ex. xxx. 6, "Thou shalt place it before the curtain, which is above the ark of the testimony before the capporeth over the testimony;" and Ex. xl. 5, "before the ark of the testimony;" whereby this altar, although actually standing "before the inner curtain," *i.e.* in the Holy Place, according to Ex. xl. 26, was placed in a closer relation to the Most Holy Place than the other two things which were in the Holy Place. The clothing of the altar with cedar presupposes that it had a heart of stone; and the omission of the article before מִזְבֵּחַ may be explained on the ground that it is mentioned here for the first time, just as in ver. 16, where כִּנֹּר was first mentioned, it had no article.—Ver. 21. To the gilding of the Most Holy Place, and the allusion to the altar of incense, which in a certain sense belonged to it, there is now appended in ver. 21 the gilding of the Holy Place. "Solomon overlaid the house from within with fine gold." רָבִית טַפְנִיקָה cannot be the party wall between the Holy Place and the Most Holy, as I formerly supposed, but is the Holy Place as distinguished from the Most Holy. The following words וַיַּעֲבֵר וְגו' are very obscure. If we rendered them, "he caused to pass over in (with) golden chains before the hinder room," we could only think of an ornament consisting of golden chains, which ran along the wall in front of the hinder room and above the folding doors. But this would be very singularly expressed. We must therefore take וַיַּעֲבֵר, as Gesenius, de Wette, and many of the earlier commentators do, according to the Chaldaean usage in the sense of bolting or fastening: "he bolted (fastened) with golden chains before the hinder room;" and must assume with Merz and others that the doors into the Most Holy Place (except on the day of atonement) were closed and fastened with golden chains, which were stretched across the whole breadth of the door and stood out against the wall.<sup>1</sup>—The following expres-

<sup>1</sup> The conjecture of Thenius, that אֶת־דִּפְלֹכָהּ (the curtain) has dropped out of the text and should be restored ("he carried the curtain across with golden chains"), is very properly described by Merz as "certainly untenable," since, apart from the fact that not one of the older versions contains



sion, וַיִּצְפֹּהוּ זָהָב, "and he overlaid it with gold," can only refer to the altar mentioned in the previous verse, the gilding of which has not yet been noticed, however surprising the separation of these words from ver. 20 may be.—In ver. 22 what has already been stated with regard to the gilding is repeated once more in a comprehensive manner, which brings this subject to a close. The whole house (כָּל-הַבַּיִת) is the Holy Place and the Most Holy, but not the porch or hall, as this is expressly distinguished from the house. הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, the whole altar, not merely a portion of it.

Vers. 23-28. *The large cherub-figures in the Most Holy Place.*—Ver. 23. He made (caused to be made) in the hinder room two cherubs of olive wood, *i.e.* wood of the *oleaster* or wild olive-tree, which is very firm and durable, and, according to 2 Chron. iii. 10, מַעֲשֵׂה צִעֲנָעִים, *i.e.*, according to the Vulgate, *opus statuarium*, a peculiar kind of sculpture, which cannot be more precisely defined, as the meaning of צִוֵּעַ is uncertain. "Ten cubits was the height of it" (*i.e.* of the one and of the other). The figures had a human form, like the golden cherubs upon the ark of the covenant, and stood upright upon their feet (2 Chron. iii. 13), with extended wings of five cubits in length, so that one wing of the one reached to one wing of the other in the centre of the room, and the other wing of each reached to the opposite wall, and consequently the four extended wings filled the entire breadth of the Most Holy Place (a breadth of twenty cubits), and the two cherubs stood opposite to one another and ten cubits apart. The wings were evidently fastened to the back and placed close to one another upon the shoulder-blades, so that the small space between their starting-points is not taken into consideration in the calculation of their length. The figures were completely overlaid with gold. The ark of the covenant was placed between these cherubs, and under the wings which pointed towards one another. As they were made like those upon the ark, they had evidently the same meaning, and simply served to strengthen the idea which was symbolized in the cherub, and which we have expounded in the Com-

the missing words, chains would have impeded the moving of the curtain. It is true that, according to 2 Chron. iii. 14, there was a curtain before the Most Holy Place; but as it is not mentioned so early as this even in the Chronicles, this would not be its proper position in the account before us, but it would be most suitably mentioned either in connection with or after the reference to the doors of the Most Holy Place in vers. 31 and 32.

mentary on Ex. xxv. 20 sqq. Only their faces were not turned towards one another and bent down towards the ark, as in the case of the golden cherubim of the ark; but, according to 2 Chron. iii. 13, they were turned  $\text{קִבְּלֵי}$ , towards the house, *i.e.* the Holy Place, so as to allow of the extension of the wings along the full length of the Most Holy Place.

Vers. 29-35. *Ornaments of the walls; the floors and doors.*—Ver. 29. All the walls of the house (the Holy Place and the Most Holy) round about ( $\text{כָּסָב}$ , adverb) he made engraved work (carving) of cherubs, palms, and open flowers from within to the outside (*i.e.* in the Most Holy as well as in the Holy Place).  $\text{הִלְכֵּי} . . . \text{פָּרִי} = \text{לֶחֶם} . . . \text{פָּרִי}$ ; and  $\text{דְּרָעִים}$  as in ver. 20. This completes the account of the nature of the covering of wood. In addition to the oval figures and open flowers (ver. 18), there were also figures of cherubim and palm-trees carved in the wooden panels. Nothing is said as to the distribution of these figures. But a comparison with Ezek. xli. 18 shows at any rate so much, that the palm-trees alternated with the cherubs, so that there was always one cherub standing between two palm-trees. The gourd-shaped figures and the open flowers probably formed the upper and lower setting of the rows of palms and cherubs, the flowers hanging in the form of garlands above the palms and cherubs, and the rows of gourds arranged in bars constituting the boundary lines both above and below. It is a disputed question whether there was only one row of palms and cherubs running round the walls, or whether there were two, or possibly even three. There is more probability in the second or third of these assumptions than in the first, inasmuch as on the walls of the Egyptian temples there were often three or four rows of mythological characters in relief arranged one above another (compare my work on the Temple, pp. 70 sqq.).—Ver. 30. The floor of the house he overlaid with gold within and without, *i.e.* in the Most Holy Place and in the Holy Place also.—Vers. 31, 32. He made the entrance to the back room, doors (*i.e.* consisting of doors; cf. Ewald, § 284, *a*, *β*) of olive wood, which moved, according to ch. vii. 50, on golden hinges.  $\text{וְהָיָה הַפֶּתַח}$ , “the projection of the door-posts was a fifth” ( $\text{וְהָיָה}$  is construed freely as an explanatory apposition to  $\text{הַפֶּתַח}$ , to which it is really subordinate; cf. Ewald, § 290, *c*). These obscure words, which have been interpreted in very different ways (see Ges. *Thes.* pp. 43 sq.), can hardly have any other meaning than this: the projecting



framework of the doors occupied the fifth part of the breadth of the wall. For the explanation given by Bottcher and Thenius, "the entrance framework with posts of fifth strength," has no real support in Ezek. xli. 3. To justify the rendering given to חֲמִשִּׁית (fifth strength), הָאֵיל is supplied, though not in the sense of projection, but in the thoroughly unwarranted sense of strength or thickness of the wall; and in addition to this, a wall two cubits thick is postulated between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, in direct contradiction to ver. 16. The further evidence, which Thenius finds in ch. viii. 8, in support of this explanation, has been already rejected by Bottcher as unsustained. It would indeed be extremely strange for the thickness of the door-posts which formed the setting of the entrance to be given, whereas nothing is said about the size of the doors. According to our explanation, "a fifth of the breadth of the wall," the entrance was four cubits broad including the projecting door-posts, and each of the two wings of the folding doors about a cubit and a half broad, if we reckon the projecting framework on either side at half a cubit in breadth.—Ver. 32. "And two doors (*i.e.* folding doors, *sc.* he made; יַשְׁתִּי is also governed by עֲשֵׂה in ver. 31) of olive wood, and carved upon them carved work," etc., as upon the walls (ver. 29), "and overlaid them with gold, spreading the gold upon the cherubs and palms" (יָרַד, *hiphil* of יָרַד), *i.e.* he spread gold-leaf upon them, so that, as Rashi observes, all the figures, the elevations and depressions of the carved work, were impressed upon the coating of gold-leaf, and were thus plainly seen. Thenius infers from this explanatory clause, that the gilding upon the walls and doors was most probably confined to the figures engraved, and did not extend over the whole of the walls and doors, because, if the doors had been entirely overlaid with gold, the gilding of the carved work upon them would have followed as a matter of course. But this inference is a very doubtful one. For if it followed as a matter of course from the gilding of the entire doors that the carved work upon them was overlaid with gold, it would by no means follow that the overlaying was such as to leave the carved work visible or prominent, which this clause affirms. Moreover, a partial gilding of the walls would not coincide with the expression עָרְתָם כָּל-הַבַּיִת in ver. 22, since these words, which are used with emphasis, evidently affirm more than "that such (partial) gilding was carried out everywhere throughout the temple proper."

The doors in front of the Most Holy Place did not render the curtain mentioned in 2 Chron. iii. 14 unnecessary, as many suppose. This curtain may very well have been suspended within the doors; so that even when the doors were opened outwards on the entrance of the high priest, the curtain formed a second covering, which prevented the priests who were ministering in the Holy Place and court from looking in.<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 33, 34. “And thus he made upon the door of the Holy Place posts of olive wood from a fourth (of the wall),” i.e. a framework which occupied a fourth of the breadth of the wall, or was five cubits broad (see at ver. 31), “and two doors of cypress wood, two leaves each door turning,” i.e. each of the folding doors consisting of two leaves, each of which was made to turn by itself, so that it could be opened and shut alone (without the other;  $\text{ס'פ'פ'}$  is probably only a copyist's error for  $\text{ס'פ'פ'}$ ). Cypress wood was chosen for the folding doors of the Holy Place, and not olive wood, as in the case of the Most Holy Place, probably because it is lighter in weight, and therefore less likely to sink. It is questionable here what idea we are to form of the division of each folding door into two leaves, each of which turned by itself: whether we are to think of each wing as divided lengthwise into two narrow leaves, or as divided half way up, so that the lower half could be opened without the upper. I agree with Merz in thinking the latter the more probable assumption; for the objection made by Thenius, on the ground that doors of this kind are only seen in the houses of the peasantry, is an idle assertion which cannot be proved. In a doorway of five cubits in breadth, after reckoning the doorposts the width of the two wings could not be more than two cubits each. And if such a door had been divided into two halves, each half would have been only one cubit wide, so that when open it would not have furnished the requisite room for one man conveniently to pass through. On the other hand, we may assume that a folding door of four cubits in breadth, if made in just proportions, would be eight cubits high. And a door of such a height might easily be

<sup>1</sup> H. Merz (*Herzog's Cycl.*) now admits this, whereas he formerly agreed with Ewald and others in denying the existence of the curtain in Solomon's temple, and regarded the curtain (veil) in Matt. xxvii. 51, 52 as an arbitrary addition made by Herod out of his princely caprice, thus overlooking the deep symbolical meaning which the veil or curtain possessed.



divided into two halves, so that only the lower half (of two cubits in breadth and about four in height) was opened for the daily entrance of the priests into the Holy Place. These doors probably opened outwards, like those in front of the Most Holy Place.—Ver. 35. Carving and gilding: as upon the doors before the hinder room. The gold was levelled or smoothed over that which had been engraved, *i.e.* it was beaten out thin and laid upon the carving in such a manner that the gold plate fitted closely to the figures. Gilding was generally effected in ancient times by the laying on of gold plate, which was fastened with tacks (compare 2 Chron. iii. 9).

Ver. 36. *The courts.*—"He built the inner court three rows of hewn stones and one row of hewn cedar beams." The epithet inner court applied to the "court of the priests" (2 Chron. iv. 9) presupposes an outer one, which is also mentioned in 2 Chron. iv. 9, and called "the great court." The inner one is called the *upper* (higher) court in Jer. xxxvi. 10, from which it follows that it was situated on a higher level than the outer one, which surrounded it on all sides. It was enclosed by a low wall, consisting of three rows of hewn stones, or square stones, laid one upon another, and a row of hewn cedar beams, which were either laid horizontally upon the stones, after the analogy of the panelling of the temple walls on the inside, or placed upright so as to form a palisading, in order that the people might be able to see through into the court of the priests. According to 2 Chron. iv. 9, the outer court had gates lined with brass, so that it was also surrounded with a high wall. Around it there were chambers and cells (2 Kings xxiii. 11; Jer. xxxv. 4, xxxvi. 10) for the priests and Levites, the plans for which had already been made by David (1 Chron. xxviii. 12). The principal gate was the east gate (Ezek. xi. 1). Other gates are mentioned in 2 Kings xi. 6, 2 Chron. xxiii. 5, Jer. xx. 2, 2 Kings xii. 10, 2 Chron. xxiv. 8. The size of these courts is not given. At the same time, following the analogy of the tabernacle, and with the reduplication of the rooms of the tabernacle which is adopted in other cases in the temple, we may set down the length of the court of the priests from east to west at 200 cubits, and the breadth from south to north at 100 cubits; so that in front of the temple-building on the east there was a space of 100 cubits in length and breadth, or 10,000 square cubits, left free for the altar of burnt-offering and the other

vessels, in other words, for the sacrificial worship. The outer or great court will therefore, no doubt, have been at least twice as large, namely, 400 cubits long and 200 cubits broad, *i.e.*, in all, 80,000 square cubits; so that the front space before the court of the priests (on the eastern side) was 150 cubits long from east to west, and 200 cubits broad from south to north, and 50 cubits in breadth or depth still remained for the other three sides.

Vers. 37, 38. *The time consumed in building.*—The foundation was laid in the fourth year in the month Ziv (see ver. 1), and it was finished in the eleventh year in the month *Boi*, *i.e.*, the eighth month, so that it was built in seven years, or, more precisely, seven years and a half, "according to all its matters and all its due."  $\text{לִבְנָתוֹ}$  for  $\text{לִבְנָתָהּ}$  signifies *procreatus*;  $\text{לִבְנָתָהּ}$  is therefore the fruit month, the month of tree fruits. The name probably originated with the Phœnicians, with whom the fruit ripened later; and it is said to be found upon the great Sidonian inscription (compare Dietrich on *Gen. Lex. s.v.*). For other explanations see *Gen. Thes.* p. 560. In comparison with other large buildings of antiquity,<sup>1</sup> and also of modern times, the work was executed in a very short time. But we must bear in mind that the building was not a very large one, notwithstanding all its splendour; that an unusually large number of workmen were employed upon it; and that the preparation of the materials, more especially the hewing of the stones, took place at Lebanon, and for the most part preceded the laying of the foundation of the temple, so that this is not to be included in the seven years and a half. Moreover, the period mentioned probably refers to the building of the temple-house and court of the priests only, and to the general arrangement of the outer court, and does not include the completion of the underground works which were necessary to prepare the space required for them, and of which only a portion may have been carried out by Solomon.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to Pliny (*H. N.* 26, c. 14), all Asia was building at the celebrated temple of Diana at Ephesus for 720 years.

<sup>2</sup> The account given by Josephus of these substructures does not show very clearly how much originated with Solomon, and how much belongs to the following centuries. At the close of his description of Solomon's temple (*Ant.* viii. 3, 9), he states that, in order to obtain the same level for the *ἑξωτερικὴ κούρη*, *i.e.* the outer court of the temple, as that of the *εὐαίη*, he had large valleys filled up, into which it was difficult to look down on account of their depth, by raising the ground to the height of 400 cubits, so as to make them



The importance of the temple is clearly expressed in ch. viii. 13, 27, ix. 3, 2 Chron. vi. 2, and other passages. It was to be a house built as the dwelling-place for Jehovah, a place for His seat for ever; not indeed in any such sense as that the house could contain God within its space, when the heavens of heavens cannot contain Him (ch. viii. 27), but a house where the name of Jehovah is or dwells (ch. viii. 16 sqq.; 2 Chron. vi. 5; cf. 2 Sam. vii. 13, etc.), *i.e.* where God manifests His presence in

level with the top of the mountain; and in the *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, after describing the temple-mountain as a mighty hill, the summit of which hardly sufficed for the temple-house and altar when the building was commenced, because it sloped off on all sides, he adds: "Solomon therefore caused a wall to be raised on the eastern side, and had a porch built upon the ground that was heaped up, and on the other sides the temple (*ναός*) was naked (*γυμνός*)." But in the description of the temple of Herod (*Ant.* xv. 11, 3) he says: "The temple was surrounded by enormous porticos (*στοαί*), which rested upon a large wall, and were the largest work of which men have ever heard. It was a steep rocky hill, rising gradually towards the eastern part of the city up to the highest point. This hill Solomon surrounded with a wall by very great works up to the very apex, and walled it round, commencing at the root, which is surrounded by a deep ravine, with stones which were fastened together with lead, . . . and continuing to the top, so that the size and height of the building, which was completed as a square, were immense," etc. The flat obtained in this manner is then described by Josephus as a *περιβόλος* of four stadia in circumference, namely, one stadium on each side. Now, although it was the outer court of the temple of Herod (the court of the Gentiles) which first had this circumference (see my *bibl. Archæol.* i. pp. 143, 144), and Josephus, *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, relates that subsequently (*ταῖς ἐξῆς αἰῶσιν*) the levelling of the hill was carried out to even a greater extent, as the people still continued to heap up earth, it is quite conceivable that Solomon may have planned the area of the temple with this circumference. And this conjecture acquires great probability from the fact that, according to the researches of Robinson (*Pal.* i. pp. 420 sqq.; *Recent Investigations concerning the Topography of Jerusalem*, pp. 68 sqq.; and *Later Biblical Researches*, pp. 173 sqq.), there are layers of enormous square stones in the lowest part of the south-western and south-eastern corners of the present Haram wall, the dimensions of which, apart from the fact that they are hewn with grooved edges, point to an early Israelitish origin, so that they might very well be relics of the Solomonian substructures of the temple-hill. There is also the remnant of the arch of a bridge of the same construction on the southern portion of the western wall of the Haram, which points to a bridge that led across from Moriah to Zion, and "appears to remove all the objections to the identity of this part of the enclosure of the mosque with that of the ancient temple" (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 426). "Here then," adds Robinson (*Pal.* i. pp. 427, 428), "we have indisputable remains of Jewish antiquity, consisting of an important portion of the western wall of

a real manner to His people, and shows Himself to them as the covenant God, so that Israel may there worship Him and receive an answer to its prayers. The temple had therefore the same purpose as the tabernacle, whose place it took, and which it resembled in its fundamental form, its proportions, divisions, and furniture. As the glory of the Lord entered into the tabernacle in the cloud, so did it into the temple also at its dedication, to sanctify it as the place of the gracious presence of God (ch. viii.

the ancient temple area. They are probably to be referred to a period long anteceding to the days of Herod: for the labours of this splendour-loving tyrant appear to have been confined to the body of the temple and the porticos around the court. The magnitude of the stones also, and the workmanship, as compared with other remaining monuments of Herod, seem to point to an earlier origin. In the accounts we have of the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans, and its rebuilding by Zerubbabel under Darius, no mention is made of these exterior walls. The former temple was destroyed by fire, which would not affect these foundations; nor is it probable that a feeble colony of returning exiles could have accomplished works like these. There seems, therefore, little room for hesitation in referring them back to the days of Solomon, or rather of his successors, who, according to Josephus, built up these immense walls, "immovable for all time."

But however probable this assumption may be, the successors of Solomon cannot come into consideration at all, since Josephus says nothing of the kind, and the biblical accounts are not favourable to this conjecture. With the division of the kingdom after the death of Solomon the might of the kings of Judah was broken; and the accounts of the new court which Jehoshaphat built, i.e. of the restoration of the inner court (2 Chron. xi. 5), and of the repairs of the temple by Josiah (2 Kings xii. 5 seq.; 2 Chron. xiv. 4 seq.) and Jehiah (2 Kings xxi. 5 seq.; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 5 seq.), do not produce the impression that walls so costly or so large could have been built at that time. The statement of Josephus (*Ant. de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1) concerning the gradual extension of the levelled hill, has reference to the enlargement of the temple area towards the north, inasmuch as he adds to the words already quoted: "and cutting through the rock wall, they took in as much as was afterwards occupied by the circumference of the whole temple."—If, therefore, the remains of the ancient wall which have been mentioned, with their stones of grooved edges, are of early Israelitish origin, we must trace them to Solomon; and this is favoured still further by the fact, that when Solomon had a magnificent palace built for himself opposite to the temple (see ch. vii. 1-12), he would assuredly connect the temple-mountains with Zion by a bridge.—Even J. Berggren (*Bibel u. Josephus über Jerus. u. d. heil. Grab.*) thinks it probable that "the so-called remains of an arch in the western Haram wall may be, as Robinson at first indicated, a relic of that ancient and marvellous xystus bridge, with which the Davidic steps on the two steep sides of the valley of the Tyropæum, constructed for the purpose of going from Moriah to Zion or from Zion to Moriah, were connected."



10; 2 Chron. v. 14). The temple thereby became not only a visible pledge of the lasting duration of the covenant, by virtue of which God would dwell among His people, but also a copy of the kingdom of God, which received at its erection an embodiment answering to its existing condition at the time. As the tabernacle, with its resemblance to a nomad's tent, answered to the time when Israel had not yet found rest in the promised land of the Lord; so was the temple, regarded as an immoveable house, a pledge that Israel had now acquired its lasting inheritance in Canaan, and that the kingdom of God on earth had obtained a firm foundation in the midst of it.—This relation between the temple and the tabernacle will serve to explain all the points of difference which present themselves between these two sanctuaries, notwithstanding their agreement in fundamental forms and in all essential particulars. As a house or palace of Jehovah, the temple was not only built of solid and costly materials, with massive walls of square stones, and with floors, ceilings, walls, and doors of cedar, cypress, and olive woods—these almost imperishable kinds of wood—but was also provided with a hall like the palaces of earthly kings, and with side buildings in three stories in which to keep the utensils requisite for a magnificent ceremonial, though care was taken that these adjoining and side buildings were not attached directly to the main building so as to violate the indestructibility and perfectness of the house of God, but merely helped to exalt it and elevate its dignity. And the increased size of the inner rooms, whilst the significant forms and measures of the tabernacle were preserved, was also essentially connected with this. Whereas the length and breadth of the dwelling were doubled, and the height of the whole house tripled, the form of a cube was still retained for the Most Holy Place as the stamp of the perfected kingdom of God (see *Comm. on Pent.* vol. ii. p. 184), and the space was fixed at twenty cubits in length, breadth, and height. On the other hand, in the case of the Holy Place the sameness of height and breadth were sacrificed to the harmonious proportions of the house or palace, as points of inferior importance; and the measurements were thirty cubits in height, twenty cubits in breadth, and forty cubits in length; so that ten as the number of perfectness was preserved as the standard even here. And in order to exhibit still further the perfectness and glory of the house of God, the walls were not constructed of ordinary quarry-

stone, but of large square stones prepared at the quarry, and the walls were panelled within with costly wood after the manner of the palaces of Hither Asia, the panelling being filled with carved work and overlaid with gold plate. And whereas the overlaying of the whole of the interior with gold shadowed forth the glory of the house as the residence of the heavenly King, the idea of this house of God was still more distinctly expressed in the carved work of the walls. In the tabernacle the walls were decorated with tapestries in costly colours and interwoven figures of cherubim; but in the temple they were ornamented with carved work of figures of cherubim, palms, and opening flowers. To the figures of cherubim, as representations of the heavenly spirits which surround the Lord of glory and set forth the psychical life at its highest stage, there are thus added flowers, and still more particularly palms, those "princes of the vegetable kingdom," which, with their fine majestic growth, and their large, fresh, evergreen leaves, unite within themselves the whole of the fulness and glory of the vegetable life; to set forth the sanctuary (probably with special reference to Canaan as the land of palms, and with an allusion to the glory of the King of peace, inasmuch as the palm is not only the sign of Palestine, but also the symbol of peace) "as a place that was ever verdant, abiding in all the freshness of strength, and enfolding within itself the fulness of life," and thereby to make it a scene of health and life, of peace and joy, a "paradise of God," where the righteous who are planted there flourish, and blossom, and bear fruit to old age (Ps. xcii. 13). And this idea of the house, as an immovable dwelling-place of God, is in perfect harmony with the setting up of two colossal cherubim in the Most Holy Place, which filled the whole space with their outspread wings, and overshadowed the ark of the covenant, to show that the ark of the covenant with its small golden cherubim upon the Cappeloth, which had journeyed with the people through the desert to Canaan, was henceforth to have there a permanent and unchangeable abode.

#### CHAP. VII. SOLOMON'S PALACE AND THE FURNITURE OF THE TEMPLE

Vers 1-12. *Erection of the royal palace*.—Ver. 1 is closely connected in form with ch. vi. 38, and contains a summary account of the building, which is more minutely described in



vers. 2-12. "And Solomon built his house (his palace) in thirteen years, and finished (in that time) all his house." The thirteen years are to be reckoned after the completion of the temple in seven years, so that the two buildings were executed in twenty years (ch. ix. 10). The expression *בְּיָתוֹ* is used, because the palace consisted of several buildings connected together; namely, (1) the house of the forest of Lebanon (vers. 2-5); (2) the pillar-hall with the porch (ver. 6); (3) the throne-room and judgment-hall (ver. 7); (4) the king's dwelling-house and the house of Pharaoh's daughter (ver. 8). That all these buildings were only different portions of the one royal palace, and the house of the forest of Lebanon was not a summer residence of Solomon erected on Lebanon itself, as many of the earlier commentators supposed, is indisputably evident, not only from the first verse when correctly interpreted, but also and still more clearly from the fact that when the buildings of Solomon are spoken of afterwards (see ch. ix. 1, 10, 15, and x. 12), we only read of the house of Jehovah and the house of the king, that is to say, of the temple and *one* palace. The description of the several portions of this palace is so very brief, that it is impossible to form a distinct idea of its character. The different divisions are given in vers. 1-8 in their natural order, commencing at the back and terminating with the front (ver. 8), and there then follows in vers. 9-12 the description of the stones that were used.—Vers. 2-5. *The house of the forest of Lebanon.*—This building—so named because it was built, so to speak, of a forest of cedar pillars—is called in the Arabic the "house of his arms," because, according to ch. x. 17, it also served as a keeping-place for arms: it is hardly to be regarded, however, as simply an arsenal, but was probably intended for other purposes also. He built it "a hundred cubits its length, fifty cubits its breadth, and thirty cubits its height, on four rows of cedar pillars, and hewn cedar beams (were) over the pillars." As the building was not merely a hall of pillars, but, according to ver. 3, had side-rooms (*צִלְעוֹת*, cf. ch. vi. 5) above the pillars, the construction of it can hardly be represented in any other way than this, that the rooms were built upon four rows of pillars, which ran round all four sides of the building, which was 100 cubits long and fifty cubits broad in the inside, and thus surrounded the inner courtyard on all sides. Of course the building could not rest merely upon pillars, but was surrounded on the outside with a strong

wall of hewn square stones (ver. 9), so that the hewn beams which were laid upon the pillars had their outer ends built into the wall, and were supported by it, so as to give to the whole building the requisite strength.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 3. "And roofing in (of) cedar was above over the side-rooms upon the pillars, five and forty; fifteen the row." ספן is to be understood of the roofing, as in ch. vi 15. (compare ספן, ch. vi. 15). The numbers "forty-five and fifteen the row" cannot refer to הַעֲמֻדִים, but must refer, as Thenius assumes, to הַצִּלְעֹת as the main idea, which is more precisely defined by עַל הָעֲמֻדִים. If we took it as referring to the pillars, as I myself have formerly done, we should have to assume that there were only galleries or pillar-halls above the lower rows of pillars, which is at variance with הַצִּלְעֹת. There were forty-five side-rooms, therefore, built upon the lower rows of pillars, in ranges of fifteen each. This could only be done by the ranges of rooms being built, not side by side, but one over the other, in other words, by the forty-five side-rooms forming three stories, as in the side buildings of the temple, so that each

<sup>1</sup> Thenius therefore supposes that "the lower part of the armoury formed a peristyle, a fourfold row of pillars running round inside its walls and enclosing a courtyard, so that the Vulgate alone gives the true sense, *quatuor decambulacra inter columnas cedrinas*;" and he points to the court of the palace of *Luxor*, which has a double row of pillars round it. The number of pillars is not given in the text, but Thenius in his drawing of this building sets it down at 400, which would certainly present a forest-like aspect to any one entering the building. Nevertheless we cannot regard this assumption as correct, because the pillars, which we cannot suppose to have been less than a cubit in thickness, would have been so close to one another that the four rows of pillars could not have formed four *decambulacra*. As the whole building was only fifty cubits broad, and this breadth included the inner courtyard, we cannot suppose that the sides of the building were more than ten cubits deep, which would leave a breadth of thirty cubits for the court. If then four pillars, each of a cubit in thickness, stood side by side or one behind the other in a space of ten cubits in depth, the distance between the pillars would be only a cubit and a half, that is to say, would be only just enough for one man and no more to walk conveniently through. And what could have been the object of crowding pillars together in this way, so as to render the entire space almost useless? It is on this ground, probably, that Hermann Weiss assumes that each side of the oblong building, which was half as broad as it was long, was supported by one row, and therefore all the sides together by four rows of cedar pillars, and the beams of the same material which rested upon them. But this view is hardly a correct one; for it not only does not do justice to the words of the text, "four rows of pillars," but it is insufficient in itself, for the simple reason that one row of pillars on each side would not have afforded the requisite strength and stability to the three stories built upon them, even



story had a "row" of fifteen side-rooms round it. This view receives support from ver. 4: "and beam-layers (שִׁרְפִים, beams, as in ch. vi. 4) were three rows, and outlook against outlook three times;" i.e. the rows of side-rooms were built one over the other by means of layers of beams, so that the rooms had windows opposite to one another three times; that is to say, the windows looking out upon the court were so arranged in the three stories that those on the one side were *vis à vis* to those on the opposite side of the building. The expression in ver. 5, מִלִּמְחֹזָה אֶל־מְחֹזָה, "window over against window," compels us to take אֶל־מְחֹזָה in the sense of "opposite to the window" (אֶל, *versus*), and not, as Thenius proposes, "outlook against outlook," according to which לִ is supposed to indicate that the windows were only separated from one another by slender piers. מְחֹזָה, which only occurs here, is different from חֶלֶק, the ordinary window, and probably denotes a large opening affording a wide outlook.—Ver. 5. "And all the doorways and mouldings were square of beams" (שִׁרְף) is an accusative of free subordination, denoting the material or the mode of execution; cf. Ewald, § 284, *a*, *β*). "Square with a

if we should not suppose the rooms in these stories to be very broad, since the further three rows of pillars, which Weiss assumes in addition, according to ver. 3, as the actual supporters of the upper building, have no foundation in the text. The words "four rows of cedar pillars" do not absolutely require the assumption that there were four rows side by side or one behind the other on every side of the building; for the assertion that טֹר does not denote a row in the sense of a straight line, but generally signifies a row surrounding and enclosing a space, is refuted by Ex. xxviii. 17, where we read of the four טֹרִים of precious stones upon the breastplate of the high priest.—Is it not likely that the truth lies midway between these two views, and that the following is the view most in accordance with the actual fact, namely, that there were four rows of pillars running along the full length of the building, but that they were distributed on the two sides, so that there were only two rows on each side? In this case a person entering from the front would see four rows of pillars running the whole length of the building. In any case the rows of pillars would of necessity be broken in front by the entrance itself.

The utter uncertainty as to the number and position of the four rows of pillars is sufficient in itself to render it quite impossible to draw any plan of the building that could in the slightest degree answer to the reality. Moreover, there is no allusion at all in the description given in the text to either entrance or exit, or to staircases and other things, and the other buildings are still more scantily described, so that nothing certain can be determined with regard to their relative position or their probable connection with one another. For this reason, after studying the matter again and again, I have been obliged to relinquish the intention to illustrate the description in the text by drawings.

straight upper beam" (Thenius) cannot be the correct rendering of רַבְעִים אַשְׁמֹנִי. Thenius proposes to read רַבְעִים אַשְׁמֹנִי for רַבְעִים אַשְׁמֹנִי, after the reading αἱ χῶραι of the Seventy, who have also rendered אַשְׁמֹנִי in ver. 4 by χῶρα, a broad space. It may be pleaded in support of this, that רַבְעִים is less applicable to the doorposts or mouldings than to the doorways and outlooks (windows), inasmuch as, if the doorways were square, the square form of the moulding or framework would follow as a matter of course. רַבְעִים אַשְׁמֹנִי are both the doors, through which the different rooms were connected with one another, and also those through which the building and its stories were reached, of course by stairs, probably winding staircases, as in the side stories of the temple. The stairs were placed, no doubt, at the front of the building. The height given is thirty cubits, corresponding to that of the whole building (ver. 2). If we reckon the height of the lower pillars at eight cubits, there were twenty-two cubits left for the stories; and assuming that the roofing of each was one cubit in thickness, there remained eighteen cubits in all for the rooms of the three stories; and this, if equally distributed, would give an internal height of six cubits for each story, or if arranged on a graduated scale, which would probably be more appropriate, a height of seven, six, and five cubits respectively.

Vers. 6-8. *The other buildings*.—Ver. 6. "And he made the pillar-hall, fifty cubits its length, and thirty cubits its breadth, and a hall in front of them, and pillars and a threshold in front of them." With regard to the situation of this hall in relation to the other parts of the building, which is not precisely defined, we may infer, from the fact that it is mentioned between the house of the forest of Lebanon and the throne and judgment halls, that it stood between these two. The length of this building (fifty cubits) corresponds to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon; so that, according to the analogy of the temple-hall (1 Ki. vi. 3), we might picture to ourselves the length given here as running parallel to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon, and might therefore assume that the pillar-hall was fifty cubits broad and thirty cubits deep. But the statement that there was a hall *in front of* the pillar-hall is irreconcilable with this assumption. We must therefore understand the length in the natural way, as signifying the measurement from back to front, and regard the pillar-hall as a portico fifty cubits long and thirty cubits broad, in front of which there was also a porch as



an entrance. **על־פְּתִיחָם**, in front of them, *i.e.* in front of the pillars which formed this portico. The last words, "and pillars and threshold in front of them," refer to the porch. This had also pillars, probably on both sides of the doorway, which carried the roof; and in front of them was **עֵב**, *i.e.*, according to the Chaldee **סְקַפְתָּא**, the moulding or framework of the threshold, a threshold-like entrance, with steps.—Ver. 7. "And the *throne-hall*, where he judged, the judgment-hall, he made and (indeed) covered with cedar, from floor to floor." The throne-hall and the judgment-hall are therefore one and the same hall, which was both a court of judgment and an audience-chamber, and in which, no doubt, there stood the splendid throne described in ch. x. 18-20. But it is distinguished from the pillar-hall by the repetition of **עֵצָה**. It probably followed immediately upon this, but was clearly distinguished from it by the fact that it was covered with cedar **מִהַקְרָקַע עַד הַקְרָקַע**. These words are very obscure. The rendering given by Thenius, "panelled from the floor to the beams of the roof," is open to these objections: (1) that **כֶּסֶן** generally does not mean to *panel*, but simply to *cover*, and that **כֶּסֶן בְּאֶרֶץ** in particular cannot possibly be taken in a different sense here from that which it bears in ver. 3, where it denotes the roofing of the rooms built above the portico of pillars; and (2) that the alteration of the second **הַקְרָקַע** into **הַקִּירוֹת** has no critical warrant in the rendering of the Syriac, *a fundamento ad cælum ejus usque*, or in that of the Vulgate, *a pavimento usque ad summitatem*, whereas the LXX. and Chald. both read **עַד הַקְרָקַע**. But even if we were to read **הַקִּירוֹת**, this would not of itself signify the roof beams, inasmuch as in ch. vi. 16 **הַקִּירוֹת** or **הַקִּירוֹת** receives its more precise definition from the expression **קִירוֹת הַכֶּסֶן** (קִירוֹת) in ver. 15. The words in question cannot have any other meaning than this: "from the one floor to the other," *i.e.* either from the floor of the throne-hall to the floor of the pillar-hall (described in ver. 6), or more probably from the lower floor to the upper, inasmuch as there were rooms built over the throne-room, just as in the case of the house of the forest of Lebanon; for **קְרָקַע** may denote not only the lower floor, but also the floor of upper rooms, which served at the same time as the ceiling of the lower rooms. So much, at any rate, may be gathered from these words, with all their obscurity, that the throne-hall was not an open pillar-hall, but was only open in front, and was shut in by solid walls on the other three sides.—

Ver. 8. After (behind) the throne and judgment hall then followed the king's own palace, the principal entrance to which was probably through the throne-hall, so that the king really delivered judgment and granted audiences in the gate of his palace. "His house, where he dwelt, in the other court inwards from the (throne) hall was like this work," *i.e.* was built like the throne-hall; "and a (dwelling) house he made for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken, like this hall." The construction of the dwelling-places of the king and queen cannot be ascertained from these words, because the hall with which its style is compared is not more minutely described. All that can be clearly inferred from the words, "in the other court inside the hall," is, that the abode of the king and his Egyptian wife had a court of its own, and when looked at from the entrance, formed the hinder court of the whole palace. The house of Pharaoh's daughter was probably distinct from the dwelling-place of the king, so that the palace of the women formed a building by itself, most likely behind the dwelling-house of the king, since the women in the East generally occupy the inner portion of the house. The statement that the dwelling-place of the king and queen formed a court by itself within the complex of the palace, warrants the further inference, that the rest of the buildings (the house of the forest of Lebanon, the pillar-hall, and the throne-hall) were united together in one first or front court.

Vers. 9-12. "All these (*viz.* the whole of the buildings described in vers. 2-8) were costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, sawn with the saw within and without (*i.e.* on the inner and outer side of the halls and buildings), and from the foundation to the corbels, and from without to the great court." **רַמְסֵהוֹת**, the corbels, upon which the beams of the roof rest. The Sept. renders it *ἕως τῶν γεισῶν*. Thenius understands by this the battlements which protected the flat roofs, and therefore interprets **רַמְסֵהוֹת** as signifying the stone border of the roof of the palace. But *γείσος*, or *γείσσος*, *γείσσον*, merely signifies the projection of the roof, and, generally speaking, every projection in a building resembling a roof, but not the battlement-like protection or border of the flat roof, which is called **סִקְיָה** in Deut. xxii. 8. **הַיָּן**, the outside in distinction from the great court, can only be the outer court; and as **הַיָּצֵר הַחוּצָה** is no doubt identical with **הַיָּצֵר הַפְּתוּחָה** (ver. 8), and therefore refers to the court surrounding the king's



dwelling-house, חֲנֹךְ is to be understood as relating to the courtyard or fore-court surrounding the front halls.—Vers. 10, 11. “And the foundation was laid with costly, large stones of ten and eight cubits (*sc.* in length, and of corresponding breadth and thickness). And above (the foundation, and therefore the visible walls, were) costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, and cedars.”—Ver. 12. And (as for) the great court, there were round it three rows (*i.e.* it was formed of three rows) of hewn stones and a row of hewn cedar beams, as in the inner court of the house of Jehovah (see at ch. vi. 36) and the hall of the house. וְלַחֲצֵר signifies “and so with the court,” *Vav* serving as a comparison, as in Prov. xxv. 3, 20, and frequently in Proverbs (see Dietrich in *Ges. Lex. s.v.* ו, and Ewald, § 340, *b*), so that there is no necessity for the un-Hebraic conjecture of Thenius, בְּלִחְצֵר. לְאֵלֶם הַבַּיִת in all probability refers not to the temple-hall, but to the pillar-hall of the palace, the surrounding wall of which was of the same nature as the wall of the great, *i.e.* the other or hinder, court.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 13–51. THE METALLIC VESSELS OF THE TEMPLE (compare 2 Chron. ii. 13, 14, and iii. 15–v. 1).—Vers. 13, 14. To

<sup>1</sup> The situation of this palace in Jerusalem is not defined. Ewald supposes (*Gesch.* iii. p. 317) that it was probably built on the southern continuation of the temple-mountain, commonly called *Ophel*, *i.e.* Hill. But “nothing more is needed to convince us that it cannot have stood upon Ophel, than a single glance at any geographical outline of Ophel on one of the best of the modern maps, and a recollection of the fact that, according to Neh. iii. 26, 31, it was upon Ophel, where the king’s palace is said to have stood, that the temple-socagers and shopkeepers had their places of abode after the captivity” (Thenius). The view held by earlier travellers and pilgrims to Zion, and defended by Berggren (p. 109 sqq.), namely, that the ancient Solomonian and Asmonæan palaces stood upon Moriah on the western side of the temple, is equally untenable. For the *xystus*, above which, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 16, 3, the Asmonæan palace stood, was connected with the temple by a bridge, and therefore did not stand upon Moriah, but upon Zion or the *ἀνω πόλις*, since this bridge, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vi. 6, 2, connected the temple with the upper city. Moreover, it clearly follows from the passages of Josephus already noticed (p. 84 sq.), in which he refers to the substructures of the temple area, that the temple occupied the whole of Moriah towards the west, and extended as far as the valley of the Tyropœon, and consequently there was no room for a palace on that side. When Josephus affirms, therefore (*Ant.* viii. 5, 2), that Solomon’s palace stood opposite to the temple (*ἀντικρυς ἔχων ναόν*), it can only have been built on the north-east side of Zion, as most of the modern writers assume (see W. Krafft,

make these vessels king Hiram had sent to Solomon, at his request (2 Chron. ii. 6), a workman named *Hiram* of Tyre. Ver. 13 contains a supplementary remark, in which חִירָם must be rendered in the pluperfect (compare the remarks on Gen. ii. 19). King Solomon had sent and fetched *Hiram* from Tyre. This artisan bore the same name as the king, חִירָם or חִירָם (ver. 40), in 2 Chron. ii. 13 חִירָם (*Hiram*), with the epithet אָבִי, i.e. my father, אָבִי being a title of honour equivalent to master or counsellor, as in Gen. xlv. 8. He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was אִישׁ צֹרְיָ, i.e. a Tyrian by birth. According to 2 Chron. ii. 13, his mother was "of the daughters of Dan," i.e. of the tribe of Dan. Both statements may easily be united thus: she was a Danite by birth, and married into the tribe of Naphtali. When her husband died, she was married again as the widow of a Naphtalite, and became the wife of a Tyrian, to whom she bore a son, *Hiram*. This explanation is also adopted by Bertheau (on the Chronicles); and the conjecture of Lardius, Thénius, and others, that the mother was an Israelitish widow of the city of Dan in the tribe of Naphtali, which was quite close to Tyre, is less in harmony with the expression "of the daughters of Dan" בְּנוֹת דָּן, "a brass-worker," refers to חִירָם (he), i.e. *Hiram*, and not to his father (Thénius). The skill of Hiram is described in almost the same terms as that of Bezaleel in Ex. xxxi. 3 sqq., with this exception, that Bezaleel's skill is attributed to his being filled with the Spirit of God, i.e. is described rather as a supernatural gift, whereas in the case of Hiram the more indefinite expression, "he was filled with wisdom, etc.," is used, representing it rather as a natural endowment. In the account given here, Hiram is merely described as a worker in brass, because he is only mentioned at the commencement of the section which treats of the preparation of the brazen vessels of the temple. According to 2 Chron. ii. 14, he was able to work in gold, silver, brass, iron, stone, wood, purple, etc. There is nothing improbable in this extension of his skill to wood and to

*Topographie Jerus.* p. 114 sqq., and Bergr. p. 110). This is sustained not only by the probability that the Assyrians would hardly build their palace anywhere else than on the spot where the palace of the kings of Judah built by Solomon stood, but also by the account of the elevation of Joash to the throne in 2 Kings xi. and 2 Chron. xxiii., from which it is perfectly obvious that the royal palace stood upon Zion opposite to the temple.



the art of weaving. Bezaleel also combined in himself all these talents. Of course Hiram was merely a foreman or leader of these different branches of art; and he certainly did not come alone, but brought several assistants with him, who carried out the different works under his superintendence.—The enumeration of them commences with the pillars of the temple-hall.

Vers. 15-22. *The brazen pillars of the porch* (compare 2 Chron. iii. 15-17).—He formed the two brazen pillars, which were erected, according to 2 Chron. iii. 15, “before the (temple) house, *i.e.* in front of the hall of the temple. One was eighteen cubits high, and a thread of twelve cubits surrounded (spanned) the other pillar.” The statement of the height of the one pillar and that of the circumference of the other is to be understood as an abbreviated expression, signifying that the height and thickness mentioned applied to the one as well as to the other, or that they were alike in height and circumference. According to the Chronicles, they were thirty-five cubits long; which many expositors understand as signifying that the length of the two together was thirty-five cubits, so that each one was only  $17\frac{1}{2}$  cubits long, for which the full number 18 is substituted in our text. But this mode of reconciling the discrepancy is very improbable, and is hardly in harmony with the words of the Chronicles. The number 35 evidently arose from confounding the numeral letters ה = 18 with ל = 35. The correctness of the number 18 is confirmed by 2 Kings xxv. 17 and Jer. lii. 21. The pillars were hollow, the brass being four finger-breadths in thickness (Jer. lii. 21); and they were cast in the Jordan valley (ver. 46).—Ver. 16. “And he made two capitals (פְּתִירוֹת), to set them on the heads of the pillars, cast in brass, five cubits the height of the one and of the other capital.” If, on the other hand, in 2 Kings xxv. 17 the height of the capital is said to have been three cubits, this discrepancy cannot be explained on the supposition that the capitals had been reduced two cubits in the course of time; but the statement rests, like the parallel passage in Jer. lii. 22, upon an error of the text, *i.e.* upon the substitution of ג (3) for ה (5).—Ver. 17. “Plait (*i.e.* ornaments of plait), plait-work and cords (twist, resembling) chain-work, were on the capitals, which were upon the heads of the pillars, seven on the one capital and seven on the other capital.” Consequently this decoration consisted of seven twists arranged as festoons, which were hung round the capitals of the

pillars.—Ver. 18. “And he made pomegranates, and indeed two rows round about the one twist, to cover the capitals which were upon the head of the pillars; and so he did with the other capital.” In the Masoretic text the words *הַמְּטָרִים* and *הַרְמָנִים* are confused together, and we must read, as some of the Codd. do, in the first clause *אֶת־הַרְמָנִים* for *אֶת־הַמְּטָרִים*, and in the middle clause *עַל־רֹאשׁ הַרְמָנִים* for *עַל־רֹאשׁ הַמְּטָרִים*. This is not only required by the sense, but sustained by a comparison with ver. 19. The relation between the two rows of pomegranates and the plaited work is indeed not precisely defined; but it is generally and correctly assumed, that one row ran round the pillars below the plaited work and the other above, so that the plaited work, which was formed of seven cords plaited together in the form of festoons, was enclosed above and below by the rows of pomegranates. If we compare with this the further statements in vers. 41 and 42, 2 Chron. iii. 16 and iv. 12, 13, and Jer. lli. 23, *כַּלְתֵּיהָ* is there more precisely designated *כַּלֵּי כַלְתֵּיהָ*, “bowls of the capitals,” from which it is evident that the lower portion of the capitals, to which the braided work was fastened, was rounded in the form of a pitcher or caldron. The number of the pomegranates on the two festoons is given at 400, so that there were 200 on each capital, and consequently each row contained 100 (2 Chron. iii. 16); and according to Jer. (*Le.*) there were 96 *רוּחָהּ*, “windwards,” and in all 100 on the braided work round about. *רוּחָהּ*, “windwards,” can hardly be taken in any other sense than this: in the direction of the wind, *i.e.* facing the four quarters of the heavens. This meaning is indisputably sustained by the use of the word *רָחַק*, to denote the quarters of the heavens, in statements of the aspect of buildings (Ezek. xli. 16–18), whereas there is no foundation whatever for such meanings as “airwards—uncovered” (Bottcher, Thenius), or hanging freely (Ewald).<sup>1</sup>—In vers. 19 and 20 a second decoration of the capitals of the pillars

<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to observe, that the expression *רוּחָהּ רוּחָהּ*, to gasp for air, in Jer. ii. 24, xiv. 6, does not warrant our giving to *רוּחָהּ* the meaning open or uncovered, as Bottcher supposes. But when Thenius follows Bottcher (*Probes*, p. 335) in adducing in support of this the fact “that the tangent, which is drawn to any circle divided into a hundred parts, covers exactly four of these parts,” the fact rests upon a simple error, inasmuch as any drawing will show that a tangent only touches *one* point of a circle divided into a hundred parts. And the remark of Bottcher, “If you describe on the outside of a circle of twelve cubits in circumference a hundred small circles of twelve-hundredths of a cubit in diameter, a tangent drawn thereupon will



is mentioned, from which we may see that the rounding with the chain-like plaited work and the pomegranates enclosing it did not cover the capital to the very top, but only the lower portion of it. The decoration of the upper part is described in ver. 19: "And capitals, which were upon the top of the pillars, were (or, Hiram made) lily-work after the manner of the hall, four cubits." The lily-work occupied, according to ver. 20, the upper portion of the capitals, which is here called כְּתֹרֶת, as a crown set upon the lower portion. It was lily-work, *i.e.* sculpture in the form of flowering lilies. The words בְּאוֹלָם אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת are obscure. According to Böttcher and Thenius, בְּאוֹלָם is intended to indicate the position of the pillars within the hall, so that their capitals sustained the lintel of the doorway. But even if בְּאוֹלָם were rendered, within the hall, as it is by Böttcher, it is impossible to see how this meaning could be obtained from the words "capitals upon the head of the pillars lily-work within the hall." In that case we must at least have "the pillars within the hall;" and בְּאוֹלָם would be connected with הָעַמּוּדִים, instead of being separated from it by מִעֵינָהּ שִׁשָּׁן. Even if we were to introduce a stop after שִׁשָּׁן and take בְּאוֹלָם by itself, the expression "in (or at) the hall" would not in itself indicate the position of the pillars in the doorway, to say nothing of the fact that it is only in ver. 21 that anything is said concerning the position of the pillars. Again, the measurement "four cubits" cannot be understood, as it is by Thenius, as denoting the diameter of the capitals of the pillars; it must rather indicate the measure of the lily-work, that is to say, it affirms that there were four cubits of lily-work on the capitals, which were five cubits high, —in other words, the lily-work covered the four upper cubits of the capitals; from which it still further follows, that the plaited work which formed the decoration of the lower portion of the capitals was only one cubit broad or high. Consequently בְּאוֹלָם cannot be understood in any other sense than "in the manner of or according to the hall," and can only express the thought, that there was lily-work on the capitals of the pillars as there was on the hall. For the vindication of this use of בְּ

cover to the eye exactly four small circles, although mathematically it touches only one of them in one point," is not correct according to any measurement. For if the tangent touches one of these smaller circles with mathematical exactness, to the eye there will be covered either three or five half circles, or even seven, but never four.

see *Ges. Lex.* by Dietrich, s.v. ב.<sup>1</sup> There is no valid objection to the inference to which this leads, namely, that on the frontispiece of the temple-hall there was a decoration of lily-work. For since the construction of the hall is not more minutely described, we cannot expect a description of its decorations.—In ver. 20 a more precise account is given of the position in which the crowns consisting of lily-work were placed on the capitals of the columns, so that this verse is to be regarded as an explanation of ver. 19: namely, capitals upon the pillars (did he make) also above near the belly, which was on the other side of the plait-work." רִבְבָן, the belly, i.e. the belly-shaped rounding, can only be the rounding of the lower portion of the capitals, which is called נֶלֶךְ in vers. 41, 42. Hence לְעֵבֶר הַרִבְבָּן (*Keri*), "on the other side of the plaited work," can only mean behind or under the plait, since we cannot suppose that there was a belly-shaped rounding above the caldron-shaped rounding which was covered with plaited work, and between this and the lily-work. The belly-shaped rounding, above or upon which the plaited work lay round about, might, when looked at from without, be described as being on the other side of it, i.e. behind it. In the second half of the verse: "and the pomegranates two hundred in rows round about on the second capital," the number of the pomegranates placed upon the capitals, which was omitted in ver. 18, is introduced in a supplementary form<sup>2</sup>—Ver. 21. "And

<sup>1</sup> This is the way in which the earlier translators appear to have understood it: e.g., LXX. ἡ γὰρ ἔργα κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν τέχνην ἔργον ("lily-work according to the hall four cubits"); Vulg. *Capitella . . . quasi opere lili fabricata erant in porticu quatuor cubitarum*; Chald. עֹבֵר שְׁלֹשָׁתָא לָקִים (opus liliaceum collectum in porticu quatuor cubitarum); Syr. opus liliaceum idem fecit (כְּסִיבָא בְּלִיָּלִים) in porticu quatuor cubitis. These readings appear to be based upon the view supported by Rashi (בְּאֵילִם for כְּסִיבָא): lily-work as it was in the hall.

<sup>2</sup> Hermann Weiss (*Kunstgeschichte*, i. p. 367) agrees in the main with the idea worked out in the text; but he assumes, on the ground of monumental views, that the decoration was of a much simpler kind, and one by no means out of harmony with the well-known monumental remains of the East. In his opinion, the pillars consisted of "a shaft nineteen cubits in height, surrounded at the top, exactly after the fashion of the ornamentation of the Egyptian pillars, with seven bands decorated like plaited work, which unitedly covered a cubit, in addition to which there was the lily-work of five cubits in height, i.e. a slender capital rising up in the form of the calyx of a lily, ornamented with pomegranates." Our reasons for dissenting from this opinion are given in the exposition of the different verses.



he set up the pillars at the hall of the Holy Place, and set up the right pillar, and called its name *Jachin*, and . . . the left . . . *Boaz*." Instead of לְאַלֶם הַהִיכָל we have in 2 Chron. iii. 15 לְפָנֵי הַבַּיִת, and in ver. 17 עַל-פְּנֵי הַהִיכָל, "before the house," "before the Holy Place." This unquestionably implies that the two brazen pillars stood unconnected in front of the hall, on the right and left sides of it, and not within the hall as supporters of the roof. Nevertheless many have decided in favour of the latter view. But of the four arguments used by Thenius in proof that this was the position of the pillars, there is no force whatever in the first, which is founded upon Amos ix. 1, unless we assume, as Merz and others do, that the words of the prophet, "Smite the capital, that the thresholds may shake, and break them (the capitals of the pillars), that they may fall upon the head of all," refer to the temple at Jerusalem, and not, as Thenius and others suppose, to the temple erected at Bethel for the calf-worship. For even if the temple at Bethel had really had a portal supported by pillars, it would by no means follow that the pillars Jachin and Boaz in Solomon's temple supported the roof of the hall, as it is nowhere stated that the temple of Jeroboam at Bethel was an exact copy of that of Solomon. And even with the only correct interpretation, in which the words of Amos are made to refer to the temple at Jerusalem, the argument founded upon them in support of the position of the pillars as bearers of the hall rests upon the false idea, that the סָפִים, which are shaken by the smiting of the capital, are the beams lying upon the top of the pillars, or the *superliminaria* of the hall. It is impossible to prove that סָף has any such meaning. The beam over the entrance, or upon the doorposts, is called מִצְקֵיף in Ex. xii. 7, 22, 23, whereas סָף denotes the threshold, *i.e.* the lower part of the framework of the door, as is evident from Judg. xix. 27. The words of the prophet are not to be interpreted architecturally, but to be taken in a rhetorical sense; "so that by the blow, which strikes the capital, and causes the thresholds to tremble, such a blow is intended as shakes the temple in all its joints" (Baur on Amos ix. 1). "הַכְּפֹתוֹר, a kind of ornament at the top of the pillars, and הַסָּפִים, the thresholds, are opposed to one another, to express the thought that the building is to be shaken and destroyed *a summo usque ad imum, a capite ad calcem*" (Hengstenberg, *Christol.* i. p. 366 transl.). The other arguments derived from

Ezek. xl. 48 and 49, and from Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 3, 4, prove nothing at all. From the words of Josephus, *τούτων τῶν κίωνων τὸν μὲν ἕτερον κατὰ τὴν δεξιάν ἔστησε τοῦ προπύλαιου παραστάδα . . . τὸν δὲ ἕτερον, κτλ.*, it would only follow "that the pillars (according to the view of Josephus) must have stood in the doorway," if it were the case that *παραστάς* had no other meaning than *doorpost*, and *προπύλαιον* could be understood as referring to the temple-hall generally. But this is conclusively disproved by the fact that Josephus always calls the temple-hall *πρόναον* (*l.c.* and viii. 3, 2 and 3), so that *προπύλαιον* can only denote the fore-court, and *παραστάς* a pillar standing by itself. Consequently Josephus regarded the pillars *Jashin* and *Boaz* as *propylæa* erected in front of the hall. We must therefore adhere to the view expressed by Bähr (*d. Tempel*, p. 35 seq.), that these pillars did not support the roof of the temple-hall, but were set up in front of the hall on either side of the entrance. In addition to the words of the text, this conclusion is sustained (1) by the circumstance that the two pillars are not mentioned in connection with the building of the temple and the hall, but are referred to for the first time here in the enumeration of the sacred vessels of the court that were made of brass. "If the pillars had formed an essential part of the construction and had been supporters of the hall, they would certainly have been mentioned in the description of the building, and not have been placed among the articles of furniture" (Schmase); and moreover they would not have been made of metal like the rest of the vessels, but would have been constructed of the same building materials as the hall and the house, namely, of stone or wood (Bähr). And to this we may add (2) the monumental character of the pillars, which is evident from the names given to them. No architectural portion of the building received a special name: *Jashin* (𐤍𐤑𐤍): "he establishes," *stabilis templum* (Simonis *Deom.* p. 430); and *Boaz* (𐤁𐤌𐤕), *ex 12 12 in illo, sc. Davidico, robor* (Sim. p. 460). Kimchi has correctly interpreted the first name thus: "Let this temple

<sup>1</sup> Stieglitz (*Geogr. der Baukunst*, p. 127) aptly observes in relation to this: "The architect cannot subscribe to Meyer's view (that the pillars were supporters of the hall), since it was only through their independent position that the pillars received the column character intended to be given to them, and by their dignity subverted the end designed, of exalting the whole building and calling attention to the real purpose of the whole."



stand for ever;" and the second, "Solomon desired that God would give it strength and endurance." The pillars were symbols of the stability and strength, which not only the temple as an outward building, but the kingdom of God in Israel as embodied in the temple, received from the Lord, who had chosen the temple to be His dwelling-place in the midst of His people.<sup>1</sup>—In ver. 22 it is stated again that there was lily-work upon the head of the pillars,—a repetition which may be explained from the significance of this emblem of the capitals of the pillars; and then the words, "So was the work of the capitals finished," bring the account of this ornament of the temple to a close.

Vers. 23-26. *The brazen sea* (cf. 2 Chron. iv. 2-5).—"He made the molten sea—a water-basin called סִי (*mare*) on account of its size—ten cubits from one upper rim to the other," *i.e.* in diameter measured from the upper rim to the one opposite to it, "rounded all round, and five cubits its (external) height, and a line of thirty cubits encircled it round about," *i.e.* it was thirty cubits in circumference. The *Chetib* קו is to be read קוה here and in Zech. i. 16 and Jer. xxxi. 39, for which the *Keri* has קו in all these passages. קוה or קו means a line for measuring, which is expressed in ver. 15 by הוּמָה. The relation of the diameter to the circumference is expressed in whole numbers which come very near to the mathematical proportions. The more exact proportions would be as 7 to 22, or 113 to 355.—Ver. 24. And colocynths (gourds) ran round it under its brim, ten to the cubit, surrounding the sea in two rows; the colocynths "cast in its casting," *i.e.* cast at the same time as the vessel itself. Instead of פִּקְעִים, gourds (see at ch. vi. 18), we find רִמּוֹת, figures of oxen, in the corresponding text of the Chronicles, and in the last clause merely הַבָּקָר, an evident error of the pen, בָּקָרִים being substituted by mistake for פִּקְעִים, and afterwards interpreted רִמּוֹת בָּקָרִים. The assumption by which the early expositors removed the discrepancy, namely, that they were casts of bullocks' heads, is not to be thought of, for the simple reason that בָּקָרִים signifies oxen and not the *heads* of oxen. How far apart the two rows of gourd-like ornaments were, it is impossible

<sup>1</sup> There is no necessity to refute the fanciful notion of Ewald, that these pillars, "when they were erected and consecrated, were certainly named after men who were held in estimation at that time, probably after the younger sons of Solomon," and that of Thenius, that יָכִין בְּעֵץ, "He (the Lord) establishes with strength," was engraved upon them as an inscription.

to decide. Their size may be estimated, from the fact that there were ten within the space of a cubit, at a little over two inches in diameter.—Ver. 25. This vessel stood (rested) upon twelve brazen oxen, three turning to the north, three to the west, three to the south, and three to the east, “and the sea above upon them, and all their backs (turned) inwards;” *i.e.* they were so placed that three of their heads were directed towards each quarter of the heavens. The size of the oxen is not given; but we must assume that it was in proportion to the size and height of the sea, and therefore about five cubits in height up to the back. These figures stood, no doubt, upon a metal plate, which gave them a fixed and immoveable position (see the engraving in my *bibl. Archæol.* Taf. iii. fig. 1).—Ver. 26. “And its thickness (*i.e.* the thickness of the metal) was a handbreadth” = four finger-breadths, as in the case of the brazen pillars (see at ver. 15), “and its upper rim like work of a goblet (or of a goblet-rim, *i.e.* bent outwards), lily-blossom,” *i.e.* ornamented with lily-flowers. It held 2000 baths; according to the Chronicles, 3000 baths. The latter statement has arisen from the confusion of 2 (3) with 2 (2); since, according to the calculation of Thenius, the capacity of the vessel, from the dimensions given, could not exceed 2000 baths. This vessel, which took the place of the laver in the tabernacle, was provided for the priests to wash themselves (2 Chron. iv. 6), that is to say, that a supply of water might be kept in readiness to enable the priests to wash their hands and feet when they approached the altar to officiate, or were about to enter the Holy Place (Ex. xxx. 18 sqq.). There were no doubt taps by which the water required for this purpose was drawn off from the sea<sup>1</sup>.—The artistic form of the vessel corresponded to its sacred purpose. The rim of the basin, which rose upwards in the form of a lily, was intended to point to the holiness and loveliness of that life which issued from the sanctuary. The twelve oxen, on which it rested, pointed to the twelve tribes of Israel as a priestly nation, which cleansed itself

<sup>1</sup> For the different conjectures on this subject, see Lundius, *jud. Heiligtümer*, p. 356. Thenius supposes that there was also a provision for filling the vessel, since the height of it would have rendered it a work of great labour and time to fill it by hand, and that there was probably a pipe hidden behind the figures of the oxen, since, according to Aristeas, *histor. LXX. Interp.*, Oxon. 1692, p. 32 (also Eusebii *præp. evang.* ix. 38), there were openings concealed at the foot of the altar, out of which water was allowed to run at certain seasons for the requisite cleansing of the pavement of the court from



here in the persons of its priests, to appear clean and holy before the Lord. Just as the number twelve unquestionably suggests the allusion to the twelve tribes of the covenant nation, so, in the choice of oxen or bullocks as supporters of the basin, it is impossible to overlook the significance of this selection of the first and highest of the sacrificial animals to represent the priestly service, especially if we compare the position of the lions on Solomon's throne (ch. x. 20).

Vers. 27-39. THE BRAZEN STANDS AND THEIR BASINS.<sup>1</sup>—He made ten stands of brass, each four cubits long, four cubits broad, and three cubits high. מַכְנֹחַ, stands or stools (Luther), is the name given to these vessels from their purpose, viz. to serve as supports to the basins which were used for washing the flesh of the sacrifices. They were square chests cast in brass, of the dimensions given.—Vers. 28, 29. Their work (their construction) was the following: they had מַסְגֵּרוֹת, lit. surroundings, i.e. panels or flat sides, and that between שְׁלֵבִים, *commissuræ*, i.e. frames or borders, which enclosed the sides, and were connected together at the angles; and upon the panels within the borders (there were figures of) lions, oxen, and cherubim. The statement in Josephus, that each centre was divided into three compartments, has nothing to support it in the biblical text, nor is it at all probable in itself, inasmuch as a division of this kind would have rendered the figures placed upon them insignificantly small. “And upon the borders was a base above.” בֶּזֶל is a noun, and has been rendered correctly by the Chaldee כְּנֶתֶא, *basis*. The meaning is, above, over the borders, there was a pedestal for the basin upon the chest, which is more fully described in ver. 31. To take בֶּזֶל as an adverb does not give a suitable sense. For if we adopt the rendering, and upon the corner borders (or ledges) likewise above (De Wette and Ewald),—i.e. there were also figures of lions, oxen, and cherubim upon the corner borders, the blood of the sacrifices; and there is still a fountain just in the neighbourhood of the spot on which, according to ver. 39, the brazen sea must have stood (see Schultz's plan); and in the time of the Crusaders there was a large basin, covered by a dome supported by columns (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. 446). But even if the later temple was supplied with the water required by means of artificial water-pipes, the Solomonian origin of these arrangements or designs is by no means raised even to the rank of probability.

<sup>1</sup> The description which follows will be more easily understood by comparing with it the sketch given in my *biblische Archäologie*, Taf. iii. fig. 4.

—it is impossible to tell what the meaning of **מִצַּעַל** can be, to say nothing of the fact that on the corner borders there could hardly be room for such figures as these. This last argument also tells against the rendering adopted by Thenius: “and upon the corner borders, above as well as below the lions and oxen, (there were) wreaths;” in which, moreover, it is impossible to attach any sup-  
portable meaning to the **בְּ**. When, on the other hand, Thenius objects to our view that the pedestal in question is spoken of for the first time in ver. 31, and that the expression “above the corner borders (ledges)” would be extremely unsuitable, since the pedestal in question was above the whole stand; the former remark is not quite correct, for ver. 31 merely contains a more minute description of the character of the pedestal, and the latter is answered by the fact that the pedestal derived its strength from the corner borders or ledges. “And below the lions and oxen were wreaths, pendant work.” **לִיָּת**, here and at ver. 36, is to be explained from **לִיָּה** in Prov. i. 9 and iv. 9, and signifies twists or wreaths. **מִצַּעַת מוֹרָר** is not “work of sinking,” i.e. sunken work (Thenius), which never can be the meaning of **מִצַּר**, but pendant work, festoons, by which, however, we cannot understand festoons hanging *freely*, or floating in the air.—  
Ver. 30. “Every stool had four brazen wheels and brazen axles, and the four feet thereof had shoulder-pieces; below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast, beyond each one (were) wreaths.” The meaning is that the square chests stood upon axles with wheels of brass, after the style of ordinary carriage wheels (ver. 33), so that they could be driven or easily moved from one place to another; and that they did not rest directly upon the axles, but stood upon four feet, which were fastened upon the axles. This raised the chest above the rim of the wheels, so that not only were the sides of the chest which were ornamented with figures left uncovered, but, according to ver. 32, the wheels stood below the panels, and not, as in ordinary carriages, at the side of the chest. With regard to the connection between the axles and the wheels, Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 972) and Thenius suppose that the axles were fastened to the wheels, as in the Roman *plaustra* and at the present day in Italy, so as to turn with them; and Thenius argues in support of this, that **לָהֶם** is to be connected not only with what immediately precedes, but also with **סָרְנֵי נְהִיָּת**. But this latter is unfounded; and the idea is altogether irreconcilable with the fact that the wheels had naves (**חֲשָׁקִים**),



ver. 33), from which we must infer that they revolved upon the axles. The words **וְאַרְבַּעַת פַּעֲמָתָיו כְּתִפֹּת לָהֶם** are ambiguous. They may either be rendered, "and its four feet had shoulder-pieces," or, as Thenius supposes, "and its four feet served as shoulder-pieces." **פַּעֲמָת** means stepping feet, feet bent out as if for stepping (Ex. xxv. 12). The suffix attached to **פַּעֲמָתָיו** refers to **מְכוֹנָה**, the masculine being often used indefinitely instead of the feminine, as in **לָהֶם** in ver. 28. Thenius compares these feet to the *ἀμαξόποδες* of the Greeks, and imagines that they were divided below, like fork-shaped upright contrivances, in which, as in forks, the wheels turned with the axles, so that the axle-peg, which projected outwards, had a special apparatus, instead of the usual pin, in the form of a stirrup-like and on the lower side hand-shaped holder (**יָד**), which was fastened to the lower rim of the **מְכוֹנָה**, and descended perpendicularly so as to cover the foot, and the general arrangement of the wheels themselves received greater strength in consequence. These feet, which were divided in the shape of forks, are supposed to be called **כְּתִפֹּת** (shoulders), because they were not attached underneath at the edge of the stand, but being cast with the corner rims passed down in the inner angles, so that their uppermost portion was *under the basin*, and the lowest portion was under the stand, which we are to picture to ourselves as without a bottom, and projecting as a split foot, held the wheel, and so formed its shoulder-pieces. But we cannot regard this representation as either in accordance with the text, or as really correct. Even if **כְּתִפֹּת לָהֶם** could in any case be grammatically rendered, "they served them (the wheels and axles) as shoulders," although it would be a very questionable course to take **לָהֶם** in a different sense here from that which it bears in the perfectly similar construction in ver. 28, the feet which carried the stand could not possibly be called the shoulders of the wheels and their axles, since they did not carry the wheels, but the **מְכוֹנָה**. Moreover, this idea is irreconcilable with the following words: "below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast." If, for example, as Thenius assumes, the *mechonah* had a cover which was arched like a dome, and had a neck in the centre into which the basin was inserted by its lower rim, the shoulder-pieces, supposing that they were cast upon the inner borders of the chest, would not be *below the basin*, but simply below the corners of the lid of the chest, so that they would stand in no direct

relation whatever to the basin. We must therefore give the preference to the rendering, which is grammatically the most natural one, "and its feet had shoulder-pieces," and understand the words as signifying that from the feet, which descended of course from the four corner borders of the chest down to the axles, there ascended shoulder-pieces, which ran along the outside of the chest and reached to the lower part of the basin which was upon the lid of the chest, and as shoulders either supported or helped to support it. According to ver. 34, these shoulder-pieces were so cast upon the four corners of the chest, that they sprang out of it as it were. *מַעְבְּרֵי אֵיט לַיִת*, opposite to each one were wreaths. Where these festoons were attached, the various senses in which *מַעְבֵּר* is used prevent our deciding with certainty. At any rate, we must reject the alteration proposed by Thenius, of *לַיִת* into *לְאַהֲתָהּ*, for the simple reason that *אֵיט לְאַהֲתָהּ* in the sense of "one to the other" would not be Hebraic.—In ver. 31 we have a description of the upper portion of the *mechonah*, which formed the pedestal for the basin, and therewith an explanation of *כִּתְרָהּ לְבֵי*. "And the mouth of it (the basin) was within the crown and upwards with a cubit, and the mouth of it (the crown) was rounded, stand-work, a cubit and a half (wide), and on its mouth also there was engraved work, and its panels were square, not round." To understand this verse, we must observe that, according to ver. 35, the *mechonah* chest was provided at the top with a dome-shaped covering, in the centre of which there was an elevation resembling the capital of a pillar (*כִּתְרָהּ*, the crown), supporting the basin, which was inserted into it by its lower rim. The suffix in *פִּיהָ* (its mouth) is supposed by Thenius to refer to the *mechonah* chest, and he questions the allusion to the basin, on the ground that this was so flat that a *mouth*-like opening could not possibly be spoken of, and the basins were never within the *mechonah*. But however correct these two remarks may be in themselves, they by no means demonstrate the necessity of taking *פִּיהָ* as referring to the *mechonah* chest. For *פֶּה* (the mouth) is not necessarily to be understood as denoting a mouth-like opening to the basin; but just as *פִּי רֹאשׁ* in Ex. xxviii. 32 signifies the opening of the clothes for the head, *i.e.* for putting the head through when putting on the clothes, so may *פִּיהָ* (its mouth) be the opening or mouth for the basin, *i.e.* the opening into which the basin fitted and was emptied, the water in the



basin being let off into the *mechonah* chest through the head-shaped neck by means of a tap or plug. The mouth was really the lower or contracted portion of the shell-shaped basin, which was about a cubit in height within the neck and upwards, that is to say, in all, inasmuch as it went partly into the neck and rose in part above it. The פִּיָּה (the mouth thereof) which follows is the (upper) opening of the crown-like neck of the lid of the *mechonah*. This was rounded, מַעֲשֵׂה-כֶּן, stand-work, *i.e.*, according to De Wette's correct paraphrase, formed after the style of the foot of a pillar, a cubit and a half in diameter. "And also upon the mouth of it (the *mechonah*) was carved work." The נָם (also) refers to the fact that the sides of the *mechonah* were already ornamented with carving. מִסְנֵרֵיהֶם, the panels of the crown-like neck (כְּתָרֶת) and its mouth (פִּיָּה) were square, like the panels of the sides of the *mechonah* chest. The fact that panels are spoken of in connection with this neck, may be explained on the assumption that with its height of one cubit and its circumference of almost five cubits (which follows from its having a diameter of a cubit and a half) it had stronger borders of brass to strengthen its bearing power, while between them it consisted of thinner plates, which are called fillings or panels.—In vers. 32, 33, the wheels are more minutely described. Every stool had four wheels under the panels, *i.e.* not against the sides of the chest, but under them, and יָדוֹת, hands or holders of the wheels, *i.e.* special contrivances for fastening the wheels to the axles, probably larger and more artistically worked than the linch-pins of ordinary carriages. These יָדוֹת were only required when the wheels turned upon the axles, and not when they were fastened to them. The height of the wheel was a cubit and a half, *i.e.* not half the height, but the whole. For with a half height of a cubit and a half the wheels would have been three cubits in diameter; and as the chest was only four cubits long, the hinder wheels and front wheels would almost have touched one another. The work (construction) of the wheels resembled that of (ordinary) carriage wheels; but everything about them (holders, felloes, spokes, and naves) was cast in brass.—In ver. 34 the description passes to the upper portion of the *mechonah*. "And he made four shoulder-pieces at the four corners of one (*i.e.* of every) stand; out of the stand were its shoulder-pieces." כְּתֻפּוֹת are the shoulder-pieces already mentioned in ver. 30, which were attached to the feet below, or

which terminated in feet. They were fastened to the corners in such a way that they seemed to come out of them; and they rose above the corners with a slight inclination (curve) towards the middle of the neck or capital, till they came under the outer rim of the basin which rested upon the capital of the lid of the chest, so as to support the basin, which turned considerably outwards at the top.—Ver. 35. "And on the upper part of the stand (the *mechannah* chest) half a cubit high was rounded all round, and on the upper part were its holders, and its panels out of it. ראש המכונה is the upper portion of the square chest. This was not flat, but rounded, i.e. arched, so that the arching rose half a cubit high above the height of the sides. This arched covering (or lid) had ידות, holders, and panels, which were therefore upon the upper part of the מכונה. The holders we take to be strong broad borders of brass, which gave the lid the necessary firmness; and the fillings or panels are the thinner plates of brass between them. They were both מנייה, "out of it," out of the upper part of the *mechannah*, i.e. cast along with it. With regard to the decoration of it, ver. 36 states that "he cut out (engraved) upon the plates of its holders, and upon its panels, cherubim, lions, and palms, according to the empty space of every one, and wreaths all round." We cannot determine anything further with regard to the distribution of these figures.—Vers. 37, 38. "Thus he made the ten stools of one kind of casting, measure, and form, and also ten brazen basins (בירות), each holding forty baths, and each basin four cubits." In a round vessel this can only be understood of the diameter, not of the height or depth, as the basins were set upon (על) the stands. ביר אחר על המכונה is dependent upon יצא: he made ten basins, . . . one basin upon a stand for the ten stands, i.e. one basin for each stand. If then the basins were a cubit in diameter at the top, and therefore their size corresponded almost exactly to the length and breadth of the stand, whilst the crown-like neck, into which they were inserted, was only a cubit and a half in diameter (ver. 31), their shape must have resembled that of wide-spreading shells. And the form thus given to them required the shoulder-pieces described in vers. 30 and 34 as supports beneath the outer rim of the basins, to prevent their upsetting when the carriage was wheeled about.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 39. And he put

<sup>1</sup> The description which Ewald has given of these stands in his *Geschichte*, iii. pp. 311, 312, and still more elaborately in an article in the *Göttinger*



the stands five on the right side of the house and five on the left; and the (brazen) sea he put upon the right side eastwards, opposite to the south. The right side is the south side, and the left the north side. Consequently the stands were not placed on the right and left, *i.e.* on each side of the altar of burnt-offering, but on each side of the house, *i.e.* of the temple-hall; while the brazen sea stood farther forward between the hall and the altar, only more towards the south, *i.e.* to the south-east of the hall and the south-west of the altar of burnt-offering. The basins upon the stands were for washing (according to 2 Chron. iv. 6), namely, "the work of the burnt-offering," that is to say, for cleansing the flesh and fat, which were to be consumed upon the altar of burnt-offering. By means of the stands on wheels, they could not only easily bring the water required near to the priests who were engaged in preparing the sacrifices, but could also let down the dirty water into the chest of the stand by means of a special contrivance introduced for the purpose, and afterwards take it away. As the introduction of carriages for the basins arose from the necessities of the altar-service, so the preparation of ten such stands, and the size of the basins, was occasioned by the greater extension of the sacrificial worship, in which it often happened that a considerable number of sacrifices had to be made ready for the altar at the same time. The artistic work of these stands and their decoration with figures were intended to show that these vessels were set apart for the service of the sanctuary. The emblems are to some extent the same as those on the walls of the sanctuary, *viz.* cherubim, palms, and flowers, which had therefore naturally the same meaning here as they had there; the only difference being that they were executed there in gold, whereas here they were in brass, to correspond to the character of the court. Moreover, there were also figures of lions and oxen, pointing no doubt to the royal and priestly characters, which were combined,

*Gelehrten Nachr.* 1859, pp. 131-146, is not only obscure, but almost entirely erroneous, since he proposes in the most arbitrary way to make several alterations in the biblical text, on the assumption that the Solomonian stands were constructed just like the small bronze four-wheeled kettle-carriages (hardly a foot in size) which have been discovered in Mecklenburg, Steyermark, and other places of Europe. See on this subject G. C. F. Lisch, "über die ehernen Wagenbecken der Bronzezeit," in the *Jahrb. des Vereins f. Mecklenb. Geschichte*, ix. pp. 373, 374, where a sketch of a small carriage of this kind is given.

according to Ex. xix. 6, in the nation worshipping the Lord in this place.

Vers. 40-51. *Summary enumeration of the other vessels of the temple.*—In ver. 40 the brazen vessels of the court are given. In vers. 41-47 the several portions of the brazen pillars, the stands and basins, the brazen sea and the smaller vessels of brass, are mentioned once more, together with notices of the nature, casting, and quantity of the metal used for making them. And in vers. 48-50 we have the golden vessels of the Holy Place. This section agrees almost word for word with 2 Chron. iv. 11-v. 1, where, moreover, not only is the arrangement observed in the previous description of the temple-building a different one, but the making of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, of the golden candlesticks, and of the table of shew-bread, and the arrangement of the great court (2 Chron. iv. 7-9) are also described, to which there is no allusion whatever in the account before us; so that these notices in the Chronicles fill up an actual gap in the description of the building of the temple which is given here.—Ver. 40a. *The smaller brazen vessels.*—Hiram made the pots, shovels, and bowls. *הַכִּיִּיִּם* is a slip of the pen for *הַכִּיִּיִּם*, pots, as we may see by comparing it with ver. 45 and the parallel passages 2 Chron. iv. 11 and 2 Kings xxv. 14. The pots were used for carrying away the ashes; *הַחֲבִיִּיִּם*, the shovels, for clearing the ashes from the altar; *הַמִּטְרָקוֹת* were the bowls used for catching the blood, when the sacrificial animals were slaughtered: compare Ex. xxvii. 3 and Num. iv. 14, where forks and fire-basins or coal-pans are also mentioned.—Ver. 40b introduces the recapitulation of all the vessels made by Hiram. *בֵּית ה' הַזֶּה*, in the house of the Lord (cf. Ewald, § 300, b); in 2 Chron. iv. 11 more clearly, *בְּבֵית ה'*; we find it also in ver. 45, for which we have in 2 Chron. iv. 16 *לְבֵית יְהוָה*, for the house of Jehovah. The several objects enumerated in vers. 41-45 are accusatives governed by *לְעֵינֵינוּ*.—Vers. 41-44, the brazen pillars with the several portions of their capitals; see at vers. 15-22. The inappropriate expression *עַל־פְּנֵי הַמִּטְרָקוֹת* (upon the face of the pillars) in ver. 42 is probably a mistake for *עַל־יְסוֹדֵי הַזֶּה*, "upon the two pillars," for it could not properly be said of the capitals that they were upon the surface of the pillars.—Ver. 43. The ten stands and their basins: see at vers. 27-37; ver. 44, the brazen sea: *vid.* vers. 23-26; lastly, ver. 45, the pots, etc., as at ver. 40. The *Chethāb* *הַחֲבִיִּיִּם* is a



mistake for **הַאֲלָה** (*Keri*).<sup>1</sup> **נְהִיטָה מְמָרֵם**, of polished brass—accusative of the material governed by **עָשָׂה**.—Ver. 46. “In the Jordan valley he cast them—in thickened earth between Succoth and Zarthan,” where the ground, according to Burckhardt, *Syr.* ii. p. 593, is marly throughout. **בְּמַעֲבֵה הָאֲדָמָה**, “by thickening of the earth,” the forms being made in the ground by stamping together the clayey soil. *Succoth* was on the other side of the Jordan,—not, however, at the ford near Bethsean (Thenius), but on the south side of the Jabbok (see at Judg. viii. 5 and Gen. xxxiii. 17). *Zarthan* or *Zereda* was in the Jordan valley on this side, probably at *Kurn Sartabeh* (see at Judg. vii. 22 and Josh. iii. 16). The casting-place must have been on this side of the Jordan, as the (eastern) bank on the other side has scarcely any level ground at all. The circumstance that a place on the other side is mentioned in connection with one on this side, may be explained from the fact that the two places were obliquely opposite to one another, and in the valley on this side there was no large place in the neighbourhood above Zarthan which could be appropriately introduced to define the site of the casting-place.—Ver. 47. Solomon left all these vessels of excessive number unweighed. **וַיִּנָּח** does not mean he laid them down (= set them up: Movers), but he let them lie, *i.e.* unweighed, as the additional clause, “the weight of the brass was not ascertained,” clearly shows. This large quantity of brass, according to 1 Chron. xviii. 8, David had taken from the cities of Hadadezer, adding also the brass presented to him by Toi.—Vers. 48-50. *The golden vessels of the Holy Place* (cf. 2 Chron. iv. 19-22). The vessels enumerated here are divided, by the repetition of **זָהָב סָגִיר** in vers. 49 and 50, into two classes, which were made of fine gold; and to this a third class is added in ver. 50b which was made of gold of inferior purity. As **זָהָב סָגִיר** is governed in both instances by **וַיַּעַשׂ** as an accusative of the material, the **זָהָב** (gold) attached to the separate vessels must be taken as an adjective. “Solomon made all the vessels in the house of Jehovah (*i.e.* had them

<sup>1</sup> After **וַיָּאֵת כָּל-הַבָּלִים הָאֵלֶּה** the LXX. have the interpolation, *καὶ οἱ στῦλοι τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ὀκτὼ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ βασιλείως καὶ τοῦ οἴκου Κυρίου*, which is proved to be apocryphal by the marvellous combination of the king's house and the house of God, though it is nevertheless regarded by Thenius as genuine, and as an interesting notice respecting certain pillars in the enclosure of the inner court of the temple, and in the king's palace!

made): the golden altar, and the golden table on which was the shew-bread, and the candlesticks . . . of costly gold (קָנֹר: see at ch. vi. 20). *The house of Jehovah* is indeed here, as in ver. 40, the temple with its courts, and not merely the Holy Place, or the temple-house in the stricter sense; but it by no means follows from this that כָּל-הַכֵּלִים, "all the vessels," includes both the brazen vessels already enumerated and also the golden vessels mentioned afterwards. A decisive objection to our taking the כָּל (all) as referring to those already enumerated as well as those which follow, is to be found in the circumstance that the sentence commencing with וַיַּעַז is only concluded with וְהָבָה קָנֹר in ver. 49. It is evident from this that כָּל-הַכֵּלִים is particularized in the several vessels enumerated from אֶת-כִּזְבֵּחַ onwards. These vessels no doubt belonged to the Holy Place or temple-house only; though this is not involved in the expression "the house of Jehovah," but is apparent from the context, or from the fact that all the vessels of the court have already been enumerated in vers. 40-46, and were made of brass, whereas the *golden* vessels follow here. That these were intended for the Holy Place is assumed as well known from the analogy of the tabernacle. אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָה merely affirms that the vessels mentioned afterwards belonged to the house of God, and were not prepared for the palace of Solomon or any other earthly purpose. We cannot infer from the expression "*Solomon* made" that the golden vessels were not made by Hiram the artist, as the brazen ones were (Thenius). Solomon is simply named as the builder of the temple, and the introduction of his name was primarily occasioned by ver. 47. The "golden altar" is the altar of incense in the Holy Place, which is called golden because it was overlaid with gold-plate; for, according to ch. vi. 20, its sides were covered with cedar wood, after the analogy of the golden altar in the tabernacle (Ex xxx. 1-5). "And the table, upon which the shew-bread, of gold." וְהָבָה belongs to הַשֻּׁלְחָן, to which it stands in free subjection (*vid.* Ewald, § 287, *h*), signifying "the golden table." Instead of הַשֻּׁלְחָן we have הַשֻּׁלְחָנוֹת in 2 Chron. iv. 13 (the tables), because there it has already been stated in ver. 8 that ten tables were made, and put in the Holy Place. In our account that verse is omitted; and hence there is only a notice of *the* table upon which the loaves of shew-bread generally lay, just as in 2 Chron. xxix. 18, in which the chronicler does not contradict



himself, as Thenius fancies. The number ten, moreover, is required and proved to be correct in the case of the tables, by the occurrence of the same number in connection with the candlesticks. In no single passage of the Old Testament is it stated that there was only one table of shew-bread in the Holy Place of Solomon's temple.<sup>1</sup> The tables were certainly made of wood, like the Mosaic table of shew-bread, probably of cedar wood, and only overlaid with gold (see at Ex. xxv. 23-30). "And the candlesticks, five on the right and five on the left, before the back-room." These were also made in imitation of the Mosaic candlestick (see Ex. xxv. 31 sqq.), and were probably placed not near to the party wall in a straight line to the right and left of the door leading into the Most Holy Place, but along the two longer sides of the Holy Place; and the same with the tables, except that they stood nearer to the side walls with the candlesticks in front of them, so that the whole space might be lighted more brilliantly. The altar of burnt-offering, on the contrary, stood in front of and very near to the entrance into the Most Holy Place (see at ch. vi. 20).—In the following clause (vers. 49<sup>b</sup> and 50<sup>a</sup>) the ornaments of the candlesticks are mentioned first, and then the rest of the smaller golden vessels are enumerated. הַפֶּהַר, the flower-work, with which the candlesticks were ornamented (see Ex. xxv. 33). The word is evidently used collectively here, so that the נְבִיעִים mentioned along with them in the book of Exodus (*l.c.*) are included. הַנֵּרֹת, the lamps, which were placed upon the shaft and arms of the candlestick (Ex. xxv. 37). הַמִּלְקָחִים, the snuffers (Ex. xxv. 38). כַּפֹּת, basins in Ex. xii. 22, here probably deep dishes (*Schalen*). מִזְרָקוֹת, knives. מִזְרָקוֹת, bowls (*Schalen*) or cans with spouts for the wine for the libations; according to 2 Chron. iv. 8, there were a hundred of these made. כַּפֹּת, small flat vessels,

<sup>1</sup> Nothing can be learned from 2 Chron. xxix. 18 concerning the number of the vessels in the Holy Place. If we were to conclude from this passage that there were no more vessels in the Holy Place than are mentioned there, we should also have to assume, if we would not fall into a most unscientific inconsistency, that there was neither a candlestick nor a golden altar of incense in the Holy Place. The correct meaning of this passage may be gathered from the words of king Abiam in 2 Chron. xiii. 11: "We lay the shew-bread upon *the* pure table, and light *the* golden candlestick every evening;" from which it is obvious that here and there only the table and the candlestick are mentioned, because usually only one table had shew-bread upon it, and only one candlestick was lighted.

probably for carrying the incense to the altar. *מִקְחָהוֹת*, extinguishers; see at Ex. xxv. 38.—Ver. 50*b*. The *פִּתּוֹת* were also of gold, possibly of inferior quality. These were either the *hinges* of the doors, or more probably the sockets, in which the pegs of the doors turned. They were provided for the doors of the inner temple, viz. the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. We must supply *Vāv* before *לְרִלְתָּ*.

All the vessels mentioned in vers. 48 and 49 belonged to the Holy Place of the temple, and were the same as those in the tabernacle; so that the remarks made in the Comm. on Ex. xxv. 30 and 39, and xxx. 1-10, as to their purpose and signification, apply to them as well. Only the number of the tables and candlesticks was ten times greater. If a multiplication of the number of these two vessels appeared appropriate on account of the increase in the size of the room, the number was fixed at ten, to express the idea of completeness by that number. No new vessel was made for the Most Holy Place, because the Mosaic ark of the covenant was placed therein (ch. viii. 4: compare the remarks on this at Ex. xxv. 10-22).—The account of the vessels of the temple is brought to a close in ver. 51: "So was ended all the work that king Solomon made in the house of the Lord; and Solomon brought all that was consecrated by his father, (namely) the silver and the gold (which were not wrought), and the vessels he placed in the treasuries of the house of Jehovah." As so much gold and brass had already been expended upon the building, it might appear strange that Solomon should not have used up all the treasures collected by his father, but should still be able to bring a large portion of it into the treasuries of the temple. But according to 1 Chron. xxii. 14, 16, and xxix. 2 sqq., David had collected together an almost incalculable amount of gold, silver, and brass, and had also added his own private treasure and the freewill offerings of the leading men of the nation (1 Chron. xxix. 7-9). Solomon was also able to devote to the building of the temple a considerable portion of his own very large revenues (cf. ch. x. 14), so that a respectable remnant might still be left of the treasure of the sanctuary, which was not first established by David, but had been commenced by Samuel and Saul, and in which David's generals, Joab and others, had deposited a portion of the gold and silver that they had taken as booty (1 Chron. xxvi. 20-28). For it is evident that not a little had found its



way into this treasure through the successful wars of David, from the fact that golden shields were taken from the generals of Hadadezer, and that these were consecrated to the Lord along with the silver, golden, and brazen vessels offered as gifts of homage by king Toi of Hamath, in addition to the gold and silver which David had consecrated from the defeated Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Amalekites (2 Sam. viii. 7, 11, 12; 1 Chron. xviii. 7, 10, 11).<sup>1</sup>

#### CHAP. VIII. DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

This solemn transaction consisted of three parts, and the chapter arranges itself in three sections accordingly: viz. (a) the conveyance of the ark and the tabernacle, together with its vessels, into the temple, with the words spoken by Solomon on the occasion (vers. 1-21); (b) Solomon's dedicatory prayer (vers. 22-53); (c) the blessing of the congregation, and the offering of sacrifice and observance of a feast (vers. 54-66).—The parallel account to this in 2 Chron. v. 2-vii. 10, in addition to certain minor alterations of words and constructions, intro-

<sup>1</sup> The amazing extent to which this booty may possibly have reached, may be inferred from the accounts we have concerning the quantity of the precious metals in Syria in the Macedonian age. In the *gaza regia* of Damascus, Alexander found 2600 talents of gold and 600 talents of uncoined silver (Curt. iii. 13, 16, cf. Arrian, ii. 11, 10). In the temple of Jupiter at Antioch there was a statue of this god of solid silver fifteen cubits high (Justin, xxxix. 2, 5, 6); and in the temple at Hierapolis there was also a golden statue (Lucian, *de Dea Syr.* § 31). According to Appian (*Parth.* 28, ed. Schweigh.), this temple was so full of wealth, that Crassus spent several days in weighing the vessels of silver and gold. And from the unanimous testimony of the ancients, the treasures of the palaces and temples of Asia in the earlier times were greater still. Of the many accounts which Bähr (*Symbolik*, i. p. 258 sqq.) and Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 40 sqq.) have collected together on this subject, we will mention only a few here, the credibility of which cannot be disputed. According to Varro (in Plin. xxxiii. 15), Cyrus had taken 34,000 pounds of gold as booty after the conquest of Asia, beside the gold wrought into vessels and ornaments, and 500,000 talents of silver. In Susa, Alexander took 40,000, or, according to other accounts, 50,000, talents from the royal treasury; or, as it is still more definitely stated, 40,000 talents of uncoined gold and silver, and 9000 talents of coined dariks. Alexander had these brought to Ecbatana, where he accumulated 180,000 talents. Antigonus afterwards found in Susa 15,000 talents more in vessels and wrought gold and silver. In Persepolis, Alexander took 120,000 talents, and in Pasargada 6000 talents. For the proofs, see Movers, pp. 42, 43.

duced for the most part merely for the sake of elucidation, contains here and there, and more especially towards the end, a few deviations of greater extent, partly omissions and partly additions. But in other respects it agrees almost word for word with our account.

With regard to the time of the dedication, it is merely stated in ver. 2 that the heads of the nation assembled at Jerusalem to this feast in the seventh month. The year in which this took place is not given. But as the building of the temple was finished, according to ch. vi. 33, in the eighth month of the eleventh year of Solomon's reign, the dedication which followed in the seventh month cannot have taken place in the same year as the completion of the building. Ewald's opinion, that Solomon dedicated the building a month before it was finished, is not only extremely improbable in itself, but is directly at variance with ch. vii. 51. If we add to this, that according to ch. ix. 1-10 it was not till after the lapse of twenty years, during which he had built the two houses, the temple, and his palace, that the Lord appeared to Solomon at the dedication of the temple and promised to answer his prayer, we must decide in favour of the view held by Thenius, that the dedication of the temple did not take place till twenty years after the building of it was begun, or thirteen years after it was finished, and when Solomon had also completed the building of the palace, which occupied thirteen years, as the LXX. have indicated at the commencement of ch. viii. 1 by the interpolation of the words *καὶ ἐγένετο ὥς συνετέλεσε Σαλωμών τοῦ οἰκοδομήσαι τὸν οἶκον Κυρίου καὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ μετὰ εἰκοσι ἔτη.*<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 1-21. The FIRST ACT of the solemnities consisted (1) in the removal of the ark of the covenant into the Most Holy Place of the temple (vers. 1-11); and (2) in the words with which Solomon celebrated the entrance of the Lord into the new temple (vers. 12-21).—Vers. 1-11. *Removal of the ark of the covenant into the temple.*—This solemn transaction was founded entirely upon the solemnities with which the ark was conveyed in the time of David from the house of Obed-edom into the holy tent upon Zion (2 Sam vi. 12 sqq.; 1 Chron. xv.

<sup>1</sup> From the whole character of the Alexandrian version, there can be no doubt that these words have been transferred by the LXX. from ch. ix. 1, and have not dropped out of the Hebrew text, as Thenius supposes.



2 sqq.). Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses (קְּנֵי בֵּית הָאָבוֹת, contracted from קְּנֵי אֲבֹת בֵּית הָאָבוֹת, of the Israelites, as representatives of the whole congregation, to himself at Jerusalem, to bring the ark of the covenant out of the city of David, *i.e.* from Mount Zion (see the Comm. on 2 Sam. vi. 16, 17), into the temple which he had built upon Moriah. (On the use of the contracted form of the imperfect יִקְהַל after אָז, see Ewald, § 233, *b.*)—Ver. 2. Accordingly “all the men of Israel (*i.e.* the heads of the tribes and families mentioned in ver. 1) assembled together to the king in the month Ethanim, *i.e.* the seventh month, at the feast.” Gesenius explains the name הָאֶתָנִים (in 55 codd. הָאֶתָנִים) as meaning “month of the flowing brooks,” after אֶתָּן in Prov. xiii. 15; Böttcher, on the other hand, supposes it to denote the equinox. But apart from other grounds, the plural by no means favours this. Nor does the seventh month answer to the period between the middle of our September and the middle of October, as is supposed by Thenius, who founds upon this supposition the explanation already rejected by Böttcher, *viz.* “month of gifts;” but it corresponds to the period between the new moon of October and the new moon of November, during which the rainy season commences in Palestine (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 96 sqq.), so that this month may very well have received its name from the constant flowing of the brooks. The explanation, “that is the seventh month,” is added, however (here as in ch. vi. 1, 38), not because the arrangement of the months was a different one before the captivity (Thenius), but because different names came into use for the months during the captivity. בָּתָּן is construed with the article: “because the feast intended was one that was well known, and had already been kept for a long time (*viz.* the feast of tabernacles).” The article overthrows the explanation given by Thenius, who supposes that the reference is to the festivities connected with the dedication of the temple itself.—Vers. 3, 4. After the arrival of all the elders (*i.e.* of the representatives of the nation, more particularly described in ver. 1), the priests carried the ark and brought it up (*sc.* into the temple), with the tabernacle and all the holy vessels in it. The expression וַיַּעֲלֵי אֹתָם, which follows, introduces as a supplementary notice, according to the general diffuseness of the early Hebrew style of narrative, the more precise statement that the priests and Levites brought up these

sacred vessels. אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד is not the tent erected for the ark of the covenant upon Zion, which can be proved to have been never so designated, and which is expressly distinguished from the former in 2 Chron. i. 4 as compared with ver. 3, but is the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon in front of which Solomon had offered sacrifice (ch. iii. 4). The tabernacle with the vessels in it, to which, however, the ark of the covenant, that had long been separated from it, did not belong, was probably preserved as a sacred relic in the rooms above the Most Holy Place. The ark of the covenant was carried by priests on all solemn occasions, according to the spirit of the law, which enjoined, in Num. iii. 31 and iv. 5 sqq., that the ark of the covenant and the rest of the sacred vessels should be carried by the Levites, after the priests had carefully wrapped them up; and the Levites were prohibited from directly touching them, on pain of death. When, therefore, the ark of the covenant was carried in solemn procession, as in the case before us, probably uncovered, this could only be done by the priests, more especially as the Levites were not allowed to enter the Most Holy Place. Consequently, by the statement in ver. 3<sup>b</sup>, that the priests and Levites carried *them* (אֹתָם), viz. the objects mentioned before, we are to understand that the ark of the covenant was carried into the temple by the priests, and the tabernacle with its vessels by the Levites<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 5. "And king Solomon and the whole congregation, that had gathered round him, were with him before the ark sacrificing sheep and oxen in innumerable multitude." This took place while the ark of the covenant was carried up, no doubt when it was brought into the court of the temple, and was set down there for a time either within or in front of the hall. Then was this magnificent sacrifice "offered" there "in front of the ark" (לִפְנֵי הָאָרְן).—Ver. 6. After this sacrificing was ended, the priests carried the ark to its place, into the back-room of the house, into the Most Holy under the wings of the cherubim (already described in ch.

<sup>1</sup> Instead of כֹּהֲנִים in ver. 3, we have קֹהֲנִים in 2 Chron. v. 4; and instead of הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם in ver. 4, we have הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם, "the Levitical priests." These variations are to be attributed to inexactness in expression. For it is obvious that Thenius is wrong in his notion that the chronicler mentioned the Levites instead of the priests, from the simple fact that he states in ver. 7 that "the priests carried the ark," etc., in exact agreement with our account.



vi. 23 sqq.). The latter statement is explained in ver. 7. "For the cherubim were spreading out wings towards the place of the ark, and so covered (lit. threw a shade) over the ark and over its poles from above." If the outspread wings of the great cherubic figures threw a shade not only over the ark of the covenant, but also over its poles, the ark was probably so placed that the poles ran from north to south, and not from east to west, as they are sketched in my *Archäologie*.—Ver. 8. "And the poles were long, and there were seen their heads (*i.e.* they were so long that their heads were seen) from the Holy Place before the hinder room; but on the outside (outside the Holy Place, say in the porch) they were not seen." יָאֲרְכוּ cannot be rendered: they had lengthened the poles, from which Kimchi and others have inferred that they had made new and longer carrying-poles, since the form of the tense in this connection cannot be the pluperfect, and in that case, moreover, the object would be indicated by אֵת as in ch. iii. 14; but הָאֲרָיִךְ is used intransitively, "to be long," lit. to show length, as in Ex. xx. 12, Deut. v. 16, etc. The remark to the effect that the poles were visible, indicates that the precept of the law in Ex. xxv. 15, according to which the poles were to be left in the ark, was observed in Solomon's temple also. Any one could convince himself of this, for the poles were there "to this day." The author of our books has retained this chronological allusion as he found it in his original sources; for when he composed his work, the temple was no longer standing. It is impossible, however, to ascertain from this statement how the heads of the poles could be seen in the Holy Place,—whether from the fact that they reached the curtain and formed elevations therein, if the poles ran from front to back; or whether, if, as is more probable, they ran from south to north, the front heads were to be seen, simply when the curtain was drawn back.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 9. "There was nothing in the ark but the two tables of stone, which Moses had put there at Horeb, when Jehovah concluded the covenant with Israel." The intention of this remark is

<sup>1</sup> The proof which Thenius has endeavoured to give by means of a drawing of the correctness of the latter view, is founded upon untenable assumptions (see Böttcher, *Æhrenl.* ii. p. 69). It by no means follows from the expression עַל־פְּנֵי דְבַיִר that the heads of the poles were visible as far off as the door of the Holy Place, but simply that they could be seen in the Holy Place, though not outside.

also simply to show that the law, which enjoined that the ark should merely preserve the stone tables of the covenant (Ex. xxv. 16, xl. 20), had not been departed from in the lapse of time. **אִשֶּׁר** before **כִּרְתָּ** is not a pronoun, but a conjunction: when, from the time that, as in Deut. xi. 6, etc. **כִּרְתָּ** without **כִּרְתָּ**, signifying the conclusion of a covenant, as in 1 Sam. xx. 16, xxii. 8, etc. *Horeb*, the general name for the place where the law was given, instead of the more definite name *Sinai*, as in Deuteronomy (see the Comm. on Ex. xix. 1, 2).<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 10, 11. At the dedication of the tabernacle the glory of Jehovah in the cloud filled the sanctuary, so that Moses could not enter (Ex. xl. 34, 35); and so was it now. When the priests came out of the sanctuary, after putting the ark of the covenant in its place, the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not stand to minister. The signification of this fact was the same on both occasions. The cloud, as the visible symbol of the gracious presence of God, filled the temple, as a sign that Jehovah the covenant-God had entered into it, and had chosen it as the scene of His gracious manifestation in Israel. By the inability of the priests to stand, we are not to understand that the cloud drove them away; for it was not till the priests had come out that it filled the temple. It simply means that they could not remain in the Holy Place to perform service, say to offer an incense-offering upon the altar to consecrate it, just as sacrifices were offered upon the altar of burnt-offering after the dedicatory prayer (vers. 62, 63).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The statement in Heb. ix. 4, to the effect that the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were also to be found in the ark, which is at variance with this verse, and which the earlier commentators endeavoured to bring into harmony with it by forced methods of different kinds, simply rests upon an erroneous interpretation of **לְפָנֵי הָעֵדֻת** in Ex. xvi. 33, 34, and Num. xvii. 25, which had become traditional among the Jews; since this merely affirms that the objects mentioned had been deposited in front of the testimony, i.e. in front of the ark which contained the testimony, and not within it, as the Jews supposed.—Still less are De Wette and others warranted in deducing from this verse an argument against the existence of the Mosaic book of the law in the time of Solomon, inasmuch as, according to the precept in Deut. xxxi. 26, the book of the law was not to be kept in the ark, but by the side of it, or near it.

<sup>2</sup> Bertheau's opinion (on 2 Chron. v. 14), that the priests could not remain in the hall and in front of it on account of the cloud, namely, "the cloud of smoke, which, ascending from the sacrifices burned upon the altar of burnt-offering, concealed the glory of the Lord," is decidedly erroneous. For the



The glory of the Lord, which is like a consuming fire (Ex. xxiv. 17; Deut. iv. 24, ix. 3), before which unholy man cannot stand, manifested itself in the cloud. This marvellous manifestation of the glory of God took place only at the dedication; after that the cloud was only visible in the Most Holy Place on the great day of atonement, when the high priest entered it.—The Chronicles contain a long account at this place of the playing and singing of the Levites at these solemnities (*vid.* 2 Chron. v. 12-14).

Vers. 12-21. *Solomon extols this marvellous proof of the favour of the Lord.*—Ver. 12. Then spake Solomon, “Jehovah hath spoken to dwell in the darkness.” “Solomon saw that the temple was filled with a cloud, and remembered that God had been pleased to appear in a cloud in the tent of Moses also. Hence he assuredly believed that God was in this cloud also, and that, as formerly He had filled the tabernacle, so He would now fill the temple and dwell therein” (Seb. Schmidt). אָמַר יְהוָה וְנִי, which Thenius still renders incorrectly, “the Lord intends to dwell in the darkness,” refers, as Rashi, C. a Lap., and others have seen, to the utterances of God in the Pentateuch concerning the manifestation of His gracious presence among His people, not merely to Lev. xvi. 2 (I will appear in the cloud), but also to Ex. xix. 9, where the Lord said to Moses, “I come to thee בָּעֶבֶךְ הָעָנָן,” and still more to Ex. xx. 21 and Deut. iv. 11, v. 19, according to which God came down upon Sinai בַּעֲרֵפָל. Solomon took the word עֲרֵפָל from these passages. That he meant by this the black, dark cloud which filled the temple, is perfectly obvious from the combination הָעָנָן וְהָעֲרֵפָל in Deut. v. 19 and iv. 11.<sup>1</sup> Solomon saw this word of Jehovah realized in

cloud which hindered the priests from performing the service was, according to the distinct words of the text, the cloud which filled the house; and the explanatory clause, “for the glory of the Lord filled the house of Jehovah,” indicates in the most unmistakeable terms that it was the vehicle of the glory of God, and therefore was not a cloud of smoke formed by the burning sacrifices, but the cloud in which God manifested His invisible being to His people,—the very same cloud in which Jehovah was to appear above the Cappareth, when the high priest entered the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement, so that he was commanded not to enter it at all times, and, when he entered, to cover the Cappareth with the cloud of the burning incense (Lev. xvi. 2, 13).

<sup>1</sup> Thenius, however, has built up all kinds of untenable conjectures as to alterations of the text, upon the erroneous assumption that עָנָן means the

the filling of the temple with the cloud, and learned therefrom that the Lord would dwell in this temple. Hence, being firmly convinced of the presence of Jehovah in the cloud which filled the sanctuary, he adds in ver. 13: "I have built Thee a house to dwell in, a place for Thy seat for ever." We are not to understand עַלְיָיִם as signifying that Solomon believed that the temple built by him would stand for ever; but it is to be explained partly from the contrast to the previous abode of God in the tabernacle, which from the very nature of the case could only be a temporary one, inasmuch as a tent, such as the tabernacle was, is not only a moveable and provisional dwelling, but also a very perishable one, and partly from the promise given to David in 2 Sam vii. 14-16, that the Lord would establish the throne of his kingdom for his seed for ever. This promise involved the eternal duration of the gracious connection between God and Israel, which was embodied in the dwelling of God in the temple. This connection, from its very nature, was an eternal one; even if the earthly form, from which Solomon at that moment abstracted himself, was temporal and perishable.—Solomon had spoken these words with his face turned to the Most Holy Place. He then (ver. 14) turned his face to the congregation, which was standing in the court, and blessed it. The word "blessed" (בֵּרַךְ) denotes the wish for a blessing with which the king greeted the assembled congregation, and introduced the praise of God which follows.—In vers. 15-21 he praises the Lord for having now fulfilled with His hand what He spake with His mouth to his father David (2 Sam vii.)—Ver. 16. The promise of God, to choose Jerusalem as the place for the temple and David as prince, is taken freely from 2 Sam. vii. 7, 8. In 2 Chron. vi. 6, before "I chose David," we find "and I chose Jerusalem, that my name might be there;" so that the affirmation answers more precisely to the preceding negation, whereas in the account before us this middle term is omitted.—Vers. 17-19. David's intention to build the temple, and the answer of God that his son was to execute this work, are so far copied from 2 Sam. vii. 2, 12, 13, that God approves the intention of David as such. כִּי־כִנְיָהּ, "Thou didst well that it was in thy mind."—Vers. 20, 21. light and radiant cloud, and cannot be synonymous with עָרַבָה. Boucher adopts the same opinion, without taking any notice of the striking remarks of Bertheau on 2 Chron. v. 14.



“And Jehovah has set up His word.” *וַיָּקֶם יְהוָה* supplies the explanation of *כִּלְאָה בְּיָדוֹ* (hath fulfilled with his hand) in ver. 15. God had caused Solomon to take possession of the throne of David; and Solomon had built the temple and prepared a place there for the ark of the covenant. The ark is thereby declared to be the kernel and star of the temple, because it was the throne of the glory of God.

Vers. 22-53. SECOND ACT of the feast of dedication: *Solomon's dedicatory prayer* (cf. 2 Chron. vi. 12-42).—Ver. 22. “Then Solomon stood before the altar of Jehovah in front of all the assembly of Israel, and stretched out his hands towards heaven.” It is evident from ver. 54 that Solomon uttered the prayer which follows upon his knees. The Chronicles contain the same account as we have here, with this addition, that it is said to have taken place on a “scaffold,” or kind of pulpit (*בִּיִּיר*) specially erected for the purpose.<sup>1</sup> The altar, to the front of which Solomon went, was the altar of burnt-offering in the court, where the congregation was gathered together. The expression *נָגַד* *בְּלִפְנֵי קְהָל יִשְׂרָאֵל* favours the idea that Solomon offered the prayer upon his knees with his face turned towards the congregation, and not with his back to the people and his face turned towards the temple, as Thenius supposes.—The substance of the prayer is closely connected with the prayer of Moses, especially with the blessings and curses therein (*vid.* Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.). Commencing with the praise of God, who “keepeth covenant and truth” towards His servants, and has thus far performed to His servant David the promise that He gave him (vers. 23, 24), Solomon entreats the Lord still further to fulfil this promise of His (vers. 25, 26), and to keep His eyes constantly open over the temple, to hearken to the prayers of His people, and to avert the curse threatened against sinners from all who shall call upon Him in this temple (vers. 27-53).—Vers. 23, 24. By granting the blessing promised to His people, the Lord has

<sup>1</sup> Böttcher is right in his assertion, that the opinion expressed by Thenius and Cappellus, that this passage in the Chronicles has been dropped out of our text through a copyist's oversight, is a very improbable one; although the reasons he assigns are for the most part untenable. The omission may be explained in a very simple manner, from the fact that the introduction of this circumstance had no bearing upon the design or contents of the dedicatory prayer.

hitherto proved Himself to be the true and only God in heaven and on earth, who keepeth covenant and mercy with those who walk before Him with all their heart. This acknowledgment produces the requisite confidence for offering the prayer which is sure of an answer (Matt. xxi. 22; Mark xi. 24; Jas. i. 6). For **לְאֵלֵינוּ שָׁמַר חֶסֶד**, compare Ex. xv. 11 with Deut. iv. 39; 2 Sam. vii. 22, xxii. 32; Ps. lxxxvi. 8. "Who keepeth covenant and mercy," *verbatim* the same as in Deut. vii. 9. The promise given to His servant David (2 Sam. vii.), the fulfilment of which the commencement now lay before their eyes (cf. vers. 20, 21), was an emanation from the covenant faithfulness of God. "As it is this day," as in ch. iii. 6.—Ver. 25. The expression "and now" (**וְעַתָּה**) introduces the prayer for the further fulfilment of the promise, never to allow a successor upon the throne to be wanting to David, in the same conditional form in which David had uttered the hope in ch. ii. 4, and in which the Lord had renewed the promise to Solomon during the building of the temple (ch. vi. 12, 13). In **וְעַתָּה שָׁמַר חֶסֶד עִלְיָנוּ**, instead of **שָׁמַר חֶסֶד** in ch. ii. 4, the divine rejection is more distinctly indicated.—Ver. 26 is not merely a repetition of the prayer in ver. 25, as Thenius supposes, but forms the introduction to the prayers which follow for the hearing of all the prayers presented before the Lord in the temple. The words, "let Thy words be verified, which Thou spakest unto Thy servant David," contain something more than a prayer for the continual preservation of the descendants of David upon the throne, for the fulfilment of which Solomon prayed in ver. 25. They refer to the whole of the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12-16. The plural **דְּבָרֶיךָ** (*Cheshb*) points back to **דְּבָרֶיךָ** in 2 Sam. vii. 17, and is not to be altered into the singular after the *Keri*. The singular **דְּבָרְךָ** is used as it frequently is with the subject in the plural, when the verb precedes (cf. Ewald, § 316, a, 1). Solomon has here in mind one particular point in the promise, viz. that God would not withdraw His mercy from the seed of David, even when it sinned. This is evident from what follows, where he mentions simply cases of transgression, and prays that they may be forgiven.—Vers. 26-28 *seqq.* are closely connected in this sense: Keep Thy words that were spoken to David; for although this temple cannot hold Thine infinite divine nature, I know that Thou wilt have respect to the prayer of Thy servant, to keep Thine eyes open over this temple, to hear every prayer which



Thy people shall bring before Thee therein. וּפָנִיךָ in ver. 28 continues the optative אֲנִי אֶשְׁכֵּן in ver. 26; and ver. 27 contains an intermediate thought, with which Solomon meets certain contracted ideas of the gracious presence of God in the temple. כִּי (ver. 27) signifies neither but, nevertheless, *atqui* (Böttcher), nor "as" (Thenius, Bertheau); and the assertion that ver. 27 is the commencement of a new section is overthrown by the inadmissible rendering of וּפָנִיךָ, "but Thou turnest Thyself" (Thenius).—With the words, "Should God really dwell upon the earth! behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens (*i.e.* the heavens in their widest extent, cf. Deut. x. 14) cannot contain Thee, to say nothing (אֵיךָ כִּי; cf. Ewald, § 354, c) of this house which I have built," in which the infinitude of God and His exaltation above the world are expressed as clearly and forcibly as possible, Solomon does not intend to guard against the delusion that God really dwells in temples (J. D. Mich.), but simply to meet the erroneous idea that He dwells in the temple as men dwell in a house, namely, shut up within it, and not also outside and above it,—a delusion which sometimes forced its way into the unspiritual nation, but which was always attacked by the prophets (cf. Mic. iii. 11; Jer. vii. 4, etc.). For it is evident that Solomon did combine with his clear perception of the infinite exaltation of God a firm belief in His real presence in the temple, and did not do homage to the abstract idealism of the rationalists, not merely from his declaration in vers. 12 sqq. that he had built this temple as a dwelling-place for God, but also from the substance of all the following prayers, and primarily from the general prayer in vers. 28 and 29, that God would take this temple under His special protection, and hearken to every prayer directed towards it. The distinction between תַּפִּלָּה, תַּחֲנֻנָּה, and רִנָּה is the following: תַּפִּלָּה denotes prayer in general, praise, supplication, and thanksgiving; תַּחֲנֻנָּה, supplication or entreaty, prayer for help and mercy; and רִנָּה, jubilation, prayer as the joyous utterance of praise and thanksgiving.—Ver. 29. "That Thine eyes may be open upon this house night and day." אֶל־הַבַּיִת, *speciali quadam providentia in hanc domum directi* (Mich.). The following clause, "upon the place of which Thou hast said, My name shall be there" (namely, 2 Sam. vii. 13, *implicite*), contains within itself the ground upon which the prayer rests. Because the name of God will be in the temple, *i.e.* because God will mani-

fest His gracious presence there, He will also keep His eyes open upon it, so as to hear the prayer of Solomon directed towards it. **אֶל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה** (toward this place): because Solomon also was praying in the court towards the temple.—In ver. 30, “and hear the supplication of Thy servant and of Thy people Israel,” he begins by asking that those prayers may be heard which the king and people shall henceforth bring before God in the temple. **וְשָׁמַעְתָּ** corresponds to **וַיִּשְׁמָע** in ver. 28, and is more precisely defined by the following **וְאָתָה תִּשְׁמָע** (as for these prayers), Thou wilt hear them up to the place of Thine abode, to heaven. **לִשְׁמָע** is a pregnant expression: to hear the prayer, which ascends to heaven. In the Chronicles we find throughout the explanatory **וְ**. The last words, “hear and forgive,” must be left in their general form, and not limited by anything to be supplied. Nothing but forgiveness of sin can remove the curse by which transgression is followed.

This general prayer is then particularized from ver. 31 onwards by the introduction of *seven* special petitions for an answer in the different cases in which, in future, prayers may be offered to God in the temple. The *first* prayer (vers. 31, 32) has reference to the oaths sworn in the temple, the sanctity of which God is asked to protect. “If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him, to cause him to swear, and he come (and) swear before the altar in this house, then wilt Thou hear,” etc. **כִּי אִם אִשָּׁר** does not mean either “granted that” (Thennus) or “just *when*” (Ewald, § 533, a), although **אִם** is used in the Chronicles, and we might render it freely “*when* ;” but **אִם** is simply an accusative particle, serving to introduce the following clause, in the sense of “as for,” or “with regard to (such a case as) that a man sins” (*vid.* Ewald, § 277, a). **וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִי** cannot be taken as anything but an *asyndeton*. For if **אֱלֹהִי** were a substantive, it would have the article (**הָאֱלֹהִי**) provided it were the subject, and the verb would be written **וַיִּבְרָא**; and if it were the object, we should have **וַיִּבְרָאֵהוּ**, as in Neh. x. 30 (*cf.* Ezek. xvii. 13). The prayer refers to the cases mentioned in Ex. xxii. 6–12 and Lev. v. 21–24, when property entrusted to any one had been lost or injured, or when a thing had been found and the finding was denied, or when an act of fraud had been committed; in which cases the law required not only compensation with the addition of a fifth of its value, but also a trespass-offering as an expiation of the sin committed by taking



a false oath. But as this punishment could only be inflicted when the guilty person afterwards confessed his guilt, many false oaths might have been sworn in the cases in question and have remained unpunished, so far as men were concerned. Solomon therefore prays that the Lord will hear every such oath that shall have been sworn before the altar, and work (עֲשֵׂיתָ), *i.e.* actively interpose, and judge His servants, to punish the guilty and justify the innocent. The construction תִּשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם (vers. 32, 34, 36, etc.) can be explained more simply from the adverbial use of the accusative (Ewald, § 300, *b*), than from אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם in ver. 30. תַּת דְּרָכָו בְּרֹאשׁוֹ, to give (bring) his way upon his head, *i.e.* to cause the merited punishment to fall upon him (cf. Ezek. ix. 10, xi. 21, etc.). הִרְשִׁיעַ רָשָׁע and הִצְדִּיק צָדִיק recall Deut. xxv. 2. For תַּת לוֹ בְּצַדִּיקוֹ compare 2 Sam. xxii. 21, 25.—The following cases are all taken from Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.

Vers. 33 and 34. The *second* petition,—“If Thy people Israel are smitten by the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and they turn to Thee and confess Thy name, . . . then hear . . . and bring them back into the land,”—refers to the threatenings in Lev. xxvi. 17 and Deut. xxviii. 25, where the nation is threatened with defeat and subjugation on the part of enemies, who shall invade the land, in which case prisoners of war are carried away into foreign lands, but the mass of the people remain in the land, so that they who are beaten can pray to the Lord in the temple, that He will forgive them their sin, save them out of the power of the enemy, and bring back the captives and fugitives into their fatherland.

Vers. 35 and 36. The *third* prayer refers to the remission of the punishment of drought threatened against the land, when the heaven is shut up, according to Lev. xxvi. 19, Deut. xi. 17, xxviii. 23. בִּי תַעֲנֶנּוּ, because Thou humblest them (LXX., Vulg.); not “that Thou hearest them” (Chald. and others). בִּי תוֹרֵם, because Thou teachest them the good way. These words correspond to בִּי תַעֲנֶנּוּ, and contain a motive for forgiveness. Because God teaches His people and seeks by means of chastisements to bring them back to the good way when they fail to keep His commandments, He must forgive when they recognise the punishment as a divine chastisement and come to Him with penitential prayer.

Vers. 37-40. The *fourth* prayer relates to the removal of other land-plagues: famine (Lev. xxvi. 19, 20, and 26; Deut. xxviii. 23); pestilence (Lev. xxvi. 25); blight and mildew

in the corn (Deut. xxviii. 22); locusts (לִבְיֹל, devourer, is connected with אֲרֵבָה without a copula,—in the Chronicles by *Vár*,—to depict the plague of locusts more vividly before their eyes after Deut. xxviii. 38); oppression by enemies in their own land; lastly, plagues and diseases of all kinds, such as are threatened against the rebellious in Lev. xxvi. 16 and Deut. xxviii. 59–61. יָצַר is not the imperfect *Kal* of יָצַר (Ges., Dietr., Furst, Olsh. *Gramm.* p. 524), but the imperfect *Hiphil* of יָצַר in Deut. xxviii. 52, as in Neh. ix. 27; and the difficult expression בְּאֶרְצוֹ שֶׁעָרֵי is probably to be altered into בְּאֶרְצוֹ שֶׁ, whilst שֶׁעָרֵי is either to be taken as a second object to יָצַר, as Luther supposes, or as in apposition to אֶרֶץ, in the land (in) his gates, as Bertheau assumes. The assertion of Thenius, that all the versions except the Vulgate are founded upon the reading בְּאֶרְצוֹ עָרֵי, is incorrect. כִּי יִהְיֶה is omitted after כָּל־תַּחֲתָאָה, since Solomon dropped the construction with which he commenced, and therefore briefly summed up all the prayers, addressed to God under the various chastisements here named, in the expression כָּל־תַּחֲתָאָה כָּל־תַּחֲתָאָה, which is placed absolutely at the opening of ver. 38. אִשָּׁר "when they perceive each one the stroke of his heart," i.e. not *dolor animi quem quisque sentit* (Vatab., Cl. a Lap.), but the plague regarded as a blow falling upon the heart, in other words, as a chastisement inflicted upon him by God. In all these cases may God hear his prayer, and do and give to every one according to his way. אִשָּׁר יִדְעֶנּוּ, "as Thou knowest his heart," i.e. as is profitable for every one according to the state of his heart or his disposition. God can do this, because He knows the hearts of all men (cf. Jer. xvii. 10). The purpose assigned for all this hearing of prayer (ver. 40), viz. "that they may fear Thee," etc., is the same as in Deut. iv. 10.

Vers. 41–43. The *fifth* prayer has reference to the hearing of the prayers of foreigners, who shall pray in the temple. Solomon assumes as certain that foreigners will come and worship before Jehovah in His temple; even Moses himself had allowed the foreigners living among the Israelites to offer sacrifice at the temple (Num. xv. 14 aqq.), and the great name and the arm of the Lord, that had manifested itself in deeds of omnipotence, had become known in the times of Moses to the surrounding nations (Ex. xv. 14, xviii. 1; Josh. v. 1), and the report of this had reached Balaam even in Mesopotamia (see the Comm. on Num. xxii.). אֲשֶׁלֶּךָ does not mean "as for the



foreigners" (Thenius), for  $\text{אֵל}$  is never used in this sense; but it is to be connected with  $\text{הַשָּׁמַיִם}$  in ver. 43, as  $\text{שָׁמַע אֵל}$  frequently occurs (Bertheau).—Ver. 42 is a parenthesis inserted in explanation of  $\text{לִמְעַן שָׁמְךָ}$ : "for they will hear," etc. The strong hand and the outstretched arm are connected together as a standing expression for the wondrous manifestations of the divine omnipotence in the guidance of Israel, as in Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, etc. With  $\text{וְהַתְּפִלָּה וְכָא מִאָרֶץ}$  the  $\text{וְכָא מִאָרֶץ}$  in ver. 41 is resumed, and the main thought continued.—Ver. 43. The reason for the hearing of the prayers of foreigners is "that all nations may know Thy name to fear Thee," etc., as in Deut. xxviii. 10. An examination of this original passage, from which  $\text{בִּי שְׁמֶךָ נִקְרָא}$   $\text{עַל וְנִי'}$  is taken and transferred to the temple, shows that the common explanations of this phrase, viz. "that this house is called after Thy name," or "that Thy name is invoked over this temple (at its dedication)," are erroneous. The name of the Lord is always used in the Scriptures to denote the working of God among His people or in His kingdom (see at 2 Sam. vi. 2). The naming of this name over the nation, the temple, etc., presupposes the working of God within it, and denotes the confession and acknowledgment of that working. This is obvious from such passages as Jer. xiv. 9, where the expression "Thy name is called over us" is only a further explanation of the word "Thou art in the midst of us;" and from Isa. lxiii. 19, where "we are they over whom Thou hast not ruled from eternity" is equivalent to "over whom Thy name has not been called." The name of Jehovah will be named over the temple, when Jehovah manifests His gracious presence within it in such a manner, that the nations who pray towards it experience the working of the living God within His sanctuary. It is in this sense that it is stated in 2 Sam. vi. 2 that the name of Jehovah is named above the ark of the covenant (see the Comm. *in loc.*).—There are no cases on record of the worship of foreigners in connection with Solomon's temple, though there are in connection with the temple built after the captivity (*vid.* Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8, 5, that of Alexander the Great; xii. 2, 5 sqq., that of Ptolemæus Philadelphus; and 2 Macc. iii. 2, 3, that of Seleucus).

Finally, in vers. 44-50 Solomon also asks, that when prayers are directed towards the temple by those who are far away both from Jerusalem and the temple, they may be heard. The *sixth* case, in vers. 44 and 45, is, if Israel should be engaged in war

with an enemy by the appointment of God; and the *seventh*, in vers. 46-50, is, if it should be carried away by enemies on account of its sins.<sup>1</sup> By the expression in ver. 44, "in the way which Thou sendest them," the war is described as one undertaken by the direction of God, whether waged against an enemy who has invaded the land, or outside the land of Canaan for the chastisement of the heathen dwelling around them. "And shall pray 'וְיָרֶד הָעִיר וְנִי' : i.e. in the direction towards the chosen city and the temple, namely, in faith in the actual presence of the covenant God in the temple. אֶל יְהוָה, "to Jehovah," instead of "to Thee," is probably introduced for the sake of greater clearness. וְיִשְׁמְרוּ כִּסְפֵּיהֶם, and secure them justice (cf. Deut. x. 18, Ps. ix. 5, etc.).—Vers. 46 sqq. In the seventh prayer, viz. if Israel should be given up to its enemies on account of its sins and carried away into the land of the enemy, Solomon had the threat in Lev. xxvi. 33 and 44 in his eye, though he does not confine his prayer to the exile of the whole nation foretold in that passage and in Deut. xxviii. 45 sqq., 64 sqq., and xxx. 1-5, but extends it to every case of transportation to an enemy's land. וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ אֶל לִבָּם, "and they take it to heart," compare Deut. iv. 39, and without the object, Deut. xxx. 1; not "they feel remorse," as Thenius supposes, because the *Hiphil* cannot have this reflective signification (Böttcher). The confession of sin in ver. 47, הִתְחַטַּט וְהִקְצִיט וְהִשְׁחָט, was adopted by the Jews when in captivity as the most exhaustive expression of their deep consciousness of guilt (Dan. ix. 5; Ps. cvi. 6). הִשְׁחָט, to slip, *labi*, depicts sin as a wandering from right;

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau (on Chron.) has already proved that there is no force in the arguments by which Thenius attempts to show, on doctrinal grounds, that vers. 44-51 are an interpolated addition. As he correctly observes, "it is, on the contrary, quite in harmony with the original plan, that the two cases are also anticipated, in which the prayers of Israelites who are at a distance from the seat of the sanctuary are directed towards the temple, since it is perfectly appropriate that the prayers of the Israelites at the place of the sanctuary are mentioned first, then the prayers of foreigners at the same place, and lastly the prayers of Israelites, who, because they are not in Jerusalem, are obliged to content themselves with turning their faces towards the temple. We might also point to the fact that it is probably intentional that exactly seven cases are enumerated, inasmuch as in enumerations of this kind, which are not restricted by the nature of the case to any definite measure, such a number as seven easily furnishes an outward limit,"—or more correctly: because seven as a sacred or covenant number was more appropriate than any other to embrace *all* prayers addressed to God.



הַעֲוֶה, to act perversely, as a conscious perversion of justice; and רָשָׁע as a passionate rebellion against God (cf. Isa. lvii. 20). —Ver. 50. וַיַּתֵּם לְרַחֲמִים: literally, “and make (place) them for compassion before their captors, that they may have compassion upon them,” i.e. cause them to meet with compassion from their enemies, who have carried them away.—In vers. 51-53 Solomon closes with general reasons, which should secure the hearing of his prayer on the part of God. Bertheau follows the earlier commentators in admitting that these reasons refer not merely to the last petitions, but to all the preceding ones.<sup>1</sup> The plea “for they are Thy people,” etc. (ver. 51), is taken from Deut. iv. 10; and that in ver. 53, “Thou didst separate them,” etc., is taken from Lev. xx. 24, 26, compared with Ex. xix. 5. לְהִיּוֹת עֵינֶיךָ וְנֹא, “that Thine eyes may be opened,” follows upon וְשָׁמְעָה (“then hear Thou”) in ver. 49; just as ver. 29 at the commencement of the prayer follows upon וּפָנִיָּה in ver. 28. The recurrence of the same expression shows that the prayer is drawing to a close, and is rounded off by a return to the thought with which it opened. “As Thou spakest by Moses” points back to Ex. xix. 5.—In 2 Chron. vi. 40-42 the conclusion of the prayer is somewhat altered, and closes with the appeal to the Lord to cause salvation and grace to go forth from the temple over His people.

Vers. 54-66. CONCLUDING ACT of the dedication of the temple. Vers. 54-61. *Blessing the congregation*.—After the conclusion of the prayer, Solomon rose up from his knees and blessed all the assembled congregation. וּכְפָיו פְּרוּשׁוֹת is a circumstantial clause, which must be connected with the previous words and rendered thus: “from lying upon his knees *with* his hands spread out towards heaven.” “And he stood,” i.e. he came from the altar and stood nearer to the assembled congregation. The blessing begins with praise to the Lord for the fulfilment of His promises (ver. 16), and consists in the petition that the Lord will always fulfil his (Solomon’s) prayers, and

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Schmidt has already given the following explanation: “These things which I have asked for myself and for my people do Thou, O Lord, because it is for Thy people that I have prayed, and I am their king: therefore hear Thou the prayers of Thy servant and Thy people. For in ver. 52 he makes mention of his own case and of the cases of all the rest, in which they would call upon the Lord.

grant His people the promised salvation<sup>1</sup>.—Ver. 56. The praise of Jehovah rests, so far as the first part is concerned, upon the promise in Deut. xii. 9, 10, and upon its fulfilment in Josh. xxi. 44, 45 and xxiii. 14; and the second part is founded upon Lev. xxvi. 3-13 and Deut. xxviii. 1-14, where the "good word, which the Lord spake by Moses," is more precisely described as the blessing which the Lord had promised to His people and had hitherto bestowed upon them. He had already given Israel rest by means of Joshua when the land of Canaan was taken; but since many parts of the land still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, this rest was only fully secured to them by David's victories over all their enemies. This glorious fulfilment warranted the hope that the Lord would also fulfil in the future what He had promised His servant David (2 Sam. vii. 10), if the people themselves would only faithfully adhere to their God. Solomon therefore sums up all his wishes for the good of the kingdom in vers. 57-61 in the words, "May Jehovah our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us nor forsake us, so incline our heart to Himself, that we may walk in all His ways," etc.—that the evil word predicted by Moses in Lev. xxvi. 14 seq., Deut. xxviii. 15, may not fall upon us. For ver. 57 compares Deut. xxxi. 6, 8, and Josh. i. 5. וְעָזַר יְהוָה corresponds to יִסְרֹף יְהוָה in these passages. In the Pentateuch וְעָזַר is used but once of men who forsake the Lord, viz. Deut. xxxii. 15; in other cases it is only used in the general sense of casting away, letting alone, and other similar meanings. It is first used of God, in the sense of for-

<sup>1</sup> This blessing is omitted from the Chronicles, because it is simply a recapitulation of the latter prayer; but instead of it we have a statement, in 2 Chron. vii. 1-4, to the effect that fire fell from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering upon the altar. This statement, which even Movers regards as a traditional, i.e. a legendary addition, according to his erroneous view of the course of the Chronicles, is confirmed by the similar miracle which occurred at the dedication of the temple. It is omitted, like so many other things in the account before us, because all that was essential in this occurrence was contained *implicitly* in the filling of the temple with the glory of the Lord. Just as at the consecration of the Mosais sanctuary the Lord did not merely manifest His gracious presence through the cloud which filled the tent, but also kindled the first sacrifice with fire from heaven (Lev. ix. 24), to sanctify the altar as the legitimate place of sacrifice; so also at the temple the miraculous kindling of the first sacrifice with fire from heaven was the immediate and even necessary consequence of the filling of the temple with the cloud, in which the presence of Jehovah was embodied.



saking His people, in Ps. xxvii. 9 in connection with עֶזְרָא; and it frequently occurs afterwards in Jeremiah.—Ver. 59. May these my words, which I have prayed (vers. 25-43), be near to Jehovah our God day and night, that He may secure the right of His servant (the king) and of His people, as every day demands. רַבֵּר יִם בְּיָמֵי, as in Ex. v. 13, xvi. 4.—For ver. 60 compare ver. 43.—Ver. 61. Let your heart be 'שָׁלֵם עִם', wholly, undividedly devoted to the Lord (cf. ch. xi. 4, xv. 3, 14, etc.).

Vers. 62-66. *Sacrifices and feast*.—Vers. 62, 63. The dedicatory prayer was followed by a magnificent sacrifice offered by the king and all Israel. The thank-offering (זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים) consisted, in accordance with the magnitude of the manifestation of divine grace, of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. This enormous number of sacrificial animals, in which J. D. Michaelis found serious difficulties, Thenius endeavours to set aside as too large, by calculating that as these sacrifices were offered in seven days, reckoning the sacrificial day at twelve full hours, there must have been about five oxen and about twenty-five sheep slaughtered and offered in sacrifice every minute for the king alone. This calculation would be conclusive, if there were any foundation for the three assumptions upon which it rests: namely, (1) that the number of sacrifices mentioned was offered for the king alone; (2) that the slaughtering and preparation of the sacrificial animals could only be performed by the priests and Levites; and (3) that the whole of the flesh of these sacrificial animals was to be consumed upon the altar. But these three assumptions are all erroneous. There is nothing in the account about their being "for the king alone." For it is obvious that the words "and Solomon offered a sacrifice" are not to be understood as signifying that the king had these sacrifices offered for himself alone, but that the words refer to the sacrifices offered by the king and all Israel for the consecration of the temple, from the simple fact that in ver. 62 "Solomon and all Israel" are expressly mentioned as offering sacrifice, and that after the statement of the number of the sacrifices we find these words in ver. 63: "so the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of Jehovah." Moreover it is very evident from the law in Lev. i. and iii. that at the offering of sacrifice the slaughtering, flaying, and preparation of the sacrificial animals were performed by any Israelite, and that it was only the sprinkling of the blood against the

altar and the burning of the sacrificial portions upon the altar which were the exclusive province of the priests. In order to form a correct idea of the enormous number of sacrifices which could be slaughtered on any one day, we will refer again to the notice in Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 9, 3) already mentioned in the *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, vol. iii. p. 51 (translation), that in the reign of the emperor Nero the procurator *Cestius* directed the priests to count the number of the paschal lambs, and that they counted 250,000, which were slaughtered for the passover between the ninth and eleventh hours of the day, and of which the blood was sprinkled upon the altar. If then it was possible at that time to slaughter more than 250,000 lambs in three hours of the afternoon, and to sprinkle the blood upon the altar, there can have been no difficulty in slaughtering and sacrificing 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep at the dedication of the temple on each of the seven days of the festival. As all Israel from Hamath to the brook of Egypt came to Jerusalem to this festival, we shall not be above the mark if we estimate the number of the heads of houses present at 100,000. And with very little trouble they could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep a day and prepared them for sacrificing. How many priests took an active part in this, we do not indeed know, in fact we have no information as to the number of the priests in Solomon's time; but we know that in the time of David the number of Levites qualified for service, reckoning from their thirtieth year, was 38,000, so that we may certainly assume that there were two or three thousand priests. Now if only the half of these Levites and priests had come to Jerusalem to the dedication of the temple, they alone could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep every day. And would not a thousand priests have been sufficient to sprinkle the blood of so many animals upon the altar and to burn the fat between the morning and evening sacrifice? If we divided these sacrifices among a thousand priests, each one would only have had to attend to the sprinkling of the blood and burning of the fat of three oxen and eighteen sheep each day.—But the brazen altar of burnt-offering might not have been large enough for the burning of so many sacrifices, notwithstanding the fact that only the fat portions of the thank-offerings were consumed, and they did not require much room; since the morning and evening burnt-offerings were added daily, and as festal offerings



they would certainly not consist of a lamb only, but at least of one bullock, and they were burned whole, although the altar of burnt-offering with a surface of 144 square yards (see my *bibl. Archäol.* i. p. 127) would hold a very large quantity of sacrificial flesh at once. In ver. 64, however, it is expressly stated that Solomon sanctified the middle of the court, which was before the house of Jehovah, to burn the burnt-offering and meat-offering and the fat portions of the thank-offerings there, because the brazen altar was too small to hold these sacrifices. "The middle of the court" (תֹּךְ הַחֲצֵר) is the whole of the inner portion of the court of the priests, which was in front of the temple-house and formed the centre of the court surrounding the temple. Of course we have not to imagine that the sacrifices were offered upon the stone pavement of the court, but must assume that there were auxiliary altars erected in the inner court around the brazen altar. By the burnt-offering and the meat-offering (belonging to it: אֶת־הָעוֹלָה וְאֶת־הַמִּנְחָה) we are not to understand certain burnt-offerings, which were offered for a definite number of thank-offerings, as Thenius supposes. The singular and the definite article are both at variance with this. The reference is rather to the (well-known) daily morning and evening burnt-offerings with their meat-offering, and in this case, no doubt, to such a festal sacrifice as is prescribed in Num. xxviii. for the great yearly feasts.—Ver. 65. Thus Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from the neighbourhood of Hamath to the brook of Egypt, *i.e.* from the whole land in its fullest extent from north to south. "The district of *Hamath*," *i.e.* *Epiphania* on the Orontes, is mentioned as the northern boundary (cf. Num. xxxiv. 8, xiii. 21, Josh. xiii. 5, etc.); and "the brook of Egypt" (נַחַל מִצְרַיִם), *Rhinocorura*, as the southern boundary (cf. Num. xxxiv. 8, Josh. xv. 4). "The feast" (הַחֵג), which Solomon held with the people "seven days and seven days, fourteen days," is not the feast of the dedication, but, as in ver. 2, the feast of tabernacles, which fell in the seventh month; and the meaning of the verse is, that on that occasion the feast of the seventh month was kept for fourteen days, namely, seven days as the feast of the dedication, and seven days as the feast of tabernacles. We are obliged to take the words in this way, partly on account of the evident reference to כֹּהֵג (at the feast) in ver. 2 in the expression אֶת־הַחֵג (the feast) in this verse, and partly on account of the statement which follows in

ver. 66, "and on the eighth day he sent the people away." The "eighth day" is not the first day of the feast of tabernacles (Thenius); but the eighth day, as the conclusion of the feast of tabernacles, עֲצֵרֶת (Lev. xxiii. 36). The correctness of this view is placed beyond all doubt by the context in the Chronicles, which states more clearly that, "Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him . . . and they kept עֲצֵרֶת (the closing feast) on the eighth day; for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days; and on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away." The feast of tabernacles lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st, with a closing festival on the eighth day, *i.e.* the 22d of the month (Lev. xxiii. 33-39). This festival was preceded by the dedication of the temple from the 8th to the 14th of the month. The statement in ver. 66, "on the eighth day he sent the people away," if we take the words in their strict sense, is at variance with the statement in the Chronicles, "on the 23d day," since the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles was the 22d day of the month; but it may easily be accounted for from want of precision in a well-known matter. Solomon sent the people away on the eighth day, *i.e.* on the afternoon or evening of the *atzeveth* of the feast of tabernacles, so that on the morning of the next day, *i.e.* on the 23d of the month, the people took their journey home, "joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to His servant David and to the people." *David* is mentioned, because the completion of the building of the temple was the fulfilment of the divine promise given to him. "Tents," for houses, as in 2 Sam. xx. 1, Judg. vii. 8, and other passages.

CHAP. IX. THE ANSWER TO SOLOMON'S PRAYER. THE MEANS  
EMPLOYED FOR THE ERECTION OF HIS BUILDINGS.

VERS. 1-9. THE ANSWER OF THE LORD TO SOLOMON'S DEDICATORY PRAYER (cf. 2 Chron. vii. 11-22).—Vers. 1, 2. When Solomon had finished the building of the temple, and of his palace, and of all that he had a desire to build, the Lord appeared to him the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon, *i.e.* by night in a dream (see ch. iii. 5), to promise him that his prayer should be answered. For the point of time, see at ch. viii. 1. כָּל־שְׁלֹשָׁה, all Solomon's desire or pleasure, is para-



phrased thus in the Chronicles: כָּל־הַקָּבָא עַל לֵב, "all that came into his mind," and, in accordance with the context, is very properly restricted to these two principal buildings by the clause, "in the house of Jehovah and in his own house."—Vers. 3 sqq. The divine promise to Solomon, that his prayer should be answered, is closely connected with the substance of the prayer; but in our account we have only a brief summary, whereas in the Chronicles it is given more elaborately (*vid.* 2 Chron. vii. 12-16). "I have sanctified this house which thou hast built, to put my name there." For the expression, see Deut. xii. 11. The sanctifying consisted in the fact, that Jehovah put His name in the temple; *i.e.* that by filling the temple with the cloud which visibly displayed His presence, He consecrated it as the scene of the manifestation of His grace. To Solomon's prayer, "May Thine eyes stand open over this house" (ch. viii. 29), the Lord replies, giving always more than we ask, "My eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually."—Vers. 4 and 5 contain the special answer to ch. viii. 25 and 26.—Vers. 6-9 refer to the prayer for the turning away of the curse, to which the Lord replies: If ye and your children turn away from me, and do not keep my commandments, but worship other gods, this house will not protect you from the curses threatened in the law, but they will be fulfilled in all their terrible force upon you and upon this temple. This threat follows the Pentateuch exactly in the words in which it is expressed; ver. 7 being founded upon Deut. xxviii. 37, 45, and 63, and the curse pronounced upon Israel in Deut. xxix. 23-26 being transferred to the temple in vers. 8 and 9.—שָׁלַח מִעַל פָּנַי, to dismiss, *i.e.* to reject from before my face. "This house will be עָלִיז," *i.e.* will stand high, or through its rejection will be a lofty example for all that pass by. The temple stood upon a high mountain, so that its ruins could not fail to attract the attention of all who went past. The expression עָלִיז is selected with an implied allusion to Deut. xxvi. 19 and xxviii. 1. God there promises to make Israel עָלִיז, high, exalted above all nations. This blessing will be turned into a curse. The temple, which was high and widely renowned, shall continue to be high, but in the opposite sense, as an example of the rejection of Israel from the presence of God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The conjecture of Böttcher, Thenius, and Bertheau, that עָלִיז should be altered into דַּיִץ, has no support in Mic. iii. 12, Jer. xxvi. 18, and Ps. lxxix. 1,

Vers. 10-28. THE MEANS BY WHICH THE BUILDINGS WERE ERECTED.—In order that all which still remained to be said concerning Solomon's buildings might be grouped together, different notices are introduced here, namely, as to his relation to Hiram, the erection of several fortresses, and the tributary labour, and also as to his maritime expeditions; and these heterogeneous materials are so arranged as to indicate the resources which enabled Solomon to erect so many and such magnificent buildings. These resources were: (1) his connection with king Hiram, who furnished him with building materials (vers. 10-14); (2) the tributary labour which he raised in his kingdom (vers. 15-25); (3) the maritime expedition to Ophir, which brought him great wealth (vers. 26-28). But these notices are very condensed, and, as a comparison with the parallel account in 2 Chron. viii. shows, are simply incomplete extracts from a more elaborate history. In the account of the tributary labour, the enumeration of the cities finished and fortified (vers. 15-19) is interpolated; and the information concerning the support which was rendered to Solomon in the erection of his buildings by Hiram (vers. 11-14), is merely supplementary to the account already given in ch. v. Vers. 24 and 25 point still more clearly to an earlier account, since they would be otherwise unintelligible.—In 2 Chron. viii. the arrangement is a simpler one: the buildings are first of all enumerated in vers. 1-6, and the account of the tributary labour follows in vers. 7-11.

Vers. 10-14. The notices concerning *Solomon's connection with Hiram* are very imperfect, for ver. 14 does not furnish a conclusion either in form or substance. The notice in 2 Chron. viii. 1, 2 is still shorter, but it supplies an important addition to the account before us.—Vers. 10 and 11 form one and has all the ancient versions against it; for they all contain the Masoretic text, either in a verbal translation (LXX.), or in a paraphrase, as for example the Chaldee, "the house that was high shall be destroyed;" the Syriac and Arabic, "this house will be destroyed;" and the Vulgate, *domus hæc erit in exemplum*.—In 2 Chron. vii. 21 the thought is somewhat varied by the alteration of *הָיָה* into *אֶסְרָה הָיָה*. For it would never enter the mind of any sober critic to attribute this variation to a misinterpretation of our text. Still less can it be an unsuccessful attempt to explain or rectify our text, as Bottcher imagines, since the assertion of this critic, that *הָיָה* is only used to signify an exalted position, and never the exaltation of dignity or worth, is proved to be erroneous by Deut. xxvi. 19 and xxviii. 1.



period.  $\text{וַיִּתֵּן}$  (then he gave) in ver. 11 introduces the apodosis to  $\text{וַיָּהִי כֵן}$  (and it came to pass, etc.) in ver. 10; and ver. 11 contains a circumstantial clause inserted as a parenthesis. Hiram had supported Solomon according to his desire with cedar wood and cypress wood, and with gold; and Solomon gave him in return, after his buildings were completed, twenty cities in the land of *Galil*. But these cities did not please Hiram. When he went out to see them, he said, "What kind of cities are these ( $\text{כֵּן}$  in a contemptuous sense) which thou hast given me, my brother?"  $\text{וַיִּתֵּן}$  as in ch. xx. 32, 1 Macc. x. 18, xi. 30, 2 Macc. xi. 22, as a conventional expression used by princes in their intercourse with one another. "And he called the land *Cabul* unto this day;" *i.e.* it retained this name even to later times. The land of *Galil* is a part of the country which was afterwards known as *Galilæa*, namely, the northern portion of it, as is evident from the fact that in Josh. xx. 7, xxi. 32, *Kedes* in the mountains of Naphtali, to the north-west of Lake *Hulch*, is distinguished from the Kadesh in southern Palestine by the epithet  $\text{בְּנִיָּל}$ . It is still more evident from 2 Kings xv. 29 and Isa. viii. 23 that *Galil* embraced the northern part of the tribe of Naphtali; whilst the expression used by Isaiah,  $\text{נָלִיל הַנּוֹרִים}$ , also shows that this district was for the most part inhabited by heathen (*i.e.* non-Israelites). The twenty cities in *Galil*, which Solomon gave to Hiram, certainly belonged therefore to the cities of the Canaanites mentioned in 2 Sam. xxiv. 7; that is to say, they were cities occupied chiefly by a heathen population, and in all probability they were in a very bad condition. Consequently they did not please Hiram, and he gave to the district the contemptuous name of the land of *Cabul*. Of the various interpretations given to the word *Cabul* (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 656), the one proposed by Hiller (*Onomast.* p. 435), and adopted by Reland, Ges., Maurer, and others, viz. that it is a contraction of  $\text{בְּהִבּוּל}$ , *sicut id quod evanuit tanquam nihil*, has the most to support it, since this is the meaning required by the context. At the same time it is possible, and even probable, that it had originally a different signification, and is derived from  $\text{קָבַל} = \text{קָבַל}$  in the sense of to pawn, as Gesenius and Dietrich suppose. This is favoured by the occurrence of the name *Cabul* in Josh. xix. 27, where it is probably derivable from  $\text{קָבַל}$ , to fetter, and signifies literally a fortress or castle; but in this instance it has no connection with

the land of *Cabul*, since it is still preserved in the village of Cabul to the south-east of Acre (see the Comm. on Josh. *l.c.*). The "land of Cabul" would therefore mean the pawned land; and in the mouths of the people this would be twisted into "good for nothing." In this case וַיִּקְרָא would have to be taken impersonally: "they called;" and the notice respecting this name would be simply an explanation of the way in which the people interpreted it. Hiram, however, did not retain this district, but gave it back to Solomon, who then completed the cities (2 Chron. viii. 2.).<sup>1</sup> The only way in which we can give to ver. 14 a meaning in harmony with the context, is by taking it as a supplementary explanation of נָשָׂא . . . וּבְקָרֶבֶת in ver. 11, and so rendering וַיִּשְׁלַח as a pluperfect, as in ch. vii. 13: "Hiram had sent the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold." If we reckon the value of gold as being ten times the worth of silver, a hundred and twenty talents of gold would be 3,141,600 *thalers* (about £471,240: Tr.). This is no doubt to be regarded as a loan, which Solomon obtained from Hiram to enable him to complete his buildings. Although David may have collected together the requisite amount of precious metals for the building of the temple, and Solomon had also very considerable yearly revenues, derived partly from tribute paid by subjugated nations and partly from trade, his buildings were so extensive, inasmuch as he erected a large number of cities beside the temple and his splendid palace (vers. 15–19), that his revenues might not suffice for the completion of these costly works; and therefore, since he would not apply the consecrated treasures of the temple to the erection of cities and palaces, he might find himself compelled to procure a loan from the wealthy king Hiram, which he probably intended to cover by ceding to him twenty cities on the border of the Phœnician territory. But as these cities did not please the king of Tyre and he gave them back to Solomon, the latter will no doubt have repaid the amount borrowed during the last twenty years of his reign.

<sup>1</sup> This simple method of reconciling the account before us with the apparently discrepant notice in the Chronicles, concerning which even Movers (*die biblische Chronik*, p. 159) observes, that the chronicler interpolated it from a second (?) source, is so natural, that it is difficult to conceive how Bertheau can object to it; since he admits that the accounts in the books of Kings and Chronicles are incomplete extracts from common and more elaborate sources.



Vers. 15-23. *Solomon's tribute service, and the building of the cities.* (Cf. 2 Chron. viii. 3-10.) The other means by which Solomon made it possible to erect so many buildings, was by compelling the remnants of the Canaanitish population that were still in the land to perform tributary labour. זֶה דְּבַר הַמָּס, "this is the case with regard to the tribute." For הָעֵלָה מִס, compare ch. v. 27. To the announcement of the object which Solomon had in view in raising tributary labourers, namely, to build, etc., there is immediately appended a list of all the buildings completed by him (vers. 15-19); and it is not till ver. 20 that we have more precise details concerning the tribute itself. *Millo*, the wall of Jerusalem, and the cities enumerated, are for the most part not new buildings, but simply fortifications, or the completion of buildings already in existence. David had already built the castle of *Millo* and the wall of Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 9); so that Solomon's building was in both cases merely fortifying more strongly. On *Millo* see the fuller remarks at 2 Sam. v. 9; and on the building of the wall, those at ch. iii. 1 and xi. 27. As Solomon thereby closed the breach of the city of David according to ch. xi. 27, he probably extended the city wall so as to enclose the temple mountain; and he may possibly have also surrounded the lower city with a wall, since David had only built a fortification round about the upper city upon Zion (see at 2 Sam. v. 9).—*Hazor*: an old royal city of the Canaanites above Lake *Huleh*, which has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Megiddo*; i.e. *Lejun* (see at ch. iv. 12). *Gezer*: also an old Canaanitish royal city, which stood close to the Philistian frontier, probably on the site of the present village of *el Kubab* (see at Josh. x. 33).—Ver. 16. This city had been taken and burned down by the king of Egypt; its Canaanitish inhabitants had been put to death; and the city itself had been given as a marriage portion to his daughter who was married to Solomon. Nothing is known concerning the occasion and object of Pharaoh's warlike expedition against this city. The conjecture of Thenius, that the Canaanitish inhabitants of Gezer had drawn upon themselves the vengeance of Pharaoh, mentioned here, through a piratical raid upon the Egyptian coast, is open to this objection, that according to all accounts concerning its situation, Gezer was not situated near the sea-coast, but very far inland.—Ver. 17. This city Solomon built: i.e. he not only rebuilt it, but also fortified it. He did the same also to *Lower*

*Bethhoron*, i.e. *Beit-Ur Tachta*, on the western slope of the mountains, four hours' journey from Gibeon. According to 2 Chron. viii. 5, Solomon also fortified *Upper Bethhoron*, which was separated by a deep wady from Lower Bethhoron, that lay to the west (see Comm. on Josh. x. 10 and xvi. 3). The two Bethhorons and Gezer were very important places for the protection of the mountainous country of Benjamin, Ephraim, and Judah against hostile invasions from the Philistian plain. The situation of Megiddo on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, through which the high road from the western coast to the Jordan ran, was equally important; and so also was Hazor as a border fortress against Syria in the northern part of the land.—Ver. 18. Solomon also built, i.e. fortified, *Baalath* and *Tadmor* in the desert. According to Josh. xix. 44, *Baalath* was a city of Dan, and therefore, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 1) justly observes, was not far from Gezer; and consequently is not to be identified with either Baalgad or Baalbek in Coele-syria (Iken, Mich. Rosenm.; cf. Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 519). תַּחְתִּי (Chathib) is either to be read תַּחְתִּי, or according to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 344) תַּחְתִּי, palm, a palm-city. The *Keri* requires תַּחְתִּי (Tadmor, after 2 Chron. viii. 4), a pronunciation which may possibly have simply arisen from Aramean expansion, but which is still the name for the city current among the Arabs even in the present day (تدمر, *locus palmarum ferax*). The Greeks and Romans called it *Palmyra*. It was situated in what is certainly now a very desolate oasis of the Syrian desert, on the caravan road between Damascus and the Euphrates,—according to modern accounts, not more than seventeen hours' journey from that river; and there are still magnificent ruins which attest the former glory of this wealthy and, under queen Zenobia, very powerful city (cf. Ritter, *Erdk.* xvii. 2, p. 1486 sqq., and E. Osiander in Herzog's *Cycl.*). The correctness of this explanation of the name is placed beyond all doubt by the words "in the wilderness;" and consequently even Movers has given up his former opinion, viz. that it was the city of *Thamar* in southern Judah (Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28), which Thenius has since adopted, and has decided in favour of *Palmyra*, without being led astray by the attempt of Hitzig to explain the name from the Sanscrit (*vid. Deutsche morgld. Ztschr.* viii. p. 222 sqq.). The expression תַּחְתִּי appears superfluous, as all the cities



named before were situated in the land or kingdom of Solomon, and *Tadmor* is sufficiently defined by **בְּמִדְבָּר** (in the desert). The text is evidently faulty, and either the name of the land, namely *Hamath* (according to 2 Chron. viii. 4), has dropped out, or **בְּאֶרֶץ** is to be taken in connection with what follows (according to the Cod. Al. of the LXX.), and the cop. ו before **אֶת כָּל-עָרֵי** must be erased and inserted before **בְּאֶרֶץ** ("and in the land of all the magazine-cities").—Ver. 19. The "magazine-cities" (**עָרֵי הַמִּסְכְּנוֹת**) were fortified cities, in which the produce of the land was collected, partly for provisioning the army, and partly for the support of the rural population in times of distress (2 Chron. xvii. 12, xxxii. 28), similar to those which Pharaoh had built in the land of Goshen (Ex. i. 11). If they were situated on the great commercial roads, they may also have served for storing provisions for the necessities of travellers and their beasts of burden. The cities for the war-chariots (**הָרֶכֶב**) and cavalry (**הַפָּרָשִׁים**) were probably in part identical with the magazine-cities, and situated in different parts of the kingdom. There were no doubt some of these upon Lebanon, as we may on the one hand infer from the general importance of the northern frontier to the security of the whole kingdom, and still more from the fact that Solomon had an opponent at Damascus in the person of Rezin (ch. xi. 24), who could easily stir up rebellion in the northern provinces, which had only just been incorporated by David into the kingdom; and as we may on the other hand clearly gather from 2 Chron. xvi. 4, according to which there were magazine-cities in the land of Naphtali. Finally, the words "and what Solomon had a desire to build" embrace all the rest of his buildings, which it would have occupied too much space to enumerate singly. That the words **אֶת הַשֵּׁק** are not to be so pressed as to be made to denote simply "the buildings undertaken for pure pleasure," like the works mentioned in Eccles. ii. 4 sqq., as Thenius and Bertheau suppose, is evident from a comparison of ver. 1, where all Solomon's buildings except the temple and palace, and therefore the fortifications as well as others, are included in the expression "all his desire."—Fuller particulars concerning the tributary workmen are given in ver. 20 sqq. The Canaanitish population that was left in the land were made use of for this purpose,—namely, the descendants of the Canaanites who had not been entirely exterminated by the Israelites. "Their children,"

etc., supplies a more precise definition of the expression "all the people," etc., in ver. 20. (For the fact itself, see the commentary on ch. v. 27, 28.)—Ver. 22. Solomon did not make Israelites into tributary slaves; but they were warriors, ministers, and civil and military officers. עֲבָדִים are the king's servants; שָׂרִים, the heads of the military and civil service; שְׁלֵשִׁים, royal adjutants (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8); שָׂרֵי רֶכְבּוֹ וַפָּרָסָיו, captains over the royal war-chariots and cavalry.—For ver. 23 compare ch. v. 30.

Vers. 24 and 25 contain two notices, with which the account of Solomon's buildings is brought to a close. Both verses point back to ch. iii. 1-4 (viz. ver. 24 to ch. iii. 1, and ver. 25 to ch. iii. 2-4), and show how the incongruities which existed at the commencement of Solomon's reign were removed by his buildings. When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, he brought her into the city of David (ch. iii. 1), until he should have finished his palace and built her a house of her own within it. After this building was completed, he had her brought up from the city of David into it. עָלָה, came up, inasmuch as the palace stood upon the loftier summit of Zion. אֲזַי is to be connected with אֲזַי which follows, in the sense of *only* or *just as*: as soon as Pharaoh's daughter had gone up into the house built for her, Solomon built Millo.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 25. After the building of the temple, the practice of sacrificing upon the altars of the high places could be brought to an end (ch. iii. 2). Solomon now offered burnt-offerings and thank-offerings three times a year upon the altar which he had built to the Lord, i.e. upon the altar of burnt-offering in the temple, or as 2 Chron. viii. 12 adds by way of explanation, "before the porch." "Three times in the year:" i.e. at the three great yearly feasts—passover, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles

<sup>1</sup> Nothing certain can be gathered from this notice as to the situation of this castle. The remark made by Thénius, to the effect that it must have joined that portion of the palace in which the harem was, rests upon the assumption that Millo was evidently intended to shelter the harem,—an assumption which cannot be raised into a probability, to say nothing of a certainty. The building of Millo immediately after the entrance of Pharaoh's daughter into the house erected for her, may have arisen from the fact that David (? Solomon—Tr.) could not undertake the fortification of Jerusalem by means of this castle till after his own palace was finished, because he had not the requisite labour at command for carrying on all these buildings at the same time.



(2 Chron. viii. 13). The words which follow, וַהֲקָטִיר אֹתוֹ, “and indeed burning (the sacrifice) at the (altar) which was before Jehovah,” cannot be taken as parallel to the preceding clause, and understood as referring to the incense, which was offered along with the bleeding sacrifices, because הַקָּטִיר is not a preterite, but an inf. absol., which shows that this clause merely serves as an explanation of the preceding one, in the sense of, “namely, burning the sacrifices at the altar which was before Jehovah.” הַקָּטִיר is the technical expression here for the burning of the portions of the sacrificial flesh upon the altar, as in Ex. xxix. 18, Lev. i. 9, etc. On the use of אֵשֶׁר after אֹתוֹ, which Thenius and Böttcher could not understand, and on which they built up all kinds of conjectures, see Ewald, § 333, *a*, note.—וַיְשַׁלֵּם אֶת־הַבַּיִת, “and made the house complete,” i.e. he put the temple into a state of completion, by offering the yearly sacrifices there from that time forward, or, as Böttcher explains it, gave it thereby its full worth as a house of God and place of worship. וַיְשַׁלֵּם is to be taken grammatically as a continuation of the inf. abs. הַקָּטִיר.

Vers. 26-28. *He sends ships to Ophir.*—Solomon built a fleet (אֲנִיָּה is collective, ships or fleet; the *nom. unitatis* is אֲנִיָּה) at Eziongeber, near Eloth, on the coast of the Red Sea (יַם־סוּף: see at Ex. x. 19), in the land of Edom; and Hiram sent in the fleet “shipmen that had knowledge of the sea” along with Solomon’s servants to Ophir, whence they brought to king Solomon 420 talents of gold. *Eziongeber*, a harbour at the north-eastern end of the Elanitic Gulf, was probably the “large and beautiful town of *Asziun*” mentioned by Makrizi (see at Num. xxxiii. 35), and situated on the great bay of *Wady Emrag* (see Rüppell, *Reisen in Nubien*, pp. 252-3). *Eloth* (lit. trees, a grove, probably so named from the large palm-grove in the neighbourhood), or *Elath* (Deut. ii. 8; 2 Kings xiv. 22: see at Gen. xiv. 6), the *Aila* and *Ælana* of the Greeks and Romans, Arab. *Aileh*, was situated at the northern point of the (Elanitic) gulf, which took its name from the town; and in the time of the Fathers it was an important commercial town. It was not far from the small modern fortress of *Akaba*, where heaps of rubbish still show the spot on which it formerly stood (compare Rüppell, *Nub.* p. 248, with plates 6 and 7, and Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 251 sqq.).—The corresponding text, 2 Chron. viii. 17, 18, differs in many respects from the account before us. The state-

ment in the Chronicles, that Solomon went to Eziongeber and Elath, is but a very unimportant deviation; for the building of the fleet makes it a very probable thing in itself that Solomon should have visited on that account the two towns on the Elanitic Gulf, which were very near to one another, to make the requisite arrangements upon the spot for this important undertaking. There is apparently a far greater deviation in ver. 27, where, in the place of the statement that Hiram sent יָמָא, in the (or a) fleet, his servants as sailors who had knowledge of the sea, the chronicler affirms that Hiram sent by his servants ships and men who had knowledge of the sea. For the only way in which Hiram could send ships to Eziongeber was either by land or (as Ritter, *Erdk.* xiv. p. 365, supposes) out of the Persian Gulf, supposing that the Tyrians had a fleet upon that sea at so early a date as this. The statement in the Chronicles receives an apparent confirmation from 1 Kings x. 22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram," if indeed this passage also refers to the trade with Ophir, as is generally supposed; for then these words affirm that Hiram sent ships of his own to Ophir along with those of Solomon. We do not think it probable, however, that the words "Hiram sent ships by his own men" are to be so pressed as to be taken to mean that he had whole ships, or ships taken to pieces, conveyed to Eziongeber either from Tyre or out of the Mediterranean Sea, although many cases might be cited from antiquity in support of this view.<sup>1</sup> In all probability the words affirm nothing more than that Hiram supplied the ships for this voyage, that is to say, that he had them built at Eziongeber by his own men, and the requisite materials conveyed thither, so

<sup>1</sup> Thus, for example, according to Arriani *exped. Alex.* l. v. p. 329, and vii. p. 485 (ed. Blanc), Alexander the Great had ships transported from Phœnicia to the Euphrates, and out of the Indus into the Hydaspes, the ships being taken to pieces for the land transport (*ὑπὸ τῶν πεζοῦν*), and the pieces (*τὰ κομμάτια*) afterwards joined together again. Plutarch relates (*vita Anton.* p. 948, ed. Frkf. 1620) that Cleopatra would have had her whole fleet carried across the isthmus which separates Egypt from the Red Sea, and have escaped by that means, had not the Arabs prevented the execution of her plan by burning the first ships that were drawn up on the land. According to Thucydides, *bell. Pelop.* iv. 8, the Peloponnesians conveyed sixty ships which lay at Corcyra across the Leucadian isthmus. Compare also Polyæni *strateg.* v. 2, 6, and Ammian. Marcell. xxiv. 7, and from the middle ages the account of Makrizi in Burekhardt's *Reisen in Syrien*, p. 331.



far as they were not to be obtained upon the spot. At any rate, Solomon was obliged to call the Tyrians to his help for the building of the ships, since the Israelites, who had hitherto carried on no maritime trade at all, were altogether inexperienced in shipbuilding. Moreover, the country round Ezion-geber would hardly furnish wood adapted for the purpose, as there are only palms to be found there, whose spongy wood, however useful it may be for the inside of houses, cannot be applied to the building of ships. But if Hiram had ships built for Solomon by his own men and sent him sailors who were accustomed to the sea, he would certainly have some of his own ships engaged in this maritime trade; and this explains the statement in ch. x. 22.

The destination of the fleet was *Ophir*, whence the ships brought 420 or (according to the Chronicles) 450 talents of gold. The difference between 420 and 450 may be accounted for from the substitution of the numeral letter י (50) for כ (20). The sum mentioned amounted to eleven or twelve million dollars (from £1,600,000 to £1,800,000—Tr.), and the question arises, whether this is to be taken as the result of one voyage, or as the entire profits resulting from the expeditions to Ophir. The words admit of either interpretation, although they are more favourable to the latter than to the former, inasmuch as there is no allusion whatever to the fact that they brought this amount all at once or on every voyage. (See also at ch. x. 14 and 22.) The question as to the situation of Ophir has given rise to great dispute, and hitherto no certain conclusion has been arrived at; in fact, it is possible that there are no longer any means of deciding it. Some have endeavoured to prove that it was in southern Arabia, others that it was on the eastern coast of Africa, and others again that it was in Hither India.<sup>1</sup> The decision is dependent upon a

<sup>1</sup> Compare the thorough examination of the different views concerning Ophir in C. Ritter's *Erdk.* xiv. pp. 348-431, with the briefer collection made by Gesenius in his *Thes.* p. 141 sq. and in the *Allgem. Encyclop. der Wissenschaft u. Künste*, 3 Sect. Bd. 4, p. 201 sqq., and by Pressel, art. "Ophir," in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*.—We need not dwell upon the different opinions held by the earlier writers. But among modern authors, Niebuhr, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, and Seetzen decide in favour of Arabia; Quatremère (*Mémoire sur le pays d'Ophir* in *Mém. de l'Institut. roy.* 1845, t. xv. P. ii. p. 350 sqq.) and Movers, who takes Ophir to be the name of an emporium on the eastern coast of Africa, in favour of Sofala; while Chr. Lassen (*Indische Alterthumskunde*,

previous question, whether ch. x. 22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram; once in three years came the Tarshish fleet, bringing gold, silver," etc., also applies to the voyage to Ophir. The expression "Tarshish fleet;" the word יָם ("on the sea"), which naturally suggests that sea to which the Israelites applied the special epithet יָם, namely the Mediterranean; and lastly, the difference in the cargoes,—the ships from Ophir bringing gold and *algummim* wood (ver. 28 and ch. x. 11), and the Tarshish fleet bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks (ch. x. 22),—appear to favour the conclusion that the Tarshish fleet did not sail to Ophir, but upon the Mediterranean Sea to Tarshish, i.e. Tartessus in Spain; to which we may add the fact that יָם תַּרְשִׁישׁ is reproduced in 2 Chron. ix. 21 by שִׁפֵּי תַרְשִׁישׁ, "ships going to Tarshish." Nevertheless, however plausible these arguments may appear, after a renewed investigation of the subject I cannot regard them as having decisive weight: for (1) the expression "Tarshish fleet" is used in ch. xii. 49 in connection with ships that were intended to go to Ophir; (2) יָם (upon the sea) might receive its more precise definition from what precedes; and (3) the difference in the cargoes reduces itself to this, that in addition to the gold, which was the chief production of Ophir, there are a few other articles of trade mentioned, so that the account in ch. x. 22 is more complete than that in ch. ix. 28 and x. 11. The statement concerning the Tarshish fleet in ch. x. 22 contains a passing remark, like that in ch. x. 11, from which we must infer that both passages treat in the same manner simply of the voyage to Ophir, and therefore that the term "Tarshish ships," like our *Indienfahrer*, was applied to ships intended for long voyages. If, in addition to the ships sailing to Ophir, Solomon had also had a fleet upon the Mediterranean Sea which sailed with the Phœnicians to Tartessus, this would certainly have been mentioned here (ch. ix. 27, 28) at the same time as the Ophir voyage. On all

i. p. 537 sqq., ii. p. 552 sqq.) and C. Ritter are the principal supporters of India. On the other hand, Albr. Reuber (*Indien und die Handelsstrassen in Central-Africa*, Gotha 1857, p. 57 sqq.) has attempted to connect together all these views by assuming that the seamen of Hiram and Solomon fetched the gold of Western Africa from the island of Dahlak in the Red Sea, and having taken it to India to exchange, returned at the end of a three years' voyage enriched with gold and the productions of India.



these grounds we can come to no other conclusion than that the expression in 2 Chron. ix. 21, "ships going to Tarshish," is simply a mistaken exposition of the term "Tarshish fleet,"—a mistake which may easily be explained from the fact, that at the time when the Chronicles were written, the voyages not only of the Israelites but also of the Tyrians both to Ophir and Tarshish had long since ceased, and even the geographical situation of these places was then unknown to the Jews (see my *Introduction to the Old Test.* p. 442, ed. 2).

The name *Ophir* occurs first of all in Gen. x. 29 among the tribes of Southern Arabia, that were descended from Joktan, between Seba and Havilah, *i.e.* the Sabæans and Chaulotæans. Hence it appears most natural to look for the gold-land of Ophir in Southern Arabia. But as there is still a possibility that the Joktanide tribe of Ophir, or one branch of it, may subsequently have emigrated either to the eastern coast of Africa or even to Hither India, and therefore that the Solomonian Ophir may have been an Arabian colony outside Arabia, the situation of this gold country cannot be determined without further evidence from Gen. x. 29 alone; but before arriving at an actual decision, we must first of all examine the arguments that may be adduced in support of each of the three countries named. *Sofala* in Eastern Africa, in the Mozambique Channel, has nothing in common with the name *Ophir*, but is the Arabic سَفَالَة (Heb.

שַׁפְלָה), *i.e.* lowland or sea-coast; and the old Portuguese accounts of the gold mines in the district of *Fura* there, as well as the pretended walls of the queen of Saba, have far too little evidence to support them, to have any bearing upon the question before us. The supposed connection between the name *Ophir* and the city of Σουπάρα mentioned by Ptolemæus, or Οὐππαρα by Periplus (*Geogr. min.* i. p. 30), in the neighbourhood of *Goa*, or the shepherd tribe of *Abhira*, cannot be sustained. Σουπάρα or *Sufâra* (Edrisi) answers to the Sanscrit *Supâra*, *i.e.* beautiful coast (cf. Lassen, *Ind. Alterthk.* i. p. 107); and Οὐππαρα in Periplus is no doubt simply a false reading for Σουπάρα, which has nothing in common with אֹפִיר. And the shepherd tribe of *Abhira* can hardly come into consideration, because the country which they inhabited, to the south-east of the mouths of the Indus, has no gold.—Again, the hypothesis that India is intended derives just as little support from the circumstance that, with

the exception of Gen. x. 29, the LXX. have always rendered Ὀφὶρ either Σωφίρα or Σουφίρ, which is, according to the Coptic lexicographers, the name used by the Copts for India, and that Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 4), who used the Old Test. in the Alexandrian version, has given India as the explanation of Ophir, as it does from this supposed resemblance in the names. For, according to the geographical ideas of the Alexandrians and later Greeks, India reached to Ethiopia, and Ethiopia to India, as Letronne has conclusively proved (see his *Mémoire sur une mission arienne*, etc., in *Mém. de l'Institut. Acad. des Inscriptions et Bell. Lettres*, t. x. p. 220 sqq.).

Greater stress has been laid upon the duration of the voyages to Ophir,—namely, that the Tarshish fleet came once in three years, according to ch. x. 22, and brought gold, etc. But even Lassen, who follows Heeren, observes quite truly, that “this expression need not be understood as signifying that three whole years intervened between the departure and return, but simply that the fleet returned once in the course of three years.” Moreover, the stay in Ophir is to be reckoned in as part of the time occupied in the voyage; and that this is not to be estimated as a short one, is evident from the fact that, according to Homer, *Odys.* xv. 454 sqq., a Phœnician merchantman lay for a whole year at one of the Cyclades before he had disposed of his wares of every description, in return for other articles of commerce, and filled his roomy vessel. If we add to this the slowness of the voyage,—considering that just as at the present day the Arabian coasters go but very slowly from port to port, so the combined fleet of Hiram and Solomon would not be able to proceed with any greater rapidity, inasmuch as the Tyrians were not better acquainted with the dangerous Arabian Sea than the modern Arabians are, and that the necessary provisions for a long voyage, especially the water for drinking, could not be taken on board all at once, but would have to be taken in at the different landing-places, and that on these occasions some trade would be done,—we can easily understand how a voyage from Eziongeber to the strait of Bab el Mandeb and the return might occupy more than a year,<sup>1</sup> so that the time occupied in

<sup>1</sup> It is no proof to the contrary, that, according to the testimony of ancient writers, as collected by Movers (*Phœniz.* ii. 3, p. 120 sqq.), the Phœnicians sailed almost as rapidly as the modern merchant ships; for this evidence simply applies to the voyages on the Mediterranean Sea with which they were



the voyage as given here cannot furnish any decisive proof that the fleet sailed beyond Southern Arabia to the East Indies.

And lastly, the same remarks apply to the goods brought from Ophir, which many regard as decisive evidence in favour of India. The principal article for which Ophir became so celebrated, viz. the gold, is not found either in *Sufāra* near Goa, or in the land of *Abhira*. Even if India be much richer in gold than was formerly supposed (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 592), the rich gold country lies to the north of Cashmir (see Lassen, ii. pp. 603-4). Moreover, not only is it impossible to conceive what goods the Phœnicians can have offered to the Indian merchants for their gold and the other articles named, since large sums of gold were sent to India every year in the Roman times to pay for the costly wares that were imported thence (see Roscher, pp. 53, 54); but it is still less possible to comprehend how the shepherd tribe of Abhira could have come into possession of so much gold as the Ophir fleet brought home. The conjecture of Ritter (*Erdk.* xiv. p. 399) and Lassen (ii. p. 592), that this tribe had come to the coast not very long before from some country of their own where gold abounded, and that as an uncultivated shepherd tribe they attached but very little value to the gold, so that they parted with it to the Phœnicians for their purple cloths, their works in brass and glass, and for other things, has far too little probability to appear at all admissible. If the Abhira did not know the value of the gold, they would not have brought it in such quantities out of their original home into these new settlements. We should therefore be obliged to assume that they were a trading people, and this would be at variance with all the known accounts concerning this tribe.—As a rule, the gold treasures of Hither Asia were principally obtained from Arabia in the most ancient times. If we leave Havilah (Gen. ii. 11) out of the account, because its position cannot be determined

familiar, and to the period when the Phœnician navigation had reached its fullest development, so that it has no bearing upon the time of Solomon and a voyage upon the Arabian Sea, with which the Phœnicians were hitherto quite unacquainted.—Again, the calculation made by Lassen (ii. pp. 590-1), according to which a voyage from Eziongeber to the mouth of the Indus could have been accomplished in a hundred days, is founded upon the assumption that the Phœnicians were already acquainted with the monsoon and knew what was the best time for the navigation of the Red Sea,—an assumption which can neither be proved nor shown to be probable.

with certainty, the only other place specially referred to in the Old Testament besides Ophir as being celebrated as a gold country is Saba, in the south-western portion of Yemen. The Sabaeans bring gold, precious stones, and incense (Isa. lx. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 22); and the queen of Saba presented Solomon with 120 talents of gold, with perfumes and with precious stones (1 Kings x. 10). This agrees with the accounts of the classical writers, who describe Arabia as very rich in gold (cf. Strabo, xvi. 777 sq. and 784; Diod. Sic. ii. 50, iii. 44; also Bochart, *Phaleg*, l. ii. c. 27). These testimonies, which we have already given in part at Ex. xxxviii. 31, are far too distinct to be set aside by the remark that there is no gold to be found in Arabia at the present time. For whilst, on the one hand, the wealth of Arabia in gold may be exhausted, just as Spain no longer yields any silver, on the other hand we know far too little of the interior of Southern Arabia to be able distinctly to maintain that there is no gold in existence there.—Silver, the other metal brought from Ophir, was also found in the land of the Nabataeans, according to Strabo, xvi. p. 784, although the wealth of the ancient world in silver was chiefly derived from Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain (cf. Movers, *Phöniz*, ii. 3, p. 36 sqq., where the different places are enumerated in which silver was found).—That precious stones were to be found in Arabia is evident from the passages cited above concerning the Sabaeans.—On the other hand, however, it has been supposed that the remaining articles of Ophir could only have been brought from the East Indies.

According to ch. x. 12, the Ophir ships brought a large quantity of עֵץ שֶׁנֶּחֱמָה (almuggim wood: 2 Chron. ii. 7, עֵץ שֶׁנֶּחֱמָה). According to Kimchi (on 2 Chron. ii. 7), the עֵץ שֶׁנֶּחֱמָה or עֵץ שֶׁנֶּחֱמָה is *arbor rubri coloris, dicta lingua arabica albakam* (البكم), *vulgo brasilica*. This tree, according to Abulfadl (Celsius, *Hierob.* i. p. 176), is a native of India and Ethiopia; and it is still a question in dispute, whether we are to understand by this the *Pterocarpus Santal.*, from which the true sandal-wood comes, and which is said to grow only in the East Indies on Malabar and Java, or the *Cassalpinia Sappan* L., a tree which grows in the East Indies, more especially in Ceylon, and also in different parts of Africa, the red wood of which is used in Europe chiefly for dyeing. Moreover the true explanation of the Hebrew name



is still undiscovered. The derivation of it from the Sanscrit *Valgu*, i.e. *pulcher* (Lassen and Ritter), has been set aside by Gesenius as inappropriate, and *mocha*, *mochâta*, which is said to signify sandal-wood in Sanscrit, has been suggested instead. But no evidence has been adduced in its favour, nor is the word to be found in Wilson's *Sanscrit Lexicon*. If, however, this derivation were correct, ל would be the Arabic article, and the introduction of this article in connection with the word *mocha* would be a proof that the sandal-wood, together with its name, came to the Hebrews through merchants who spoke Arabic.—The other articles from Ophir mentioned in ch. x. 22 are שִׁנֵּהַיִם, ὀδόντες ἐλεφάντινοι (LXX.), *dentes elephantorū* or *ebur* (Vulg.), שֵׁן דָּפִיל, elephants' teeth (Targ.). But however certain the meaning of the word may thus appear, the justification of this meaning is quite as uncertain. In other cases ivory is designated by the simple term שֵׁן (ch. x. 18, xxii. 39; Ps. xlv. 9; Amos iii. 15, etc.), whereas Ezekiel (xxvii. 15) calls the whole tusk קַרְנוֹת שֵׁן, horns of the tooth. הַיִּם is said to signify elephants here; and according to Benary it is contracted from הַאֲבִים, the Sanscrit word *ibha*, elephant; according to Ewald, from הַלָּבִים, from the Sanscrit *Kalabha*; and according to Hitzig, from נַהֲבִים = לִיבִי, *Libyi*; or else שִׁנֵּהַיִם is a false reading for שֵׁן וְהַבִּנִּים, ivory and ebony, according to Ezek. xxvii. 15 (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 1453). Of these four derivations the first two are decidedly wrong: the first, because *ibha* as a name for the elephant only occurs, according to Weber, in the later Indian writings, and is never used in the earlier writings in this sense (*vid.* Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 115); the second, because *Kalabha* does not signify the elephant, but *catulum elephanti*, before it possesses any teeth available for ivory. The third is a fancy which its originator himself has since given up; and the fourth a conjecture, which is not raised to a probability even by the attempt of Böttcher to show that הַיִּם is a case of backward assimilation from הַבִּנִּים, because the asyndeton שֵׁן הַיִּם between two couples connected by ו is without any analogy, and the passages adduced by Böttcher, viz. Deut. xxix. 22, Josh. xv. 54 sqq., and even Ezek. xxvii. 33, are to be taken in quite a different way.—The rendering of לָפִים by apes, and the connection of the name not only with the Sanscrit and Malabar *kapi*, but also with the Greek *κῆπος* and *κῆβος*, also *κεῖβος*, are much surer; but, on the other hand, the assumption

that the Greeks, like the Semitic nations, received the word from the Indians along with the animals, is very improbable: for κῆπος in Greek does not denote the ape (πίθηκος) generally, but simply a species of long-tailed apes, the native land of which, according to the testimony of ancient writers, was Ethiopia,<sup>1</sup> and the Ethiopian apes are hardly likely to have sprung from India.—And lastly, even in the case of עִבְרִי, according to the ancient versions *peacocks*, the derivation from the Malabaric or Tamul *tōgai* or *tōghai* (cf. Roediger in *Ges. Theol.* p. 1502) is not placed beyond the reach of doubt.

If, in conclusion, we look through all the articles of commerce that were brought to Jerusalem from the Ophir voyages, apart from the gold and silver, which were not to be found in the land of Abhira, the ivory and ebony (supposing that we ought to read עִבְרִי for עִבְרִי) furnish no evidence in support of India, inasmuch as both of them could have been brought from Ethiopia, as even Lassen admits (ii. p. 554). And even if the words *Almuggim*, *Kophim*, and *Tuschim* really came from India along with the objects to which they belonged, it would by no means follow with certainty from this alone that Ophir was situated in India.—For since, for example, there are indisputable traces of very early commercial intercourse between India and Hither Asia and Africa, especially Southern Arabia and Ethiopia, reaching far beyond the time of Solomon, the seamen of Hiram and Solomon may have obtained these articles either in Arabia or on the Ethiopian coast. For even if the statements of Herodotus and Strabo, to the effect that the Phœnicians emigrated from the islands of the Egean Sea, Tylos (or Tyros) and Arados, to the Phœnician coast, do not prove that the Phœnicians had already extended their commercial enterprise as far as India even before the twelfth century, as Lassen (ii. 597 and 584–5) supposes; if the Tyrians and Aradians, who were related to them by tribe, still continued to dwell upon the islands of the Persian Gulf, from which they could much more easily find the way to

<sup>1</sup> Compare Aristoteles. *hist. animal.* ii. 8: ἔστι δὲ ὁ μὲν κῆπος πίθηκος, ἔχων οὐραν. Strabo, xvii. p. 812: ἔστι δὲ ὁ κῆπος τὸ μὲν πλείονος ἰνδοῦ Σαύρω, τ' ἄλλα δὲ κούρῳ καὶ ἀφ' οὗ μεταξὺ γινώσκται δ' ἐν Αἰθιοπία. Plinius, *h. n.* viii. 19 (28): *Idem* (the games of Pompey the Great) *ostenderunt ex Æthiopia quas vocant κῆπος, quarum pedes postavius pedibus humanis et cruribus, priores manibus facere similes.* Solinus Polyh. says the same (Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. lib. iii. c. 31).



India by sea,—since the historical character of these statements has been disputed by Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 1, p. 38 sqq.) on very weighty grounds; yet it is evident that there was a very early intercourse between East India and Africa, reaching far beyond all historical testimony, from the following well-established facts: that the Egyptians made use of indigo in the dyeing of their stuffs, and this could only have been brought to them from India; that muslins, which were likewise of Indian origin, are found among the materials in which the mummies are enveloped; and that in the graves of the kings of the eighteenth dynasty, who ceased to reign in the year 1476 B.C., there have been discovered vases of Chinese porcelain (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 596). And the intercourse between the southern coast of Arabia and Hither India may have been quite as old, if not older; so that Indian productions may have been brought to Hither Asia by the Sabæans long before the time of Solomon (*vid.* Lassen, ii. pp. 593-4, and Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, pp. 247, 256). But the commercial intercourse between Arabia and the opposite coast of Ethiopia, by which African productions reached the trading inhabitants of Arabia, was unquestionably still older than the trade with India. If we weigh well all these points, there is no valid ground for looking outside Arabia for the situation of the Solomonian Ophir. But we shall no doubt be obliged to give up the hope of determining with any greater precision that particular part of the coast of Arabia in which Ophir was situated, inasmuch as hitherto neither the name Ophir nor the existence of gold-fields in Arabia has been established by modern accounts, and moreover the interior of the great Arabian peninsula is still for the most part a *terra incognita*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If the notice of Eupolemus contained in a fragment in Eusebius (*præpar. ev.* ix. 30), to the effect that *David* (a mistake for Solomon) sent miners to the island of *Oûφῆ* (for which Gesenius conjectures that we should read *Oûφῆ* or *Oûφῆρ*) in the Red Sea, which was rich in gold mines, and that they brought gold thence to Judæa, could be proved to be historical through any earlier testimony, Ophir would have been an island of the Erythræan Sea, either *Dahlak* inside Bab el Mandeb, or *Diu Zokatara* (the Sanscrit *Dwipa Sukhatara*, i.e. the happy island) by the present Cape Guardafui. But this notice is evidently simply a conjecture founded upon the Old Testament, having no historical value.

## CHAP. X. THE QUEEN OF SABA. SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND SPLENDOUR.

Vers. 1-13. VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SABA (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 1-12).—When the fame of Solomon's great wisdom came to the ears of the queen of Saba, probably through the Ophir voyages, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem, to convince herself of the truth of the report which had reached her, by putting it to the test by means of enigmas. **שָׁבָא**, *Sabá*, is not Ethiopia or Meroë, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 5), who confounds **שָׁבָא** with **שֵׁט**, and the Abyssinian Christians suppose (*vid.* Ludolfi *hist. Eth.* ii. 3), but the kingdom of the *Sabaans*, who were celebrated for their trade in incense, gold, and precious stones, and who dwelt in Arabia Felix, with the capital *Saba*, or the *Μαπύβα* of the Greeks. This queen, who is called *Balkis* in the Arabian legend (cf. Koran, *Sur.* 27, and Pococke, *Specim. hist. Arab.* p. 60), heard the fame of Solomon **שֵׁם יְהוָה**; i.e. not "at the naming of the name of Jehovah" (Böttcher), nor "in respect of the glory of the Lord, with regard to that which Solomon had instituted for the glory of the Lord" (Thenius); nor even "serving to the glorification of God" (de Wette and Maurer); but literally, "belonging to the name of the Lord;" in other words, the fame which Solomon had acquired through the name of the Lord, or through the fact that the Lord had so glorified Himself in him (Ewald and Dietrich in *Gen. Lex.* s.v. **שֵׁם**). "She came to try him with riddles," i.e. to put his wisdom to the test by carrying on a conversation with him in riddles. The love of the Arabs for riddles, and their superiority in this *jeu d'esprit*, is sufficiently well known from the immense extent to which the Arabic literature abounds in *Mashals*. We have only to think of the large collections of proverbs made by Ali ben Abi Taleb and Meidani, or the *Mahamam* of Hariri, which have been made accessible to all by F. Rückert's masterly translation into German, and which are distinguished by an amazing fulness of word-play and riddles. **חֵידָה**, a riddle, is a pointed saying which merely hints at the deeper truth and leaves it to be guessed.—Vers. 2, 3. As the queen of a wealthy country, she came with a very large retinue. **חַיָּל** does not mean a military force or an armed escort (Thenius), but riches, property; namely, her numerous retinue of men (**עֲבָדָיו**, ver. 13), and camels laden with valuable treasures. The words **יָקָרָה** . . . **נִסְתָּלִים** are an explanatory circumstantial clause, both here and also in the Chronicles,



where the cop. *Vav* stands before נִמְלִים (cf. Ewald, § 341, *a, b*). "And spake to Solomon all that she had upon her heart," *i.e.* in this connection, whatever riddles she had it in her mind to lay before him; "and Solomon told her all her sayings," *i.e.* was able to solve all her riddles. There is no ground for thinking of sayings of a religious nature, as the earlier commentators supposed, but simply of sayings the meaning of which was concealed, and the understanding of which indicated very deep wisdom.—Vers. 4, 5. She saw הֶבֶית, *i.e.* Solomon's palace, not the temple, and "the food of his table," *i.e.* both the great variety of food that was placed upon the king's table (ch. v. 2, 3), and also the costly furniture of the table (ver. 21), and "the seat of his retainers and the standing of his servants," *i.e.* the places in the palace assigned to the ministers and servants of the king, which were contrived with wisdom and arranged in a splendid manner. עֲבָדִים are the chief officers of the king, viz. ministers, counsellors, and *aides de camp*; מִשְׁרָתִים, the court servants; מוֹעֵב, the rooms of the courtiers in attendance; מַעֲמָד, the standing-place, *i.e.* the rooms of the inferior servants, "and their clothing," which they received from the king; and מִשְׁקָיו, not his cup-bearers (LXX., Vulg.), but as in Gen. xl. 21, the drink, *i.e.* probably the whole of the drinking arrangements; וְעֹלָתוֹ, and his ascent, by which he was accustomed to go into the house of Jehovah. עֹלָה does not mean burnt-offering here, as the older translators have rendered it, but ascent, as in Ezek. xl. 26, and as the Chronicles have correctly explained it by עֲלִיתוֹ. For burnt-offering is not to be thought of in this connection, because the queen had nothing to see or to be astonished at in the presentation of such an offering. עֹלָתוֹ is most likely "the king's outer entrance" into the temple, mentioned in 2 Kings xvi. 18; and the passage before us would lead us to suppose that this was a work of art, or an artistic arrangement. וְלֹא הָיָה רוּחַ, "and there was no more spirit in her:" she was beside herself with amazement, as in Josh. v. 1, ii. 11.—Vers. 6-9. She then said with astonishment to Solomon, that of what her eyes now saw she had not heard the half, through the report which had reached her of his affairs and of his wisdom, and which had hitherto appeared incredible to her; and not only congratulated his servants, who stood continually near him and could hear his wisdom, but also praised Jehovah his God, that out of His eternal love to His people Israel He had given them a king

to do justice and righteousness. The earlier theologians inferred from this praising of Jehovah, which involved faith in the true God, when taken in connection with Matt. xii. 42, that this queen had been converted to the true God, and conversed with Solomon on religious matters. But, as we have already observed at ch. v. 21, an acknowledgment of Jehovah as the God of Israel was reconcilable with polytheism. And the fact that nothing is said about her offering sacrifice in the temple, shows that the conversion of the queen is not to be thought of here.—Ver. 10. She thereupon presented to Solomon a hundred and twenty talents of gold (more than three million thalers [nearly half a million sterling—TR.]), and a very large quantity of spices and precious stones. The בְּצִנְדִּים probably included the genuine balsam of Arabia, even if בִּשְׁמֵם was not the specific name of the genuine balsam. “There never more came so much of such spices to Jerusalem.” Instead of עוֹר לָרֵב . . . אֵלֹא we find in the Chronicles, ver. 2, simply אֵלֹא כִּי, “there was nothing like this balsam,” which conveys the same meaning though expressed more indefinitely, since בְּבִשְׁמֵם הָרַחֵם points back to the preceding words, “balsam (spices) in great quantity.”<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 11, 12. The allusion to these costly presents leads the historian to introduce the remark here, that the Ophir fleet also brought, in addition to gold, a large quantity of *Algummim* wood (see at ch. ix. 28) and precious stones. Of this wood Solomon had סִסְמָרִים or סִסְמָלֹת made for the temple and palace. סִסְמָרִים, from סָמַר, signifies a support, and סִסְמָלָה may be a later form for סִסְמָרָה, a flight of steps or a staircase, so that we should have to think of steps with bannisters. This explanation is at any rate a safer one than that of “divans” (Thenius), which would have been quite out of place in the temple, or “narrow pannelled stripes on the floor” (Bertheau), which cannot in the smallest degree be deduced from סִסְמָרִים, or “support = moveables, viz. tables, benches, footstools, boxes, and drawers” (Bottcher), which neither harmonizes with the temple, where there was no such furniture, nor with the סִסְמָלֹת of the Chronicles. “And guitars and harps for the singers,” probably for the temple singers. כִּנּוֹר and בָּבָב are string instruments; the former resembling our guitar

<sup>1</sup> It was this which gave rise to the legend in Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6. 61), that it was through this queen that the root of the true balsam (*Ophobalsamum*), which was afterwards cultivated in gardens at Jericho and Engedi, was first of all brought to Palestine (cf. Movers, *Phœnizien*, ii. 3, p. 226 sqq.).



rather than the harp, the strings being carried over the sounding-board upon a bridge, the latter being of a pitcher shape without any sounding bridge, as in the case of the harps.—Ver. 13. Solomon gave the queen of Saba all that she wished and asked for, beside what he gave her “according to the hand,” i.e. the might, of the king; that is to say, in addition to the presents answering to his might and his wealth, which he was obliged to give as a king, according to the Oriental custom. In the Chronicles (ver. 12) we find “beside that which she had brought (הַבִּיאָה) to the king,” which is an abbreviated expression for “beside that which he gave her in return for what she had brought to him,” or beside the return presents corresponding to her gifts to him, as it has been already correctly paraphrased by the Targum.

Vers. 14-22. SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND THE USE HE MADE OF IT (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 13-21).—Ver. 14. The gold which Solomon received in one year amounted to 666 talents,—more than seventeen million thalers (two million and a half sterling—Tr.). 666 is evidently a round number founded upon an approximative valuation. בִּשְׁנֵה אֶחָת is rendered in the Vulg. *per annos singulos*; but this is hardly correct, as the Ophir fleet, the produce of which is at any rate included, did not arrive every year, but once in three years. Thenius is wrong in supposing that this revenue merely applies to the direct taxes levied upon the Israelites. It includes all the branches of Solomon's revenue, whether derived from his commerce by sea and land (cf. vers. 28, 29) or from the royal domains (1 Chron. xxvii. 26-31), or received in the form of presents from foreign princes, who either visited him like the queen of Saba or sent ambassadors to him (vers. 23, 24), excepting the duties and tribute from conquered kings, which are specially mentioned in ver. 15. לְבַד מֵאֲנָשֵׁי הַתּ׳, beside what came in (בָּא לְשִׁלְמוֹה) from the travelling traders and the commerce of the merchants, and from all the kings, etc. אֲנָשֵׁי הַתְּרִים (a combination resembling our merchantmen; cf. Ewald, § 287, e, p. 721) are probably the tradesmen or smaller dealers who travelled about in the country, and רִבְלִים the wholesale dealers. This explanation of תְּרִים cannot be rendered doubtful by the objection that תִּיר only occurs elsewhere in connection with the wandering about of spies; for רָבַל signified originally to go about, spy out, or retail scandal, and after that to trade, and go about as a tradesman. מַלְכֵי הָעָרֹב are not kings of the auxiliary

and allied nations (Chald., Ges.), but kings of the mixed population, and according to Jer. xxv. 24, more especially of the population of Arabia Deserta (הַשִּׁכְנִים בְּמִדְבָּר), which bordered upon Palestine; for עָרַב is a mixed crowd of all kinds of men, who either attach themselves to a nation (Ex. xii. 38), or live in the midst of it as foreigners (Neh. xiii. 3), hence a number of mercenaries (Jer. l. 37). In 2 Chron. ix. 14, הָעָרַב is therefore correctly explained by the term עָרַב, which does not mean the whole of Arabia, but "only a tract of country not very extensive on the east and south of Palestine" (Gesenius), as these tribes were tributary to Solomon. פְּחוֹת הָאָרֶץ, the governors of the land, are probably the officers named in ch. iv. 7-19. As they collected the duties in the form of natural productions and delivered them in that form, so also did the tradesmen and merchants pay their duties, and the subjugated pastoral tribes of Arabia their tribute, *in natura*. This explains in a very simple manner why these revenues are separated from the revenue of Solomon which came in the form of money. פָּתָה is a foreign word, which first found its way into the Hebrew language after the times of the Assyrians, and sprang from the Sanscrit *paksha*, a companion or friend, which took the form of *pakkha* in Prakrit, and probably of *pakha* in the early Persian (*vid.* Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 195).—Vers. 16, 17. Solomon had 500 ornamental shields made, 200 larger ones (עֲיִים, *scuta*, targets), and 300 smaller (קִינִים, *clypei*). These shields, like all the shields of the ancients, were made of wood or basket-work, and covered with gold plate instead of leather (see my *bibl. Archæol.* ii. pp. 296 sqq.). זָהָב שְׁחוּט does not mean *aurum jugulatum*, i.e. gold mixed with metal of a different kind, but, as Kimchi has shown, *aurum diductum*, beaten gold, from שָׁחַט, to stretch; since Solomon would certainly use pure gold for these ornamental shields. "Six hundred shekels of gold he spread upon one target," that is to say, he used for gilding one target. Six hundred shekels would weigh about  $17\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., so that the value of the gold upon a target would be more than 5000 thalers (£750), supposing that the Mosaic shekel is meant. But this is rendered doubtful by the fact that the gold upon the small shields is estimated at three minæ. If, for example, the three minæ are equal to three hundred shekels, according to 2 Chron. ix. 16, as is generally assumed, a hundred shekels are reckoned as one mina; and as the mina only contained fifty Mosaic shekels, according to Ezek.



xliv. 12, the reference must be to shekels after the king's weight (2 Sam. xiv. 26), which were only half the sacred shekel (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. p. 135). Consequently the gold plate upon one target was not quite 9 lbs., and that upon a shield not quite  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. These shields were intended for the body-guard to carry on state occasions (ch. xiv. 27, 28; 2 Chron. xii. 10), and were kept in the house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. vii. 2). —Vers. 18-20. Solomon had a great throne of ivory made, and had it overlaid with fine gold. כִּסֵּא-יָשָׁן is not a throne made of ivory, but one merely ornamented with ivory; and we are to imagine the gilding as effected by laying the gold simply upon the wood, and inserting the ivory within the gold plate. מִיָּפֹז, a *hophal* participle of פָּזָה: *aurum depuratum*, hence = טָהוֹר in 2 Chron. ix. 17. The throne had six steps, and a "rounded head on the hinder part thereof," i.e. a back which was arched above or rounded off,<sup>1</sup> and יָרֵחַ, arms, i.e. arms on both sides of the seat (מְקוֹם הַשֵּׁבֶת), and two lions standing by the side of the arms. Beside this there were twelve lions upon the six steps, namely two upon each step, one on this side and one on that. Instead of אֲרָיִים (ver. 20) we find אֲרִיּוֹת in ver. 19, just as we do in both verses of the Chronicles, not because the reference is to artificial, inanimate figures and not to natural lions, as Thenius supposes, but because the plural ending יִם is an unusual one with this word; and even where natural lions are spoken of, we always find אֲרִיּוֹת in other passages (cf. Judg. xiv. 5; 2 Sam. i. 23; 2 Kings xvii. 25; Song of Sol. iv. 8, etc.). The lions were symbols of the ruler's authority; and the twelve lions upon the steps may possibly have pointed to the rule over the twelve tribes of Israel, which was concentrated in the throne; not "watchers of the throne," as Thenius thinks. This throne was so splendid a work, that the historian observes that nothing of the kind had ever been made for any other kingdom. Upon the

<sup>1</sup> Instead of וְכִבֵּשׁ עֲגוֹל לְכִסֵּא מֵאֲחֵרָיו we have in the Chronicles וְכִבֵּשׁ עֲגוֹל לְכִסֵּא מֵאֲחֵרָיו, "and a footstool in gold fastened to the throne" (the plural מֵאֲחֵרָיו refers to the footstool and the steps). Now, however easily מֵאֲחֵרָיו may have been written by mistake for מֵאֲחֵרָיו, כִּבֵּשׁ זֶהב cannot have grown out of רֹאשׁ עֲגוֹל by any such mistake. The *quid-pro-quo* of the LXX. for רֹאשׁ עֲגוֹל, προτομα μύσχα, in which עֲגוֹל is certainly confounded with עֲגוֹל, does not warrant the conjecture of Thenius, that the Chronicler found עֲגוֹל in his original and substituted כִּבֵּשׁ (lamb), whereupon כִּבֵּשׁ (lamb) was changed by another hand into כִּבֵּשׁ, footstep, and רֹאשׁ was dropped altogether.

early Assyrian monuments we do indeed find high seats depicted, which are very artistically worked, and provided with backs and arms, and some with the arms supported by figures of animals (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 301), but none resembling Solomon's throne. It is not till a later age that the more splendid thrones appear (*vid.* Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenland*, iii. pp. 176 sqq.).—Vers. 21, 22. The drinking vessels of Solomon also were all of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon of costly gold (סָנַיִר: see at ch. vi. 20). Silver was counted as nothing, because the Tarshish fleet arrived once in three years, bringing gold, silver, etc. (see at ch. ix. 28).

In vers. 23–29 everything that had to be stated concerning the wealth, wisdom, and revenue of Solomon is summed up as a conclusion (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 22–28 and i. 14–17).—Vers. 23 and 24 point back to ch. v. 9–14. וַיֵּגֶדֶל: Solomon became greater, not was greater, on account of the *Vår consec.* בְּלִדְהָאָרֶץ, all the world, corresponds to בְּלִדְהָעַמִּים in ch. v. 14. The foreigners out of all lands, who came on account of his wisdom, brought Solomon presents: gold and silver vessels, clothes (שִׁלְמֹת), court dresses, which are still customary presents in the East, נִשְׂאָה, armour, spices, horses and mules.—Ver. 26 is simply a repetition of ch. v. 6 (compare also ch. ix. 19); and ver. 27 is merely a further extension of ver. 21. The words of ver. 27, “Solomon made silver like stones in Jerusalem, and cedars like the sycamores in the lowland for abundance,” are a hyperbolical description of his collection of enormous quantities of precious metals and costly wood. סִיְמֹרִים, *sycamori*, mulberry fig-trees, are very rare in Palestine in its present desolate state (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 27), and are only met in any abundance in Egypt; but in ancient times they abounded in the lowlands of Palestine to such an extent, that they were used as common building wood (*vid.* Isa. ix. 9, on which Theodoret observes, *τούτων (συκαμίνων) ἡ Παλαιστίνη πεπλήρωται*). According to 1 Chron. xxvii. 28, the sycamore forests in the lowland of Judah were royal domains.—Vers. 28, 29 (cf. 2 Chron. i. 16, 17). “And (as for) the going out of horses from Egypt for Solomon, a company of king's merchants fetched (horses) for a definite price.” This is the only possible explanation of the verse according to the Masoretic punctuation; but to obtain it, the first מִקְנֵה must be connected with סָהָרִי in opposition to the accents, and the second must be pointed מִקְנֵה. This is the rendering adopted by Ge-



senius in his *Thesaurus* and *Lexicon* (ed. Dietr. s. v. מִקְנֵה). The meaning company or troop may certainly be justified from Gen. i. 10, Ex. vii. 19, and Lev. xi. 36, where the word signifies an accumulation of water. Still there is something very strange not only in the application of the word both to a company of traders and also to a troop of horses, but also in the omission of כֹּסִיִּים (horses) after the second מִקְנֵה. Hence the rendering of the LXX. and Vulgate deserves attention, and may possibly be the one to be preferred (as Michaelis, Bertheau on *Chron.*, and Movers assume). The translators of these versions have taken מִקְנֵה as the name of a place, ἐξ Ἐκουέ, or rather ἐκ Κουέ, *de Coa*.<sup>1</sup> According to this, the rendering would be: "And as for the going out of horses from Egypt and Koa (or Kawe) for Solomon, the king's traders fetched them from Koa (Kawe) for a fixed price." It is true that the situation of *Koa* cannot be more precisely defined; but there seems to be very little doubt that it was a place for the collection of customs upon the frontier of Egypt.—Ver. 29. "And there came up and went out a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty shekels; and so (in the same manner as for Solomon) they led them out for all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram through their hand." מִרְכָּבָה, like רֶכֶב in 2 Sam. viii. 4, x. 18, and Ezek. xxxix. 20, denotes a chariot with the team of horses belonging to it, possibly three horses (see at ch. v. 6), not *quadriga* (Clericus and others), or two draught horses and two as a reserve (Thenius). For the inference, that if a horse cost 150 shekels, a team of four would be obtained for 600, is not quite a certain one, since the chariot itself would certainly not be given in. A hundred and fifty shekels are a little more than 130 thalers (£19, 10s.—TR.), and 600 would be 525 thalers (£78, 15s.). These amounts are sufficient to show how untenable the opinion of Movers is, that the sums mentioned are not the prices paid for horses and chariots, but the payment made for their exit, or the customs duty. And his other opinion is equally erroneous, namely that the chariots and horses were state carriages and horses of luxury intended for the king.—The merchants are called the king's

<sup>1</sup> That Κουέ or Κωέ is the earliest reading of the LXX., and not the ἐκ Θεκουέ of the Cod. Vat. and Alex., is very evident from the statement which we find in the *Onomast.* of Eusebius (ed. Larsow et Parth. p. 260), Κώδ, πλησίον Αἰγύπτου; for which Jerome has *Coa, quæ est juxta Ægyptum*, after the Vulgate.

traders, not because a portion of their profits went into the royal treasury as the tax upon trade (Bertheau), nor as the brokers who bought for the king (Thenius), but because they carried on their trade for the king's account. **בְּיָדָם** cannot be adduced as evidence to the contrary; for linguists require no proof that this cannot mean "*auf ihre Hand*," as Thenius assumes. Bottcher's explanation is the right one, namely, "through their hand," inasmuch as they brought the horses and chariots themselves even to those kings who lived at a greater distance, without employing intermediate agents. The kings of the **חֵטִי**, the Hittites in the wider sense (= Canaanites, as in Josh. i. 4, 2 Kings vii. 6, Ezek. xvi. 3), and of Aram, were in part Solomon's vassals, since his rule extended over all the Canaanites with the exception of the Phœnicians, and over several kingdoms of Aram.

CHAP. XL. SOLOMON'S POLYGAMY AND IDOLATRY. HIS OPPONENTS,  
AND HIS DEATH.

The idolatry into which Solomon fell in his old age appears so strange in a king so wise and God-fearing as Solomon showed himself to be at the dedication of the temple, that many have been quite unable to reconcile the two, and have endeavoured to show either that Solomon's worship of idols was psychologically impossible, or that the knowledge of God and the piety attributed to him are unhistorical. But great wisdom and a refined knowledge of God are not a defence against the folly of idolatry, since this has its roots in the heart, and springs from sensual desires and the lust of the flesh. The cause assigned in the biblical account for Solomon's falling away from the Lord, is that he loved many strange, *i.e.* foreign or heathen, wives, who turned his heart from Jehovah to their own gods in his old age. Consequently the falling away did not take place suddenly, but gradually, as Solomon got old, and was not a complete renunciation of the worship of Jehovah, to whom he offered solemn sacrifices three times a year, and that certainly to the day of his death (ch. ix. 25), but consisted simply in the fact that his heart was no longer thoroughly devoted to the Lord (ch. xi. 4), and that he inclined towards the idols of his foreign wives and built them altars (vers. 5-8); that is to say, it consisted merely in a syncretic mixture of Jehovah-worship and idolatry, by which the worship which should be paid solely



and exclusively to the true God was not only injured, but was even turned into idolatry itself, Jehovah the only true God being placed on a level with the worthless gods of the heathen. —Love to foreign wives no doubt presupposed an inclination to foreign customs ; it was not, however, idolatry in itself, but was still reconcilable with that sincere worship of Jehovah which is attributed to Solomon in the earlier years of his reign. At the same time it was a rock on which living faith and true adherence to the Lord might at last suffer shipwreck. And we may even infer from the repeated warnings of God (ch. iii. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4), that from the earliest years of his reign Solomon was in danger of falling into idolatry. This danger did, indeed, spring in his case from his inclination to foreign customs ; but this inclination was again influenced by many of the circumstances of his reign, which we must regard as contributing more remotely to his eventual fall. And among the first of these we must place the splendour and glory of his reign. Through long and severe conflicts David had succeeded in conquering all the enemies of Israel, and had not only helped his people to peace and prosperity, but had also raised the kingdom to great power and glory. And Solomon inherited these fruits of his father's reign. Under the blessings of peace he was not only able to carry out the work of building a splendid temple, which his father had urged upon him, but was also able, by a wise use of the sources already existing and by opening new ones, still further to increase the treasures which he had collected, and thereby to exalt the splendour of his kingdom. The treaty with Hiram of Tyre, which enabled him to execute the intended state buildings in Jerusalem, was followed by alliances for the establishment of a widespread commerce both by sea and land, through which ever increasing treasures of gold and silver, and other costly goods, were brought to the king. As this accumulation of riches helped to nourish his inclination to a love of show, and created a kind of luxury which was hardly reconcilable with the simplicity of manners and the piety of a servant of God, so the foreign trade led to a toleration of heathen customs and religious views which could not fail to detract from the reverence paid to Jehovah, however little the trade with foreigners might be in itself at variance with the nature of the Old Testament kingdom of God. And again, even the great wisdom of king Solomon might also become a rock en-

dangering his life of faith, not so much in the manner suggested by J. J. Hess (*Gesch. Dav. u. Sal.* ii. p. 413), namely, that an excessive thirst for inquiry might easily seduce him from the open and clearer regions of the kingdom of truth into the darker ones of the kingdom of lies, *i.e.* of magic, and so lead him to the paths of superstition; as because the widespread fame of his wisdom brought distinguished and wise men from distant lands to Jerusalem and into alliance with the king, and their homage flattered the vanity of the human heart, and led to a greater and greater toleration of heathen ways. But these things are none of them blamed in the Scriptures, because they did not of necessity lead to idolatry, but might simply give an indirect impulse to it, by lessening the wall of partition between the worship of the true God and that of heathen deities, and making apostasy a possible thing. The Lord Himself had promised and had given Solomon wisdom, riches, and glory above all other kings for the glorification of his kingdom; and these gifts of God merely contributed to estrange his heart from the true God for the simple reason, that Solomon forgot the commandments of the Lord and suffered himself to be besotted by the lusts of the flesh, not only so as to love many foreign wives, but so as also to take to himself wives from the nations with which Israel was not to enter into any close relationship whatever.

Vers. 1-13. SOLOMON'S LOVE OF MANY WIVES AND IDOLATRY.  
 --Vers. 1, 2. "Solomon loved many foreign wives, and that along with the daughter of Pharaoh." *וְאִתּוֹ בַּת־מִצְרַיִם*, standing as it does between *וְאִתּוֹ בַּת־מִצְרַיִם* and *וְאִתּוֹ בַּת־מִצְרַיִם*, cannot mean "and especially the daughter of P.," as Thienius follows the earlier commentators in supposing, but must mean, as in ver. 25, "and that with, or along with," *i.e.* actually beside the daughter of Pharaoh. She is thereby distinguished from the foreign wives who turned away Solomon's heart from the Lord, so that the blame pronounced upon those marriages does not apply to his marriage to the Egyptian princess (see at ch. iii. 1). All that is blamed is that, in opposition to the command in Deut. xvii. 17, Solomon loved (1) *many* foreign wives, and (2) Moabitish, Ammonitish, and other wives, of the nations with whom the Israelites were not to intermarry. All that the law expressly prohibited was marriage with Canaanitish women (Deut. vii. 1-3; Ex. xxxiv. 16); consequently the words "of the nations," etc., are



not to be taken as referring merely to the Sidonian and Hittite women (J. D. Mich.); but this prohibition is extended here to all the tribes enumerated in ver. 2, just as in Ezra ix. 2 sqq., x. 3, Neh. xiii. 23; not from a rigour surpassing the law, but in accordance with the spirit of the law, namely, because the reason appended to the law, *ne in idololatriam a superstitionis mulieribus pellicerentur* (Clericus), applied to all these nations. The Moabites and Ammonites, moreover, were not to be received into the congregation at all, not even to the tenth generation, and of the Edomites only the children in the third generation were to be received (Deut. xxiii. 4, 8, 9). There was all the less reason, therefore, for permitting marriages with them, that is to say, so long as they retained their nationality or their heathen ways. The words *לֹא-תִבְנֶהוּ בְכֶם* are connected in form with Josh. xxiii. 12, but, like the latter, they really rest upon Ex. xxxiv. 16 and Deut. vii. 1-3. In the last clause *בְּרֵם* is used with peculiar emphasis: Solomon clave to these nations, of which God had said such things, to love, *i.e.* to enter into the relation of love or into the marriage relation, with them. *יִבְנֶה* is used of the attachment of a man to his wife (Gen. ii. 4) and also to Jehovah (Deut. iv. 4, x. 20, etc.).—Vers. 3-8 carry out still further what has been already stated. In ver. 3 the taking of *many* wives is first explained. He had seven hundred *נָשִׁים שְׂרוֹת*, women of the first rank, who were exalted into princesses, and three hundred concubines. These are in any case round numbers, that is to say, numbers which simply approximate to the reality, and are not to be understood as affirming that Solomon had all these wives and concubines at the same time, but as including all the women who were received into his harem during the whole of his reign, whereas the sixty queens and eighty concubines mentioned in Song of Sol. vi. 8 are to be understood as having been present in the court at one time. Even in this respect Solomon sought to equal the rulers of other nations, if not to surpass them.<sup>1</sup>—These women “inclined his heart,” *i.e.* determined the inclina-

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless these numbers, especially that of the wives who were raised to the rank of princesses, appear sufficiently large to suggest the possibility of an error in the numeral letters, although Oriental rulers carried this custom to a very great length, as for example Darius Codomannus, of whom it is related that he took with him 360 *pellices* on his expedition against Alexander (see Curtius, iii. 3, 24; Athen. *Deipnos.* iii. 1).

tion of his heart. Ver. 4. In the time of old age, when the flesh gained the supremacy over the spirit, they turned his heart to other gods, so that it was no longer wholly with Jehovah, his God. **שֵׁלֵם**, *integer*, i.e. entirely devoted to the Lord (cf. ch. viii. 61), like the heart of David his father, who had indeed grievously sinned, but had not fallen into idolatry. —Vers. 5–8. He walked after the Ashtaroath, etc. According to ver. 7, the idolatry here condemned consisted in the fact that he built altars to the deities of all his foreign wives, upon which they offered incense and sacrifice to their idols. It is not stated that he himself also offered sacrifice to these idols. But even the building of altars for idols was a participation in idolatry which was irreconcilable with true fidelity to the Lord. **עֵשֶׂת־אֲרֻרָה**, Astarte, was the chief female deity of all the Canaanitish tribes; her worship was also transplanted from Tyre to Carthage, where it flourished greatly. She was a moon-goddess, whom the Greeks and Romans called sometimes *Aphrodite*, sometimes *Urania*, *Σελήνη*, *Celestis*, and *Juno* (see the Comm. on Judg. ii. 13). **מִלְכָּם**, which is called **מֶלֶךְ** (without the article) in ver. 7, and **מִלְכָּם** in Jer. xlix. 1, 3, and Amos i. 15, the abomination of the Ammonites, must not be confounded with the *Molech* (**מֹלֶךְ**, always with the article) of the early Canaanites, to whom children were offered in sacrifice in the valley of Benhinnom from the time of Ahaz onwards (see the Comm. on Lev. xviii. 21), since they had both of them their separate places of worship in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 10 and 13), and nothing is ever said about the offering of children in sacrifice to *Mileom*; although the want of information prevents us from determining the precise distinction between the two. *Mileom* was at any rate related to the *Chemosh* of the Moabites mentioned in ver. 7; for Chemosh is also described as a god of the Ammonites in Judg. xi. 24, whereas everywhere else he is called the god of the Moabites (Num. xxi. 29; Amos i. 15, etc.). *Chemosh* was a sun-god, who was worshipped as king of his people and as a god of war, and as such is depicted upon coins with a sword, lance, and shield in his hands, and with two torches by his side (see at Num. xxi. 29). The enumeration of the different idols is incomplete; Chemosh being omitted in ver. 5, and Astarte, to whom Solomon also built an altar in Jerusalem, according to 2 Kings xxiii. 13, in ver. 7. Still this incompleteness does not warrant our filling



up the supposed gaps by emendations of the text. וַיֵּשֶׁב הָרֶע וְנֹר', as in Judg. ii. 11, iii. 7, etc. מִלֵּא אַחֲרֵי י', a pregnant expression for מִלֵּא לְלֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי י', as in Num. xiv. 24, xxxii. 11, 12, etc. —These places of sacrifice (בְּמָקָם, see at ch. iii. 2) Solomon built upon the mountain in front, *i.e.* to the east, of Jerusalem, and, according to the more precise account in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, to the right, that is to say, on the southern side, of the Mount of Corruption,—in other words, upon the southern peak of the Mount of Olives; and consequently this peak has been called in church tradition from the time of Brocardus onwards, either *Mons Offensionis*, after the Vulgate rendering of הַר הַמִּשְׁחָת in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, or *Mons Scandali*, Mount of Offence (*vid.* Rob. Pal. i. 565 and 566).—Ver. 8. "So did he for all his foreign wives," *viz.* built altars for their gods; for instance, in addition to those already named, he also built an altar for Astarte. These three altars, which are only mentioned in the complete account in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, were sufficient for all the deities of the foreign wives. For the Hittites and Edomites do not appear to have had any deities of their own that were peculiar to themselves. The Hittites no doubt worshipped Astarte in common with the Sidonians, and the Edomites probably worshipped Milcom. In the whole of the Old Testament the only place in which gods of the Edomites are mentioned is 2 Chron. xxv. 20, and there no names are given. Of course we must except Pharaoh's daughter, according to ver. 1, and the remarks already made in connection with that verse; for she brought no idolatrous worship to Jerusalem, and consequently even in later times we do not find the slightest trace of Egyptian idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah.<sup>1</sup> Burning incense (מִקְטֹרֶת) is mentioned before sacrificing (מִזְבְּחֹת), because vegetable offerings took precedence of animal sacrifices in the nature-worship of Hither Asia (*vid.* Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 237 sqq.).—Vers. 9 sqq. Through this apostasy from the Lord his God, who had appeared

<sup>1</sup> From the fact that these places of sacrifice still existed even in the time of Josiah, notwithstanding the reforms of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, and Hezekiah, which rooted out all public idolatry, at least in Jerusalem, Movers infers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 207), and that not without reason, that there was an essential difference between these sacred places and the other seats of Israelitish idolatry which were exterminated, namely, that in their national character they were also the places of worship for the foreigners settled in and near Jerusalem, *e.g.* the Sidonian, Ammonitish, and Moabitish merchants, which were under the protection of treaties, since this is the only ground on which

to him twice (ch. iii. 5 sqq. and ix. 2 sqq.) and had warned him against idolatry (כִּנְזָרִים is a continuation of the participle כִּנְזָרִים), Solomon drew down upon himself the anger of Jehovah. The emphasis lies upon the fact that God had appeared to him Himself for the purpose of warning him, and had not merely caused him to be warned by prophets, as Theodoret has explained. In consequence of this, the following announcement is made to him, no doubt through the medium of a prophet, possibly Ahijah (ver. 29): "Because this has come into thy mind, and thou hast not kept my covenant, . . . I will tear the kingdom from thee and give it to thy servant; nevertheless I will not do it in thy lifetime for thy father David's sake: howbeit I will not tear away the whole kingdom; one tribe I will give to thy son." In this double limitation of the threatened forfeiture of the kingdom there is clearly manifested the goodness of God (δείκνυσιν τὴν ἀμετρον ἀγαθότητα—Theodoret); not, however, with reference to Solomon, who had forfeited the divine mercy through his idolatry, but with regard to David and the selection of Jerusalem: that is to say, not from any special preference for David and Jerusalem, but in order that the promise made to David (2 Sam. vii.), and the choice of Jerusalem as the place where His name should be revealed which was connected with that promise, might stand immoveably as an act of grace, which no sin of men could overturn (*vid.* ver. 36). For כִּנְזָרִים וְכִנְזָרִים see the Comm. on vers. 31, 32.

VERS. 14–40. SOLOMON'S OPPONENTS.—Although the punishment with which Solomon was threatened for his apostasy was not to be inflicted till after his death, the Lord raised up several adversaries even during his lifetime, who endangered the peace of his kingdom, and were to serve as constant reminders that he owed his throne and his peaceable rule over the whole of the kingdom inherited from his father solely to the mercy, the fidelity, and the long-suffering of God.—The rising up of Hadad and Rezon took place even before the temple we can satisfactorily explain their undisturbed continuance at Jerusalem. But this would not preclude their having been built by Solomon for the worship of his foreign wives; on the other hand, it is much easier to explain their being built in the front of Jerusalem, and opposite to the temple of Jehovah, if from the very first regard was had to the foreigners who visited Jerusalem. The objection offered by Thénius to this view, which Bertheau had already adopted (*zur Gesch. der Isr.* p. 323), has been shown by Bottcher (*N. exeg. Ehrenl.* ii. p. 95) to be utterly untenable.



mencement of Solomon's idolatry, but it is brought by יָהִי (ver. 14) into logical connection with the punishment with which he is threatened in consequence of that idolatry, because it was not till a later period that it produced any perceptible effect upon his government, yet it ought from the very first to have preserved him from self-security.

Vers. 14-22. The *first* adversary was *Hadad* the Edomite, a man of royal birth. The name הָדָד (אָדָד in ver. 17, according to an interchange of ה and א which is by no means rare) was also borne by a præ-Mosaic king of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 35), from which we may see that it was not an uncommon name in the royal family of the Edomites. But the conjecture of Ewald and Thenius, that our Hadad was a grandson of Hadar, the last of the kings mentioned there, is quite a groundless one, since it rests upon the false assumption that Hadar (called Hadad in the Chronicles by mistake) reigned in the time of David (see the Comm. on Gen. xxxvi. 31 sqq.). הָדָד before בְּאֶדוֹם stands in the place of the relative אֲשֶׁר: "of royal seed he = who was of the royal seed in Edom" (cf. Ewald, § 332, a).—Vers. 15 sqq. When David had to do with the Edomites, . . . Hadad fled. הָיָה אֵת is analogous to הָיָה עִם, to have to do with any one, though in a hostile sense, as in the phrase to go to war with (אֵת) a person, whereas הָיָה עִם generally means to be upon the side of any one. The correctness of the reading בְּהִיּוֹת is confirmed by all the ancient versions, which have simply paraphrased the meaning in different ways. For Böttcher has already shown that the LXX. did not read בְּהִיּוֹת, as Thenius supposes. The words from בְּעֵלֹת to the end of ver. 16 form explanatory circumstantial clauses. On the circumstance itself, compare 2 Sam. viii. 13, 14, with the explanation given there. "The slain," whom Joab went to bury, were probably not the Israelites who had fallen in the battle in the Salt valley (2 Sam. viii. 13), but those who had been slain on the invasion of the land by the Edomites, and still remained unburied. After their burial Joab defeated the Edomites in the valley of Salt, and remained six months in Edom till he had cut off every male. "All Israel" is the whole of the Israelitish army. "Every male" is of course only the men capable of bearing arms, who fell into the hands of the Israelites; for "Hadad and others fled, and the whole of the Idumæan race was not extinct" (Clericus). Then *Hadad* fled, while yet a little boy, with some of his father's

Edomitish servants, to go to Egypt, going first of all to Midian and thence to Paran. The country of *Midian* cannot be more precisely defined, inasmuch as we meet with Midianites sometimes in the peninsula of Sinai on the eastern side of the Elanitic Gulf, where Edrisi and Abulfeda mention a city of Madian (see at Ex. ii. 15), and sometimes on the east of the Moabitish territory (see at Num. xxii. 4 and Judg. vi. 1). Here, at any rate, we must think of the neighbourhood of the Elanitic Gulf, though not necessarily of the city of Madian, five days' journey to the south of Aela; and probably of the country to which Moses fled from Egypt. *Paran* is the desert of that name between the mountains of Sinai and the south of Canaan (see at Num. x. 12), through which the Haj route from Egypt by Elath to Mecca still runs. Hadad would be obliged to take the road by Elath in order to go to Egypt, even if he had taken refuge with the Midianites on the east of Moab and Edom.—Vers. 18 sqq. From Paran they took men with them as guides through the desert. Thus Hadad came to Egypt, where Pharaoh received him hospitably, and gave them a house and maintenance (מִסְכָּן), and also assigned him land (שָׂדֶה) to cultivate for the support of the fugitives who had come with him, and eventually, as he found great favour in his eyes, gave him for a wife the sister of his own wife, queen *Tachpenes*, who bare him a son, *Genubath*. This son was weaned by Tachpenes in the royal palace, and then brought up among (with) the children of Pharaoh, the royal princes. According to Rosellini and Wilkinson (*Ges. The.* p. 1500), Tachpenes was also the name of a female deity of Egypt. The wife of Pharaoh is called מִלְכֵּי, i.e. the mistress among the king's wives, as being the principal consort. In the case of the kings of Judah this title is given to the king's mother, probably as the president in the harem, whose place was taken by the reigning queen after her death. The weaning, probably a family festival as among the Hebrews (Gen. xxi. 8) and other ancient nations (*vid.* Douglai *Analecta* ss. i. 22 sq.), was carried out by the queen in the palace, because the boy was to be thereby adopted among the royal children, to be brought up with them.—Vers. 21, 22. When Hadad heard in Egypt of the death of David and Joab, he asked permission of Pharaoh to return to his own country. Pharaoh replied, "What is there lacking to thee with me?" This answer was a pure expression



of love and attachment to Hadad, and involved the request that he would remain. But Hadad answered, "No, but let me go." We are not told that Pharaoh then let him go, but this must be supplied; just as in Num. x. 32 we are not told what Hobab eventually did in consequence of Moses' request, but it has to be supplied from the context. The return of Hadad to his native land is clearly to be inferred from the fact that, according to vers. 14 and 25, he rose up as an adversary of Solomon.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 23-25. A *second* adversary of Solomon was *Rezon*, the son of Eliadah (for the name see at ch. xv. 18), who had fled from his lord Hadadezer, king of Zobah, and who became the captain of a warlike troop (רִגְדִּי), when David smote *them* (מִלְחָמָה), i.e. the troops of his lord (2 Sam. viii. 3, 4). Rezon probably fled from his lord for some reason which is not assigned,

<sup>1</sup> The LXX. have supplied what is missing *e conjectura*: καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν Ἀδερ (i.e. Hadad) εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ· αὐτὴ ἡ κακία ἣν ἐποίησεν Ἀδερ καὶ ἐβαρύνθησεν Ἰσραήλ, καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν γῇ Ἐδὼμ. Thenius proposes to alter the Hebrew text accordingly, and draws this conclusion, that "shortly after the accession of Solomon, Hadad, having returned from Egypt, wrested from the power of the Israelites the *greatest* part of Edom, probably the true mountain-land of Edom, so that certain places situated in the plain, particularly Ezion-geber, remained in the hands of the Israelites, and intercourse could be maintained with that port through the *Arabah*, even though not quite without disturbance." This conclusion, which is described as "historical," is indeed at variance with 1 Kings xxii. 48, according to which Edom had no king even in the time of Jehoshaphat, but only a vicegerent, and also with 2 Kings viii. 20, according to which it was not till the reign of Jehoshaphat's son Joram that Edom fell away from Judah. But this discrepancy Thenius sets aside by the remark at 1 Kings xxii. 48, that in Jehoshaphat's time the family of Hadad had probably died out, and Jehoshaphat prudently availed himself of the disputes which arose concerning the succession to enforce Judah's right of supremacy over Edom, and to appoint first a vicegerent and then a new king, though perhaps one not absolutely dependent upon him. But this conjecture as to the relation in which Jehoshaphat stood to Edom is proved to be an imaginary fiction by the fact that, although the history does indeed mention a revolt of the Edomites from Judah (2 Chron. xx.; see at 1 Kings xxii. 48), it not only says nothing whatever about the dying out of the royal family of Hadad or about disputes concerning the succession, but it does not even hint at them.—But with regard to the additions made to this passage by the LXX., to which even Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 276) attributes historical worth, though without building upon them such confident historical combinations as Thenius, we may easily convince ourselves of their critical worthlessness, if we only pass our eye over the whole section (vers. 14-25), instead of merely singling out those readings of the LXX. which support our preconceived opinions, and overlooking all the rest, after the thoroughly unscientific mode of criticism adopted by a Thenius or Böttcher.

when the latter was engaged in war with David, before his complete overthrow, and collected together a company from the fugitives, with which he afterwards marched to Damascus, and having taken possession of that city, made himself king over it. This probably did not take place till towards the close of David's reign, or even after his death, though it was at the very beginning of Solomon's reign; for "he became an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon (*i.e.* during the whole of his reign), and that with (beside) the mischief which Hadad did, and he abhorred Israel (*i.e.* became disgusted with the Israelitish rule), and became king over Aram." אֹיֵבֵי הָיָה is an abbreviated expression, to which עָנִיָּה may easily be supplied, as it has been by the LXX. (*vid.* Ewald, § 292, *b*, *Ann.*). It is impossible to gather from these few words in what the mischief done by Hadad to Solomon con-

For example, the LXX. have connected together the two accounts respecting the adversaries Hadad and Rezon who rose up against Solomon (ver. 14 and ver. 23), which are separated in the Hebrew text, and have interpolated what is stated concerning Rezon in vers. 23 and 24 after הָאֲרָמִי in ver. 14, and consequently have been obliged to alter וַיְהִי עִטָּן וְנָר in ver. 25 into καὶ ἦσαν Σατάν, because they had previously cited Hadad and Rezon as adversaries, whereas in the Hebrew text these words apply to Rezon alone. But the rest of ver. 25, namely the words from וְאֶת-הָרַעָה onwards, they have not given till the close of ver. 22 (LXX.); and in order to connect this with what precedes, they have interpolated the words καὶ ἀνίστασθαι Ἀδὸν εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ. The Alexandrians were induced to resort to this intertwining of the accounts concerning Hadad and Rezon, which are kept separate in the Hebrew text, partly by the fact that Hadad and Rezon are introduced as adversaries of Solomon with the very same words (vers. 14 and 23), but more especially by the fact that in ver. 25 of the Hebrew text the injury done to Solomon by Hadad is merely referred to in a supplementary manner in connection with Rezon's enterprise, and indeed is inserted parenthetically within the account of the latter. The Alexandrian translators did not know what to make of this, because they did not understand וְאֶת-הָרַעָה and took וְאֶת for וְאֵת, αὐτῇ ἡ κακία. With this reading וַיִּקֶּן which follows was necessarily understood as referring to Hadad; and as Hadad was an Edomite, וַיִּמְלֶךְ עַל-אֲרָם had to be altered into ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν γῇ Ἐδὼμ. Consequently all the alterations of the LXX. in this section are simply the result of an arbitrary treatment of the Hebrew text, which they did not really understand, and consist of a collocation of all that is homogeneous, as every reader of this translation who is acquainted with the original text must see so clearly even at the very beginning of the chapter, where the number of Solomon's wives is taken from ver. 3 of the Hebrew text and interpolated into ver. 1, that, as Thenius observes, "the true state of the case can only be overlooked from superficiality of observation or from preconceived opinion."



sisted.<sup>1</sup> Rezon, on the other hand, really obtained possession of the rule over Damascus. Whether at the beginning or not till the end of Solomon's reign cannot be determined, since all that is clearly stated is that he was Solomon's adversary during the whole of his reign, and attempted to revolt from him from the very beginning. If, however, he made himself king of Damascus in the earliest years of his reign, he cannot have maintained his sway very long, since Solomon afterwards built or fortified Tadmor in the desert, which he could not have done if he had not been lord over Damascus, as the caravan road from Gilead to Tadmor (Palmyra) went past Damascus.<sup>2</sup>

Vers. 26-40. *Attempted rebellion of Jeroboam the Ephraimite.*—Hadad and Rezon are simply described as adversaries (שָׁטָן) of Solomon; but in the case of Jeroboam it is stated that "he lifted up his hand against the king," i.e. he stirred up a tumult or rebellion. הָרִים יָדָּב is synonymous with נָשָׂא יָדָּב in 2 Sam. xviii. 28, xx. 21. It is not on account of this rebellion, which was quickly suppressed by Solomon, but on account of the later enterprise of Jeroboam, that his personal history is so minutely detailed. Jeroboam was an Ephraimite (אֶפְרַתִּי, as in 1 Sam. i. 1, Judg. xii. 5) of *Zereda*, i.e. *Zarthan*, in the Jordan valley (see ch. vii. 46), son of a widow, and עֶבֶר, i.e. not a subject (Then.), but an officer, of Solomon. All that is related of his rebellion against the king is the circumstances under which it took place. וְהָהָבֶר אֲשֶׁר, this is how it stands with, as in Josh. v. 4. Solomon built *Millo* (ch. ix. 15), and closed the rent (the defile?) in the city of David. פֶּרֶץ, *ruptura*, cannot be a rent or breach in the wall of the city of David, inasmuch as חוֹמָה is not added, and since the fortification of the city by David (2 Sam. v. 9) no

<sup>1</sup> What Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 7, 6) relates concerning an alliance between Hadad and Rezon for the purpose of making hostile attacks upon Israel, is merely an inference drawn from the text of the LXX., and utterly worthless.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 276. It is true that more could be inferred from 2 Chron. viii. 3, if the conquest of the city of Hamath by Solomon were really recorded in that passage, as Bertheau supposes. But although חָזַק עַל is used to signify the conquest of tribes or countries, we cannot infer the conquest of the city of Hamath from the words, "Solomon went to Hamath Zobah וַיַּחֲזֶק עָלֶיהָ and built Tadmor," etc., since all that יַחֲזֶק עָלֶיהָ distinctly expresses is the establishment of his power over the land of Hamath Zobah. And this Solomon could have done by placing fortifications in that province, because he was afraid of rebellion, even if Hamath Zobah had not actually fallen away from his power.

hostile attack had ever been made upon Jerusalem; but in all probability it denotes the ravine which separated Zion from Moriah and Ophel, the future *Tyropæon*, through the closing of which the temple mountain was brought within the city wall, and the fortification of the city of David was completed (Thenius, Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 330). Compare מִפְּרֵץ, a gap in the coast, a bay. On the occasion of this building, Jeroboam proved himself a גִּבּוֹר הָיִל, *i.e.* a very able and energetic man; so that when Solomon saw the young man, that he was doing work, *i.e.* urging it forward, he committed to him the oversight over all the heavy work of the house of Joseph. It must have been while occupying this post that he attempted a rebellion against Solomon. This is indicated by וְהָהֱדָבַר וְנֹא in ver. 27. According to ch. xii. 4, the reason for the rebellion is to be sought for in the appointment of the Ephraimites to heavy works. This awakened afresh the old antipathy of that tribe to Judah, and Jeroboam availed himself of this to instigate a rebellion.—Vers. 29 sqq. At that time the prophet Ahijah met him in the field and disclosed to him the word of the Lord, that he should become king over Israel. בָּעֵת הַהִיא: at that time, *viz.* the time when Jeroboam had become overseer over the heavy works, and not after he had already stirred up the rebellion. For the whole of the account in vers. 29–39 forms part of the explanation of וְהָיָה בָּעֵת הַהִיא which commences with ver. 27b, so that וְהָיָה בָּעֵת הַהִיא is closely connected with וַיִּפְקֹד אֹתוֹ in ver. 28, and there is no such gap in the history as is supposed by Thenius, who builds upon this opinion most untenable conjectures as to the intertwining of different sources. At that time, as Jeroboam was one day going out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah of Shilo (Seilun) met him by the way (בְּדַרְבָּהּ), with a new upper garment wrapped around him; and when they were alone, he rent the new garment, that is to say, his own, not Jeroboam's, as Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 388) erroneously supposes, into twelve pieces, and said to Jeroboam, “Take thee ten pieces, for Jehovah saith, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and give thee ten tribes; and one tribe shall remain to him (Solomon) for David's sake,” etc. The new שִׁלְמָה was probably only a large four-cornered cloth, which was thrown over the shoulders like the *Heik* of the Arabs, and enveloped the whole of the upper portion of the body (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. pp. 36, 37). By the tearing of the new garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam



was to take *ten* for himself, the prophetic announcement was symbolized in a very emphatic manner. This symbolical action made the promise a completed fact. "As the garment was torn in pieces and lay before the eyes of Jeroboam, so had the division of the kingdom already taken place in the counsel of God" (O. v. Gerlach). There was something significant also in the circumstance that it was a *new* garment, which is stated twice, and indicates the newness, *i.e.* the still young and vigorous condition, of the kingdom (Thenius).

In the word of God explaining the action it is striking that Jeroboam was to receive *ten* tribes, and the *one* tribe was to remain to Solomon (vers. 31, 32, 35, 36, as in ver. 13). The nation consisted of twelve tribes, and Ahijah had torn his garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam was to take ten; so that there were two remaining. It is evident at once from this, that the numbers are intended to be understood symbolically and not arithmetically. *Ten* as the number of completeness and totality is placed in contrast with *one*, to indicate that all Israel was to be torn away from the house of David, as is stated in ch. xii. 20, "they made Jeroboam king over *all* Israel," and only one single fragment was to be left to the house of Solomon out of divine compassion. This one tribe, however, is not Benjamin, the one tribe beside Judah, as Hupfeld (on Ps. lxxx.), C. a Lap., Mich., and others suppose, but, according to the distinct statement in ch. xii. 20, "the tribe of Judah only." Nevertheless Benjamin belonged to Judah; for, according to ch. xii. 21, Rehoboam gathered together the whole house of Judah *and the tribe of Benjamin* to fight against the house of Israel (which had fallen away), and to bring the kingdom again to himself. And so also in 2 Chron. xi. 3 and 23 Judah and Benjamin are reckoned as belonging to the kingdom of Rehoboam. This distinct prominence given to Benjamin by the side of Judah overthrows the explanation suggested by Seb. Schmidt and others, namely, that the description of the portion left to Rehoboam as *one* tribe is to be explained from the fact that Judah and Benjamin, on the border of which Jerusalem was situated, were regarded in a certain sense as one, and that the little Benjamin was hardly taken into consideration at all by the side of the great Judah. For if Ahijah had regarded Benjamin as one with Judah, he would not have torn his garment into twelve pieces, inasmuch as if Benjamin was to be merged in Judah, or was not

to be counted along with it as a distinct tribe, the whole nation could only be reckoned as eleven tribes. Moreover the twelve tribes did not so divide themselves, that Jeroboam really received ten tribes and Rehoboam only one or only two. In reality there were three tribes that fell to the kingdom of Judah, and only nine to the kingdom of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh being reckoned as two tribes, since the tribe of Levi was not counted in the political classification. The kingdom of Judah included, beside the tribe of Judah, both the tribe of Benjamin and also the tribe of Simeon, the territory of which, according to Josh. xix. 1-9, was within the tribe-territory of Judah and completely surrounded by it, so that the Simeonites would have been obliged to emigrate and give up their tribe-land altogether, if they desired to attach themselves to the kingdom of Israel. But it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. xv. 9 and xxxiv. 6 that an emigration of the whole tribe had taken place (see also at ch. xii. 17). On the other hand, whilst the northern border of the tribe of Benjamin, with the cities of Bethel, Ramah, and Jericho, fell to the kingdom of Jeroboam (ch. xii. 29, xv. 17, 21, xvi. 34), several of the cities of the tribe of Dan were included in the kingdom of Judah, namely, Ziklag, which Achish had presented to David, and also Zorea and Ajalon (2 Chron. xi. 10, xxviii. 18), in which Judah obtained compensation for the cities of Benjamin of which it had been deprived.<sup>1</sup> Consequently there

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the fact that in Ps. lxxx. 2 Benjamin is placed between Ephraim and Manasseh is no proof that it belonged to the kingdom of Israel; nor can this be inferred from the fact that Benjamin, as the tribe to which Saul belonged, at the earlier split among the tribes took the side of those which were opposed to David, and that at a still later period a rebellion originated with Benjamin. For in Ps. lxxx. 2 the exposition is disputed, and the jealousy of Benjamin towards Judah appears to have become extinct with the dying out of the royal house of Saul. Again, the explanation suggested by Oehler (Herzog's *Cycl.*) of the repeated statement that the house of David was to receive only *one* tribe, namely, that there was not a single whole tribe belonging to the southern kingdom beside Judah, is by no means satisfactory. For it cannot be proved that any portion of the tribe of Simeon ever belonged to the kingdom of Israel, although the number ten was not complete without it. And it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. xv. 9 that Simeonites had settled outside their tribe-territory. And, as a rule, single families or households that may have emigrated cannot be taken into consideration as having any bearing upon the question before us, since, according to the very same passage of the Chronicles, many members of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh had emigrated to the kingdom of Judah.



only remained nine tribes for the northern kingdom. For 'למען עבדי וגו' see at ver. 13. For ver. 33 compare vers. 4-8. The plurals *עֲזָבוּנִי*, *יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ*, and *הִלְכוּ* are not open to critical objection, but are used in accordance with the fact, since Solomon did not practise idolatry alone, but many in the nation forsook the Lord along with him. *צִדְנָן*, with a Chaldaic ending (see Ges. § 87, 1, *a*). In vers. 34-36 there follows a more precise explanation: Solomon himself is not to lose the kingdom, but to remain prince all his life, and his son is to retain one tribe; both out of regard to David (*vid.* vers. 12 and 13). *כִּי נָשִׂיא אֲשַׁתְּנוּ*, "but I will set him for prince," inasmuch as leaving him upon the throne was not merely a divine permission, but a divine act. "That there may be a light to my servant David always before me in Jerusalem." This phrase, which is repeated in ch. xv. 4, 2 Kings viii. 19, 2 Chron. xxi. 7, is to be explained from 2 Sam. xxi. 17, where David's regal rule is called the light which God's grace had kindled for Israel, and affirms that David was never to want a successor upon the throne.—Vers. 37-39. The condition on which the kingdom of Jeroboam was to last was the same as that on which Solomon had also been promised the continuance of his throne in ch. iii. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4, namely, faithful observance of the commandments of God. The expression, "be king over all that thy soul desireth," is explained in what follows by "all Israel." It is evident from this that Jeroboam had aspired after the throne. On the condition named, the Lord would build him a lasting house, as He had done for David (see at 2 Sam. vii. 16). In the case of Jeroboam, however, there is no allusion to a lasting duration of the *מַמְלָכָה* (kingdom) such as had been ensured to David; for the division of the kingdom was not to last for ever, but the seed of David was simply to be chastised. *לְמַעַן זֹאת*, for this, *i.e.* because of the apostasy already mentioned; "only not all the days," *i.e.* not for ever. *וְאֶעֱנֶה* is explanatory so far as the sense is concerned: "for I will humble." Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, and therefore his house was extirpated at the death of his son (ch. xv. 28 sqq.).—Ver. 40 is a continuation of *וַיָּרֶם יָד בַּמֶּלֶךְ* in ver. 26; for vers. 27-39 contain simply an explanation of Jeroboam's lifting up his hand against Solomon. It is obvious from this that Jeroboam had organized a rebellion against Solomon; and also, as ver. 29 is closely connected with ver. 28, that this did not take place till after the

prophet had foretold his reigning over ten tribes after Solomon's death. But this did not justify Jeroboam's attempt; nor was Ahijah's announcement an inducement or authority to rebel. Ahijah's conduct was perfectly analogous to that of Samuel in the case of Saul, and is no more to be attributed to selfish motives than his was, as though the prophetic order desired to exalt itself above the human sovereign (Ewald; see, on the other hand, Oehler's article in Herzog's *Cycl.*). For Ahijah expressly declared to Jeroboam that Jehovah would let Solomon remain prince over Israel during the remainder of his life. This deprived Jeroboam of every pretext for rebellion. Moreover the prophet's announcement, even without this restriction, gave him no right to seize with his own hand and by means of rebellion upon that throne which God intended to give to him. Jeroboam might have learned how he ought to act under these circumstances from the example of David, who had far more ground, according to human opinion, for rebelling against Saul, his persecutor and mortal foe, and who nevertheless, even when God had delivered his enemy into his hand, so that he might have slain him, did not venture to lay his hand upon the anointed of the Lord, but waited in pious submission to the leadings of his God, till the Lord opened the way to the throne through the death of Saul. By the side of David's behaviour towards Saul the attempt of Jeroboam has all the appearance of a criminal rebellion, so that Solomon would have been perfectly justified in putting him to death, if Jeroboam had not escaped from his hands by a flight into Egypt.—On *Shishak* see at ch. xiv. 25.

Vers. 41–43. *Conclusion of the history of Solomon.*—Notice of the original works, in which further information can be found concerning his acts and his wisdom (see the Introduction); the length of his reign, viz. forty years; his death, burial, and successor. Solomon did not live to a very great age, since he was not more than twenty years old when he ascended the throne.—Whether Solomon turned to the Lord again with all his heart, a question widely discussed by the older commentators (see Pfeifferi *Dubia rex.* p. 435; Buddei *hist. eccl.* ii. p. 273 sqq.), cannot be ascertained from the Scriptures. If the Preacher *Kohelath*) is traceable to Solomon so far as the leading thoughts are concerned, we should find in this fact an evidence of his conversion, or at least a proof that at the close of his life Solomon



discovered the vanity of all earthly possessions and aims, and declared the fear of God to be the only abiding good, with which a man can stand before the judgment of God.

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## II.—HISTORY OF THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FORMER.

### CHAP. XII.—2 KINGS XVII.

After the death of Solomon the Israelitish kingdom of God was rent asunder, through the renunciation of the Davidic sovereignty by the ten tribes, into the two kingdoms of Israel (the ten tribes) and Judah; and through this division not only was the external political power of the Israelitish state weakened, but the internal spiritual power of the covenant nation was deeply shaken. And whilst the division itself gave rise to two small and weak kingdoms in the place of one strong nation, the power of both was still further shaken by their attitude towards each other.—The history of the two kingdoms divides itself into three epochs. In the *first* epoch, *i.e.* the period from Jeroboam to Omri in Israel, and from Rehoboam to Asa in Judah (1 Kings xii.—xvi.), they maintained a hostile attitude towards each other, until Israel sustained a severe defeat in a great war with Judah; and on the renewal of its attacks upon Judah, king Asa called the Syrians to his help, and thereby entangled Israel in long and severe conflicts with this powerful neighbouring state. The hostility terminated in the *second* epoch, under Ahab and his sons Ahaziah and Joram in Israel, and under Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah of Judah, since the two royal families connected themselves by marriage, and formed an alliance for the purpose of a joint attack upon their foreign foes, until the kings of both kingdoms, *viz.* Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, were slain at the same time by Jehu (1 Kings xvii.—2 Kings x. 27). This period of union was followed in the *third* epoch, from Jehu in Israel and Joash in Judah onwards, by further estrangement and reciprocal attacks, which led eventually to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians through the untheocratical policy of Ahaz.

If we take a survey of the attitude of the two kingdoms towards the Lord, the invisible God-King of His people, during these three epochs, to all appearance the idolatry was stronger in the kingdom of Judah than in the kingdom of Israel. For in the latter it is only under Ahab and his two sons, under whom the worship of Baal was raised into the state religion at the instigation of Jezebel the Phœnician wife of Ahab, that we meet with the actual worship of idols. Of the other kings both before and afterwards, all that is related is, that they walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and did not desist from his sin, the worship of the calves. In the kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, out of thirteen kings, only five were so truly devoted to the Lord that they promoted the worship of Jehovah and opposed idolatry (viz. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, and Hezekiah). Of the others, it is true that Joash and Amaziah walked for a long time in the ways of the Lord, but in the closing years of their reign they forsook the God of their fathers to serve idols and worship them (2 Chron. xxiv. 18 and xxv. 14 sqq.). Even Rehoboam was strengthened at the outset in the worship of Jehovah by the Levites who emigrated from the kingdom of the ten tribes to Judah; but in the course of three years he forsook the law of the Lord, and Judah with him, so that altars of high places, Baal columns, and Asherah idols, were set up on every hill and under every green tree, and there were even male prostitutes in the land, and Judah practised all the abominations of the nations that were cut off before Israel (1 Kings xiv. 23, 24; 2 Chron. xi. 13-17, xii. 1). In all these sins of his father Abijam also walked (1 Kings xv. 3). At a later period, in the reign of Joram, the worship of Baal was transplanted from Israel to Judah and Jerusalem, and was zealously maintained by Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah. It grew still worse under Ahaz, who even went so far as to set up an idolatrous altar in the court of the temple and to close the temple doors, for the purpose of abolishing altogether the legal worship of Jehovah. But notwithstanding this repeated spread of idolatry, the apostasy from the Lord was not so great and deep in the kingdom of Judah as in the kingdom of Israel. This is evident from the fact that idolatry could not strike a firm root there, inasmuch as the kings who were addicted to it were always followed by pious and God-fearing rulers, who abolished the idolatrous abominations, and nearly all of whom had long



reigns ; so that during the 253 years which intervened between the division of the kingdom and the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, idolatry did not prevail in Judah for much more than fifty-three years,<sup>1</sup> and for about 200 years the worship of the true God was maintained according to the commandment of the law. This constant renewal of a victorious reaction against the foreign deities shows very clearly that the law of God, with its ordinances and institutions for divine worship, had taken firm and deep root in the people and kingdom, and that the reason why idolatry constantly revived and lifted up its head afresh was, that the worship of Jehovah prescribed in the law made no concessions to the tendency to idolatry in hearts at enmity against God. It was different with the kingdom of the ten tribes. There the fact that idolatry only appeared in the reigns of Ahab and his sons and successors, is to be accounted for very simply from the attitude of that kingdom towards the Lord and His lawful worship. Although, for instance, the secession of the ten tribes from the house of David was threatened by God, as a punishment that would come upon Solomon and his kingdom on account of Solomon's idolatry ; on the part of the rebellious tribes themselves it was simply the ripe fruit of their evil longing for a less theocratic and more heathen kingdom, and nothing but the work of opposition to the royal house appointed by Jehovah, which had already shown itself more than once in the reign of David, though it had been suppressed again by the weight of his government, which was strong in the Lord.

This opposition became open rebellion against the Lord, when Jeroboam, its head, gave the ten tribes a religious constitution opposed to the will of God for the purpose of establishing his throne, and not only founded a special sanctuary for his subjects, somewhat after the model of the tabernacle or of the temple at Jerusalem, but also set up golden calves as symbols and images of Jehovah the invisible God, to whom no likeness can be made. This image-worship met the wishes and religious cravings of the sensual and carnally-minded people, because it so far filled up the gap between the legal

<sup>1</sup> Namely, fourteen years under Rehoboam, three under Abijah, six under Joram, one under Ahaziah, six under Athaliah, and sixteen under Ahaz,—in all forty-six years ; to which we have also to add the closing years of the reigns of Joash and Amaziah.

worship of Jehovah and the worship of the nature-deities, that the contrast between Jehovah and the Baalim almost entirely disappeared, and the principal ground was thereby removed for the opposition on the part of the idolatrous nation to the stringent and exclusive worship of Jehovah. In this respect the worship of the calves worked more injuriously upon the religious and moral life of the nation than the open worship of idols. This sin of Jeroboam is therefore "the ground, the root and cause of the very sinful development of the kingdom of Israel, which soon brought down the punishment of God, since even from the earliest time one judgment after another fell openly upon the kingdom. For beside the sin of Jeroboam, that which was the ground of its isolation continued to increase, and gave rise to tumult, opposing aspirants to the throne, and revolutionary movements in the nation, so that the house of Israel was often split up within itself" (Ziegler). Therefore the judgment, with which even from the time of Moses the covenant nation had been threatened in case of obstinate rebellion against its God, namely the judgment of dispersion among the heathen, fell upon the ten tribes much earlier than upon Judah, because Israel had filled up the measure of sin earlier than Judah.

The chronological computation of this period, both as a whole and in its separate details, is one of the more difficult features connected with this portion of the history of the Israelitish kingdom. As our books give not only the length of time that every king both of Israel and Judah reigned, but also the time when every king of Israel ascended the throne, calculated according to the year of the reign of the contemporaneous king of Judah, and *vice versa*, these accounts unquestionably furnish us with very important help in determining the chronology of the separate data; but this again is rendered difficult and uncertain by the fact, that the sum-total of the years of the several kings is greater, as a rule, than the number of years that they can possibly have reigned according to the synchronistic accounts of the contemporaneous sovereigns in the other kingdom. Chronologists have therefore sought from time immemorial to reconcile the discrepancies by assuming inaccuracies in the accounts, or regencies and interregna. The necessity for such assumptions is indisputable, from the fact that the discrepancies in the numbers of the years are absolutely



irreconcilable without them.<sup>1</sup> But if the application of them in the several cases is not to be dependent upon mere caprice, the reconciliation of the sum-totals of the years that the different kings reigned with the differences which we obtain from the chronological data in the synchronistic accounts must be effected upon a fixed and well-founded historical principle, regencies and interregna being only assumed in cases where there are clear indications in the text. Most of the differences can be reconciled by consistently observing and applying the principle pointed out in the Talmud, viz. that the years of the kings are reckoned from Nisan to Nisan, and that with such precision, that even a single day before or after Nisan is reckoned as equal to a year,—a mode of reckoning which is met with even in the New Testament, *e.g.* in the statement that Jesus rose from the dead after three days, or on the third day, and also in the writings of Josephus, so that it is no doubt an early Jewish custom,<sup>2</sup>—for, according to this, it is not necessary to assume a single interregnum in the kingdom of Judah, and only one regency (that

<sup>1</sup> This is indirectly admitted even by O. Wolff (in his *Versuch die Widersprüche in den Jahrreihen der Könige Juda's und Israel's und andere Differenzen in der bibl. Chronologie auszugleichen*; *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1858, p. 625 sqq.), though for the most part he declares himself opposed to such assumptions as arbitrary loopholes, inasmuch as, with his fundamental principle to adhere firmly to the years of the reigns of the kings of Judah as normative, he is only able to effect a reconciliation by shortening at his pleasure the length of the reigns given in the text for the kings of Israel in the period extending from Rehoboam to the death of Ahaziah of Judah, and in the following period by arbitrarily interpolating a thirty-one years' interregnum of the Israelitish kings in the kingdom of Judah between Amaziah and Uzziah.

<sup>2</sup> Compare *Gemara babyl. tract. ראש השנה*, c. i. fol. 3, p. 1, ed. Amstel.: *אין מונין להם למלכים אלא מניסן*, "*non numerant in regibus nisi a Nisano*" (*i.e. regum annos non nisi a Nisano numerant*). After quoting certain passages, he says as a proof of this, *אמר ר' חסדא לא שני אלא למלכי ישראל*, "*dixit R. Chasda: hoc non docent nisi de regibus Israelitarum*."—*Ibid.* fol. 2, p. 2: *ניסן ראש השנה למלכים ויום אחד בשנה השנה*, "*Nisanus initium anni regibus, ac dies quidem unus in anno (videl. post calendas Nisani) instar anni computatur*."—*Ibid.*: *יום אחד בסוף שנה השנה*, "*unus dies in fine anni pro anno computatur*." For the examples of the use of this mode of calculation in Josephus, see Wieseler, *chronol. Synopse der vier Evangelien* (Hamb. 1852), p. 52 sqq. They are sufficient of themselves to refute the assertion of Joach. Hartmann, *Systema chronol. bibl.*, Rostoch. 1777, p. 253 sq., that this is a mere invention of the Rabbins and later commentators, even though the biblical writers may not have carried it out to such an extent as to reckon one single day before or after the commencement of Nisan as equal to a whole year, as is evident from 2 Kings xv. 17 and 23.

of Joram with his father Jehoshaphat), which is clearly indicated in the text (2 Kings viii. 16); and in the kingdom of Israel there is no necessity to assume a single regency, and only two interregna (the first after Jeroboam II., the second between Pekah and Hoshea). — If, for example, we arrange the chronological data of the biblical text upon this principle, we obtain for the period between the division of the kingdom and the Babylonian captivity the following table, which only differs from the statements in the text in two instances,<sup>1</sup> and has a guarantee of its correctness in the fact that it coincides with the well-established chronological data of the universal history of the ancient world.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Namely, in the fact that the commencement of the reign of Jehoahaz of Israel is placed in the twenty-second year of Joash of Judah, and not in the twenty-third, according to 2 Kings xiii. 1, and that that of Azariah or Uzziah of Judah is placed in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam of Israel, and not the twenty-seventh, according to 2 Kings xv. 1. The reasons for this will be given in connection with the passages themselves.

<sup>2</sup> Not only with the ordinary chronological calculation as to the beginning and end of this entire period, which has been adopted in most text-books of the biblical history, and taken from Usserii *Annales Vet. et Novi Test.*, but also with such data of ancient history as have been astronomically established. For the fourth year of Jehoiakim, with which the captivity or seventy years' servitude of the Jews in Babylon commences, coincides with the twenty-first year of the reign of Nabopolassar, in the fifth year of whose reign an eclipse of the moon, recorded in *Almagest*, was observed, which eclipse, according to the calculation of Ideler (in the *Abhdl. der Berliner Academie der Wissensch. für histor. Klasse* of the year 1814, pp. 202 and 224), took place on April 22 of the year 621 B.C. Consequently the twenty-first year of Nabopolassar, in which he died, coincides with the year 605 B.C.; and the first conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which occurred before the death of Nabopolassar, took place in the year 606 B.C.—Compare with this Marc. Niebuhr's *Geschichte Assurs und Babels*, p. 47. Among other things, this scholar observes, at p. 5, note 1, that "the whole of the following investigation has given us no occasion whatever to cherish any doubts as to the correctness of the narratives and numbers in the Old Testament;" and again, at p. 83 sqq., he has demonstrated the agreement of the chronological data of the Old Testament from Azariah or Uzziah to the captivity with the Canon of Ptolemy, and in so doing has only deviated two years from the numbers given in our chronological table, by assigning the battle at Carchemish to the year 143 *ara Nabonas.*, i.e. 605 B.C., the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, 144 *ær. Nab.*, or 604 B.C., and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple to the year 162 *ær. Nab.*, or 586 B.C.,—a difference which arises chiefly from the fact that Niebuhr reckons the years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar given in the Old Test. from the death of Nabopolassar in the year 605, and assumes that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar corresponded to the year 605 B.C.



*Chronological View of the Principal Events from the Division of the Kingdom to the Babylonian Captivity.*

Year from the division of the Kingdom.	Kingdom of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah.	Kingdom of Israel.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Israel.	Kingdoms of the World.	Year before the birth of Christ.
1	Rehoboam, reigned 17 years	1	Jeroboam, reigned 22 years	1	Shishak of Egypt, plunders Jerusalem . . .	975
18	Abijam, r. 3 y.	—	. . . . .	18	. . . . .	971
20	Asa, r. 41 y.	—	. . . . .	20	. . . . .	957
22	. . . . .	2	Nadab, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	955
23	. . . . .	3	Baasha, r. 24 y.	—	. . . . .	953
					Serah the Cushite	952
					Benhadad I. of Syria . . .	940
45	. . . . .	26	Ela, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	939
46	. . . . .	27	Simri, r. 7 days	—	. . . . .	930
46	. . . . .	27	Tibni & Omri, r. 4 years	—	. . . . .	929
50	. . . . .	31	Omri alone, r. 8 y.	—	. . . . .	925
					Ithobal, king of Tyre and Sidon.	
57	. . . . .	38	Ahab, r. 22 y.	—	. . . . .	918
61	Jehoshaphat, r. 25 years	—	. . . . .	4	. . . . .	914
					Benhadad II. in Syria.	
78	. . . . .	17	Ahaziah, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	897
79	. . . . .	18	Joram, r. 12 y.	—	. . . . .	896
	Joram, regent 2 y.	(23)	. . . . .	5	. . . . .	891
86	Jehoshaphat †.	—	. . . . .	(7)	. . . . .	889
91	Joram r. 6 y. more	—	. . . . .	12	. . . . .	884
	Ahaziah, r. 1 y.	—	. . . . .		Hazael in Syria.	
92	Athaliah, r. 6 y.	—	Jehu, r. 28 y.	—	. . . . .	883
98	Joash, r. 40 y.	—	. . . . .	7	. . . . .	877
119	. . . . .	22?	Jehoahaz, r. 17 y.	—	. . . . .	856
135	. . . . .	37	Jehoash, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . .	840
					Benhadad III. in Syria.	
137	Amaziah, r. 29 y.	—	. . . . .	2	. . . . .	838
151	. . . . .	15	Jeroboam II. r. 41 y.	—	. . . . .	824
165	Uzziah, r. 52 y.	—	. . . . .	15?	. . . . .	810
192	. . . . .	(27)	Jeroboam †. Anarchy 11 years	—	. . . . .	783
203	. . . . .	38	Zechariah, r. 6 months	—	. . . . .	772
204	. . . . .	39	Shallum, r. 1 mon.	—	. . . . .	771
204	. . . . .	39	Menahem, r. 10 y.	—	. . . . .	771
					Pul, king of Assyria.	
215	. . . . .	50	Pekahiah, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	760
216	. . . . .	52	Pekah, r. 20 y.	—	. . . . .	759

Year from the division of the Kingdom.	Kingdom of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah.	Kingdom of Israel.	Year of the reign Kings of Israel.	Kingdoms of the World.	Year before the birth of Christ.
217	Jotham, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . .	2		758
					Building of Rome	753
233	Ahaz, r. 16 y.	—		17	Nabonasar . .	747
236	. . . . .	4	Pekah †. Anarchy 8½ months	—	Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria	742
245	. . . . .	12	Hoshea, r. 9 y.	—	So, king of Egypt	739
248	Hezekiah, r. 29 y.	—		3		730
253	. . . . .	6	Destruction of the Kingdom	—	Salmanasar, king of Assyria	727
						722
261	. . . . .		Sennacherib, king of Assyria, besieges Jerusalem			714
			Merodach-Baladan's embassy.			
277	Manasseh, r. 55 y.		Esarhaddon sends colonists to Samaria.			698
332	Amon, r. 2 y.					
334	Josiah, r. 31 y.					643
			Nabopolasar, king of Babylon . . . . .			641
365	Jehoahaz, r. 3 mon.		Battle at Megiddo with Pharaoh-Necho . . . .			626
365	Jehoiakim, r. 11 y.					610
369	Beginning of the Captivity		Battle at Carchemish and conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar			610
			Nabopolasar † . . . . .			606
376	Jehoiachin, r. 3 months		Second conquest of Jerusalem and deportation			605
376	Zedekiah, r. 11 y.					599
			Pharaoh-Hophra, king of Egypt.			599
387	Destruction of Jerusalem					588
	Jehoiachin's elevation		Evil-merodach . . . . .			588
	End of the Captivity		Cyrus sole ruler . . . . .			562
						536

# 1. FROM THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM TO THE ASCENT OF THE THRONE BY AHAB IN THE 38TH YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH.

## CHAP. XII.—XVI. 28.

This epoch embraces only fifty-seven years, which are filled up in the kingdom of Judah by the reigns of three kings, and in the kingdom of Israel by six rulers from four different houses, Jeroboam's sin of rebellion against the ordinance and commandment of God having produced repeated rebellions, so that one



dynasty was ever rising up to overthrow and exterminate another. —Commencing with the secession of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, we have first of all an account of the founding of the kingdom of Israel (ch. xii.), and of the predictions of the prophets concerning the introduction of the calf-worship (ch. xiii.) and the rejection of Jeroboam and his house by God (ch. xiv. 1–20); and after this the most important facts connected with the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijam, and Asa are given (ch. xiv. 21–xv. 24); and, finally, a brief history of the kingdom of Israel from the ascent of the throne by Nadab to the death of Omri (ch. xv. 25–xvi. 28).

CHAP. XII. SECESSION OF THE TEN TRIBES FROM THE HOUSE  
OF DAVID, AND FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

The jealousy which had prevailed from time immemorial between Ephraim and Judah, the two most powerful tribes of the covenant nation, and had broken out on different occasions into open hostilities (Judg. viii. 1 sqq.; 2 Sam. ii. 9, xix. 42 sqq.), issued, on the death of Solomon, in the division of the kingdom; ten tribes, headed by Ephraim, refusing to do homage to Rehoboam, the son and successor of Solomon, and choosing Jeroboam the Ephraimite as their king. Now, although the secession of the ten tribes from the royal house of David had been ordained by God as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry, and not only had Solomon been threatened with this punishment, but the sovereignty over ten tribes had been promised to Jeroboam by the prophet Ahijah, whilst the secession itself was occasioned by Rehoboam's imprudence; yet it was essentially a rebellion against the Lord and His anointed, a conspiracy on the part of these tribes against Judah and its king Rehoboam. For apart from the fact that the tribes had no right to choose at their pleasure a different king from the one who was the lawful heir to the throne of David, the very circumstance that the tribes who were discontented with Solomon's government did not come to Jerusalem to do homage to Rehoboam, but chose Sichem as the place of meeting, and had also sent for Jeroboam out of Egypt, showed clearly enough that it was their intention to sever themselves from the royal house of David; so that the harsh reply given by Rehoboam to their petition that the service imposed upon them might be lightened, furnished them with the

desired opportunity for carrying out the secession upon which they had already resolved, and for which Jeroboam was the suitable man. And we have already shown at ch. xi. 40 that the promise of the throne, which Jeroboam had already received from God, neither warranted him in rebelling against Solomon, nor in wresting to himself the government over the tribes that were discontented with the house of David after Solomon's death. The usurpation of the throne was therefore Jeroboam's first sin (vers. 1-24), to which he added a second and much greater one immediately after his ascent of the throne, namely, the establishment of an unlawful worship, by which he turned the political division into a religious schism and a falling away from Jehovah the God-King of His people (vers. 25-33).

Vers. 1-24. SECESSION OF THE TEN TRIBES (cf. 2 Chron. x. 1-xi. 4).—Vers. 1-4. Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel had come thither to make him king. "All Israel," according to what follows (cf. vers. 20 and 21), was the ten tribes beside Judah and Benjamin. The right of making king the prince whom God had chosen, *i.e.* of anointing him and doing homage to him (compare 1 Chron. xii. 38, where הַמֶּלֶךְ alternates with מִיָּצִיף לְמֶלֶךְ, 2 Sam. ii. 4, v. 3), was an old traditional right in Israel, and the tribes had exercised it not only in the case of Saul and David (1 Sam. xi. 15; 2 Sam. ii. 4, v. 3), but in that of Solomon also (1 Chron. xxix. 22). The ten tribes of Israel made use of this right on Rehoboam's ascent of the throne; but instead of coming to Jerusalem, the residence of the king and capital of the kingdom, as they ought to have done, and doing homage there to the legitimate successor of Solomon, they had gone to Sichem, the present Nablus (see at Gen. xii. 6 and xxxiii. 18), the place where the ancient national gatherings were held in the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xxiv. 1), and where Abimelech the son of Gideon had offered himself as king in the time of the Judges (Judg. ix. 1 sqq.). On the choice of Sichem as the place for doing homage Kimchi has quite correctly observed, that "they sought an opportunity for transferring the government to Jeroboam, and therefore were unwilling to come to Jerusalem, but came to Sichem, which belonged to Ephraim, whilst Jeroboam was an Ephraimite." If there could be any further doubt on the matter, it would be removed by the fact that they had sent for Jeroboam the son of Nebat to come from Egypt, whither he had



fled from Solomon (ch. xi. 40), and attend this meeting, and that Jeroboam took the lead in the meeting, and no doubt suggested to those assembled the demand which they should lay before Rehoboam (ver. 4).<sup>1</sup>—The construction of vers. 2 and 3 is a complicated one, since it is only in **וַיָּבֹאוּ** in ver. 3 that the apodosis occurs to the protasis **וַיְהִי כִשְׁמוֹעַ וְגו'**, and several circumstantial clauses intervene. “And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard, *sc.* that Solomon was dead and Rehoboam had been made king . . . he was still in Egypt, however, whither he had fled from king Solomon; and as Jeroboam was living in Egypt, they had sent and called him . . . that Jeroboam came and the whole congregation of Israel,” etc. On the other hand, in 2 Chron. x. 2 the construction is very much simplified, and is rendered clearer by the alteration of **וַיָּשֶׁב יִר'** into **וַיָּשֶׁב יִר' מִמִּצְרַיִם**, “and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt,” into **וַיָּשֶׁב יִר' מִמִּצְרַיִם**, “that Jeroboam returned from Egypt.”<sup>2</sup>—Ver. 4. The persons assembled desired that the burdens which Solomon had laid upon them should be lightened, in which case they would serve Rehoboam, *i.e.* would yield obedience to him as their king. **הֲקֵל מֵעֲבֹדֶת אָבִיךָ**, “make light away from the service of thy father,”

<sup>1</sup> “This pretext was no doubt furnished to the people by Jeroboam, who, because he had formerly been placed above Ephraim as superintendent of the works, could most craftily suggest calumnies, from the things which he knew better than others.”—(Seb. Schmidt.)

<sup>2</sup> At the same time, neither this explanation in the Chronicles, nor the fact that the Vulgate has the same in our text also, warrants our making alterations in the text, for the simple reason that the deviation in the Chronicles and Vulgate is so obviously nothing but an elucidation of our account, which is more obscurely expressed. There is still less ground for the interpolation, which Thenius has proposed, from the clauses contained in the Septuagint partly after ch. xi. 43, partly in ch. xii. between vers. 24 and 25, and in an abbreviated form once more after ch. xiii. 34, so as to obtain the following more precise account of the course of the rebellion which Jeroboam instigated, and of which we have not a very minute description in ch. xi. 26: “Solomon having appointed Jeroboam superintendent of the tributary labour in Ephraim, for the purpose of keeping in check the Sichemites, who were probably pre-eminently inclined to rebel, directed him to make a fortress, which already existed upon Mount Gerizim under the name of *Millo*, into a strong prison (**צִרְיָה**), from which the whole district of Gerizim, the table-land, received the name of the land of *Zerirah*, and probably made him governor of it and invested him with great power. When holding this post, Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon, but was obliged to flee. Having now returned from Egypt, he assembled the members of his own tribe, and with them he first of all besieged this prison, for the purpose of making himself lord of the surrounding district.

*i.e.* reduce what was imposed upon us by thy father. Solomon had undoubtedly demanded greater performances from the people than they had previously been accustomed to, not only to meet the cost of maintaining the splendour of his court, but also and principally to carry out his large and numerous buildings. But in return for this, he had secured for his people not only the blessings of undisturbed peace throughout his whole reign, but also great wealth from the trade and tribute of the subjugated nations, so that there cannot have been any well-grounded occasion for complaint. But when, as is too often the case, men overlooked the advantages and blessings which they owed to his government, and fixed their attention in a one-sided manner merely upon the performances which the king demanded, it might appear as though he had oppressed his people with excessive burdens.

Vers. 5-24. In order that the request of the tribes might be maturely weighed, Rehoboam directed them to appear before him again in three days, and in the meantime discussed the matter with the older counsellors, who had served his father.—Ver. 7. These counsellors said (the singular *יָדָבָר* is

Now this castle was the citadel of the city in which Jeroboam was born, to which he had just returned, and from which they fetched him to take part in the negotiations with Rehoboam. Its ruins are still in existence, according to Robinson (*Pal.* iii. p. 99), and from all that has been said it was not called Zeredah (ch. xi. 26), but (after the castle) Zerira." This is what Thenius says. But if we read the two longer additions of the LXX. quite through, we shall easily see that the words *ἡκοδόμησεν τῷ Σαλωμών τὴν ἐν ὄρει Ἐφραΐμ* do not give any more precise historical information concerning the building of the Millo mentioned in ch. xi. 27, since this verse is repeated immediately afterwards in the following form: *οὗτος ἡκοδόμησεν τὴν ἀκρὰν ἐν ταῖς ἀστυσὶν αἰκαῖς Ἐφραΐμ, οὗτος συνέχτισεν τὴν πόλιν Δαβὶδ*,—but are nothing more than a legendary supplement made by an Alexandrian, which has no more value than the statement that Jeroboam's mother was named *Sarira* and was *γυνὴ πόρνη*. The name of the city *Σαριρά* is simply the Greek form of the Hebrew *צִרְרָה*, which the LXX. have erroneously adopted in the place of *צִרְרָה* as the reading in ch. xi. 26. But in the additional clauses in question in the Alexandrian version, *Σαριρά* is made into the residence of king Jeroboam and confounded with *Thirza*; what took place at Thirza according to ch. xiv. 17 (of the Hebrew text) being transferred to Sarira, and the following account being introduced, viz. that Jeroboam's wife went *ἐκ Σαριρά* to the prophet Ahijah to consult him concerning her sick son, and on returning heard of the child's death as she was entering the city of *Sarira*.—These remarks will be quite sufficient to prove that the Alexandrian additions have not the least historical worth.



used, because one of them spoke in the name of the whole), "If thou wilt be subservient to this people to-day (now), and servest them, and hearkenest to them, . . . they will serve thee for ever."—Vers. 8 sqq. But Rehoboam forsook this advice, and asked the younger ministers who had grown up with him. They advised him to overawe the people by harsh threats. "My little finger is stronger than my father's loins." קִטְנִי, from קָטַן, littleness, *i.e.* the little finger (for the form, see Ewald, § 255, b),—a figurative expression in the sense of, I possess much greater might than my father. "And now, my father laid a heavy yoke upon you, and I will still further add to your yoke (lay still more upon you): my father chastised you with whips, I will chastise you with scorpions." עֲקָרְבִּים, *scorpiones*, are whips with barbed points like the point of a scorpion's sting.<sup>1</sup> This advice was not only imprudent, "considering all the circumstances" (Seb. Schmidt), but it was unwise in itself, and could only accelerate the secession of the discontented. It was the language of a tyrant, and not of a ruler whom God had placed over His people. This is shown in vers. 13, 14: "The king answered the people harshly, and forsook the counsel of the old men," *i.e.* the counsellors who were rich in experience, and spoke according to the counsels of the young men, who flattered his ambition. It is very doubtful, indeed, whether the advice of the old men would have been followed by so favourable a result; it might probably have been so for the moment, but not for a permanency. For the king could not become the עֲבָד of the people, *serve* the people, without prejudicing the authority entrusted to him by God; though there is no doubt that if he had consented to such condescension, he would have deprived the discontented tribes of all pretext for rebellion, and not have shared in the sin of their secession.—Ver. 15. "And the king hearkened not to the people (to their request for their burdens to be reduced), for it was סָפָה יְהוָה מַעַם יְהוָה, a turning from the Lord, that He might establish His word" (ch. xi. 31 sqq.), *i.e.* by a divine decree, that Rehoboam

<sup>1</sup> The Rabbins give this explanation: *virgæ spinis instructæ*. Isidor. Hispal. Orig. v. c. 27, explains it in a similar manner: *virga si est nodosa vel aculeata, scorpio vocatur*. The Targ. and Syr., on the other hand, מִרְגָּנִין, מִרְגָּנִין, *i.e.* the Greek μάραγμα, a whip. See the various explanations in Bochart, *Hieroz.* iii. p. 554 sq. ed. Ros.

contributed to the fulfilment of the counsel of God through his own folly, and brought about the accomplishment of the sentence pronounced upon Solomon.—Ver. 16. The harsh word supplied the discontented with an apparently just occasion for saying, “What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse! To thy tents, O Israel! Now see to thy house, David!” *i.e.* take care of thy house. David, the tribe-father, is mentioned in the place of his family. These words, with which Sheba had once preached rebellion in the time of David (2 Sam. xx. 1), give expression to the deep-rooted aversion which was cherished by these tribes towards the Davidic monarchy, and that in so distinct and unvarnished a manner, that we may clearly see that there were deeper causes for the secession than the pretended oppression of Solomon’s government; that its real foundation was the ancient jealousy of the tribes, which had been only suppressed for the time by David and Solomon, but had not been entirely eradicated, whilst this jealousy again had its roots in the estrangement of these tribes from the Lord, and from His law and righteousness.—Ver. 17. But the sons of Israel, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, over these Rehoboam became king. These “sons of Israel” are members of the ten tribes who had settled in Judah in the course of ages (*cf.* ver. 23); and the Simeonites especially are included, since they were obliged to remain in the kingdom of Judah from the very situation of their tribe-territory, and might very well be reckoned among the Israelites who dwelt in the cities of Judah, inasmuch as at first the whole of their territory was allotted to the tribe of Judah, from which they afterwards received a portion (Josh. xix. 1). The verse cannot possibly mean that “the tribe of Judah declared in favour of their countryman Rehoboam as king” (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 399).—Ver. 18. In order to appease the agitated tribes and commence negotiations with them, Rehoboam sent Adoram, the superintendent of the tribute, to them (*see* at ch. iv. 6). Rehoboam entrusted him with the negotiation, because the tribes had complained that the tribute burdens were too severe, and the king was no doubt serious in his wish to meet the demands of the people. But the very fact that he sent this man only increased the bitterness of feeling, so that they stoned him to death, and Rehoboam himself was obliged to summon up all his strength (הִתְאַמֵּץ) to escape a similar fate by



a speedy flight to his chariot.—Ver. 19. Thus Israel fell away from the house of David “unto this day” (for this formula, see p. 13).—Ver. 20. The secession was completed by the fact that all Israel (of the ten tribes) called Jeroboam to the assembly of the congregation and made him king “over all Israel,” so that the tribe of Judah alone adhered to the house of David (see at ch. xi. 32). Ver. 20 commences in the same manner as ver. 2, to indicate that it closes the account commenced in ver. 2.—Vers. 21-24. But after the return of Rehoboam to Jerusalem he was still desirous of bringing back the seceders by force of arms, and raised for that purpose an army of 180,000 men out of all Judah, the tribe of Benjamin, and the rest of the people, *i.e.* the Israelites dwelling in the cities of Judah,—a number which does not appear too large according to 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. But the prophet Shemaiah, a prophet who is not mentioned again, received instructions from God to forbid the king to go to war with their brethren the Israelites, “for this thing was from the Lord.” הִדְבָּר הַזֶּה, “this thing, *i.e.* his being deprived of the sovereignty over ten tribes, but not their rebellion” (Seb. Schmidt). For the fact itself, see the remark on ver. 15. The king and the people hearkened to this word. יָשׁוּבוּ לָלֶכֶת, “they turned to go,” *i.e.* they gave up the intended expedition and returned home. In 2 Chron. xi. 4 we have the explanatory phrase יָשׁוּבוּ מִלֶּכֶת.

Vers. 25-33. FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 25. When Jeroboam had become king, it was his first care to give a firmer basis to his sovereignty by the fortification of Sichem and Pnuel. בָּנָה, to build, is used here in the sense of fortifying, because both cities had stood for a long time, and nothing is known of their having been destroyed under either Solomon or David, although the tower of Sichem had been burnt down by Abimelech (Judg. ix. 49), and the tower of Pnuel had been destroyed by Gideon (Judg. viii. 17). *Sichem*, a place well known from the time of Abraham downwards (Gen. xii. 6), was situated upon the mountains of Ephraim, between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, and still exists under the name of *Nabulus* or *Nablûs*, a name corrupted from *Flavia Neapolis*. Jeroboam dwelt therein, *i.e.* he chose it at first as his residence, though he afterwards resided in Thirza (see ch. xiv. 17). *Pnuel* was situated, according to Gen. xxxii. 31, on the

other side of the Jordan, on the northern bank of the Jabbok (not the southern side, as Thenius supposes); and judging from Gen. xxxii. 22 sqq. and Judg. viii. 8 sqq., it was on the caravan road, which led through Gilead to Damascus, and thence past Palmyra and along the Euphrates to Mesopotamia. It was probably on account of its situation that Jeroboam fortified it, to defend his sovereignty over Gilead against hostile attacks from the north-east and east.—Vers. 26 sqq. In order also to give internal strength to his kingdom, Jeroboam resolved to provide for his subjects a substitute for the sacrificial worship in the temple by establishing new *sacra*, and thus to take away all occasion for making festal journeys to Jerusalem, from which he apprehended, and that probably not without reason, a return of the people to the house of David, and consequently further danger for his own life. “If this people go up to perform sacrifice in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, their heart will turn to their lord, king Rehoboam,” etc.—Ver. 28. He therefore consulted, *sc.* with his counsellors, or the heads of the nation, who had helped him to the throne, and made two calves of gold. עֲגֵלֵי זָהָב are young oxen, not of pure gold however, or cast in brass and gilded, but in all probability like the golden calf which Aaron had cast for the people at Sinai, made of a kernel of wood, which was then covered with gold plate (see the Comm. on Ex. xxxii. 4). That Jeroboam had in his mind not merely the Egyptian *Apis*-worship generally, but more especially the image-worship which Aaron introduced for the people at Sinai, is evident from the words borrowed from Ex. xxxii. 4, with which he studiously endeavoured to recommend his new form of worship to the people: “Behold, this is thy God, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.” רַב־לָכֶם מַעֲלֹת, it is too much for you to go to Jerusalem; not “let your going suffice,” because לָכֶם is not to be taken in a partitive sense here, as it is in Ex. ix. 28 and Ezek. xlv. 6. What Jeroboam meant to say by the words, “Behold thy God,” etc., was, “this is no new religion, but this was the form of worship which our fathers used in the desert, with Aaron himself leading the way” (Seb. Schmidt). And whilst the verbal allusion to that event at Sinai plainly shows that this worship was not actual idolatry, *i.e.* was not a worship of Egyptian idols, from which it is constantly distinguished in our books as well as in Hosea and Amos, but that Jehovah was worshipped under the image of the calves or



young oxen ; the choice of the places in which the golden calves were set up also shows that Jeroboam desired to adhere as closely as possible to ancient traditions. He did not select his own place of residence, but Bethel and Dan. *Bethel*, on the southern border of his kingdom, which properly belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 13 and 22), the present *Beitin*, had already been consecrated as a divine seat by the vision of Jehovah which the patriarch Jacob received there in a dream (Gen. xxviii. 11, 19), and Jacob gave it the name of *Bethel*, house of God, and afterwards built an altar there to the Lord (Gen. xxxv. 7). And Jeroboam may easily have fancied, and have tried to persuade others, that Jehovah would reveal Himself to the descendants of Jacob in this sacred place just as well as He had done to their forefather.—*Dan*, in the northern part of the kingdom, on the one source of the Jordan, formerly called *Laish* (Judg. xviii. 26 sqq.), was also consecrated as a place of worship by the image-worship established there by the Danites, at which even a grandson of Moses had officiated ; and regard may also have been had to the convenience of the people, namely, that the tribes living in the north would not have to go a long distance to perform their worship.—Ver. 30. But this institution became a sin to Jeroboam, because it violated the fundamental law of the Old Testament religion, since this not only prohibited all worship of Jehovah under images and symbols (Ex. xx. 4), but had not even left the choice of the place of worship to the people themselves (Deut. xii. 5 sqq.). “ And the people went before the one to Dan.” The expression “ to Dan ” can only be suitably explained by connecting it with הָעָם: the people even to Dan, *i.e.* the people throughout the whole kingdom even to Dan. The southern boundary as the *terminus a quo* is not mentioned ; not because it was for a long time in dispute, but because it was already given in the allusion to Bethel. הָאֵלֹהִים is neither the golden calf at Dan nor (as I formerly thought) that at Bethel, but is to be interpreted according to the preceding אֱלֹהֵי הָאֵתֶר וְאֱלֹהֵי הָאֶרֶץ: one of the two, or actually both the one and the other (Thenius). The sin of which Jeroboam was guilty consisted in the fact that he no longer allowed the people to go to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, but induced or compelled them to worship Jehovah before one or the other of the calves which he had set up, or (as it is expressed in ver. 31) made a house of high places, בָּיִת בָּמוֹת (see at ch. iii. 2), instead of the

house of God, which the Lord had sanctified as the place of worship by filling it with His gracious presence. The singular **בֵּית ב** may be accounted for from the antithesis to **בֵּית יְהוָה**, upon which it rests. There was no necessity to say expressly that there was a house of high places at Bethel and Dan, *i.e.* in two places, because it followed as a matter of course that the golden calves could not stand in the open air, but were placed in a temple, by which the sacrificial altar stood. These places of worship were houses of *high places*, *Bamoth*, because the ark of the covenant was wanting, and therewith the gracious presence of God, the *Shechinah*, for which no symbol invented by men could be a substitute. Moreover Jeroboam made "priests from the mass of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi." **מִקְצוֹת הָעָם**, *i.e.* not of the poorest of the people (Luther and others), but from the last of the people onwards, that is to say, from the whole of the people any one without distinction even to the very last, instead of the priests chosen by God out of the tribe of Levi. For this meaning of **מִקְצוֹת** see Gen. xix. 4 and Ezek. xxxiii. 2, also Lud. de Dieu on this passage. This innovation on the part of Jeroboam appears very surprising, if we consider how the Ephraimite Micah (Judg. xvii. 10 sqq.) rejoiced that he had obtained a Levite to act as priest for his image-worship, and can only be explained from the fact that the Levites did not consent to act as priests in the worship before the golden calves, but set their faces against it, and therefore, as is stated in 2 Chron. xi. 13, 14, were obliged to leave their district towns and possessions and emigrate into the kingdom of Judah.—Ver. 32. Jeroboam also transferred to the eighth month the feast which ought to have been kept in the seventh month (the feast of tabernacles, Lev. xxiii. 34 sqq.). The pretext for this arbitrary alteration of the law, which repeatedly describes the seventh month as the month appointed by the Lord (Lev. xxiii. 34, 39, and 41), he may have found in the fact that in the northern portion of the kingdom the corn ripened a month later than in the more southern Judah (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 118, Anm. 3, and § 119, Anm. 2), since this feast of the ingathering of the produce of the threshing-floor and wine-press (Ex. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 39; Deut. xvi. 13) was a feast of thanksgiving for the gathering in of all the fruits of the ground. But the true reason was to be found in his intention to make the separation in a religious point of view as complete as pos-



sible, although Jeroboam retained the day of the month, the fifteenth, for the sake of the weak who took offence at his innovations. For we may see very clearly that many beside the Levites were very discontented with these illegal institutions, from the notice in 2 Chron. xi. 16, that out of all the tribes those who were devoted to the Lord from the heart went to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the God of the fathers there. "And he sacrificed upon the altar." This clause is connected with the preceding one, in the sense of: he instituted the feast and offered sacrifices thereat. In ver. 32b (from כִּן עֲשָׂה on-wards) and ver. 33, what has already been related concerning Jeroboam's religious institutions is brought to a close by a comprehensive repetition of the leading points. "Thus did he in Bethel, (namely) to offer sacrifice to the calves; and there he appointed the priests of the high places which he had made, and offered sacrifice upon the altar which he had made at Bethel, on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, which he himself had devised, and so made a feast for the children of Israel and sacrificed upon the altar to burn." מִלְּבָר signifies *seorsum*, by himself alone, *i.e.* in this connection, *i.q.* "from his own heart." The *Keri* מִלְּבוֹ is therefore a correct explanation as to the fact; but it is a needless correction from Neh. vi. 8. The last clause, וַיַּעַל . . . לְהִקְטִיר, leads on to what follows, and it would be more correct to take it in connection with ch. xiii. 1 and render it thus: and when he was offering sacrifice upon the altar to burn, behold there came a man of God, etc. Thenius has rendered וַיַּעַל incorrectly, and he stood at the altar. This thought would have been expressed by וַיַּעֲמֹד עַל הַמ', as in ch. xiii. 1. By הִקְטִיר we are not to understand the burning or offering of incense, but the burning of the sacrificial portions of the flesh upon the altar, as in Lev. i. 9, 13, 17, etc.

CHAP. XIII. TESTIMONY OF GOD AGAINST THE CALF-WORSHIP OF  
JEROBOAM.

A prophet out of Judah announces to Jeroboam the eventual overthrow of the idolatrous worship, and attests his divine mission by miraculous signs upon the altar at Bethel and the hardened king (vers. 1-10); but on the way back he allows himself to be enticed by an old prophet out of Bethel to go into his house, contrary to the express command of the Lord, and while

sitting at table with him has to hear from his mouth the divine threat, that on account of his transgression of the command of God he will not come into the sepulchre of his fathers. This threat was fulfilled on his way home; and the marvellous fulfilment made so deep an impression upon the old prophet, that he confirmed the testimony which he had given concerning the worship at the high places (vers. 11–32). These marvellous occurrences not only teach how Jeroboam brought about the overthrow of his dynasty by his thorough hardening against the word of God (vers. 33, 34), but they also show how false prophecy rose up from the very beginning in the kingdom of Israel and set itself against the true prophets of the Lord, and how it gained a victory, which merely displayed its own impotence, however, and foreshadowed its eventual and certain overthrow.

Vers. 1–10. *Prophecy against the idolatrous worship at Bethel.*—Vers. 1, 2. Whilst Jeroboam was still occupied in sacrificing by the altar at Bethel, there came a prophet (אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים) out of Judah “in the word of Jehovah” to Bethel, and pronounced upon the altar its eventual destruction. בְּרִבְרֵי יְהוָה does not mean “at the word of Jehovah” here, as it frequently does, but “in the word of Jehovah,” as vers. 9 and 17 more especially show; so that the word of Jehovah is regarded as a power which comes upon the prophet and drives him to utter the divine revelation which he has received. It is the same in ch. xx. 35. לִהְיוֹת is to be taken as in ch. xii. 33.—“Behold a son will be born to the house of David, named Josiah; he will offer upon thee (O altar) the priests of the high places, who burn incense (i.e. kindle sacrifices) upon thee, and men’s bones will they burn upon thee.” According to 2 Kings xxiii. 15–20, this prophecy was literally fulfilled. The older theologians found in this an evident proof of the divine inspiration of the prophets; modern theology, on the other hand, which denies the supernatural inspiration of prophecy in accordance with its rationalistic or naturalistic principles, supposes that this prophecy was not more precisely defined till after the event, and adduces in support of this the apparently just argument, that the prediction of particular historical events is without analogy, and generally that the introduction either of particular persons by name or of definite numbers is opposed to the very essence of prophecy, and turns prediction into soothsaying. The dis-



inction between soothsaying and prediction, however, is not that the latter merely utters general ideas concerning the future, whilst the former announces special occurrences beforehand: but soothsaying is the foretelling of all kinds of accidental things; prophecy, on the contrary, the foretelling of the progressive development of the kingdom of God, not merely in general, but in its several details, according to the circumstances and necessities of each particular age, and that in such a manner that the several concrete details of the prophecy rest upon the general idea of the revelation of salvation, and are thereby entirely removed from the sphere of the accidental. It is true that perfectly concrete predictions of particular events, with the introduction of names and statement of times, are much more rare than the predictions of the progressive development of the kingdom of God according to its general features; but they are not altogether wanting, and we meet with them in every case where it was of importance to set before an ungodly generation in the most impressive manner the truth of the divine threatenings or promises. The allusion to *Coresh* in Isa. xlv. 28, xlv. 1, is analogous to the announcement before us. But in both cases the names are closely connected with the destination of the persons in the prophecy, and are simply a concrete description of what God will accomplish through these men. Hence the name **יְאֲשִׁירֵהוּ** occurs primarily according to its appellative meaning alone, viz. "he whom Jehovah supports," from **אָשָׂה**, to support, and expresses this thought: there will be born a son to the house of David, whom Jehovah will support or establish, so that he shall execute judgment upon the priests of the high places at Bethel. This prophecy was then afterwards so fulfilled by the special arrangement of God, that the king who executed this judgment bore the name of *Joshiyahu* as his proper name. And so also **בִּזְיֹשׁ** was originally an appellative in the sense of sun. The judgment which the prophet pronounced upon the altar was founded upon the *jus talionis*. On the very same altar on which the priests offer sacrifice to the **עֲגֻלִּים** shall they themselves be offered, and the altar shall be defiled for ever by the burning of men's bones upon it. **עֲצָמוֹת אָדָם**, "men's bones," does not stand for "their (the priests') bones," but is simply an epithet used to designate human corpses, which defile the place where they lie (2 Kings xxiii. 16).—Ver. 3. In confirmation of his word the prophet added a miracle (**מוֹפֵת**, *τέρας*,

*portentum*, see at Ex. iv. 21): "this is the sign that the Lord hath spoken (through me): behold the altar will be rent in pieces, and the ashes upon it will be poured out." רֵשֶׁן is the ashes of the fat of the sacrificial animals. The pouring out of the sacrificial ashes in consequence of the breaking up of the altar was a penal sign, which indicated, along with the destruction of the altar, the desecration of the sacrificial service performed upon it.—Ver. 4. The king, enraged at this announcement, stretched out his hand against the prophet with the words, "seize him"—and his hand dried up, so that he was not able to draw it back again. יָבֵשׁ, to dry up, *i.e.* to become rigid in consequence of a miraculous withdrawal of the vital energy. Thus Jeroboam experienced in the limbs of his own body the severity of the threatened judgment of God.—Vers. 5, 6. The penal miracle announced in the word of Jehovah, *i.e.* in the strength of the Lord, also took effect immediately upon the altar; and the defiant king was now obliged to entreat the man of God, saying, "Soften, I pray, the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may return to me," *i.e.* that I may be able to draw it back again, to move it once more. And this also took place at once at the intercession of the prophet. הִלֵּךְ אֶת־פָּנָיו, lit. to stroke the face of God, *i.e.* to render it soft by intercession (see at Ex. xxxii. 11).—Ver. 7. As Jeroboam could do nothing by force against the prophet, he endeavoured to gain him over to his side by friendliness, that at least he might render his threat harmless in the eyes of the people. For this purpose, and not to do him honour or to make him some acknowledgment for the restoration of his hand, he invited him to his house, to strengthen himself with food (סָעַר as in Gen. xviii. 5, Judg. ix. 5; for the form סָעַרָה, see Ewald, § 41, c) and receive from him a present.—Vers. 8 sqq. But this design was also frustrated, and the rejection of his worship on the part of God was still more strongly declared. "If thou gavest me," the man of God replied, "the half of thy house, I shall not go in with thee, nor eat bread and drink water in this place; for thus hath Jehovah commanded me," etc. The subject, *Jehorah*, is easily supplied to יָהִי from the context (*vid.* Ewald, § 294, b). God had forbidden the prophet to eat and drink "to manifest His detestation of idolatry, and to show by that fact that the Bethelites were so detestable, and as it were excommunicated by God, that He wished none of the faithful to



join with them in eating and drinking" (C. a Lap.). He was not to return by the way by which he came, that no one might look out for him, and force him to a delay which was irreconcilable with his commission, or "lest by chance being brought back by Jeroboam, he should do anything to please him which was unworthy of a prophet, or from which it might be inferred that idolaters might hope for some favour from the Deity" (Budd.).

Vers. 11-32. *Seduction of the man of God by an old prophet, and his consequent punishment.*—Vers. 11-19. The man of God had resisted the invitations of Jeroboam, and set out by a different road to return to Judah. An old prophet at Bethel heard from his sons what had taken place (the singular יָבוֹא בְּנֵו as compared with the plural וַיִּסְפְּרוּם may be explained on the supposition that first of all one son related the matter to his father, and that then the other sons supported the account given by the first); had his ass saddled; hurried after him, and found him sitting under *the* terebinth (the tree well known from that event); invited him to come into his house and eat with him; and when the latter appealed to the divine prohibition, said to him (ver. 18), "I am a prophet also as thou art, and an angel has said to me in the word of the Lord: Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat and drink," and lied to him (פָּחַשׁ לוֹ without a *copula*, because it is inserted as it were parenthetically, simply as an explanation)—then he went back with him, and ate and drank in his house.—Vers. 20-22. As they were sitting at table the word of the Lord came to the old prophet, so that he cried out to the man of God from Judah: "Because thou hast been rebellious against the command of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment, . . . thou wilt not come to the grave of thy fathers," *i.e.* thou wilt meet with a violent death by the way. This utterance was soon fulfilled.—Vers. 23 sqq. After he had eaten he saddled the ass for him, *i.e.* for the prophet whom he had fetched back, and the latter (the prophet from Judah) departed upon it. On the road a lion met him and slew him; "and his corpse was cast in the road, but the ass stood by it, and the lion stood by the corpse." The lion, contrary to its nature, had neither consumed the prophet whom it had slain, nor torn in pieces and devoured the ass upon which he rode, but had remained standing by the corpse and by the ass, that the slaying of the prophet might not be regarded as a misfortune that had

befallen him by accident, but that the hand of the Lord might be manifest therein, so that passers-by saw this marvel and related it in Bethel.—Ver. 26. When the old prophet at Bethel heard of this, he said, “It is the man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the Lord; the Lord hath delivered him to the lion, so that it hath torn him (פָּרַץ, *frangere, confringere*, used of a lion which tears its prey in pieces) and slain him according to the word of the Lord, which He spake to him.”—Vers. 27–32. He thereupon had his ass saddled, and went and found the corpse and the ass standing by it, without the lion having eaten the corpse or torn the ass in pieces; and he lifted the corpse upon his ass, and brought it into his own city, and laid the corpse in his grave with the customary lamentation: אָחִי הִנֵּה, *alas, my brother!* (cf. Jer. xxii. 18), and then gave this command to his sons: “When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried, let my bones rest beside his bones; for the word which he proclaimed in the word of Jehovah upon the altar at Bethel and upon all the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria will take place” (*i.e.* will be fulfilled). The expression “cities of Samaria” belongs to the author of these books, and is used proleptically of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which did not receive this name till after the building of the city of Samaria as the capital of the kingdom and the residence of the kings of Israel (ch. xvi. 24). There is a prophetic element in the words “upon all the houses of the high places,” etc., inasmuch as the only other erection at that time beside the one at Bethel was a temple of the high places at Dan. But after such a beginning the multiplication of them might be foreseen with certainty, even without any higher illumination.

The conduct of the old prophet at Bethel appears so strange, that Josephus and the Chald. and most of the Rabbins and of the earlier commentators both Catholic and Protestant, have regarded him as a false prophet, who tried to lay a trap for the prophet from Judah, in order to counteract the effect of his prophecy upon the king and the people. But this assumption cannot be reconciled with either the divine revelation which came to him at the table, announcing to the Judæan prophet the punishment of his transgression of the commandment of God, and was so speedily fulfilled (vers. 20–24); or with the honour which he paid to the dead man after this punishment had fallen upon him, by burying him in his own grave; and still less with his con-



firmation of his declaration concerning the altar at Bethel (vers. 29-32). We must therefore follow Eplm. Syr., Theodor., Hengstenberg, and others, and regard the old prophet as a true prophet, who with good intentions, and not "under the influence of human envy" (Thenius), but impelled by the desire to enter into a closer relation to the man of God from Judah and to strengthen himself through his prophetic gifts, urged him to enter his house. The fact that he made use of sinful means in order to make more sure of securing the end desired, namely, of the false pretence that he had been directed by an angel to do this, may be explained, as Hengstenberg suggests (*Dissert.* vol. ii. p. 149), on the ground that when Jeroboam introduced his innovations, he had sinned by keeping silence, and that the appearance of the Judean prophet had brought him to a consciousness of this sin, so that he had been seized with shame on account of his fall, and was anxious to restore himself to honour in his own eyes and those of others by intercourse with this witness to the truth. But however little the lie itself can be excused or justified, we must not attribute to him alone the consequences by which the lie was followed in the case of the Judean prophet. For whilst he chose reprehensible means of accomplishing what appeared to be a good end, namely, to raise himself again by intercourse with a true prophet, and had no wish to injure the other in any way, the Judean prophet allowed himself to be seduced to a transgression of the clear and definite prohibition of God simply by the sensual desire for bodily invigoration by meat and drink, and had failed to consider that the divine revelation which he had received could not be repealed by a pretended revelation from an angel, because the word of God does not contradict itself. He was therefore obliged to listen to a true revelation from God from the mouth of the man whose pretended revelation from an angel he had too carelessly believed, namely, to the announcement of punishment for his disobedience towards the commandment of God, which punishment he immediately afterwards endured, "for the destruction of the flesh, but for the preservation of the spirit: 1 Cor. xv. 5" (*Berleb. Bible*). That the punishment fell upon him alone and not upon the old prophet of Bethel also, and that for apparently a smaller crime, may be accounted for "not so much from the fact that the old prophet had lied with a good intention (this might hold good of the other also), as from the fact that it was needful to deal strictly with

the man who had just received a great and holy commission from the Lord" (O. v. Gerlach). It is true that no bodily punishment fell upon the old prophet, but this punishment he received instead, that with his lie he was put to shame, and that his conscience must have accused him of having occasioned the death of the man of God from Judah. He was thereby to be cured of his weakness, that he might give honour to the truth of the testimony of God. "Thus did the wondrous providence of God know how to direct all things most gloriously, so that the bodily destruction of the one contributed to the spiritual and eternal preservation of the soul of the other" (*Berleb. Bible*).—Concerning the design of these marvellous events, H. Witsius has the following remarks in his *Miscell.* ss. i. p. 118 (ed. nov. 1736): "So many wondrous events all concurring in one result caused the prophecy against the altar at Bethel to be preserved in the mouths and memories of all, and the mission of this prophet to become far more illustrious. Thus, although the falsehood of the old man of Bethel brought disgrace upon himself, it injured no one but the man of God whose credulity was too great; and, under the overruling providence of God, it contributed in the most signal manner to the confirmation and publication of the truth."<sup>1</sup> The heaping up of the marvellous corresponded to the great object of the mission of the man of God out of Judah, through which the Lord would enter an energetic protest against the idolatrous worship of Jeroboam at its first introduction, to guard those who feared God in Israel, of whom there were not a few (2 Chron. xi. 16; 2 Kings xviii. 3, xix. 18), from falling away from Him by joining in the worship of the calves, and to take away every excuse from the ungodly who participated therein.

Vers. 33 and 34. But this did not lead Jeroboam to conversion. He turned not from his evil way, but continued to make high priests from the mass of the people. הָיָה לְהָרֹבֵץ, "he re-

<sup>1</sup> Compare with this the remark of Theodoret in his *quest.* 43 in 3 *libr. Reg.*: "In my opinion this punishment served to confirm the declaration concerning the altar. For it was not possible for the statement of such a man to be concealed: and this was sufficient to fill with terror those who heard it; for if partaking of food contrary to the command of God, and that not of his own accord, but under a deception, brought such retribution upon a righteous man, to what punishments would they be exposed who had forsaken the God who made them, and worshipped the likenesses of irrational creatures?"



turned and made," *i.e.* he made again or continued to make. For the fact itself compare ch. xii. 31. "Whoever had pleasure (הֵחָפֵץ), cf. Ges. § 109), he filled his hand, that he might become a priest of the high places." כָּלֵא אֶת־יָדוֹ, to fill the hand, is the technical expression for investing with the priesthood, according to the rite prescribed for the consecration of the priests, namely, to place sacrificial gifts in the hands of the persons to be consecrated (see at Lev. vii. 37 and viii. 25 sqq.). The plural כֹּהֲנֵי בָמוֹת is used with indefinite generality: that he might be ranked among the priests of high places.—Ver. 34. "And it became in (with) this thing the sin of the house of Jeroboam, and the destroying and cutting off from the earth;" that is to say, this obstinate persistence in ungodly conduct was the guilt which had as its natural consequence the destroying of his house from the face of the earth. בִּדְבַר הַזֶּה is not a mistake for הַדְּבַר הַזֶּה, but בִּ is used, as in 1 Chron. ix. 33, vii. 23, to express the idea of being and persisting in a thing (for this use of בִּ compare Ewald, § 295, *f*).

#### CHAP. XIV. REIGN AND DEATH OF JEROBOAM AND REHOBOAM.

Vers. 1-20. REIGN OF JEROBOAM.—Vers. 1-18. *Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam and the kingdom of Israel.*—As Jeroboam did not desist from his idolatry notwithstanding the threatened punishment, the Lord visited him with the illness of his son, and directed the prophet Ahijah, to whom his wife had gone to ask counsel concerning the result of the illness, to predict to him not only the cutting off of his house and the death of his sick son, but also the thrusting away of Israel out of the land of its fathers beyond the Euphrates, and in confirmation of this threat caused the sick son to die when the returning mother crossed the threshold of her house again.—Vers. 1-3. When his son fell sick, Jeroboam said to his wife: Disguise thyself, that thou mayest not be known as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh to the prophet Ahijah, who told me that I should be king over this people; he will tell thee how it will fare with the boy. הִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, from שָׁחָה, to alter one's self, *i.e.* to disguise one's self. She was to go to Shiloh disguised, so as not to be recognised, to deceive the old prophet, because otherwise Jeroboam did not promise himself any favourable answer, as he had contemptuously neglected Ahijah's admonition (ch. xi. 38, 39). But he turned

to this prophet because he had spoken concerning him לְמֶלֶךְ, to be king, *i.e.* that he would become king, over this people. לְמֶלֶךְ stands for לְהָיִית מֶלֶךְ, with which the infinitive *esse* can be omitted (*vid.* Ewald, § 336, *b*). As this prophecy, which was so favourable to Jeroboam, had come to pass (ch. xi. 29, 30), he hoped that he might also obtain from Ahijah a divine revelation concerning the result of his son's illness, provided that he did not know who it was who came to seek counsel concerning her sick son. To complete the deception, she was to take with her as a present for the prophet (cf. 1 Sam. ix. 8) "ten loaves and crumbs" and a jar with honey, *i.e.* a trifling gift such as a simple citizen's wife might take. According to the early versions and the context, a kind of plain cake, *κολλυρίδα* (LXX.), *crustulam* (Vulg.). It is different in Josh. ix. 5.—Vers. 4, 5. Ahijah could no longer see, because his eyes were blinded with age. קִטְרִי as in 1 Sam. iv. 15, an expression applied to the black cataract, *amaurosis*. It was therefore all the less possible for him to recognise in a natural manner the woman who was coming to him. But before her arrival the Lord had not only revealed to him her coming and her object, but had also told him what he was to say to her if she should disguise herself when she came. קִטְרִי וְקָטָה; see at Judg. xviii. 4. "וְהָיָה כִּבְשָׁתָהּ וְנִי," "let it be if she comes and disguises herself;" *i.e.* if when she comes she should disguise herself.—Ver. 6. When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet entering the door (the participle הִשְׁמָעָהּ, according to the number and gender, refers to the הָיָה implied in וְהָיָה, *vid.* Ewald, § 317, *c*), he addressed her by her name, charged her with her disguise of herself, and told her that he was entrusted with a hard saying to her. הָיָה (cf. ch. xii. 13) is equivalent to הָיָה וְהָיָה; for the construction, compare Ewald, § 284, *c*.—Vers. 7 sqq. The saying was as follows: "Therefore, because thou hast exalted thyself from the people, and I have made thee prince over my people Israel (cf. ch. xi. 31), . . . but thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments . . . (cf. ch. xi. 34), and hast done worse than all who were before thee (*judices nimirum et duces Israelis*—Cler.), and hast gone and hast made thyself other gods (contrary to the express command in Ex. xx. 2, 3), . . . and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore I bring misfortune upon the house of Jeroboam," etc. The expression, to cast God behind the back, which only occurs here and in Ezek. xxiii. 35, denotes the most



scornful contempt of God, the strict opposite of "keeping God before the eyes and in the heart." מִשְׁתֵּיזֵן בְּקִיר, every male person; see at 1 Sam. xxv. 22. A synonymous expression is עֲצוּר וְעֵזוּב, the fettered (*i.e.* probably the married) and the free (or single); see at Deut. xxxii. 36. "In Israel," *i.e.* in the kingdom of the ten tribes. The threat is strengthened by the clause in ver. 10, "and I will sweep out after the house of Jeroboam, as one sweepeth out dung, even to the end," which expresses shameful and utter extermination; and this threat is still further strengthened in ver. 11 by the threat added from Deut. xxviii. 26, that of those cut off not one is to come to the grave, but their bodies are to be devoured by the dogs and birds of prey,—the worst disgrace that could befall the dead. Instead of wild beasts (Deut. xxviii. 26) the dogs are mentioned here, because in the East they wander out in the streets without owners, and are so wild and ravenous that they even devour corpses (*vid.* Harmer, *Beobachtungen*, i. p. 198). לִירְבָּעַם with ל of relationship, equivalent to of those related to Jeroboam. It is the same in ver. 13.—Vers. 12, 13. After this announcement of the judgment upon the house of Jeroboam, Ahijah gave the wife information concerning her sick son. He would die as soon as she entered the city, and of all the male members of the house of Jeroboam he only would receive the honour of a proper burial, because in him there was some good thing towards Jehovah found. Ewald (§ 247, *b*) regards the form בְּבִנָּה as standing for בְּבִנָּה, and refers the suffix to the following word הָעִיר (*vid.* Ewald, § 309, *c*). But as this use of the suffix would be very harsh, the question arises whether בִּנָּה is not to be regarded as a feminine form of the infinitive, after the analogy of דָּעָה in Ex. ii. 4 and לָרָה in 2 Kings xix. 3, etc. From the fulfilment of this declaration in vers. 17 and 18 Jeroboam was to learn that the threatened destruction of his royal house would also be just as certainly fulfilled. The sick son appears to have been the heir-presumptive to the throne. This may be inferred partly from the lamentation of all Israel at his death (ver. 18), and partly from what follows here in the next verse. אֶל־יְהוָה means in his relation to Jehovah.—Ver. 14. "Jehovah will raise Himself up a king over Israel, who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day; but what (*sc.* do I say)? even now," *sc.* has He raised him up. This appears to be the simplest explanation of the last words of the verse, of which

very various interpretations have been given. **וְה'** is placed before **הַיּוֹם**, to give it the stronger emphasis, as in Ex. xxxii. 1 (compare Josh. ix. 12, 13, and Ewald, § 293, *b*; and for **וְהַיּוֹם** compare Delitzsch on *Job*, i. p. 290, transl.).—Vers. 15, 16. But in order that not only Jeroboam, but also the people who had joined in his idolatry, might perceive the severity of the divine judgment, Ahijah also announced to the nation its banishment into exile beyond the Euphrates. “Jehovah will smite Israel, as the reed shakes in the water,” is an abbreviated phrase for: Jehovah will smite Israel in such a manner that it will sway to and fro like a reed in the water moved by a strong wind, which has not a sufficiently firm hold to resist the violence of the storm. “And will thrust them out of the good land,” etc., as Moses threatened the transgressors of the law (Deut. xxix. 27), “and scatter them beyond the river (Euphrates),” *i.e.* banish them among the heathen, from whom God brought out and chose their forefather (Josh. xxiv. 3), “because they have made themselves Ashera-idols, to provoke Jehovah.” **אֱשֵׁרִים** is used for idols generally, among which the golden calves are reckoned. **וְה'**, that He may deliver up Israel, on account of the idolatrous forms of worship introduced by Jeroboam. For the fulfilment see 2 Kings xv. 29, xvii. 23, and xviii. 11.—In vers. 17 and 18 the exact fulfilment of Ahijah’s announcement concerning the death of Jeroboam’s sick son is described. According to ver. 17, Jeroboam was then residing at *Thirza*, whereas he had at first resided at Shechem (ch. xii. 25). *Thirza* is probably the present *Talluza*, on the north of Shechem (see at Josh. xii. 24).—Vers. 19 and 20. *End of Jeroboam’s reign.* Of the wars, which were described in the annals of the kings (see p. 12), the war with Abijam of Judah is the only one of which we have any account (2 Chron. xiii. 2 sqq.). See also the Comm. on ver. 30. He was followed on the throne by his son Nadab.

Vers. 21–31. REIGN OF REHOBAM IN JUDAH (compare 2 Chron. xi. 5–xii. 16).—Ver. 21. Rehoboam, who ascended the throne at the age of forty-one, was born a year before the accession of Solomon (see at ch. ii. 24). In the description of Jerusalem as the city chosen by the Lord (cf. ch. xi. 36) there is implied not so much an indirect condemnation of the falling away of the ten tribes, as the striking contrast to the idolatry



of Rehoboam referred to in vers. 23 sqq. The name of his mother is mentioned (here and in ver. 31), not because she seduced the king to idolatry (Ephr. Syr.), but generally on account of the great influence which the queen-mother appears to have had both upon the king personally and upon his government, as we may infer from the fact that the mother's name is given in the case of every king of Judah (*vid.* ch. xv. 2, 13, xxii. 42, etc.).—Vers. 22-24. The general characteristics of Rehoboam's reign are supplied and more minutely defined in the account in the Chronicles. According to 2 Chron. xi. 5-xii. 1, he appears to have been brought to reflection by the announcement of the prophet, that the falling away of the ten tribes had come from the Lord as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry (ch. xii. 23, 24; 2 Chron. xi. 2-4); and in the first years of his reign to have followed the law of God with earnestness, and to have been occupied in the establishment of his government partly by the fortification of different cities (2 Chron. xi. 5-12), and partly by setting in order his domestic affairs, placing his numerous sons, who were born of his many wives and concubines, in the fortified cities of the land, and thus providing for them, and naming Abijam as his successor (2 Chron. xi. 18-22); while his kingdom was still further strengthened by the priests, Levites, and pious Israelites who emigrated to Judah and Jerusalem from the ten tribes (2 Chron. xi. 13-17). But this good beginning only lasted three years (2 Chron. xi. 17). When he thought that he had sufficiently fortified his kingdom, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel (*i.e.* all the covenant nation) with him (2 Chron. xii. 1). “Judah did that which was displeasing in the sight of the Lord; they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers (*sc.* under the Judges) had done with their sins.” קִנְאָה, to provoke to jealousy (Num. v. 14), is to be explained, when it refers to God, from the fact that the relation in which God stood to His people was regarded under the figure of a marriage, in which Jehovah appears as the husband of the nation, who is angry at the unfaithfulness of his wife, *i.e.* at the idolatry of the nation. Compare the remarks on אֵל קָנָא in the Comm. on Ex. xx. 5.—Ver. 23. They also (the Judæans as well as the Israelites) built themselves *bamoth*, altars of high places (see at ch. iii. 3), monuments and Ashera-idols. מַצֵּבוֹת are not actual images of gods, but stones set up as

memorials (Gen. xxxi. 13, xxxv. 20; Ex. xxiv. 4), more especially stone monuments set up in commemoration of a divine revelation (Gen. xxviii. 18, 22, xxxv. 14). Like the *lamoth*, in connection with which they generally occur, they were originally dedicated to Jehovah; but even under the law they were forbidden, partly as places of divine worship of human invention which easily degenerated into idolatry, but chiefly because the Canaanites had erected such monuments to Baal by the side of his altars (Ex. xxxii. 24, xxxiv. 13; Deut. vii. 5, etc.), whereby the worship of Jehovah was unconsciously identified with the worship of Baal, even when the *masseloth* were not at first erected to the Canaanitish Baal. As the *מצבות* of the Canaanites were dedicated to Baal, so were the *אֲשֵׁרִים* to Astarte, the female nature-deity of those tribes. *אֲשֵׁרָה*, however, does not mean a *grove* (see the Comm. on Deut. xvi. 21), but an idol of the Canaanitish nature-goddess, generally most likely a lofty wooden pillar, though sometimes perhaps a straight trunk of a tree, the branches and crown of which were lopped off and which was planted upon heights and in other places by the side of the altars of Baal. The name *אֲשֵׁרָה* was transferred from the idol to the goddess of nature (ch. xv. 13, xviii. 19; 2 Kings xxi. 7, etc.), and was used of the image or column of the Phœnician Astarte (ch. xvi. 33; 2 Kings xiii. 6, xvii. 16, etc.), just as *אֲשֵׁרָה* in Judg. iii. 7 alternates with *עֲשֻׁרִים* in Judg. ii. 13. These idols the Israelites (? Judæans—*Te*.) appear to have also associated with the worship of Jehovah; for the external worship of Jehovah was still maintained in the temple, and was performed by Rehoboam himself with princely pomp (ver. 28). "On every high hill," etc.; see at Deut. xii. 2. —Ver. 24. "There were also prostitutes in the land." *קָדִישׁ* is used collectively as a generic name, including both male and female hierodules, and is exchanged for the plural in ch. xv. 12. The male *קָדִישׁ* had emasculated themselves in religious frenzy in honour of the Canaanitish goddess of nature, and were called Galli by the Romans. They were Canaanites, who had found their way into the land of Judah when idolatry gained the upper hand (as indicated by *נָכְרִים*). "They appear here as strangers among the Israelites, and are those notorious Cinadi more especially of the imperial age of Rome who travelled about in all directions, begging for the Syrian goddess, and even in the time of Augustine went about asking for alms in the streets of Car-



thage as a remnant of the Phœnician worship (*de civ. Dei*, vii. 26).—Movers, p. 679. On the female קַשְׁשָׁת see the Comm. on Gen. xxxviii. 21 and Deut. xxiii. 18.

This sinking into heathen abominations was soon followed by the punishment, that Judah was given up to the power of the heathen.—Vers. 25-28. King *Shishak* of Egypt invaded the land with a powerful army, conquered all the fortified cities, penetrated to Jerusalem, and would probably have put an end to the kingdom of Judah, if God had not had compassion upon him, and saved him from destruction, in consequence of the humiliation of the king and of the chiefs of the nation, caused by the admonition of the prophet Shemaiah, so that after the conquest of Jerusalem Shishak contented himself with withdrawing, taking with him the treasures of the temple and of the royal palace. Compare the fuller account of this expedition in 2 Chron. xii. 2-9. *Shishak* (שִׁשְׁכָּא) was the first king of the twenty-second (or Bubastitic) dynasty, called *Sesonchis* in Jul. Afric., *Sesonchosis* in Eusebius, and upon the monuments on which Champollion first deciphered his name, *Sheshonk* or *Sheshenk*. Shishak has celebrated his expedition against Judah by a bas-relief on the outer wall of the pillar-hall erected by him in the first palace at Karnak, in which more than 130 figures are led in cords by *Ammon* and the goddess *Muth* with their hands bound upon their backs. The lower portion of the figures of this long row of prisoners is covered by escutcheons, the border of which being provided with battlements, shows that the prisoners are symbols of conquered cities. About a hundred of these escutcheons are still legible, and in the names upon them a large number of the names of cities in the kingdom of Judah have been deciphered with tolerable certainty.<sup>1</sup> Shishak was probably bent chiefly upon the conquest and

<sup>1</sup> Compare Max Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, Bd. i. p. 909, ed. 3, and for the different copies of this bas-relief in the more recent works upon Egypt, Ruetschi in Herzog's *Cycl.* (art. *Rehoboam*). The latest attempts at deciphering are those by Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschriften in den ägypt. Denkmälern*, ii. p. 56 sqq., and O. Blau, *Sisaks Zug gegen Juda aus dem Denkmale bei Karnak erläutert*, in the *Deutsch. morgenl. Ztschr.* xv. p. 233 sqq. Champollion's interpretation of one of these escutcheons, in his *Précis du système hierogl.* p. 204, viz. *Juda hammalek*, "the king of Judah," has been rejected by Lepsius and Brugsch as philologically inadmissible. Brugsch writes the name thus: *Judh malk* or *Joud-hamalok*, and identifies *Judh* with *Jehudijeh*, which Robinson (*Pal.* iii. p. 45) supposes to be the ancient *Jehud* (*Josh.* xix. 45).

plundering of the cities. But from Jerusalem, beside other treasures of the temple and palace, he also carried off the golden shields that had been made by Solomon (ch. x. 16), in the place of which Rehoboam had copper ones made for his body-guard. The guard, רצים, runners, are still further described as הַשְׁמָרִים פֶּתַח בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ, "who kept the door of the king's house," i.e. supplied the sentinels for the gate of the royal palace.—Ver. 28. Whenever the king went into the house of Jehovah, the runners carried these shields; from which we may see that the king was accustomed to go to the temple with solemn pomp. These shields were not kept in the state-house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. x. 17) as the golden shields were, but in the guard-chamber (סִדְרָה; see at Ezek. xl. 7) of the runners.—Vers. 29-31. Further particulars are given in 2 Chron. xi. and xii. concerning the rest of the acts of Rehoboam. "There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam the whole time [of their reign]." As nothing is said about any open war between them, and the prophet Shemaiah prohibited the attack which Rehoboam was about to make upon the tribes who had fallen away (ch. xi. 23 sqq.), סִלְחָה can only denote the hostile feelings and attitude of the two rulers towards one another.—Ver. 31. *Death and burial of Rehoboam*: as in the case of Solomon (ch. xi. 43). The name of the queen-mother has already been given in ver. 21, and the repetition of it here may be explained on the supposition that in the original sources employed by the author of our books it stood in this position. The son and successor of Rehoboam upon the throne is called *Abijam* (אֲבִיָּאָם) in the account before us; whereas in the Chronicles he is always called *Abijah* (אֲבִיָּהָה, 2 Chron. xii. 16, xiii. 1, etc., or אֲבִיָּהָה, 2 Chron. xiii. 21). אֲבִיָּאָם, i.e. father of the sea, is unquestionably the older form of the name, which was reduced to אֲבִיָּהָה.

This *Jehud* in the tribe of Dan, Blau (p. 238) therefore also finds in the name; and it will not mislead any one that this city is reckoned as belonging to the tribe of Dan, since in the very same chapter (Josh. xix. 42) Ajalon is assigned to Dan, though it was nevertheless a fortress of Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 10). But Blau has not given any explanation of the addition *maik* or *malek*, whereas Gust. Roosh takes it to be מֶלֶךְ, and supposes it to mean "Jehud of the king, namely, of Rehoboam or of Judah, on account of its being situated in Dan, which belonged to the northern kingdom." But this is certainly incorrect. For where could the Egyptians have obtained this exact knowledge of the relation in which the tribes of the nation of Israel stood to one another?



and then identified with the formation from אָבִי and יָהּ = יְהוָה (from יְהוָה).

CHAP. XV. 1-24. REIGNS OF THE TWO KINGS ABIJAM AND ASA  
OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1-8. REIGN OF ABIJAM (cf. 2 Chron. xiii.).—*Abijam* reigned three years, and his mother's name was *Maacah*, daughter (*i.e.* grand-daughter) of Absalom. We have the same in 2 Chron. xi. 20, 21; but in 2 Chron. xiii. 2 she is called *Michajahu*, daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. If אֲבִישָׁלוֹם was without doubt Absalom, the well-known son of David, as we may infer from the fact that this name does not occur again in the Old Testament in connection with any other person, since Absalom had only one daughter, viz. *Thamar* (2 Sam. xiv. 27), who was fifty years old when Solomon died, Maacah must have been a daughter of this Thamar, who had married Uriel of Gibeah, and therefore a grand-daughter of Absalom. This is sustained by Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 10, 1). The form of the name מִיכָיָהּ is probably an error in copying for מַעְכָּה, as the name is also written in 2 Chron. xi. 20 and 21, and not a different name, which Maacah assumed as queen, as Caspari supposes (*Micha*, p. 3, note 4).—Vers. 3, 4. Abijam walked as king in the footsteps of his father. Although he made presents to the temple (ver. 15), his heart was not שָׁלֵם, wholly or undividedly given to the Lord, like the heart of David (cf. ch. xi. 4); but (בִּי, after a previous negative) for David's sake Jehovah had left him a light in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him and to let Jerusalem stand, because (אֲשֶׁר) David had done right in the eyes of God, etc., *i.e.* so that it was only for David's sake that Jehovah did not reject him, and allowed the throne to pass to his son. For the fact itself compare ch. xi. 13 and 36; and for the words, "except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite," see 2 Sam. xi. and xii.—Ver. 6. "And there was war between *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam* all his life;" *i.e.* the state of hostility which had already existed between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continued "all the days of his life," or so long as Abijam lived and reigned. If we take כָּל־יְמֵי הָיִי in this manner (not כָּל־יְמֵיהֶם, ver. 16), the statement loses the strangeness which it has at first sight, and harmonizes very well with that in ver. 7, that there was also war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

Under Abijam it assumed the form of a serious war, in which Jeroboam sustained a great defeat (see 2 Chron. xiii. 3-20).—The other notices concerning Abijam in vers. 7 and 8 are the same as in the case of Rehoboam in ch. xiv. 29 and 31.

Vers. 9-24. REIGN OF ASA (cf. 2 Chron. xiv.-xvi.).—As Asa ascended the throne in the twentieth year of the reign of Jeroboam, his father Abijam, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam (ver. 1), can only have reigned two years and a few months, and not three full years.—Ver. 10. Asa reigned forty-one years. “The name of his mother was Maacah, the daughter of Absalom.” This notice, which agrees verbatim with ver. 2, cannot mean that Abijam had his own mother for a wife; though Thénius finds this meaning in the passage, and then proceeds to build up conjectures concerning emendations of the text. We must rather explain it, as Ephr. Syr., the Rabbins, and others have done, as signifying that Maacah, the mother of Abijam, continued during Asa’s reign to retain the post of queen-mother or מַלְכָּה, *i.e.* *auctora valide*, till Asa deposed her on account of her idolatry (ver. 13), probably because Asa’s own mother had died at an early age.—Vers. 11 sqq. As ruler Asa walked in the ways of his pious ancestor David: he banished the male prostitutes out of the land, abolished all the abominations of idolatry, which his fathers (Abijam and Rehoboam) had introduced, deposed his grandmother Maacah from the rank of a queen, because she had made herself an idol for the Ashera, and had the idol hewn in pieces and burned in the valley of the Kidron. מַלְכָּה is a contemptuous epithet applied to idols (Lev. xxvi. 30); it does not mean *stercoræ*, however, as the Rabbins affirm, but logs, from מָלַךְ, to roll, or masses of stone, after the Chaldee מַלְכָּה (Ezra v. 8, vi. 4), generally connected with מַלְכָּה. It is so in Deut. xxix. 16. מַלְכָּה, *formido*, from מָלַךְ, *terrere, timere*, hence an idol as an object of fear, and not *pudendum*, a shameful image, as Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 571), who follows the Rabbins, explains it, understanding thereby a Phallus as a symbol of the generative and fructifying power of nature. With regard to the character of this idol, nothing further can be determined than that it was of wood, and possibly a wooden column like the מַלְכָּה (see at ch. xiv. 23). “But the high places departed not,” *i.e.* were not abolished. By the מַלְכָּה we are not to understand, according to ver. 12,



altars of high places dedicated to idols, but unlawful altars to Jehovah. It is so in the other passages in which this formula recurs (ch. xxii. 24; 2 Kings xii. 4, xiv. 4, xv. 4; and the parallel passages 2 Chron. xv. 17, xx. 33). The apparent discrepancy between the last-mentioned passages and 2 Chron. xiv. 2, 4, and xvii. 6, may be solved very simply on the supposition that the kings (Asa and Jehoshaphat) did indeed abolish the altars on the high places, but did not carry their reforms in the nation thoroughly out; and not by distinguishing between the *bamoth* dedicated to Jehovah and those dedicated to idols, as Thenius, Bertheau, and Caspari, with many of the earlier commentators, suppose. For although 2 Chron. xiv. 2 is very favourable to this solution, since both *בָּמוֹת* and *מִזְבְּחוֹת הַזָּכָר* are mentioned there, it does not accord with 2 Chron. xvii. 6, where *הַבָּמוֹת* cannot be merely idolatrous altars dedicated to the Canaanitish Baal, but unquestionably refer to the unlawful altars of Jehovah, or at any rate include them. Moreover, the next clause in the passage before us, "nevertheless Asa's heart was wholly given to the Lord," shows that the expression *לֹא קָרַי* does not mean that the king allowed the unlawful Jehovah-*bamoth* to remain, but simply that, notwithstanding his fidelity to Jehovah, the *bamoth* did not depart, so that he was unable to carry the abolition of them thoroughly out.—Ver. 15. He brought the sacred offerings of his father and his own sacred offerings into the house of Jehovah; probably the booty, in silver, gold, and vessels, which his father Abijam had gathered in the war with Jeroboam (2 Chron. xiii. 16, 17), and he himself on the conquest of the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv. 12, 13). The *Keri* *יִקְרֵי* is a bad emendation of the correct reading in the *Chethib* *קָרָשׁוּ*, i.e. *קָרְשׁוּ* (*קָרְשׁוּ*); for *בֵּית יְהוָה* is an accusative, and is to be connected with *וַיָּבֵא*.—Vers. 16, 17. The state of hostility between Judah and Israel continued during the reign of Asa; and Baasha the king of Israel advanced, etc. These statements are completed and elucidated by the Chronicles. After the great victory obtained by Abijam over Jeroboam, the kingdom of Judah enjoyed rest for ten years (2 Chron. xiii. 23). Asa employed this time in exterminating idolatry, fortifying different cities, and equipping his army (2 Chron. xiv. 1-7). Then the Cushite *Zerah* invaded the land of Judah with an innumerable army (in the eleventh year of Asa), but was totally defeated by the help of the Lord

(2 Chron. xiv. 8-14); whereupon Asa, encouraged by the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, proceeded with fresh zeal to the extermination of such traces of idolatry as still remained in the kingdom, then renewed the altar of burnt-offering in front of the temple-hall, and in the fifteenth year of his reign held, with the whole nation, a great festival of thanksgiving and rejoicing to the Lord at Jerusalem (2 Chron. xv. 1-15). The next year, the sixteenth of his reign and the thirty-sixth from the division of the kingdom (2 Chron. xvi. 1), Baasha commenced hostilities, by advancing against Judah, taking possession of *Ramah*, the present *er Rām* (see at Josh. xviii. 25), which was only two hours and a quarter from Jerusalem, and fortifying it. The occupation of Ramah is not expressly mentioned indeed, but it is implied in *וַיֵּצֵא עַל יְהוּדָה*, which affirms the hostile invasion of Judah. For Ramah, from its very situation in the heart of the tribe of Benjamin and the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, can neither have been a border city nor have belonged to the kingdom of Israel. The intention of Baasha, therefore, in fortifying Ramah cannot have been merely to restrain his own subjects from passing over into the kingdom of Judah, but was evidently to cut off from the kingdom of Judah all free communication with the north. *לְבַלְתִּי לָבֵא וּלְיָצֵא*, "that they might not give one going out or one coming in to Asa;" i.e. to cut off from the others all connection with Asa, and at the same time to cut off from those with Asa all connection with this side. The main road from Jerusalem to the north passed by Ramah, so that by shutting up this road the line of communication of the kingdom of Judah was of necessity greatly disturbed. Moreover, the fortification of Ramah by Baasha presupposes the reconquest of the cities which Abijam had taken from the kingdom of Israel (2 Chron. xiii. 19), and which, according to 2 Chron. xiii. 19, were still in the possession of Asa.—Vers. 18, 19. In order to avert the danger with which his kingdom was threatened, Asa endeavoured to induce the Syrian king, Benhadad of Damascus, to break the treaty which he had concluded with Baasha and to become his ally, by sending him such treasures as were left in the temple and palace.<sup>1</sup> *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ* may be explained from the

<sup>1</sup> Asa had sought help from the Lord and obtained it, when the powerful army of the Cushites invaded the land; but when an invasion of the Israelites took place, he sought help from the Syrians. This alteration in his con-



fact that the temple and palace treasures had been plundered by Shishak in the reign of Rehoboam (ch. xiv. 26); and therefore what Asa had replaced in the temple treasury (ver. 15), and had collected together for his palace, was only a remnant in comparison with the former state of these treasures. The name *בְּנֵי הַדָּד*, i.e. son of *Hadad*, the sun-god (according to Macrobius, i. 23; cf. Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 196), was borne by three kings of Damascus: the one here named, his son in the time of Ahab (ch. xx. 1, 34), and the son of Hazael (2 Kings xiii. 24). The first was a son of *Tabrimmon* and grandson of *Hezyon*. According to ver. 19, his father *Tabrimmon* (good is *Rimmon*; see at 2 Kings v. 18) had also been king, and was the contemporary of Abijam. But that his grandfather *Hezyon* was also king, and the same person as the *Rezon* mentioned in ch. xi. 23, cannot be shown to be even probable, since there is no ground for the assumption that *Hezyon* also bore the name *Rezon*, and is called by the latter name here and by the former in ch. xi. 23.—Ver. 20. Benhadad consented to Asa's request, and directed his captains to advance into the kingdom of Israel: they took several cities in the north of the land, whereby Baasha was compelled to give up fortifying Ramah and withdraw to Thirza. *Ijon* (יִזְי) is to be sought for in all probability in Tell *Dibbin*, on the eastern border of *Merj Ayun*; and in *Ajun*, although *Ajun* is written with *Aleph*, the name *Ijon* is probably preserved, since the situation of this Tell seems thoroughly adapted for a fortress on the northern border of Israel (*vid.* Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 375, and Van de Velde, *Mem.* p. 322). *Dan* is the present *Tell el Kadi*; see at Josh. xix. 47. *Abel-Beth-Maachah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, to the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 2 Sam. xx. 14). "All *Chinnereth*" is the district of *Chinnereth*, the tract of land on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth (see at Josh. xix. 35). *עַל כָּל-אֶרֶץ נַ*, together with all the land of Naphtali (for this meaning of *עַל* compare the Comm. on Gen. xxxii. 12). The cities named were duct may probably be explained in part from the fact, that notwithstanding the victory, his army had been considerably weakened by the battle which he fought with the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv. 9), although this by no means justified his want of confidence in the power of the Lord, and still less his harsh and unjust treatment of the prophet Hanani, whom he caused to be put in the house of the stocks on account of his condemnation of the confidence which he placed in the Syrians instead of Jehovah (2 Chron. xvi. 7-10).

the principal fortresses of the land of Naphtali, with which the whole of the country round was also smitten, *i.e.* laid waste.—Ver. 21. **וַיֵּשֶׁב**, and remained at Thirza, his place of residence (see at ch. xiv. 17).—Ver. 22. Asa thereupon summoned all Judah **וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל**, *namine immuni*, *i.e.* *excepto*, no one being free (cf. Ewald, § 286, *a*), and had the stones and the wood carried away from Ramah, and *Geba* and *Mispah* in Benjamin built, *i.e.* fortified, with them. *Geba* must not be confounded with *Gibeah* of Benjamin or Saul, but is the present *Jeba*, three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of Ramah (see at Josh. xviii. 24). *Mispah*, the present *Nebi Samwil*, about three-quarters of a geographical mile to the south-west of Ramah (see at Josh. xviii. 26).—Vers. 23, 24. Of the other acts of Asa, the building of cities refers to the building of fortifications mentioned in 2 Chron. xiv. 5, 6. The disease in his feet in the time of his old age commenced, according to 2 Chron. xvi. 12, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign; and he sought help from the physicians, but not from the Lord; from which we may see, that the longer he lived the more he turned his heart away from the Lord (compare 2 Chron. xvi. 10).

CHAP. XV. 25—XVI. 28. REIGNS OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL, NADAB, BAASHA, ELAH, ZIMRI, AND OMRI.

Vers. 25–32. THE REIGN OF NADAB lasted not quite two years, as he ascended the throne in the second year of Asa, and was slain in his third year.—Ver. 6. He walked in the ways of his father (Jeroboam) and in his sin, *i.e.* in the calf-worship introduced by Jeroboam (ch. xii. 28). When Nadab in the second year of his reign besieged Gibbethon, which the Philistines had occupied, Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house, *i.e.* the family or tribe, of Issachar, conspired against him and slew him, and after he became king exterminated the whole house of Jeroboam, without leaving a single soul, whereby the prediction of the prophet Ahijah (ch. xiv. 10 sqq.) was fulfilled. *Gibbethon*, which was allotted to the Danites (Josh. xix. 44), has not yet been discovered. It probably stood close to the Philistian border, and was taken by the Philistines, from whom the Israelites attempted to wrest it by siege under both Nadab and Baasha (ch. xvi. 16), though apparently without success. **לֹא הִשָּׁאֵר כָּל-בְּנֵי שָׁמְרָה** as in Josh. xi. 14 (see the Comm. on Deut. xx.



16).—Ver. 32 is simply a repetition of ver. 16 ; and the remark concerning Baasha's attitude towards Asa of Judah immediately after his entrance upon the government precedes the account of his reign, for the purpose of indicating at the very outset, that the overthrow of the dynasty of Jeroboam and the rise of a new dynasty did not alter the hostile relation between the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah.

Ver. 33—ch. xvi. 7. THE REIGN OF BAASHA is described very briefly according to its duration (two years) and its spirit, namely, the attitude of Baasha towards the Lord (ver. 34) ; there then follow in ch. xvi. 1–4 the words of the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani (2 Chron. xvi. 7), concerning the extermination of the family of Baasha ; and lastly, in vers. 5–7, his death is related with the standing allusion to the annals of the kings. The words of Jehu concerning Baasha (ch. xvi. 1–4) coincide exactly *mutatis mutandis* with the words of Ahijah concerning Jeroboam.<sup>1</sup> The expression “exalted thee out of the dust,” instead of “from among the people” (ch. xiv. 7), leads to the conjecture that Baasha had risen to be king from a very low position. **בְּכֹרְתּוֹ** (his might) in ver. 5 refers, as in the case of Asa (ch. xv. 23), less to brave warlike deeds, than generally to the manifestation of strength and energy in his government.—Ver. 7 adds a supplementary remark concerning the words of Jehu (vers. 2 sqq.), not to preclude an excuse that might be made, in which case **יָנִים** would have to be taken in the sense of nevertheless, or notwithstanding (Ewald, § 354, a), but to guard against a misinterpretation by adding a new feature, or rather to preclude an erroneous inference that might be drawn from the words, “I (Jehovah) have made thee prince”

<sup>1</sup> “There was something very strange in the perversity and stolidity of the kings of Israel, that when they saw that the families of preceding kings were evidently overthrown by the command of God on account of the worship of the calves, and they themselves had overturned them, they nevertheless worshipped the same calves, and placed them before the people for them to worship, that they might not return to the temple and to Asa, king of Jerusalem ; though prophets denounced it and threatened their destruction. Truly the devil and the ambition of reigning blinded them and deprived them of their senses. Hence it came to pass, through the just judgment of God, that they all were executioners of one another in turn : Baasha was the executioner of the sons of Jeroboam ; Zambri was the executioner of the sons of Baasha ; and the executioner of Zambri was Omri.”—C. A LAPIDE.

(ver. 2), as though Baasha had exterminated Nadab and his house by divine command (Thenius). **וְגַם** simply means "*and also*," and is not to be connected specially with **בְּיַד יְהוָה**, but to be taken as belonging to the whole sentence: "also the word of Jehovah had come to Baasha through Jehu, . . . not only because of the evil, etc., but also (**וְגַם** . . . **וְגַם**) because he had slain him (Jeroboam)." With regard to this last reason, we must call to mind the remark made at ch. xi. 39, viz. that the prediction of the prophet to Baasha gave him no right to put himself forward arbitrarily as the fulfiller of the prophecy. The very fact that Baasha continued Jeroboam's sin and caused the illegal worship to be perpetuated, showed clearly enough that in exterminating the family of Jeroboam he did not act under divine direction, but simply pursued his own selfish ends.

Vers. 8-14. THE REIGN OF ELAH.—As Baasha reigned from the third to the twenty-sixth year of Asa, *i.e.* not quite twenty-four years, but only twenty-three years and a few months, so his son Elah reigned from the twenty-sixth to the twenty-seventh year of Asa, *i.e.* not quite two years.—Vers. 9, 10. *Zimri*, the commander of the half of his war-chariots, conspired against him, and not only slew him, when he was intoxicated (**וַיִּשְׁכָּרוֹ**) at a drinking bout in the house of *Arza*, the prefect of his palace, but after ascending the throne exterminated the whole family of Baasha to the very last man. The prefect of the palace was no doubt a party to the conspiracy, and had probably arranged the drinking bout in his house for the purpose of carrying it out. "He did not leave him **מִשְׁתָּחִין בָּקָר** (see at ch. xiv. 10), either his avengers (**וְגַם**, blood-relations, who might have avenged his death) or his friends." These words simply serve to explain **מִשְׁתָּחִין בָּקָר**, and show that this phrase is to be understood as relating to males only.—Vers. 12, 13. "According to the word of the Lord;" see at vers. 1 sqq. **אֵל כָּל-חַטָּאתָם**, with regard to all, *i.e.* on account of all the sins (compare ver. 7, where **עַל** is used). **בְּהִקְלָיהֶם**, through their nothingnesses, *i.e.* their idols, by which the golden calves are meant.

Vers. 15-22. THE REIGN OF ZIMRI lasted only seven days. As soon as the people of war (**וְהַיָּמִין**), who were besieging Gibbethon (see at ch. xv. 27), heard of his conspiracy, his usurpation of the throne, and his murderous deeds, they proclaimed



*Omri* king in the camp of the military commanders, and he at once, with all Israel, *i.e.* all the army, raised the siege of Gibbethon, to lay siege to Thirza. Now when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the castle of the royal palace and burned the king's house over his own head, as Sardanapalus did, according to Justin (*Hist.* i. 3). אֶרְמֶן does not mean harem (Ewald), but the high castle (from אָרַם, to be high); here and in 2 Kings xv. 25, the citadel of the royal palace, which consisted of several buildings.—Ver. 19 is connected with יָמָת in ver. 18: “and so died for his sins,” *i.e.* as a punishment for them.—Vers. 21, 22. But Omri did not come into possession of an undisputed sovereignty immediately upon the death of Zimri. The nation divided itself into two halves; one half was behind *Tibni*, the son of Ginath (*i.e.* declared in favour of Tibni), to make him king, the other adhered to *Omri*. Nevertheless Omri's gained the upper hand over the party of Tibni, and the latter died, whereupon Omri became king after four years, as we may see from a comparison of vers. 15, 16 with ver. 23. The “people of Israel” (ver. 21) are probably the fighting people, so that the succession to the throne was decided by the military. הָיָה אִתִּי, as in 2 Sam. ii. 10. הָיָה, with an accusative instead of with עַל, in the sense of to overpower, as in Jer. xx. 7. According to Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 12, 5), Tibni was slain by his opponent; but this is not contained in the words; on the contrary, all that is implied in the connection of יָמָת with וַיִּהְיוּ is that he met with his death in the decisive engagement in which the opposing party triumphed.

Vers. 23-28. THE REIGN OF OMRI.—Ver. 23. Omri reigned twelve years, *i.e.*, if we compare vers. 15 and 23 with ver. 29, reckoning from his rebellion against Zimri; so that he only possessed the sole government for eight years (or, more exactly, seven years and a few months), viz. from the 31st to the 38th years of Asa, and the conflict with Tibni for the possession of the throne lasted about four years. “At Thirza he reigned six years,” *i.e.* during the four years of the conflict with Tibni, and after his death two years more.—Ver. 24. As soon as he had obtained undisputed possession of the throne, he purchased the hill *Shomron* (Samaria) from *Shemer* (*Semer*) for two talents of silver, about 5200 thalers (£780—TR.), built houses upon it, and named the town which he built after the former owner of

the hill שֶׁמֶרֶן, rendered by the LXX. Σαμηνών here, but everywhere else Σαμάρεια (Samaria), after the Chaldee form שְׁמֶרֶן (Ezra iv. 10, 17). This city he made his seat (*Residenz*, place of residence, or capital), in which he resided for the last six years of his reign, and where he was buried after his death (ver. 28). *Samaria* continued to be the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes from that time forward, and the residence of all succeeding kings of Israel until the destruction of this kingdom after its conquest by Salmanasar (2 Kings xviii. 9, 10). The city was two hours and a half to the north-west of Sichem, upon a mountain or hill in a mountain-hollow (*Bergkessel*, lit. mountain-caldron) or basin of about two hours in diameter, surrounded on all sides by still higher mountains. "The mountains and valleys round about are still for the most part arable, and are alive with numerous villages and diligent cultivation." The mountain itself upon which Samaria stood is still cultivated to the very top, and about the middle of the slope is surrounded by a narrow terrace of level ground resembling a girdle. And even higher up there are marks of smaller terraces, where streets of the ancient city may possibly have run. After the captivity Samaria was retaken and demolished by John Hyrcanus, and lay in ruins till Gabinius the Roman governor rebuilt it (Joseph. *Ant.* xiii. 19, 2, 3, and xiv. 5, 3). Herod the Great afterwards decorated it in a marvellous manner, built a temple there to the emperor Augustus, and named the city after him Σεβαστή, i.e. *Augusta*, from which arose the present name *Sebaste* or *Sebustich*, borne by a village which is still standing on the ancient site: "a pitiable hamlet consisting of a few squalid houses, inhabited by a band of plunderers, notorious as thieves even among their lawless fellow-countrymen" (V. de Velde, i. p. 378).—But by the side of this there are magnificent ruins of an ancient Johnanite church, with the reputed grave of John the Baptist and remains of limestone columns at the foot of the mountain (cf. Robinson, *Pal.* iii. p. 136 sqq.; Van de Velde, *Syria and Pal.* i. p. 374 sqq.; and C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 159, 160).—Vers. 25, 26. Omri also walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and acted worse than his predecessors upon the throne.—For vers. 26 and 27, compare vers. 13 and 14.



## 2. FROM AHAB'S ASCENT OF THE THRONE TO THE DEATH OF JORAM OF ISRAEL AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.

CHAP. XVI. 29-2 KINGS x. 27.

In this epoch, which embraces only thirty-four years, the history of the kings of Judah falls so far into the background behind the history of the kingdom of Israel, that it seems to form merely an appendix to it; and the history of the monarchy is so controlled by the description of the labours of the prophets, that it seems to be entirely absorbed in them. These phenomena have their foundation in the development of the two kingdoms during this period. Through the alliance and affinity of Jehoshaphat with the idolatrous Ahab, the kingdom of Judah not only lost the greatest part of the blessing which the long and righteous reign of this pious king had brought, but it became so entangled in the political and religious confusion of the kingdom of Israel in consequence of the participation of Jehoshaphat in the wars between Israel and the Syrians, and other foes, and the inclination of Joram and Ahaziah to the worship of Baal, that its further development during this period was almost entirely dependent upon the history of Israel. In the latter kingdom the prophets maintained a fierce conflict with the idolatry introduced by Ahab and Jezebel, in which the worship of Baal did indeed eventually succumb, but the pure lawful worship of Jehovah did not attain to full supremacy, so that this great spiritual conflict was no more followed by a permanent blessing to the kingdom as such, than the single victories of Ahab and Joram over the Syrians by outward peace and rest from its oppressors. To guard against the spreading apostasy of the people from the living God through the exaltation of the worship of Baal into the ruling national religion in Israel, the Lord raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, Elijah the Tishbite, with his fiery zeal, who worked so mightily upon the formation of the spiritual life of the covenant nation and the fate of the kingdom, not only in his own person in the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah (ch. xvii.—2 Kings ii.), but indirectly in the person of his successor Elisha under Joram (2 Kings iii.—ix.), and also under the succeeding kings of Israel, that the labours of these prophets and their disciples form the central and culminating point of the Old Testament kingdom of God during the period in question.

## CHAP. XVI. 29-34. THE REIGN OF AHAB OF ISRAEL.

The ascent of the throne of Israel by Ahab (ver. 29) formed a turning-point for the worse, though, as a comparison of ver. 30 with ver. 25 clearly shows, the way had already been prepared by his father Omri.—Vers. 30, 31. Whereas the former kings of Israel had only perpetuated the sin of Jeroboam, *i.e.* the calf-worship, or worship of Jehovah under the image of an ox, which he had introduced, Ahab was not satisfied with this. *וַיְהִי הַנֶּקֶל לְכַתּוֹ* “it came to pass, was it too little?” *i.e.* because it was too little (cf. Ewald, § 362, *a*) to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, that he took as his wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal the king of the Sidonians, and served Baal, and worshipped him. *וַיֵּלֶךְ* before *וַיַּעֲבֹד*, “he went and served,” is a pictorial description of what took place, to give greater prominence to the new turn of affairs. *אֶתְבַּעַל* (*i.e.* with Baal) is the *Εἰθώβαλος* (*אֶתּוֹ בַּעַל* or *Ἰθώβαλος*: Jos. *Ant.* viii. 13, 1) mentioned by Menander in Josephus, *c. Ap.* i. 18, who was king of Tyre and Sidon, and priest of Astarte, and who usurped the throne after the murder of his brother, king Pheles, and reigned thirty-two years. Jezebel (*אִיזַבֵּל*, *i.e.* probably without cohabitation, cf. Gen. xxx. 20, = untouched, chaste; not a contraction of *אִיזַבֵּל*, as Ewald, § 273, *b*, supposes) was therefore, as tyrant and murderess of the prophets, a worthy daughter of her father, the idolatrous priest and regicide. *Baal* (always *הַבַּעַל* with the article, *the Baal*, *i.e.* Lord *κατ' ἐξοχήν*) was the principal male deity of the Phœnicians and Canaanites, and generally of the western Asiatics, called by the Babylonians *בַּל* = *בַּעַל* (Isa. xlv. 1), *Bḡλος*, and as the sun-god was worshipped as the supporter and first principle of psychical life and of the generative and reproductive power of nature (see at Judg. ii. 13). Ahab erected an altar to this deity *בֵּית הַבַּעַל*, in the house (temple) of Baal, which he had built at Samaria. The worship of Baal had its principal seat in Tyre, where Hiram, the contemporary of David and Solomon, had built for it a splendid temple and placed a golden pillar (*χρυσοῦν κίονα*) therein, according to Dios and Menander, in Joseph. *Ant.* viii. 5, 3, and *c. Ap.* i. 18. Ahab also erected a similar pillar (*מַצֵּבָה*) to Baal in his temple at Samaria (*vid.* 2 Kings iii. 2, x. 27). For statues or images of Baal are not met with in the earlier times; and the *עֲלָמִים* are not statues of Baal, but different modifications of that deity. It was only in the later temple of Baal or Hercules at Tyre that there was, as



Cicero observes (*Verr. iv. 43*), *ex ære simulacrum ipsius Herculis, quo non facile quidquam dixerim me vidisse pulcrius*.—Ver. 33. “And Ahab made אֲתֵרֶת אֲשֵׁרָה, *i.e.* the Asherah belonging to the temple of Baal” (see at Judg. vi. 25 and Ex. xxxiv. 13), an idol of Astarte (see at ch. xiv. 23).—Ver. 34. In his time *Hiel* the Bethelite (בֵּית הַאֵל; compare Ges. § 111, 1 with § 86, 2. 5) built Jericho: “he laid the foundation of it with Abiram his first-born, and set up its gates with Segub his youngest, according to the word of Jehovah,” etc. (for the explanation see the Comm. on Josh. vi. 26). The restoration of this city as a fortification, upon which Joshua had pronounced the curse, is mentioned as a proof how far ungodliness had progressed in Israel; whilst the fulfilment of the curse upon the builder shows how the Lord will not allow the word of His servants to be transgressed with impunity. *Jericho*, on the border of the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 7), which was allotted to the Benjaminites (Josh. xviii. 21), had come into the possession of the kingdom of Israel on the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal house of David, and formed a border city of that kingdom, through the fortification of which Ahab hoped to secure to himself the passage across the Jordan.

### *The prophets Elijah and Elisha.*

When Ahab, who was not satisfied with the sin of Jeroboam, had introduced the worship of Baal as the national religion in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and had not only built a temple to Baal in his capital and place of residence, but had also appointed a very numerous priesthood to maintain the worship (see ch. xviii. 19); and when his godless wife Jezebel was persecuting the prophets of Jehovah, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of the true God: the Lord God raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, namely Elijah the Tishbite, who by his deeds attested his name אֱלֹהֵי or אֱלִיָּה, *i.e.* whose God is Jehovah. For however many prophets of Jehovah arose in the kingdom of the ten tribes from its very commencement and bore witness against the sin of Jeroboam in the power of the Spirit of God, and threatened the kings with the extermination of their house on account of this sin, no other prophet, either before or afterwards, strove and worked in the idolatrous kingdom for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth with anything like the same mighty power of God as the prophet Elijah. And there was no other prophet whom the Lord so gloriously acknow-

ledged by signs and wonders as Elijah, although He fulfilled the words of all His servants by executing the judgments with which they had threatened the rebellious, and whenever it was necessary accredited them as His messengers by miraculous signs. —Although, in accordance with the plan of our books, which was to depict the leading features in the historical development of the kingdom, all that is related in detail of the life and labours of Elijah is the miracles which he performed in his conflict with the worshippers of Baal, and the miraculous display of the omnipotence and grace of God which he experienced therein; yet we may see very clearly that these formed but one side of his prophetic labours from the passing notices of the schools of the prophets, which he visited once more before his departure from the earth (2 Kings ii.); from which it is obvious that this other side of his ministry, which was more hidden from the world, was not less important than his public ministry before the kings and magnates of the land. For these societies of “sons of the prophets,” which we meet with at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho (2 Kings ii. 3, 5, iv. 38), had no doubt been called into existence by Elijah, by associating together those whose souls were fitted to receive the Spirit of God for mutual improvement in the knowledge and fear of Jehovah, in order to raise up witnesses to the truth and combatants for the cause of the Lord, and through these societies to provide the godly, who would not bow the knee before Baal, with some compensation for the loss of the Levitical priesthood and the want of the temple-worship. Compare the remarks on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. xix. 24.—The more mightily idolatry raised its head in the kingdom of Israel, the more powerfully did the Lord show to His people that He, Jehovah, and not Baal, was God and Lord in Israel. In the prophet Elijah there were combined in a marvellous manner a life of solitude spent in secret and contemplative intercourse with God, and an extraordinary power for action, which would suddenly burst forth, and by which he acted as a personal representative of God (see at ch. xvii. 1). In his person the spirit of Moses revived; he was the restorer of the kingdom of God in Israel, of which Moses was the founder. His life recalls that of Moses in many of its features: namely, his flight into the desert, the appearance of the Lord to him at Horeb, and the marvellous termination of his life. Moses and Elijah are the Coryphæi of the Old Testament, in whose life and labours the nature and glory



of this covenant are reflected. As the thunder and lightning and the blast of trumpets and the smoking mountain bare witness to the devouring fire of the holiness of the God who had come down upon Sinai to give effect to the promises He had made to the fathers, and to make the children of Israel the people of His possession; so does the fiery zeal of the law come out so powerfully in Moses and Elijah, that their words strike the ungodly like lightning and flames of fire, to avenge the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth and maintain His covenant of grace in Israel. Moses as lawgiver, and Elijah as prophet, are, as Ziegler has well said (p. 206), the two historical anticipations of those two future witnesses, which are "the two olive-trees and two torches standing before the God of the earth. And if any one will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must therefore be slain. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all kinds of plagues, as often as they will" (Rev. xi. 4 sqq.). Elijah was called to this office of witness to turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and of the sons to their fathers (Mal. iii. 24), so that in his ministry the prophecy of the future of the kingdom of God falls quite into the background. Nevertheless he was not only a forerunner but also a type of the Prophet promised by Moses, who was to fulfil both law and prophets (Matt. v. 17); and therefore he appeared as the representative of prophecy, along with Moses the representative of the law, upon the mount of the Transfiguration, to talk with Christ of the decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 31; Matt. xvii. 3).—To continue his work, Elijah, by command of God, called *Elisha* the son of Shaphat, of Abel-Meholah, who during the whole of his prophetic course carried on with power the restoration of the law in the kingdom of Israel, which his master had begun, by conducting schools of the prophets and acting as the counsellor of kings, and proved himself by many signs and wonders to be the heir of a double portion of the gifts of Elijah.

Modern theology, which has its roots in naturalism, has taken offence at the many miracles occurring in the history of these two prophets, but it has overlooked the fact that these miracles were regulated by the extraordinary circumstances under which Elijah and Elisha worked. At a time when the

sovereignty of the living God in Israel was not only called in question, but was to be destroyed by the worship of Baal, it was necessary that Jehovah as the covenant God should interpose in a supernatural manner, and declare His eternal Godhead in extraordinary miracles. In the kingdom of the ten tribes there were no priestly or Levitical duties performed, nor was there the regular worship of God in a temple sanctified by Jehovah Himself; whilst the whole order of life prescribed in the law was undermined by unrighteousness and ungodliness. But with all this, the kingdom was not yet ripe for the judgment of rejection, because there were still seven thousand in the land who had not bowed their knee before Baal. For the sake of these righteous men, the Lord had still patience with the sinful kingdom, and sent it prophets to call the rebellious to repentance. If, then, under the circumstances mentioned, the prophets were to fulfil the purpose of their mission and carry on the conflict against the priests of Baal with success, they needed a much greater support on the part of God, through the medium of miracles, than the prophets in the kingdom of Judah, who had powerful and venerable supports in the Levitical priesthood and the lawful worship.<sup>1</sup> It is only when we overlook the object of these miracles, therefore, that they can possibly appear strange. "If," as Kurtz has said,<sup>2</sup> "we take the history of our prophet as one living organic link in the whole of the grand chain of the marvellous works of God, which stretches from Sinai to Golgotha and the Mount of Olives, and bear in mind the peculiarity of the position and circumstances of Elijah, the occurrence of a miracle in itself, and even the accumulation of them and their supposed externality, will

<sup>1</sup> "Where the temple was wanting, and image-worship took its place, and the priesthood was an unlawful caste, it was only by extraordinary methods that the spreading evil could be met. The illegitimacy, which was represented here by the monarchy and priesthood, was opposed by the prophetic order as the representative of the law, and therefore also as a peculiarly constituted and strong body divided up into societies of considerable scope, and having a firm organization. And this prophetic order, as the only accredited representative of the law, also took the place of the law, and was therefore endowed with the power and majesty of the law which had been manifested in wonders and signs. Not only was the spirit of Moses inherited by Elijah and others, but his miraculous power also."—HAEVERNICK, *Einkl. in d. A. Test.* ii. 1, pp. 166, 167. Compare Hengstenberg, *Dissertation*, vol. i. p. 186 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Herzog's *Cyclopædia*, Art. *Elijah*.



appear to us in a very different light.—Without miracle, without very striking, *i.e.* external miracles, their ministry would have been without basis, without a starting-point, and without hold.”—The miracles are still more numerous in the history of Elisha, and to some extent bear such a resemblance to those of Elijah, that the attempt has been made to set them down as merely legendary imitations of the latter; but considered as a whole, they are more of a helpful and healing nature, whereas those of Elijah are for the most part manifestations of judicial and punitive wrath. The agreement and the difference may both be explained from Elisha’s position in relation to Elijah and his time. By the performance of similar and equal miracles (such as the division of the Jordan, 2 Kings ii. 8 and 14; the increase of the oil, 2 Kings iv. 3 sqq. compared with 1 Kings xvii. 14 sqq.; the raising of the dead, 2 Kings iv. 34 sqq. compared with 1 Kings xvii. 19 sqq.) Elisha proved himself to be the divinely-appointed successor of Elijah, who was carrying forward his master’s work (just as Joshua by the drying up of the Jordan proved himself to be the continuer of the work of Moses), and as such performed more miracles, so far as number is concerned, than even his master had done, though he was far inferior to him in spiritual power. But the difference does not prevail throughout. For whilst the helpful and healing side of Elijah’s miraculous power is displayed in his relation to the widow at Zarephath; the judicial and punitive side of that of Elisha comes out in the case of the mocking boys at Bethel, of Gehazi, and of Joram’s knight. But the predominance of strict judicial sternness in the case of Elijah, and of sparing and helpful mildness in that of Elisha, is to be accounted for not so much from any difference in the personality of the two, as from the altered circumstances. Elijah, with his fiery zeal, had broken the power of the Baal-worship, and had so far secured an acknowledgment of the authority of Jehovah over His people that Joram and the succeeding kings gave heed to the words of the prophets of the Lord; so that Elisha had for the most part only to cherish and further the conversion of the people to their God, for which Elijah had prepared the way.

#### CHAP. XVII. FIRST APPEARANCE OF ELIJAH.

The prophet Elijah predicts to Ahab, as a punishment for his idolatry, the coming of a drought and famine. During their con-

tinuance he is miraculously preserved by God, first of all at the brook Cherith, and then at the house of a widow at Zarephath (vers. 1-16), whose deceased son he calls to life again (vers. 17-24).

Ver. 1. Elijah the Tishbite is introduced without the formula "The word of the Lord came to . . .," with which the appearance of the prophets is generally announced, proclaiming to king Ahab in the name of the Lord the punitive miracle of a drought that will last for years. This abrupt appearance of Elijah cannot be satisfactorily explained from the fact that we have not the real commencement of his history here; it is rather a part of the character of this mightiest of all the prophets, and indicates that in him the divine power of the Spirit appeared as it were personified, and his life and acts were the direct effluence of the higher power by which he was impelled. His origin is also uncertain. The epithet *תִּישְׁבִּי* is generally derived from a place called *Tishbeh*, since, according to Tobit i. 2, there existed in Upper Galilee a *Θίσβη ἐκ δεξιῶν Κυδίου*, "on the right, *i.e.* to the south of *Kydios*," probably *Kedesh* in the tribe of Naphtali, from which the elder Tobias was carried away captive, although this description of the place is omitted in the Hebrew version of the book of Tobit issued by Fagius and Munster, and in the Vulgate. And to this we must adhere, and as no other *Thisbe* occurs, must accept this Galilean town as the birthplace of Elijah; in which case the expression "of the settlers of Gilead" indicates that Elijah did not live in his birthplace, but dwelt as a foreigner in Gilead. For *תִּישְׁבִּי* in itself by no means denotes a non-Israelite, but, like *נָזִיר*, simply one who lived away from his home and tribe relations in the territory of a different tribe, without having been enrolled as a member of it, as is clearly shown by Lev. xxv. 40, and still more clearly by Judg. xvii. 7, where a Levite who was born in Bethlehem is described as *נָזִיר* in the tribe of Ephraim.<sup>1</sup> The expression "as truly as Jehovah

<sup>1</sup> The supposition of Seb. Schmidt, with which I formerly agreed, namely, that Elijah was a foreigner, a Gentile by birth, after further examination I can no longer uphold, though not from the *à priori* objection raised against it by Kurtz (in Herzog's *Cycl.*), namely, that it would show a complete misapprehension of the significance of Israel in relation to sacred history and the history of the world, and that neither at this nor any other time in the Old Testament history could a prophet for Israel be called from among the Gentiles,—an assertion of which it would be difficult to find any proof,—but because we are not forced to this conclusion by either *תִּישְׁבִּי* or *נָזִיר*. For



the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand (*i.e.* whom I serve; see at ch. i. 2), there shall not fall dew and rain these years, except at my word," was a special application of the threats of the law in Deut. xi. 16, 17, xxviii. 23, 24, and Lev. xxvi. 19, to the idolatrous kingdom. הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלֶּה, "these (ensuing) years," does not fix any definite terminus. In לִפְי דְּבָרִי there is involved an emphatic antithesis to others, and more especially to the prophets of Baal. "When I shall say this by divine authority and might, let others prate and lie as they may please" (*Berleb. Bibel*). Elijah thereby describes himself as one into whose power the God of Israel has given up the idolatrous king and his people. In Jas. v. 17, 18, this act of Elijah is

even if the Thisbeh in Tob. i. 2 should not be Elijah's birthplace, it would not follow that there was no other place named Thisbeh in existence. How many places in Canaan are there that are never mentioned in the Old Testament! And such cases as that described in Judg. vii. 7, where the Levite is said to have left his birthplace and to have lived in another tribe as a foreigner or settler, may not have been of rare occurrence, since the Mosaic law itself refers to it in Lev. xxv. 41.—Again, the LXX. were unable to explain מְתִשְׁבִּי גִלְעָד, and have paraphrased these words in an arbitrary manner by ὁ ἐκ Θεσσαλονίκης Γαλααδ, from which Thenius and Ewald conjecture that there was a Thisbeh in Gilead, and that it was probably the *Tisieh* (طيسيه) mentioned by Robinson (*Pal.* iii. 153) to the south of *Busra* = *Bostra*. The five arguments by which Kurtz has attempted to establish the probability of this conjecture are very weak. For (1) the defective writing מְתִשְׁבִּי by no means proves that the word which is written *plene* (תִּשְׁבִּי) in every other case must necessarily have been so written in the *stat. constr. plur.*; and this is the only passage in the whole of the Old Testament in which it occurs in the *stat. constr. plur.*;—(2) the precise description of the place given in Tobit i. 2 does not at all lead "to the assumption that the Galilean Thisbeh was not the only place of that name," but may be fully explained from the fact that Thisbeh was a small and insignificant place, the situation of which is defined by a reference to a larger town and one better known;—(3) there is no doubt that "Gilead very frequently denotes the whole of the country to the east of the Jordan," but this does not in the least degree prove that there was a Thisbeh in the country to the east of the Jordan;—(4) "that the distinction and difference between a birthplace and a place of abode are improbable in themselves, and not to be expected in this connection," is a perfectly unfounded assumption, and has first of all to be proved;—(5) the *Tisieh* mentioned by Robinson cannot be taken into consideration, for the simple reason that the assumption of a copyist's error, the confusion of א with א (Tisieh instead of Thisbeh), founders on the long *i* of the first syllable in *Tisieh*; moreover the Arabic ب corresponds to the Hebrew ו and not to ת.

ascribed to the power of his prayers, since Elijah "was also a man such as we are," inasmuch as the prophets received their power to work solely through faith and intercourse with God in prayer, and faith gives power to remove mountains.

Vers. 2-9. After the announcement of this judgment, Elijah had to hide himself, by the command of God, until the period of punishment came to an end, not so much that he might be safe from the wrath and pursuit of Ahab and Jezebel, as to preclude all earnest entreaties to remove the punishment. "For inasmuch as the prophet had said that the rain would come at his word, how would they have urged him to order it to come!" (Seb. Schm.) He was to turn קִרְיָה, eastward, *i.e.* from Samaria, where he had no doubt proclaimed the divine judgment to Ahab, to the Jordan, and to hide himself at the brook *Cherith*, which is in front of the Jordan. The brook Cherith was in any case a brook emptying itself into the Jordan; but whether upon the eastern or the western side of that river, the ambiguity of עַל-פָּנֵי, which means both "to the east of" (Gen. xxv. 18) and also "in the face of," *i.e.* before or towards (Gen. xvi. 12, xviii. 16), it is impossible to determine with certainty. That it must signify "to the east of the Jordan" here, does not follow from קִרְיָה with anything like the certainty that Thenius supposes. An ancient tradition places the Cherith on this side of the Jordan, and identifies it with the spring *Phasaelis*, which takes its rise in the slope of the mountains into the Jordan valley above the city of *Phasaelis*, and empties itself into the Jordan (cf. Ges. *thes.* p. 719, and V. de Velde, *Reise*, ii. pp. 273-4); whereas Eusebius, in the *Onom. s.v. Chorath* (*Xoppá*), places it on the other side of the Jordan, and Thenius thinks of the apparently deep Wady *Rajib* or *Ajlun*. All that can be affirmed with certainty is, that neither the brook *Kanah* (Josh. xvi. 8, xvii. 9), which flows into the Mediterranean, nor the Wady *Kilt* near Jericho, which Robinson (*Pal.* ii. p. 288) suggests, can possibly come into consideration: the latter for the simple reason, that the locality in the neighbourhood of Jericho was unsuitable for a hiding-place. Elijah was to drink of this brook, and the ravens by divine command were to provide him with bread and meat, which they brought him, according to ver. 6, both morning and evening. It is now generally admitted that הָעֲרָבִים does not mean either Arabs or Orebites (the inhabitants of an imaginary city named Oreb), but *ravens*. Through this miracle, which unbelievers reject, because they do not acknowledge a living God, by



whom, as the Creator and Lord of all creatures, even the voracious ravens are made subservient to His plans of salvation, Elijah was not only cut off from intercourse with men, who might have betrayed his place of abode to the king, but was mightily strengthened himself, through the confidence inspired in the almighty assistance of his God, for his approaching contests with the worshippers of idols, and for the privations and sufferings which awaited him in the fulfilment of his vocation.—Vers. 7-9. After some time this brook dried up for want of rain. Then the Lord directed His servant to go to the Sidonian *Zarephath*, and to live with a widow whom He had commanded to provide for him. מִקֵּץ יָמִים does not mean *post annum*, for יָמִים merely derives this meaning in certain passages from the context (cf. Lev. xxv. 29; 1 Sam. xxvii. 7; Judg. xvii. 10); whereas in this instance the context does not point to the space of a year, but to a longer period of indefinite duration, all that we know being that, according to ch. xviii. 1, the sojourn of Elijah at Cherith and Zarephath lasted at least two years. Zarephath (Σαρέπτα, LXX.) was situated on the Mediterranean Sea between Tyre and Sidon, where a miserable Mohammedan village with ruins and a promontory, *Sura-fend*, still preserve the name of the former town (Rob. iii. p. 413 sqq., and V. de Velde, *Syria and Palestine*, i. pp. 101-3, transl.).

Vers. 10-16. When Elijah arrived at the city gate, he met a widow engaged in gathering wood. To discover whether it was to her that the Lord had sent him, he asked her for something to drink and for a morsel of bread to eat; whereupon she assured him, with an oath by Jehovah, that she had nothing baked (מַעֲוָה = עֵנָה, ἐγκρυφίας, a cake baked in hot ashes), but only a handful of meal in the כַּי (a pail or small vessel in which meal was kept) and a little oil in the pitcher, and that she was just gathering wood to dress this remnant for herself and her son, that they might eat it, and then die. From this statement of the widow it is evident, on the one hand, that the drought and famine had spread across the Phœnician frontier, as indeed Menander of Ephesus attests;<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, the widow showed by the oath, “as Jehovah thy God liveth,” that she was a worshipper of the true God, who spoke of *Jehovah* as his God,

<sup>1</sup> Josephus gives this statement from his Phœnician history: ἀβροχία τε ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ (sc. Ἰθοβάλου) ἐγένετο ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὑπερβερεταίου μηνὸς ἕως τοῦ ἐρχομένου ἔτους Ὑπερβερεταίου (*Ant.* viii. 13, 2). *Hyperberetæus* answers to *Tishri* of the Hebrews; cf. Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 18.

because she recognised the prophet as an Israelite.—Vers. 13 sqq. In order, however, to determine with indisputable certainty whether this believing Gentile was the protectress assigned him by the Lord, Elijah comforted her, and at the same time desired her first of all to bake him a little cake מִצֶּמֶת, i.e. of the last of the meal in the *Kad* and of the oil in the pitcher, and then to bake for herself and her son, adding this promise: Jehovah the God of Israel will not let the meal in the *Kad* and the oil in the pitcher fail, till He sends rain upon the earth again. And the widow did according to his word. She gave up the certain for the uncertain, because she trusted the word of the Lord, and received the reward of her believing confidence in the fact that during the whole time of the drought she suffered from no want of either meal or oil. This act of the pious Gentile woman, who had welcomed with a simple heart the knowledge of the true God that had reached her from Israel, must have been the source of strong consolation to Elijah in the hour of conflict, when his faith was trembling because of the multitude of idolaters in Israel. If the Lord Himself had raised up true worshippers of His name among the Gentiles, his work in Israel could not be put to shame. The believing widow, however, received from the prophet not only a material blessing, but a spiritual blessing also. For, as Christ tells His unbelieving contemporaries to their shame (Luke iv. 25, 26), Elijah was not sent to this widow in order that he might be safely hidden at her house, although this object was better attained thereby than by his remaining longer in Israel; but because of her faith, namely, to strengthen and to increase it, he was sent to her, and not to one of the many widows in Israel, many of whom would also have received the prophet if they had been rescued by him from the pressure of the famine. And the miraculous increase of the meal and oil did not merely subserve the purpose of keeping the prophet and the widow alive; but the relief of her bodily need was also meant to be a preparatory means of quieting her spiritual need as well. On the *Chethib* הָיָה, see at ch. vi. 19. In ver. 15 the *Keri* הָיָה וְהָיָה is an unnecessary emendation of the *Chethib* הָיָה; the feminine form וְהָיָה is occasioned primarily by the preceding verbs, and may be taken as an indefinite neuter: “and there ate he and she.” The offence which Thenius has taken at יָמִים (days) has no foundation, if we do not understand the sentence as referring merely to their eating once of the bread just



baked, but take it generally as signifying that in consequence of their acting according to the word of Jehovah, they (Elijah, the widow, and her family) ate for days, *i.e.* until God sent rain again (ver. 14).

Vers. 17-24. *The widow's deceased son raised to life again.*  
 —Ver. 17. After these events, when Elijah had taken up his abode in the upper room of her house, her son fell sick, so that he breathed out his life. עַר אֵשֶׁר וָנִי, literally till no breath remained in him. That these words do not signify merely a death-like torpor, but an actual decease, is evident from what follows, where Elijah himself treats the boy as dead, and the Lord, in answer to his prayer, restores him to life again.—Ver. 18. The pious woman discerned in this death a punishment from God for her sin, and supposed that it had been drawn towards her by the presence of the man of God, so that she said to Elijah, “What have we to do with one another (מִה־לִּי וְלָךְ; cf. Judg. xi. 12; 2 Sam. xvi. 10), thou man of God? Hast thou come to me to bring my sin to remembrance (with God), and to kill my son?” In this half-heathenish belief there spoke at the same time a mind susceptible to divine truth and conscious of its sin, to which the Lord could not refuse His aid. Like the blindness in the case of the man born blind mentioned in John ix., the death of this widow's son was not sent as a punishment for particular sins, but was intended as a medium for the manifestation of the works of God in her (John ix. 3), in order that she might learn that the Lord was not merely the God of the Jews, but the God of the Gentiles also (Rom. iii. 29).  
 —Vers. 19, 20. Elijah told her to carry the dead child up to the chamber in which he lived and lay it upon his bed, and then cried to the Lord, “Jehovah, my God! hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, to slay her son?” These words, in which the word *also* refers to the other calamities occasioned by the drought, contain no reproach of God, but are expressive of the heartiest compassion for the suffering of his benefactress and the deepest lamentation, which, springing from living faith, pours out the whole heart before God in the hour of distress, that it may appeal to Him the more powerfully for His aid. The meaning is, “Thou, O Lord my God, according to Thy grace and righteousness, canst not possibly leave the son of this widow in death.” Such confident belief carries within itself the certainty of being heard. The

prophet therefore proceeds at once to action, to restore the boy to life.—Ver. 21. He stretched himself (יָתַד) three times upon him, not to ascertain whether there was still any life left in him, as Paul did in Acts xx. 10, nor to warm the body of the child and set its blood in circulation, as Elisha did with a dead child (2 Kings iv. 34),—for the action of Elisha is described in a different manner, and the youth mentioned in Acts xx. 10 was only apparently dead,—but to bring down the vivifying power of God upon the dead body, and thereby support his own word and prayer.<sup>1</sup> He then cried to the Lord, “Jehovah, my God, I pray Thee let the soul of this boy return within it.” עַל־קִרְבּוֹ, inasmuch as the soul as the vital principle springs from above.—Vers. 22, 23. The Lord heard this prayer: the boy came to life again; whereupon Elijah gave him back to his mother.—Ver. 24. Through this miracle, in which Elijah showed himself as the forerunner of Him who raiseth all the dead to life, the pious Gentile woman was mightily strengthened in her faith in the God of Israel. She now not only recognised Elijah as a man of God, as in ver. 18, but perceived that the word of Jehovah in his mouth was truth, by which she confessed *implicite* her faith in the God of Israel as the true God.

CHAP. XVIII. ELIJAH'S MEETING WITH AHAB, AND VICTORY OVER  
THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

As the judgment of drought and famine did not bring king Ahab to his senses and lead him to turn from his ungodly ways, but only filled him with exasperation towards the prophet who had announced to him the coming judgment; there was no other course left than to lay before the people with mighty and convincing force the proof that Jehovah was the only true God, and to execute judgment upon the priests of Baal as the seducers of the nation.

Vers. 1-19. *Elijah's meeting with Ahab.*—Vers. 1 and 2a. In the third year of his sojourn at Zarephath the word of the Lord came to Elijah to show himself to Ahab; since God was about to send rain upon the land again. The time given, “the third year,” is not to be reckoned, as the Rabbins, Clericus,

<sup>1</sup> “This was done, that the prophet's body might be the instrument of the miracle, just as in other cases of miracle there was an imposition of the hand.”  
—SELB. SCHMIDT.



Thenius, and others assume, from the commencement of the drought, but from the event last mentioned, namely, the sojourn of Elijah at Zarephath. This view merits the preference as the simplest and most natural one, and is shown to be the oldest by Luke iv. 25 and Jas. v. 17, where Christ and James both say, that in the time of Ahab it did not rain for three years and six months. And this length of time can only be obtained by allowing more than two years for Elijah's stay at Zarephath.—From ver. 2*b* to ver. 6 we have parenthetical remarks introduced, to explain the circumstances which led to Elijah's meeting with Ahab. The verbs וַיִּאָמֶר, וַיְהִי, וַיִּקְרָא, and וַיַּחֲלֶקְוּ (vers. 3, 4, 5, 6) carry on the circumstantial clauses: "and the famine was . . ." (ver. 2*b*), and "Obadiah feared . . ." (ver. 3*b*), and are therefore to be expressed by the pluperfect. When the famine had become very severe in Samaria (the capital), Ahab, with Obadiah the governor of his castle (אַשְׁרֵי עַל הַבֵּית, see at ch. iv. 6), who was a God-fearing man, and on the persecution of the prophets of Jehovah by Jezebel had hidden a hundred prophets in caves and supplied them with food, had arranged for an expedition through the whole land to seek for hay for his horses and mules. And for this purpose they had divided the land between them, so that the one explored one district and the other another. We see from ver. 4 that Jezebel had resolved upon exterminating the worship of Jehovah, and sought to carry out this intention by destroying the prophets of the true God. The hundred prophets whom Obadiah concealed were probably for the most part pupils ("sons") of the prophets. חַמְשִׁים אִישׁ must signify, according to the context and also according to ver. 13, "fifty each," so that חַמְשִׁים must have fallen out through a copyist's error. וְלֹא נָבְרִית מִן, that we may not be obliged to kill (a portion) of the cattle (מִן partitive). The *Keri* מִהֶבֶמָה is no doubt actually correct, but it is not absolutely necessary, as the *Chethib* מִן בְּהֶמָה may be taken as an indefinite phrase: "any head of cattle."—Vers. 7, 8. Elijah met Obadiah on this expedition, and told him to announce his coming to the king.—Vers. 9 sqq. Obadiah was afraid that the execution of this command might cost him his life, inasmuch as Ahab had sent in search of Elijah "to every kingdom and every nation,"—a hyperbole suggested by inward excitement and fear. וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵין is to be connected with what follows in spite of the accents: "and if they said he is not

here, he took an oath," etc.—Vers. 12, 13. "And if it comes to pass (that) I go away from thee, and the Spirit of Jehovah carries thee away whither I know not, and I come to tell Ahab (*sc.* that thou art here) and he findeth thee not, he will slay me, and thy servant feareth the Lord from his youth," etc.; *i.e.* since I as a God-fearing man and a protector of the prophets cannot boast of any special favour from Ahab. מִנְעִרִי, from *my* youth up: "thy servant" being equivalent to "I myself." From the fear expressed by Obadiah that the Spirit of Jehovah might suddenly carry the prophet to some unknown place, Seb. Schmidt and others have inferred that in the earlier history of Elijah there had occurred some cases of this kind of sudden transportation, though they have not been handed down; but the anxiety expressed by Obadiah might very well have sprung from the fact, that after Elijah had announced the coming drought to Ahab, he disappeared, and, notwithstanding all the inquiries instituted by the king, was nowhere to be found. And since he was not carried off miraculously then (compare the הֵן and הֵלֵךְ, "get thee hence" and "he went," in ch. xvii. 3, 5), there is all the less ground for imagining cases of this kind in the intermediate time, when he was hidden from his enemies. The subsequent translation of Elijah to heaven (2 Kings ii. 11, 12), and the miraculous carrying away of Philip from the chamberlain of Mauritania (Acts viii. 39), do not warrant any such assumption; and still less the passage which Clericus quotes from Ezekiel (iii. 12, 14), because the carrying of Ezekiel through the air, which is mentioned here, only happened in vision and not in external reality. If Obadiah had known of any actual occurrence of this kind, he would certainly have stated it more clearly as a more striking vindication of his fear.—Vers. 15–19. But when Elijah assured him with an oath (יְהוָה עֲבָדִיתָ, see at 1 Sam. i. 3) that he would show himself to Ahab that day, Obadiah went to announce it to the king; whereupon Ahab went to meet the prophet, and sought to overawe him with the imperious words, "Art thou here, thou troubler of Israel?" (עֲבִיר, see at Gen. xxxiv. 30). But Elijah threw back this charge: "It is not I who have brought Israel into trouble, but thou and thy family, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou goest after Baalim." He then called upon the king to gather together all Israel to him upon Carmel, together with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of



Asherah, who ate of Jezebel's table, *i.e.* who were maintained by the queen.

CARMEL, a mountain ridge "with many peaks, intersected by hundreds of larger and smaller ravines," which stands out as a promontory running in a north-westerly direction into the Mediterranean (see at Josh. xix. 26), and some of the loftiest peaks of which rise to the height of 1800 feet above the level of the sea, when seen from the northern or outer side shows only "bald, monotonous rocky ridges, scantily covered with short and thorny bushes;" but in the interior it still preserves its ancient glory, which has procured for it the name of "fruit-field," the valleys being covered with the most beautiful flowers of every description, and the heights adorned with myrtles, laurels, oaks, and firs (cf. V. de Velde, *R. i.* p. 292 sqq.). At the north-western extremity of the mountain there is a celebrated Carmelite monastery, dedicated to Elijah, whom tradition represents as having lived in a grotto under the monastery; but we are certainly not to look there for the scene of the contest with the priests of Baal described in the verses which follow. The scene of Elijah's sacrifice is rather to be sought for on one of the south-eastern heights of Carmel; and Van de Velde (*i.* p. 320 sqq.) has pointed it out with great probability in the ruins of *el Mohraka*, *i.e.* "the burned place," "a rocky level space of no great circumference, and covered with old gnarled trees with a dense entangled undergrowth of bushes." For "one can scarcely imagine a spot better adapted for the thousands of Israel to have stood drawn up on than the gentle slopes. The rock shoots up in an almost perpendicular wall of more than 200 feet in height on the side of the vale of Esdraelon. On this side, therefore, there was no room for the gazing multitude; but, on the other hand, this wall made it visible over the whole plain, and from all the surrounding heights, so that even those left behind, who had not ascended Carmel, would still have been able to witness at no great distance the fire from heaven that descended upon the altar."—"There is not a more conspicuous spot on all Carmel than the abrupt rocky height of *el Mohraka*, shooting up so suddenly on the east." Moreover, the soil was thoroughly adapted for the erection of the altar described in vers. 31 and 32: "it showed a rocky surface, with a sufficiency of large fragments of rock lying all around, and, besides, well fitted for the rapid digging of a trench."

There is also water in the neighbourhood, as is assumed in ver. 34. "Nowhere does the Kishon run so close to Mount Carmel as just beneath el Mohraka," which is "1635 feet above the sea, and perhaps 1000 feet above the Kishon. This height can be gone up and down in the short time allowed by the Scripture (vers. 40-44)." But it was possible to find water even nearer than this, to pour upon the burnt-offering in the manner described in vers. 34, 35. Close by the steep rocky wall of the height, just where you can descend to the Kishon through a steep ravine, you find, "250 feet it might be beneath the altar plateau, a vaulted and very abundant fountain built in the form of a tank, with a few steps leading down into it, just as one finds elsewhere in the old wells or springs of the Jewish times."—"From such a fountain alone could Elijah have procured so much water at that time. And as for the distance between this spring and the supposed site of the altar, it was every way possible for men to go thrice thither and back again to obtain the necessary supply." Lastly, el Mohraka is so situated, that the circumstances mentioned in vers. 42-44 also perfectly coincide (Van de Velde, pp. 322-325).

Vers. 20-46. *Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal.*—Ahab sent through all Israel and gathered the prophets (of Baal) together upon Mount Carmel. According to vers. 21, 22, and 39, a number of the people ("all the people") had also come with them. On the other hand, not only is there no further reference in what follows to the 400 prophets of Asherah (cf. vers. 25 and 40), but in ver. 22 it is very obvious that the presence of the 450 prophets of Baal alone is supposed. We must therefore assume that the Asherah prophets, foreboding nothing good, had found a way of evading the command of Ahab and securing the protection of Jezebel.<sup>1</sup> King Ahab also appeared upon Carmel (cf. ver. 41), as he had no idea of

<sup>1</sup> It is true that in ver. 22 the LXX. have this clause, *καὶ οἱ προφῆται τοῦ δαδου* (i.e. *הַנְּבִיאִים*) *τετρακόνσιοι*, which Thenius regards as an original portion of the text, though without observing the character of the LXX. If the Asherah prophets had also been present, Elijah would not only have commanded the prophets of Baal to be seized and slain (ver. 40), but the Asherah prophets also. From the principle *a potiori fit*, etc., it may be possible to explain the omission of the Asherah prophets in ver. 25, but not in ver. 40.



Elijah's intention, which was by no means "to prove to the king that he (Ahab) and not Elijah had brought Israel into trouble" (Vat., Seb. Schm.), but to put before the eyes of the whole nation a convincing practical proof of the sole deity of Jehovah and of the nothingness of the Baals, that were regarded as gods, and by slaying the priests of Baal to give a death-blow to idolatry in Israel.—Ver. 21. Elijah addressed the assembled people as follows: "How long do ye limp upon both sides? Is Jehovah God, then go after Him; but if Baal be God, then go after him"—and the people answered him not a word. They wanted to combine the worship of Jehovah and Baal, and not to assume a hostile attitude towards Jehovah by the worship of Baal; and were therefore obliged to keep silence under this charge of infatuated halving, since they knew very well from the law itself that Jehovah demanded worship with a whole and undivided heart (Deut. vi. 4, 5). This dividing of the heart between Jehovah and Baal Elijah called limping על שתי הסעפים, "upon the two parties (of Jehovah and Baal)." For סעפים the meaning "divided opinions, parties," is well established by the use of סעפים in Ps. cxix. 113; and the rendering of the LXX. *ἰγνύαι*, the hollow of the knee, is only a paraphrase of the sense and not an interpretation of the word.—Vers. 22-25. As the people adhered to their undecided double-mindedness, Elijah proposed to let the Deity Himself decide who was the true God, Jehovah or Baal. The prophets of Baal were to offer a sacrifice to Baal, and he (Elijah) would offer one to Jehovah. And the true God should make Himself known by kindling the burnt-offering presented to Him with fire from heaven, and in this way answering the invocation of His name. This proposal was based upon the account in Lev. ix. As Jehovah had there manifested Himself as the God of Israel by causing fire to fall from heaven upon the first sacrifice presented in front of the tabernacle and to consume it, Elijah hoped that in like manner Jehovah would even now reveal Himself as the living God. And the form of decision thus proposed would necessarily appear all the fairer, because Elijah, the prophet of Jehovah, stood alone in opposition to a whole crowd of Baal's prophets, numbering no less than 450 men. And for that very reason the latter could not draw back, without publicly renouncing their pretensions, whether they believed that Baal would really do what was desired, or hoped

that they might be able to escape, through some accident or stratagem, from the difficult situation that had been prepared for them, or fancied that the God of Elijah would no more furnish the proof of His deity that was desired of Him than Baal would. In order, however, to cut off every subterfuge in the event of their attempt proving a failure, Elijah not only yielded the precedence to them on the occasion of this sacrifice, but gave them the choice of the two oxen brought to be offered; which made the fairness of his proposal so much the more conspicuous to every one, that the people willingly gave their consent.

Vers. 26-29. The prophets of Baal then proceeded to the performance of the duty required. They prepared (עֲשׂוּ) the sacrifice, and called solemnly upon Baal from morning to noon: "O Baal, hear us," limping round the altar; "but there was no voice, and no one to hear (to answer), and no attention." פֶּסֶחַ is a contemptuous epithet applied to the pantomimic sacrificial dance performed by these priests round about the altar,<sup>1</sup> אִשָּׁר עֲשָׂה ("which one had made").—Ver. 27. As no answer had been received before noon, Elijah cried out to them in derision: "Call to him with a loud voice, for he is God (sc. according to your opinion), for he is meditating, or has gone aside (יָצָא, *secessio*), or is on the journey (בְּדֶרֶךְ, on the way); perhaps he is sleeping, that he may wake up." The ridicule lies more especially in the כִּי אֱלֹהִים הוּא (for he is a god), when contrasted with the enumeration of the different possibilities which may have occasioned their obtaining no answer, and is heightened by the earnest and threefold repetition of the כִּי. With regard to these possibilities we may quote the words of Clericus: "Although these things when spoken of God are the most absurd things possible, yet idolaters could believe such things, as we may see from Homer." The priests of Baal did actually begin therefore to cry louder than before, and scratched themselves with swords and lances, till the blood poured out, "according to their custom" (כַּמִּשְׁכָּבָם). Movers describes this as follows (*Phönizier*, i. pp. 682, 683), from statements made by ancient authors concerning the processions of the strolling

<sup>1</sup> The following is the description which Herodian (*hist.* v. 3), among others, gives of Heliogabalus when dancing as chief priest of the Emesinian sun-god: Ἱερουργοῦντα δὴ τοῦτον, περί τε τοῖς βῆμοις χοροῦντα νόμῳ Βαρβάρων, ὑπὸ τε αὐλοῖς καὶ συριγξὶ παντοδαπῶν τε ὀργάνων ἤχῳ.



bands of the Syrian goddess: "A discordant howling opens the scene. They then rush wildly about in perfect confusion, with their heads bowed down to the ground, but always revolving in circles, so that the loosened hair drags through the mire; they then begin to bite their arms, and end with cutting themselves with the two-edged swords which they are in the habit of carrying. A new scene then opens. One of them, who surpasses all the rest in frenzy, begins to prophesy with sighs and groans; he openly accuses himself of the sins which he has committed, and which he is now about to punish by chastising the flesh, takes the knotted scourge, which the *Galli* generally carry, lashes his back, and then cuts himself with swords till the blood trickles down from his mangled body." The climax of the Bacchantic dance in the case of the priests of Baal also was the prophesying (הִתְנַבֵּא), and it was for this reason, probably, that they were called prophets (נְבִיאִים). This did not begin till noon, and lasted till about the time of the evening sacrifice (עֶרְ לַעֲלֹת, not עֶרְ עֲלֹת, ver. 29). עֲלֹת הַמִּנְחָה, "the laying on (offering) of the meat-offering," refers to the daily evening sacrifice, which consisted of a burnt-offering and a meat-offering (Ex. xxix. 38 sqq.; Num. xxviii. 3-8), and was then offered, according to the Rabbinical observance (see at Ex. xii. 6), in the closing hours of the afternoon, as is evident from the circumstances which are described in vers. 40 sqq. as having taken place on the same day and subsequently to Elijah's offering, which was presented at the time of the evening sacrifice (ver. 36).

Vers. 30-39. *Elijah's sacrifice*.—As no answer came from Baal, Elijah began to prepare for his own sacrifice. Ver. 30. He made the people come nearer, that he might have both eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses present at his sacrifice, and restored the altar of Jehovah which was broken down. Consequently there was already an altar of Jehovah upon Carmel, which either dated from the times anterior to the building of the temple, when altars of Jehovah were erected in different places throughout the land (see at ch. iii. 2), or, what is more probable, had been built by pious worshippers belonging to the ten tribes since the division of the kingdom (Hengstenberg, *Dissertations on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. p. 183, transl.), and judging from ch. xix. 10, had been destroyed during the reign of Ahab, when the worship of Baal gained the upper hand.—Vers. 31, 32.

Elijah took twelve stones, "according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come (Gen. xxxii. 29, xxxv. 10), Israel shall be thy name," and built these stones into an altar. The twelve stones were a practical declaration on the part of the prophet that the division of the nation into two kingdoms was at variance with the divine calling of Israel, inasmuch as according to the will of God the twelve tribes were to form *one* people of Jehovah, and to have a common sacrificial altar; whilst the allusion to the fact that Jehovah had given to the forefather of the nation the name of Israel, directs attention to the wrong which the seceding ten tribes had done in claiming the name of Israel for themselves, whereas it really belonged to the whole nation. בְּיָסָם יְהוָה (in the name of Jehovah) belongs to יִבְנֶה (built), and signifies by the authority and for the glory of Jehovah. "And made a trench as the space of two seahs of seed (i.e. so large that you could sow two seahs<sup>1</sup> of seed upon the ground which it covered) round about the altar." The trench must therefore have been of considerable breadth and depth, although it is impossible to determine the exact dimensions, as the kind of seed-corn is not defined. He then arranged the sacrifice upon the altar, and had four *Kad* (pails) of water poured three times in succession upon the burnt-offering which was laid upon the pieces of wood, so that the water flowed round about the altar, and then had the trench filled with water.<sup>2</sup> Elijah adopted this course for the purpose of precluding all suspicion of even the possibility of fraud in connection with the miraculous burning of the sacrifice. For idolaters had carried their deceptions to such a length, that they would set fire to the wood of the sacrifices from

<sup>1</sup> i.e. about two Dresden pecks (*Metzen*).—THENIUS.

<sup>2</sup> Thenius throws suspicion upon the historical character of this account, on the ground that "the author evidently forgot the terrible drought, by which the numerous sources of the Carmel and the Nachal Kishon *must* have been dried up;" but Van de Velde has already answered this objection, which has been raised by others also, and has completely overthrown it by pointing out the covered well of *el Mohraka*, in relation to which he makes the following remark: "In such springs the water remains always cool, under the shade of a vaulted roof, and with no hot atmosphere to evaporate it. While all other fountains were dried up, I can well understand that there might have been found here that superabundance of water which Elijah poured so profusely over the altar" (vol. i. p. 325, transl.). But the drying up of the Kishon is a mere conjecture, which cannot be historically proved.



hollow spaces concealed beneath the altars, in order to make the credulous people believe that the sacrifice had been miraculously set on fire by the deity. Ephraem Syrus and Joh. Chrysostom both affirm this; the latter in his *Oratio in Petrum Apost. et Eliam proph.* t. ii. p. 737, ed. Montf., the genuineness of which, however, is sometimes called in question.—Vers. 36, 37. After these preparations at the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah drew near and prayed: “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (this name is used with deliberate purpose instead of Jacob: see at ver. 31), let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and I am Thy servant, and do all these things through Thy word. Hear me, Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that Thou Jehovah art God, and turnest back their hearts!” (*i.e.* back from idols to Thyself.) This clearly expresses not only the object of the miracle which follows, but that of miracles universally. The perfects עָשִׂיתִי and הִסְבַּתָּ are used to denote not only what has already occurred, but what will still take place and is as certain as if it had taken place already. עָשִׂיתִי refers not merely to the predicted drought and to what Elijah has just been doing (Thenius), but to the miracle which was immediately about to be performed; and הִסְבַּתָּ to the conversion of the people to the Lord their God, for which Elijah’s coming had already prepared the way, and which was still further advanced by the following miracle.—Ver. 38. Then fire of Jehovah fell and consumed the burnt-offering and the pieces of wood, etc. אֵשׁ יְהוָה, the fire proceeding from Jehovah, was not a natural flash of lightning, which could not produce any such effect, but miraculous fire falling from heaven, as in 1 Chron. xxi. 26, 2 Chron. vii. 1 (see at Lev. ix. 24), the supernatural origin of which was manifested in the fact, that it not only consumed the sacrifice with the pile of wood upon the altar, but also burned up (*in calcem redegit*—Cler.) the stones of the altar and the earth that was thrown up to form the trench, and licked up the water in the trench. Through this miracle Jehovah not only accredited Elijah as His servant and prophet, but proved Himself to be the living God, whom Israel was to serve; so that all the people who were present fell down upon their faces in worship, as they had done once before, viz. at the consecration of the altar in Lev. ix. 24, and confessed “Jehovah is God:” הָאֱלֹהִים, the true or real God.

Vers. 40-46. Elijah availed himself of this enthusiasm of

the people for the Lord, to deal a fatal blow at the prophets of Baal, who turned away the people from the living God. He commanded the people to seize them, and had them slain at the brook Kishon, and that not so much from revenge, *i.e.* because it was at their instigation that queen Jezebel had murdered the prophets of the true God (ver. 13), as to carry out the fundamental law of the Old Testament kingdom of God, which prohibited idolatry on pain of death, and commanded that false prophets should be destroyed (Deut. xvii. 2, 3, xiii. 13 sqq.).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 41. Elijah then called upon the king, who had eaten nothing from morning till evening in his eagerness to see the result of the contest between the prophet and the priests of Baal, to come up from the brook Kishon to the place of sacrifice upon Carmel, where his wants were provided for, and to partake of meat and drink, for he (Elijah) could already hear the noise of a fall of rain. *šip* is without a verb, as is often the case (*e.g.* Isa. xiii. 4, lii. 8, etc.); literally, it is the sound, the noise. After the occasion of the curse of drought, which had fallen upon the land, had been removed by the destruction of the idolatrous priests, the curse itself could also be removed. “But this was not to take place without the prophet’s saying it, and by means of this gift proving himself afresh to be the representative of God” (O. v. Gerlach).—Vers. 42 sqq. While the king was refreshing himself with food and drink, Elijah went up to the top of Carmel to pray that the Lord would complete His work by fulfilling His promise (ver. 1) in sending rain; and continued in prayer till the visible commencement of the fulfilment of his prayer was announced by his servant, who, after looking out upon the sea seven times, saw at last a small cloud ascend from the sea

<sup>1</sup> It was necessary that idolatry and temptation to the worship of idols should be punished with death, as a practical denial of Jehovah the true God and Lord of His chosen people, if the object of the divine institutions was to be secured. By putting the priests of Baal to death, therefore, Elijah only did what the law required; and inasmuch as the ordinary administrators of justice did not fulfil their obligations, he did this as an extraordinary messenger of God, whom the Lord had accredited as His prophet before all the people by the miraculous answer given to his prayer.—To infer from this act of Elijah the right to institute a bloody persecution of heretics, would not only indicate a complete oversight of the difference between heathen idolaters and Christian heretics, but the same reprehensible confounding of the evangelical standpoint of the New Testament with the legal standpoint of the Old, which Christ condemned in His own disciples in Luke ix. 55, 56.



about the size of a man's hand.<sup>1</sup> The peculiar attitude assumed by Elijah when praying (Jas. v. 18), viz. bowing down even to the earth (יָנַח) and putting his face between his knees, probably the attitude of deep absorption in God, was witnessed by Shaw and Chardin in the case of certain dervishes (*vid.* Harmar, *Beobachtungen*, iii. pp. 373-4).—Ver. 44. As soon as the small cloud ascended from the sea, Elijah sent his servant to tell the king to set off home, that he might not be stopped by the rain. וָרָג, go down, *sc.* from Carmel to his chariot, which was standing at the foot of the mountain.<sup>2</sup>—Ver. 45. Before any provision had been made for it (עֲרֹכָה וְעֲרֹכָה: hither and thither, *i.e.* while the hand is being moved to and fro, “very speedily;” cf. Ewald, § 105, b) the heaven turned black with clouds and wind, *i.e.* with storm-clouds (Thenius), and there came a great fall of rain, while Ahab drove along the road to Jezreel. It was quite possible for the king to reach Jezreel the same evening from that point, namely, from the foot of Carmel below *el Mohraka*: but only thence, for every half-hour farther west would have taken him too far from his capital for it to be possible to accomplish the distance before the rain overtook him (V. de Velde, i. p. 326). *Jezreel*, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18), was probably the summer residence of Ahab (see at Josh. xxi. 1). The distance from *el Mohraka* thither is hardly  $2\frac{3}{4}$  German geographical miles (? 14 Engl. miles—Tr.) in a straight line.—Ver. 46. When Ahab drove off, the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah, so that he ran before Ahab as far as Jezreel,—not so much for the purpose of bringing the king to his residence unhurt (Seb. Schm.), as to give him a proof of his humility, and thus deepen the impression already made upon his heart, and fortify him all the more against the strong temptations of his wife, who abused his weakness to support the cause of ungodliness. This act of Elijah, whom Ahab had hitherto only

<sup>1</sup> V. de Velde has shown how admirably these circumstances (vers. 43 and 44) also apply to the situation of *el Mohraka*: “on its west and north-west side the view of the sea is quite intercepted by an adjacent height. That height may be ascended, however, in a few minutes, and a full view of the sea obtained from the top” (i. p. 326).

<sup>2</sup> “After three years' drought all herbage must have disappeared from the plain of Jezreel, and the loose clay composing its soil must have been changed into a deep layer of dust. Had time been allowed for the rain to convert that dust into a bed of mud, the chariot-wheels might have stuck fast in it.”—V. DE VELDE, i. pp. 326-7.

known as a stern, imperious, and powerful prophet, by which he now showed himself to be his faithful subject and servant, was admirably adapted to touch the heart of the king, and produce the conviction that it was not from any personal dislike to him, but only in the service of the Lord, that the prophet was angry at his idolatry, and that he was not trying to effect his ruin, but rather his conversion and the salvation of his soul. יְד־יְהוָה, the hand (*i.e.* the power) of the Lord, denotes the supernatural strength with which the Lord endowed him, to accomplish superhuman feats. This formula is generally applied to the divine inspiration by which the prophets were prepared for their prophesying (*cf.* 2 Kings iii. 15 ; Ezek. i. 3, iii. 15, etc.).

CHAP. XIX. ELIJAH'S FLIGHT INTO THE DESERT, THE REVELATION OF GOD AT HOREB, AND ELISHA'S CALL TO BE A PROPHET.

The hope of completing his victory over the idolaters and overthrowing the worship of Baal, even in the capital of the kingdom, with which Elijah may have hastened to Jezreel, was frustrated by the malice of the queen, who was so far from discerning any revelation of the almighty God in the account given her by Ahab of what had occurred on Carmel, and bending before His mighty hand, that, on the contrary, she was so full of wrath at the slaying of the prophets of Baal as to send to the prophet Elijah to threaten him with death. This apparent failure of his ministry was the occasion of a severe inward conflict, in which Elijah was brought to a state of despondency and fled from the land. The Lord allowed His servant to pass through this conflict, that he might not exalt himself, but, being mindful of his own impotence, might rest content with the grace of his God, whose strength is mighty in the weak (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9), and who would refine and strengthen him for the further fulfilment of his calling.

Vers. 1-8. *Elijah's flight into the desert and guidance to Horeb.*—Vers. 1, 2. When "Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and all, how he had slain all the prophets (of Baal)," she sent a messenger to Elijah in her impotent wrath, with a threat, which she confirmed by an oath (*see at ch. ii. 23*), that in the morning she would have him slain like the prophets whom he had put to death. The early commentators detected in this threat the *impotentia muliebris iracundiæ*, and saw that all that



Jezebel wanted was to get rid of the man who was so distressing and dangerous to her, because she felt herself unable to put him to death, partly on account of the people, who were enthusiastic in his favour, and partly on account of the king himself, upon whom the affair at Carmel had not remained without its salutary effect.—Vers. 3, 4. But when Elijah saw (וַיֵּרָא), *sc.* how things stood, or the audacity of Jezebel, from which the failure of his work was evident, he rose up and went to Beersheba in Judah, *i.e.* Bir-seba on the southern frontier of Canaan (see at Gen. xxi. 31). The expression אֲשֶׁר לְיְהוּדָה, “which to Judah,” *i.e.* which belonged to the kingdom of Judah, for Beersheba was really allotted to the tribe of Simeon (Josh. xix. 2), is appended not merely as a geographical indication that Elijah went outside the land, but to show that he meant to leave the kingdom of Israel, the scene of his previous labours, just as Jeremiah in a similar internal conflict gave utterance to the wish that he could leave his people, if he had but a lodging-place in the wilderness (Jer. ix. 2). וַיֵּרָא is not to be altered into וַיִּירָא, *et timuit*, after the LXX. and Vulg., notwithstanding the fact that some Codd. have this reading, which only rests upon an erroneous conjecture. For it is obvious that Elijah did not flee from any fear of the vain threat of Jezebel, from the fact that he did not merely withdraw into the kingdom of Judah, where he would have been safe under Jehoshaphat from all the persecutions of Jezebel, but went to Beersheba, and thence onwards into the desert, there to pour out before the Lord God his weariness of life (ver. 4). וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־נַפְשׁוֹ, he went upon his soul, or his life, *i.e.* not to save his life (as I once thought, with many other commentators), for his wish to die (ver. 4) is opposed to this; but to care for his soul in the manner indicated in ver. 4, *i.e.* to commit his soul or his life to the Lord his God in the solitude of the desert, and see what He would determine concerning him.<sup>1</sup>—He left his servant in Beersheba, while he himself went a day’s journey farther into the desert (Paran), not merely because he was so filled with weariness

<sup>1</sup> G. Menken (*christl. Homil. üb. den Proph. Elias*, p. 231) has given the following admirable explanation of אֶל נַפְשׁוֹ so far as the sense is concerned: “For conscience sake, from conviction, out of obligation, not from fear. After all his former experience, and from the entire relation in which Elijah stood to God, it was impossible that he should be afraid, and not be firmly convinced that the God who had shut up heaven at his word, who had supplied him with bread and flesh for a whole year in the desert through the medium of ravens, who had supported him miraculously for years in a foreign land through the

ness of life in his dark oppression, that he thought he should have no further need of his servant, and therefore left him behind in Beersheba, but that he might pour out his heart before God alone in the desert and yield himself up to His guidance. For however unquestionably his lamentation in ver. 4, for example, expresses a weariness of life, this merely indicates the feeling which had taken possession of his soul after a day's journey in the barren desert. And even there he lays his wish to die before God in prayer; so that this feeling is merely to be regarded as one result of the spiritual conflict, which his bodily exhaustion had now raised to a height that it cannot have reached when he was in Beersheba. If, therefore, he did not start with the intention of making a pilgrimage to Horeb, he had certainly gone into the desert for the purpose of seeing whether the Lord would manifest His mercy to him, as He had formerly done to His people under Moses, or whether He would withdraw His hand entirely from him. After a day's journey he sat down under a רֶתֶם (construed here as a feminine, in ver. 5 as a masculine), a species of broom (*genista Retem* in Forskâl), which is the finest and most striking shrub of the Arabian desert, growing constantly in the beds of streams and in the valleys, where places of encampment are frequently selected for the sake of the shelter which they afford by night from the wind and by day from the sun (Rob. *Pal.* i. 299). וַיִּשְׁאַל . . . לָמָּוֶת: and wished that his soul might die (a kind of accusative with infinitive; see Ewald, § 336, *b*), and said, רַב עָתָה, "Enough now; take, Lord, my soul, for I am not better than my fathers;" i.e. I have worked and endured enough, and deserve no longer life than my fathers. From this it appears that Elijah was already of a great age.—Vers. 5 sqq. In this disturbed state of mind he lay down and slept under a broom-tree. Then the Lord came with His power to the help of the despairing man. "An angel touched him (wakened him out of his sleep), and said to him: Arise, eat." And behold he saw at his head עֵנַת רֶצֶפִים, a bread cake baked over red-hot stones, a savoury article of food which is still a great favourite with the Bedouins (see at Gen. xviii. 6, xix. 3), and a pitcher of water,

medium of a poor widow, who had concealed and rescued him for three years and a half from the search of the king, who had accredited and honoured him in the sight of all the people as His servant, who had given an immediate answer to his prayer for rain, could also defend him in this extremity, and rescue him from this danger, if such should be His will."



and ate and drank, and lay down again.—Ver. 7. But the angel wakened him a second time, and called upon him to eat with these words: “for the way is too far for thee” (רַב מְסַךְ הַדֶּרֶךְ, *iter est majus quam pro viribus tuis*—Vat.).—Ver. 8. “Then he arose, ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to the mount of God at Horeb.” As the angel did not tell him whither he was to go, and Elijah wandered to Horeb in consequence of this strengthening, it appears to have been his intention from the very beginning to go into the desert, and see whether the Lord would still further acknowledge him and his work; so that in the support and strength imparted by the angel he saw an indication that he was to follow the footsteps of the divine grace still farther into the desert, and make a pilgrimage to Horeb, with the hope that there perhaps the Lord would reveal to him His counsel concerning the further guidance of the people of His covenant, as He had formerly done to His servant Moses, and give him the necessary instruction for the continuance of his prophetic service. *Horeb* is called the mount of God here, as it was proleptically in Ex. iii. 1, as the place where the Lord confirmed the covenant, already made with the patriarchs, to their descendants, and adopted the tribes of Israel as His people and made them into a kingdom of God. The distance from Beersheba to Horeb is about 200 miles. Consequently Elijah would not have required forty days to travel there, if the intention of God had been nothing more than to cause him to reach the mountain, or “to help him on his way” (Thenius). But in the strength of the food provided by the angel Elijah was not only to perform the journey to Horeb, but to wander in the desert for forty days and forty nights, *i.e.* forty whole days, as Moses had formerly wandered with all Israel for forty years; that he might know that the Lord was still the same God who had nourished and sustained His whole nation in the desert with manna from heaven for forty years. And just as the forty years’ sojourn in the desert had been to Moses a time for the trial of faith and for exercise in humility and meekness (Num. xii. 3), so was the strength of Elijah’s faith to be tried by the forty days’ wandering in the same desert, and to be purified from all carnal zeal for the further fulfilment of His calling, in accordance with the divine will. What follows shows very clearly that this was the object of the divine guidance of Elijah (cf. Hengstenberg, *Diss. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. 171, 172).

Vers. 9-18. *Appearance of God at Horeb.*—Ver. 9. When Elijah arrived at Horeb, he went into *the* cave (the definite article in הַכְּעֶרֶה, with the obvious connection between the appearance of God, which follows here, and that described in Ex. xxxiii. 12 sqq., points back to the cleft in the rock, נִקְרַת הַצֵּדֶר) in which Moses had stood while the glory of Jehovah passed by (see at Ex. xxxiii. 22), and there he passed the night. And behold the word of the Lord came to him (in the night): "What doest thou here, Elijah?" This question did not involve a reproof, as though Elijah had nothing to do there, but was simply intended to lead him to give utterance to the thoughts and feelings of his heart.—Ver. 10. Elijah answered: "I have striven zealously for Jehovah the God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, destroyed Thine altars, and killed Thy prophets with the sword; and I only am left, and they seek my life." In these words there was not only the greatest despair expressed as to the existing condition of things, but also a carnal zeal which would gladly have called down the immediate vengeance of the Almighty upon all idolaters. The complaint contained, on the one hand, the tacit reproof that God had looked on quietly for so long a time at the conduct of the ungodly, and had suffered things to come to such an extremity, that he, His prophet, was the only one left of all the true worshippers of God, and, on the other hand, the indirect appeal that He would interpose at last with His penal judgments. Because Elijah had not seen the expected salutary fruits of his zeal for the Lord, he thought that all was lost, and in his gloomy state of mind overlooked what he had seen a short time before with his own eyes, that even in the neighbourhood of the king himself there lived a pious and faithful worshipper of Jehovah, viz. Obadiah, who had concealed a hundred prophets from the revenge of Jezabel, and that the whole of the people assembled upon Carmel had given glory to the Lord, and at his command had seized the prophets of Baal and put them to death, and therefore that the true worshippers of the Lord could not all have vanished out of Israel. קָנַס קִנְאָתִי לַיהוָה recalls to mind the zeal of Phinehas (Num. xxv. 11 sqq.), which put an end to the whoredom of the sons of Israel with the daughters of Moab. But whereas Phinehas received the promise of an everlasting priesthood for his zeal, Elijah had seen so little fruit from his zeal against the worshippers of Baal, that they actually sought



his life. מִזְבְּחֹתָי are altars, which pious Israelites in the kingdom of the ten tribes had built in different places for the worship of Jehovah (see at ch. xviii. 30).—Vers. 11 sqq. The Lord replied to the prophet's complaint first of all by the manifestation of His control of the phenomena of nature (vers. 11-13), and then by a verbal explanation of His design (vers. 15-18).

In this divine revelation men have recognised from the very earliest times a repetition of the appearance of God which was granted to Moses upon Sinai. As God, in token of His grace, granted the prayer of Moses that he might see His glory, after he had striven zealously for the honour of the Lord when the people rebelled by worshipping the golden calf; so did He also display His glory upon Horeb to Elijah as a second Moses for the purpose of strengthening his faith, with this simple difference, that He made all His goodness pass by Moses, and declared His name in the words, "Jehovah, a gracious and merciful God," etc. (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7), whereas He caused Elijah first of all to behold the operation of His grace in certain phenomena of nature, and then afterwards made known to him His will with regard to Israel and to the work of His prophets. This difference in the form of the revelation, while the substance and design were essentially the same, may be explained from the difference not only in the historical circumstances, but also in the state of mind of the two servants to whom He manifested His glory. In the case of Moses it was burning love for the welfare of his people which impelled him to offer the prayer that the Lord would let him see His glory, as a sign that He would not forsake His people; and this prayer was granted him, so far as a man is ever able to see the glory of God, to strengthen him for the further discharge of the duties of his office. Hidden in the cleft of the rock and shielded by the hand of God, he saw the Lord pass by him, and heard Him utter in words His inmost being. Elijah, on the other hand, in his zeal for the honour of God, which was not quite free from human passion, had been led by the want of any visible fruit from his own labour to overlook the work of the Lord in the midst of His people; so that he had fled into the desert and wished to be released from this world by death, and had not been brought out of his despair by the strengthening with meat and drink which he had received from the angel, and which enabled him to travel for forty days to the mount of

God without suffering from want, a fact which was intended to remind him of the ancient God of the fathers, to whose omnipotence and goodness there is no end; so that it was in a most gloomy state of mind that he reached Horeb at last. And now the Lord designed not only to manifest His glory as the love in which grace and righteousness are united, but also to show him that his zeal for the honour of the Lord was not in harmony with the love and grace and long-suffering of God. "The design of the vision was to show to the fiery zeal of the prophet, who wanted to reform everything by means of the tempest, the gentle way which God pursues, and to proclaim the long-suffering and mildness of His nature, as the voice had already done to Moses on that very spot; hence the beautiful change in the divine appearance" (Herder, *Geist der hebr. Poesie*, 1788, ii. p. 52).—Vers. 11, 12. After God had commanded him to come out of the cave and stand upon the mountain (that part of the mountain which was in front of the cave) before Him, "behold Jehovah went by (the participle עָבַר is used to give a more vivid representation of the scene); and a great and strong tempest, rending mountains and breaking rocks in pieces, before Jehovah—it was not in the tempest that Jehovah was; and after the tempest an earthquake—it was not in the earthquake that Jehovah was; and after the earthquake fire—it was not in the fire that Jehovah was; and after the fire a still, gentle rustling." קוֹל רֶקֶשֶׁת רֶקֶשׁ, literally the tone of a gentle blowing. On the change of gender in רוּחַ יְהוָה וְרוּחַ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, see Ewald, § 174, c.—Tempest, earthquake, and fire, which are even more terrible in the awful solitude of the Horeb mountains than in an inhabited land, are signs of the coming of the Lord to judgment (cf. Ps. xviii. 8 sqq.). It was in the midst of such terrible phenomena that the Lord had once come down upon Sinai, to inspire the people who were assembled at the foot of the mountain with a salutary dread of His terrible majesty, of the fiery zeal of His wrath and love, which consumes whatever opposes it (see at Ex. xix. 16 sqq.). But now the Lord was not in these terrible phenomena; to signify to the prophet that He did not work in His earthly kingdom with the destroying zeal of wrath, or with the pitiless severity of judgment. It was in a soft, gentle rustling that He revealed Himself to him.—Vers. 13, 14. When Elijah heard this, he covered up his face in his cloak (אָרָרַת; see at 2 Kings i. 8) and went out to the entrance



to the cave. And behold he heard the question a second time, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and answered with a repetition of his complaint (see vers. 9 and 10).—While the appearance of God, not in the tempest, the earthquake, and the fire, but in a gentle rustling, revealed the Lord to him as a merciful and gracious God, long-suffering, and of great goodness and truth (Ex. xxxiv. 6), the answer to his complaint showed him that He did not leave guilt unpunished (Ex. xxxiv. 7), since the Lord gave him the following command, vers. 15 sqq.: "Go back in thy way to the desert of Damascus, and anoint Hazael king over Aram (see 2 Kings viii. 12, 13), and Jehu the son of Nimshi king over Israel (see 2 Kings ix. 2), and Elisha the son of Shaphat prophet in thy stead" (see ver. 19); and then added this promise, which must have quieted his zeal, that was praiseworthy in the feelings from which it sprang, although it had assumed too passionate a form, and have given him courage to continue his prophetic work: "And it will come to pass, that whoever escapeth the sword of Hazael, him will Jehu slay, and whoever escapeth the sword of Jehu, him will Elisha slay."—Ver. 18. But in order that he might learn, to his shame, that the cause of the Lord in Israel appeared much more desperate to his eye, which was clouded by his own dissatisfaction, than it really was in the eye of the God who knows His own by number and by name, the Lord added: "I have seven thousand left in Israel, all knees that have not bent before Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him." מִדְּבַרָּה דַּמְשֶׁק, into the desert of Damascus (with the *He loc.* with the construct state as in Deut. iv. 41, Josh. xii. 1, etc.; cf. Ewald, § 216, *b*), *i.e.* the desert lying to the south and east of the city of Damascus, which is situated on the river *Barady*; not *per desertum in Damascus* (Vulg., Luth., etc.); for although Elijah would necessarily pass through the Arabian desert to go from Horeb to Damascus, it was superfluous to tell him that he was to go that way, as there was no other road. The words "return by thy way . . . and anoint Hazael," etc., are not to be understood as signifying that Elijah was to go at once to Damascus and anoint Hazael there, but simply that he was to do this at a time which the Spirit would more precisely indicate. According to what follows, all that Elijah accomplished immediately was to call Elisha to be his successor; whereas the other two commissions were fulfilled by Elisha after Elijah's ascension to heaven

(2 Kings viii. and ix.). The opinion that Elijah also anointed Hazael and Jehu immediately, but that this anointing was kept secret, and was repeated by Elisha when the time for their public appearance arrived, has not only very little probability in itself, but is directly precluded by the account of the anointing of Jehu in 2 Kings ix. The anointing of Hazael and Jehu is mentioned first, because God had chosen these two kings to be the chief instruments of His judgments upon the royal family and people for their idolatry. It was only in the case of Jehu that a real anointing took place (2 Kings ix. 6); Hazael was merely told by Elisha that he would be king (2 Kings viii. 13), and Elisha was simply called by Elijah to the prophetic office by having the cloak of the latter thrown upon him. Moreover, the Messianic passage, Isa. lxi. 1, is the only one in which there is any allusion to the anointing of a prophet. Consequently *מָשִׁיחַ* must be taken figuratively here, as in Judg. ix. 8, as denoting divine consecration to the regal and prophetic offices. And so, again, the statement that Elisha would slay those who escaped the sword of Jehu is not to be understood literally. Elisha slew by the word of the Lord, which brought judgments upon the ungodly, as we see from 2 Kings ii. 24 (cf. Jer. i. 10, xviii. 7). The "seven thousand," who had not bowed the knee before Baal, are a round number for the *ἐκλογὴ* of the godly, whom the Lord had preserved for Himself in the sinful kingdom, which was really very large in itself, however small it might be in comparison with the whole nation. The number *seven* is the stamp of the works of God, so that seven thousand is the number of the "remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. xi. 5), which had then been preserved by God. *Kissing* Baal was the most usual form in which this idol was worshipped, and consisted not merely in throwing kisses with the hand (cf. Job xxxi. 27, and Plin. *h. n.* 28, 8), but also in kissing the images of Baal, probably on the feet (cf. Cicero in *Verr.* 4, 43).

Vers. 19-21. *Call of Elisha to be a prophet.*—Ver. 19. As he went thence (viz. away from Horeb), Elijah found *Elisha* the son of Shaphat at Abel-Meholah, in the Jordan valley (see at Judg. vii. 22), occupied in ploughing; "twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he himself with the twelfth" (a very wealthy man therefore), and threw his cloak to him as he passed by. The prophet's cloak was a sign of the prophet's vocation, so that throwing it to him was a symbol of the call to the prophetic



office.—Ver. 20. Elisha understanding the sign, left the oxen standing, ran after Elijah, and said to him, “Let me kiss my father and my mother,” *i.e.* take leave of my parents, and then I will follow thee. For the form אִשְׁקָה see Ewald, § 228, *b*. As he has ploughed his earthly field with his twelve pair of oxen, he was now to plough the spiritual field of the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke ix. 62). Elijah answered, “Go, return, for what have I done to thee?” לֵךְ שׁוּב belong together, as in ver. 15; so that Elijah thereby gave him permission to return to his father and mother. פִּי signifies *for*, not *yet* (Thenius); for there is no antithesis here, according to which פִּי might serve for a more emphatic assurance (Ewald, § 330, *b*). The words “what have I done to thee?” can only mean, I have not wanted to put any constraint upon thee, but leave it to thy free will to decide in favour of the prophetic calling.—Ver. 21. Then Elisha returned, took the pair of oxen with which he had been ploughing, sacrificed, *i.e.* slaughtered them (זָבַח used figuratively), boiled the flesh with the plough, gave a farewell meal to the people (of his place of abode), *i.e.* his friends and acquaintance, and then followed Elijah as his servant, *i.e.* his assistant. The suffix in בְּשָׁלָם refers to צֶמֶד הַבָּקָר, and is more precisely defined by the apposition הַבָּשָׂר, “namely, the flesh of the oxen.”

#### CHAP. XX. AHAB'S DOUBLE VICTORY OVER BENHADAD OF SYRIA.

Even if the impression which the miracle upon Carmel had made upon Ahab, who was weak rather than malevolent, remained without any lasting fruit, the Lord did very quickly manifest His mercy towards him, by sending a prophet with a promise of victory when the Syrians invaded his kingdom, and by giving the Syrians into his power. This victory was a fruit of the seven thousand who had not bent their knee before Baal. Elijah was also to learn from this that the Lord of Sabaoth had not yet departed from the rebellious kingdom.

Vers. 1-22. THE FIRST VICTORY.—Ver. 1. Benhadad, the son of that Benhadad who had conquered several cities of Galilee in the reign of Baasha (ch. xv. 20), came up with a great army—there were thirty-two kings with him, with horses and chariots—and besieged Samaria. The thirty-two kings with him (אֲתָם) were vassals of Benhadad, rulers of different cities and the terri-

tory belonging to them, just as in Joshua's time almost every city of Canaan had its king; they were therefore bound to follow the army of Benhadad with their troops.—Vers. 2 sqq. During the siege Benhadad sent messengers into the city to Ahab with this demand: "Thy silver and thy gold are mine, and the best of thy wives and thy sons are mine;" and Ahab answered with pusillanimity: "According to thy word, my lord king, I and all that is mine are thine." Benhadad was made still more audacious by this submissiveness, and sent messengers the second time with the following notice (ver. 6): "Yea, if I send my servants to thee to-morrow at this time, and they search thy house and thy servants' houses, all that is the pleasure of thine eyes they will put into their hands and take."  $\text{כִּי־וְאִם}$  does not mean "only = certainly" here (Ewald, § 356, *b*), for there is neither a negative clause nor an oath, but  $\text{כִּי}$  signifies *if* and  $\text{וְאִם}$  introduces the statement, as in ver. 5; so that it is only in the repetition of the  $\text{וְאִם}$  that the emphasis lies, which can be expressed by *yea*. The words of Ahab in ver. 9 show unquestionably that Benhadad demanded more the second time than the first. The words of the first demand, "Thy silver and thy gold," etc., were ambiguous. According to ver. 5, Benhadad meant that Ahab should give him all this; and Ahab had probably understood him as meaning that he was to give him what he required, in order to purchase peace; but Benhadad had, no doubt, from the very first required an unconditional surrender at discretion. He expresses this very clearly in the second demand, since he announces to Ahab the plunder of his palace and also of the palaces of his nobles.  $\text{כָּל־מִסְכָּרְךָ־עֵצֶיךָ}$ , all thy costly treasures. It was from this second demand that Ahab first perceived what Benhadad's intention had been; he therefore laid the matter before the elders of the land, *i.e.* the king's counsellors, ver. 7: "Mark and see that this man seeketh evil," *i.e.* that he is aiming at our ruin, since he is not contented with the first demand, which I did not refuse him.—Ver. 8. The elders and all the people, *i.e.* the citizens of Samaria, advised that his demand should not be granted.  $\text{לֹא־תִשְׁמָעַךְ־וְלֹא־תִשְׁמָעַךְ}$ , "hearken not (to him), and thou wilt not be willing" ( $\text{לֹא}$  is stronger than  $\text{לֹא־תִשְׁמָעַךְ}$ ; yet compare Ewald, § 350, *a*); whereupon Ahab sent the messengers away with this answer, that he would submit to the first demand, but that the second he could not grant.—Ver. 10. Benhadad then attempted to overawe the weak-minded Ahab by strong threats, sending fresh messengers to threaten him



with the destruction of the city, and confirming it by a solemn oath: "The gods do so to me—if the dust of Samaria should suffice for the hollow hands of all the people that are in my train." The meaning of this threat was probably that he would reduce the city to ashes, so that scarcely a handful of dust should be left; for his army was so powerful and numerous, that the rubbish of the city would not suffice for every one to fill his hand.—Ver. 11. Ahab answered this loud boasting with the proverb: "Let not him that girdeth himself boast as he that looseth the girdle," equivalent to the Latin, *ne triumphum canas ante victoriam*.—Ver. 12. After this reply of Ahab, Benhadad gave command to attack the city, while he was drinking with his kings in the booths. סִבּוֹת are booths made of branches, twigs, and shrubs, such as are still erected in the East for kings and generals in the place of tents (*vid.* Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. pp. 198-9). שִׁימוּ: take your places against the city, *sc.* to storm it (for שָׁיִם in the sense of arranging the army for battle, see 1 Sam. xi. 11 and Job i. 17); not οἰκοδομήσατε χάρακα (LXX.), or place the siege train.—Vers. 13, 14. While the Syrians were preparing for the attack, a prophet came to Ahab and told him that Jehovah would deliver this great multitude (of the enemy) into his hand that day, "that thou mayest know that I am Jehovah," and that through the retainers of the governors of the provinces (שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת, who had fled to Samaria), *i.e.* by a small and weak host. In the appearance of the prophet in Samaria mentioned here and in vers. 28 and 35 sqq. there is no such irreconcilable contradiction to ch. xviii. 4, 22, and xix. 10, as Thenius maintains; it simply shows that the persecution of the prophets by Jezebel had somewhat abated, and therefore Elijah's labour had not remained without fruit. מִי יִאֲסֹר הַמָּוֶה, who shall open the battle? אָסַר answers to the German *anfödeln* (to string, unite; Eng. *join* battle—Tr.); cf. 2 Chron. xiii. 3.—Vers. 15, 16. Ahab then mustered his fighting men: there were 232 servants of the provincial governors; and the rest of the people, all the children of Israel, *i.e.* the whole of the Israelitish fighting men that were in Samaria (הַחֵיל, ver. 19), amounted to 7000 men. And at noon, when Benhadad and his thirty-two auxiliary kings were intoxicated at a carousal in the booths (שֹׁתֵה נִשְׁכּוֹר as in ch. xvi. 9), he ordered his men to advance, with the servants of the provincial governors taking the lead. The 7000 men are not to be regarded as the 7000 mentioned in ch. xix. 18, who had

not bowed their knee before Baal, as Rashi supposes, although the sameness in the numbers is apparently not accidental; but in both cases the number of the covenant people existing in Israel is indicated, though in ch. xix. 18 the 7000 constitute the ἐκλογὴ of the true Israel, whereas in the verse before us they are merely the fighting men whom the Lord had left to Ahab for the defence of his kingdom.—Vers. 17, 18. When Benhadad was informed of the advance of these fighting men, in his drunken arrogance he ordered them to be taken alive, whether they came with peaceable or hostile intent.—Vers. 19, 20. But they—the servants of the governors at the head, and the rest of the army behind—smote every one his man, so that the Arameans fled, and Benhadad, pursued by the Israelites, escaped on a horse with some of the cavalry. יַפְרָטִים is in apposition to בָּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל, “he escaped, and horsemen,” *sc.* escaped with him, *i.e.* some of the horsemen of his retinue, whilst the king of Israel, going out of the city, smote horses and chariots of the enemy, who were not prepared for this sally of the besieged, and completely defeated them.—Ver. 22. After this victory the prophet came to Ahab again, warning him to be upon his guard, for at the turn of the year, *i.e.* the next spring (see at 2 Sam. xi. 1), the Syrian king would make war upon him once more.

Vers. 23-34. THE SECOND VICTORY.—Vers. 23, 24. The servants (ministers) of Benhadad persuaded their lord to enter upon a fresh campaign, attributing the defeat they had sustained to two causes, which could be set aside, viz to the supposed nature of the gods of Israel, and to the position occupied by the vassal-kings in the army. The gods of Israel were mountain gods: when fighting with them upon the mountains, the Syrians had had to fight against and succumb to the power of these gods, whereas on the plain they would conquer, because the power of these gods did not reach so far. This notion concerning the God of Israel the Syrians drew, according to their ethnical religious ideas, from the fact that the sacred places of this God—not only the temple at Jerusalem upon Moriah, but also the altars of the high places—were erected upon mountains; since heathenism really had its mountain deities, *i.e.* believed in gods who lived upon mountains and protected and conducted all that took place upon them (cf. Douglar *Analect.* ss. i. 178, 179; Deyling, *Observ.* ss. iii. pp. 97 sqq.; Winer,



*bibl. R. W.* i. p. 154), and in Syrophœnicia even mountains themselves had divine honours paid to them (*vid.* Movers, *Phœniz.* i. p. 667 sqq.). The servants of Benhadad were at any rate so far right, that they attributed their defeat to the assistance which God had given to His people Israel; and were only wrong in regarding the God of Israel as a local deity, whose power did not extend beyond the mountains. They also advised their lord (ver. 24) to remove the kings in his army from their position, and appoint governors in their stead (פָּחָד, see ch. x. 15). The vassal-kings had most likely not shown the desired self-sacrifice for the cause of their superior in the war. And, lastly (ver. 25), they advised the king to raise his army to its former strength, and then carry on the war in the plain. "Number thyself an army, like the army which has fallen from thee." מִמֶּנִּי, "from with thee," rendered correctly *de tuis* in the Vulgate, at least so far as the sense is concerned (for the form see Ewald, § 264, b). But these prudently-devised measures were to be of no avail to the Syrians; for they were to learn that the God of Israel was not a limited mountain-god.—Ver. 26. With the new year (see ver. 22) Benhadad advanced to Aphek again to fight against Israel. *Aphek* is neither the city of that name in the tribe of Asher (Josh. xix. 30 and xiii. 4), nor that on the mountains of Judah (Josh. xv. 53), but the city in the plain of Jezreel not far from Endor (1 Sam. xxix. 1 compared with xxviii. 4); since Benhadad had resolved that this time he would fight against Israel in the plain.—Ver. 27. The Israelites, mustered and provided for (פָּלְפָלִי: supplied with ammunition and provisions), marched to meet them, and encamped before them "like two little separate flocks of goats" (*i.e.* severed from the great herd of cattle). They had probably encamped upon slopes of the mountains by the plain of Jezreel, where they looked like two miserable flocks of goats in contrast with the Syrians who filled the land.—Ver. 28. Then the man of God (the prophet mentioned in vers. 13 and 22) came again to Ahab with the word of God: "Because the Syrians have said Jehovah is a mountain-God and not a God of the valleys, I will give this great multitude into thy hand, that ye may know that I am Jehovah."—Vers. 29, 30. After seven days the battle was fought. The Israelites smote the Syrians, a hundred thousand men in one day; and when the rest fled to Aphek, into the city, the wall fell upon twenty-seven

thousand men, ἵνα δὲ κακῆνοι καὶ οὗτοι μάθωσιν, ὥς θείλατος ἡ πληγή (Theodoret). The flying Syrians had probably some of them climbed the wall of the city to offer resistance to the Israelites in pursuit, and some of them sought to defend themselves by taking shelter behind it. And during the conflict, through the special interposition of God, the wall fell and buried the Syrians who were there. The cause of the fall is not given. Thenius assumes that it was undermined, in order to remove all idea of any miraculous working of the omnipotence of God. Benhadad himself fled into the city "room to room," i.e. from one room to another (cf. ch. xxii. 25, 2 Chron. xviii. 24).—Vers. 31, 32. In this extremity his servants made the proposal to him, that trusting in the generosity of the kings of Israel, they should go and entreat Ahab to show favour to him. They clothed themselves in mourning apparel, and put ropes on their necks, as a sign of absolute surrender, and went to Ahab, praying for the life of their king. And Ahab felt so flattered by the fact that his powerful opponent was obliged to come and entreat his favour in this humble manner, that he gave him his life, without considering how a similar act on the part of Saul had been blamed by the Lord (1 Sam. xv. 9 sqq.). "Is he still alive? He is my brother!" was his answer to Benhadad's servants.—Ver. 33. And they laid hold of these words of Ahab as a good omen (וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ), and hastened and bade him explain (i.e. bade him quickly explain); וַיִּשְׂאֵל, whether (it had been uttered) from himself, i.e. whether he had said it with all his heart (Maurer), and said, "Benhadad is thy brother." The ἀπ. λεγ. וְהָיָה, related to יָצָא, *exuere*, signifies *abstrahere*, *nudare*, then figuratively, *aliquid facere nudo*, i.e. *sine prætextu*, or *aliquid nudo*, i.e. *sine fuce atque ambagibus testari, confirmare* (cf. Furst, *Concord.* p. 398); then in the Talmud, to give an explanation (*vid. Ges. thes.* p. 476). This is perfectly applicable here, so that there is no necessity to alter the text, even if we thereby obtained a better meaning than Thenius with his explanation, "they tore it out of him," which he takes to be equivalent to "they laid hold of him by his word" (!). Ahab thereupon ordered Benhadad to come and get up into his chariot.—Ver. 34. Benhadad, in order to keep Ahab in this favourable mood, promised to give him back at once the cities which his father had taken away from Ahab's father, and said, "Thou mayest make thyself roads in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." There is no account



of any war between Omri and Benhadad 1.; it is simply stated in ch. xv. 20 that Benhadad 1. had taken away several cities in Galilee from the Israelites during the reign of Baasha. This cannot be the war intended here, however, not indeed because of the expression **מֵאֵת אָבִיךָ**, since **אָב** might certainly be taken in a broader sense as referring to Baasha as an ancestor of Ahab, but chiefly on account of the statement that Benhadad had made himself roads in Samaria. This points to a war between Omri and Benhadad, after the building of Samaria into the capital of the kingdom, of which no account has been preserved. **וַיַּעַם הָעִצּוֹת לוֹ**, "to make himself roads," cannot be understood as referring either to fortifications and military posts, or to roads for cattle and free pasturage in the Syrian kingdom, since Samaria and Damascus were cities; nor can it signify the establishment of custom-houses, but only the clearing of portions of the city for the purpose of trade and free intercourse (Cler., Ges., etc.), or for the establishment of bazaars, which would occupy a whole street (Böttcher, Thenius; see also Movers, *Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 135).—"And I," said Ahab, "will let thee go upon a covenant" (a treaty on oath), and then made a covenant with him, giving him both life and liberty. Before **וַיֵּאָמֶר** we must supply in thought **וַיֵּאָמֶר אֶחָדָם**. This thoroughly impolitic proceeding on the part of Ahab arose not merely from a natural and inconsiderate generosity and credulity of mind (G. L. Bauer, Thenius), but from an unprincipled weakness, vanity, and blindness. To let a cruel and faithless foe go unpunished, was not only the greatest harshness to his own subjects, but open opposition to God, who had announced to him the victory, and delivered the enemy of His people into his hand.<sup>1</sup> Even if Ahab had no express command from God to put Benhadad to death, as Saul had in 1 Sam. xv. 3, it was his duty to punish this bitter foe of Israel with death, if only to secure quiet for his own subjects; as it was certainly to be foreseen that Ben-

\* Clericus is correct in the explanation which he has given: "Although, therefore, this act of Ahab had all the appearance of clemency, it was not an act of true clemency, which ought not to be shown towards violent aggressors, who if released will do much more injury than before, as Benhadad really did. God had given the victory to Ahab, and delivered the guilty king into his hands, that he might inflict punishment upon him, not that he might treat him kindly. And Ahab, who had allowed so many prophets to be slain by his wife Jezebel, had no great clemency at other times."

hadad would not keep the treaty which had been wrung from him by force, as was indeed very speedily proved (see ch. xxii. 1).

Vers. 35–43. *The verdict of God upon Ahab's conduct towards Benhadad.*—Vers. 35, 36. A disciple of the prophets received instructions from God, to announce to the king that God would punish him for letting Benhadad go, and to do this, as Nathan had formerly done in the case of David (2 Sam. xii. 1 sqq.), by means of a symbolical action, whereby the king was led to pronounce sentence upon himself. The disciple of the prophets said to his companion, “in the word of Jehovah,” *i.e.* by virtue of a revelation from God (see at ch. xiii. 2), “Smite me;” and when the friend refused to smite him, he announced to him that because of this disobedience to the voice of the Lord, after his departure from him a lion would meet him and smite him, *i.e.* would kill him; a threat which was immediately fulfilled. This occurrence shows with how severe a punishment all opposition to the commandments of God to the prophets was followed, as a warning for others; just as in the similar occurrence in ch. xiii. 24.—Ver. 27. The disciple of the prophets then asked another to smite him, and he smote him, “smiting and wounding,” *i.e.* so that he not only smote, but also wounded him (*vid.* Ewald, § 280, *a*). He wished to be smitten and wounded, not to disguise himself, or that he might be able to appeal loudly to the king for help to obtain his rights, as though he had suffered some wrong (Ewald), nor merely to assume the deceptive appearance of a warrior returning from the battle (Thenius), but to show to Ahab symbolically what he had to expect from Benhadad whom he had released (C. a Lap., Calm., etc.).—Ver. 38. With these wounds he placed himself in the king's path, and disguised himself (עָרַב as in 1 Sam. xxviii. 8) by a bandage over his eyes. עָרַב does not mean ashes (Syr., Vulg., Luth., etc.), but corresponds to the Chaldee אַרְבַּע, head-band, τελαμών (LXX.).—Vers. 39, 40. When the king passed by, he cried out to him and related the following fictitious tale: He had gone to the war, and a man had come aside to him (סַוֵּר as in Ex. iii. 3, Judg. xiv. 8, etc.), and had given a man (a prisoner) into his care with this command, that he was to watch him, and if he should be missing he was to answer for his life with his own life, or to pay a talent of silver (as a punishment). The rest may be easily imagined, namely the request



to be saved from this punishment. Ahab answered (ver. 40), כִּן מִשְׁפָּטֶךָ, "thus thy sentence, thou hast decided," *i.e.* thou hast pronounced thine own sentence, and must endure the punishment stated.—Vers. 41, 42. Then the disciple of the prophets drew the bandage quickly from his eyes, so that the king recognised him as a prophet, and announced to him the word of the Lord: "Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man of my ban (*i.e.* Benhadad, who has fallen under my ban), thy life shall stand for his life, and thy people for his people," *i.e.* the destruction to which Benhadad was devoted will fall upon thee and thy people. The expression אִישׁ-חַרְמִי (man of my ban) showed Ahab clearly enough what ought to have been done with Benhadad. A person on whom the ban was pronounced was to be put to death (Lev. xxvii. 29).—Ver 43. The king therefore went home, and returned sullen (פָּר, from פָּרַר) and morose to Samaria.

#### CHAP. XXI. THE MURDER AND ROBBERY OF NABOTH.

After these events Ahab was seized with such a desire for a vineyard which was situated near his palace at Jezreel, that when Naboth, the owner of the vineyard, refused to part with his paternal inheritance, he became thoroughly dejected, until his wife Jezebel paved the way for the forcible seizure of the desired possession by the shameful execution of Naboth (vers. 1-15). But when Ahab was preparing to take possession of the vineyard, Elijah came to meet him with the announcement, that both he and his wife would be visited by the Lord with a bloody death for this murder and robbery, and that his idolatry would be punished with the extermination of all his house (vers. 16-26). Ahab was so affected by this, that he humbled himself before God; whereupon the Lord told Elijah, that the threatened judgment should not burst upon his house till after Ahab's death (vers. 27-29).

Vers. 1-15.—Ahab wanted to obtain possession of the vineyard of Naboth, which was in Jezreel (אֶשְׂרָא refers to פָּרַם), near the palace of the king, either in exchange for another vineyard or for money, that he might make a vegetable garden of it. From the fact that Ahab is called the king of Samaria we may infer that Jezreel, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18), was only a summer residence of the king.—Ver. 3. Naboth refused

to part with the vineyard, because it was the inheritance of his fathers, that is to say, on religious grounds (הֵלֵלָהּ לִי מִירוּשָׁה), because the sale of a paternal inheritance was forbidden in the law (Lev. xxv. 23–28; Num. xxxvi. 7 sqq.). He was therefore not merely at liberty as a personal right to refuse the king's proposal, but bound by the commandment of God.—Ver. 4. Instead of respecting this tender feeling of shrinking from the transgression of the law and desisting from his coveting, Ahab went home, *i.e.* to Samaria (cf. ver. 8), sullen and morose (סָר וְחָצָה as in ch. xx. 43), lay down upon his bed, turned his face (*viz.* to the wall; cf. 2 Kings xx. 2)—“after the manner of sorrowful persons, who shrink from and refuse all conversation, and even the sight of others” (Seb. Schmidt)—and did not eat. This childish mode of giving expression to his displeasure at Naboth's refusal to comply with his wish, shows very clearly that Ahab was a man sold under sin (ver. 20), who only wanted the requisite energy to display the wickedness of his heart in vigorous action.—Vers. 5–7. When Jezebel learned the cause of Ahab's ill-humour, she said to him, “Thou, dost thou now exercise royal authority over Israel?” הֲתִשָּׁלֵט is placed first for the sake of emphasis, and the sentence is to be taken as an ironical question, as it has been by the LXX. “I (if thou hast not courage enough to act) will procure thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”—Vers. 8, 9. The shameless woman then wrote a letter in the name of Ahab, sealed it below with the royal seal, which probably bore the king's signature and was stamped upon the writing instead of signing the name, as is done at the present day among Arabs, Turks, and Persians (*vid.* Paulsen, *Beg. der Morgenl.* p. 295 sqq.), to give it the character of a royal command (cf. Esther viii. 13, Dan. vi. 17), and sent this letter (the *Chethib* חֶתֶב is correct, and the *Keri* has arisen from a misunderstanding) to the elders and nobles of his town (*i.e.* the members of the magistracy, Deut. xvi. 18), who lived near Naboth, and therefore had an opportunity to watch his mode of life, and appeared to be the most suitable persons to institute the charge that was to be brought against him. The letter ran thus: “Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people, and set two worthless men opposite to him, that they may give evidence against him: Thou hast blasphemed God and king; and lead him out and stone him, that he may die.” Jezebel ordered the fasting for a sign, as though some public



crime or heavy load of guilt rested upon the city, for which it was necessary that it should humble itself before God (1 Sam. vii. 6). The intention was, that at the very outset the appearance of justice should be given to the legal process about to be instituted in the eyes of all the citizens, and the stamp of veracity impressed upon the crime of which Naboth was to be accused. **בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם** . . . **הוֹשִׁיבוּ**, "*seat him at the head of the people,*" i.e. bring him to the court of justice as a defendant before all the people. The expression may be explained from the fact, that a sitting of the elders was appointed for judicial business, in which Naboth and the witnesses who were to accuse him of blasphemy took part *seated*. To preserve the appearance of justice, two witnesses were appointed, according to the law in Deut. xvii. 6, 7, xix. 15, Num. xxxv. 30; but worthless men, as at the trial of Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 60). **בֵּרַךְ אֱלֹהִים**, to bless God, i.e. to bid Him farewell, to dismiss Him, as in Job ii. 9, equivalent to blaspheming God. God and king are mentioned together, like God and prince in Ex. xxii. 27, to make it possible to accuse Naboth of transgressing this law, and to put him to death as a blasphemer of God, according to Deut. xiii. 11 and xvii. 5, where the punishment of stoning is awarded to idolatry as a practical denial of God. Blaspheming the king is not to be taken as a second crime to be added to the blasphemy of God; but blaspheming the king, as the visible representative of God, was *eo ipso* also blaspheming God.—Vers. 11-13. The elders of Jezreel executed this command without delay; a striking proof both of deep moral corruption and of slavish fear of the tyranny of the ruthless queen.—Vers. 14, 15. When the report of Naboth's execution was brought to her, she called upon Ahab to take possession of his vineyard (**רִשׁ = רִשָּׁה**, Deut. ii. 24). As Naboth's sons were put to death at the same time, according to 2 Kings ix. 26, the king was able to confiscate his property; not, indeed, on any rule laid down in the Mosaic law, but according to a principle involved in the very idea of high treason. Since, for example, in the case of blasphemy the property of the criminal was forfeited to the Lord as *cherem* (Deut. xiii. 16), the property of traitors was regarded as forfeited to the king.

Vers. 16-26. But when Ahab went down to Jezreel to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, Elijah came to meet him by the command of God, with the word of the Lord,

“Hast thou murdered and also taken possession?” The question served to sharpen his conscience, since Ahab was obliged to admit the fact. **אִישׁר בְּשִׁמְרֹן** means “who lives at Samaria,” for when Elijah came to meet him, Ahab was in Jezreel. Elijah then said to him still further: “Thus saith the Lord: In the place where the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, will they also lick thine, yea, thy blood.” **נָם אֶתָּה** serves as an emphatic repetition of the suffix (cf. Ges. § 121, 3). This threat was only so far fulfilled upon Ahab, from the compassion of God, and in consequence of his humbling himself under the divine judgment (vers. 27–29), that dogs licked his blood at Samaria when the carriage was washed in which he had died (ch. xxii. 38); but it was literally fulfilled in the case of his son Joram, whose corpse was cast into Naboth’s piece of ground (2 Kings ix. 25, 26).—Ver. 20. Ahab answered, “Hast thou found me (met with me), O mine enemy?” (not, hast thou ever found me thine enemy?—Vulg., Luth.) *i.e.* dost thou come to meet me again, mine enemy? He calls Elijah his enemy, to take the sting from the prophet’s threat as an utterance caused by personal enmity. But Elijah fearlessly replied, “I have found (thee), because thou sellest thyself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord.” He then announced to him, in vers. 21, 22, the extermination of his house, and to Jezebel, as the principal sinner, the most ignominious end (ver. 23). **הִתְמַכֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרָע**, to sell one’s self to do evil, *i.e.* to give one’s self to evil so as to have no will of one’s own, to make one’s self the slave of evil (cf. ver. 25, 2 Kings xvii. 17). The consequence of this is *πεπραῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ* (Rom. vii. 14), sin exercising unlimited power over the man who gives himself up to it as a slave. For vers. 21, 22, see ch. xiv. 10, 11, xv. 29, 30, xvi. 3, 12, 13. The threat concerning Jezebel (ver. 23) was literally fulfilled, according to 2 Kings ix. 30 sqq. **חַל**, written defectively for **חַיִל**, as in 2 Sam. xx. 15, is properly the open space by the town-wall, *pomarium*. Instead of **בְּחַל** we have **בְּחֵלֶק** in the repetition of this threat in 2 Kings ix. 10, 36, 37, and consequently Thenius and others propose to alter the **חַל** here. But there is no necessity for this, as **בְּחֵלֶק**, on the portion, *i.e.* the town-land, of Jezreel (not, in the field at Jezreel), is only a more general epithet denoting the locality, and **חַל** is proved to be the original word by the LXX.—Vers. 25 and 26 contain a reflection on the part of the historian concerning Ahab’s ungodly



conduct, whereby he brought such an ignominious end upon himself and his house. רַק לֹא הָיָה וְנֹ, "only there has not been (one) like Ahab," *i.e.* there was no one else like Ahab, "who sold himself," etc. הַסִּיתָה for הִסְתָּה, from סִית, to entice, to seduce or lead astray (cf. Ewald, § 114, *a*, and Ges. § 72, Anm. 6). וַיַּחֲעֹב, and he acted abominably. *Amorites*: for Canaanites, as in Gen. xv. 16, etc.

Vers. 27-29. This terrible threat made such an impression upon Ahab, that he felt deep remorse, and for a time at least was sincerely penitent. Rending the clothes, putting on the mourning garment of hair (שֵׁקֶל), and fasting, are frequently mentioned as external signs of humiliation before God or of deep mourning on account of sin. יֵהַלֵּךְ אֵט, he walked about lightly (slowly), like one in deep trouble. This repentance was neither hypocritical, nor purely external; but it was sincere even if it was not lasting and produced no real conversion. For the Lord Himself acknowledged it to be humiliation before Him (ver. 29), and said to Elijah, that because of it He would not bring the threatened calamity upon Ahab's house in his own lifetime, but only in the days of his son. אָבִי for אֲבִי, as in ver. 21.

CHAP. XXII. WAR OF AHAB AND JEHOSEPHAT AGAINST THE SYRIANS,  
AND DEATH OF AHAB. REIGNS OF JEHOSEPHAT OF JUDAH AND  
AHAZIAH OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1-40. ALLIED CAMPAIGN OF AHAB AND JEHOSEPHAT AGAINST THE SYRIANS AT RAMOTH, AND DEATH OF AHAB (compare 2 Chron. xviii. 2-34).—Ver. 1. "And they rested three years; there was no war between Aram and Israel." יָשַׁב here is to keep quiet, to undertake nothing, as in Judg. v. 17, etc. The subject to וַיֵּשְׁבוּ is Aram and Israel mentioned in the second clause. The length of time given here points back to the end of the war described in ch. xx.—Vers. 2-4. In the third year (not necessarily "towards the end of it," as Thenius supposes, for Jehoshaphat's visit preceded the renewal of the war) Jehoshaphat visited the king of Israel, with whom he had already formed a marriage alliance by marrying his son to Ahab's daughter (2 Chron. xviii. 1; 2 Kings viii. 18). Ahab then said to his servants that the king of Syria had kept the city of *Ramoth* in Gilead (probably situated on the site of the present *Szalt*: see at

Deut. iv. 43), which he ought to have given up, according to the conditions of the peace in ch. xx. 34, and asked Jehoshaphat whether he would go with him to the war against Ramoth, which the latter promised to do. "I as thou, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses;" *i.e.* I am at thy service with the whole of my military power. In the place of the last words we have therefore in the Chronicles *וְעִמָּךְ בְּמִלְחָמָה*, "I am with thee in the war," *i.e.* I will assist thee in the war.—Vers. 5, 6. But as Jehoshaphat wished also to inquire the word of the Lord concerning the war, Ahab gathered together about 400 prophets, who all predicted as out of one mouth a prosperous result to the campaign. These 400 prophets are neither the 400 prophets of Asherah who had not appeared upon Carmel when Elijah was there (ch. xviii. 19, 20), nor prophets of Baal, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, since Ahab could not inquire of them *אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה*. On the other hand, they were not "true prophets of Jehovah and disciples of the prophets" (Cler., Then.), but prophets of the Jehovah worshipped under the image of an ox, who practised prophesying as a trade without any call from God, and even if they were not in the pay of the idolatrous kings of Israel, were at any rate in their service. For Jehoshaphat did not recognise them as genuine prophets of Jehovah, but inquired whether there was not such a prophet still in existence (ver. 7), that they might inquire the will of the Lord of him (*שְׁאֵלָתוֹ*).—Ver. 8. Ahab then named to him one, but one whom he hated, because he never prophesied good concerning him, but only evil,<sup>1</sup> namely, *Micah* the son of Jimlah. Josephus and the Rabbins suppose him to have been the prophet, whose name is not given, who had condemned Ahab in the previous war for setting Benhadad at liberty (ch. xx. 35 sqq.). But there is no foundation for this, and it is mere conjecture. At any rate, Ahab had already come to know Micah as a prophet of evil, and, as is evident from ver. 26, had had him imprisoned on account of an unwelcome prophecy. Ahab's dislike to this prophet had its root in the belief, which was connected with heathen notions of prophecy and conjuring, that the prophets stood in such a relation to the Deity that the latter necessarily fulfilled their will; a belief which had arisen from the fact that the predictions of true prophets always came to pass (see at Num. xxii. 6 and 17).

<sup>1</sup> Just as Agamemnon says to Calchas in *Il.* iv. 106: *μάντι κακῶν, οὐ πάποτε μοι τό κρηγνον εἶπας, κ.τ.λ.*



—Ver. 9. By Jehoshaphat's desire, Ahab nevertheless sent a chamberlain (סָרִיס; see at 1 Sam. viii. 15 and Gen. xxxvii. 36) to fetch Micah (מִיכָה, bring quickly).—Vers. 10-12. In the meantime the prophets of the calves continued to prophesy success before the two kings, who sat upon thrones "clothed in robes," *i.e.* in royal attire, upon a floor in front of the gate of Samaria. גֶּזֶן, a threshing-floor, *i.e.* a levelled place in the open air. In order to give greater effect to their announcement, one of them, named *Zedekiyah* the son of Cnaanah, made himself iron horns, probably iron spikes held upon the head (Thenius), and said, "With these wilt thou thrust down Aram even to destruction." This symbolical action was an embodiment of the figure used by Moses in the blessing of Joseph (Deut. xxxiii. 17): "Buffalo horns are his (Joseph's) horns, with them he thrusts down nations" (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Beitrr.* ii. p. 131), and was intended to transfer to Ahab in the case before them that splendid promise which applied to the tribe of Ephraim. But the pseudo-prophet overlooked the fact that the fulfilment of the whole of the blessing of Moses was dependent upon fidelity to the Lord. All the rest of the prophets adopted the same tone, saying, "Go to Ramoth, and prosper," *i.e.* and thou wilt prosper. (On this use of two imperatives see Ges. § 130, 2).—Vers. 13, 14. The messenger who fetched Micah tried on the way to persuade him to prophesy success to the king as the other prophets had done; but Micah replied with a solemn oath, that he would only speak what Jehovah said to him.

Vers. 15-28. *Micah's prophecy concerning the war, and his testimony against the lying prophets.*—Vers. 15, 16. When Micah had come into the presence of the king, he replied to his question, "Shall we go against Ramoth?" etc., in just the same words as the pseudo-prophets, to show the king how he would speak if he were merely guided by personal considerations, as the others were. From the verbal agreement in his reply, and probably also from the tone in which he spoke, Ahab perceived that his words were ironical, and adjured him to speak only truth in the name of Jehovah. Micah then told him what he had seen in the spirit (ver. 17): "I saw all Israel scatter itself upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd;" and then added the word of the Lord: "These have no master; let them return every one to his house in peace." That is to say, Ahab would fall in the war against Ramoth in Gilead, and his army scatter itself with-

out a leader upon the mountains of Gilead, and then every one would return home, without being pursued and slain by the enemy. Whilst Zedekiyah attempted to give greater emphasis to his prophecy by symbolically transferring to Ahab's enterprise the success predicted by Moses, Micah, on the other hand, showed to the king out of the law what would really take place in the intended war, namely, that very state of things which Moses before his departure sought to avert from Israel, by the prayer that the Lord would set a man over the congregation to lead them out and in, that the congregation might not become as sheep that have no shepherd (Num. xxvii. 16, 17).—Ver. 18. But although Ahab had asked for a true word of the Lord, yet he endeavoured to attribute the unfavourable prophecy to Micah's personal enmity, saying to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell thee that he prophesies nothing good concerning me, but only evil (misfortune)?"—Vers. 19 sqq. Micah was not led astray, however, by this, but disclosed to him by a further revelation the hidden ground of the false prophecy of his 400 prophets. לָכֵן שָׁמַע וְיָי, "therefore, sc. because thou thinkest so, hear the word of Jehovah: I saw the Lord sit upon His throne, and all the army of heaven stand around Him (עֲמִיד עֲלָיו as in Gen. xviii. 8, etc.) on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who will persuade Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead? and one spake so, the other so; and the spirit came forth (from the ranks of the rest), stood before Jehovah, and said, I will persuade him. . . I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He (Jehovah) said, Persuade, and thou wilt also be able; go forth and do so. And now Jehovah has put a lying spirit into the mouth of all his prophets; but Jehovah (Himself) has spoken evil (through me) concerning thee." The vision described by Micah was not merely a subjective drapery introduced by the prophet, but a simple communication of the real inward vision by which the fact had been revealed to him, that the prophecy of those 400 prophets was inspired by a lying spirit. The spirit (הָרִיחַ) which inspired these prophets as a lying spirit is neither Satan, nor any evil spirit whatever, but, as the definite article and the whole of the context show, the personified spirit of prophecy, which is only so far a πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον τῆς πλάνης (Zech. xiii. 2; 1 John iv. 6) and under the influence of Satan as it works as רִיחַ שָׁקֶר in accordance with the will of God. For even the predictions of the false prophets, as we may see from the passage before us,



and also from Zech. xiii. 2 and the scriptural teaching in other passages concerning the spiritual principle of evil, were not mere inventions of human reason and fancy; but the false prophets as well as the true were governed by a supernatural spiritual principle, and, according to divine appointment, were under the influence of the evil spirit in the service of falsehood, just as the true prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit in the service of the Lord. The manner in which the supernatural influence of the lying spirit upon the false prophets is brought out in Micah's vision is, that the spirit of prophecy (רוח הנבואה) offers itself to deceive Ahab as רוח שקר in the false prophets. Jehovah sends this spirit, inasmuch as the deception of Ahab has been inflicted upon him as a judgment of God for his unbelief. But there is no statement here to the effect that this lying spirit proceeded from Satan, because the object of the prophet was simply to bring out the working of God in the deception practised upon Ahab by his prophets.—The words of Jehovah, "Persuade Ahab, thou wilt be able," and "Jehovah has put a lying spirit," etc., are not to be understood as merely expressing the permission of God, as the fathers and the earlier theologians suppose. According to the Scriptures, God does work evil, but without therefore willing it and bringing forth sin. The prophet's view is founded upon this thought: Jehovah has ordained that Ahab, being led astray by a prediction of his prophets inspired by the spirit of lies, shall enter upon the war, that he may find therein the punishment of his ungodliness. As he would not listen to the word of the Lord in the mouth of His true servants, God had given him up (παρέδωκεν, Rom. i. 24, 26, 28) in his unbelief to the working of the spirits of lying. But that this did not destroy the freedom of the human will is evident from the expression תַּפְתֵּהוּ, "thou canst persuade him," and still more clearly from נָם תִּיכַל, "thou wilt also be able," since they both presuppose the possibility of resistance to temptation on the part of man.

Zedekiah was so enraged at this unveiling of the spirit of lying by which the pseudo-prophets were impelled, that he smote Micah upon the cheek, and said (ver. 24): "Where did the Spirit of Jehovah depart from me, to speak to thee?" To אִי־יָהּ the Chronicles add as an explanation, הִי־רָקָה: "by what way had he gone from me?" (cf. 2 Kings iii. 8, and Ewald, § 326, a.) Zedekiah was conscious that he had not invented his prophecy himself, and therefore it was that he rose up with such audacity

against Micah; but he only proved that it was not the Spirit of God which inspired him. If he had been inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, he would not have thought it necessary to try and give effect to his words by rude force, but he would have left the defence of his cause quietly to the Lord, as Micah did, who calmly replied to the zealot thus (ver. 25): "Thou wilt see it (that the Spirit of Jehovah had departed from thee) on the day when thou shalt go from chamber to chamber to hide thyself" (הִתְחַבֵּה for אֶתְחַבֵּה, see Ges. § 75, Anm. 21). This was probably fulfilled at the close of the war, when Jezebel or the friends of Ahab made the pseudo-prophets suffer for the calamitous result; although there is nothing said about this in our history, which confines itself to the main facts.—Vers. 26, 27. But Ahab had Micah taken back to Amon the commander of the city, and to Joash the king's son, with the command to put him in prison and to feed him with bread and water of affliction, till he came safe back (בְּשָׁלוֹם) from the war. From the expression הִשְׁבִּיחֵהוּ, "lead him back," it evidently follows that Micah had been fetched from the commander of the city, who had no doubt kept him in custody, as the city-prison was probably in his house. The opposite cannot be inferred from the words "put him into the prison;" for this command, when taken in connection with what follows, simply enjoins a more severe imprisonment.—Ver. 28. In his consciousness of the divine truth of his announcement, Micah left the king with these words: "If thou come back safe, Jehovah has not spoken by me. Hear it, all ye nations." עַמִּים does not mean people, for it is only in the antique language of the Pentateuch that the word has this meaning, but nations; and Micah thereby invokes not only the persons present as witnesses of the truth of his words, but the nations generally, Israel and the surrounding nations, who were to discern the truth of his word from the events which would follow (see at Mic. i. 2).

Vers. 29–40. *The issue of the war, and death of Ahab.*—Ver. 29. Ahab, disregarding Micah's prophecy, went on with the expedition, and was even joined by Jehoshaphat, of whom we should have thought that, after what had occurred, he at any rate would have drawn back. He was probably deterred by false shame, however, from retracting the unconditional promise of help which he had given to Ahab, merely in consequence of a prophetic utterance, which Ahab had brought against his



own person from Micah's subjective dislike. But Jehoshaphat narrowly escaped paying the penalty for it with his life (ver. 32), and on his fortunate return to Jerusalem had to listen to a severe reproof from the prophet Jehu in consequence (2 Chron. xix. 2).—Vers. 30, 31. And even Ahab could not throw off a certain fear of the fulfilment of Micah's prophecy. He therefore resolved to go to the battle in disguise, that he might not be recognised by the enemy. **הִתְחַפֵּשׂ וְיָבֵא** ("disguise myself and go into the battle," *i.e.* I will go into the battle in disguise): an *infin. absol.*,—a broken but strong form of expression, which is frequently used for the imperative, but very rarely for the first person of the voluntative (cf. Ewald, § 328, c), and which is probably employed here to express the anxiety that impelled Ahab to take so much trouble to ensure his own safety. (Luther has missed the meaning in his version; in the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is correctly given.) **וְאַתָּה לְבָשׁ**, "but do thou put on thy clothes." These words are not to be taken as a command, but simply in this sense: "thou mayest (canst) put on thy (royal) dress, since there is no necessity for thee to take any such precautions as I have to take." There is no ground for detecting any cunning, *vafrities*, on the part of Ahab in these words, as some of the older commentators have done, as though he wished thereby to divert the predicted evil from himself to Jehoshaphat. But we may see very clearly that Ahab had good reason to be anxious about his life, from the command of the Syrian king to the captains of his war-chariots (ver. 31) to fight chiefly against the king of Israel. We cannot infer from this, however, that Ahab was aware of the command. The measure adopted by him may be sufficiently accounted for from his fear of the fulfilment of Micah's evil prophecy, to which there may possibly have been added some personal offence that had been given on his part to the Syrian king in connection with the negotiations concerning the surrender of Ramoth, which had no doubt preceded the war. The thirty-two commanders of the war-chariots and cavalry are, no doubt, the commanders who had taken the place of the thirty-two kings (ch. xxi. 24). "Fight not against small and great, but against the king of Israel only," *i.e.* endeavour above all others to fight against the king of Israel and to slay him.—Vers. 32, 33. And when the leaders of the war-chariots saw Jehoshaphat in the battle in his royal clothes, they took him

for the king of Israel (Ahab), and pressed upon him. Then Jehoshaphat cried out; and from this they perceived that he was not the king of Israel, and turned away from him. **וַהֲמָה** **אָמְרוּ אִךְ וְגו'**, "and they thought, it is only (*i.e.* no other than) the king of Israel." **יָסְרוּ עָלָיו**, "they bent upon him." Instead of this we have in the Chronicles **יָסְבוּ עָלָיו**, "they surrounded him," and Thenius proposes to alter our text to this; but there is no necessity for doing so, as **סִוּר** also occurs in a similar sense and connection in ch. xx. 39. How far Jehoshaphat was saved by his crying out, is not precisely stated. He probably cried out to his followers to come to his aid, from which the Syrians discovered that he was not the king of Israel, whom they were in search of. The chronicler adds (ch. ii. 18, 31): "and the Lord helped him and turned them off from him;" thus believingly tracing the rescue of the king to its higher causality, though without our having any right to infer from this that Jehoshaphat cried aloud to God for help, which is not implied in the words of the Chronicles.—Ver. 34. But notwithstanding the precaution he had taken, Ahab did not escape the judgment of God. "A man drew his bow in his simplicity" (**לְתַמּוֹ**) as in 2 Sam. xv. 11), *i.e.* without trying to hit any particular man, "and shot the king of Israel between the skirts and the coat of mail." **דְּבָקִים** are "joints by which the iron thorax was attached to the hanging skirt, which covered the abdomen" (Cler.). The true coat of mail covered only the breast, to somewhere about the last rib; and below this it had an appendage (skirts) consisting of moveable joints. Between this appendage and the true coat of mail there was a groove through which the arrow passed, and, entering the abdomen, inflicted upon the king a mortal wound; so that he said to his charioteer: **הֲפֹךְ יָדֶיךָ**, *verte manus tuas*, *i.e.* turn round (cf. 2 Kings ix. 23). The *Chethib* **יָדֶיךָ** (plural) is the only correct reading, since the driver held the reins in both his hands. **כִּי הִחַלֵּיתִי**: for I am wounded. —Ver. 35. "And the conflict ascended," *i.e.* became more violent. The use of the verb **עָלָה** in this sense may be accounted for on the supposition that it is founded upon the figure of a rising stream, which becomes more and more impetuous the higher it rises (*vid.* Isa. viii. 7). "And the king was stationed (*i.e.* remained or kept himself in an upright posture) upon the chariot before the Syrians," that he might not dishearten his soldiers, "and died in the evening, and poured the



blood of the wounds in the middle hollow (פִּי) of the chariot.” —Ver. 36. Towards sunset the cry went through the army (הַמַּחֲנֶה, the army drawn up in battle array), “Every one into his city and into his land!” —In ver. 37 the historian shows how the word of the Lord was fulfilled in the case of Ahab. “Thus the king died and came to Samaria:” equivalent to, thus the king reached Samaria dead; and he was buried there. —Ver. 38. When they washed the chariot at the pool of Samaria, the dogs licked his blood, while the harlots were bathing (in the pool). וְהַזְנוֹת רָחֳצוּ is a circumstantial clause, and רָחַץ means to bathe, as in Ex. ii. 5. This explanation, which is sustained by the grammar and is the only tenable one, disposes of the several arbitrary interpretations of these words, together with the emendations of the text of which Thenius is so fond. In this way was the word of the Lord through Elijah (ch. xxi. 19) and the unknown prophet (ch. xx. 42) fulfilled; also the prediction of Micah (ver. 17). Ahab had paid the penalty with his own life for sparing the life of Benhadad (ch. xx. 42), and his blood was licked up by the dogs (ch. xxi. 19). The fact that the dogs licked up the blood and the harlots were bathing in the pool, when the chariot that was stained with the blood of Ahab was being washed, is mentioned as a sign of the ignominious contempt which was heaped upon him at his death. —Vers. 39, 40. Close of Ahab’s history. We have no further account of his buildings. “The ivory palace,” *i.e.* the palace inlaid with ivory, he had probably built in his capital Samaria (cf. Amos iii. 15).

Vers. 41-50. REIGN OF JEHOSEPHAT OF JUDAH. — The account of this in the books before us is a very condensed one. Beside the two campaigns in which he joined with Ahab and Joram of Israel against the Syrians and Moabites, and which are described in the history of the kingdom of Israel (ch. xxii. 1-35 and 2 Kings iii.), we have simply a short notice of his attempt to restore the trade with Ophir, and a general statement of the spirit of his reign; whereas we learn from the extract preserved in the Chronicles from the annals of the kings, that he also carried on a victorious war against the Edomites and Ammonites (2 Chron. xx.), and did a great deal to promote the spread of the knowledge of the law among his people, and to carry out the restoration of a better administration of justice, and to

improve the condition of the army (2 Chron. xvii. and xix.).—Vers. 41–44, which give the age of Jehoshaphat when he ascended the throne, and the duration and character of his reign, are also found with slight deviations in 2 Chron. xx. 31–33, in the closing summary of the history of his reign.—Ver. 43. “He walked entirely in the way of his father Asa and departed not from it, to do what was well-pleasing to the Lord,” whereas Asa’s heart had become more estranged from the Lord in the last years of his reign (see ch. xv. 18 sqq.).—On the worship of the high places (ver. 43), see at ch. xv. 14.—Ver. 44. He maintained peace with the king of Israel, *i.e.* with every one of the Israelitish kings who were contemporaneous with him, viz. Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram, whereas hitherto the two kingdoms had assumed an attitude of hostility towards each other. Even if this friendly bearing towards Israel was laudable in itself, Jehoshaphat went beyond the bounds of what was allowable, since he formed a marriage alliance with the house of Ahab, by letting his son Joram marry a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (2 Chron. xviii. 1).—Ver. 45. The brave deeds (הַנְּבוֹרָה) which he performed include both his efforts to strengthen his kingdom, partly by raising fortifications and organizing the military force, and partly by instructing the people in the law and improving the administration of justice (2 Chron. xvii. 7–19 and xix. 4–11), and also the wars which he waged, viz. the expeditions already mentioned.—For ver. 46 see ch. xv. 12.—Ver. 47. “There was (then) no (real) king in Edom; a vicegerent was king,” *i.e.* governed the country. This remark is introduced here merely on account of what follows, namely, to show how it was that Jehoshaphat was able to attempt to restore the maritime trade with Ophir. If we observe this connection between the verse before us and what follows, we cannot infer from it, as Ewald does (*Gesch.* iii. pp. 464 and 474 sqq.), that the Edomites with Egyptian help had forced from Rehoboam both their liberty and also their right to have a king of their own blood, and had remained in this situation till Jehoshaphat completely subjugated them again. (See the remarks on ch. xi. 21, 22.) All that can be gathered from 2 Chron. xx. is, that the Edomites, in league with the Ammonites and other desert tribes, made an incursion into Judah, and therefore tried to throw off the supremacy of Judah, but did not succeed in their attempt.—Vers. 48, 49. The brief notice concerning Jehoshaphat’s attempt to



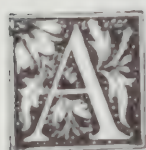
build Tarshish ships (for the word, see p. 150) for the voyage to Ophir is expanded in 2 Chron. xx. 36, 37, where we learn that Jehoshaphat had allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel for this purpose, and that the prophet Eliezer predicted the destruction of his ships on account of this alliance. When the ships had been broken in pieces in Eziongeber, no doubt by a storm, Ahaziah made this fresh proposal to him: "Let my people sail with thy people;" but Jehoshaphat would not. Ahaziah evidently wanted to persuade Jehoshaphat to make another attempt, after the destruction of the ships which were first built; but Jehoshaphat did not agree to it any more, because it was impossible for him, after the fulfilment of Eliezer's prediction, to expect a more favourable result. Thus the two accounts can be harmonized in a very simple manner, with the exception of the words "to go to Tarshish," which we find in the Chronicles in the place of "to go to Ophir," the reading in our text, and which sprang from an erroneous interpretation of the expression "ships of Tarshish" (see above, p. 150). The *Chethîb* עֶשֶׂר is an error of the pen for עֶשֶׂה (*Keri*); but נִשְׁבְּרָה (*Chethîb*) is not to be altered into נִשְׁבְּרִי, since the construction of a singular verb with the subject following in the plural is by no means rare (*vid.* Ewald, § 317, *a*). On Eziongeber and Ophir, see at ch. ix. 26 and 28.

Vers. 51-53. REIGN OF AHAZIAH OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 51. For the *datum* "in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat," see at 2 Kings i. 17.—Vers. 52, 53. Ahaziah walked in the way of his father and his mother, who had introduced the worship of Baal into the kingdom, and in the way of Jeroboam, who had set up the calves (*cf.* ch. xvi. 30-33).—In ver. 53 it is again expressly added, that he adored and worshipped Baal, as in ch. xvi. 31.—With this general description of his character not only is the chapter brought to a close, but the first book of Kings also,—very unsuitably, however, since the further account of Ahaziah's reign and of his death is given in ch. i. of the following book. It would have been incomparably more suitable to commence a fresh chapter with ver. 52, and indeed to commence the second book there also.

## SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS

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CHAP. I. AHAZIAH'S ILLNESS. HIS DEATH ANNOUNCED BY ELIJAH.



**A**FTER the Moabites had rebelled against Israel, Ahaziah became sick in consequence of a fall through a grating in his upper room, and sent messengers to Ekron to consult the idol Baalzebub concerning the result of his illness. By the command of God, however, Elijah met the messengers on the road, and told them that the king would die (vers. 1-8). When Ahaziah sent soldiers to fetch Elijah, the messengers were miraculously slain on two successive occasions, and it was only his humiliation before the prophet which saved the third captain and his host from sharing a similar fate; whereupon Elijah went with him to the king, and repeated the threat already announced on account of his idolatry, which was very soon fulfilled (vers. 9-18).

Vers. 1-8. After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel (ver. 1). The Moabites, who had been subjugated by David (2 Sam. viii. 2), had remained tributary to the kingdom of the ten tribes after the division of the kingdom. But when Israel was defeated by the Syrians at Ramoth in the time of Ahab, they took advantage of this defeat and the weakening of the Israelitish power in the country to the east of the Jordan to shake off the yoke of the Israelites, and very soon afterwards attempted an invasion of the kingdom of Judah, in alliance with the Edomites and other tribes of the desert, which terminated, however, in a great defeat, though it contributed to the maintenance of their independence. For further remarks, see at ch. iii. 4 sqq.—Ver. 2. Ahaziah could not do anything to subjugate the Moabites any further, since he was very soon afterwards taken grievously ill. He fell through the grating in his upper room at Samaria. **הַשֹּׁכֶה**, the grating, is either a window



furnished with a shutter of lattice-work, or a door of lattice-work in the upper room of the palace, but hardly a grating in the floor of the *Aliyah* for the purpose of letting light into the lower rooms, as the Rabbins supposed. On account of this misfortune, Ahaziah resorted to the Ekronitish *Baalzebub* to obtain an oracle concerning the result of his illness. *בַּעַל-זְבוֹב*, i.e. Fly-Baal, was not merely the "avertor of swarms of insects," like the *Ζεὺς ἀπομυῖος, μυίαγρος* of Elis (Ges., Winer, Movers, *Phoniz.* i. p. 175), since "the Fly-God cannot have received his name as the enemy of flies, like *lucis a non lucendo*," but was *Μυῖα θεός* (LXX., Joseph.), i.e. God represented as a fly, as a fly-idol, to which the name *Myiodes*, gnat-like, in Plin. *h. n.* xxix. 6, clearly points, and as a god of the sun and of summer must have stood in a similar relation to the flies to that of the oracle-god Apollo, who both sent diseases and took them away (*vid.* J. G. Müller, *Art. Beelzebub* in Herzog's *Cycl.* i. p. 768, and Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 260, 261). The latter observes that "these (the flies), which are governed in their coming and going by all the conditions of the weather, are apparently endowed with prophetic power themselves." This explains the fact that a special power of prophecy was attributed to this god.<sup>1</sup> *Ekron*, now *Akir*, the most northerly of the five Philistian capitals (see at Josh. xiii. 3).—Vers. 3, 4. But the angel of the Lord, the mediator of the revelations made by the invisible God to the covenant nation (see *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. pp. 185–191, transl.), had spoken to Elijah to go and meet the king's messengers, who were going to inquire of Baalzebub, and to ask them whether it was from the want of a God in Israel (*מִבְּלִי אֵין*) as in Ex. xiv. 11; see Ewald, § 323, *a*) that they turned to Baalzebub, and to announce to them the word of Jehovah, that Ahaziah would not rise up from his bed again, but would die. "And Elijah went," *sc.* to carry out the divine commission.—Vers. 5–8. The messengers did not recognise Elijah, but yet they turned back and reported the occurrence to the king, who knew at once, from the description they gave of the

<sup>1</sup> The later Jews altered the name *Beelzebub* into *Βεελζεβοὺλ*, i.e. probably lord of the (heavenly) dwelling, as a name given to the *ἄρχων τῶν δαιμονίων* (Matt. x. 25, etc.); and the later Rabbins finally, by changing *בַּעַל-זְבוֹב* into *בַּעַל-זָבַל*, made a fly-god into a dung-god, to express in the most intense form their abomination of idolatry (see Lightfoot, *Horæ hebr. et talm. in Matt.* xii. 24, and my *bibl. Archäol.* i. pp. 440, 441).

*habitus* of the man in reply to his question, that it was Elijah the *Tishbite*. מַה מְשַׁפֵּט הָאִישׁ: "what was the manner of the man?" מְשַׁפֵּט is used here to denote the peculiarity of a person, that which in a certain sense constitutes the vital law and right of the individual personality; *figura et habitus* (Vulg.). The servants described the prophet according to his outward appearance, which in a man of character is a reflection of his inner man, as אִישׁ בָּעַל שֵׁעַר, *vir pilosus, hirsutus*. This does not mean a man with a luxuriant growth of hair, but refers to the hairy dress, i.e. the garment made of sheep-skin or goat-skin or coarse camel-hair, which was wrapped round his body; the אֲדָרְתָּ (ch. ii. 8; 1 Kings xix. 13), or אֲדָרְתָּ שֵׁעַר (Zech. xiii. 4, cf. Matt. iii. 4, Heb. xi. 37), which was worn by the prophets, not as mere ascetics, but as preachers of repentance, the rough garment denoting the severity of the divine judgments upon the effeminate nation, which revelled in luxuriance and worldly lust. And this was also in keeping with "the leather girdle," אֲזוּר עוֹר, ζώνη δερματίνη (Matt. iii. 4), whereas the ordinary girdle was of cotton or linen, and often very costly.

Vers. 9-16. After having executed the divine command, Elijah returned to the summit of the mountain, on which he dwelt. Most of the commentators suppose it to have been one of the peaks of Carmel, from ch. ii. 25 and 1 Kings xviii. 42, which is no doubt very probable, though it cannot be raised into certainty. Elijah's place of abode was known to the king; he therefore sent a captain with fifty men to fetch the prophet. To the demand of the captain, "Man of God, the king has said, Come down," Elijah replied, "And if I am a man of God, let fire fall from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty." (The expression וְאִם, *and if*, shows that Elijah's words followed immediately upon those of the captain.) This judicial miracle was immediately fulfilled.—Vers. 11, 12. The same fate befell a second captain, whom the king sent after the death of the first. He was more insolent than the first, "both because he was not brought to his senses by hearing of his punishment, and because he increased his impudence by adding *make haste* (כְּהָרָה)." —C. a Lap. For וַיֵּן וַיְדַבֵּר the LXX. (*Cod. Alex.*) have καὶ ἀνέβη καὶ ἐλάλησε, so that they read וַיַּעַל. The correctness of this reading, according to which וַיֵּן would be an error of the pen, is favoured not only by וַיַּעַל in vers. 9 and 13, but also by וַיְדַבֵּר which follows; for, as a general rule, וַיֵּן would be followed by



רִאשִׁי. The repetition of this judicial miracle was meant to show in the most striking manner not only the authority which rightfully belonged to the prophet, but also the help and protection which the Lord gave to His servants. At the same time, the question as to the "morality of the miracle," about which some have had grave doubts, is not set at rest by the remark of Thenius, that "the soldiers who were sent come into consideration here purely as instruments of a will acting in opposition to Jehovah." The third captain also carried out the ungodly command of the king, and he was not slain (vers. 13 sqq.). The first two must therefore have been guilty of some crime, which they and their people had to expiate with their death. This crime did not consist merely in their addressing him as "man of God," for the third addressed Elijah in the same way (ver. 13), but in their saying "Man of God, come down." This summons to the prophet, to allow himself to be led as a prisoner before the king, involved a contempt not only of the prophetic office in the person of Elijah, but also of the Lord, who had accredited him by miracles as His servant. The two captains who were first sent not only did what they were bound to do as servants of the king, but participated in the ungodly disposition of their lord (*συμβαίνοντες τῷ σκοπῷ τοῦ πεπομφότος*—Theodoret); they attacked the Lord with reckless daring in the person of the prophet, and the second captain, with his "Come down quickly," did it even more strongly than the first. This sin was punished, and that not by the prophet, but by the Lord Himself, who fulfilled the word of His servant.<sup>1</sup> What Elijah here did was an act of holy zeal for the honour of the Lord, in the spirit of the old covenant, under which God destroyed the insolent despisers of His name with fire and sword, to manifest the energy of His holy majesty by the side of the dead idols of the heathen. But this act cannot be transferred to the times of the new covenant, as is clearly shown in Luke ix. 54, 55, where Christ does not blame Elijah for what he did, but admonishes His disciples, who overlooked the difference between the economy of the law and that of the gospel, and in their carnal zeal wanted to imitate what Elijah had done in divine zeal for the honour of the Lord, which had been injured in his own person.—Vers. 13, 14. The king, disregarding the

<sup>1</sup> Οἱ τοῦ προφήτου κατηγοροῦντες κατὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ προφήτου κινοῦσι τὰς γλώττας, as Theodoret very aptly observes.

punishing hand of the Lord, which, even if it might possibly have been overlooked in the calamity that befell the captain who was first sent and his company, could not be misunderstood when a similar fate befell the second captain with his fifty men, sent a third company, in his defiant obduracy, to fetch the prophet. (שְׁלִישִׁים after הַמֵּשִׁים is apparently an error of the pen for שְׁלִישִׁי, as the following word הַשְּׁלִישִׁי shows.) But the third captain was better than his king, and wiser than his two predecessors. He obeyed the command of the king so far as to go to the prophet; but instead of haughtily summoning him to follow him, he bent his knee before the man of God, and prayed that his own life and the lives of his soldiers might be spared.—Vers. 15, 16. Then Elijah followed him to the king (לְפָנָיו, before him, i.e. before the king, not before the captain; and אֵתָּה for אִתָּה, see Ewald, § 264, b), having been directed to do so by the angel of the Lord, and repeated to him the word of the Lord, which he had also conveyed to him through his messengers (see vers. 4 and 6).

Vers. 17 and 18. When Ahaziah died, according to the word of the Lord through Elijah, as he had no son, he was followed upon the throne by his brother Joram, “in the second year of Joram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.” This statement is at variance both with that in ch. iii. 1, to the effect that Joram began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, and with that in 1 Kings xxii. 52, viz. that Ahaziah ascended the throne in the seventeenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat, which lasted twenty-five years, and also with the statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram of Judah became king over Judah in the fifth year of Joram of Israel. If, for example, Ahaziah of Israel died after a reign of not quite two years, at the most a year and a half, in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat; as Jehoshaphat himself reigned twenty-five years, he cannot have died till the seventh year of Joram of Israel, and his son Joram followed him upon the throne. The last of these discrepancies may be solved very simply, from the fact that, according to ch. viii. 16, Jehoshaphat was still king when his son Joram began to reign, so that Jehoshaphat abdicated in favour of his son about two years before his death. And the first discrepancy (that between ch. i. 17 and ch. iii. 1) is removed by Usher (*Annales M. ad a.m.* 3106 and 3112), Lightfoot, and others, after the example of the *Seder Olam*, by the assumption of a co-regency. According to this, when Jehoshaphat went with Ahab to Ramoth in Gilead to war against the Syrians, in



the eighteenth year of his reign, which runs parallel to the twenty-second year of the reign of Ahab, he appointed his son Joram to the co-regency, and transferred to him the administration of the kingdom. It is from this co-regency that the statement in ch. i. 17 is dated, to the effect that Joram of Israel became king in the second year of Joram of Judah. This second year of the co-regency of Joram corresponds to the eighteenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat (ch. iii. 1). And in the fifth year of his co-regency Jehoshaphat gave up the reins of government entirely to him. It is from this point of time, *i.e.* from the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, that we are to reckon the eight years of the reign of Joram (of Judah), so that he only reigned six years more after his father's death.<sup>1</sup> We have no information as to the reason which induced Jehoshaphat to abdicate in favour of his son two years before his death; for there is very little probability in the conjecture of Lightfoot (*Opp.* i. p. 85), that Jehoshaphat did this when he commenced the war with the Moabites in alliance with Joram of Israel, for the simple reason that the Moabites revolted after the death of Ahab, and Joram made preparations for attacking them immediately after their rebellion (ch. iii. 5-7), so that he must have commenced this expedition before the fifth year of his reign.

<sup>1</sup> Wolff indeed boldly declares that "the co-regency of Joram is a pure fiction, and the biblical historians do not furnish the slightest warrant for any such supposition" (see p. 628 of the treatise mentioned at p. 187); but he cannot think of any other way of reconciling the differences than by making several alterations in the text, and inventing a co-regency in the case of the Israelitish king Ahaziah. The synchronism of the reigns of the Israelitish kings necessarily requires the solution adopted in the text. For if Joram of Israel, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat and reigned twelve years (ch. iii. 1), was slain at the same time as Ahaziah of Judah (ch. ix. 24-27), and Ahaziah of Judah reigned about one year and his predecessor Joram about eight years, so that the two together certainly reigned fully eight years; Joram of Judah must have ascended the throne four years after Joram of Israel, *i.e.* in the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, which runs parallel to the fifth year of Joram of Israel. Consequently the twenty-five years of Jehoshaphat are to be reduced to twenty-three in reckoning the sum-total of the years embraced by the period of the kings. It is true that there is no analogy for this combination of the years of the reigns of two kings, since the other reductions of which different chronologists are fond are perfectly arbitrary, and the case before us stands quite alone; but this exception to the rule is indicated clearly enough in the statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram began to reign while Jehoshaphat was (still) king. When, however, Thenius objects to this mode of reconciling the differences, which even Winer adopts

CHAP. II. ELIJAH'S ASCENSION TO HEAVEN. ELISHA'S FIRST  
MIRACLES.

Vers. 1-13. ELIJAH'S ASCENSION TO HEAVEN.—Vers. 1-10. *Journey from Gilgal to the other side of the Jordan.*—Vers. 1, 2. When the time arrived that Jehovah was about to take up His servant Elijah in a tempest to heaven, Elijah went with his attendant Elisha from Gilgal down to Bethel. בַּסְעָרָה, in the tempest or storm, *i.e.* in a tempestuous storm, which was frequently the herald of the divine self-revelations in the terrestrial world (*vid.* Job xxxviii. 1, xl. 6; Ezek. i. 4; Zech. ix. 14). הַשָּׁמַיִם is the accusative of direction. *Gilgal* and *Bethel* (*Beitin*, see at 1 Kings xii. 29) were seats of schools of the prophets, which Elijah had founded in the kingdom of the ten tribes. It is now generally admitted that *Gilgal*, from which they went down to Bethel, cannot be the place of that name which was situated in the Jordan valley to the east of Jericho, but must be the *Gilgal* upon the mountains, the elevated *Jiljilia* to the south-west of Silo (*Seilun*, see at Josh. viii. 35). On the way Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, I pray, for the Lord has sent me to Bethel;" but Elisha declared with a solemn oath that he would not leave him. The Lord had revealed to both that the seal of divine attestation was to be impressed upon the work of Elijah by his being miraculously taken up into heaven, to

in the third edition of his *biibl. Real-Wörterbuch*, i. p. 539, on the ground that the reign of Joram is dated most precisely in 1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Chron. xxi. 1, 5, 20, from the death of Jehoshaphat, and that an actual co-regency, *viz.* that of Jotham, is expressly mentioned in ch. xv. 5, which does not render it at all necessary to carry the years of his reign into those of his father's, this appeal to the case of Jotham cannot prove anything, for the simple reason that the biblical text knows nothing of any co-regency of Jotham and Uzziah, but simply states that when Uzziah was smitten with leprosy, his son Jotham *judged* the people of the land, but that he did not become king till after his father's death (ch. xv. 5, 7; 2 Chron. xxvi. 21, 23). It is indeed stated in 1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 5, 20, that Jehoshaphat died and his son Joram became king, which may be understood as meaning that he did not become king till after the death of Jehoshaphat; but there is no necessity to understand it so, and therefore it can be very easily reconciled with the more precise statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram ascended the throne during the reign of Jehoshaphat, whereas the assertion of Thenius, that the circumstantial clause מֶלֶךְ יְהוֹרָם in ch. viii. 16 is a gloss, is not critically established by the absence of these words from the LXX., Syr., and Arabic, and to expunge them from the text is nothing but an act of critical violence.



strengthen the faith not of Elisha only, but also of the disciples of the prophets and of all the godly in Israel; but the revelation had been made to them separately, so that Elijah had no suspicion that Elisha had also been informed as to his being taken away. He wanted, therefore, to get rid of his servant, not "to test his love and attachment" (Vatabl.), but from humility (C. a Lap. and others), because he did not wish to have any one present to witness his glorification without being well assured that it was in accordance with the will of God.—Ver. 3. In Bethel the disciples of the prophets came to meet Elisha, and said to him, "Knowest thou that Jehovah will take thy master from over thy head to-day?" *לֵקֶחַ מֵעַל רִאשִׁי* expresses in a pictorial manner the taking away of Elijah from his side by raising him to heaven, like *ἐπαίρειν* and *ὑπολαμβάνειν* in Acts i. 9, 10. Elisha replied, "I know it, be silent," because he knew Elijah's feeling. The Lord had therefore revealed to the disciples of the prophets the taking away of Elijah, to strengthen their faith.—Vers. 4-7. In Bethel, and again in Jericho, to which they both proceeded from Bethel, Elijah repeated the appeal to Elisha to stay there, but always in vain. The taking away of Elijah had also been revealed to the disciples of the prophets at Jericho. Thus they both came to the Jordan, whilst fifty disciples of the prophets from Jericho followed them at a distance, to be eye-witnesses of the miraculous translation of their master. The course which Elijah took before his departure from this earth, viz. from Gilgal past Bethel and Jericho, was not merely occasioned by the fact that he was obliged to touch at these places on the way to the Jordan, but had evidently also the same higher purpose, for which his ascension to heaven had been revealed both to Elisha and to the disciples of the prophets at Bethel and Jericho. Elijah himself said that the Lord had sent him to Bethel, to Jericho, to the Jordan (vers. 2, 4, 6). He therefore took this way from an impulse received from the Spirit of God, that he might visit the schools of the prophets, which he had founded, once more before his departure, and strengthen and fortify the disciples of the prophets in the consecration of their lives to the service of the Lord, though without in the least surmising that they had been informed by the Spirit of the Lord of his approaching departure from this life. But as his ascension to heaven took place not so much for his own sake, as because of

those associates in his office who were left behind, God had revealed it to so many, that they might be even more firmly established in their calling by the miraculous glorification of their master than by his words, his teaching, and his admonitions, so that they might carry it on without fear or trembling, even if their great master should no longer stand by their side with the might of his spiritual power to instruct, advise, or defend. But above all, Elisha, whom the Lord had appointed as his successor (1 Kings xix. 16), was to be prepared for carrying on his work by the last journey of his master. He did not leave his side therefore, and resolved, certainly also from an inward impulse of the Spirit of God, to be an eye-witness of his glorification, that he might receive the spiritual inheritance of the first-born from his departing spiritual father.—Ver. 8. When they reached the Jordan, Elijah took his prophet's cloak, rolled it up (עָלָה, ἀπ. λεγ. *convolvit*), and smote the water with it; whereupon the water divided hither and thither, so that they both passed through on dry ground. The cloak, that outward sign of the prophet's office, became the vehicle of the Spirit's power which works unseen, and with which the prophet was inspired. The miracle itself is analogous to the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea by the stretching out of Moses' rod (Ex. xiv. 16, 21); but at the same time it is very peculiar, and quite in accordance with the prophetic character of Elijah. Moses, the leader of the people, performed his miracles with his shepherd's crook, Elijah the prophet divided the river with his prophet's mantle.—Vers. 9, 10. After crossing the Jordan, Elijah allowed his servant and companion to make one more request before he was taken away, in the full confidence that the Lord would fulfil it in answer to his prayer; and Elisha asked, "Let פִּרְשָׁנִים בְּרִיךְ, διπλᾶ ἐν πνεύματί σου, i.e. a double portion in (of) thy spirit be granted to me." This request has been misunderstood by many translators, from Ephraem Syrus down to Köster and F. W. Krummacher, who have supposed that Elisha wished to have a double measure of Elijah's spirit ("that thy spirit may be twofold in me:" Luther after the Vulgate, "*ut fiat in me duplex spiritus tuus*"); and some have taken it as referring to the fact that Elisha performed many more miracles and much greater ones than Elijah (Cler., Pfeiffer, *dub. vex.* p. 442), others to the gift of prophecy and miracles (Köster, *die Proph.* p. 82), whilst others, like Krummacher, have understood by it



that the spirit of Elisha, as an evangelical spirit, was twice as great as the legal spirit of Elijah. But there is no such meaning implied in the words, nor can it be inferred from the answer of Elijah; whilst it is impossible to show that there was any such measure of the Spirit in the life and works of Elisha in comparison with the spirit of Elijah, although his request was fulfilled. The request of Elisha is evidently based upon Deut. xxi. 17, where *בְּיֶשְׁנֵי* denotes the double portion which the first-born received in (of) the father's inheritance, as R. Levi b. Gers., Seb. Münst., Vatabl., Grot., and others have perceived, and as Hengstenberg (*Beitr.* ii. p. 133 f.) in our days has once more proved. Elisha, resting his foot upon this law, requested of Elijah as a first-born son the double portion of his spirit for his inheritance. Elisha looked upon himself as the first-born son of Elijah in relation to the other "sons of the prophets," inasmuch as Elijah by the command of God had called him to be his successor and to carry on his work. The answer of Elijah agrees with this: "Thou hast asked a hard thing," he said, because the granting of this request was not in *his* power, but in the power of God. He therefore made its fulfilment dependent upon a condition, which did not rest with himself, but was under the control of God: "if thou shalt see me taken from thee (*לָקַח*, *partic. Pual* with the *נ* dropped, see Ges. § 52, Anm. *b*; Ewald, § 169, *d*), let it be so to thee; but if not, it will not be so." From his own personal inclination Elijah did not wish to have Elisha, who was so closely related to him, as an eye-witness of his translation from the earth; but from his persistent refusal to leave him he could already see that he would not be able to send him away. He therefore left the matter to the Lord, and made the guidance of God the sign for Elisha whether the Lord would fulfil his request or not. Moreover, the request itself even on the part of the petitioner presupposes a certain dependence, and for this reason Elisha could not possibly desire that the double measure of Elijah's spirit should be bestowed upon him. A dying man cannot leave to his heir more than he has himself. And, lastly, even the ministry of Elisha, when compared with that of Elijah, has all the appearance of being subordinate to it. He lives and labours merely as the continuer of the work already begun by Elijah, both outwardly in relation to the worshippers of idols, and inwardly in relation to the disciples of the prophets. Elisha performs the anointing of Jehu and Hazael,

with which Elijah was charged, and thereby prepares the way for the realization of that destruction of Ahab's house which Elijah predicted to the king; and he merely receives and fosters those schools of the prophets which Elijah had already founded. And again, it is not Elisha but Elijah who appears as the Coryphæus of prophecy along with Moses, the representative of the law, upon the mount of transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 3).—It is only a thoroughly external mode of observation that can discover in the fact that Elisha performed a greater number of miracles than Elijah, a proof that the spirit of Elijah rested doubly upon him.

Vers. 11–13. *Elijah's ascension*.—Ver. 11. While they were walking on and talking to each other, “behold (there suddenly appeared) a fiery chariot and fiery horses, and separated the two (by driving between them), and Elijah went up in the tempest to heaven.” As God had formerly taken Enoch away, so that he did not taste of death (see at Gen. v. 24), so did He also suddenly take Elijah away from Elisha, and carry him to heaven without dying. It was בַּסְעָרָה, “in the tempest,” that he was taken away. The storm was accompanied by a fiery phenomenon, which appeared to the eyes of Elisha as a chariot of fire with horses of fire, in which Elijah rode to heaven. The tempest was an earthly substratum for the theophany, the fiery chariots and fiery horses the symbolical form in which the translation of his master to heaven presented itself to the eye of Elisha, who was left behind.<sup>1</sup>—The ascension of Elijah has been compared to the death of Moses. “As God Himself buried Moses, and his grave has not been found to this day, so did He fetch Elias to heaven in a still more glorious manner in a fiery chariot with fiery horses, so that fifty men, who searched for him, did not find him on the earth” (Ziegler). This parallel has a real foundation in the appearance of Moses and Elijah with Christ on the mountain of transfiguration, only we must not overlook the difference in the departure from this life of these two witnesses of God. For Moses died and was to die in the wilderness because of his sin (Deut. xxxii.

<sup>1</sup> All further questions, *e.g.* concerning the nature of the fiery chariot, the place to which Elijah was carried, the day of his ascension, which C. a Lap., according to the Romish martyrology, assigns to the 20th of July in the 19th year of Jehoshaphat, and others of the same kind, which have been discussed by the earlier commentators, are to be set down as useless trifles, which go beyond the bounds of our thought and comprehension.



49 sqq.), and was only buried by the hand of the Lord, so that no one has seen his grave, not so much for the purpose of concealing it from men as to withdraw his body from corruption, and preserve and glorify it for the eternal life (see the Comm. on Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6). Elijah did not die, but was received into heaven by being "changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52; 1 Thess. iv. 15 sqq.). This difference is in perfect harmony with the character and position of these two men in the earthly kingdom of God. Moses the lawgiver departed from the earthly life by the way of the law, which worketh death as the wages of sin (Rom. vi. 23, vii. 13); Elijah the prophet, who was appointed to admonish for future times (*ὁ καταγραφείς ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς εἰς καιρούς*), to pacify the wrath before the judgment, to turn the heart of the father to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob (Ecclus. xlviii. 10), was taken to heaven as the forerunner of Christ (Mal. iii. 23, 24; Matt. xi. 10, 11) without tasting of death, to predict the ascension of our Lord, and to set it forth in Old Testament mode; for as a servant, as the servant of the law, who with his fiery zeal preached both by word and deed the fire of the wrath of divine justice to the rebellious generation of his own time, Elijah was carried by the Lord to heaven in a fiery storm, the symbol of the judicial righteousness of God. "As he was an unparalleled champion for the honour of the Lord, a fiery war-chariot was the symbol of his triumphal procession into heaven" (O. v. Gerlach). But Christ, as the Son, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, after having taken away from death its sting and from hell its victory, by His resurrection from the grave (1 Cor. xv. 55), returned to the Father in the power of His eternal deity, and ascended to heaven in His glorified body before the eyes of His disciples as the victor over death and hell, until a cloud received Him and concealed His figure from their sight (Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 12. When Elisha saw his

<sup>1</sup> The actual truth of this miraculous departure of the prophet is strongly confirmed by the appearance of Elijah, as recorded in Matt. xvii. 3, 4 and Luke ix. 30, upon which the seal of attestation is impressed by the ascension of our Lord. His ascension was in harmony with the great mission with which he, the mightiest of all the prophets, was entrusted in that development of the divine plan of salvation which continued through the centuries in the interval between Moses and Christ.—Whoever is unable to do justice to the spirit and nature of the divine revelation of mercy, will be unable to comprehend this miracle also. This was the case with Josephus, and even with Ephraem the Syrian father. Josephus, for example (*Ant.* ix. 2, 2), says nothing about the

master carried thus miraculously away, he exclaimed, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!" and as he saw him no more, he took hold of his clothes and rent them in two pieces, *i.e.* from the top to the bottom, as a proof of the greatness of his sorrow at his being taken away. He called Elijah אֲבִי, "my father," as his spiritual father, who had begotten him as his son through the word of God. "Chariot (war-chariot) and horsemen of Israel," on which the Israelitish kings based the might and security of their kingdom, are a symbolical representa-

miracle, and simply states that Ἡλίας ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἠΨανίσθη καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔγνω μέχρις τῆς σήμερον αὐτοῦ τὴν τελευτήν, and adds that it is written of Elijah and Enoch in the sacred books, ὅτι γεγόνασιν ἀφανεῖς. θάνατον δὲ αὐτῶν οὐδεὶς οἶδεν. Ephraem, the Christian father, passes over the last clause of ver. 11, "so Elijah went up in the whirlwind to heaven," in his exposition of our chapter, and paraphrases the rest of the words thus: "There came suddenly from on high a fire-storm, and in the midst of the flame the form of a chariot and of horses, and separated them from one another; one of the two it left on the earth, the other, namely Elijah, it carried up on high (יָרָא לְמַעַל מִן הָאָרֶץ);

but whither the wind (or Spirit? רִיחַ) took him, or in what place it left him, the Scriptures have *not* told us. They say, however, that some years afterwards an alarming letter from him, full of threats, was delivered to king Joram of Judah." Following the lead of such predecessors as these, J. D. Michaelis, who boasts so much of his orthodoxy, informed the "unlearned" (in the *Anmerkungen* to his *Bibel-übersetzung*) that Elijah did not go to heaven, but was simply carried away from Palestine, and lived at least twelve years more, that he might be able to write a letter to king Joram (2 Chron. xxi. 12), for "men do not receive letters from people in heaven." This incident has been frequently adduced since then as a disproof of the ascension of Elijah. But there is not a word in the Chronicles about any letter (ספר, ספרים, or אגרת, which would be the Hebrew for a letter); all that is said is that a *writing* (מכתב) from the prophet Elijah was brought to Joram, in which he was threatened with severe punishments on account of his apostasy. Now such a writing as this might very well have been written by Elijah before his ascension, and handed to Elisha to be sent by him to king Joram at the proper time. Even Bertheau admits that, according to the chronological data of the Old Testament, Elijah might have been still living in the reign of Joram of Judah; and it is *a priori* probable that he both spoke of Joram's sin and threatened him with punishment. It is impossible to fix the year of Elijah's ascension. Neither the fact that it is mentioned after the death of Ahaziah of Israel, which he himself had personally foretold to that ungodly king, nor the circumstance that in the war which Jehoshaphat and Joram of Israel waged with the Moabites the prophet Elisha was consulted (ch. iii.), warrants the conclusion that Elijah was taken from the earth in the interval between these two events. It is very obvious from ch. iii. 11, that the two kings applied to Elisha simply because he was in the neighbourhood, and not because Elijah was no longer alive.



tion of the strong defence which Elijah had been through his ministry to the kingdom of Israel (cf. ch. xiii. 14).—Ver. 13. He then took up Elijah's prophet's mantle, which had fallen from him when he was snatched away, and returned to the Jordan. The prophet's mantle of the master fell to Elisha the disciple, as a pledge to himself that his request was fulfilled, and as a visible sign to others that he was his divinely appointed successor, and that the spirit of Elijah rested upon him (ver. 15).

Vers. 14-25. RETURN OF ELISHA TO JERICHO AND BETHEL, AND HIS FIRST MIRACLES.—Vers. 14, 15. Having returned to the banks of the Jordan, Elisha smote the water with Elijah's mantle, saying, "Where is Jehovah the God of Elijah, yea He?" and the water divided hither and thither, so that he was able to go through. אֵי-יְהוָה, which the LXX. did not understand, and have simply reproduced in Greek characters, ἀφφώ, is an emphatic apposition, "yea He," such as we find after suffixes, *e.g.* Prov. xxii. 19; and אֵי is only a strengthened אֵ, which is more usual when emphatic prominence is given to the suffix (*vid.* Ges. § 121, 3). The Masoretic accentuation, which separates it from the preceding words, rests upon a false interpretation. There is no need either for the alteration proposed by Ewald, § 362, *a*, of אֵי into אֵי, "he had scarcely smitten the water," especially as not a single analogous example can be adduced of the use of אֵי-יְהוָה followed by a *Vav* consec.; or for the conjecture that the original reading in the text was אֵי-יְהוָה (Houb., Böttch., Then.), "where is now the God of Elijah?" which derives no critical support from the ἀφφώ of the LXX., and is quite at variance with Hebrew usage, since אֵי-יְהוָה generally stands immediately after אֵי, when it serves to strengthen the interrogation (*vid.* Judg. ix. 38, Job xvii. 15, Isa. xix. 12, Hos. xiii. 10). This miracle was intended partly to confirm Elisha's conviction that his petition had been fulfilled, and partly to accredit him in the eyes of the disciples of the prophets and the people generally as the divinely appointed successor of Elijah. All the disciples of the prophets from Jericho saw also from this that the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha, and came to meet him to do homage to him as being now their spiritual father and lord.—Vers. 16-18. But the disciples of the prophets at Jericho were so unable to realize the fact of Elijah's translation, although it had been previously revealed to them, that

they begged permission of Elisha to send out fifty brave men to seek for Elijah. **פֶּן־נִשָּׂא**: whether the Spirit of the Lord has not taken him and cast him upon one of the mountains, or into one of the valleys. **פֶּן** with the perfect is used "where there is fear of a fact, which as is conjectured almost with certainty has already happened," like  $\mu\eta$  in the sense of "*whether not*" (*vid.* Ewald, § 337, *b*). **רוּחַ יְהוָה** is not a wind sent by Jehovah (*Ges.*), but the Spirit of Jehovah, as in 1 Kings xviii. 12. The *Chethib* **נִיָּאֹת** is the regular formation from **נִיא** or **נִיָּא** (Zech. xiv. 4); the *Keri* with the transposition of **א** and **י**, the later form: **נִיאֹת**, Ezek. vii. 16, xxxi. 12, etc. The belief expressed by the disciples of the prophets, that Elijah might have been miraculously carried away, was a popular belief, according to 1 Kings xviii. 12, which the disciples of the prophets were probably led to share, more especially in the present case, by the fact that they could not imagine a translation to heaven as a possible thing, and with the indefiniteness of the expression **לָקַח מֵעַל רֹאשֶׁךָ** could only understand the divine revelation which they had received as referring to removal by death. So that even if Elisha told them how miraculously Elijah had been taken from him, which he no doubt did, they might still believe that by the appearance in the storm the Lord had taken away His servant from this life, that is to say, had received his soul into heaven, and had left his earthly tabernacle somewhere on the earth, for which they would like to go in search, that they might pay the last honours to their departed master. Elisha yielded to their continued urgency and granted their request; whereupon fifty men sought for three days for Elijah's body, and after three days' vain search returned to Jericho. **עַרְבֵשׁ**, to being ashamed, *i.e.* till he was ashamed to refuse their request any longer (see at Judg. iii. 25).

The two following miracles of Elisha (vers. 19–25) were also intended to accredit him in the eyes of the people as a man endowed with the Spirit and power of God, as Elijah had been. Vers. 19–22. *Elisha makes the water at Jericho wholesome.*—During his stay at Jericho (ver. 18) the people of the city complained, that whilst the situation of the place was good in other respects, the water was bad and the land produced miscarriages. **הָאָרֶץ**, the land, *i.e.* the soil, on account of the badness of the water; not "the inhabitants, both man and beast" (Thenius). Elisha then told them to bring a new dish with



salt, and poured the salt into the spring with these words: "Thus saith the Lord, I have made this water sound; there will no more be death and miscarriage thence" (מִשְׁלָכָהּ מָשָׁם). מִשְׁלָכָהּ is a substantive here (*vid.* Ewald, 160, e). מוֹצֵא הַיָּם is no doubt the present spring *Ain es Sultân*, the only spring near to Jericho, the waters of which spread over the plain of Jericho, thirty-five minutes' distance from the present village and castle, taking its rise in a group of elevations not far from the foot of the mount *Quarantana* (Kuruntul); a large and beautiful spring, the water of which is neither cold nor warm, and has an agreeable and sweet (according to Steph. Schultz, "somewhat salt") taste. It was formerly enclosed by a kind of reservoir or semicircular wall of hewn stones, from which the water was conducted in different directions to the plain (*vid.* Rob. Pal. ii. p. 283 sqq.). With regard to the miracle, a spring which supplied the whole of the city and district with water could not be so greatly improved by pouring in a dish of salt, that the water lost its injurious qualities for ever, even if salt does possess the power of depriving bad water of its unpleasant taste and injurious effects. The use of these natural means does not remove the miracle. Salt, according to its power of preserving from corruption and decomposition, is a symbol of incorruptibility and of the power of life which destroys death (see Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 325, 326). As such it formed the earthly substratum for the spiritual power of the divine word, through which the spring was made for ever sound. A new dish was taken for the purpose, not *ob munditiem* (Seb. Schm.), but as a symbol of the renewing power of the word of God.—But if this miracle was adapted to show to the people the beneficent character of the prophet's ministry, the following occurrence was intended to prove to the despisers of God that the Lord does not allow His servants to be ridiculed with impunity.—Vers. 23-25. *The judgment of God upon the loose fellows at Bethel.* Elisha proceeded from Jericho to Bethel, the chief seat of the idolatrous calf-worship, where there was also a school of the prophets (ver. 3). On the way thither there came small boys out of the city to meet him, who ridiculed him by calling out, "Come up, bald-head, come," etc. קַרְחִי, bald-head (with a bald place at the back of the head), was used as a term of scorn (cf. Isa. iii. 17, 24); but hardly from a suspicion of leprosy (Winer, Thenius). It was rather as a natural defect, for Elisha, who

lived for fifty years after this (ch. xiii. 14), could not have been bald from age at that time.—Ver. 24. The prophet then turned round and cursed the scoffers in the name of the Lord, and there came two bears out of the wood, and tore forty-two boys of them in pieces. The supposed “immorality of cursing,” which Thenius still adduces as a disproof of the historical truth of this miracle, even if it were established, would not affect Elisha only, but would fall back upon the Lord God, who executed the curse of His servant in such a manner upon these worthless boys. And there is no need, in order to justify the judicial miracle, to assume that there was a preconcerted plan which had been devised by the chief rulers of the city out of enmity to the prophet of the Lord, so that the children had merely been put forward (O. v. Gerlach). All that is necessary is to admit that the worthless spirit which prevailed in Bethel was openly manifested in the ridicule of the children, and that these boys knew Elisha, and in his person insulted the prophet of the Lord. If this was the case, then Elisha cursed the boys for the purpose of avenging the honour of the Lord, which had been injured in his person; and the Lord caused this curse to be fulfilled, to punish in the children the sins of the parents, and to inspire the whole city with a salutary dread of His holy majesty.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 25. Elisha went from Bethel to Carmel (see at 1 Kings xviii. 19), probably to strengthen himself in solitude for the continuation of his master’s work. He returned thence to Samaria, where, according to ch. vi. 32, he possessed a house.

CHAP. III. JORAM OF ISRAEL, AND THE EXPEDITION AGAINST MOAB  
WHICH HE UNDERTOOK IN COMPANY WITH JEHOASHAPHAT.

Vers. 1–3. REIGN OF JORAM OF ISRAEL.—For the chronological statement in ver. 1, see at ch. i. 17. *Joram* or *Jehoram* was

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, or the author of the *Sermo 204 de Tempore* (or *Sermo 41 de Eliso* in t. v. of the *Opp. August.*, ed. J. P. Migne, p. 1826), which is attributed to him, gives a similar explanation. “The insolent boys,” he says, “are to be supposed to have done this at the instigation of their parents; for they would not have called out if it had displeased their parents.” And with regard to the object of the judicial punishment, he says it was inflicted “that the elders might receive a lesson through the smiting of the little ones, and the death of the sons might be a lesson to the parents; and that they might learn to fear the prophet, whom they would not love, notwithstanding the wonders which he performed.”



not so ungodly as his father Ahab and his mother Jezebel. He had the statue or pillar of Baal, which his father had erected in Samaria, removed; and it was only to the sin of Jeroboam, *i.e.* the calf-worship, that he adhered. Joram therefore wished to abolish the worship of Baal and elevate the worship of Jehovah, under the image of the calf (ox), into the religion of his kingdom once more. For the singular suffix מִמֶּנָּה see Ewald, § 317, *a*. He did not succeed, however, in exterminating the worship of Baal. It not only continued in Samaria, but appears to have been carried on again in the most shameless manner (cf. ch. x. 18 sqq.); at which we cannot be surprised, since his mother Jezebel, that fanatical worshipper of Baal, was living throughout the whole of his reign (ch. ix. 30).

Vers. 4-27. WAR OF JORAM, IN ALLIANCE WITH JEHOSEPHAT, AGAINST THE MOABITES.—Vers. 4, 5. The occasion of this war was the rebellion of the Moabites, *i.e.* the refusal to pay tribute to Israel since the death of Ahab. Mesha the (vassal-) king of Moab was a possessor of flocks, and paid to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams; not merely at the commencement of each new reign (Cler.), but as a yearly tribute (הִשִּׁיב, to bring again = to bring repeatedly, as in Num. xviii. 9, etc.). This yearly tribute could not be exorbitant for the land of the Moabites, which abounded in good pasture, and was specially adapted for the rearing of flocks. The payment of tribute in natural objects and in the produce of the land was very customary in ancient times, and is still usual among the tribes of Asia.<sup>1</sup> נוֹקֵר signifies both a shepherd (Amos i. 1) and also a possessor of flocks. In Arabic it is properly the possessor of a superior kind of sheep and goats (*vid.* Boch. *Hieroz.* i. p. 483 sq. ed. Ros.). צֶמֶר may either be taken as a second object to הִשִּׁיב, or be connected with אֵילִים as an accusative of looser government (Ewald, § 287, *h*). In the first case the tribute would consist of the wool (the fleeces) of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams; in the second, of 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. In support of the latter we may quote Isa. xvi. 1, where lambs are mentioned as tribute.—Vers. 5 sqq. The statement

<sup>1</sup> *Pecunia ipsa a pecore appellabatur. Etiam nunc in tabulis Censoriis pascua dicuntur omnia, ex quibus populus redditus habet, quia diu hoc solum vectigal fuit. Multatio quoque nonnisi ovium boumque impendio dicebatur.*—PLINII *h. nat.* xviii. 3.

concerning the rebellion of the Moabites, which has already been mentioned in ch. i. 1, is repeated here, because it furnished the occasion for the expedition about to be described. Ahaziah had been unable to do anything during his short reign to renew the subjugation of Moab; Joram was therefore anxious to overtake what had been neglected immediately after his ascent of the throne. He went to Samaria בְּיֹם הָרָהוּא, at that time, namely, when he renewed his demand for the tribute and it was refused (Thenius), and mustered all Israel, *i.e.* raised an army out of the whole kingdom, and asked Jehoshaphat to join in the war, which he willingly promised to do (as in 1 Kings xxii. 4), notwithstanding the fact that he had been blamed by prophets for his alliance with Ahab and Ahaziah (2 Chron. xix. 2 and xx. 37). He probably wished to chastise the Moabites still further on this occasion for their invasion of Judah (2 Chron. xx.), and to do his part by bringing them once more under the yoke of Israel, to put it out of their power to make fresh incursions into Judah.—Ver. 8. In reply to Joram's question, "By which way shall we advance (against Moab)?" Jehoshaphat decided in favour of "the way through the desert of Edom." There were two ways by which it was possible to enter the land of the Moabites; namely, either by going above the Dead Sea, and crossing the Jordan and the boundary river Arnon, and so entering it from the north, or by going round the southern point of the Dead Sea, and advancing through the northern portion of the mountains of Edom, and thus entering it from the south. The latter way was the longer of the two, and the one attended with the greatest difficulties and dangers, because the army would have to cross mountains which were very difficult to ascend. Nevertheless Jehoshaphat decided in its favour, partly because, if they took the northern route, they would have the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead to fear, partly also because the Moabites, from their very confidence in the inaccessibility of their southern boundary, would hardly expect any attack from that side, and might therefore, if assailed at that point, be taken off their guard and easily defeated, and probably also from a regard to the king of Edom, whom they could induce to join them with his troops if they took that route, not so much perhaps for the purpose of strengthening their own army as to make sure of his forces, namely, that he would not make a fresh attempt at rebellion by a second invasion of the kingdom of Judah while



Jehoshaphat was taking the field against the Moabites.—Ver. 9. But however cleverly this plan may have been contrived, when the united army had been marching round for seven days and was passing through the deep rocky valley of the *Ahsy*,<sup>1</sup> which divided the territories of Edom and Moab, it was in the greatest danger of perishing from want of water for men and cattle, as the river which flows through this valley, and in which they probably hoped to find a sufficient supply of water, since according to Robinson (*Pal.* ii. pp. 476 and 488) it is a stream which never fails, was at that time perfectly dry.

In this distress the hearts of the two kings were manifested.—Vers. 10–12. Joram cried out in his despair: “Woe, that Jehovah has called these three kings, to give them into the hand of Moab!” (״ו, *that*, serves to give emphasis to the assurance; see Ewald, § 330, b.) Jehoshaphat, on the other hand, had confidence in the Lord, and inquired whether there was no prophet there, through whom they could seek counsel of the Lord (as in 1 Kings xxii. 7); whereupon one of the servants of the Israelitish king answered that Elisha was there, who had poured water upon the hands of Elijah, *i.e.* had been with him daily as his servant, and therefore could probably obtain and give a revelation from God. Elisha may perhaps have come to the neighbourhood of the army at the instigation of the Spirit of God, because the distress of the kings was to be one means in the hand of the Lord, not only of dis-

<sup>1</sup> The usual route from southern Judæa to the land of the Moabites, which even the Crusaders and more recent travellers took, runs round the Dead Sea up to the mouth of the Wady *ed Deraah* or *Kerak*, and then up this wady to Kerak (*vid.* Rob. ii. p. 231). The allied kings did not take this route however, but went through the Wady *el Kurahy* or *es-Safieh*, which opens into the southern end of the Dead Sea, and which is called the Wady *el Ahsy* farther up in the mountains, by Seetzen (*R.* ii. pp. 355, 356) erroneously the Wady *el Hössa* (Rob. ii. p. 488), a ravine through which Burckhardt passed with the greatest difficulty (*Syrien*, ii. p. 673). That they advanced by this route is a necessary inference from the fact, that when they first suffered from want of water they were on the border of the Moabitish territory, of which this very wady forms the boundary (ver. 21; see Burckh. p. 674, and Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 555), and the water came flowing from Edom (ver. 20). Neither of these circumstances is applicable to the Wady *el Kerak*.—Still less can we assume, with O. v. Gerlach, that they chose the route through the Arabah that they might approach Moab from the south, as the Israelites under Moses had done. For it would have been impossible for them to reach the border of Moab by this circuitous route. And why should they go so far round, with the way through Edom open to them?

tinguishing the prophet in the eyes of Joram, but also of pointing Joram to the Lord as the only true God. The three kings, humbled by the calamity, went in person to Elisha, instead of sending for him.—Vers. 13, 14. In order still further to humble the king of Israel, who was already bowed down by the trouble, and to produce some salutary fruit of repentance in his heart, Elisha addressed him in these words: “What have I to do with thee? Go to the (Baal-) prophets of thy father and thy mother! Let them help thee.” When Joram replied to this in a supplicatory tone: לֹא, no, pray (as in Ruth i. 13), *i.e.* speak not in this refusing way, for the Lord has brought these three kings—not me alone, but Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom also—into this trouble; Elisha said to him with a solemn oath (cf. 1 Kings xvii. 1): “If I did not regard Jehoshaphat, I should not look at thee and have respect to thee,” *i.e.* I should not deign to look at thee, much less to help thee.—Vers. 15–17. He then sent for a minstrel, to collect his mind from the impressions of the outer world by the soft tones of the instrument, and by subduing the self-life and life in the external world to become absorbed in the intuition of divine things. On this influence of music upon the state of the mind, see the remark on 1 Sam. xvi. 16, and Passavant's *Untersuchungen über den Lebens-magnetismus*, p. 207 (ed. 2).—As the minstrel was playing, the hand of the Lord came upon him (וַיָּהִי) according to the later usage for וַיֵּי, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 48, etc.; compare Ewald, § 345, *b*, and וַיֵּי יְהוָה as in 1 Kings xviii. 46), so that he said in the name of the Lord: “Make this valley full of trenches (עֲשֵׂה, *inf. abs.* for the imperative; for עֲשֵׂה נְבִים see Ges. § 108, 4); for thus saith the Lord, ye will see neither wind nor rain, and this valley will be filled with water, that ye may be able to drink, and your flocks and your cattle.” נְבִים are trenches for collecting water (*vid.* Jer. xiv. 3), which would suddenly flow down through the brook-valley. This large quantity of water came on the (following) morning “by the way of Edom” (ver. 20), a heavy fall of rain or violent storm having taken place, as is evident from the context, in the eastern mountains of Edom, at a great distance from the Israelitish camp, the water of which filled the brook-valley, *i.e.* the Wady *el Kurahy* and *el Ahsy* (see at ver. 9) at once, without the Israelites observing anything either of the wind, which always precedes rain in the East (Harmar, *Beobb.* i. pp. 51, 52), or of the rain itself. מִקְנֵיהֶם



are the flocks intended for slaughtering, בְּהֵמָתְכֶם the beasts of burden.—Vers. 18, 19. Elisha continued: “and this is too little for Jehovah (the comparative force of נָקַל is implied in the context, especially in the alternating combination of the two clauses, which is indicated by וְ . . . וְ, see Ewald, § 360, c): He will also give Moab into your hand, and ye will smite all the fortified and choice cities, fell all the good trees (fruit-trees), stop up all the springs of water, and spoil all the good fields with stones.” מִבְּצָר and מִבְּחֹר are intended to produce a play upon words, through the resemblance in their sound and meaning (Ewald, § 160, c). In the announcement of the devastation of the land there is an allusion to Deut. xx. 19, 20, according to which the Israelites were ordered to spare the fruit-trees when Canaan was taken. These instructions were not to apply to Moab, because the Moabites themselves as the arch-foes of Israel would not act in any other way with the land of Israel if they should gain the victory. הֵכֵאב, to add pain, is a poetical expression for spoiling a field or rendering it infertile through the heaping up of stones.—Ver. 20. The water came in the morning at the time of the morning sacrifice (see 1 Kings xviii. 36), to indicate that the Lord was once more restoring His favour to the people on account of the sacrifice presented to Him in His temple.

The help of God, which preserved the Israelitish army from destruction, also prepared destruction for the Moabites. Vers. 21-23. On hearing the report of the march of the allied kings, Moab had raised all the men that were capable of bearing arms, and stationed them on the frontier. In the morning, when the sun had risen above the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite to them like blood, and said: “That is blood: the (allied) kings have destroyed themselves and smitten one another; and now to the spoil, Moab!” Coming with this expectation to the Israelitish camp, they were received by the allies, who were ready for battle, and put to flight. The divine help consisted, therefore, not in a miracle which surpassed the laws of nature, but simply in the fact that the Lord God, as He had predicted through His prophet, caused the forces of nature ordained by Him to work in the predetermined manner. As the sudden supply of an abundance of water was caused in a natural way by a heavy fall of rain, so the illusion, which was so fatal to the Moabites, is also to be explained in the natural manner indicated in the text. From the reddish earth of the freshly dug trenches the

water collected in them had acquired a reddish colour, which was considerably intensified by the rays of the rising sun, so that when seen from a distance it resembled blood. The Moabites, however, were the less likely to entertain the thought of an optical delusion, from the fact that with their accurate acquaintance with the country they knew very well that there was no water in the wady at that time, and they had neither seen nor heard anything of the rain which had fallen at a great distance off in the Edomitish mountains. The thought was therefore a natural one, that the water was blood, and that the cause of the blood could only have been that their enemies had massacred one another, more especially as the jealousy between Israel and Judah was not unknown to them, and they could have no doubt that Edom had only come with them as a forced ally after the unsuccessful attempt at rebellion which it had made a short time before; and, lastly, they cannot quite have forgotten their own last expedition against Judah in alliance with the Edomites and Ammonites, which had completely failed, because the men composing their own army had destroyed one another. But if they came into collision with the allied army of the Israelites under such a delusion as this, the battle could only end in defeat and in a general flight so far as they were concerned.—Vers. 24, 25. The Israelites followed the fugitives into their own land and laid it waste, as Elisha had prophesied (ver. 25 compared with ver. 19). The *Chethib* **יִבּוֹ כָּה** is to be read **יִבּוֹ כָּה** (for **יִבּוֹא**, as in 1 Kings xii. 12): and (Israel) came into the land and smote Moab. The *Keri* **יִבּוֹ** is a bad emendation. **הַכּוֹת** is either the infinitive construct used instead of the infin. absolute (Ewald, § 351, c), or an unusual form of the inf. absol. (Ewald, § 240, b). **עַד-הַשָּׂאִיר**, till one (= so that one only) left its stones in *Kir-chareseth*. On the infinitive form **הַשָּׂאִיר** see at Josh. viii. 22. The suffix in **אֲבָנֶיהָ** probably points forward to the following noun (Ewald, § 309, c). The city called **קִיר הַרְשֵׁת** here and Isa. xvi. 7, and **קִיר הַרְשֵׁת** in Isa. xvi. 11 and Jer. xlviii. 31, 36, i.e. probably city of potsherds, is called elsewhere **קִיר מוֹאָב**, the citadel of Moab (Isa. xv. 1), as the principal fortress of the land (in the Chaldee Vers. **כִּרְקָא מוֹאָב**), and still exists under the name of *Kerak*, with a strong castle built by the Crusaders, upon a lofty and steep chalk rock, surrounded by a deep and narrow valley, which runs westward under the name of Wady Kerak and falls into the Dead Sea (*vid.* Burckhardt, *Syr.* pp. 643



sq. q., C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 271, 272). This fortress the allied kings besieged. "The slingers surrounded and smote it," *i.e.* bombarded it.—Ver. 26. When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too strong for him, he attempted to fight a way through the beseigers with 700 men with drawn swords (לְהַבְקִיעַ, lit. to split them) to the king of Edom, *i.e.* on the side which was held by this king, from whom he probably hoped that he should meet with the weakest resistance.—Ver. 27. But when this attempt failed, in his desperation he took his first-born son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him as a sacrifice upon the wall, *i.e.* in the sight of the besiegers, not to the God of Israel (Joseph., Ephr. Syr., etc.), but to his own god Camos (see at 1 Kings xi. 7), to procure help from him by appeasing his wrath; just as the heathen constantly sought to appease the wrath of their gods by human sacrifices on the occasion of great calamities (*vid.* Euseb. *præpar. ev.* iv. 16, and E. v. Lasaulx, *die Sühnopfer der Griechen und Römer*, pp. 8 sqq.).—"And there was (came) great wrath upon Israel, and they departed from him (the king of Moab) and returned into their land." As הָיָה קֶצֶף עָלָיו is used of the divine wrath or judgment, which a man brings upon himself by sinning, in every other case in which the phrase occurs, we cannot understand it here as signifying the "human indignation," or ill-will, which broke out among the besieged (Budd., Schulz, and others). The meaning is: this act of abomination, to which the king of the Moabites had been impelled by the extremity of his distress, brought a severe judgment from God upon Israel. The besiegers, that is to say, felt the wrath of God, which they had brought upon themselves by occasioning human sacrifice, which is strictly forbidden in the law (Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 3), either inwardly in their conscience or in some outwardly visible signs, so that they gave up the further prosecution of the siege and the conquest of the city, without having attained the object of the expedition, namely, to renew the subjugation of Moab under the power of Israel.

#### CHAP. IV. ELISHA WORKS SEVERAL MIRACLES.

From ch. iv.—ch. viii. 6 there follows a series of miracles on the part of Elisha, which both proved this prophet to be the continuer of the work which Elijah had begun, of converting Israel from the service of Baal to the service of the living God, and also

manifested the beneficent fruits of the zeal of Elijah for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth in the midst of the idolatrous generation of his time, partly in the view which we obtain from several of these accounts of the continuance and prosperity of the schools of the prophets, and partly in the attitude of Elisha towards the godly in the land as well as towards Joram the king, the son of the idolatrous Ahab, and in the extension of his fame beyond the limits of Israel. (See the remarks on the labours of both prophets at pp. 229 sqq, and those on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. xix. 24.)—All the miracles described in this section belong to the reign of Joram king of Israel. They are not all related, however, in chronological order, but the chronology is frequently disregarded for the purpose of grouping together events which are homogeneous in their nature. This is evident, not only from the fact that (*a*) several of these accounts are attached quite loosely to one another without any particle to indicate sequence (*vid.* ch. iv. 1, 38, 42, v. 1, vi. 8, and viii. 1), and (*b*) we have first of all those miracles which were performed for the good of the scholars of the prophets and of particular private persons (ch. iv.–vi. 7), and then such works of the prophet as bore more upon the political circumstances of the nation, and of the king as the leader of the nation (ch. vi. 8–vii. 20), but also from the circumstance that in the case of some of these facts you cannot fail to perceive that their position is regulated by their substantial relation to what precedes or what follows, without any regard to the time at which they occurred. Thus, for example, the occurrence described in ch. viii. 1–6, which should undoubtedly stand before ch. v. so far as the chronology is concerned, is placed at the end of the miracles which Elisha wrought for king Joram, simply because it exhibits in the clearest manner the salutary fruit of what he had done. And so, again, the account of Naaman the leper is placed in ch. v., although its proper position would be after ch. vi. 7, because it closes the series of miracles performed for and upon private persons, and the miracle was wrought upon a foreigner, so that the fame of the prophet had already penetrated into a foreign country; whereas in order of time it should either stand between vers. 23 and 24 of the sixth chapter (because the incursions of the flying parties of Syrians, to which ch. vi. 8–23 refers, had already taken place), or not till after the close of ch. vii. On the other hand, the partial separation of the miracles performed for the schools of



the prophets (ch. iv. 1-7, 38-41, 42-44, and ch. vi. 1-7) can only be explained on chronological grounds; and this is favoured by the circumstance that the events inserted between are attached by a *Vav consec.*, which does indicate the order of sequence (ch. v. 8 sqq. and vi. 1 sqq.). Regarded as a whole, however, the section ch. iv. 1-viii. 6, which was no doubt taken from a prophetic monograph and inserted into the annals of the kings, is in its true chronological place, since the account in ch. iii. belongs to the earlier period of the history, and the events narrated from ch. viii. 7 onwards to the later period.

Vers. 1-7. THE WIDOW'S CRUSE OF OIL.—A poor widow of the scholars of the prophets complained to Elisha of her distress, namely, that a creditor was about to take her two sons as servants (slaves). The Mosaic law gave a creditor the right to claim the person and children of a debtor who was unable to pay, and they were obliged to serve him as slaves till the year of jubilee, when they were once more set free (Lev. xxv. 39, 40). When the prophet learned, on inquiry, that she had nothing in her house but a small flask of oil (אֶסְיָה, from סִיָּה, means an anointing flask, a small vessel for the oil necessary for anointing the body), he told her to beg of all her neighbours empty vessels, not a few (אַל-תַּמְעִיטִי, *sc.* to beg), and then to shut herself in with her sons, and to pour from her flask of oil into all these vessels till they were full, and then to sell this oil and pay her debt with the money, and use the rest for the maintenance of herself and her children. She was to close the house-door, that she might not be disturbed in her occupation by other people, and also generally to avoid all needless observation while the miracle was being performed. הַמֶּלֶא תִּסְעִי, let that which is filled be put on one side, namely by the sons, who handed her the vessels, according to vers. 5 and 6, so that she was able to pour without intermission. The form מִצֶּקֶת is a participle *Piel*, and is quite appropriate as an emphatic form; the *Keri* מוֹצֶקֶת (*Hiphil*) is an unnecessary alteration, especially as the *Hiphil* of יָצַק is הִצִּיק. וַיַּעֲמֹד הַשָּׁמֶן, then the oil stood, *i.e.* it ceased to flow. The *asyndeton* וְאֵת בְּנֵיהִי is very harsh, and the *Vav copul.* has probably dropped out. With the alteration proposed by L. de Dieu, viz. of וְאֵת into וְאִתְּ, “live with thy sons,” the verb תִּהְיִי would necessarily stand first (Thenius).

Vers. 8-37. THE SHUNAMMITE AND HER SON.—Ver. 8. When Elisha was going one day (lit. *the day*, *i.e.* at that time, then) to *Shunem* (*Solam*, at the south-western foot of the Lesser Hermon; see at 1 Kings i. 3), a wealthy woman (נְרוּלָה as in 1 Sam. xxv. 2, etc.) constrained him to eat at her house; whereupon, as often as he passed by that place in his subsequent journeys from Carmel to Jezreel and back, he was accustomed to call upon her (סוּר as in Gen. xix. 2).—Vers. 9, 10. The woman then asked her husband to build a small upper chamber for this holy man of God, and to furnish it with the necessary articles of furniture (*viz.* bed, table, seat, and lamp), that he might always turn in at their house. עֲלִית־קִיר is either a walled upper chamber, *i.e.* one built with brick and not with wooden walls (Cler., Then.), or an upper chamber built upon the wall of the house (Ges.).—Vers. 11-13. After some time, when Elisha had spent the night in the chamber provided for him, he wanted to make some acknowledgment to his hostess for the love which she had shown him, and told his servant Gehazi to call her, and say to her: “Thou hast taken all this care for us, what shall I do to thee? Hast thou (anything) to say to the king or the chief captain?” *i.e.* hast thou any wish that I could convey to them, and intercede for thee? There is something striking here in the fact that Elisha did not address the woman himself, as she was standing before him, but told his servant to announce to her his willingness to make some return for what she had done. This was, probably, simply from a regard to the great awe which she had of the “holy man of God” (ver. 9), and to inspire her with courage to give expression to the wishes of her heart.<sup>1</sup> She answered: “I dwell among my people,” *i.e.* not, I merely belong to the people (Thenius), but, I live quietly and peaceably among my countrymen, so that I have no need for any intercession with the king and great men of the kingdom. Ἀπραγμοσύνη χαίρω, καὶ εἰρηνικῶς διὰ γὰρ καὶ πρὸς τινα ἀμφισβήτησιν οὐκ ἀνέχομαι (Theodoret).—Vers. 14-16. When Elisha conversed with Gehazi still further on the matter, the latter said: “But she has no son, and her husband is old.” Elisha

<sup>1</sup> The conjecture that Elisha would not speak to her directly for the sake of maintaining his dignity, or that the historian looked upon such conversation with women as unbecoming in a teacher of the law (Thenius), is already proved to be untenable by vers. 15, 16, where Elisha does speak to her directly.



then had her called again, and told her when she had entered the door: "At this time a year hence (כָּעֵת הַיָּהּ, lit. at the time when it revives again; see at Gen. xviii. 10) thou wilt embrace a son." The same favour was to be granted to the Shunammite as that which Sarah had received in her old age, that she might learn that the God of Abraham still ruled in and for Israel. She replied: "No, my lord, thou man of God," אֵל-תִּכְנֹב, *i.e.* do not excite in thy servant any deceptive hopes.—Ver. 17. But however incredible this promise might appear to her, as it had formerly done to Sarah (Gen. xviii. 12, 13), it was fulfilled at the appointed time (cf. Gen. xxi. 2).—Vers. 18-20. But even the faith of the pious woman was soon to be put to the test, and to be confirmed by a still more glorious revelation of the omnipotence of the Lord, who works through the medium of His prophets. When the child presented to her by God had grown up into a lad, he complained one day to the reapers in the field of a violent headache, saying to his father, "My head, my head!" He was then taken home to his mother, and died at noon upon her knees, no doubt from inflammation of the brain produced by a sunstroke.—Vers. 21-23. The mother took the dead child at once up to the chamber built for Elisha, laid it upon the bed of the man of God, and shut the door behind her; she then asked her husband, without telling him of the death of the boy, to send a young man with a she-ass, that she might ride as quickly as possible to the man of God; and when her husband asked her, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day, since it is neither new moon nor Sabbath?"<sup>1</sup> she replied, *shalom*; *i.e.* either "it is all well," or "never mind." For this word, which is used in reply to a question after one's health (see ver. 26), is apparently also used, as Clericus has correctly observed, when the object is to avoid giving a definite answer to any one, and yet at the same time to satisfy him.—Vers. 24, 25. She then rode without stopping, upon the animal

<sup>1</sup> From these words, Theod., Kimchi, C. a Lap., Vatabl., and others have drawn the correct conclusion, that the pious in Israel were accustomed to meet together at the prophets' houses for worship and edification, on those days which were appointed in the law (Lev. xxiii. 3; Num. xxviii. 11 sqq.) for the worship of God; and from this Hertz and Hengstenberg have still further inferred, that in the kingdom of the ten tribes not only were the Sabbath and new moons kept, as is evident from Amos viii. 5 also, but the prophets supplied the pious in that kingdom with a substitute for the missing Levitical priesthood.

driven by the young man, to Elisha at mount Carmel. אֶל־תַּעְצֹרֶיךָ לִרְכֹב, literally, do not hinder me from riding.—Vers. 25-27. When the prophet saw her מִנֶּגֶד (from the opposite), that is to say, saw her coming in the distance, and recognised her as the Shunammite, he sent Gehazi to meet her, to ask her about her own health and that of her husband and child. She answered, *shalom*, i.e. well, that she might not be detained by any further discussion, and came to the prophet and embraced his feet, to pray for the help of the “holy man of God.” Gehazi wanted to thrust her away, “because it seemed to him an immodest importunity to wish to urge the prophet in such a way as this, and as it were to compel him” (Seb. Schm.); but the prophet said, “Let her alone, for her soul is troubled, and Jehovah has hidden it from me and has not told me.”<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 28. The pious woman then uttered this complaint to the prophet: “Did I ask a son of the Lord? Did I not say, Do not deceive me?” What had happened to her she did not say,—a fact which may easily be explained on psychological grounds from her deep sorrow,—but Elisha could not fail to discover it from what she said.—Ver. 29. He therefore directed his servant Gehazi: “Gird thy loins and take thy staff in thy hand and go: if thou meet any one, thou wilt not salute him; and if any one salute thee, thou wilt not answer him; and lay my staff upon the face of the boy.” The object of this command neither to salute nor to return salutations by the way, was not merely to ensure the greatest haste (Thenius and many others), inasmuch as the people of the East lose a great deal of time in prolonged salutations (Niebuhr, *Beschr. v. Arab.* p. 48),<sup>2</sup> but the prophet wished thereby to preclude at the very outset the possibility of attributing the failure of Gehazi’s attempt to awaken the child to any external or accidental circumstance of this kind. For since it is inconceivable that the prophet should have adopted a wrong method, that is to say, should have sent Gehazi with the hope

<sup>1</sup> All that we can infer from these last words with regard to the nature of prophecy, is that the *donum propheticum* did not involve a supernatural revelation of every event.

<sup>2</sup> Or, as C. a Lap. supposes: “that Gehazi might avoid all distraction of either eyes or ears, and prepare himself entirely by prayers for the accomplishment of so great a miracle.” Theodoret explains it in a similar manner: “He knew that he was vainglorious and fond of praise, and that he would be sure to tell the reason of his journey to those who should meet him by the way. And vainglory is a hindrance to thaumaturgy.”



that he would restore the dead boy to life, his only intention in sending the servant must have been to give to the Shunammite and her family, and possibly also to Gehazi himself, a practical proof that the power to work miracles was not connected in any magical way with his person or his staff, but that miracles as works of divine omnipotence could only be wrought through faith and prayer; not indeed with the secondary intention of showing that he alone could work miracles, and so of increasing his own importance (Köster), but to purify the faith of the godly from erroneous ideas, and elevate them from superstitious reliance upon his own human person to true reliance upon the Lord God.

—Ver. 30. The mother of the boy does not appear, indeed, to have anticipated any result from the measures adopted by Elisha; for she swears most solemnly that she will not leave him. But the question arises, whether this urging of the prophet to come himself and help arose from doubt as to the result of Gehazi's mission, or whether it was not rather an involuntary utterance of her excessive grief, and of the warmest wish of her maternal heart to see her beloved child recalled to life. We may probably infer the latter from the fulfilment of her request by Elisha.

—Ver. 31. Gehazi did as he was commanded, but the dead child did not come to life again; the prophet's staff worked no miracle. "There was no sound and no attention," *i.e.* the dead one gave no sign of life. This is the meaning of **אין קול** **ואין קשב** both here and 1 Kings xviii. 29, where it is used of dead idols. The attempt of Gehazi to awaken the child was unsuccessful, not *propter fidem ipsi a muliere non adhibitam* (Seb. Schm.), nor because of the vainglory of Gehazi himself, but simply to promote in the godly of Israel true faith in the Lord.

—Vers. 32-35. Elisha then entered the house, where the boy was lying dead upon his bed, and shut the door behind them both (*i.e.* himself and the dead child), and prayed to the Lord. He then lay down upon the boy, so that his mouth, his eyes, and his hands lay upon the mouth, eyes, and hands of the child, bowing down over him (**גָּהַר**; see at 1 Kings xviii. 42); and the flesh (the body) of the child became warm. He then turned round, *i.e.* turned away from the boy, went once up and down in the room, and bowed himself over him again; whereupon the boy sneezed seven times, and then opened his eyes. This raising of the dead boy to life does indeed resemble the raising of the dead by Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 20 sqq.); but it

differs so obviously in the manner in which it was effected, that we may see at once from this that Elisha did not possess the double measure of the spirit of Elijah. It is true that Elijah stretched himself three times upon the dead child, but at his prayer the dead returned immediately to life, whereas in the case of Elisha the restoration to life was a gradual thing.<sup>1</sup> And they both differ essentially from the raising of the dead by Christ, who recalled the dead to life by one word of His omnipotence (Mark v. 39–42; Luke vii. 13–15; John xi. 43, 44), a sign that He was the only-begotten Son of God, to whom the Father gave to have life in Himself, even as the Father has life in Himself (John v. 25 sqq.), in whose name the Apostle Peter also was able through prayer to recall the dead Tabitha to life, whereas Elisha and Elijah had only to prophesy by word and deed of the future revelation of the glory of God.—Vers. 36, 37. After the restoration of the boy to life, Elisha had his mother called and gave her back her son, for which she fell at his feet with thanksgiving.

Vers. 38–41. ELISHA MAKES UNEATABLE FOOD WHOLESOME.—Ver. 38. When Elisha had returned to Gilgal, the seat of a school of the prophets (see at ch. ii. 1), *i.e.* had come thither once more on his yearly circuit, during the famine which prevailed in the land (see at ch. viii. 1), and the prophets' scholars sat before him (the teacher and master), he directed his servant (*i.e.* probably not Gehazi, but the pupil who waited upon him) to put the large pot to the fire and boil a dish for the pupils of the prophets. שָׂפַת answers to the German *beisetzen*, which is used for placing a vessel *upon* the fire (cf. Ezek. xxiv. 3).—Ver. 39. One (of these pupils) then went to the field to gather vegetables (אֲרֵת, *olera*: for the different explanations of this word see Celsii *Hierobot.* i. 459 sqq., and Ges. *Thes.* p. 56), and found נֶפֶן יִטְרָה, *i.e.* not wild vines, but wild creepers (Luther), field-creepers

<sup>1</sup> The raising of the dead by Elijah and Elisha, especially by the latter, has been explained by many persons as being merely a revivification by magnetic manipulations or by the force of animal magnetism (even Passavant and Ennemoser adopt this view). But no dead person was ever raised to life by animal magnetism; and the assumption that the two boys were only apparently dead is at variance with the distinct words of the text, in addition to which, both Elisha and Elijah accomplished the miracle through their prayer, as is stated as clearly as possible both here (ver. 33) and also at 1 Kings xvii. 21, 22.



resembling vines ; and having gathered his lap full of wild cucumbers, took them home and cut them into the vegetable pot, because they did not know them. לֵעָרֵב is rendered in the ancient versions *colocynths* (LXX. *πολυπὴ ἀγρία*, i.e., according to Suid., *colocynthis*), whereas Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 1122), Winer, and others, following Celsius (*l.c.* i. 393 sqq.), have decided in favour of wild cucumbers, a fruit resembling an acorn, or, according to Oken, a green fleshy fruit of almost a finger's length and an inch thick, which crack with a loud noise, when quite ripe, on very gentle pressure, spirting out both juice and seeds, and have a very bitter taste. The reason for this decision is, that the peculiarity mentioned answers to the etymon עָרַב, to split, in Syr. and Chald. to crack. Nevertheless the rendering given by the old translators is apparently the more correct of the two ; for the colocynths also belong to the genus of the cucumbers, creep upon the ground, and are a round yellow fruit of the size of a large orange, and moreover are extremely bitter, producing colic, and affecting the nerves. The form of this fruit is far more suitable for oval architectural ornaments (עָרֵב, 1 Kings vi. 18, vii. 24) than that of the wild cucumber.—Ver. 40. The extremely bitter flavour of the fruit so alarmed the pupils of the prophets when they began to eat of the dish, that they cried out, “Death in the pot,” and therefore thought the fruit was poison. If eaten in any large quantity, colocynths might really produce death: *vid.* Dioscorid. iv. 175 (178).—Ver. 41. Elisha then had some meal brought and poured it into the pot, after which the people were able to eat of the dish, and there was no longer anything injurious in the pot. וְעַתָּה, then take, וְעַתָּה denoting sequence in thought (*vid.* Ewald, § 348, a). The meal might somewhat modify the bitterness and injurious qualities of the vegetable, but could not take them entirely away; the author of the *Exegetical Handbook* therefore endeavours to get rid of the miracle, by observing that Elisha may have added something else. The meal, the most wholesome food of man, was only the earthly substratum for the working of the Spirit, which proceeded from Elisha, and made the noxious food perfectly wholesome.

Vers. 42-44. FEEDING OF A HUNDRED PUPILS OF THE PROPHETS WITH TWENTY BARLEY LOAVES.—A man of *Baal-Shalisha* (a place in the land of *Shalisha*, the country to the west of Gilgal, Jiljilia ; see at 1 Sam. ix. 4) brought the prophet as first-

fruits twenty barley loaves and  $\text{נֶרִישׁ בָּרְמֶל} = \text{בָּרְמֶל}$ , *i.e.* roasted ears of corn (see the Comm. on Lev. ii. 14), in his sack ( $\text{צִקְלֹן}$ , *ἀπ. λεγ.*, sack or pocket). Elisha ordered this present to be given to the people, *i.e.* to the pupils of the prophets who dwelt in one common home, for them to eat; and when his servant made this objection: "How shall I set this (this little) before a hundred men?" he repeated his command, "Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus hath the Lord spoken: They will eat and leave" ( $\text{אָכֹל וְהוֹתִיר}$ , *infin. absol.*; see Ewald, § 328, *a*); which actually was the case. That twenty barley loaves and a portion of roasted grains of corn were not a sufficient quantity to satisfy a hundred men, is evident from the fact that one man was able to carry the whole of this gift in a sack, and still more so from the remark of the servant, which shows that there was no proportion between the whole of this quantity and the food required by a hundred persons. In this respect the food, which was so blessed by the word of the Lord that a hundred men were satisfied by so small a quantity and left some over, forms a type of the miraculous feeding of the people by Christ (Matt. xiv. 16 sqq., xv. 36, 37; John vi. 11, 12); though there was this distinction between them, that the prophet Elisha did not produce the miraculous increase of the food, but merely predicted it. The object, therefore, in communicating this account is not to relate another miracle of Elisha, but to show how the Lord cared for His servants, and assigned to them that which had been appropriated in the law to the Levitical priests, who were to receive, according to Deut. xviii. 4, 5, and Num. xviii. 13, the first-fruits of corn, new wine, and oil. This account therefore furnishes fresh evidence that the godly men in Israel did not regard the worship introduced by Jeroboam (his state-church) as legitimate worship, but sought and found in the schools of the prophets a substitute for the lawful worship of God (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Beitr.* ii. S. 136 f.).

CHAP. V. CURING OF THE LEPROSY OF NAAMAN THE SYRIAN, AND  
PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.

Vers. 1–19. CURING OF NAAMAN FROM LEPROSY.—Ver. 1. *Naaman*, the commander-in-chief of the Syrian king, who was a very great man before his lord, *i.e.* who held a high place in the service of his king and was greatly distinguished ( $\text{נִשָּׂא פָנִים}$ , cf. Isa. iii. 3, ix. 14), because God had given the Syrians salvation (*vic-*



tory) through him, was as a warrior afflicted with leprosy. The ו has not dropped out before מִצְרַע, nor has the copula been omitted for the purpose of sharpening the antithesis (Thenius), for the appeal to Ewald, § 354, *a*, proves nothing, since the passages quoted there are of a totally different kind; but נָבוֹר חַיִּל is a second predicate: the man was as a brave warrior leprous. There is an allusion here to the difference between the Syrians and the Israelites in their views of leprosy. Whereas in Israel lepers were excluded from human society (see at Lev. xiii. and xiv.), in Syria a man afflicted with leprosy could hold a very high state-office in the closest association with the king.—Vers. 2, 3. And in Naaman's house before his wife, *i.e.* in her service, there was an Israelitish maiden, whom the Syrians had carried off in a marauding expedition (יֵצְאוּ גִדּוּדִים: they had gone out in (as) marauding bands). She said to her mistress: "O that my lord were before the prophet at Samaria! (where Elisha had a house, ch. vi. 32,) he would free him from his leprosy." אָסַף מִצְרַעַת, to receive (again) from leprosy, in the sense of "to heal," may be explained from Num. xii. 14, 15, where אָסַף is applied to the reception of Miriam into the camp again, from which she had been excluded on account of her leprosy.—Vers. 4, 5. When Naaman related this to his lord (the king), he told him to go to Samaria furnished with a letter to the king of Israel; and he took with him rich presents as compensation for the cure he was to receive, *viz.* ten talents of silver, about 25,000 thalers (£3750—TR.); 6000 shekels (= two talents) of gold, about 50,000 thalers (£7500); and ten changes of clothes, a present still highly valued in the East (see the Comm. on Gen. xlv. 22). This very large present was quite in keeping with Naaman's position, and was not too great for the object in view, namely, his deliverance from a malady which would be certainly, even if slowly, fatal.—Vers. 6, 7. When the king of Israel (Joram) received the letter of the Syrian king on Naaman's arrival, and read therein that he was to cure Naaman of his leprosy (וַעֲתָהּ, and now,—showing in the letter the transition to the main point, which is the only thing communicated here; cf. Ewald, § 353, *b*), he rent his clothes in alarm, and exclaimed, "Am I God, to be able to kill and make alive?" *i.e.* am I omnipotent like God? (cf. Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6;) "for he sends to me to cure a man of his leprosy." The words of the letter וַאֲסִפְתִּי, "so cure him," were certainly not so insolent in their meaning as Joram supposed,

but simply meant: have him cured, as thou hast a wonder-working prophet; the Syrian king imagining, according to his heathen notions of priests and *goëtes*, that Joram could do what he liked with his prophets and their miraculous powers. There was no ground, therefore, for the suspicion which Joram expressed: "for only observe and see, that he seeks occasion against me." הִתְאַנָּה, to seek occasion, *sc.* for a quarrel (cf. Judg. xiv. 4).—Ver. 8. When Elisha heard of this, he reprov'd the king for his unbelieving alarm, and told him to send the man to him, "that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel."—Vers. 9, 10. When Naaman stopped with his horses and chariot before the house of Elisha, the prophet sent a messenger out to him to say, "Go and wash thyself seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh will return to thee, *i.e.* become sound, and thou wilt be clean." יָשָׁב, return, inasmuch as the flesh had been changed through the leprosy into festering matter and putrefaction. The reason why Elisha did not go out to Naaman himself, is not to be sought for in the legal prohibition of intercourse with lepers, as Ephraem Syrus and many others suppose, nor in his fear of the leper, as Thenius thinks, nor even in the wish to magnify the miracle in the eyes of Naaman, as C. a Lapide imagines, but simply in Naaman's state of mind. This is evident from his exclamation concerning the way in which he was treated. Enraged at his treatment, he said to his servant (vers. 11, 12): "I thought, he will come out to me and stand and call upon the name of Jehovah his God, and go with his hand over the place (*i.e.* move his hand to and fro over the diseased places), and take away the leprosy." הַמַּצֹּרֶעַ, the leprous = the disease of leprosy, the scabs and ulcers of leprosy. "Are not *Abana* and *Pharpar*, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? (for the combination of טוֹב with נְהַרֹת, see Ewald, § 174, *f.*) Should I not bathe in them, and become clean?" With these words he turned back, going away in a rage. Naaman had been greatly strengthened in the pride, which is innate in every natural man, by the exalted position which he held in the state, and in which every one bowed before him, and served him in the most reverential manner, with the exception of his lord the king; and he was therefore to receive a salutary lesson of humiliation, and at the same time was also to learn that he owed his cure not to any magic touch from the prophet, but solely to the power of God working through him.—Of the two rivers of Damascus, *Abana*



or *Amana* (the reading of the *Keri* with the interchange of the labials כ and מ, see Song of Sol. iv. 8) is no doubt the present *Barada* or *Barady* (بردى, *i.e.* the cold river), the *Chrysorrhoas* (Strabo, xvi. p. 755; Plin. *h. n.* 18 or 16), which rises in the table-land to the south of Zebedany, and flows through this city itself, and then dividing into two arms, enters two small lakes about  $4\frac{3}{4}$  hours to the east of the city. The *Pharpar* is probably the only other independent river of any importance in the district of Damascus, namely, the *Avaj*, which arises from the union of several brooks around *Sa'sa'*, and flows through the plain to the south of Damascus into the lake Heijâny (see Rob. *Bibl. Researches*, p. 444). The water of the Barada is beautiful, clear and transparent (Rob.), whereas the water of the Jordan is turbid, "of a clayey colour" (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 256); and therefore Naaman might very naturally think that his own native rivers were better than the Jordan.—Ver. 13. His servants then addressed him in a friendly manner, and said, "My father, if the prophet had said to thee a great thing (*i.e.* a thing difficult to carry out), shouldst thou not have done it? how much more then, since he has said to thee, Wash, and thou wilt be clean?" אָבִי, my father, is a confidential expression arising from childlike piety, as in ch. vi. 21 and 1 Sam. xxiv. 12; and the etymological jugglery which traces אָבִי from לֹא־לִי = לֹא־לִבִּי (Ewald, *Gr.* § 358, Anm.), or from אָם (Thenius), is quite superfluous (see Delitzsch on *Job*, vol. ii. p. 265, transl.).—וְכִּי־כֵן . . . is a conditional clause without אָם (see Ewald, § 357, *b*), and the object is placed first for the sake of emphasis (according to Ewald, § 309, *a*). אַחֲרֵי־כֵן, how much more (see Ewald, § 354, *c*), *sc.* shouldst thou do what is required, since he has ordered thee so small and easy a thing.—Ver. 14. Naaman then went down (from Samaria to the Jordan) and dipped in Jordan seven times, and his flesh became sound (יָשָׁם, as in ver. 10) like the flesh of a little boy. *Seven times*, to show that the healing was a work of God, for seven is the stamp of the works of God.—Vers. 15, 16. After the cure had been effected, he returned with all his train to the man of God with this acknowledgment: "Behold, I have found that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel," and with the request that he would accept a blessing (a present, בְּרִכָּה, as in Gen. xxxiii. 11, 1 Sam. xxv. 27, etc.) from him, which the prophet, however, stedfastly refused, notwithstanding

all his urging, that he might avoid all appearance of selfishness, by which the false prophets were actuated.—Vers. 17, 18. Then Naaman said:  $\text{וְלֹא}$ , “and not” = and if not,  $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\iota\ \mu\acute{\eta}$  (LXX. ; not “and O,” according to Ewald, § 358, *b*, Anm.), “let there be given to thy servant (=to me) two mules’ burden of earth (on the construction see Ewald, § 287, *h*), for thy servant will no more make (offer) burnt-offerings and slain-offerings to any other gods than Jehovah. May Jehovah forgive thy servant in this thing, when my lord (the king of Syria) goeth into the house of Rimmon, to fall down (worship) there, and he supports himself upon my hand, that I fall down (with him) in the house of Rimmon ; if I (thus) fall down in the house of Rimmon, may,” etc. It is very evident from Naaman’s explanation, “for thy servant,” etc., that he wanted to take a load of earth with him out of the land of Israel, that he might be able to offer sacrifice upon it to the God of Israel, because he was still a slave to the polytheistic superstition, that no god could be worshipped in a proper and acceptable manner except in his own land, or upon an altar built of the earth of his own land. And because Naaman’s knowledge of God was still adulterated with superstition, he was not yet prepared to make an unreserved confession before men of his faith in Jehovah as the only true God, but hoped that Jehovah would forgive him if he still continued to join outwardly in the worship of idols, so far as his official duty required. *Rimmon* (*i.e.* the pomegranate) is here, and probably also in the local name *Hadad-rimmon* (Zech. xii. 11), the name of the supreme deity of the Damascene Syrians, and probably only a contracted form of *Hadad-rimmon*, since *Hadad* was the supreme deity or sun-god of the Syrians (see at 2 Sam. viii. 3), signifying the sun-god with the modification expressed by *Rimmon*, which has been differently interpreted according to the supposed derivation of the word. Some derive the name from  $\text{רִמּוֹם} = \text{רוֹם}$ , as the supreme god of heaven, like the  $\text{Ἑλίουϥ}$  of *Sanchun.* (Cler., Seld., *Ges. thes.* p. 1292) ; others from  $\text{רִמּוֹן}$ , a pomegranate, as a personification of the power of generation, as *numen naturæ omnia fecundantis*, since the pomegranate with its abundance of seeds is used in the symbolism of both Oriental and Greek mythology along with the Phallus as a symbol of the generative power (*vid.* Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 122, 123), and is also found upon Assyrian monuments (*vid.* Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, p. 343) ; others again, with less probability, from  $\text{רִמְיָה}$ , *jaculari*,



as the sun-god who vivifies and fertilizes the earth with his rays, like the *ἑκκεβόλος Ἀπόλλων*; and others from  $\text{רָמִים} = \text{רָמַ$ , *compurtrit*, as the dying winter sun (according to Movers and Hitzig; see Leyrer in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*).—The words “and he supports himself upon my hand” are not to be understood literally, but are a general expression denoting the service which Naaman had to render as the aide-de-camp to his king (cf. ch. vii. 2, 17). For the Chaldaic form *הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי*, see Ewald, § 156, *a*.—In the repetition of the words “if I fall down in the temple of Rimmon,” etc., he expresses the urgency of his wish.—Ver. 19. Elisha answered, “Go in peace,” wishing the departing Syrian the peace of God upon the road, without thereby either approving or disapproving the religious conviction which he had expressed. For as Naaman had not asked permission to go with his king into the temple of Rimmon, but had simply said, might Jehovah forgive him or be indulgent with him in this matter, Elisha could do nothing more, without a special command from God, than commend the heathen, who had been brought to belief in the God of Israel as the true God by the miraculous cure of his leprosy, to the further guidance of the Lord and of His grace.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 20-27. PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.—Vers. 20-22. When Naaman had gone a stretch of the way (*בְּנֶרֶת אֶרֶץ*, ver 19; see at Gen. xxxv. 16), there arose in Gehazi, the servant of Elisha,

<sup>1</sup> Most of the earlier theologians found in Elisha's words a direct approval of the religious conviction expressed by Naaman and his attitude towards idolatry; and since they could not admit that a prophet would have permitted a heathen alone to participate in idolatrous ceremonies, endeavoured to get rid of the consequence resulting from it, viz. *licitam ergo esse Christianis συμφώνησιν πιστοῦ μετὰ ἀπιστοῦ*, seu *symbolizationem et communicationem cum ceremonia idololatræ*, either by appealing to the use of *הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי* and to the distinction between *incurvatio regis voluntaria et religiosa* (real worship) and *incurvatio servilis et coacta Naemani*, quæ erat *politica et civilis* (mere prostration from civil connivance), or by the ungrammatical explanation that Naaman merely spoke of what he had already done, not of what he would do in future (*vid.* Pfeiffer, *Dub. vex.* p. 445 sqq., and J. Meyer, *ad Seder Olam*, p. 904 sqq., Budd., and others).—Both are unsatisfactory. The dreaded consequence falls of itself if we only distinguish between the times of the old covenant and those of the new. Under the old covenant the time had not yet come in which the heathen, who came to the knowledge of the true deity of the God of Israel, could be required to break off from all their heathen ways, unless they would formally enter into fellowship with the covenant nation.

the desire for a portion of the presents of the Syrian which his master had refused (הִי י' כִּי אֵם, as truly as Jehovah liveth, assuredly I run after him; אֵם כִּי אֵם as in 1 Sam. xxv. 34). He therefore hastened after him; and as Naaman no sooner saw Gehazi running after him than he sprang quickly down from his chariot in reverential gratitude to the prophet (יָפַל as in Gen. xxiv. 64), he asked in the name of Elisha for a talent of silver and two changes of raiment, professedly for two poor pupils of the prophets, who had come to the prophet from Mount Ephraim.—Ver. 23. But Naaman forced him to accept two talents (הוֹאֵל קָח, be pleased to take; and בְּפָרִים, with the dual ending, *ne percat indicium numeri*—Winer) in two purses, and two changes of raiment, and out of politeness had these presents carried by two of his servants before Gehazi.—Ver. 24. When Gehazi came to the hill (הָעֵפֶל, the well-known hill before the city) he took the presents from the bearers, and dismissing the men, laid them up in the house. בָּקַר, to bring into safe custody.—Vers. 25, 26. But when he entered his master's presence again, he asked him, "Whence (comest thou), Gehazi?" and on his returning the lying answer that he had not been anywhere, charged him with all that he had done. לֹא לִבִּי הָלַךְ, "had not my heart gone, when the man turned from his chariot to meet thee?" This is the simplest and the only correct interpretation of these difficult words, which have been explained in very different ways. Theodoret (οὐχὶ ἡ καρδία μου ἦν μετὰ σοῦ) and the Vulgate (*nonne cor meum in præsenti erat, quando, etc.*) have already given the same explanation, and so far as the sense is concerned it agrees with that adopted by Thenius: was I not (in spirit) away (from here) and present (there)? לֹא הָלַךְ stands in a distinct relation to the הָלַךְ of Gehazi.—הָעֵת וְנֹ: "is it time to take silver, and clothes, and olive-trees, and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and servants and maidens?" i.e. is this the time, when so many hypocrites pretend to be prophets from selfishness and avarice, and bring the prophetic office into contempt with unbelievers, for a servant of the true God to take money and goods from a non-Israelite for that which God has done through him, that he may acquire property and luxury for himself?—Ver. 27. "And let the leprosy of Naaman cleave to thee and to thy seed for ever." This punishment took effect immediately. Gehazi went out from Elisha covered with leprosy as if with snow (cf. Ex. iv. 6, Num. xii. 10). It was not too harsh a punishment that the



leprosy taken from Naaman on account of his faith in the living God, should pass to Gehazi on account of his departure from the true God. For it was not his avarice only that was to be punished, but the abuse of the prophet's name for the purpose of carrying out his selfish purpose, and his misrepresentation of the prophet.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. VI. 1-23. THE FLOATING IRON. THE SYRIANS SMITTEN  
WITH BLINDNESS.

Vers. 1-7. ELISHA CAUSES AN IRON AXE TO FLOAT.—The following account gives us an insight into the straitened life of the pupils of the prophets. Vers. 1-4. As the common dwelling-place had become too small for them, they resolved, with Elisha's consent, to build a new house, and went, accompanied by the prophet, to the woody bank of the Jordan to fell the wood that was required for the building. The place where the common abode had become too small is not given, but most of the commentators suppose it to have been Gilgal, chiefly from the erroneous assumption that the Gilgal mentioned in ch. ii. 1 was in the Jordan valley to the east of Jericho. Thenius only cites in support of this the reference in יִשְׁבִּים לְפָנָיִךָ (dwell with thee) to ch. iv. 38 ; but this decides nothing, as the pupils of the prophets sat before Elisha, or gathered together around their master in a common home, not merely in Gilgal, but also in Bethel and Jericho. We might rather think of Jericho, since Bethel and Gilgal (Jiljilia) were so far distant from the Jordan, that there is very little probability that a removal of the meeting-place to the Jordan, such as is indicated by נָעֲשֶׂה-לָנוּ שָׁם מְקוֹם, would ever have been thought of from either of these localities. —Ver. 5. In the felling of the beams, the iron, *i.e.* the axe, of one of the pupils of the prophets fell into the water, at which he exclaimed with lamentation : “Alas, my lord (*i.e.* Elisha), and it was begged !” The sorrowful exclamation implied a petition for help. וְאֶת-הַבְּרֹזָל: “and as for the iron, it fell into the water;” so that even here אֵת does not stand before the nominative, but

<sup>1</sup> “This was not the punishment of his immoderate *δωροδοξίας* (receiving of gifts) merely, but most of all of his lying. For he who seeks to deceive the prophet in relation to the things which belong to his office, is said to lie to the Holy Ghost, whose instruments the prophets are” (*vid.* Acts v. 3).—GROTIUS.

serves to place the noun in subjection to the clause (cf. Ewald, § 277, *a*). **שָׁאֵל** does not mean borrowed, but begged. The meaning to borrow is attributed to **שָׁאֵל** from a misinterpretation of particular passages (see the Comm. on Ex. iii. 22). The prophets' pupil had begged the axe, because from his poverty he was unable to buy one, and hence the loss was so painful to him.—Vers. 6, 7. When he showed Elisha, in answer to his inquiry, the place where it had fallen, the latter cut off a stick and threw it thither (into the water) and made the iron flow, *i.e.* float (**יָצַף** from **צָף**, to flow, as in Deut. xi. 4); whereupon the prophets' pupil picked the axe out of the water with his hand. The object of the miracle was similar to that of the stater in the fish's mouth (Matt. xvii. 27), or of the miraculous feeding, namely, to show how the Lord could relieve earthly want through the medium of His prophet. The natural interpretation of the miracle, which is repeated by Thenius, namely, that "Elisha struck the eye of the axe with the long stick which he thrust into the river, so that the iron was lifted by the wood," needs no refutation, since the raising of an iron axe by a long stick, so as to make it float in the water, is impossible according to the laws of gravitation.

Vers. 8–23. ELISHA'S ACTION IN THE WAR WITH THE SYRIANS.—Vers. 8–10. In a war which the Syrians carried on against the Israelitish king Joram (not Jehoahaz, as Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 557, erroneously supposes), by sending flying parties into the land of Israel (cf. ver. 23), Elisha repeatedly informed king Joram of the place where the Syrians had determined to encamp, and thereby frustrated the plans of the enemy. **אֶל-מָקוֹם . . . תַּחֲנוּתִי**: "at the place of so and so shall my camp be." **פָּלַנִי אֶלְמָנִי** as in 1 Sam. xxi. 3 (see at Ruth iv. 1). **תַּחֲנוּת**, the encamping or the place of encampment (cf. Ewald, § 161, *a*), is quite appropriate, so that there is no need either for the alteration into **תַּחֲבֹאוּ**, "ye shall hide yourselves" (Then.), or into **תַּנְחִיתוּ**, with the meaning which is arbitrarily postulated, "ye shall place an ambush" (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 558), or for the much simpler alteration into **לִי תַחֲנֵנִי**, "pitch the camp for me" (Böttcher). The singular suffix in **תַּחֲנֵנִי** refers to the king as leader of the war: "my camp" = the camp of my army. "Beware of passing over (**עֲבֹר**) this place," *i.e.* of leaving it unoccupied, "for there have the Syrians determined to make their invasion." **נִהְיָתִים**, from **נָהַת**, going down,



with *dagesh euphon.*, whereas Ewald (§ 187, *b*) is of opinion that נִחֲתִים, instead of being an intrans. part. *Kal*, might rather be a part. *Niph.* of נָחַת, which would not yield, however, any suitable meaning. Thenius renders מַעְבֵּר, “to pass by this place,” which would be grammatically admissible, but is connected with his conjecture concerning תַּחֲנִיתִי, and irreconcilable with ver. 10. When the king of Israel, according to ver. 10, sent to the place indicated on account of Elisha’s information, he can only have sent troops to occupy it; so that when the Syrians arrived they found Israelitish troops there, and were unable to attack the place. There is nothing in the text about the Syrians bursting forth from their ambush. הוֹדִיר means to enlighten, instruct, but not to warn. נִשְׁמַר־שָׁם, “he took care there,” *i.e.* he occupied the place with troops, to defend it against the Syrians, so that they were unable to do anything, “not once and not twice,” *i.e.* several times.—Ver. 11. The king of the Syrians was enraged at this, and said to his servants, “Do ye not show me who of our men (leans) to the king of Israel?” *i.e.* takes his part. מֵאִשֵּׁר לָנוּ = מִשְׁלָלָנוּ, probably according to an Aramæan dialect: see Ewald, 181, *b*, though he pronounces the reading incorrect, and would read מִכְלָלָנוּ, but without any ground and quite unsuitably, as the king would thereby reckon himself among the traitors.—Vers. 12 sqq. Then one of the servants answered, “No, my lord king,” *i.e.* it is not we who disclose thy plans to the king of Israel, “but Elisha the prophet tells him what thou sayest in thy bed-chamber;” whereupon the king of Syria inquired where the prophet lived, and sent a powerful army to Dothan, with horses and chariots, to take him prisoner there. *Dothan* (see Gen. xxxvii. 17), which according to the *Onom.* was twelve Roman miles to the north of Samaria, has been preserved under its old name in a *Tell* covered with ruins to the south-west of Jenin, on the caravan-road from Gilead to Egypt (see Rob. *Bibl. Res.* p. 158, and V. de Velde, *Journey*, i. pp. 273, 274).—Vers. 15-17. When Elisha’s servant went out the next morning and saw the army, which had surrounded the town in the night, he said to the prophet, “Alas, my lord, how shall we do?” But Elisha quieted him, saying, “Fear not, for those with us are more than those with them.” He then prayed that the Lord might open his servant’s eyes, whereupon he saw the mountain upon which Dothan stood full of fiery horses and chariots round about Elisha. Opening

the eyes was translation into the ecstatic state of clairvoyance, in which an insight into the invisible spirit-world was granted him. The fiery horses and chariots were symbols of the protecting powers of Heaven, which surrounded the prophet. The fiery form indicated the super-terrestrial origin of this host. Fire, as the most ethereal of all earthly elements, was the most appropriate substratum for making the spirit-world visible. The sight was based upon Jacob's vision (Gen. xxxii. 2), in which he saw a double army of angels encamped around him, at the time when he was threatened with danger from Esau.—Vers. 18–20. When the enemy came down to Elisha, he prayed to the Lord that He would smite them with blindness; and when this took place according to his word, he said to them, This is not the way and this is not the city; follow me, and I will lead you to the man whom ye are seeking; and led them to Samaria, which was about four hours' distance from Dothan, where their eyes were opened at Elisha's prayer, so that they saw where they had been led. וַיֵּרְדוּ אֵלָיו cannot be understood as referring to Elisha and his servant, who went down to the Syrian army, as J. H. Mich., Budd., F. v. Meyer, and Thenius, who wants to alter אֵלָיו into אֵלֵיהֶם, suppose, but must refer to the Syrians, who went down to the prophet, as is evident from what follows. For the assumption that the Syrians had stationed themselves below and round the mountain on which Dothan stood, and therefore would have had to come up to Elisha, need not occasion an unnatural interpretation of the words. It is true that Dothan stands upon an isolated hill in the midst of the plain; but on the eastern side it is enclosed by a range of hills, which project into the plain (see V. de Velde, *R. i.* p. 273). The Syrians who had been sent against Elisha had posted themselves on this range of hills, and thence they came *down* towards the town of Dothan, which stood on the hill, whilst Elisha went out of the town to meet them. It is true that Elisha's going out is not expressly mentioned, but in ver. 19 it is clearly presupposed. פְּנִיָּם is mental blindness here, as in the similar case mentioned in Gen. xix. 11, that is to say, a state of blindness in which, though a man has eyes that can see, he does not see correctly. Elisha's untruthful statement, "this is not the way," etc., is to be judged in the same manner as every other *ruse de guerre*, by which the enemy is deceived.—Vers. 21–23. Elisha forbade king Joram to slay



the enemy that he had brought to him, because he had not taken them prisoners in war, and recommended him to treat them hospitably and then let them return to their lord. The object of the miracle would have been frustrated if the Syrians had been slain. For the intention was to show the Syrians that they had to do with a prophet of the true God, against whom no human power could be of any avail, that they might learn to fear the almighty God. Even when regarded from a political point of view, the prophet's advice was more likely to ensure peace than the king's proposal, as the result in ver. 23 clearly shows. The Syrians did not venture any more to invade the land of Israel with flying parties, from fear of the obvious protection of Israel by its God; though this did not preclude a regular war, like that related in the following account. For אָבִי see the Comm. on ch. v. 13. הָאֲשֶׁר שָׁבִיתָ וְגו': "art thou accustomed to slay that which thou hast taken captive with sword and bow?" *i.e.* since thou dost not even slay those whom thou hast made prisoners in open battle, how wouldst thou venture to put these to death? יָכֵרָה לָהֶם כֶּרֶךְ, he prepared them a meal. כֶּרֶךְ is a *denom.* from כָּרַךְ, a meal, so called from the union of several persons, like *cæna* from *κοινωνή* (*vid.* Dietr. on Ges. *Lex. s. v.* כֶּרֶךְ).

CHAP. VI. 24-VII. 20. ELISHA'S ACTION DURING A FAMINE IN SAMARIA.

Vers. 24-33. After this there arose so fearful a famine in Samaria on the occasion of a siege by Benhadad, that one mother complained to the king of another, because she would not keep her agreement to give up her son to be eaten, as she herself had already done.—Ver. 25. The famine became great—till an ass's head was worth eighty shekels of silver, and a quarter of a cab of dove's dung was worth five shekels. הָיָה בָּ, to become for = to be worth. The ass was an unclean animal, so that it was not lawful to eat its flesh. Moreover the head of an ass is the most inedible part of the animal. Eighty shekels were about seventy thalers (£10, 10s.—TR.), or if the Mosaic bekas were called shekels in ordinary life, thirty-five thalers (£5, 5s.; see Bertheau, *Zur Gesch. der Isr.* p. 49). According to Thenius, a quarter of a cab is a sixth of a small Dresden measure (*Mässchen*), not quite ten Parisian cubic inches. Five

shekels: more than four thalers (twelve shillings), or more than two thalers (six shillings). The *Chethib* חֲרִיבִים is to be read חֲרִיבִים, *excrementa columbarum*, for which the *Keri* substitutes the euphemistic חֲרִיבִים, *fluxus, profluvium columbarum*. The expression may be taken literally, since dung has been known to be collected for eating in times of terrible famine (*vid.* Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 13, 7); but it may also be figuratively employed to signify a very miserable kind of food, as the Arabs call the *herba Alcali* اشنان, *i.e.* sparrow's dung, and the Germans call *Asa fætida* Teufelsdreck. But there is no ground for thinking of wasted chick-pease, as Bochart (*Hieroz.* ii. p. 582, ed. Ros.) supposes (see, on the other hand, Celsii *Hierobot.* ii. p. 30 sqq.).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 26. As the king was passing by upon the wall to conduct the defence, a woman cried to him for help; whereupon he replied: "אֵל-יִשְׂרָאֵל, "should Jehovah not help thee, whence shall I help thee? from the threshing-floor or from the wine-press?" It is difficult to explain the אֵל, which Ewald (§ 355, *b*) supposes to stand for אֵם. Thenius gives a simpler explanation, namely, that it is a subjective negation and the sentence hypothetical, so that the condition would be only expressed by the close connection of the two clauses (according to Ewald, § 357). "From the threshing-floor or from the wine-press?" *i.e.* I can neither help thee with corn nor with wine, cannot procure thee either food or drink. He then asked her what her trouble was; upon which she related to him the horrible account of the slaying of her own child to appease her hunger, etc.—Ver. 30. The king, shuddering at this horrible account, in which the curses of the law in Lev. xxvi. 29 and Deut. xxviii. 53, 57 had been literally fulfilled, rent his clothes; and the people then saw that he wore upon his body the hairy garment of penitence and mourning, מַכְבֵּית, within, *i.e.* beneath the upper garment, as a sign of humiliation before God, though it was indeed more an *opus operatum* than a true bending of the heart before God and His judgment. This is proved by his conduct in ver. 31. When, for example, the complaint of the

<sup>1</sup> Clericus gives as a substantial parallel the following passage from Plutarch (*Artax.* c. 24): "he only killed the beasts of burden, so that the head of an ass was hardly to be bought for sixty drachmæ;" and Grotius quotes the statement in Plin. *h. n.* viii. 57, that when *Casalinum* was besieged by Hannibal a mouse was sold for 200 *denaria*.



woman brought the heart-breaking distress of the city before him, he exclaimed, "God do so to me . . . if the head of Elisha remain upon him to-day." Elisha had probably advised that on no condition should the city be given up, and promised that God would deliver it, if they humbled themselves before Him in sincere humility and prayed for His assistance. The king thought that he had done his part by putting on the hairy garment; and as the anticipated help had nevertheless failed to come, he flew into a rage, for which the prophet was to pay the penalty. It is true that this rage only proceeded from a momentary ebullition of passion, and quickly gave place to a better movement of his conscience. The king hastened after the messenger whom he had sent to behead Elisha, for the purpose of preventing the execution of the murderous command which he had given in the hurry of his boiling wrath (ver. 32); but it proves, nevertheless, that the king was still wanting in that true repentance, which would have sprung from the recognition of the distress as a judgment inflicted by the Lord. The desperate deed, to which his violent wrath had impelled him, would have been accomplished, if the Lord had not protected His prophet and revealed to him the king's design, that he might adopt defensive measures.—Ver. 32. The elders of the city were assembled together in Elisha's house, probably to seek for counsel and consolation; and the king sent a man before him (namely, to behead the prophet); but before the messenger arrived, the prophet told the elders of the king's intention: "See ye that this son of a murderer (Joram, by descent and disposition a genuine son of Ahab, the murderer of Naboth and the prophets) is sending to cut off my head?" and commanded them to shut the door against the messenger and to force him back at the door, because he already heard the sound of his master's feet behind him. These measures of Elisha, therefore, were not dictated by any desire to resist the lawful authorities, but were acts of prudence by which he delayed the execution of an unrighteous and murderous command which had been issued in haste, and thereby rendered a service to the king himself.—In ver. 33 we have to supply from the context that the king followed close upon the messenger, who came down to Elisha while he was talking with the elders; and he (the king) would of course be admitted at once. For the subject to וַיֵּאמֶר is not the messenger, but the king, as is evident from ch. vii. 2

and 17. The king said: "Behold the calamity from the Lord, why shall I wait still further for the Lord?"—the words of a despairing man, in whose soul, however, there was a spark of faith still glimmering. The very utterance of his feelings to the prophet shows that he had still a weak glimmer of hope in the Lord, and wished to be strengthened and sustained by the prophet; and this strengthening he received.

Ch. vii. 1, 2. Elisha announced to him the word of the Lord: "At the (this) time to-morrow a seah of wheaten flour (סֵלָה, see at 1 Kings v. 2) will be worth a shekel, and two seahs of barley a shekel in the gate, *i.e.* in the market, at Samaria." A seah, or a third of an ephah = a Dresden peck (*Metze*), for a shekel was still a high price; but in comparison with the prices given in ch. vi. 25 as those obtained for the most worthless kinds of food, it was incredibly cheap. The king's aide-de-camp (שָׁלִישׁ: see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8; אֲשֶׁר לְפָלֶקֶת נִשְׁעָן, an error in writing for אֲשֶׁר הַפֶּלֶקֶת נִשְׁ, cf. ver. 17, and for the explanation ch. v. 18) therefore replied with mockery at this prophecy: "Behold (*i.e.* granted that) the Lord made windows in heaven, will this indeed be?" *i.e.* such cheapness take place. (For the construction, see Ewald, § 357, *b.*) The ridicule lay more especially in the "windows in heaven," in which there is an allusion to Gen. vii. 11, *sc.* to rain down a flood of flour and corn. Elisha answered seriously: "Behold, thou wilt see it with thine eyes, but not eat thereof" (see vers. 17 sqq.). The fulfilment of these words of Elisha was brought about by the event narrated in vers. 3 sqq.—Vers. 3–7. "Four men were before the gate as lepers," or at the gateway, separated from human society, according to the law in Lev. xiii. 46, Num. v. 3, probably in a building erected for the purpose (cf. ch. xv. 5), just as at the present day the lepers at Jerusalem have their huts by the side of the Zion gate (*vid.* Strauss, *Sinai u. Golgatha*, p. 205, and Tobler, *Denkblätter aus Jerus.* p. 411 sqq.). These men being on the point of starvation, resolved to invade the camp of the Syrians, and carried out this resolution בַּנֶּשֶׁף, in the evening twilight, not the morning twilight (Seb. Schm., Cler., etc.), on account of ver. 12, where the king is said to have received the news of the flight of the Syrians during the night. Coming to "the end of the Syrian camp," *i.e.* to the outskirts of it on the city side, they found no one there. For (vers. 6, 7) "the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and horses,



a noise of a great army," so that, believing the king of Israel to have hired the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians to fall upon them, they fled from the camp in the twilight **אֶל-נֶפֶשָׁם**, with regard to their life, *i.e.* to save their life only, leaving behind them their tents, horses, and asses, and the camp as it was.—The miracle, by which God delivered Samaria from the famine or from surrendering to the foe, consisted in an oral delusion, namely, in the fact that the besiegers thought they heard the march of hostile armies from the north and south, and were seized with such panic terror that they fled in the greatest haste, leaving behind them their baggage, and their beasts of draught and burden. It is impossible to decide whether the noise which they heard had any objective reality, say a miraculous buzzing in the air, or whether it was merely a deception of the senses produced in their ears by God; and this is a matter of no importance, since in either case it was produced miraculously by God. The kings of the Hittites are kings of northern Canaan, upon Lebanon and towards Phœnicia; **הַמִּלְכִּים** in the broader sense for Canaanites, as in 1 Kings x. 29. The plural, "kings of the Egyptians," is probably only occasioned by the parallel expression "kings of the Hittites," and is not to be pressed.—Vers. 8-11. When these lepers (*these*, pointing back to vers. 3 sqq.) came into the camp which the Syrians had left, they first of all satisfied their own hunger with the provisions which they found in the tents, and then took different valuables and concealed them. But their consciences were soon aroused, so that they said: We are not doing right; this day is a day of joyful tidings: if we are silent and wait till the morning light, guilt will overtake us; "for it is the duty of citizens to make known things relating to public safety" (Grotius). They then resolved to announce the joyful event in the king's palace, and reported it to the watchman at the city gate. **שָׂעֵר הָעִיר** stands as a generic term in a collective sense for the persons who watched at the gate; hence the following plural **לָהֶם**, and in ver. 11 **הַשְּׂעִירִים**. "And the gate-keepers cried out (what they had heard) and reported it in the king's palace."—Vers. 12 sqq. The king imagined that the unexpected departure of the Syrians was only a *ruse*, namely, that they had left the camp and hidden themselves in the field, to entice the besieged out of the fortress, and then fall upon them and press into the city. **בְּהִשָּׁרָה** according to later usage for **בְּשָׂרָה** (*vid.* Ewald, § 244, *a*). In order to

make sure of the correctness or incorrectness of this conjecture, one of the king's servants (counsellors) gave this advice: "Let them take (the *Vav* before יקחי as in ch. iv. 41) five of the horses left in the city, that we may send and see how the matter stands." The words, "Behold they (the five horses) are as the whole multitude of Israel that are left in it (the city); behold they are as the whole multitude of Israel that are gone," have this meaning: The five horsemen (for horses stand for horsemen, as it is self-evident that it was men on horseback and not the horses themselves that were to be sent out as spies) can but share the fate of the rest of the people of Samaria, whether they return unhurt to meet death by starvation with the people that still remain, or fall into the hands of the enemy and are put to death, in which case they will only suffer the lot of those who have already perished. *Five* horses is an approximate small number, and is therefore not at variance with the following statement, that two pair of horses were sent out with chariots and men. The *Chethib* חֲמֵשׁ is not to be altered, since there are other instances in which the first noun is written with the article, though in the construct state (*vid.* Ewald, § 290, e); and the *Keri* is only conformed to the following כָּל־חֲמֵשׁ.—Vers. 14b and 15. They then sent out two chariots with horses, who pursued the flying enemy to the Jordan, and found the whole of the road full of traces of the hurried flight, consisting of clothes and vessels that had been thrown away. The *Chethib* בַּהֲפֹזִים is the only correct reading, since it is only in the *Niphal* that הָפֹז has the meaning to fly in great haste (cf. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26, Ps. xlviii. 6, civ. 7).—Vers. 16, 17. When the returning messengers reported this, the people went out and plundered the camp of the Syrians, and this was followed by the consequent cheapness of provisions predicted by Elisha. As the people streamed out, the unbelieving aide-de-camp, whom the king had ordered to take the oversight at the gate (הַפְקִיד, to deliver the oversight) for the purpose of preserving order in the crowding of the starving multitude, was trodden down by the people, so that he died, whereby this prediction of Elisha was fulfilled. The exact fulfilment of this prediction appeared so memorable to the historian, that he repeats this prophecy in vers. 18–20 along with the event which occasioned it, and refers again to its fulfilment.



CHAP. VIII. ELISHA HELPS THE SHUNAMMITE TO HER PROPERTY THROUGH THE HONOUR IN WHICH HE WAS HELD ; AND PREDICTS TO HAZAEL HIS POSSESSION OF THE THRONE. REIGNS OF JORAM AND AHAZIAH, KINGS OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1-6. ELISHA'S INFLUENCE HELPS THE SHUNAMMITE TO THE POSSESSION OF HER HOUSE AND FIELD.—Vers. 1 and 2. By the advice of Elisha, the woman whose son the prophet had restored to life (ch. iv. 33) had gone with her family into the land of the Philistines during a seven years' famine, and had remained there seven years. The two verses are rendered by most commentators in the pluperfect, and that with perfect correctness, for they are circumstantial clauses, and *וַתֵּקַם* is merely a continuation of *וַתֵּבֶר*, the two together preparing the way for, and introducing the following event. The object is not to relate a prophecy of Elisha of the seven years' famine, but what afterwards occurred, namely, how king Joram was induced by the account of Elisha's miraculous works to have the property of the Shunammite restored to her upon her application. The seven years' famine occurred in the middle of Joram's reign, and the event related here took place before the curing of Naaman the Syrian (ch. v.), as is evident from the fact that Gehazi talked with the king (ver. 4), and therefore had not yet been punished with leprosy. But it cannot have originally stood between ch. iv. 37 and iv. 38, as Thenius supposes, because the incidents related in ch. iv. 38-44 belong to the time of this famine (cf. ch. iv. 38), and therefore precede the occurrence mentioned here. By the words, "the Lord called the famine, and it came seven years" (*sc.* lasting that time), the famine is described as a divine judgment for the idolatry of the nation.—Ver. 3. When the woman returned to her home at the end of the seven years, she went to the king to cry, *i.e.* to invoke his help, with regard to her house and her field, of which, as is evident from the context, another had taken possession during her absence.—Ver. 4. And just at that time the king was asking Gehazi to relate to him the great things that Elisha had done ; and among these he was giving an account of the restoration of the Shunammite's son to life.—Vers. 5, 6. While he was relating this, the woman herself came in to invoke the help of the king to recover her property, and was pointed out

to the king by Gehazi as the very woman of whom he was speaking, which caused the king to be so interested in her favour, that after hearing her complaint he sent a chamberlain with her (*saris* as in 1 Kings xxii. 9), with instructions to procure for her not only the whole of her property, but the produce of the land during her absence.—For עֲזֹבָה without *mappiq*, see Ewald, § 247, *d*.

Vers. 7–15. ELISHA PREDICTS TO HAZAEL AT DAMASCUS THE POSSESSION OF THE THRONE.—Vers. 7 sqq. Elisha then came to Damascus at the instigation of the Spirit of God, to carry out the commission which Elijah had received at Horeb with regard to Hazael (1 Kings xix. 15). Benhadad king of Syria was sick at that time, and when Elisha's arrival was announced to him, sent Hazael with a considerable present to the man of God, to inquire of Jehovah through him concerning his illness. The form of the name הַזְּהָאֵל (here and ver. 15) is etymologically correct; but afterwards it is always written without ה. 'וְכָל־טוֹב רַמ' ("and that all kinds of good of Damascus") follows with a more precise description of the *minchah*—"a burden of forty camels." The present consisted of produce or wares of the rich commercial city of Damascus, and was no doubt very considerable; at the same time, it was not so large that forty camels were required to carry it. The affair must be judged according to the Oriental custom, of making a grand display with the sending of presents, and employing as many men or beasts of burden as possible to carry them, every one carrying only a single article (cf. Harmar, *Beobb.* ii. p. 29, iii. p. 43, and Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. p. 17).—Ver. 10. According to the *Chethib* לֹא הָיָה, Elisha's answer was, "Thou wilt not live, and (for) Jehovah has shown me that he will die;" according to the *Keri* לֹא הָיָה, "tell him: Thou wilt live, but Jehovah," etc. Most of the commentators follow the ancient versions, and the Masoretes, who reckon our לֹא among the fifteen passages of the O. T. in which it stands for the pronoun לוֹ (*vid.* Hilleri *Arcan. Keri*, p. 62 seq.), and some of the codices, and decide in favour of the *Keri*. (1) because the conjecture that לוֹ was altered into לֹא in order that Elisha might not be made to utter an untruth, is a very natural one; and (2) on account of the extreme rarity with which a negative stands before the inf. abs. with the finite verb following. But there is not much force in either argument.



The rarity of the position of לֹא before the inf. abs. followed by a finite verb, in connection with the omission of the pronoun לוֹ after אַמֵּר, might be the very reason why לֹא was taken as a pronoun; and the confirmation of this opinion might be found in the fact that Hazael brought back this answer to the king: "Thou wilt live" (ver. 14). The reading in the text לֹא (*non*) is favoured by the circumstance that it is the more difficult of the two, partly because of the unusual position of the negative, and partly because of the contradiction to ver. 14. But the לֹא is found in the same position in other passages (Gen. iii. 4, Ps. xlix. 8, and Amos ix. 8), where the emphasis lies upon the negation; and the contradiction to ver. 14 may be explained very simply, from the fact that Hazael did not tell his king the truth, because he wanted to put him to death and usurp the throne. We therefore prefer the reading in the text, since it is not in harmony with the character of the prophets to utter an untruth; and the explanation, "thou wilt not die of thine illness, but come to a violent death," puts into the words a meaning which they do not possess. For even if Benhadad did not die of his illness, he did not recover from it.—Ver. 11. Elisha then fixed Hazael for a long time with his eye, and wept. וַיַּעֲמֵר וְגו', literally, he made his face stand fast, and directed it (upon Hazael) to shaming. עַרְבֵשׁ as in Judg. iii. 25; not in a shameless manner (Thenius), but till Hazael was embarrassed by it.—Ver. 12. When Hazael asked him the cause of his weeping, Elisha replied: "I know the evil which thou wilt do to the sons of Israel: their fortresses wilt thou set on fire (שָׁלַח בָּאֵשׁ, see at Judg. i. 8), their youths wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children to pieces, and cut asunder their women with child" (בִּקַּעַ, split, cut open the womb). This cruel conduct towards Israel which is here predicted of Hazael, was only a special elaboration of the brief statement made by the Lord to Elijah concerning Hazael (1 Kings xix. 17). The fulfilment of this prediction is indicated generally in ch. x. 32, 33, and xiii. 3 sqq.; and we may infer with certainty from Hos. x. 14 and xiv. 1, that Hazael really practised the cruelties mentioned.—Vers. 13 sqq. But when Hazael replied in feigned humility, What is thy servant, the dog (*i.e.* so base a fellow: for דָּלֵב see at 1 Sam. xxiv. 15), that he should do such great things? Elisha said to him, "Jehovah has shown thee to me as king over Aram;" whereupon Hazael returned to his lord, brought him the

pretended answer of Elisha that he would live (recover), and the next day suffocated him with a cloth dipped in water. מִכְבֵּר, from כָּבַר, to plait or twist, literally, anything twisted; not, however, a net for gnats or flies (Joseph., J. D. Mich., etc.), but a twisted thick cloth, which when dipped in water became so thick, that when it was spread over the face of the sick man it was sufficient to suffocate him.

Vers. 16–24. REIGN OF JORAM OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxi. 2–20).—Joram became king in the fifth year of Joram of Israel, while Jehoshaphat his father was (still) king, the latter handing over the government to him two years before his death (see at ch. i. 17), and reigned eight years, namely, two years to the death of Jehoshaphat and six years afterwards.<sup>1</sup> The *Chethîb* שְׁמוֹנֶה שָׁנָה is not to be altered, since the rule that the numbers two to ten take the noun in the plural is not without exception (cf. Ewald, § 287, i).—Vers. 18, 19. Joram had married a daughter of Ahab, namely Athaliah (ver. 26), and walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, transplanting the worship of Baal into his kingdom. Immediately after the death of Jehoshaphat he murdered his brothers, apparently with no other object than to obtain possession of the treasures which his father had left them (2 Chron. xxi. 2–4). This wickedness of Joram would have been followed by the destruction of Judah, had not the Lord preserved a shoot to the royal house for David's sake. For לָחֵת לוֹ בֵּן see 1 Kings xi. 36. The following word לְבָנָי serves as an explanation of לוֹ בֵּן, “a light with regard to his sons,” i.e. by the fact that he kept sons (descendants) upon the throne.—Vers. 20–22. Nevertheless the divine chastisement was not omitted. The ungodliness of Joram was punished partly by the revolt of the Edomites and of the city of Libnah from his rule, and partly by a horrible sickness of which he died (2 Chron. xxi. 12–15). Edom, which had hitherto had only a

<sup>1</sup> The words וַיְהוֹשָׁפָט מָלָךְ יְהוּדָה have been improperly omitted by the Arabic and Syriac, and by Luther, Dathe, and De Wette from their translations; whilst Schulz, Maurer, Thenius, and others pronounce it a gloss. The genuineness of the words is attested by the LXX. (the Edit. Complut. being alone in omitting them) and by the Chaldee: and the rejection of them is just as arbitrary as the interpolation of מֵת, which is proposed by Kimchi and Ewald (“when Jehoshaphat was dead”). Compare J. Meyer, *annotatt. ad Seder Olam*, p. 916 sq.



vicegerent with the title of king (see ch. iii. 9 and 1 Kings xxii. 48), threw off the authority of Judah, and appointed its own king, under whom it acquired independence, as the attempt of Joram to bring it back again under his control completely failed. The account of this attempt in ver. 21 and 2 Chron. xxi. 9 is very obscure. "Joram went over to *Zair*, and all his chariots of war with him; and it came to pass that he rose up by night and smote the Edomites round about, and indeed the captains of the war-chariots, and the people fled (*i.e.* the Judæan men of war, not the Edomites) to their tents." It is evident from this, that Joram had advanced to *Zair* in Idumæa; but there he appears to have been surrounded and shut in, so that in the night he fought his way through, and had reason to be glad that he had escaped utter destruction, since his army fled to their homes. *זַעִירָה* is an unknown place in Idumæa, which Movers, Hitzig, and Ewald take to be Zoar, but without considering that Zoar was in the land of Moab, not in Edom. The Chronicles have instead *עִם שָׂרָיו*, "with his captains," from a mere conjecture; whilst Thenius regards *זַעִירָה* as altered by mistake from *שֵׁעִירָה* ("to Seir"), which is very improbable in the case of so well-known a name as *שֵׁעִיר*. *הַפְּבִיב* is a later mode of writing for *הַפּוֹבֵב*, probably occasioned by the frequently occurring word *קָבִיב*. "To this day," *i.e.* to the time when the original sources of our books were composed. For the Edomites were subjugated again by Amaziah and Uzziah (ch. xiv. 7 and 22), though under Ahaz they made incursions into Judah again (2 Chron. xxviii. 17).—At that time *Libnah* also revolted. This was a royal city of the early Canaanites, and at a later period it was still a considerable fortress (ch. xix. 8). It is probably to be sought for in the ruins of *Arak el Menshiych*, two hours to the west of *Beit-Jibrin* (see the Comm. on Josh. x. 29). This city probably revolted from Judah on the occurrence of an invasion of the land by the Philistines, when the sons of Joram were carried off, with the exception of the youngest, Jehoahaz (Ahaziah: 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17).—Vers. 23, 24. According to 2 Chron. xxi. 18 sqq., Joram died of a terrible disease, in which his bowels fell out, and was buried in the city of David, though not in the family sepulchre of the kings.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The building of Carthage, Dido, her husband Sichæus, her brother Pygmalion king of Tyre (*scelere ante alios immanior omnes*), all coincide with the reign of Joram. This synchronism of the history of Tyre is not without

Vers. 25–29. REIGN OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 1–6).—Ahaziah, the youngest son of Joram, ascended the throne in the twenty-second year of his age. The statement in 2 Chron. xxii. 2, that he was forty-two years old when he became king, rests upon a copyist's error, namely, a confusion of כ twenty with פ forty. Now, since his father became king at the age of thirty-two, and reigned eight years, Ahaziah must have been born in the nineteenth year of his age. Consequently it may appear strange that Ahaziah had brothers still older than himself (2 Chron. xxi. 17); but as early marriages are common in the East, and the royal princes had generally concubines along with their wife of the first rank, as is expressly stated of Joram in 2 Chron. xxi. 17, he might have had some sons in his nineteenth year. His mother was called Athaliah, and was a daughter of the idolatrous Jezebel. In ver. 26 and 2 Chron. xxii. 2 she is called the daughter, *i.e.* grand-daughter, of Omri; for, according to ver. 18, she was a daughter of Ahab. Omri, the grandfather, is mentioned in ver. 26 as the founder of the dynasty which brought so much trouble upon Israel and Judah through its idolatry.—Ver. 27. Ahaziah, like his father, reigned in the spirit of Ahab, because he allowed his mother to act as his adviser (2 Chron. xxii. 3, 4).—Vers. 28, 29. Ahaziah went with Joram of Israel, his mother's brother, to the war with the Syrians at Ramoth. The contest for this city, which had already cost Ahab his life (1 Kings xxii.), was to furnish the occasion, according to the overruling providence of God, for the extermination of the whole of Omri's family. Being wounded in the battle with the Syrians, Joram king of Israel returned to Jezreel to be healed of his wounds. His nephew Ahaziah visited him there, and there he met with his death at the same time as Joram at the hands of Jehu, who had conspired against Joram (see ch. ix. 14 sqq. and 2 Chron. xxii. 7–9). Whether the war with Hazael at Ramoth was for the recapture of this city, which had been taken by the Syrians, or simply for holding it against the Syrians, it is impossible to determine. All

significance here. The Tyrian, Israelitish, and Judæan histories are closely connected at this time. Jezebel, a Tyrian princess, was Ahab's wife, and again her daughter Athaliah was the wife of Joram, and after his death the murderess of the heirs of the kingdom, and sole occupant of the throne. Tyre, through these marriages, introduced its own spirit and great calamity into both the Israelitish kingdoms."—J. D. MICHAELIS on ver. 24.



that we can gather from ch. ix. 14 is, that at that time Ramoth was in the possession of the Israelites, whether it had come into their possession again after the disgraceful rout of the Syrians before Samaria (ch. vii.), or whether, perhaps, it was not recovered till this war. For אַרְמִים without the article see Ewald, § 277, c. —Ver. 29. בְּרָמָה = בְּרָמָה וְלָעָר, ver. 28; see at 1 Kings xxii. 4.

CHAP. IX. JEHU ANOINTED KING. HIS CONSPIRACY AGAINST JORAM.  
JORAM, AHAZIAH, AND JEZEBEL SLAIN.

Vers. 1-10. ANOINTING OF JEHU BY COMMAND OF ELISHA.—While the Israelitish army was at Ramoth, Elisha executed the last of the commissions which Elijah had received at Horeb (1 Kings xix. 16), by sending a pupil of the prophets into the camp to anoint *Jehu* the commander-in-chief of the army as king, and to announce to him, in the name of Jehovah, that he would be king over Israel; and to charge him to exterminate the house of Ahab.—Vers. 1-3 contain the instructions which Elisha gave to the pupil of the prophets. פֶּה הַשָּׁמַיִם as in 1 Sam. x. 1. רְאֵה שָׁם יְהוּא, look round there for Jehu. הִקְמָתוֹ וְגַר, let him (bid him) rise up from the midst of his brethren, *i.e.* of his comrades in arms. הָיָר בְּהָרָר: the true meaning is, “into the innermost chamber” (see at 1 Kings xx. 30). Ver. 3 contains only the leading points of the commission to Jehu, the full particulars are communicated in the account of the fulfilment in vers. 6 sqq. “And flee, and thou shalt not wait.” Elisha gave him this command, not to protect him from danger on the part of the secret adherents of Ahab (Theodoret, Cler.), but to prevent all further discussions, or “that he might not mix himself up with other affairs” (Seb. Schmidt).—Ver. 4. “And the young man, the servant of the prophet, went.” The second יָעַר has the article in the construct state, contrary to the rule (*vid.* Ges. § 110, 2, b).—Vers. 5 sqq. After the communication of the fact that he had a word to Jehu, the latter rose up and went with him into the house, *i.e.* into the interior of the house, in the court of which the captains were sitting together. There the pupil of the prophets poured oil upon Jehu’s head, and announced to him that Jehovah had anointed him king for Israel, and that he was to smite, *i.e.* exterminate, the house of Ahab, to avenge upon it the blood of the prophets (*vid.* 1 Kings xviii. 4, xix. 10).—Vers. 8-10 are simply a repetition of the

threat in 1 Kings xxi. 21-23. For בְּחֶלֶק ר', see at 1 Kings xxi. 23.

Vers. 11-15. **JEHU'S CONSPIRACY AGAINST JORAM.**—Ver. 11. When Jehu came out again to his comrades in arms, after the departure of the pupil of the prophets, they inquired הֲשָׁלוֹם, *i.e.* "is it all well? why did this madman come to thee?" not because they were afraid that he might have done him some injury (Ewald), or that he might have brought some evil tidings (Thenius), but simply because they conjectured that he had brought some important news. They called the prophet מְשִׁנֵּעַ, a madman, in derision, with reference to the ecstatic utterances of the prophets when in a state of holy inspiration. Jehu answered evasively, "Ye know the man and his muttering," *i.e.* ye know that he is mad and says nothing rational. שִׁיחַ includes both meditating and speaking.—Ver. 12. They were not contented with this answer, however, but said שָׁקֶר, *i.e.* thou dost not speak truth. Jehu thereupon informed them that he had anointed him king over Israel in the name of Jehovah.—Ver. 13. After hearing this, they took quickly every man his garment, laid it under him upon the steps, blew the trumpet, and proclaimed him king. The clothes, which consisted simply of a large piece of cloth for wrapping round the body (see at 1 Kings xi. 29), they spread out in the place of carpets upon the steps, which served as a throne, to do homage to Jehu. For these signs of homage compare Matt. xxi. 7 and Wetstein, *N. Test. ad h. l.* The difficult words אֶל-נֶגְרָם הַמַּעֲלוֹת, as to the meaning of which the early translators have done nothing but guess, can hardly be rendered in any other way than that proposed by Kimchi (*lib. rad.*), *super ipsosmet gradus*, upon the steps themselves = upon the bare steps; נֶגְרָם being taken according to Chaldee usage like the Hebrew עָצָם in the sense of *substantia rei*, whereas the rendering given by Lud. de Dieu, after the Arabic جِزْم, *sectio—super aliquem e gradibus*, is without analogy in Hebrew usage (*vid.* L. de Dieu *ad h. l.*, and Ges. *Thes.* p. 303).<sup>1</sup> The meaning is, that without looking for a suitable

<sup>1</sup> The objection raised by Thenius, that it is only in combination with personal pronouns that the Chaldaic נֶגְרָם signifies *self* either in the Chaldee or Samaritan versions, is proved to be unfounded by לְנֶגְרָם in Job i. 3 (Targ.). Still less can the actual circumstances be adduced as an objection, since



place on which to erect a throne, they laid their clothes upon the bare steps, or the staircase of the house in which they were assembled, and set him thereon to proclaim him king.—Vers. 14, 15. Thus Jehu conspired against Joram, who (as is related again in the circumstantial clause which follows from וְיֹרָם הָיָה to מִלְּךְ אֲרָם; cf. ch. viii. 28, 29) had been keeping guard at Ramoth in Gilead, *i.e.* had defended this city against the attacks of Hazael, and had returned to Jezreel to be healed of the wounds which he had received; and said, “If it is your wish (נַפְשְׁכֶם), let no fugitive go from the city, to announce it in Jezreel (*viz.* what had taken place, the conspiracy or the proclamation of Jehu as king).” It is evident from this, that the Israelites were in possession of the city of Ramoth, and were defending it against the attacks of the Syrians, so that שָׁמַר in ver. 14 cannot be understood as relating to the siege of Ramoth. The *Chethîb* לְיֵזְרְעֵל for לְהַגִּיר is not to be altered according to the *Keri*, as there are many examples to be found of syncope in cases of this kind (*vid.* Olshausen, *Lehrb. d. Hebr. Spr.* p. 140).

Vers. 16-29. SLAYING OF THE TWO KINGS, JORAM OF ISRAEL AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.—Ver. 16. Jehu drove without delay to Jezreel, where Joram was lying sick, and Ahaziah had come upon a visit to him.—Vers. 17-21. As the horsemen, who were sent to meet him on the announcement of the watchman upon the tower at Jezreel that a troop was approaching, joined the followers of Jehu, and eventually the watchman, looking down from the tower, thought that he could discover the driving of Jehu in the approaching troop, Joram and Ahaziah mounted their chariots to drive and meet him, and came upon him by the portion of ground of Naboth the Jezreelite. The second שָׁפַעַת in ver. 17 is a rarer form of the absolute state (see Ges. § 80, 2, Anm. 2, and Ewald, § 173, *d*).—מִה־לֶּךְ וְלִשְׁלוֹם: “what hast thou to do with peace?” *i.e.* to trouble thyself about it. סֹב אַל-אַחֲרִי: “turn behind me,” *sc.* to follow me. הַמְנִיחַ כְּמִי: “the driving is like the driving of Jehu; for he drives like a madman.” בְּשִׁנְעוֹן, *in insania*, *i.e.* in actual fact *in præcipitatione* (Vatabl.). “The there is no evidence to support the assertion that there was no staircase in front of the house. The perfectly un-Hebraic conjecture אֶל-צֵלָם הַמַּעֲלוֹת, “as a figure (or representation) of the necessary ascent” (Thenius), has not the smallest support in the Vulgate rendering, *ad similitudinem tribunalis*.

portion of Naboth" is the vineyard of Naboth mentioned in 1 Kings xxi., which formed only one portion of the gardens of the king's palace.—Ver. 22. To Joram's inquiry, "Is it peace, Jehu?" the latter replied, "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her many witchcrafts continue?" The notion of continuance is implied in עַר (see Ewald, § 217, *e*); זְנוּנִים is spiritual whoredom, *i.e.* idolatry. בְּשָׁפִים, *incantationes magicæ*, then witchcrafts generally, which were usually associated with idolatry (cf. Deut. xviii. 10 sqq.).—Ver. 23. Joram detecting the conspiracy from this reply, turned round (יָהֲפֹךְ יָדָיו) as in 1 Kings xxii. 34) and fled, calling out to Ahaziah מְרַמָּה, "deceit," *i.e.* we are deceived, in actual fact betrayed.—Ver. 24. But Jehu seized the bow (מָלֵא יָדוֹ בַּקֶּשֶׁת, lit. filled his hand with the bow), and shot Joram "between his arms," *i.e.* in his back between the shoulders in an oblique direction, so that the arrow came out at his heart, and Joram sank down in his chariot.—Ver. 25. Jehu then commanded his aide-de-camp (שְׁלִישׁ, see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8) Bidkar to cast the slain man into the field of Naboth the Jezreelite, and said, "For remember how we, I and thou, both rode (or drove) behind his father Ahab, and Jehovah pronounced this threat upon him." אֲנִי וְאַתָּה are accusatives, written with a looser connection for אֲתִי וְאַחֲרָיִךְ, as the apposition רִכְבָּיִם shows: literally, think of me and thee, the riders. The olden translators were misled by אֲנִי, and therefore transposed זָכַר into the first person, and Thenius naturally follows them. רִכְבָּיִם צִמְדִים, riding in pairs. This is the rendering adopted by most of the commentators, although it might be taken, as it is by Kimchi and Bochart, as signifying the two persons who are carried in the same chariot. מִשָּׂא, a burden, then a prophetic utterance of a threatening nature (see the Comm. on Nah. i. 1). For the connection of the clauses 'וַיִּהְיֶה וְגו', see Ewald, § 338, *a*. In ver. 26 Jehu quotes the word of God concerning Ahab in 1 Kings xxi. 19 so far as the substance is concerned, to show that he is merely the agent employed in executing it. "Truly (אִם-לֹא, a particle used in an oath) the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons have I seen yesterday, saith the Lord, and upon this field will I requite him." The slaying of the sons of Naboth is not expressly mentioned in 1 Kings xxi. 13, "because it was so usual a thing, that the historian might leave it out as a matter of course" (J. D. Mich., Ewald). It necessarily followed, however, from the fact that Naboth's field was confiscated (see



at 1 Kings xxi. 14).—Vers. 27, 28. When Ahaziah saw this, he fled by the way to the garden-house, but was smitten, *i.e.* mortally wounded, by Jehu at the height of Gur near Jibleam, so that as he was flying still farther to Megiddo he died, and was carried as a corpse by his servants to Jerusalem, and buried there. After הִכָּהוּ, “and him also, smite him,” we must supply וַיִּכָּהוּ, “and they smote him,” which has probably only dropped out through a copyist’s error. The way by which Ahaziah fled, and the place where he was mortally wounded, cannot be exactly determined, as the situation of the localities named has not yet been ascertained. The “garden-house” (בֵּית הַגֶּן) cannot have formed a portion of the royal gardens, but must have stood at some distance from the city of Jezreel, as Ahaziah went away by the road thither, and was not wounded till he reached the height of Gur near Jibleam. מַעְלֵה-נֹר, the ascent or eminence of Gur, is defined by Jibleam. Now, as Ahaziah fled from Jezreel to Megiddo past Jibleam, Thenius thinks that Jibleam must have been situated between Jezreel and Megiddo. But between Jezreel and Megiddo there is only the plain of Jezreel or Esdrelom, in which we cannot suppose that there was any such eminence as that of Gur. Moreover Jibleam or Bileam (1 Chron. vi. 55, see at Josh. xvii. 11) was probably to the south of Jenin, where the old name בִּלְעָם has been preserved in the well of بِلْعَمَة, Belameh, near Beled Sheik Manssûr, which is half an hour’s journey off. And it is quite possible to bring this situation of Jibleam into harmony with the account before us. For instance, it is *a priori* probable that Ahaziah would take the road to Samaria when he fled from Jezreel, not only because his father’s brothers were there (ch. x. 13), but also because it was the most direct road to Jerusalem; and he might easily be pursued by Jehu and his company to the height of Gur near Jibleam before they overtook him, since the distance from Jezreel (Zerîn) to Jenin is only two hours and a half (Rob. Pal. iii. p. 828), and the height of Gur might very well be an eminence which he would pass on the road to Jibleam. But the wounded king may afterwards have altered the direction of his flight for the purpose of escaping to Megiddo, probably because he thought that he should be in greater safety there than he would be in Samaria.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 2 Chron. xxii. 8, 9, the account of the slaying of Ahaziah and his brethren (ch. x. 12 sqq.) is condensed into one brief statement, and then

—In ver. 29 we are told once more in which year of Joram's reign Ahaziah became king. The discrepancy between "the *eleventh* year" here and "the *twelfth* year" in ch. viii. 25 may be most simply explained, on the supposition that there was a difference in the way of reckoning the commencement of the years of Joram's reign.

Vers. 30–37. DEATH OF JEZEBEL.—Ver. 30. When Jehu came to Jezreel and Jezebel heard of it, "she put her eyes into lead polish (*i.e.* painted them with it), and beautified her head and placed herself at the window." פִּיֶּקֶת is a very favourite eye-paint with Oriental women even to the present day. It is prepared from antimony ore (كحل, *Cohol* or *Stibium* of the Arabs), which when pounded yields a black powder with a metallic brilliancy, which was laid upon the eyebrows and eyelashes either in a dry state as a black powder, or moistened generally with oil and made into an ointment, which is applied with a fine smooth eye-pencil of the thickness of an ordinary goose-quill, made either of wood, metal, or ivory. The way to use it was to hold the central portion of the pencil horizontally between the eyelids, and then draw it out between them, twisting it round all the while, so that the edges of the eyelids were blackened all round; and the object was to heighten the splendour of the dark southern eye, and give it, so to speak, a more deeply glowing fire, and to impart a youthful appearance to the whole of the eyelashes even in extreme old age. Rosellini found jars with eye-paint of this kind in the early Egyptian graves (*vid.* Hille, *über den Gebrauch u. die*

afterwards it is stated with regard to Ahaziah, that "Jehu sought him, and they seized him when he was hiding in Samaria, and brought him to Jehu and slew him," from which it appears that Ahaziah escaped to Samaria. From the brevity of these accounts it is impossible to reconcile the discrepancy with perfect certainty. On the one hand, our account, which is only limited to the main fact, does not preclude the possibility that Ahaziah really escaped to Samaria, and was there overtaken by Jehu's followers, and then brought back to Jehu, and wounded upon the height of Gur near Jibleam, whence he fled to Megiddo, where he breathed out his life. On the other hand, in the perfectly summary account in the Chronicles, וְהוּא מִתְחַבֵּא בְּשֹׁמְרוֹן may be understood as referring to the attempt to escape to Samaria and hide himself there, and may be reconciled with the assumption that he was seized upon the way to Samaria, and when overtaken by Jehu was mortally wounded.



*Zusammensetzung der oriental. Augenschminke: Deutsch. morg. Ztsch.* v. p. 236 sqq.).—Jezebel did this that she might present an imposing appearance to Jehu and die as a queen; not to allure him by her charms (Ewald, after Ephr. Syr.). For (ver. 31) when Jehu entered the palace gate, she cried out to him, “Is it peace, thou Zimri, murderer of his lord?” She addressed Jehu as Zimri the murderer of the king, to point to the fate which Jehu would bring upon himself by the murder of the king, as Zimri had already done (*vid.* 1 Kings xvi. 10-18).—Vers. 32, 33. But Jehu did not deign to answer the worthless woman; he simply looked up to the window and inquired: “Who is (holds) with me? who?” Then two, three chamberlains looked out (of the side windows), and by Jehu’s command threw the proud queen out of the window, so that some of her blood spirted upon the wall and the horses (of Jehu), and Jehu trampled her down, driving over her with his horses and chariot.—Ver. 34. Jehu thereupon entered the palace, ate and drank, and then said to his men: “Look for this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king’s daughter.” הָאִרְוֶרָה, the woman smitten by the curse of God.—Vers. 35, 36. But when they went to bury her, they found nothing but her skull, the two feet, and the two hollow hands. The rest had been eaten by the dogs and dragged away. When this was reported to Jehu, he said: “This is the word of the Lord, which He spake by His servant Elijah,” etc. (1 Kings xxi. 23), *i.e.* this has been done in fulfilment of the word of the Lord. Ver. 37 is also to be regarded as a continuation of the prophecy of Elijah quoted by Jehu (and not as a closing remark of the historian, as Luther supposes), although what Jehu says here does not occur verbatim in 1 Kings xxi. 23, but Jehu has simply expanded rather freely the meaning of that prophecy. יֵהִי־כֵן (Chethîb) is the older form of the 3d pers. fem. Kal, which is only retained here and there (*vid.* Ewald, § 194, a). וְאִשֶּׁר is a conjunction (see Ewald, § 337, a): “that men may not be able to say, This is Jezebel,” *i.e.* that they may no more be able to recognise Jezebel.

CHAP. X. 1-27. EXTERMINATION OF THE OTHER SONS OF AHAB, OF THE BRETHREN OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH, AND OF THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

Vers. 1-11. EXTERMINATION OF THE SEVENTY SONS OF AHAB IN SAMARIA.—Vers. 1-3. As Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria (בָּנִים in the wider sense, viz. sons, including grandsons [see at ver. 13], as is evident from the fact that אֲמֻנִים, foster-fathers, are mentioned, whereas Ahab had been dead fourteen years, and therefore his youngest sons could not have had foster-fathers any longer), Jehu sent a letter to the elders of the city and to the foster-fathers of the princes, to the effect that they were to place one of the sons of their lord upon the throne. There is something very strange in the words אֶל-שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֵאל הַזִּקְנִים, “to the princes of Jezreel, the old men,” partly on account of the name *Jezreel*, and partly on account of the combination of הַזִּקְנִים with שָׂרֵי. If we compare ver. 5, it is evident that הַזִּקְנִים cannot be the adjective to שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֵאל, but denotes the elders of the city, so that the preposition אֶל has dropped out before הַזִּקְנִים. שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֵאל, the princes or principal men of Jezreel, might certainly be the chief court-officials of the royal house of Ahab, since Ahab frequently resided in Jezreel. But against this supposition there is not only the circumstance that we cannot discover any reason why the court-officials living in *Samaria* should be called princes of Jezreel, but also ver. 5, where, instead of the princes of Jezreel, the governor of the city and the governor of the castle are mentioned. Consequently there is an error of the text in יִזְרְעֵאל, which ought to read הָעִיר אֶל, though it is older than the ancient versions, since the Chaldee has the reading יִזְרְעֵאל, and no doubt the Alexandrian translator read the same, as the Septuagint has sometimes τῆς πόλεως, like the Vulgate, and sometimes Σαμαρείας, both unquestionably from mere conjecture. The “princes of the city” are, according to ver 5, the prefect of the palace and the captain of the city; the זִקְנִים, “elders,” the magistrates of Samaria; and אֲמֻנִים אֲחָאָב, the foster-fathers and tutors appointed by Ahab for his sons and grandsons. אֲחָאָב is governed freely by הָאֲמֻנִים. In ver. 2 the words from וְאֶתְכֶם to הַנִּשְׁקָא form an explanatory circumstantial clause: “since the sons of your lord are with you, and with you the war-chariots and horses, and a fortified city and arms,” i.e. since you have everything in your hands,—the royal



princes and also the power to make one of them king. It is perfectly evident from the words, "the sons of your lord," *i.e.* of king Joram, that the seventy sons of Ahab included grandsons also. This challenge of Jehu was only a *ruse*, by which he hoped to discover the feelings of the leading men of the capital of the kingdom, because he could not venture, without being well assured of them, to proceed to Samaria to exterminate the remaining members of the royal family of Ahab who were living there. **נָלַחֵם עָלָיו**, to fight concerning, *i.e.* for a person, as in Judg. ix. 17.—Vers. 4, 5. This *ruse* had the desired result. The recipients of the letter were in great fear, and said, Two kings could not stand before him, how shall we? and sent messengers to announce their submission, and to say that they were willing to carry out his commands, and had no desire to appoint a king.—Vers. 6, 7. Jehu then wrote them a second letter, to say that if they would hearken to his voice, they were to send to him on the morrow at this time, to Jezreel, the heads of the sons of their lord; which they willingly did, slaying the seventy men, and sending him their heads in baskets. **רָאִשֵׁי אֲנָשֵׁי בְנֵי אָדָם**, "the heads of the men of the sons of your lord," *i.e.* of the male descendants of Ahab, in which **אֲנָשֵׁי** may be explained from the fact that **בְּנֵי-אֲדָמִים** has the meaning "royal princes" (see the similar case in Judg. xix. 22). In order to bring out still more clearly the magnitude of Jehu's demand, the number of the victims required is repeated in the circumstantial clause, "and there were seventy men of the king's sons with (**אִתּוֹ**) the great men of the city, who had brought them up."—Vers. 8, 9. When the heads were brought, Jehu had them piled up in two heaps before the city-gate, and spoke the next morning to the assembled people in front of them: "Ye are righteous. Behold I have conspired against my lord, and have slain him, but who has slain all these?" Jehu did not tell the people that the king's sons had been slain by his command, but spake as if this had been done without his interfering by a higher decree, that he might thereby justify his conspiracy in the eyes of the people, and make them believe what he says still further in ver. 10: "See then that of the word of the Lord nothing falls to the ground (*i.e.* remains unfulfilled) which Jehovah has spoken concerning the house of Ahab; and Jehovah has done what He spake through His servant Elijah."—Ver. 11. The effect of these words was, that the people looked quietly

on when he proceeded to slay all the rest of the house of Ahab, *i.e.* all the more distant relatives in Jezreel, and "all his great men," *i.e.* the superior officers of the fallen dynasty, and "all his acquaintances," *i.e.* friends and adherents, and "all his priests," probably court priests, such as the heathen kings had; not secular counsellors or nearest servants (Thenius), a meaning which פְּהִינִים never has, not even in 2 Sam. viii. 18 and 1 Kings iv. 5.

Vers. 12-17. EXTERMINATION OF THE BROTHERS OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH AND OF THE OTHER MEMBERS OF AHAB'S DYNASTY.—Vers. 12 sqq. Jehu then set out to Samaria; and on the way, at the binding-house of the shepherds, he met with the brethren of Ahaziah, who were about to visit their royal relations, and when he learned who they were, had them all seized, viz. forty-two men, and put to death at the cistern of the binding-house. וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּלֶךְ, "he came and went," appears pleonastic; the words are not to be transposed, however, as Böttcher and Thenius propose after the Syriac, but וַיֵּלֶךְ is added, because Jehu did not go at once to Samaria, but did what follows on the way. By transposing the words, the slaying of the relations of Ahaziah would be transferred to Samaria, in contradiction to vers. 15 sqq.—The words from הוּא בֵּית וְנִי onwards, and from וַיֵּהוּא to כָּלֵךְ יְהוֹדָה, are two circumstantial clauses, in which the subject וַיֵּהוּא is added in the second clause for the sake of greater clearness: "when he was at the binding-house of the shepherds on the road, and Jehu (there) met with the brethren of Ahaziah, he said . . . ." בֵּית-עֶקֶר הָרָעִים (*Baithakáθ*, LXX.) is explained by Rashi, after the Chaldee בֵּית כְּנִישַׁת רָעִיָא, as signifying *locus conventus pastorum*, the meeting-place of the shepherds; and Gesenius adopts the same view. But the rest of the earlier translators for the most part adopt the rendering, *locus ligationis pastorum*, from עָקַר, to bind, and think of a house *ubi pastores ligabant oves quando eas tondabant*. In any case it was a house, or perhaps more correctly a place, where the shepherds were in the habit of meeting, and that on the road from Jezreel to Samaria; according to Eusebius in the *Onom.* s.v. *Baithakáθ*, a place fifteen Roman miles from *Legio* (*Lejun*, *Megiddo*), in the great plain of Jezreel: a statement which may be correct with the exception of the small number of miles, but which does not apply to the present village of *Beit Kad* to the east of Jenin (Rob. *Pal.* iii. p. 157), with which, according



to Thenius, it exactly coincides. אֲחִי אֶחָיָהּ, for which we have בְּנֵי אֶחָי אֶחָי, Ahaziah's brothers' sons, in 2 Chron. xxii. 8, were not the actual brothers of Ahaziah, since they had been carried off by the Arabians and put to death before he ascended the throne (2 Chron. xxi. 17), but partly step-brothers, *i.e.* sons of Joram by his concubines, and partly Ahaziah's nephews and cousins. לְשָׁלוֹם, *ad salutandum*, *i.e.* to inquire how they were, or to visit the sons of the king (Joram) and of the queen-mother, *i.e.* Jezebel, therefore Joram's brothers. In ver. 1 they are both included among the "sons" of Ahab.—Vers. 15 sqq. As Jehu proceeded on his way, he met with *Jehonadab* the son of Rechab, and having saluted him, inquired, "Is thy heart true as my heart towards thy heart?" and on his replying וַיֵּן, "it is (honourable or true)," he bade him come up into the chariot, saying וַיֵּן, "if it is (so), give me thy hand;" whereupon he said still further, "Come with me and see my zeal for Jehovah," and then drove with him to Samaria, and there exterminated all that remained of Ahab's family. *Jehonadab* the son of *Rechab* was the tribe-father of the Rechabites (Jer. xxxv. 6). The rule which the latter laid down for his sons and descendants for all time, was to lead a simple nomad life, namely, to dwell in tents, follow no agricultural pursuits, and abstain from wine; which rule they observed so sacredly, that the prophet Jeremiah held them up as models before his own contemporaries, who broke the law of God in the most shameless manner, and was able to announce to the Rechabites that they would be exempted from the Chaldæan judgment for their faithful observance of their father's precept (Jer. xxxv.). *Rechab*, from whom the descendants of Jehonadab derived their tribe-name, was the son of Hammath, and belonged to the tribe of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55), to which Hobab the father-in-law of Moses also belonged (Num. x. 29); so that the Rechabites were probably descendants of Hobab, since the Kenites the sons of Hobab had gone with the Israelites from the Arabian desert to Canaan, and had there carried on their nomad life (Judg. i. 16, iv. 11; 1 Sam. xv. 6; see Witsii *Miscell.* ss. ii. p. 223 sqq.). This Jehonadab was therefore a man distinguished for the strictness of his life, and Jehu appears to have received him in this friendly manner on account of the great distinction in which he was held, not only in his own tribe, but also in Israel generally, that he might exalt himself in the eyes of the people through his

friendship.<sup>1</sup>—In *הִישׁ אֶת־לִבְבִּי*, “is with regard to thy heart honourable or upright?” *אֶת* is used to subordinate the noun to the clause, in the sense of *quoad* (see Ewald, § 277, *a*). *כָּל־הַנִּשְׁאָרִים לְאֶחָב*, “all that remained to Ahab,” *i.e.* all the remaining members of Ahab’s house.

Vers. 18–27. EXTERMINATION OF THE PROPHETS AND PRIESTS OF BAAL AND OF THE BAAL-WORSHIP.—Vers. 18 sqq. Under the pretence of wishing to serve Baal even more than Ahab had done, Jehu appointed a great sacrificial festival for this idol, and had all the worshippers of Baal throughout all the land summoned to attend it; he then placed eighty of his guards around the temple of Baal in which they were assembled, and after the sacrifice was offered, had the priests and worshippers of Baal cut down by them with the sword. Objectively considered, the slaying of the worshippers of Baal was in accordance with the law, and, according to the theocratical principle, was perfectly right; but the subjective motives which impelled Jehu, apart from the artifice, were thoroughly selfish, as Seb. Schmidt has correctly observed. For since the priests and prophets of Baal throughout the Israelitish kingdom were bound up with the dynasty of Ahab, with all their interests and with their whole existence, they might be very dangerous to Jehu, if on any political grounds he should happen not to promote their objects, whereas by their extermination he might hope to draw to his side the whole of the very numerous supporters of the Jehovah-worship, which had formerly been legally established in Israel, and thereby establish his throne more firmly. The very fact that Jehu allowed the calf-worship to continue, is a proof that he simply used religion as the means of securing his own ends (ver. 29). *קִדְּשׁוּ עֲצֵרָה* (ver. 20), “sanctify a festal assembly,” *i.e.* proclaim in the land a festal assembly for Baal (compare Isa. i. 13; and for *עֲצֵרָה* = *עֲצֵרָה*, see at Lev. xxiii. 36). *וַיִּקְרְאוּ*, and they proclaimed, *sc.* the festal meeting.—Ver. 21. The temple of Baal was filled *פָּה לְפָה*,

<sup>1</sup> According to C. a Lapide, Jehu took him up into his chariot “that he might establish his authority with the Samaritans, and secure a name for integrity by having Jehonadab as his ally, a man whom all held to be both an upright and holy man, that in this way he might the more easily carry out the slaughter of the Baalites, which he was planning, without any one daring to resist him.”



“from one edge (end) to the other.” פֶּה in this sense is not to be derived from פֶּאֶה, a corner (Cler., Ges.), but signifies mouth, or the upper rim of a vessel. *Metaphora sumta a vasis humore aliquo plenis*: Vatabl.—Ver. 22. אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַפֶּלְתָּהּ is the keeper of the wardrobe (Arab. *præfectus vestium*), for the ἀπ. λεγ. מְלִתָּהּ signifies *vestiarium* (Ges. *Thes.* p. 764). The reference is not to the wardrobe of the king's palace, out of which Jehu had every one who took part in the feast supplied with a festal dress or new caftan (Deres., Then., etc.), but the wardrobe of the temple of Baal, since the priests of Baal had their own sacred dresses like the priests of almost all religions (as Silius has expressly shown in his *Ital.* iii. 24-27, of the priests of the Gadetan Hercules). These dresses were only worn at the time of worship, and were kept in a wardrobe in the temple.—Vers. 23, 24. Jehu then came with Jehonadab to the temple, and commanded the worshippers of Baal to be carefully examined, that there might not be one of the worshippers of Jehovah with (among) them. When the priests of Baal were preparing to offer sacrifice, Jehu had eighty men of his guards stationed before the temple, and laid this injunction upon them: “Whoever lets one of the men escape whom I bring into your hands (we must read מִלֵּט instead of יִפְלֵט), his life shall answer for his (the escaped man's) life. נַפְשׁוֹ תַּחַת נַפְשׁוֹ, as in 1 Kings xx. 39.—Ver. 25. בְּכַלְתּוֹ: when he (the sacrificing priest, not Jehu) had finished the burnt-offering (the singular suffix *i* may also be taken as indefinite, when one had finished, *vid.* Ewald, § 294, *b*), Jehu commanded the runners and aides-de-camp: Come and smite them (the worshippers of Baal), without one coming out (escaping); whereupon they smote them with the edge of the sword, *i.e.* slew them unsparingly. וַיִּשְׁלִיכוּ: and the runners and aides-de-camp threw (those who had been slain) away, and went into the citadel of the temple of Baal. עִיר בֵּית־הַבַּעַל cannot be the city of the temple of Baal, *i.e.* that part of the city in which the temple of Baal stood, for the runners were already in the court of the temple of Baal; but it is no doubt the temple-citadel, the true temple-house (עִיר from עָוַר, *locus circumseptus*)—*templum Baalis magnifice exstructum instar arcis alicujus* (Seb. Schm.).—Ver. 26. They then fetched the columns (מַצֵּבֹת) out of the temple and burned them (the suffix in יִשְׂרְפוּהָ refers to the plural מַצֵּבֹת taken as an abstract noun, as in ch. iii. 3; cf. Ewald, § 317, *a*). They then broke

in pieces the *מַצֵּבַת הַבַּעַל*, column of Baal, *i.e.* the real image of Baal, probably a conical stone dedicated to Baal, whereas the *מַצֵּבֹת*, which were burned, were wooden columns as *πάρεδροι* or *σύμβωμοι* of Baal (see Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 674).—Ver. 27. Lastly, they destroyed the temple itself and made it *לְמַחֲרָאוֹת*, privies, for which the Masoretes have substituted the euphemistic *מוֹצָאוֹת*, sinks, as a mark of the greatest insult, many examples of which are to be met with among Oriental tribes (*vid.* Ezra vi. 11, Dan. ii. 5, and Hævernicks *in loc.*).—Thus Jehu exterminated Baal from Israel. This remark in ver. 28 forms the introduction to the history of Jehu's reign, with which the last epoch in the history of the ten tribes begins.

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3. FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REIGNS OF JEHU IN ISRAEL,  
AND ATHALIAH IN JUDAH, TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KING-  
DOM OF ISRAEL.

CHAP. X. 28-XVII.

In the 161 years which this epoch embraces, from B.C. 883 to 722, the fate of the kingdom of Israel was accomplished. The first hundred years, which comprised the reigns of Jehu and his descendants, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam II., were the last day of grace for the rebellious ten tribes, at the expiration of which the judgment began to burst upon them. As the anointing of Jehu by Elisha was performed by the command of God, so also was the religious reform, which Jehu vigorously commenced with the extermination of the Baal-worship, a fruit of the labours of the prophets Elijah and Elisha within the sinful kingdom; but this reform stood still half-way, since Jehu merely restored the idolatrous Jehovah-worship introduced by Jeroboam, and neither he himself nor his successors desisted from that sin. In order, therefore, if possible, to complete the work begun by His prophets of converting Israel to its God, the Lord now began to visit the rebellious tribes with severe chastisements, giving them up into the power of the Syrians, who under Hazael not only conquered the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan, but almost annihilated the military force of the Israelites (ch. x. 32, 33, xiii. 3, 7). This chastisement did not remain without fruit. Jehoahaz prayed to the Lord, and the Lord had compassion upon the oppressed for the sake of His



covenant with the patriarchs, and sent them deliverers in Joash, who recovered the conquered land from the Syrians after the death of Hazael, and in Jeroboam, who even restored the ancient boundaries of the kingdom (ch. xiii. 4, 5, and 23 sqq., xiv. 25, 26). But with this renewal of external strength, luxuriance and debauchery, partiality in judgment and oppression of the poor began to prevail, as we may see from the prophecies of Hosea and Amos (Amos v. 10 sqq., vi. 1-6; Hos. vi. 7 sqq.); and in addition to the Jehovah-worship, which was performed in an idolatrous manner (Hos. viii. 13, ix. 4, 5), the worship of Baal was carried on most vigorously (Hos. ii. 13, 15, x. 1, 2), so that the people made pilgrimages to Bethel, Gilgal, and even to Beersheba in the south of the kingdom of Judah (Hos. iv. 15; Amos iv. 4, v. 5, viii. 14), and on account of the worship thus zealously performed, relied in carnal security upon the protection of God, and scoffed at the judgments of the Lord which were threatened by the prophets (Amos v. 14, 18). This internal corruption increased with the death of Jeroboam, till all civil order was dissolved. Anarchy, conflicts for the possession of the throne, and repeated regicides, broke up the kingdom and made it ripe for the judgment of destruction, which was gradually accomplished by the Assyrians, whom one party in the reign of Menahem had called to their help, under Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmanasar.—The kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, was purified from the destructive consequences of the alliance with the dynasty of Ahab through the overthrow by the high priest Jehoiada of the godless Athaliah, who had murdered the royal children after the death of Ahaziah and seized upon the government, and, with the renewal of the covenant and the extermination of the worship of Baal under the young king whom Jehoiada had trained, was brought back to the theocratic path; and notwithstanding the fact that in the closing years of Joash and Amaziah idolatry found admission again, was preserved in that path, in which it increased in strength and stability, so that not only were the wounds quickly healed which the war with Israel, occasioned by Amaziah's pride, had inflicted upon it through the conquest and plunder of Jerusalem (ch. xiv. 8 sqq.), but during the sixty-eight years comprised in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, the people rose to a state of great prosperity and wealth through the pursuit of agriculture and trade, and a thoughtful development of the resources of the land, and the

kingdom acquired great external power through the humiliation of the Philistines and the subjugation of the Edomites once more (2 Chron. xxvi.). At the same time, neither of these kings was able entirely to suppress the illegal worship of the high places, although the temple-worship was regularly sustained according to the law; and with the increase of wealth and power, not only did luxuriance and pride set in, but also idolatry and an inclination to heathen ways (Isa. ii. 5-8 and 16 sqq., v. 18 sqq.); so that even in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham Isaiah predicted the day of the Lord's judgment, which was to fall upon everything lofty and proud (Isa. ii.-iv.). This prophecy began to be fulfilled, so far as its first beginnings were concerned, even in the time of Ahaz. Under this weak and idolatrous ruler idolatry gained the upper hand, and the worship of Jehovah was suppressed; and this open apostasy from the Lord was followed by immediate punishment. The allied kings of Israel and Syria forced their way victoriously into Judah, and even stood before the gates of Jerusalem, with the intention of destroying the kingdom of Judah, when Ahaz, despising the help of the Lord, which was offered him by the prophet Isaiah, purchased the assistance of Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria with silver and gold, and was thereby delivered from his foes. But this made him dependent upon the Assyrians, who would have conquered the kingdom of Judah and destroyed it, as they had already destroyed the kingdom of Israel, had not the Lord hearkened to the prayer of the pious king and miraculously routed the powerful army of Sennacherib before the walls of Jerusalem.

#### CHAP. X. 28-36. REIGN OF JEHU OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 28, 29. Jehu exterminated the worship of Baal from Israel; but the sins of Jeroboam, the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, that is to say, the idolatrous worship of Jehovah, he allowed to remain. "The golden calves, etc.:" this is a supplementary and explanatory apposition to "the sins of Jeroboam." —Vers. 30, 31. Jehu is promised the possession of the throne to the fourth generation of his sons for having exterminated the godless royal house of Ahab (*vid.* ch. xv. 12). The divine sentence, "because thou hast acted well to do right in mine eyes, (because thou) hast done as it was in my heart to the house of Ahab," refers to the deed as such, and not to the subjective



motives by which Jehu had been actuated. For it is obvious that it had not sprung from pure zeal for the honour of the Lord, from the limitation added in ver. 31: "but Jehu did not take heed to walk in the law of Jehovah with all his heart, and did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam."—Vers. 32, 33. Therefore (this link of connection follows from the actual fact, though it is not distinctly mentioned in the text) Hazael had now to inflict chastisement upon faithless Israel. In Jehu's days Jehovah began "to cut off in Israel," *i.e.* to rend away certain portions from the kingdom. "Hazael smote them (the Israelites) on the whole of the border of Israel," *i.e.* of the kingdom, "from Jordan to the sun-rising (*i.e.* on the eastern side of the Jordan), the whole of the land of Gilead (*אֶת כָּל-אֶרֶץ* is dependent upon *יִשְׂרָאֵל*, which must be supplied from *יִשְׂרָאֵל*), namely, the territory of the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Half-Manasseh, from Aroer on the brook Arnon (now *Araayr*, a ruin on the northern border of the Mojob (Arnon) valley; see at Num. xxxii. 34), the southern border of the Israelitish land to the east of the Jordan (Deut. ii. 36, iii. 12), both Gilead and Bashan," the two countries into which Gilead in the broader sense was divided (see at Deut. iii. 8-17).—These conquests took place during the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu, since Hazael began to reign before Jehu, *viz.* while Joram was king, and had already fought successfully against the Israelites at Ramoth in Joram's reign (ch. viii. 28, 29), but not in the later part of Jehu's reign, as Thenius supposes.—Vers. 34-36. Conclusion of the history of Jehu's reign. The length of his reign is not given till the end in this instance (ver. 36), contrary to the usual custom in our books, because his ascent of the throne is not expressly mentioned in what precedes; but the general character of his reign is given in immediate connection with the account of his anointing and of the extermination of Ahab's dynasty.

CHAP. XI. TYRANNY AND OVERTHROW OF ATHALIAH, AND  
CORONATION OF JOASH.

Vers. 1-3. THE GOVERNMENT OF ATHALIAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 10-12). After the death of Ahaziah of Judah, his mother Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (see at ch. viii. 18 and 26), seized upon the government, by putting to death all the king's descendants with the exception of Joash, a son of Ahaziah of only a year old, who had been secretly carried off

from the midst of the royal children, who were put to death, by Jehosheba, his father's sister, the wife of the high priest Jehoiada, and was first of all hidden with his nurse in the bed-chamber, and afterwards kept concealed from Athaliah for six years in the high priest's house. The ו before רָאָתָה is no doubt original, the subject, Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah, being placed at the head absolutely, and a circumstantial clause introduced with וַרָאָתָה: "Athaliah, when she saw that, etc., rose up." בְּלִיְיָרֵעַ הַמִּמְלָכָה, all the royal seed, *i.e.* all the sons and relations of Ahaziah, who could put in any claim to succeed to the throne. At the same time there were hardly any other direct descendants of the royal family in existence beside the sons of Ahaziah, since the elder brothers of Ahaziah had been carried away by the Arabs and put to death, and the rest of the closer blood-relations of the male sex had been slain by Jehu (see at ch. x. 13).—*Jehosheba* (יְהוֹשֻׁבָעַת, in the Chronicles יְהוֹשֻׁבָעַת), the wife of the high priest Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxii. 11), was a daughter of king Joram and a sister of Ahaziah, but she was most likely not a daughter of Athaliah, as this worshipper of Baal would hardly have allowed her own daughter to marry the high priest, but had been born to Joram by a wife of the second rank. מְמוֹתִים (*Chethib*), generally a substantive, *mortes* (Jer. xvi. 4; Ezek. xxviii. 8), here an adjective: slain or set apart for death. The *Keri* מוֹמְתִים is the participle *Hophal*, as in 2 Chron. xxii. 11. בְּחֶדְרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ is to be taken in connection with תִּגְנוֹב: she stole him (took him away secretly) from the rest of the king's sons, who were about to be put to death, into the chamber of the beds, *i.e.* not the children's bed-room, but a room in the palace where the beds (mattresses and counterpanes) were kept, for which in the East there is a special room that is not used as a dwelling-room (see Chardin in Harm. *Beobb.* iii. p. 357). This was the place in which at first it was easiest to conceal the child and its nurse. וַיִּסְתְּרוּ, "they (Jehosheba and the nurse) concealed him," is not to be altered into וַתִּסְתְּרֵהוּ after the Chronicles, as Thenius maintains. The masculine is used in the place of the feminine, as is frequently the case. Afterwards he was concealed with her (with Jehosheba) in the house of Jehovah, *i.e.* in the home of the high-priest in one of the buildings of the court of the temple.



OF JOASH (compare the account in 2 Chron. xxiii., which is more elaborate in several points).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 4. In the seventh year of Athaliah's reign, Jehoiada sent for the captains of the king's body-guard to come to him into the temple, and concluded a covenant with them, making them swear and showing them the king's son, namely, to dethrone the tyrant Athaliah and set the king's son upon the throne. שָׂרֵי הַמִּצְחִיּוֹת, *centuriones*, military commanders of the executioners and runners, *i.e.* of the royal body-guard. The *Chethib* מִצְחִיּוֹת may be explained from the fact that מִצְחָה is abridged from מִצְחָה (vid. Ewald, § 267, *d*). On כָּרִי וְרָצִים = הַכְּרִיתִי וְהַרְצִיתִי (1 Kings i. 38) see the Comm. on 2 Sam. viii. 18; and on לְ as a periphrasis of the genitive, see Ewald, § 292, *a*. In 2 Chron xxiii. 1-3 the chronicler not only gives the names of these captains, but relates still more minutely that they went about in the land and summoned the Levites and heads of families in Israel to Jerusalem, probably under the pretext of a festal celebration; whereupon Jehoiada concluded a covenant with the persons assembled, to ensure their assistance in the execution of his plan.—Vers. 5-8. Jehoiada then communicated to those initiated into the plan the necessary instructions for carrying it out, assigning them the places which they were to occupy. "The third part of you that come on the Sabbath (*i.e.* mount guard) shall keep the guard of the king's house (יִשְׁמְרֵי is a corruption of יִשְׁמְרוּ), and the third part shall be at the gate Sur, and the third part at the gate behind the runners, and (ye) shall keep guard over the house for defence; and the two parts of you, (namely) all who depart on the Sabbath, shall keep the guard of the house of Jehovah for the king; and ye shall surround the king round about, every one with his weapons in his hand; and whoever presses into the ranks shall be slain, and shall be with the king when

<sup>1</sup> In both accounts we have only short extracts preserved from a common and more complete original, the extracts having been made quite independently of one another and upon different plans. Hence the apparent discrepancies, which have arisen partly from the incompleteness of the two abridged accounts, and partly from the different points of view from which the extracts were made, but which contain no irreconcilable contradictions. The assertion of De Wette, which has been repeated by Thenius and Bertheau, that the chronicler distorted the true state of the case to favour the Levites, rests upon a misinterpretation of our account, based upon arbitrary assumptions, as I have already shown in my *apologetischer Versuch über die Chronik* (p. 361 sqq.).

he goes out and in," *i.e.* in all his steps. The words **בָּאִי הַשָּׁבֶת** and **יֹצְאֵי הַשָּׁבֶת**, "those coming and those going out on the Sabbath," denote the divisions of the watch, those who performed duty on the Sabbath and those who were relieved on the Sabbath; not the military guard at the palace however, but the temple-guard, which consisted of Levites. For David had divided the priests and Levites into classes, every one of which had to perform service for a week and was relieved on the Sabbath: compare 1 Chron. xxiii.-xxvi. with Josephus (*Ant.* vii. 14, 7), who expressly says that every one of the twenty-four classes of priests had to attend to the worship of God "for eight days, from Sabbath to Sabbath," also with Luke i. 5. On the other hand, we do not know that there was any similar division and obligation to serve in connection with the royal body-guard or with the army. The current opinion, that by those who come on the Sabbath and those who go out on the Sabbath we are to understand the king's halberdiers or the guard of the palace, is therefore proved to be unfounded and untenable. And if there could be any doubt on the matter, it would be removed by vers. 7 and 10. According to ver. 7, two parts of those who went away (were relieved) on the Sabbath were to undertake the guarding of the house of Jehovah about the king, *i.e.* to keep guard over that room in the temple where the king then was. Could Jehoiada have used the royal body-guard, that was being relieved from guarding the palace, for such a purpose as this? Who can imagine that this is a credible thing? According to ver. 10, Jehoiada gave to the captains over a hundred the weapons of king David, which were in the house of Jehovah. Did the palace-guard then return without weapons? In 2 Chron. xxiii. 4, "those coming on the Sabbath" are correctly described as the priests and Levites coming on the Sabbath, *i.e.* the priests and Levites who entered upon their week's duty at the temple on the Sabbath. According to this explanation of the words, which is the only one that can be grammatically sustained, the facts were as follows: "When Jehoiada had initiated the captains of the royal halberdiers, and with their help the heads of families of the people generally, into his plan of raising the youthful Joash to the throne and dethroning Athaliah, he determined to carry out the affair chiefly with the help of the priests and Levites who entered upon their duty in the temple on the Sabbath, and



of those who left or were relieved at the same time, and entrusted the command over these men to the captains of the royal halberdiers, that they might occupy the approaches to the temple with the priests and Levites under their command, so as to prevent the approach of any military from the king's palace and protect the youthful king. These captains had come to the temple without weapons, to avoid attracting attention. Jehoiada therefore gave them the weapons of king David that were kept in the temple.

With regard to the distribution of the different posts, the fact that two-thirds are spoken of first of all in vers. 5, 6, and then two parts in ver. 7, occasions no difficulty. For the two-thirds mentioned in vers. 5, 6 were those who came on the Sabbath, whereas the "two divisions" (שְׁתֵּי הַיָּדוֹת) referred to in ver. 7 were all who went away on the Sabbath. Consequently the priests and Levites, who came on the Sabbath and entered upon the week's service, were divided into three sections; and those who should have been relieved, but were detained, into two. Probably the number of those who came this time to perform service at the temple was much larger than usual, as the priests were initiated into Jehoiada's secret; so that it was possible to make three divisions of those who arrived, whereas those who were about to depart could only be formed into two. The three divisions of those who were entering upon duty are also distinctly mentioned in the Chronicles; whereas, instead of the two divisions of those who were relieved, "all the people" are spoken of. The description of the different posts which were assigned to these several companies causes some difficulty. In general, so much is clearly indicated in vers. 7 and 8, that the two divisions of those who were relieved on the Sabbath were to keep guard over the young king in the house of Jehovah, and therefore to remain in the inner spaces of the temple-court for his protection; whereas the three divisions of those who were entering upon duty were charged with the occupation of the external approaches to the temple. One-third was to "keep watch over the king's house," *i.e.* to observe whatever had to be observed in relation to the king's palace; not to occupy the king's palace, or to keep guard in the citadel at the palace gate (Thenius), but to keep watch towards the royal palace, *i.e.* to post themselves so that no one could force a way into the temple, with which the indefinite פְּנֵי הַמִּקְדָּשׁ in the

Chronicles harmonizes, if we only translate it "against (at) the king's house." The idea that the palace was guarded is precluded not only by ver. 13, according to which Athaliah came out of the palace to the people to the house of Jehovah, which she would not have been able to do if the palace had been guarded, but also by the circumstance that, according to ver. 19, the chief men were in the temple with the whole of the (assembled) people, and did not go out of the house of Jehovah into the king's house till after the anointing of Joash and the death of Athaliah. The other third was to station itself at the gate *Sur* (סור), or, according to the Chronicles, *Yesod* (יסוד), foundation-gate. There is no doubt as to the identity of the gate *Sur* and the gate *Yesod*; only we cannot decide whether one of these names has simply sprung from a copyist's error, or whether the gate had two different names. The name יסוד, foundation-gate, suggests a gate in the outer court of the temple, at the hollow of either the Tyropæon or the Kedron; for the context precludes our thinking of a palace gate. The third division was to be posted "at the gate behind the runners;" or, as it is stated in ver. 19, "at the gate of the runners." It is very evident from ver. 19 that this gate led from the temple-court to the royal palace upon Zion, and was therefore on the western side of the court of the temple. This also follows from ver. 4 of the Chronicles, according to which this division was to act as "doorkeepers of the thresholds" (לְשַׁעֲרֵי הַסְּפִיִּים), i.e. to keep guard at the gate of the thresholds. For we may safely infer, from a comparison with 1 Chron. ix. 19, that הַסְּפִיִּים were the thresholds of the ascent to the temple. The last clause, "and shall keep guard over the house for defence," refers to all three divisions, and serves to define with greater precision the object for which they were stationed there. מִנֶּפֶח is not a proper name (LXX., Luther, and others), but an appellative in the sense of defence or resistance, from נָסַח, *depellere*. The meaning is, that they were to guard the house, to keep off the people, and not to let any of the party of Athaliah force a way into the temple.—In ver 7, כָּל יֵצְאֵי הַשָּׁר, is an explanatory apposition to וְשְׁתֵּי הַיָּדוֹת בְּכֶם, "and the two parts in (of) you," namely, all who go out on the Sabbath, i.e. are relieved from duty. Their task, to observe the watch of the house of Jehovah with regard to the king, is more precisely defined in ver. 8 as signifying, that they were to surround the king with weapons



in their hands, and slay every one who attempted to force a way into their ranks. בְּצֵאתוֹ וּבְבֹאוֹ, *i.e.* in all his undertakings, or in all his steps; צֵאת וּבֹא being applied to the actions and pursuits of a man, as in Deut. xxviii. 6, xxxi. 2, etc. (see the Comm. on Num. xxvii. 17). Thenius has explained this incorrectly: "in his going out of the temple and entering into the palace."—Vers. 9-11. The execution of these plans. The high priest gave the captains "the spears and shields (שִׁלְטָיִם): see at 2 Sam. viii. 7) which (belonged) to king David, that were in the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the weapons which David had presented to the sanctuary as dedicatory offerings. יְהוֹיָדָה Instead of יְהוֹיָדָה we ought probably to read יְהוֹיָדָה (cf. Mic. iv. 3, Isa. ii. 4), after the יְהוֹיָדָה of the Chronicles, since the collective force of יְהוֹיָדָה is very improbable in prose, and a ה might easily drop out through a copyist's error. Jehoiada gave the captains weapons from the temple, because, as has been already observed, they had come unarmed, and not, as Thenius imagines, to provide them with old and sacred weapons instead of their ordinary ones. In ver. 11 the position of all the divisions is given in a comprehensive manner, for the purpose of appending the further course of the affair, namely, the coronation of the king. "Thus the halberdiers stood, every one with his weapons in his hand, from the right wing of the house to the left wing, towards the altar (of burnt-offering) and the (temple-) house, round about the king," *i.e.* to cover the king on all sides. For it is evident that we are not to understand עַל-הַמֶּלֶךְ כָּבִיב as signifying the encircling of the king, from the statement in ver. 12, according to which Jehoiada did not bring out the king's son till after the men had taken up their positions. The use of הַרְצִים, to signify the captains with the armed priests and Levites put under their command for this purpose, is an uncommon one, but it may be explained from the fact that רָצִים had retained the general meaning of royal halberdiers; and the priests and Levites under the command of the captains of the royal body-guard by this very act discharged the duty of the royal body-guard itself. The chronicler has used the indefinite expression כָּל-הָעָם, the whole of the people assembled in the temple-court.—Ver. 12. After the approaches to the temple had all been occupied in this manner, Jehoiada brought out the king's son from his home in the temple; or, he brought him forth, set the crown upon him, and handed him the testimony, *i.e.* the book of the

law, as the rule of his life and action as king, according to the precept in Deut. xvii. 18, 19. *וְאֶת־הַעֲדוּת* is connected with *יָתַן* *עָלָיו*, because *יָתַן עָלָיו* has the general meaning "delivered to him, handed him," and does not specially affirm the putting on of the crown. *יַמְלִיכוּ*, they made him king. The subject is the persons present, though, as a matter of course, the anointing was performed by Jehoiada and the priests, as the Chronicles expressly affirm. Clapping the hands was a sign of joyful acclamation, like the cry, "Long live the king" (cf. 1 Kings i. 39).

Vers. 13-16. *Death of Athaliah*.—Vers. 13, 14. As soon as Athaliah heard the loud rejoicing of the people, she came to the people into the temple, and when she saw the youthful king in his standing-place surrounded by the princes, the trumpeters, and the whole of the people, rejoicing and blowing the trumpets, she rent her clothes with horror, and cried out, Conspiracy, conspiracy! *הָרָצוֹן הָעַם* does not mean the people running together, but the original reading in the text was probably *הָרָצוֹן וְהָעַם*, the people and the halberdiers, and the *Vav* dropped out through an oversight of the copyist. By *הָרָצוֹן* we are to understand the captains of the halberdiers with the armed Levites, as in ver. 11; and *הָעַם* is the people who had assembled besides (cf. ver. 19). In the Chronicles *וְהַמְהַלְלִים הַמִּלָּחָם* is in apposition to *הָעַם*: the noise of the people, the halberdiers, and those who praised the king. The *עַמּוּד*, upon which the king stood, was not a pillar, but an elevated standing-place (*suggestus*) for the king at the eastern gate of the inner court (*בְּמִכּוֹא*, 2 Chron. xxiii. 13 compared with Ezek. xlvi. 2), when he visited the temple on festive occasions (cf. ch. xxiii. 3), and it was most probably identical with the brazen scaffold (*בֵּיּוֹר*) mentioned in 2 Chron. vi. 13, which would serve to explain *כַּמִּשְׁפָּט*, "according to the right" (Angl. V. "as the manner was"). *הַיָּשָׁרִים* are not merely the captains mentioned in vers. 4, 9, and 10, but these together with the rest of the assembled heads of the nation (*רָאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת*, 2 Chron. xiii. 2). *הַחֲצֹצְרוֹת*, the trumpets, is an abbreviated expression for those blowing the trumpets, the trumpeters. The reference is to the Levitical musicians mentioned in 1 Chron. xiii. 8, xv. 24, etc.; for they are distinguished from *כָּל־הָעַם וְנֹו*, "all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing the trumpets," i.e. not all the military men of the land who were present in Jerusalem (Thenius), but the mass of the people present in the temple (Bertheau).—Ver. 15. Jehoiada then commanded the captains



פָּקָדֵי הַחֵיל, those placed over the army, *i.e.* the armed men of the Levites, to lead out Athaliah between the ranks, and to slay every one who followed her, *i.e.* who took her part (הִמָּת, *inf. abs.* instead of imperative); for, as is added supplementarily in explanation of this command, the priest had (previously) said: "Let her not be slain in the house of Jehovah." The temple was not to be defiled with the blood of the usurper and murderess.—Ver. 16. Thus they made way for her on both sides, or, according to the correct explanation given by the Chaldee, יָשִׁימוּ לָהּ יָרִים, they formed lines (*Spalier*, fences) and escorted her back, and she came by the way of the horses' entrance into the palace, and was there put to death. מְבוֹא הַפָּסִים is explained in the Chronicles by מְבוֹא שַׁעַר הַפָּסִים, entrance of the horse-gate. The entrance for the horses, *i.e.* the way which led to the royal mews, is not to be identified with the horse-gate mentioned in Neh. iii. 28; for this was a gate in the city wall, whereas the road from the temple to the royal mews, which were no doubt near the palace, was inside the wall.

Vers. 17-20. *Renewal of the covenant, extermination of the worship of Baal, and entrance of the king into the palace.*—Ver. 17. After Jehoash was crowned and Athaliah put to death, Jehoiada concluded the covenant (1) between Jehovah on the one hand and the king and people on the other, and (2) between the king and the people. The former was simply a renewal of the covenant which the Lord had made with Israel through Moses (Ex. xxiv.), whereby the king and the people bound themselves לְהֵיוֹת לְעַם לַיהוָה, *i.e.* to live as the people of the Lord, or to keep His law (cf. Deut. iv. 20, xxvii. 9, 10), and was based upon the "testimony" handed to the king. This covenant naturally led to the covenant between the king and the people, whereby the king bound himself to rule his people according to the law of the Lord, and the people vowed that they would be obedient and subject to the king as the ruler appointed by the Lord (cf. 2 Sam. v. 3). The renewal of the covenant with the Lord was necessary, because under the former kings the people had fallen away from the Lord and served Baal. The immediate consequence of the renewal of the covenant, therefore, was the extermination of the worship of Baal, which is mentioned at once in ver. 18, although its proper place in order of time is after ver. 18. All the people (כָּל-עַם הָאָרֶץ, as in ver. 14) went to the temple of Baal, threw down his altars, broke his images (the columns of

Baal and Astarte) rightly, *i.e.* completely (הַיָּטֵב as in Deut. ix. 21), and slew the priest Mattan, probably the chief priest of Baal, before his altars. That the temple of Baal stood within the limits of the sanctuary, *i.e.* of the temple of Jehovah (Thenius), cannot be shown to be probable either from 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 or from the last clause of this verse. (For 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 see the fuller remarks on ch. xii. 5.) The words "and the priest set overseers over the house of Jehovah" do not affirm that Jehoiada created the office of overseer over the temple for the purpose of guarding against a fresh desecration of the temple by idolatry (Thenius), but simply that he appointed overseers over the temple, namely, priests and Levites entrusted with the duty of watching over the performance of worship according to the precepts of the law, as is more minutely described in vers. 18 and 19.—Ver. 19. And he took the captains, and they brought the king down out of the house of Jehovah, etc. The word יָקַח is not to be pressed, but simply affirms that Jehoiada entrusted the persons named with the duty of conducting the king into his palace. Beside the captains over a hundred (see at ver. 4) there are mentioned הַכָּרִי וְהַרְצִים, *i.e.* the royal halberdiers (the body-guard), who had passed over to the new king immediately after the fall of Athaliah and now followed their captains, and כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ, all the rest of the people assembled. Instead of the halberdiers there are mentioned in the Chronicles הָאֲדִירִים הַמִּזְעָלִים, the nobles and lords in the nation,—a completion implied in the facts themselves, since Jehoiada had drawn the heads of the nation into his plan, and on the other hand the express allusion to the body-guard might be omitted as of inferior importance. We cannot infer from יָרִידוֹ that the bridge between Moriah and Zion was not yet in existence, as Thenius supposes, but simply that the bridge was lower than the temple-courts. Instead of שַׁעַר הַרְצִים, the gate of the runners (*i.e.* of the halberdiers), we find in the Chronicles שַׁעַר הָעֲלִיּוֹן, the upper gate, which appears to have been a gate of the temple, according to ch. xv. 35 and 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. The statement that they came by the way of the runners' gate into the house of the king is not at variance with this, for it may be understood as meaning that it was by the halberdiers' gate of the temple that the entry into the palace was carried out.—In ver. 20 this account is concluded with the general remark that all the people rejoiced, *sc.* at the coronation of Joash, and the city was quiet, when they slew Athaliah with



the sword. This is the way, so far as the sense is concerned, in which the last two clauses are to be connected.

CHAP. XII. REIGN OF KING JOASH OF JUDAH, AND REPAIRING OF  
THE TEMPLE.

All that is recorded of the forty years' reign of Joash, in addition to the general characteristics of the reign (vers. 1-4), is the repairing of the temple which was effected by him (vers. 5-17), and the purchased retreat of the Syrians from their invasion of Judah (vers. 18 and 19), and finally his violent death in consequence of a conspiracy formed against him, of which we have only a brief notice in vers. 20-22. The parallel account in 2 Chron. xxiv. supplies several additions to this: viz. concerning the wives of Joash, the distribution of the Levites at the repairing of the temple, the death of Jehoiada, and the seduction of Joash to idolatry by the chief men of Judah, and the stoning of the prophet Zechariah, who condemned this rebellion,—all of which can easily be fitted into our account.

Vers. 1-4 (1-5). *Reign of Joash*.—Ver. 1 (1, 2). His age on ascending the throne, viz. seven years (cf. ch. xi. 4).—Commencement and length of his reign. His mother's name was *Zibiah* of Beersheba.—Ver. 2 (3). Joash did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord *בְּלִיְיָמוֹ אֲשֶׁר וְנֹה*, "all his days that," etc., i.e. during the whole period of his life that Jehoiada instructed him (for *אֲשֶׁר* after substantives indicating time, place, and mode, see Ewald, § 331, c, 3; and for the use of the suffix attached to the noun defined by *אֲשֶׁר וְנֹה*, compare ch. xiii. 14); not "all his life long, because Jehoiada had instructed him," although the *Athnach* under *יָמָיו* favours this view. For Jehoiada had not instructed him before he began to reign, but he instructed him after he had been raised to the throne at the age of seven years, that is to say, so long as Jehoiada himself lived. The *בְּלִיְיָמוֹ יְהוֹיָדָע* of the Chronicles is therefore a correct explanation. But after Jehoiada's death, Joash yielded to the petitions of the princes of Judah that he would assent to their worshipping idols, and at length went so far as to stone the son of his benefactor, the prophet Zechariah, on account of his candid reproof of this apostasy (2 Chron. xxiv. 17-22).—Ver. 3 (4). But the worship on the high places was not entirely suppressed, notwithstanding the fact that Jehoiada instructed him (on this standing formula see the Comm. on 1 Kings xv. 14).

Vers. 4-16 (5-17). *Repairing of the temple* (cf. 2 Chron. xxiv. 5-14).—Vers. 4, 5. That the temple, which had fallen into ruins, might be restored, Joash ordered the priests to collect all the money of the consecrated gifts, that was generally brought into the house of the Lord, and to effect therewith all the repairs that were needed in the temple. The general expression **בְּסָף הַקִּדְשִׁים**, money of the holy gifts, *i.e.* money derived from holy gifts, is more specifically defined by **בְּסָף עֹבֵר וְנֹ**, according to which it consisted of three kinds of payments to the temple: viz. (1) **בְּסָף עֹבֵר**, *i.e.* money of persons mustered (or numbered in the census); **עֹבֵר** is an abbreviated expression for **הָעֹבֵר** **הַפְּקָדִים**, “he who passes over to those who are numbered” (Ex. xxx. 13), as it has been correctly interpreted by the Chald., Rashi, Abarb., and others; whereas the explanation “money that passes” (Luther), or current coin, which Thenius still defends, yields no suitable sense, since it is impossible to see why only current coin should be accepted, and not silver in bars or vessels, inasmuch as Moses had accepted gold, silver, copper, and other objects of value *in natura*, for the building of the tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 2, 3, xxxv. 5, xxxvi. 5, 6). The brevity of the expression may be explained from the fact, that **בְּסָף עֹבֵר** had become a technical term on the ground of the passage in the law already cited. The objection raised by Thenius, that the explanation adopted would be without any parallel, would, if it could be sustained, also apply to his own explanation “current money,” in which **עֹבֵר** is also taken as an abbreviation of **עֹבֵר לַפֶּהֶר** in Gen. xxiii. 16. There is still less ground for the other objection, that if **בְּסָף עֹבֵר** denoted one kind of temple-revenue, **כָּל** or **אִישׁ** would necessarily have been used. (2) **אִישׁ . . . עֶרְבּוֹ**, “every kind of souls’ valuation money;” **אִישׁ** is more precisely defined by **עֶרְבּוֹ**, and the position in which it stands before **בְּסָף** resembles the **בְּתָרוֹ** in Gen. xv. 10—literally, soul money of each one’s valuation. Thenius is wrong in his interpretation, “every kind of money of the souls according to their valuation,” to which he appends the erroneous remark, that **אִישׁ** is also used in Zech. x. 1 and Joel ii. 7 in connection with inanimate objects as equivalent to **כָּל**. **אִישׁ . . . עֶרְבּוֹ**, every kind of valuation, because both in the redemption of the male first-born (Num. xviii. 15, 16) and also in the case of persons under a vow a payment had to be made according to the valuation of the priest. (3) “All the money that cometh



into any one's mind to bring into the house of the Lord," *i.e.* all the money which was offered as a free-will offering to the sanctuary. This money the priests were to take to themselves, every one from his acquaintance, and therewith repair all the dilapidations that were to be found in the temple. In the Chronicles the different kinds of money to be collected for this purpose are not specified; but the whole is embraced under the general expression "the taxes of Moses the servant of God, and of the congregation of Israel, to the tent of the testimony," which included not only the contribution of half a shekel for the building of the temple, which is prescribed in Ex. xxx. 12 sqq., but also the other two taxes mentioned in this account.<sup>1</sup> Again, according to ver. 7 of the Chronicles, Joash gave the following reason for his command: "For Athaliah, the wicked woman, and her sons have demolished the house of God, and all the dedicated gifts of the house of Jehovah have they used for the Baals." We are not told in what the violent treatment or demolition (פָּרַץ) of the temple by Athaliah and her sons consisted. The circumstance that considerable repairs even of the stonework of the temple were required in the time of Joash, about 130 or 140 years after it was built, is quite conceivable without any intentional demolition. And in no case can we infer from these words, as Thenius has done, that Athaliah or her sons had erected a temple of Baal within the limits of the sanctuary. The application of all the dedicatory offerings of the house of Jehovah to the Baals, involves nothing more than that the gifts which were absolutely necessary for the preservation of the temple and temple-service were withdrawn from the sanctuary of Jehovah and applied to the worship of Baal, and therefore that the decay of the sanctuary would necessarily follow upon the neglect of the worship.—Vers. 6 sqq. But

<sup>1</sup> There is no ground either in the words or in the facts for restricting the perfectly general expression "taxes of Moses and of the congregation of Israel" to the payment mentioned in Ex. xxx. 12, as Thenius and Bertheau have done, except perhaps the wish to find a discrepancy between the two accounts, for the purpose of being able to accuse the chronicler, if not of intentional falsification, as De Wette does, at any rate of perverting the true state of the case. The assertion of Thenius, that the yearly payment of half a shekel, which was appointed in the law and regarded as atonement-money, appears to be directly excluded in our text, is simply founded upon the interpretation given to עֹבֵר כֶּסֶף as current money, which we have already proved to be false.

when the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash arrived, and the dilapidations had not been repaired, the king laid the matter before the high priest Jehoiada and the priests, and directed them not to take the money any more from their acquaintance, but to give it for the dilapidations of the temple; "and the priests consented to take no money, and not to repair the dilapidations of the house," *i.e.* not to take charge of the repairs. We may see from this consent how the command of the king is to be understood. Hitherto the priests had collected the money to pay for the repairing of the temple; but inasmuch as they had not executed the repairs, the king took away from them both the collection of the money and the obligation to repair the temple. The reason for the failure of the first measure is not mentioned in our text, and can only be inferred from the new arrangement made by the king (ver. 9): "Jehoiada took a chest,—of course by the command of the king, as is expressly mentioned in 2 Chron. xxiv. 8,—bored a hole in the door (the lid) thereof, and placed it by the side of the altar (of burnt-offering) on the right by the entrance of every one into the house of Jehovah, that the priests keeping the threshold might put thither (*i.e.* into the chest) all the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah."—Ver. 10. "And when they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's writer and the high priest came, and bound up and reckoned the money that was found in the house of Jehovah." וַיִּבְדְּ, to bind up the money in bags (cf. ch. v. 23). The binding is mentioned before the reckoning, because the pieces of money were not counted singly, but packed at once into bags, which were then weighed for the purpose of estimating the amount received.—Vers. 11, 12. "They gave the money weighed into the hands of those who did the work, who were placed over the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the appointed overlookers of the work; "and they paid it (as it was required) to the carpenters and builders, who worked at the house, and to the masons and the hewers of stone, and for the purchase of wood and hewn stones, to repair the dilapidations of the house, and for all that might be spent (וְכָל, *i.e.* be given out) for the house for repairing it." It is quite clear from this, that the assertion of J. D. Michaelis, De Wette, and others, that the priests had embezzled the money collected, is perfectly imaginary. For if the king had cherished any such suspicion against the priests, he would not have asked for their



consent to an alteration of the first arrangement or to the new measure; and still less would he have commanded that the priests who kept the door should put the money into the chest, for this would have been no safeguard against embezzlement. For if the door-keepers wished to embezzle, all that they would need to do would be to put only a part of the money into the chest. The simple reason and occasion for giving up the first arrangement and introducing the new arrangement with the chest, was that the first measure had proved to be insufficient for the accomplishment of the purpose expected by the king. For inasmuch as the king had not assigned any definite amount for the repairing of the temple, but had left it to the priests to pay for the cost of the repairs out of the money that was to be collected, one portion of which at least came to themselves, according to the law, for their own maintenance and to provide for the expenses of worship, it might easily happen, without the least embezzlement on the part of the priests, that the money collected was paid out again for the immediate necessities of worship and their own maintenance, and that nothing remained to pay for the building expenses. For this reason the king himself now undertook the execution of the requisite repairs. The reason why the chest was provided for the money to be collected was, first of all, that the money to be collected for the building might be separated from the rest of the money that came in and was intended for the priests; and secondly, that the contributions to be gathered for the building might be increased, since it might be expected that the people would give more if the collections were made for the express purpose of restoring the temple, than if only the legal and free-will offerings were simply given to the priests, without any one knowing how much would be applied to the building.—And because the king had taken the building into his own hand, as often as the chest was full he sent his secretary to reckon the money along with the high priest, and hand it over to the superintendents of the building.

If we compare with this the account in the Chronicles, it helps to confirm the view which we have obtained from an unprejudiced examination of the text as to the affair in question. According to ver. 5 of the Chronicles, Joash had commanded the priests and Levites to accelerate the repairs; “but the Levites did not hurry.” This may be understood as signifying that they were dilatory both in the collection of the money and

in the devotion of a portion of their revenues to the repairing of the temple. But that the king took the matter in hand himself, not so much because of the dilatoriness or negligence of the priests as because his first measure, regarded as an expedient, did not answer the purpose, is evident from the fact that, according to the Chronicles, he did not content himself with placing the chest at the entrance, but had a proclamation made at the same time in Judah and Jerusalem, to offer the tax of Moses for the repair of the temple (ver. 9)—evidently with no other intention than to procure more liberal contributions. For, according to ver. 10, all the chief men and all the people rejoiced thereat, and cast their gifts into the chest, *i.e.* they offered their gifts with joy for the purpose that had been proclaimed.—The other points of difference between the Chronicles and our text are unimportant. For instance, that they placed the chest “at the gate of the house of Jehovah on the outside.” The בְּיָמִין בְּבֹאֲאֵי־בֵית merely defines the expression in our text, בְּיָמִין, “to the right at the entrance into the temple,” more minutely, by showing that the ark was not placed on the inner side of the entrance into the court of the priests, but against the outer wall of it. This is not at variance with אֶצֶל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ in ver. 10; for even apart from the account in the Chronicles, and according to our own text, this cannot be understood as signifying that the ark had been placed in the middle of the court, as Thenius explains in opposition to בְּבֹאֲאֵי־וְנֹ, but can only mean at the entrance which was on the right side of the altar, *i.e.* at the southern entrance into the inner court. Again, the further variation, that according to the Chronicles (ver. 11), when the chest was full, an officer of the high priest came with the scribe (not the high priest himself), furnishes simply a more exact definition of our account, in which the high priest is named; just as, according to ver. 10, the high priest took the chest and bored a hole in the lid, which no intelligent commentator would understand as signifying that the high priest did it with his own hand. But there is a real difference between vers. 14 and 15 of our text and ver. 14 of the Chronicles, though the solution of this suggests itself at once on a closer inspection of the words. According to our account, there were no golden or silver vessels, basons, knives, bowls, etc., made with the money that was brought in, but it was given for the repairing of the house. In the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is



stated that "when they had finished the repairs, they brought the remnant of the money to the king and Jehoiada, and he (the king) used it for vessels for the house of the Lord, for vessels of the service," etc. But if we take proper notice of כְּבִלֹתָם here, there is no ground for saying that there is any contradiction, since the words of our text affirm nothing more than that none of the money that came in was applied to the making of vessels of worship so long as the repairing of the building went on. What took place afterwards is not stated in our account, which is limited to the main fact; this we learn from the Chronicles. —Ver. 15. No return was required of the inspectors as to the money handed over to them, because they were convinced of their honesty. —Ver. 16. The money obtained from trespass-offerings and sin-offerings was not brought into the house of Jehovah, *i.e.* was not applied to the repairing of the temple, but was left for the priests. In the case of the trespass-offering compensation had to be made for the earthly debt according to the valuation of the priest, with the addition of a fifth in money; and this was assigned to the priests not only in the case of a מַעַל committed against Jehovah, but also when a neighbour had been injured in his property, if he had died in the meantime (see at Lev. v. 16 and Num. v. 9). On the other hand, in the case of the sin-offerings the priests received no money according to the law. Most of the commentators therefore assume, that those who lived at a distance had sent money to the priests, that they might offer sin-offerings with it, and what money was over they had retained for themselves. But there is not the slightest trace of any such custom, which is quite at variance with the idea of the sin-offering. It may probably have become a customary thing in the course of time, for those who presented these offerings to compensate the officiating priest for his trouble by a free-will gift.

Vers. 17 and 18. The brief account of *Hazeal's campaign against Jerusalem* is completed by 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, 24. Hazeal had gone down along the coast after defeating Israel (see ch. xiii. 3), for the purpose of making war upon Judah also, and had taken Gath, which Rehoboam had fortified (2 Chron. xi. 8). He then set his face, *i.e.* determined, to advance to Jerusalem; and Joash took the temple treasures, etc. According to the Chronicles, he sent an army against Judah and Jerusalem, which destroyed all the princes of the

nation and sent much booty to the king to Damascus, as the small army of the Syrians had smitten the very large army of Judah. To protect Jerusalem, after this defeat, from being taken by the Syrians, Joash sent all the treasures of the temple and palace to Hazael, and so purchased the withdrawal of the Syrians. In this way the two brief accounts of the war may be both reconciled and explained; whereas the opinion, still repeated by Thenius, that the two passages treat of different wars, has no tenable ground to rest upon. The Philistian city of *Gath* (see the Comm. on Josh. xiii. 3) appears to have belonged at that time to the kingdom of Judah, so that the Gathites were not among the Philistines who made an incursion into Judah in the reign of Joram along with the Arabian tribes of the south (2 Chron. xxi. 16). And it is impossible to determine when Gath was wrested from the Syrians again; probably in the time of Joash the son of Jehoahaz of Israel, as he recovered from the Syrians all the cities which they had taken from the Israelites under Jehoahaz (ch. xiii. 25), and even smote Amaziah the king of Judæa at Bethshemesh and took him prisoner (ch. xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxv. 21 sqq.). "All the consecrated things, which Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah had consecrated, and his own consecrated things," *i.e.* what he (Joash) himself had consecrated. The existence of such temple treasures is not at variance either with the previous account of the repairing of the temple, for Joash would not use the consecrated offerings for the restoration of the temple, as the current revenue of the temple was sufficient for the purpose, or with 2 Chron. xxiv. 7, where it is stated that Athaliah and her sons had applied all the קִרְשֵׁי יְהוָה to the Baals (see at ch. xii. 5, p. 367); for even if we are to understand by the sons of Athaliah not bastard sons (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 582), but the brethren of Joram whom the Philistines and Arabians had carried off, Ahaziah and Joram, although they both of them served Baal, may, from political considerations, have now and then made consecrated gifts to the temple, if only in a passing fit of religious fear.

Vers. 19–21. *Conspiracy against Joash.*—Not long after the departure of the Syrians, who had left Joash, according to 2 Chron. xxiv. 25, with many wounds, his servants formed a conspiracy against him and slew him upon his bed in the house Millo, which goeth down to Silla. This description of the locality is perfectly obscure for us. The conjecture that בֵּית-מִלֹּא



was the house in the castle of *Millo* which is so frequently mentioned (see at 1 Kings ix. 15 and 2 Sam. v. 9), is precluded by the fact that this castle is always called *המלל* (with the article). *סלל* is regarded by many as an abbreviation of *סללה*, "which goes down by the road;" and Thenius supposes that the reference is to the road which ran diagonally through the city from the Joppa gate to the Haram-area, corresponding to the present David's road. Others regard *סלל* as the proper name of a place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. It is impossible to get any certain meaning out of it, unless we alter the text according to arbitrary assumptions, as Thenius has done. The conspirators were *Jozachar* the son of *Shimeath*, and *Jehozabad* the son of *Shomer*, according to ver. 21; but according to the Chronicles (ver. 26), they were *Zabad* the son of *Shimeath* the Ammonitess, and *Jehozabad* the son of *Shimrith* the Moabite. The identity of the first names is perfectly obvious. *זכר* is a copyist's error for *זכר*, and this is the contracted form of *יזכר*. The difference in the second: son of *Shomer* according to our text, and son of the *Shimrith* according to the Chronicles, has probably also arisen from a slip of the pen, since *שמר* might easily be occasioned by the dropping out of the *ת* from the defectively written *שמרת*, although it is also possible that *Shomer* may be the name of the grandfather. Joash was buried with his fathers in the city of David; but according to ver. 25 of the Chronicles he was not buried in the graves of the kings. The two statements are not irreconcilable; and there may be good historical ground for the account in the Chronicles, as Bertheau acknowledges with perfect justice, in spite of the suspicion which has been cast upon it by Thenius.

#### CHAP. XIII. REIGNS OF JEHOAHAZ AND JOASH, KINGS OF ISRAEL.

##### DEATH OF ELISHA.

Vers. 1-9. REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ. — Jehu was followed by Jehoahaz his son, "in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah." This synchronistic statement is not only at variance with ver. 10, but cannot be very well reconciled with ch. xii. 1. If Jehoahaz began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash king of Judah, and reigned seventeen years, his son cannot have followed him after his death in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, as is stated in ver. 10, for there are only fourteen years and possibly a few months between the twenty-third and thirty-

seventh years of Joash; and even if he ascended the throne at the commencement of the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash and died at the end of the thirty-seventh, they could only be reckoned as fifteen and not as seventeen years. Moreover, according to ch. xii. 1, Joash of Judah began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu, and therefore Athaliah, who ascended the throne at the same time as Jehu, reigned fully six years. If, therefore, the first year of Joash of Judah coincides with the seventh year of Jehu, the twenty-eighth year of Jehu must correspond to the twenty-second year of Joash of Judah; and in this year of Joash not only did Jehu die, but his son Jehoahaz ascended the throne. Consequently we must substitute the twenty-second year of Joash, or perhaps, still more correctly, the twenty-first year (Josephus), for the twenty-third.<sup>1</sup> If Jehu died in the earliest months of the twenty-eighth year of his reign, so that he only reigned twenty-seven years and one or two months, his death and his son's ascent of the throne might

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Thenius, who follows des Vignoles and Winer, not only defends the correctness of the account "in the twenty-third year of Joash," because it agrees with the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu (ch. x. 36), but also holds fast the seventeen years' duration of the reign of Jehoahaz on account of its agreement with ch. xiv. 1; for 6 years (Athaliah) + 40 years (Joash) = 46 years, and 28 years (Jehu) + 17 years (Jehoahaz) = 45 years; so that, as is there affirmed, Amaziah the son of Joash ascended the throne in the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz. But to arrive at this result he assumes that there is an error in ver. 10, namely, that instead of the thirty-seventh year we ought to read the thirty-ninth year there, according to the edit. Aldina of the LXX. But apart from the fact that, as we have shown above in the text, the datum "in the twenty-third year of Joash" does not harmonize with the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu, this solution of the difference is overthrown by the circumstance that, in order to obtain this agreement between ver. 1 and ver. 14, Thenius reckons the years of the reigns not only of Athaliah and Joash, but also of Jehu and Jehoahaz, as full years (the former 16 + 40, the latter 28 + 17); whereas, in order to bring the datum in ver. 1 (in the twenty-third year of Joash) into harmony with the emendation proposed in ver. 10 (in the thirty-ninth year of Joash), he reckons the length of the reign of Jehoahaz as only sixteen years (instead of seventeen). For example, if Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years, supposing that he ascended the throne in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah, he died in the fortieth year of Joash (not the thirty-ninth), and his son began to reign the same year. In that case Amaziah would have begun to reign in the first year of Jehoash of Israel, and not in the second, as is stated in ch. xiv. 1.—The reading of the LXX. (ed. Ald. ver. 10), "in the thirty-ninth year," is therefore nothing but a mistaken emendation resorted to for the purpose of removing a discrepancy, but of no critical value.



fall even in the closing months of the twenty-first year of the reign of Joash of Judah. And from the twenty-first to the thirty-seventh year of Joash, Jehoahaz may have reigned sixteen years and a few months, and his reign be described as lasting seventeen years.—Vers. 2, 3. As Jehoahaz trod in the footsteps of his forefathers and continued the sin of Jeroboam (the worship of the calves), the Lord punished Israel during his reign even more than in that of his predecessor. The longer and the more obstinately the sin was continued, the more severe did the punishment become. He gave them (the Israelites) into the power of the Syrian king Hazael and his son Benhadad בְּלִיַּיִם, “the whole time,” *sc.* of the reign of Jehoahaz (*vid.* ver. 22); not of the reigns of Hazael and Benhadad, as Thenius supposes in direct opposition to vers. 24 and 25. According to ver. 7, the Syrians so far destroyed the Israelitish army, that only fifty horsemen, ten war-chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers were left.—Vers. 4 sqq. In this oppression Jehoahaz prayed to the Lord (הָלָה פָּנֵי יי as in 1 Kings xiii. 6); and the Lord heard this prayer, because He saw their oppression at the hands of the Syrians, and gave Israel a saviour, so that they came out from the power of the Syrians and dwelt in their booths again, as before, *i.e.* were able to live peaceably again in their houses, without being driven off and led away by the foe. The saviour, מוֹשִׁיעַ, was neither an angel, nor the prophet Elisha, nor *quidam e ducibus Joasi*, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, nor a victory obtained by Jehoahaz over the Syrians, nor merely Jeroboam (Thenius); but the Lord gave them the saviour in the two successors of Jehoahaz, in the kings Jehoash and Jeroboam, the former of whom wrested from the Syrians all the cities that had been conquered by them under his father (ver. 25), while the latter restored the ancient boundaries of Israel (ch. xiv. 25). According to vers. 22-25, the oppression by the Syrians lasted as long as Jehoahaz lived; but after his death the Lord had compassion upon Israel, and after the death of Hazael, when his son Benhadad had become king, Jehoash recovered from Benhadad all the Israelitish cities that had been taken by the Syrians. It is obvious from this, that the oppression which Benhadad the son of Hazael inflicted upon Israel, according to ver. 3, falls within the period of his father's reign, so that it was not as king, but as commander-in-chief under his father, that he oppressed Israel, and therefore he is not even

called king in ver. 3.—Ver. 6. “Only they departed not,” etc., is inserted as a parenthesis and must be expressed thus: “although they departed not from the sin of Jeroboam.”—Ver. 7. “For (כִּי) he had not left,” etc., furnishes the ground for ver. 5: God gave them a saviour, . . . although they did not desist from the sin of Jeroboam, . . . for Israel had been brought to the last extremity; He (Jehovah) had left to Jehoahaz people (עַם, people of war), only fifty horsemen, etc. For הַחֲטִי instead of הַחֲטִיָּה (ver. 6), see at 1 Kings xxi. 21. The suffix בָּה in ver. 6 refers to הַטָּאָה, just as that in מִמֶּנָּה in ver. 2 (see at ch. iii. 3). “And even the Asherah was (still) standing at Samaria,” probably from the time of Ahab downwards (1 Kings xvi. 33), since Jehu is not said to have destroyed it (ch. x. 26 sqq.). וַיִּשְׁמָם וְנִוּוּ, “and had made them like dust for trampling upon,”—an expression denoting utter destruction.—Vers. 8 and 9. Close of the reign of Jehoahaz. Jehoahaz had probably shown his might in the war with the Syrians, although he had been overcome.

Vers. 10–13. REIGN OF JEHOASH OR JOASH OF ISRAEL.—On the commencement of his reign see at ver. 1. He also walked in the sins of Jeroboam (compare ver. 11 with vers. 2 and 6). The war with Amaziah referred to in ver. 12 is related in the history of this king in ch. xiv. 8–14; and the close of the reign of Joash is also recorded there (vers. 15 and 16) with the standing formula. And even here it ought not to be introduced till the end of the chapter, instead of in vers. 12 and 13, inasmuch as the verses which follow relate several things belonging to the reign of Joash. But as they are connected with the termination of Elisha's life, it was quite admissible to wind up the reign of Joash with ver. 13.

Vers. 14–21. ILLNESS AND DEATH OF THE PROPHET ELISHA.—Ver. 14. When Elisha was taken ill with the sickness of which he was to die, king Joash visited him and wept over his face, *i.e.* bending over the sick man as he lay, and exclaimed, “My father, my father! the chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!” just as Elisha had mourned over the departure of Elijah (ch. ii. 12). This lamentation of the king at the approaching death of the prophet shows that Joash knew how to value his labours. And on account of this faith which was manifested in his recognition of the prophet's worth, the Lord gave the king another gracious assurance through the dying Elisha, which was confirmed



by means of a symbolical action.—Vers. 15 sqq. “Take—said Elisha to Joash—bow and arrows, . . . and let thy hand pass over the bow” (הִרְכִּיב), *i.e.* stretch the bow. He then placed his hands upon the king’s hands, as a sign that the power which was to be given to the bow-shot came from the Lord through the mediation of the prophet. He then directed him to open the window towards the east and shoot, adding as he shot off the arrow: “An arrow of salvation from the Lord, and an arrow of salvation against the Syrians; and thou wilt smite the Syrians at Aphek (see at 1 Kings xx. 26) to destruction.” The arrow that was shot off was to be a symbol of the help of the Lord against the Syrians to their destruction. This promise the king was then to appropriate to himself through an act of his own. Elisha therefore directed him (ver. 18) to “take the arrows;” and when he had taken them, said: הֵךְ אֶרֶצָה, “strike to the earth,” *i.e.* shoot the arrows to the ground, not “smite the earth with the bundle of arrows” (Thenius), which neither agrees with the shooting of the first arrow, nor admits of a grammatical vindication; for הֵכָה, when used of an arrow, signifies to shoot and to strike with the arrow shot off, *i.e.* to wound or to kill (cf. ch. ix. 24, 1 Kings xxii. 34). The shooting of the arrows to the earth was intended to symbolize the overthrow of the Syrians. “And the king shot three times, and then stood (still),” *i.e.* left off shooting.—Ver. 19. Elisha was angry at this, and said: “Thou shouldst shoot five or six times, thou wouldst then have smitten the Syrians to destruction; but now thou wilt smite them three times.” לִהְיוֹת: it was to shoot, *i.e.* thou shouldst shoot; compare Ewald, § 237, *c*; and for אִין הִכִּיתָ, then hadst thou smitten, *vid.* Ewald, § 358, *a*. As the king was told that the arrow shot off signified a victory over the Syrians, he ought to have shot off all the arrows, to secure a complete victory over them. When, therefore, he left off after shooting only three times, this was a sign that he was wanting in the proper zeal for obtaining the divine promise, *i.e.* in true faith in the omnipotence of God to fulfil His promise.<sup>1</sup> Elisha was angry at this weakness of the king’s faith, and told him that by leaving off so soon he had deprived himself of a perfect victory over the Syrians.—Vers. 20,

<sup>1</sup> “When the king reflected upon the power of the kings of Syria, since he had not implicit faith in Elisha, he thought that it was enough if he struck the earth three times, fearing that the prophecy might not be fulfilled if he should strike more blows upon the ground.”—CLERICUS.

21. Elisha then died at a great age. As he had been called by Elijah to be a prophet in the reign of Ahab and did not die till that of Joash, and forty-one years elapsed between the year that Ahab died and the commencement of the reign of Joash, he must have held his prophetic office for at least fifty years, and have attained the age of eighty. "And they buried him just as marauding bands of Moabites entered the land. And it came to pass, that at the burial of a man they saw the marauding bands coming, and placed the dead man in the greatest haste in the grave of Elisha," for the purpose of escaping from the enemy. But when the (dead) man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life again, and rose up upon his feet. **וַיָּגִדוּ מוֹאָב וְנָ** is a circumstantial clause. The difficult expression **בָּא שָׁנָה**, "a year had come," can only have the meaning given by the LXX. and Chald.: "when a year had come," and evidently indicates that the burial of Elisha occurred at the time when the yearly returning bands of Moabitish marauders invaded the land. Ewald (*Krit. Gramm.* p. 528) would therefore read **בֹּא**, a coming of the year, in which case the words would be grammatically subordinate to the main clause. Luther renders it "the same year," *in ipso anno*, after the Vulgate and Syriac, as if the reading had been **בָּא שָׁנָה**. **הֵם**, they, the people who had just buried a man. **וַיִּשְׁלִיכוּ**, not threw, but placed hastily. **וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּנֵּעַ**: and the man went and touched. **וַיֵּלֶךְ** serves as a pictorial delineation of the thought, that as soon as the dead man touched the bones of Elisha he came to life. **וַיֵּלֶךְ** is not only applied to the motion of inanimate objects, but also to the gradual progress of any transaction. The conjecture of Thenius and Hitzig, **וַיֵּלֶכוּ**, "and they went away," is quite unsuitable. The earlier Israelites did not bury their dead in coffins, but wrapped them in linen cloths and laid them in tombs hewn out of the rock. The tomb was then covered with a stone, which could easily be removed. The dead man, who was placed thus hurriedly in the tomb which had been opened, might therefore easily come into contact with the bones of Elisha. The design of this miracle of the restoration of the dead man to life was not to show how even in the grave Elisha surpassed his master Elijah in miraculous power (Ephr. Syr. and others), but to impress the seal of divine attestation upon the prophecy of the dying prophet concerning the victory of Joash over the Syrians (Wisd. xlviii. 13, 14), since the Lord thereby bore witness that He was not the God of the dead, but of the



living, and that His spirit was raised above death and corruptibility.—The opinion that the dead man was restored to life again in a natural manner, through the violent shaking occasioned by the fall, or through the coolness of the tomb, needs no refutation.

Vers. 22-25. The prophecy which Elisha uttered before his death is here followed immediately by the account of its fulfilment, and to this end the oppression of the Israelites by Hazael is mentioned once more, together with that turn of affairs which took place through the compassion of God after the death of Hazael and in the reign of his son Benhadad. לְחַץ is a plu-perfect: "Hazael *had* oppressed" (for the fact itself compare vers. 4 and 7). For the sake of the covenant made with the patriarchs the Lord turned again to the Israelites, and would not destroy them, and did not cast them away from His face עַד עַתָּה ("till now"), as was the case afterwards, but delivered them from the threatening destruction through the death of Hazael. For in the reign of his son and successor Benhadad, Joash the son of Jehoahaz took from him again (וַיִּשָּׁב is to be connected with וַיִּקַּח) the cities which he (Hazael) had taken from Jehoahaz in the war. These cities which Hazael had wrested from Jehoahaz were on this side of the Jordan, for Hazael had conquered all Gilead in the time of Jehu (ch. x. 32, 33). Joash recovered the former from Benhadad, whilst his son Jeroboam reconquered Gilead also (see at ch. xiv. 25).

#### CHAP. XIV. REIGNS OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH, AND JEROBOAM II. OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1-22. REIGN OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxv.).—Vers. 1-7. *Length and spirit of his reign, and his victory over the Edomites.*—Ver. 1. Amaziah began to reign in the second year of Joash of Israel. Now as Joash of Israel ascended the throne, according to ch. xiii. 10, in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, the latter cannot have reigned thirty-nine full years, which might be reckoned as forty (ch. xii. 1), according to the principle mentioned at p. 186 sq. of reckoning the current years as complete years, if the commencement of his reign took place a month or two before Nisan, and his death occurred a month or two after, without its being necessary to assume a regency.—Vers. 2, 3. Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years in the same theocratical spirit as his father Joash, only not like his ancestor David, *i.e.*, according to the correct explanation in 2 Chron. xxv. 2, not

with *לִבְבֵי שֵׁלִים* (see at 1 Kings xi. 4), since Amaziah, like his father Joash (see at ch. xii. 3), fell into idolatry in the closing years of his reign (cf. 2 Chron. xxv. 14 sqq.).—Only the high places were not taken away, etc.—Vers. 5, 6. After establishing his own government, he punished the murderers of his father with death; but, according to the law in Deut. xxiv. 16, he did not slay their children also, as was commonly the custom in the East in ancient times, and may very frequently have been done in Israel as well. The *Chethib* *יָמֹת* is correct, and the *Keri* *יָמָה* is an unnecessary alteration made after Deuteronomy.—Ver. 7. The brief account of the defeat of the Edomites in the Salt Valley and of the taking of the city of *Sela* is completed by 2 Chron. xxv. 6–16. According to the latter, Amaziah sought to strengthen his own considerable army by the addition of 100,000 Israelitish mercenaries; but at the exhortation of a prophet he sent the hired Israelites away again, at which they were so enraged, that on their way home they plundered several of the cities of Judah and put many men to death. The Edomites had revolted from Judah in the reign of Joram (ch. viii. 20 sqq.); Amaziah now sought to re-establish his rule over them, in which he was so far successful, that he completely defeated them, slaying 10,000 in the battle and then taking their capital, so that his successor Uzziah was also able to incorporate the Edomitish port of Elath in his own kingdom once more (ver. 22). On the Salt Valley (*גִּיא־הַמֶּלַח* for *גִּיא־הַמֶּלַח* in the Chronicles), a marshy salt plain in the south of the Dead Sea, see at 2 Sam. viii. 13. According to ver. 12 of the Chronicles, in addition to the 10,000 who were slain in battle, 10,000 Edomites were taken prisoners and cast headlong alive from the top of a rock. *הַפֶּלֶע* (*the rock*) with the article, because the epithet is founded upon the peculiar nature of the city, was probably the capital of the Edomites, called by the Greeks *ἡ Πέτρα*, and bore this name from its situation and the mode in which it was built, since it was erected in a valley surrounded by rocks, and that in such a manner that the houses were partly hewn in the natural rock. Of this commercial city, which was still flourishing in the first centuries of the Christian era, splendid ruins have been preserved in a valley on the eastern side of the ghor which runs down to the Elanitic Gulf, about two days' journey from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, on the east of Mount *Hor*, to which the Crusaders gave the name of *vallis*



*Moysi*, and which the Arabs still call *Wady Musa* (see Robinson, *Pal.* ii. pp. 512 sqq., and for the history of this city, pp. 574 sqq., and Ritter's *Erdkunde*, xiv. pp. 1103 sqq.).

Vers. 8-14. *War with Joash of Israel*.—Ver. 8. Amaziah then sent a challenge to the Israelitish king Joash to go to war with him. The outward reason for this was no doubt the hostile acts that had been performed by the Israelitish troops, which had been hired for the war with Edom and then sent back again (2 Chron. xxv. 13). But the inward ground was the pride which had crept upon Amaziah in consequence of his victory over the Edomites, and had so far carried him away, that he not only forgot the Lord his God, to whom he was indebted for this victory, and brought to Jerusalem the gods of the Edomites which he had taken in the war and worshipped them, and silenced with threats the prophet who condemned this idolatry (2 Chron. xxv. 14 sqq.), but in his proud reliance upon his own power challenged the Israelitish king to war.—Vers. 9, 10. Jehoash (Joash) answered his insolent challenge, “Come, we will see one another face to face,” *i.e.* measure swords with one another in war, with a similar fable to that with which Jotham had once instructed his fellow-citizens (Judg. ix. 8 sqq.). “The thorn-bush on Lebanon asked the cedar on Lebanon for its daughter as a wife for his son, and beasts of the field went by and trampled down the thorn-bush.” This fable is, of course, not to be interpreted literally, as though Amaziah were the thorn-bush, and Jehoash the cedar, and the wild beasts the warriors; but the thorn-bush putting itself upon an equality with the cedar is a figurative representation of a proud man overrating his strength, and the desire expressed to the cedar of a wish surpassing the bounds of one’s condition; so that Thenius is not warranted in inferring from this that Amaziah had in his mind the subjugation of Israel to Judah again. The trampling down of the thorn-bush by a wild beast is only meant to set forth the sudden overthrow and destruction which may come unexpectedly upon the proud man in the midst of his daring plans. Ver. 10 contains the application of the parable. The victory over Edom has made thee high-minded. נִשְׁאָר לִבִּי: thy heart has lifted thee up, equivalent to, thou hast become high-minded. הִפְבֵּיר, “be honoured,” *i.e.* be content with the fame thou hast acquired at Edom, “and stay at home.” Wherefore shouldst thou meddle with misfortune? הִתְנַהֵּר, to engage in

conflict or war. Misfortune is thought of as an enemy, with whom he wanted to fight.—Vers. 11, 12. But Amaziah paid no attention to this warning. A battle was fought at *Beth-shemesh* (Ain-Shems, on the border of Judah and Dan, see at Josh. xv. 10); Judah was smitten by Israel, so that every one fled to his home.—Ver. 13. Jehoash took king Amaziah prisoner, and then came to Jerusalem, and had four hundred cubits of the wall broken down at the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, and then returned to Samaria with the treasures of the palace and temple, and with hostages. The *Chethîb* יִבְאִי is to be pointed יִבְאִי, the vowel *i* being placed after *א*, as in several other cases (see Ewald, § 18, *b*). There is no ground for altering יִבְאִי after the Chronicles (Thenius), although the reading in the Chronicles elucidates the thought. For if Jehoash took Amaziah prisoner at Beth-shemesh and then came to Jerusalem, he no doubt brought his prisoner with him, for Amaziah remained king and reigned for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash (ver. 17). The *Ephraim gate*, which is generally supposed to be the same as the gate of Benjamin (Jer. xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 7; Zech. xiv. 10; compare Neh. viii. 16, xii. 39), stood in the middle of the north wall of Jerusalem, through which the road to Benjamin and Ephraim ran; and the *corner gate* was at the north-western corner of the same wall, as we may see from Jer. xxxi. 38 and Zech. xiv. 10. If, then, Jehoash had four hundred cubits of the wall thrown down at the gate Ephraim to the corner gate, the distance between the two gates was not more than four hundred cubits, which applies to the northern wall of Zion, but not to the second wall, which defended the lower city towards the north, and must have been longer, and which, according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 5, was probably built for the first time by Hezekiah (*vid.* Krafft, *Topographie v. Jerus.* pp. 117 sqq.). Jehoash destroyed this portion of the Zion wall, that the city might be left defenceless, as Jerusalem could be most easily taken on the level northern side.<sup>1</sup>—The treasures of the temple and palace, which Jehoash took away, cannot, according to ch. xii. 19, have

<sup>1</sup> Thenius takes a different view. According to the description which Josephus gives of this event (*Ant.* ix. 9, 3), he assumes that Jehoash had the four hundred cubits of the city wall thrown down, that he might get a magnificent gate (?) for himself and the invading army; and he endeavours to support this assumption by stating that the space between the Ephraim gate and the corner gate was much more than four hundred cubits. But this



been very considerable. **בְּנֵי הַתְּעֻבּוֹת**, sons of the citizenships, *i.e.* hostages (*obsides*, Vulg.). He took hostages in return for the release of Amaziah, as pledges that he would keep the peace.

Vers. 15-17. The repetition of the notice concerning the end of the reign of Joash, together with the formula from ch. xiii. 12 and 13, may probably be explained from the fact, that in the annals of the kings of Israel it stood after the account of the war between Jehoash and Amaziah. This may be inferred from the circumstance that the name of Joash is spelt invariably **יְהוֹאָשׁ** here, whereas in the closing notices in ch. xiii. 12 and 13 we have the later form **יֹאָשׁ**, the one which was no doubt adopted by the author of our books. But he might be induced to give these notices once more as he found them in his original sources, from the statement in ver. 17, that Amaziah outlived Jehoash fifteen years, seeing therein a manifestation of the grace of God, who would not destroy Amaziah notwithstanding his pride, but delivered him, through the death of his victor, from further injuries at his hands. As Amaziah ascended the throne in the second year of the sixteen years' reign of Jehoash, and before his war with Israel made war upon the Edomites and overcame them, the war with Israel can only fall in the closing years of Jehoash, and this king cannot very long have survived his triumph over the king of Judah.

Vers. 18-22. *Conspiracy against Amaziah.*—Ver. 19. Amaziah, like his father Joash, did not die a natural death. They made a conspiracy against him at Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish, whither murderers were sent after him, who slew him there. The earlier commentators sought for the cause of this conspiracy in the unfortunate result of the war with Jehoash; but this conjecture is at variance with the circumstance that the conspiracy did not break out till fifteen years or more after that event. It is true that in 2 Chron. xxv. 27 we read "from the time that Amaziah departed from the Lord, they formed a conspiracy against him;" but even this statement cannot be understood in any other way than that Amaziah's apostasy gave occasion for discontent, which eventually led to a conspiracy.

assertion is based upon an assumption which cannot be sustained, namely, that the second wall built by Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 5) was already in existence in the time of Amaziah, and that the gates mentioned were in this wall. The subjective view of the matter in Josephus has no more worth than that of a simple conjecture.

For his apostasy began with the introduction of Edomitish deities into Jerusalem after the defeat of the Edomites, and therefore before the war with Jehoash, in the first part of his reign, whereas the conspiracy cannot possibly have lasted fifteen years or more before it came to a head. *Lachish*, in the lowlands of Judah, has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Um Lakis* (see at Josh x. 3).—Ver. 20. "They lifted him upon the horses," *i.e.* upon the hearse to which the king's horses had been harnessed, and brought him to Jerusalem, where he was buried with his fathers, *i.e.* in the royal tomb.—Ver. 21. All the people of Judah, *i.e.* the whole nation, not the whole of the men of war (Thenius), thereupon made his son *Azariah* (*Uzziah*) king, who was only sixteen years old. עֲזַרְיָה or עֲזִרְיָהוּ is the name given to this king here and ch. xv. 1, 6, 8, 17, 23, and 27, and 1 Chron. iii. 12; whereas in ch. xv. 13, 30, 32, 34, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 3, 11, etc., and also Isa. i. 1, vi. 1, Hos. i. 1, Amos i. 1, and Zech. xiv. 5, he is called עֲזִיָּה or עֲזִיָּהוּ (*Uzziah*). This variation in the name is too constant to be attributable to a copyist's error. Even the conjecture that *Azariah* adopted the name *Uzziah* as king, or that it was given to him by the soldiers after a successful campaign (Thenius), does not explain the use of the two names in our historical books. We must rather assume that the two names, which are related in meaning, were used promiscuously. עֲזַרְיָה signifies "in Jehovah is help;" עֲזִיָּה, "whose strength is Jehovah." This is favoured by the circumstance adduced by Bertheau, that among the descendants of Kohath we also find an *Uzziah* who bears the name *Azariah* (1 Chron. vi. 9 and 21), and similarly among the descendants of Heman an *Uzziel* with the name *Azareel* (1 Chron. xxv. 4 and 18).—Ver. 22. Immediately after his ascent of the throne, *Uzziah* built, *i.e.* fortified, *Elath*, the Idumæan port (see at 1 Kings ix. 26), and restored it to Judah again. It is evident from this that *Uzziah* completed the renewed subjugation of Edom which his father had begun. The position in which this notice stands, immediately after his ascent of the throne and before the account of the duration and character of his reign, may be explained in all probability from the importance of the work itself, which not only distinguished the commencement of his reign, but also gave evidence of its power.

Vers. 23-29. REIGN OF JEROBOAM II. OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 23.



The statement that Jeroboam the son of Joash (Jehoash) ascended the throne in the fifteenth year of Amaziah, agrees with ver. 17, according to which Amaziah outlived Jehoash fifteen years, since Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years. On the other hand, the forty-one years' duration of his reign does not agree with the statement in ch. xv. 8, that his son Zachariah did not become king till the thirty-eighth year of Azariah (Uzziah); and therefore Thenius proposes to alter the number 41 into 51, Ewald into 53. For further remarks, see ch. xv. 8. Jeroboam also adhered firmly to the image-worship of his ancestors, but he raised his kingdom again to great power.—Ver. 25. He brought back (הָשִׁיב), *i.e.* restored, the boundary of Israel from towards Hamath in the north, to the point to which the kingdom extended in the time of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 65), to the sea of the Arabah (the present Ghor), *i.e.* to the Dead Sea (compare Deut. iii. 17, and iv. 49, from which this designation of the southern border of the kingdom of the ten tribes arose), “according to the word of the Lord, which He had spoken through the prophet Jonah,” who had probably used this designation of the southern boundary, which was borrowed from the Pentateuch, in the announcement which he made. The extent of the kingdom of Israel in the reign of Jeroboam is defined in the same manner in Amos vi. 14, but instead of יַם הָעֲרָבָה the נַחַל הָעֲרָבָה is mentioned, *i.e.* in all probability the Wady *el Ahsy*, which formed the boundary between Moab and Edom; from which we may see that Jeroboam had also subjugated the Moabites to his kingdom, which is not only rendered probable by ch. iii. 6 sqq., but is also implied in the words that he restored the former boundary of the kingdom of Israel.—On the prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai, see the Comm. on Jon. i. 1. *Gath-Hepher*, in the tribe of Zebulun, is the present village of *Meshed*, to the north of Nazareth (see at Josh. xix. 13).—Vers. 26, 27. The higher ground for this strengthening of Israel in the time of Jeroboam was to be found in the compassion of God. The Lord saw the great oppression and helpless condition of Israel, and had not yet pronounced the decree of rejection. He therefore sent help through Jeroboam. מֶלֶךְ מָאֵר without the article, and governed by אֲנִי יְיָ (see Ewald, § 293, a), signifies very bitter, מָרָה having taken the meaning of מָרַר. This is the explanation adopted in all the ancient versions, and also by Dietrich in *Ges. Lex.* וְאִפְסָ עֲצִיר וְנֹו, verbatim from Deut.

xxxii. 36, to show that the kingdom of Israel had been brought to the utmost extremity of distress predicted there by Moses, and it was necessary that the Lord should interpose with His help, if His people were not utterly to perish. **לֹא דָבַר**: He had not yet spoken, *i.e.* had not yet uttered the decree of rejection through the mouth of a prophet. To blot out the name under the heavens is an abbreviated expression for : among the nations who dwelt under the heavens.—Vers. 28, 29. Of the rest of the history of Jeroboam we have nothing more than an intimation that he brought back Damascus and Hamath of Judah to Israel, *i.e.* subjugated it again to the kingdom of Israel. **לְיִהוּדָה** is a periphrastic form for the genitive, as proper names do not admit of any form of the construct state, and in this case the simple genitive would not have answered so well to the fact. For the meaning is : “whatever in the two kingdoms of Damascus and Hamath had formerly belonged to Judah in the times of David and Solomon.” By Damascus and Hamath we are not to understand the cities, but the kingdoms ; for not only did the city of Hamath never belong to the kingdom of Israel, but it was situated outside the boundaries laid down by Moses for Israel (see at Num. xxxiv. 8). It cannot, therefore, have been re-conquered (**הִשְׁבִּיב**) by Jeroboam. It was different with the city of Damascus, which David had conquered and even Solomon had not permanently lost (see at 1 Kings xi. 24). Consequently in the case of Damascus the capital is included in the kingdom.—Ver. 29. As Jeroboam reigned forty-one years, his death occurred in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah. If, then, his son did not begin to reign till the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, as is stated in ch. xv. 8, he cannot have come to the throne immediately after his father’s death (see at ch. xv. 8).

CHAP. XV. REIGNS OF AZARIAH OF JUDAH, ZACHARIAH, SHALLUM, MENAHEM, PEKAHIAH, AND PEKAH OF ISRAEL, AND JOTHAM OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1–7. REIGN OF AZARIAH (UZZIAH) OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxvi.).—The statement that “in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam Azariah began to reign” is at variance with ch. xiv. 2, 16, 17, and 23. If, for example, Azariah ascended the throne in the fifteenth year of Joash of Israel, and with his twenty-nine years’ reign outlived Joash fifteen years (ch. xiv. 2, 17) ; if, moreover, Jeroboam followed his father Joash in the



fifteenth year of Amaziah (ch. xiv. 23), and Amaziah died in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam; Azariah (Uzziah) must have become king in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam, since, according to ch. xiv. 21, the people made him king after the murder of his father, which precludes the supposition of an interregnum. Consequently the *datum* "in the twenty-seventh year" can only have crept into the text through the confounding of the numerals טו (15) with כז (27), and we must therefore read "in the fifteenth year."—Vers. 2 sqq. Beside the general characteristics of Uzziah's fifty-two years' reign, which are given in the standing formula, not a single special act is mentioned, although, according to 2 Chron. xxvi., he raised his kingdom to great earthly power and prosperity; probably for no other reason than because his enterprises had exerted no permanent influence upon the development of the kingdom of Judah, but all the useful fruits of his reign were destroyed again by the ungodly Ahaz. Uzziah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father Amaziah had done. For as the latter was unfaithful to the Lord in the closing years of his reign, so did Uzziah seek God only so long as Zechariah, who was experienced in divine visions, remained alive, and God gave success to his enterprises, so that during this time he carried on successful wars against the Philistines and Arabians, fortified the walls of Jerusalem with strong towers, built watch-towers in the desert, and constructed cisterns for the protection and supply of his numerous flocks, promoted agriculture and vine-growing, and organized a numerous and well-furnished army (2 Chron. xxvi. 5-15). But the great power to which he thereby attained produced such haughtiness, that he wanted to make himself high priest in his kingdom after the manner of the heathen kings, and usurping the sacred functions, which belonged according to the law to the Levitical priests alone, to offer incense in the temple, for which he was punished with leprosy upon the spot (ver. 5 compared with 2 Chron. xxvi. 16 sqq.). The king's leprosy is described in our account also as a punishment from God. **וַיִּכּוּתֵּהּ**: Jehovah smote him, and he became leprous. This presupposes an act of guilt, and confirms the fuller account of this guilt given in the Chronicles, which Thenius, following the example of De Wette and Winer, could only call in question on the erroneous assumption "that the powerful king wanted to restore the regal high-priesthood exercised by David and Solomon." Oehler (*Herzog's Cycl.*)

has already shown that such an opinion is perfectly "groundless," since it is nowhere stated that David and Solomon performed with their own hands the functions assigned in the law to the priests in connection with the offering of sacrifice, as the co-operation of the priests is not precluded in connection with the sacrifices presented by these kings (2 Sam. vi. 17, and 1 Kings iii. 4, etc.).—Uzziah being afflicted with leprosy, was obliged to live in a separate house, and appoint his son Jotham as president of the royal house to judge the people, *i.e.* to conduct the administration of the kingdom.—The time when this event occurred is not stated either in our account or in the Chronicles. But this punishment from God cannot have fallen upon him before the last ten years of his fifty-two years' reign, because his son, who was only twenty-five years old when his father died (ver. 33, and 2 Chron. xxvii. 1), undertook the administration of the affairs of the kingdom at once, and therefore must have been at least fifteen years old. **בֵּית הַחֲפָשִׁית** is taken by Winer, Gesenius, and others, after the example of Iken, to signify *nosocomium*, an infirmary or lazaret-house, in accordance with the verb **חָפַשׂ**, *fecit, u. debilis, imbecillis fuit*. But this meaning cannot be traced in Hebrew, where **חָפַשׂ** is used in no other sense than free, set at liberty, *manumissus*. Consequently the rendering adopted by Aquila is correct, **οἶκος ἐλευθερίας**; and the explanation given by Kimchi of this epithet is, that the persons who lived there were those who were sent away from human society, or perhaps more correctly, those who were released from the world and its privileges and duties, or cut off from intercourse with God and man.—Ver. 7. When Uzziah died, he was buried with his fathers in the city of David, but because he died of leprosy, not in the royal family tomb, but, as the Chronicles (ver. 23) add to complete the account, "in the burial-field of the kings;" so that he was probably buried in the earth according to our mode. His son Jotham did not become king till after Uzziah's death, as he had not been regent, but only the administrator of the affairs of the kingdom during his father's leprosy.

Vers. 8–12. REIGN OF ZACHARIAH OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 8. "In the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, Zachariah the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel six months." As Jeroboam died in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah, according to our remarks on ch.



xiv. 29, there is an interregnum of eleven years between his death and the ascent of the throne by his son, as almost all the chronologists since the time of Usher have assumed. It is true that this interregnum may be set aside by assuming that Jeroboam reigned fifty-one or fifty-three years instead of forty-one, without the synchronism being altered in consequence. But as it is not very probable that the numeral letters נב or ננ should be confounded with נמ, and as the conflict for the possession of the throne, which we meet with after the very brief reign of Zachariah, when taken in connection with various allusions in the prophecies of Hosea, rather favours the idea that the anarchy broke out immediately after the death of Jeroboam, we regard the assumption of an interregnum as resting on a better foundation than the removal of the chronological discrepancy by an alteration of the text.—Vers. 9 sqq. Zachariah also persevered in the sin of his fathers in connection with the calf-worship; therefore the word of the Lord pronounced upon Jehu (ch. x. 30) was fulfilled in him.—*Shallum* the son of Jabesh formed a conspiracy and put him to death קָבַל-עַם, before people, *i.e.* openly before the eyes of all.<sup>1</sup> As Israel would not suffer itself to be brought to repentance and to return to the Lord, its God and King, by the manifestations of divine grace in the times of Joash and Jeroboam, any more than by the severe judgments that preceded them, and the earnest admonitions of the prophets Hosea and Amos; the judgment of rejection could not fail eventually to burst forth upon the nation, which so basely despised the grace, long-suffering, and covenant-faithfulness of God. We therefore see the kingdom hasten with rapid steps towards its destruction after the death of Jeroboam. In the sixty-two years between the death of Jeroboam and the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser anarchy prevailed twice, in all for the space of twenty years, and six kings followed one another, only one of whom, viz. Menahem, died a natural death, so as to be succeeded by his son upon the throne. The other five were dethroned and murdered by rebels, so that, as Witsius has truly said, with the murder of Zachariah not only was the declaration of Hosea (i. 4) fulfilled, “I visit the blood-guiltiness of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu,” but also the parallel utterance, “and I destroy the kingdom of the house of Israel,” since the

<sup>1</sup> Ewald in the most marvellous manner has made קָבַל-עַם into a king (*Gesch.* iii. p. 598).

monarchy in Israel really ceased with Zachariah. "For the successors of Zachariah were not so much kings as robbers and tyrants, unworthy of the august name of kings, who lost with ignominy the tyranny which they had wickedly acquired, and as wickedly exercised."—WITSIUS, *Δεκαφυλ.* p. 320.

Vers. 13–16. REIGN OF SHALLUM.—Shallum reigned only a full month (יָרַח יָמִים, as in Deut. xxi. 13; see at Gen. xxix. 14). *Menahem* the son of Gadi then made war upon him from Tirzah; and by him he was smitten and slain. Menahem must have been a general or the commander-in-chief, as Josephus affirms. As soon as he became king he smote *Tiphsach*,—i.e. Thapsacus on the Euphrates, which has long since entirely disappeared, probably to be sought for in the neighbourhood of the present *Rakka*, by the ford of *el Hamman*, the north-eastern border city of the Israelitish kingdom in the time of Solomon (1 Kings v. 4), which came into the possession of the kingdom of Israel again when the ancient boundaries were restored by Jeroboam II. (ch. xiv. 25 and 28), but which had probably revolted again during the anarchy which arose after the death of Jeroboam,—“and all that were therein, and the territory thereof, from Tirzah; because they opened not (to him), therefore he smote it, and had them that were with child ripped up.” מִתִּירְזָה does not mean that Menahem laid the land or district waste from Tirzah to Tiphsach, but is to be taken in connection with יָכָה in this sense: he smote Tiphsach proceeding from Tirzah, etc. The position of this notice, namely, immediately after the account of the usurpation of the throne by Menahem and before the history of his reign, is analogous to that concerning Elath in the case of Uzziah (ch. xiv. 22), and, like the latter, is to be accounted for from the fact that the expedition of Menahem against Tiphsach formed the commencement of his reign, and, as we may infer from ver. 19, became very eventful not only for his own reign, but also for the kingdom of Israel generally. The reason why he proceeded from Tirzah against Tiphsach, was no doubt that it was in Tirzah, the present Tallusa, which was only three hours to the east of Samaria (see at 1 Kings xiv. 17), that the army of which Menahem was commander was posted, so that he had probably gone to Samaria with only a small body of men to overthrow Shallum, the murderer of Zachariah and usurper of the throne, and to make himself king. It is possible



that the army commanded by Menahem had already been collected in Tirzah to march against the city of Tiph-sach, which had revolted from Israel when Shallum seized upon the throne by the murder of Zachariah; so that after Menahem had removed the usurper, he carried out at once the campaign already resolved upon, and having taken Tiph-sach, punished it most cruelly for its revolt. On the cruel custom of ripping up the women with child, *i.e.* of cutting open their wombs, see ch. viii. 12, Amos i. 13, and Hos. xiv. 1. *Tiph-sach*, *Thapsacus*, appears to have been a strong fortress; and from its situation on the western bank of the Euphrates, at the termination of the great trade-road from Egypt, Phœnicia, and Syria to Mesopotamia and the kingdoms of Inner Asia (Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 2, pp. 164, 165; and Ritter, *Erdkunde*, x. pp. 1114-15), the possession of it was of great importance to the kingdom of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 17-22. REIGN OF MENAHEM.—Menahem's reign lasted ten full years (see at ver. 23), and resembled that of his pre-

<sup>1</sup> There is no foundation for the view propounded by Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 599), Simson (*Hosea*, pp. 20, 21), Thenius, and many others, that *Tiph-sach* was a city between Tirzah and Samaria, which Menahem laid waste on his march from Tirzah to Samaria to dethrone Shallum; for it rests upon nothing more than the perfectly unwarrantable and ungrammatical combination of *מתרצה* with *את-נבוליה*, "its boundaries toward Tirzah" (Sims.), and upon the two worthless objections: (1) that the great distance of *מתרצה* from *יכה* precludes the rendering "going out from Tirzah;" and (2) that Menahem was not the man to be able to conquer Thapsacus on the Euphrates. But there is no foundation for the latter assertion, as we have no standard by which to estimate the strength and bravery of the Israelitish army commanded by Menahem. And the first objection falls to the ground with the correct rendering of *מתרצה*, *viz.* "proceeding from Tirzah," which is preferred even by Ewald and Thenius. With this rendering, the words by no means affirm that Menahem smote Tiph-sach from Tirzah *on the way to Samaria*. This is merely an inference drawn from ver. 13, according to which Menahem went from Tirzah to Samaria to overthrow Shallum. But this inference is open to the following objections: (1) that it is very improbable that there was a strong fortress between Tirzah and Samaria, which Menahem was obliged to take on his march before he could overthrow the usurper in the capital of the kingdom; and (2) that the name Tiph-sach, *trajectus*, ford, is by no means a suitable one for a city situated on the mountains between Tirzah and Samaria, and therefore, in order to carry out the hypothesis in question, Thenius proposes to alter *Tiph-sach* into *Tappuach*, without any critical warrant for so doing.

decessors in its attitude towards God. In ver 18, the expression כָּל־יָמָיו (all his days) is a very strange one, inasmuch as no such definition of time occurs in connection with the usual formula, either in this chapter (cf. vers. 24 and 28) or elsewhere (cf. ch. iii. 3, x. 31, xiii. 2, 11, etc.). The LXX. have instead of this, ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ (in his days). If we compare ver. 29, בְּיָמֵי פֶקַח בָּא (in the days of Pekah came, etc.), בְּיָמָיו בָּא might possibly be regarded as the original reading, from which a copyist's error כָּל־יָמָיו בָּא arose, after which כָּל־יָמָיו was connected with the preceding clause.—Ver. 19. In the time of Menahem, Pul king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem gave him 1000 talents of silver—more than two and a half millions of thalers (£375,000)—“that his hands might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand.” These words are understood by the majority of commentators from the time of Ephraem Syrus, when taken in connection with Hos. v. 13, as signifying that Menahem invited Pul, that he might establish his government with his assistance. But the words of Hosea, “Ephraim goes to the Assyrian,” sc. to seek for help (ch. v. 13, cf. vii. 11 and viii. 9), are far too general to be taken as referring specially to Menahem; and the assumption that Menahem invited Pul into the land is opposed by the words in the verse before us, “Pul came over the land.” Even the further statement that Menahem gave to Pul 1000 talents of silver when he came into the land, that he might help him to establish his government, presupposes at the most that a party opposed to Menahem had invited the Assyrians, to overthrow the usurper. At any rate, we may imagine, in perfect harmony with the words of our account, that Pul marched against Israel of his own accord, possibly induced to do so by Menahem's expedition against Thapsacus, and that his coming was simply turned to account as a good opportunity for disputing Menahem's possession of the throne he had usurped, so that Menahem, by paying the tribute mentioned, persuaded the Assyrian to withdraw, that he might deprive the opposing party of the Assyrian support, and thereby establish his own rule.—Ver. 20. To collect the requisite amount, Menahem imposed upon all persons of property a tax of fifty shekels each. הֵצִיא with עַל, he caused to arise, i.e. made a collection. הֵצִיא in a causative sense, from הֵצִיא, to arise, to be paid (ch. xii. 13). גְּבוּרֵי חַיִּל: not warriors, but men of property, as in Ruth ii. 1, 1 Sam. ix. 1. לְאִישׁ אֶחָד, for the individual. Pul was the first



king of Assyria who invaded the kingdom of Israel and prepared the way for the conquest of this kingdom by his successors, and for the extension of the Assyrian power as far as Egypt. According to the thorough investigation made by Marc. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Assurs u. Babels*, pp. 128 sqq.), *Pul*, whose name has not yet been discovered upon the Assyrian monuments, was the last king of Nineveh of the family of the *Derketades*, who still ruled over Babylon according to Berosus, and the last king but one of this dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 23-26. REIGN OF PEKAHIAH.—Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign “in the fiftieth year of Uzziah.” As Menahem had begun to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah and reigned ten years, he must have died in the forty-ninth year of Uzziah; and therefore, if his son did not become king till the fiftieth year, some months must have elapsed between the death of Menahem and Pekahiah’s ascent of the throne, probably because, in the existing disorganization of the kingdom, the possession of the throne by the latter was opposed. Pekahiah reigned in the spirit of his predecessors, but only for two years, as his aide-de-camp (שָׁלִישׁ, see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8) *Pekah* conspired against him and slew him in the citadel (אַרְמוֹן, see at 1 Kings xvi. 8) of the king’s palace, with *Argob* and *Aryeh*. Argob and Aryeh were not fellow-conspirators of Pekah, who helped to slay the king, but *principes Pekachjæ*, as Seb. Schmidt expresses it, probably aides-de-camp of Pekahiah, who were slain by the conspirators when defending their king. We must take the words in this sense on account of what follows: וְעִמּוֹ תְּמַשִּׁים וְגוֹ’ “and with him (Pekah) were fifty men of the Gileadites” (i.e. they helped him). The Gileadites probably belonged

<sup>1</sup> It is true that some trace of his expedition has been found in the monuments, since an inscription has been deciphered with tolerable certainty, stating that king *Minikhimmi* of *Samirina* (Menahem of Shomron or Samaria) paid tribute to an Assyrian king. But the name of this Assyrian king is not determined with certainty, as Rawlinson and Oppert read it *Tiglat-palassar*, and suppose Tiglath-pileser to be intended; whereas M. v. Niebuhr (p. 132, note 1) imagines it to be the full name of Pul, since no Assyrian king ever had a name of one syllable like *Pul* as his official name, and even before that Hincks had detected in the name *Minikhimmi* the king Menahem who had to purchase the friendship of the Assyrian ruler Pul with 1000 talents of silver. (Comp. J. Brandis, *über d. histor. Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyr. Inschriften*, Berl. 1856, p. 50.)

to the king's body-guard, and were under the command of the aides-de-camp of Pekah.

Vers. 27–31. REIGN OF PEKAH.—Pekah the son of Remaliah reigned twenty years.<sup>1</sup> During his reign the Assyrian king *Tiglath-pileser* came, and after conquering the fortified cities round Lake Merom took possession of Gilead and Galilee, namely the whole land of Naphtali, and led the inhabitants captive to Assyria. Tiglath-pileser (תִּגְלַת פִּלְסֶר or תִּגְלַת פִּלְסֶר, ch. xvi. 7; פִּלְסֶר or תִּגְלַת פִּלְסֶר, 1 Chron. v. 26, and 2 Chron. xxviii. 20; Θεγλαθφαλασάρ or Θαλγαθφελλασάρ, LXX.; written *Tiglat-palatsira* or *Tiglat-palatsar* on the Assyrian monuments, and interpreted by Gesenius and others “ruler of the Tigris,” although the reading of the name upon the monuments is still uncertain, and the explanation given a very uncertain one, since Tiglat or Tilgat is hardly identical with *Diglat* = Tigris, but is probably a name of the goddess *Derketo*, *Atergatis*), was, according to M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 156, 157), the last king of the *Derketade* dynasty, who, when the Medes and Babylonians threw off the Assyrian supremacy after the death of Pul, attempted to restore and extend the ancient dominion.<sup>2</sup> His expedition against Israel

<sup>1</sup> As this is apparently at variance not only with ver. 30, according to which Pekah was slain in the twentieth year of Jotham, i.e. in the fourth year of Ahaz, but also with ch. xvii. 1, according to which Hosea the murderer of Pekah became king in the twelfth year of Ahaz and reigned nine years, Ewald has added עֶשְׂרִים after יָרֵם without any hesitation, and lengthened Pekah's reign to twenty-nine years, whereas Thenius proposes to alter twenty into thirty. But we do not thereby obtain an actual agreement either with ver. 30 or with ch. xvii. 1, so that in both these passages Thenius is obliged to make further alterations in the text. For instance, if Pekah had reigned for thirty years from the fifty-second or closing year of Uzziah's reign, Hosea would have ascended the throne in the fourteenth year of Ahaz, supposing that he really became king immediately after the murder of Pekah, and not in the twelfth, as is stated in ch. xvii. 1. It is only with a reign of twenty-eight years and a few months (one year of Uzziah, sixteen of Jotham, and eleven of Ahaz), which might be called twenty-nine years, that the commencement of Hosea's reign could fall in the twelfth year of Ahaz. But the discrepancy with ver. 30, that Hosea conspired against Pekah and slew him in the twentieth year of Jotham, is not removed thereby. For further remarks see at ver. 30 and ch. xvii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> M. Duncker (*Gesch. des Alterthums*, i. pp. 658, 659) also assumes that the dynasty changed with the overthrow of the Derketades, but he places it considerably earlier, about the year 900 or 950 B.C., because on the one hand Niebuhr's reasons for his view cannot be sustained, and on the



falls, according to ver. 29 and ch. xvi. 9, in the closing years of Pekah, when Ahaz had come to the throne in Judah. The enumeration of his conquests in the kingdom of Israel commences with the most important cities, probably the leading fortifications. Then follow the districts of which he took possession, and the inhabitants of which he led into captivity. The cities mentioned are *Ijon*, probably the present *Ayun* on the north-eastern edge of the Merj Ayun; *Abel-Beth-Maacah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, on the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 1 Kings xv. 20); *Janoach*, which must not be confounded with the *Janocha* mentioned in Josh. xvi. 6, 7, on the border of Ephraim and Manasseh, but is to be sought for in Galilee or the tribe-territory of Naphtali, and has not yet been discovered; *Kedesh*, on the mountains to the west of Lake Huleh, which has been preserved as an insignificant village under the ancient name (see at Josh. xii. 22); *Hazor*, in the same region, but not yet traced with certainty (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Gilead* is the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan, the territory of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh (1 Chron. v. 26), which had only been wrested from the Syrians again a short time before by Jeroboam II., and restored to Israel (ch. xiv. 25, compared with ch. x. 33). הַגִּלְעָד (the feminine form of הַגִּלָּי, see Ewald, § 173, *h*) is more precisely defined by the apposition "all the land of Naphtali" (see at 1 Kings ix. 11).—In the place of אַשּׁוּרָה, "to the land of Assyria," the different regions to which the captives were transported are given in 1 Chron. v. 26. For further remarks on this point see at ch. xvii. 6.—Ver. 30. Pekah met with his death in a conspiracy organized by *Hosea* the son of Elah, who made himself king "in the twentieth year of Jotham." There is something very strange in this chronological datum, as Jotham only reigned sixteen years (ver. 33), and Ahaz began to reign in the seventeenth year of

other hand there are distinct indications that the change in the reigning family must have taken place about this time: viz. 1. in the ruins of the southern city of Nineveh, at Kalah, where we find the remains of the palaces of two rulers, who sat upon the throne of Assyria between the years 900 and 830, whereas the castles of Ninos and his descendants must undoubtedly have stood in the northern city, in Nineveh; 2. in the circumstance that from the time mentioned the Assyrian kingdom advanced with fresh warlike strength and in a fresh direction, which would agree with the change in the dynasty.—Which of these two assumptions is the correct one, cannot yet be decided in the present state of the researches on this subject.

Pekah (ch. xvi. 1) ; so that Pekah's death would fall in the fourth year of Ahaz. The reason for this striking statement can only be found, as Usher has shown (*Chronol. sacr.* p. 80), in the fact that nothing has yet been said about Jotham's successor Ahaz, because the reign of Jotham himself is not mentioned till vers. 32 sqq.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 32-38. REIGN OF JOTHAM OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxvii.). —Ver. 32. "In the second year of Pekah Jotham began to reign." This agrees with the statement in ver. 27, that Pekah became king in the last year of Uzziah, supposing that it occurred at the commencement of the year. Jotham's sixteen years therefore came to a close in the seventeenth year of Pekah's reign (ch. xvi. 1). His reign was like that of his father Uzziah (compare vers. 34, 35 with vers. 3, 4), except, as is added in Chron. ver. 2, that he did not force himself into the temple of the Lord, as Uzziah had done (2 Chron. xxvi. 16).

<sup>1</sup> Other attempts to solve this difficulty are either arbitrary and precarious, e.g. the conjectures of the earlier chronologists quoted by Winer (*R. W. s. v. Jotham*), or forced, like the notion of Vaihinger in Herzog's *Cycl.* (art. *Jotham*), that the words *בן-עזיה* are to be eliminated as an interpolation, in which case the datum "in the twentieth year" becomes perfectly enigmatical; and again the assertion of Hitzig (*Comm. z. Jesaj.* pp. 72, 73), that instead of in the twentieth year of Jotham, we should read "in the twentieth year of Ahaz the son of Jotham," which could only be consistently carried out by altering the text of not less than seven passages (viz. ver. 33, ch. xvi. 1, and 2, 17; 2 Chron. xxvii. 1 and 8, and xxviii. 1); and lastly, the assumption of Thenius, that the words from *בשנת* to *עזיה* have crept into the text through a double mistake of the copyist and an arbitrary alteration of what had been thus falsely written, which is much too complicated to appear at all credible, even if the reasons which are supposed to render it probable had been more forcible and correct than they really are. For the first reason, viz. that the statement in what year of the contemporaneous ruler a king came to the throne is *always* first given when the history of this king commences, is disproved by ch. i. 17; the second, that the name of the king by the year of whose reign the accession of another is defined is invariably introduced with the epithet king of Judah or king of Israel, is shown by ch. xii. 2 and xvi. 1 to be not in accordance with fact; and the third, that this very king is never described by the introduction of his father's name, as *he is* here, except where the intention is to prevent misunderstanding, as in ch. xiv. 1, 23, or in the case of usurpers without ancestors (ver. 32, xvi. 1 and 15), is also incorrect in its first portion, for in the case of Amaziah in ch. xiv. 23 there was no misunderstanding to prevent, and even in the case of Joash in ch. xiv. 1 the epithet king of Israel would have been quite sufficient to guard against any misunderstanding.



All that is mentioned of his enterprises in the account before us is that he built the upper gate of the house of Jehovah, that is to say, that he restored it, or perhaps added to its beauty. The upper gate, according to Ezek. ix. 2 compared with ch. viii. 3, 5, 14 and 16, is the gate at the north side of the inner or upper court, where all the sacrifices were slaughtered, according to Ezek. xl. 38-43. We also find from 2 Chron. xxvii. 3 sqq. that he built against the wall of *Ophel*, and several cities in the mountains of Judah, and castles and towers in the forests, and subdued the Ammonites, so that they paid him tribute for three years. Jotham carried on with great vigour, therefore, the work which his father had began, to increase the material prosperity of his subjects.—Ver. 37. In those days the Lord began to send against Judah *Rezin*, etc. It is evident from the position of this verse at the close of the account of Jotham, that the incursions of the allied Syrians and Israelites into Judah under the command of *Rezin* and *Pekah* commenced in the closing years of Jotham, so that these foes appeared before Jerusalem at the very beginning of the reign of Ahaz.—It is true that the Syrians had been subjugated by Jeroboam II. (ch. xiv. 28); but in the anarchical condition of the Israelitish kingdom after his death, they had no doubt recovered their independence. They must also have been overcome by the Assyrians under *Pul*, for he could never have marched against Israel without having first of all conquered Syria. But as the power of the Assyrians was greatly weakened for a time by the falling away of the Medes and Babylonians, the Syrians had taken advantage of this weakness to refuse the payment of tribute to Assyria, and had formed an alliance with *Pekah* of Israel to conquer Judah, and thereby to strengthen their power so as to be able to offer a successful resistance to any attack from the side of the Euphrates.—But as ch. xvi. 6 sqq. and ch. xvii. show, it was otherwise decreed in the counsels of the Lord.

## CHAP. XVI. REIGN OF KING AHAZ OF JUDAH.

With the reign of Ahaz a most eventful change took place in the development of the kingdom of Judah. Under the vigorous reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, by whom the earthly prosperity of the kingdom had been studiously advanced, there had been, as we may see from the prophecies of Isaiah, chs. ii.-vi., which date from this time, a prevalence of luxury and self-security, of un-

righteousness and forgetfulness of God, among the upper classes, in consequence of the increase of their wealth. Under Ahaz these sins grew into open apostasy from the Lord; for this weak and unprincipled ruler trod in the steps of the kings of Israel, and introduced image-worship and idolatrous practices of every kind, and at length went so far in his ungodliness as to shut up the doors of the porch of the temple and suspend the temple-worship prescribed by the law altogether. The punishment followed this apostasy without delay. The allied Syrians and Israelites completely defeated the Judæans, slew more than a hundred thousand men and led away a much larger number of prisoners, and then advanced to Jerusalem to put an end to the kingdom of Judah by the conquest of the capital. In this distress, instead of seeking help from the Lord, who promised him deliverance through the prophet Isaiah, Ahaz sought help from Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria, who came and delivered him from the oppression of Rezin and Pekah by the conquest of Damascus, Galilee, and the Israelitish land to the east of the Jordan, but who then oppressed him himself, so that Ahaz was obliged to purchase the friendship of this conqueror by sending him all the treasures of the temple and palace.—In the chapter before us we have first of all the general characteristics of the idolatry of Ahaz (vers. 2-4), then a summary account of his oppression by Rezin and Pekah, and his seeking help from the king of Assyria (vers. 5-9), and lastly a description of the erection of a heathen altar in the court of the temple on the site of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, and of other acts of demolition performed upon the older sacred objects in the temple-court (vers. 10-18). The parallel account in 2 Chron. xxviii. supplies many additions to the facts recorded here.

Vers. 1-4. On the time mentioned, "in the seventeenth year of Pekah Ahaz became king," see at ch. xv. 32. The datum "twenty years old" is a striking one, even if we compare with it ch. xviii. 2. As Ahaz reigned only sixteen years, and at his death his son Hezekiah became king at the age of twenty-five years (ch. xviii. 2), Ahaz must have begotten him in the eleventh year of his age. It is true that in southern lands this is neither impossible nor unknown,<sup>1</sup> but in the case of the kings of Judah

<sup>1</sup> In the East they marry girls of nine or ten years of age to boys of twelve or thirteen (Volney, *Reise*, ii. p. 360). Among the Indians husbands of ten years of age and wives of eight are mentioned (Thevenot, *Reisen*, iii. pp. 100



it would be without analogy. The reading found in the LXX., Syr., and Arab. at 2 Chron. xxviii. 1, and also in certain codd., viz. five and twenty instead of twenty, may therefore be a preferable one. According to this, Hezekiah, like Ahaz, was born in his father's sixteenth year.—Ver. 3. “Ahaz walked in the way of the kings of Israel,” to which there is added by way of explanation in 2 Chron. xxviii. 2, “and also made molten images to the Baals.” This refers, primarily, simply to the worship of Jehovah under the image of a calf, which they had invented; for this was the way in which all the kings of Israel walked. At the same time, in ch. viii. 18 the same formula is so used of Joram king of Judah as to include the worship of Baal by the dynasty of Ahab. Consequently in the verse before us also the way of the kings of Israel includes the worship of Baal, which is especially mentioned in the Chronicles.—“He even made his son pass through the fire,” *i.e.* offered him in sacrifice to Moloch in the valley of Benhinnom (see at ch. xxiii. 10), after the abominations of the nations, whom Jehovah had cast out before Israel. Instead of בְּנֵי we have the plural בָּנָי in 2 Chron. xxviii. 3, and in ver. 16 מַלְכֵי אַשּׁוּר, kings of Asshur, instead of מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, although only one, viz. Tiglath-pileser, is spoken of. This repeated use of the plural shows very plainly that it is to be understood rhetorically, as expressing the thought in the most general manner, since the number was of less importance than the fact.<sup>1</sup> So far as the fact is concerned, we have here the first instance of an actual Moloch-sacrifice among the Israelites, *i.e.* of one performed by slaying and burning. For although the phrase

and 165). In Abyssinia boys of twelve and even ten years old marry (Rüppell, *Abessinien*, ii. p. 59). Among the Jews in Tiberias, mothers of eleven years of age and fathers of thirteen are not uncommon (Burckh. *Syrien*, p. 570); and Lynch saw a wife there, who to all appearance was a mere child about ten years of age, who had been married two years already. In the *epist. ad N. Carbonelli*, from Hieronymi *epist. ad Vitalem*, 132, and in an ancient *glossa*, Bochart has also cited examples of one boy of ten years and another of nine, *qui nutricem suam gravidavit*, together with several other cases of a similar kind from later writers. Cf. Bocharti *Opp. i. (Geogr. sacr.)* p. 920, ed. Lugd. 1692.

<sup>1</sup> The Greeks and Romans also use the plural instead of the singular in their rhetorical style of writing, especially when a father, a mother, or a son is spoken of. Cf. Cic. *de prov. cons.* xiv. 35: *si ad jucundissimos liberos, si ad clarissimum generum redire properaret*, where Julia, the only daughter of Cæsar, and the wife of Pompey the Great, is referred to; and for other examples see Caspari, *der Syr. Ephraimit. Krieg*, p. 41.

לְמֹלֶךְ or הָעֶבֶר בָּאֵשׁ does not in itself denote the slaying and burning of the children as Moloch-sacrifices, but primarily affirms nothing more than the simple passing through fire, a kind of februation or baptism of fire (see at Lev. xviii. 21); such passages as Ezek. xvi. 21 and Jer. vii. 31, where sacrificing in the valley of Benhinnom is called slaying and burning the children, show most distinctly that in the verse before us הָעֶבֶר בָּאֵשׁ is to be taken as signifying actual sacrificing, *i.e.* the burning of the children slain in sacrifice to Moloch, and, as the emphatic וַיִּבְעֵר indicates, that this kind of idolatrous worship, which had never been heard of before in Judah and Israel, was introduced by Ahaz.<sup>1</sup> In the Chronicles, therefore, הָעֶבֶר is correctly explained by וַיִּבְעֵר, "he burned;" though we cannot infer from this that הָעֶבֶר is always a mere conjecture for הִבְעִיר, as Geiger does (*Urschrift u. Uebers. der Bibel*, p. 305). The offering of his son for Moloch took place, in all probability, during the severe oppression of Ahaz by the Syrians, and was intended to appease the wrath of the gods, as was done by the king of the Moabites in similar circumstances (ch. iii. 27).—In ver. 4 the idolatry

<sup>1</sup> "If this idolatry had occurred among the Israelites before the time of Ahaz, its abominations would certainly not have been passed over by the biblical writers, who so frequently mention other forms of idolatry." These are the correct words of Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 65), who only errs in the fact that on the one hand he supposes the origin of human sacrifices in the time of Ahaz to have been inwardly connected with the appearance of the Assyrians, and traces them to the acquaintance of the Israelites with the Assyrian fire-deities *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech* (ch. xvii. 31), and on the other hand gives this explanation of the phrase, "cause to pass through the fire for Moloch," which is used to denote the sacrificing of children: "the burning of children was regarded as a *passage*, whereby, after the separation of the impure and earthly dross of the body, the children attained to union with the deity" (p. 329). To this J. G. Müller has correctly replied (in Herzog's *Cyclop.*): "This mystic, pantheistic, moralizing view of human sacrifices is not the ancient and original view of genuine heathenism. It is no more the view of Hither Asia than the Mexican view (*i.e.* the one which lay at the foundation of the custom of the ancient Mexicans, of passing the new-born boy four times through the fire). The Phœnician myths, which Movers (p. 329) quotes in support of his view, refer to the offering of human sacrifices in worship, and the moral view is a later addition belonging to Hellenism. The sacrifices were rather given to the gods as food, as is evident from innumerable passages (compare the primitive religions of America), and they have no moral aim, but are intended to reward or bribe the gods with costly presents, either because of calamities that have already passed, or because of those that are anticipated with alarm; and, as Movers himself admits (p. 301), to make atonement for ceremonial sins, *i.e.* to follow smaller sacrifices by those of greater value."



is described in the standing formulæ as sacrificing upon high places and hills, etc., as in 1 Kings xiv. 23. The temple-worship prescribed by the law could easily be continued along with this idolatry, since polytheism did not exclude the worship of Jehovah. It was not till the closing years of his reign that Ahaz went so far as to close the temple-hall, and thereby suspend the temple-worship (2 Chron. xxviii. 24); in any case it was not till after the alterations described in vers. 11 sqq. as having been made in the temple.

Vers. 5-9. Of the war which the allied Syrians and Israelites waged upon Ahaz, only the principal fact is mentioned in ver. 5, namely, that the enemy marched to Jerusalem to war, but were not able to make war upon the city, *i.e.* to conquer it; and in ver. 6 we have a brief notice of the capture of the port of Elath by the Syrians. We find ver. 5 again, with very trifling alterations, in Isa. vii. 1 at the head of the prophecy, in which the prophet promises the king the help of God and predicts that the plans of his enemies will fail. According to this, the allied kings intended to take Judah, to dethrone Ahaz, and to instal a vassal king, viz. the son of Tabeel. We learn still more concerning this war, which had already begun, according to ch. xv. 37, in the closing years of Jotham, from 2 Chron. xxviii. 5-15; namely, that the two kings inflicted great defeats upon Ahaz, and carried off many prisoners and a large amount of booty, but that the Israelites set their prisoners at liberty again, by the direction of the prophet *Oded*, and after feeding and clothing them, sent them back to their brethren. It is now generally admitted that these statements are not at variance with our account (as Ges., Winer, and others maintain), but can be easily reconciled with it, and simply serve to complete it.<sup>1</sup> The only questions in dispute are, whether the two accounts refer to two different campaigns, or merely to two different events in the same campaign, and whether the battles to which the Chronicles allude are to be placed before or after the siege of Jerusalem mentioned in our text. The first question cannot be absolutely decided, since there are no decisive arguments to

<sup>1</sup> Compare C. P. Caspari's article on the Syro-Ephraimitish war in the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz (*Univers. Progr. von Christiania*, 1849), where the different views concerning the relation between the two accounts are fully discussed, and the objections to the credibility of the account given in the Chronicles most conclusively answered.

be found in favour of either the one supposition or the other; and even "the *one* strong argument" which Caspari finds in Isa. vii. 6 against the idea of two campaigns is not conclusive. For if the design which the prophet there attributes to the allied kings, "we will make a breach in Judah," *i.e.* storm his fortresses and his passes and conquer them, does obviously presuppose, that at the time when the enemy spake or thought in this manner, Judah was still standing uninjured and unconquered, and therefore the battles mentioned in 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6 cannot yet have been fought; it by no means follows from the connection between Isa. vii. 6 and ver. 1 (of the same chapter) that ver. 6 refers to plans which the enemy had only just formed at the time when Isaiah spoke (ch. vii. 4 sqq.). On the contrary, Isaiah is simply describing the plans which the enemy devised and pursued, and which they had no doubt formed from the very commencement of the war, and now that they were marching against Jerusalem, hoped to attain by the conquest of the capital. All that we can assume as certain is, that the war lasted longer than a year, since the invasion of Judah by these foes had already commenced before the death of Jotham, and that the greater battles (2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6) were not fought till the time of Ahaz, and it was not till his reign that the enemy advanced to the siege of Jerusalem.—With regard to the second question, it cannot be at all doubtful that the battles mentioned preceded the advance of the enemy to the front of Jerusalem, and therefore our account merely mentions the last and principal event of the war, and that the enemy was compelled to retreat from Jerusalem by the fact that the king of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser, whom Ahaz had called to his help, marched against Syria and compelled Rezin to hurry back to the defence of his kingdom.—It is more difficult to arrange the account of the capture of Elath by the Syrians (ver. 6) among the events of this war. The expression בָּעֵת הַהִיא merely assigns it in a perfectly general manner to the period of the war. The supposition of Thenius, that it did not take place till after the siege of Jerusalem had been relinquished, and that Rezin, after the failure of his attempt to take Jerusalem, that he might not have come altogether in vain, marched away from Jerusalem round the southern point of the Dead Sea and conquered Elath, is impossible, because he would never have left his own kingdom in such a defenceless state to



the advancing Assyrians. We must therefore place the taking of Elath by Rezin before his march against Jerusalem, though we still leave it undecided how Rezin conducted the war against Ahaz: whether by advancing along the country to the east of the Jordan, defeating the Judæans there (2 Chron. xxviii. 5), and then pressing forward to Elath and conquering that city, while Pekah made a simultaneous incursion into Judah from the north and smote Ahaz, so that it was not till after the conquest of Elath that Rezin entered the land from the south, and there joined Pekah for a common attack upon Jerusalem, as Caspari supposes; or whether by advancing into Judah along with Pekah at the very outset, and after he had defeated the army of Ahaz in a great battle, sending a detachment of his own army to Idumæa, to wrest that land from Judah and conquer Elath, while he marched with the rest of his forces in combination with Pekah against Jerusalem.—“Rezin brought Elath to Aram and drove the Jews out of Elath, and Aramæans came to Elath and dwelt therein to this day.” וַיָּשִׁיב does not mean “to lead back” here, but literally to turn, to bring to a person; for Elath had never belonged to Aram before this, but was an Edomitish city, so that even if we were to read אֲדוֹמִים for אֲרָם, וַיָּשִׁיב could not mean to bring back. But there is no ground whatever for altering לְאֲרָם into לְאֲדוֹמִים (Cler., Mich., Ew., Then., and others), whereas the form אֲרָם is at variance with such an alteration through the assumption of an exchange of ר and ד, because אֲדוֹמִים is never written *defective* אֲדָם except in Ezek. xxv. 14. There are also no sufficient reasons for altering וַיֵּאָדוּמִים into וַיֵּאָרָמִים (*Keri*); וַיֵּאָרָמִים is merely a Syriac form for וַיֵּאָרָמִים with the dull Syriac *u*-sound, several examples of which form occur in this very chapter,—*e.g.* וַיֵּאָרָמִים for וַיֵּאָרָמִים ver. 7, וַיֵּאָרָמִים for וַיֵּאָרָמִים ver. 10, and וַיֵּאָרָמִים for וַיֵּאָרָמִים ver. 6,—whereas וַיֵּאָרָמִים, with additions, is only written *plene* twice in the ancient books, and that in the Chronicles, where the *scriptio plena* is generally preferred (2 Chron. xxv. 14 and xxviii. 17), but is always written *defective* (וַיֵּאָרָמִים). Moreover the statement that “וַיֵּאָרָמִים (*Edomites*, not *the Edomites*) came thither,” etc., would be very inappropriate, since Edomites certainly lived in this Idumæan city in perfect security, even while it was under Judæan government. And there would be no sense in the expression “the Edomites dwelt there *to this day*,” since the Edomites remained in their own land to the time of the captivity.

All this is applicable to *Aramæans* alone. As soon as Rezin had conquered this important seaport town, it was a very natural thing to establish an Aramæan colony there, which obtained possession of the trade of the town, and remained there till the time when the annals of the kings were composed (for it is to this that the expression עַד-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה refers), even after the kingdom of Rezin had long been destroyed by the Assyrians, since Elath and the Aramæans settled there were not affected by that blow.<sup>1</sup> As soon as the Edomites had been released by Rezin from the control of Judah, to which they had been brought back by Amaziah and Uzziah (ch. xiv. 7, 22), they began plundering Judah again (2 Chron. xxviii. 17); and even the Philistines took possession of several cities in the lowland, to avenge themselves for the humiliation they had sustained at the hand of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxviii. 18).—Ver. 7. In this distress Ahaz turned to Tiglath-pileser, without regarding either the word of Isaiah in ch. vii. 4 sqq., which promised salvation, or the prophet's warning against an alliance with Assyria, and by sending the gold and silver which were found in the treasures of the temple and palace, purchased his assistance against Rezin and Pekah. Whether this occurred immediately after the invasion of the land by the allied kings, or not till after they had defeated the Judæan army and advanced against Jerusalem, it is impossible to discover either from this verse or from 2 Chron. xxviii. 16; but probably it was after the first great victory gained by the foe, with which Isa. vii. and viii. agree.—On קָטִים for קָטִים see Ewald, § 151, *b*.—Ver. 9. Tiglath-pileser then marched against Damascus, took the city, slew Rezin, and led the inhabitants away to *Kir*, as Amos had prophesied (Amos i. 3–5). קִיר, *Kir*, from which, according to Amos ix. 7, the Aramæans had emigrated to Syria, is no doubt a district by the river *Kur* (*Kûpos*, *Kúppos*), which taking its rise in Armenia, unites with the Araxes and flows into the Caspian Sea, although from the length of the river Kur it is impossible to define precisely the locality in which they were

<sup>1</sup> If we only observe that אַרְוִיִּים has not the article, and therefore the words merely indicate the march of an Aramæan colony to Elath, it is evident that אַרְוִיִּים would be unsuitable; for when the יְהוּדִים had been driven from the city which the Syrians had conquered, it was certainly not some Edomites but the Edomites who took possession again. Hence Winer, Caspari, and others are quite right in deciding that אַרְוִיִּים is the only correct reading.



placed; and the statement of Josephus (*Ant.* ix. 13, 3), that the Damascenes were transported *εἰς τὴν ἄνω Μηδίαν*, is somewhat indefinite, and moreover has hardly been derived from early historical sources (see M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, p. 158). Nothing is said here concerning Tiglath-pileser's invasion of the kingdom of Israel, because this has already been mentioned at ch. xv. 29 in the history of Pekah.

Vers. 10-18. Ahaz paid Tiglath-pileser a visit in Damascus, "to present to him his thanks and congratulations, and possibly also to prevent a visit from Tiglath-pileser to himself, which would not have been very welcome" (Thenius). The form *רִמְשֶׁק* is neither to be altered into *רִמְשֶׁק* nor regarded as a copyist's error for *רִמְשֶׁק*, as we have several words in this chapter that are formed with the dull Syriac *u*-sound. The visit of Ahaz to Damascus is simply mentioned on account of what follows, namely, that Ahaz saw an altar there, which pleased him so much that he sent a picture and model of it "according to all the workmanship thereof," *i.e.* its style of architecture, to Urijah the priest (see Isa. viii. 2), and had an altar made like it for the temple, upon which, on his return to Jerusalem, he ordered all the burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, and drink-offerings to be presented. The allusion here is to the offerings which he commanded to be presented for his prosperous return to Jerusalem.—Vers. 14 sqq. Soon after this Ahaz went still further, and had "the copper altar before Jehovah," *i.e.* the altar of burnt-offering in the midst of the court before the entrance into the Holy Place, removed "from the front of the (temple-) house, from (the spot) between the altar (the new one built by Urijah) and the house of Jehovah (*i.e.* the temple-house), and placed at the north side of the altar." *הִקְרִיב* does not mean *removit*, caused to be taken away, but *admovit*, and is properly to be connected with *עַל־יָרֵךְ הַמ'*, notwithstanding the fact that *וַיִּתֵּן אֹתוֹ* is inserted between for the sake of greater clearness, as Maurer has already pointed out.<sup>1</sup> On the use of the article with *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ* in the construct state, see Ewald, § 290, *d.*—Ver.

<sup>1</sup> There is nothing in the text to support the view of Thenius, that Urijah had the brazen altar of burnt-offering erected by Solomon moved farther forwards, nearer to the temple-house, and the new one put in its place, whence it was afterwards shifted by Ahaz and the new one moved a little farther to the south, that is to say, that he placed the two altars close to one another, so that they now occupied the centre of the court.

15. He also commanded that the daily morning and evening sacrifice, and the special offerings of the king and the people, should be presented upon the new altar, and thereby put a stop to the use of the Solomonian altar, "about which he would consider." The *Chethîb* וַיִּצְוֵהוּ is not to be altered; the *pron. suff.* stands before the noun, as is frequently the case in the more diffuse popular speech. The new altar is called "the great altar," probably because it was somewhat larger than that of Solomon. הַקָּטָר : used for the burning of the sacrifices. מִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב is not merely the meat-offering offered in the evening, but the whole of the evening sacrifice, consisting of a burnt-offering and a meat-offering, as in 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36. יְהִי־לִי לְבִקָּר, the brazen altar "will be to me for deliberation," i.e. I will reflect upon it, and then make further arrangements. On בִּקָּר in this sense see Prov. xx. 25. In the opinion of Ahaz, the altar which had been built after the model of that of Damascus was not to be an idolatrous altar, but an altar of Jehovah. The reason for this arbitrary removal of the altar of Solomon, which had been sanctified by the Lord Himself at the dedication of the temple by fire from heaven, was, in all probability, chiefly that the Damascene altar pleased Ahaz better; and the innovation was a sin against Jehovah, inasmuch as God Himself had prescribed the form for His sanctuary (cf. Ex. xxv. 40, xxvi. 30; 1 Chron. xxviii. 19), so that any altar planned by man and built according to a heathen model was practically the same as an idolatrous altar.—The account of this altar is omitted from the Chronicles; but in ver. 23 we have this statement instead: "Ahaz offered sacrifice to the gods of Damascus, who smote him, saying, The gods of the kings of Aram helped them; I will sacrifice to them that they may help me: and they were the ruin of him and of all Israel." Thenius and Bertheau find in this account an alteration of our account of the copying of the Damascene altar introduced by the chronicler as favouring his design, namely, to give as glaring a description as possible of the ungodliness of Ahaz. But they are mistaken. For even if the notice in the Chronicles had really sprung from this alone, the chronicler would have been able from the standpoint of the Mosaic law to designate the offering of sacrifice upon the altar built after the model of an idolatrous Syrian altar as sacrificing to these gods. But it is a question whether the chronicler had in his mind merely the sacrifices offered



upon that altar in the temple-court, and not rather sacrifices which Ahaz offered upon some *bamah* to the gods of Syria, when he was defeated and oppressed by the Syrians, for the purpose of procuring their assistance. As Ahaz offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch according to ver. 3, he might just as well have offered sacrifice to the gods of the Syrians.—Vers. 17, 18. Ahaz also laid his hand upon the other costly vessels of the court of the temple. He broke off the panels of the Solomonian stands, which were ornamented with artistic carving, and removed the basins from the stands, and took the brazen sea from the brazen oxen upon which they stood, and placed it upon a stone pavement. The אֶת־הַכִּיֹּר before ! can only have crept into the text through a copyist's error, and the singular must be taken distributively: he removed from them (the stands) every single basin. מִרְצַפַּת אֲבָנִים (without the article) is not the stone pavement of the court of the temple, but a pedestal made of stones (*βάσις λιθίνη*, LXX.) for the brazen sea. The reason why, or the object with which Ahaz mutilated these sacred vessels, is not given. The opinion expressed by Ewald, Thenius, and others, that Ahaz made a present to Tiglath-pileser with the artistically wrought panels of the stands, the basins, and the oxen of the brazen sea, is not only improbable in itself, since you would naturally suppose that if Ahaz had wished to make a "valuable and very welcome present" to the Assyrian king, he would have chosen some perfect stands with their basins for this purpose, and not merely the panels and basins; but it has not the smallest support in the biblical text,—on the contrary, it has the context against it. For, in the first place, if the objects named had been sent to Tiglath-pileser, this would certainly have been mentioned, as well as the sending of the temple and palace treasures. And, again, the mutilation of these vessels is placed between the erection of the new altar which was constructed after the Damascene model, and other measures which Ahaz adopted as a protection against the king of Assyria (ver. 18). Now if Ahaz, on his return from visiting Tiglath-pileser at Damascus, had thought it necessary to send another valuable present to that king in order to secure his permanent friendship, he would hardly have adopted the measures described in the next verse.—Ver. 18. "The covered Sabbath-stand, which they had built in the house (temple), and the outer

entrance of the king he turned (*i.e.* removed) into the house of Jehovah before the king of Assyria.” מִסֵּף הַשָּׁבֶת (*Keri* מִסֵּף, from סָבַף, to cover) is no doubt a covered place, stand or hall in the court of the temple, to be used by the king whenever he visited the temple with his retinue on the Sabbath or on feast-days; and “the outer entrance of the king” is probably the special ascent into the temple for the king mentioned in 1 Kings x. 5. In what the removal of it consisted it is impossible to determine, from the want of information as to its original character. According to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 621) and Thenius, הִסֵּב הָיָה means, “he altered (these places), *i.e.* he robbed them of their ornaments, in the house of Jehovah.” This is quite arbitrary. For even if הָיָה could mean “in the house of Jehovah” in this connection, הִסֵּב does not mean to disfigure, and still less “to deprive of ornaments.” In ch. xxiii. 34 and xxiv. 17 it signifies to alter the name, not to disfigure it. Again, מִפְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, “for fear of the king of Assyria,” cannot mean, in this connection, “to make presents to the king of Assyria.” And with this explanation, which is grammatically impossible, the inference drawn from it, namely, that Ahaz sent the ornaments of the king’s stand and king’s ascent to the king of Assyria along with the vessels mentioned in ver. 17, also falls to the ground. If the alterations which Ahaz made in the stands and the brazen sea had any close connection with his relation to Tiglath-pileser, which cannot be proved, Ahaz must have been impelled by fear to make them, not that he might send them as presents to him, but that he might hide them from him if he came to Jerusalem, to which 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21 seems to refer. It is also perfectly conceivable, as Züllich (*Die Cherubimwagen*, p. 56) conjectures, that Ahaz merely broke off the panels from the stands and removed the oxen from the brazen sea, that he might use these artistic works to decorate some other place, possibly his palace.—Whether these artistic works were restored or not at the time of Hezekiah’s reformation or in that of Josiah, we have no accounts to show. All that can be gathered from ch. xxv. 13, 14, Jer. lii. 17, and xxvii. 19, is, that the stands and the brazen sea were still in existence in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and that on the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans they were broken in pieces and carried away to Babylonia as brass. The brazen oxen are also specially mentioned in Jer.



lii. 20, which is not the case in the parallel passage 2 Kings xxv. 13; though this does not warrant the conclusion that they were no longer in existence at that time.—Vers. 19, 20. Conclusion of the reign of Ahaz. According to 2 Chron. xxviii. 27, he was buried in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

CHAP. XVII. REIGN OF HOSHEA AND DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. THE PEOPLE CARRIED AWAY TO ASSYRIA AND MEDIA. TRANSPORTATION OF HEATHEN COLONISTS TO SAMARIA.

Vers. 1-6. REIGN OF HOSHEA KING OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 1. In the twelfth year of Ahaz began Hoshea to reign. As Hoshea conspired against Pekah, according to ch. xv. 30, in the fourth year of Ahaz, and after murdering him made himself king, whereas according to the verse before us it was not till the twelfth year of Ahaz that he really became king, his possession of the throne must have been contested for eight years. The earlier commentators and almost all the chronologists have therefore justly assumed that there was an eight years' anarchy between the death of Pekah and the commencement of Hoshea's reign. This assumption merits the preference above all the attempts made to remove the discrepancy by alterations of the text, since there is nothing at all surprising in the existence of anarchy at a time when the kingdom was in a state of the greatest inward disturbance and decay. Hoshea reigned nine years, and "did that which was evil in the eyes of Jehovah, though not like the kings of Israel before him" (ver. 2). We are not told in what Hoshea was better than his predecessors, nor can it be determined with any certainty, although the assumption that he allowed his subjects to visit the temple at Jerusalem is a very probable one, inasmuch as, according to 2 Chron. xxx. 10 sqq., Hezekiah invited to the feast of the Passover, held at Jerusalem, the Israelites from Ephraim and Manasseh as far as to Zebulun, and some individuals from these tribes accepted his invitation. But although Hoshea was better than his predecessors, the judgment of destruction burst upon the sinful kingdom and people in his reign, because he had not truly turned to the Lord; a fact which has been frequently repeated in the history of the world, namely, that the last rulers of a decaying kingdom have not been so bad as their forefathers. "God is

accustomed to defer the punishment of the elders in the greatness of His long-suffering, to see whether their descendants will come to repentance ; but if this be not the case, although they may not be so bad, the anger of God proceeds at length to visit iniquity (cf. Ex. xx. 5)." Seb. Schmidt.—Ver. 3. "Against him came up *Salmanasar* king of Assyria, and Hoshea became subject to him and rendered him tribute" (מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, as in 1 Kings v. 1). מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, Σαλαμανασσάρ (LXX.), *Salmanasar*, according to the more recent researches respecting Assyria, is not only the same person as the *Shalman* mentioned in Hos. x. 14, but the same as the *Sargon* of Isa. xx. 1, whose name is spelt *Sargina* upon the monuments, and who is described in the inscriptions on his palace at Khorsabad as ruler over many subjugated lands, among which *Samirina* (Samaria ?) also occurs (*vid.* Brandis *üb. d. Gewinn*, pp. 48 sqq. and 53 ; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* pp. 129, 130 ; and M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterth.* i. pp. 687 sqq.). The occasion of this expedition of Salmanasar appears to have been simply the endeavour to continue the conquests of his predecessor Tiglath-pileser. There is no ground whatever for Maurer's assumption, that he had been asked to come to the help of a rival of Hoshea ; and the opinion that he came because Hoshea had refused the tribute which had been paid to Assyria from the time of Menahem downwards, is at variance with the fact that in ch. xv. 29 Tiglath-pileser is simply said to have taken a portion of the territory of Israel ; but there is no allusion to any payment of tribute or feudal obligation on the part of Pekah. Salmanasar was the first to make king Hoshea subject and tributary. This took place at the commencement of Hoshea's reign, as is evident from the fact that Hoshea paid the tribute for several years, and in the sixth year of his reign refused any further payment.—Ver. 4. The king of Assyria found a conspiracy in Hoshea ; for he had sent messengers to *So* the king of Egypt, and did not pay the tribute to the king of Assyria, as year by year. The Egyptian king סו, *So*, possibly to be pronounced סֶבֶךְ, *Seveh*, is no doubt one of the two *Shebeks* of the twenty-fifth dynasty, belonging to the Ethiopian tribe ; but whether he was the second king of this dynasty, *Sabātakā* (Brugsch, *hist. d'Egypte*, i. p. 244), the *Sevechus* of Manetho, who is said to have ascended the throne, according to Wilkinson, in the year 728, as Vitringa (*Isa.* ii. p. 318), Gesenius, Ewald, and others suppose, or the first king



of this Ethiopian dynasty, *Sabako* the father of Sevechus, which is the opinion of Usher and Marsham, whom M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* pp. 458 sqq. and 463) and M. Duncker (i. p. 693) have followed in recent times, cannot possibly be decided in the present state of Egyptological research.<sup>1</sup>—As soon as Salmanasar received intelligence of the conduct of Hoshea, which is called קִשָּׁר, conspiracy, as being rebellion against his acknowledged superior, he had him arrested and put into prison in chains, and then overran the whole land, advanced against Samaria and besieged that city for three years, and captured it in the ninth year of Hoshea. These words are not to be understood as signifying that Hoshea had been taken prisoner before the siege of Samaria and thrown into prison, because in that case it is impossible to see how Salmanasar could have obtained possession of his person.<sup>2</sup> We must rather assume, as many commentators have done, from R. Levi ben Gersom down to Maurer and Thenius, that it was not till the conquest of his capital Samaria that Hoshea fell into the hands of the Assyrians and was cast into a prison; so that the explanation to be given of the introduction of this circum-

<sup>1</sup> It is true that M. Duncker says, "Synchronism gives Sabakon, who reigned from 726 to 714;" but he observes in the note at pp. 713 sqq. that the Egyptian chronology has only been firmly established as far back as the commencement of the reign of Psammetichus at the beginning of the year 664 B.C., that the length of the preceding dodekarchy is differently given by Diodorus Sic. and Manetho, and that the date at which Tarakos (*Tirhaka*), who succeeded Sevechus, ascended the throne is so very differently defined, that it is impossible for the present to come to any certain conclusion on the matter. Compare with this what M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 458 sqq.) adduces in proof of the difficulty of determining the commencement and length of the reign of *Tirhaka*, and the manner in which he proposes to solve the difficulties that arise from this in relation to the synchronism between the Egyptian and the Biblical chronology.

<sup>2</sup> The supposition of the older commentators, that Hoshea fought a battle with Salmanasar before the siege of Samaria, and was taken prisoner in that battle, is not only very improbable, because this would hardly be passed over in our account, but has very little probability in itself. For "it is more probable that Hoshea betook himself to Samaria when threatened by the hostile army, and relied upon the help of the Egyptians, than that he went to meet Salmanasar and fought with him in the open field" (Maurer). There is still less probability in Ewald's view (*Gesch.* iii. p. 611), that "Salmanasar marched with unexpected rapidity against Hoshea, summoned him before him that he might hear his defence, and then, when he came, took him prisoner, and threw him into prison in chains, probably into a prison on the border of the

stance before the siege and conquest of Samaria must be, that the historian first of all related the eventual result of Hoshea's rebellion against Salmanasar so far as Hoshea himself was concerned, and then proceeded to describe in greater detail the course of the affair in relation to his kingdom and capital. This does not necessitate our giving to the word **יַעֲצִירָהוּ** the meaning "he assigned him a limit" (Thenius); but we may adhere to the meaning which has been philologically established, namely, arrest or incarcerate (Jer. xxxiii. 1, xxxvi. 5, etc.). **יַעַל** may be given thus: "he overran, that is to say, the entire land." The three years of the siege of Samaria were not full years, for, according to ch. xviii. 9, 10, it began in the seventh year of Hoshea, and the city was taken in the ninth year, although it is also given there as three years.—Ver. 6. The ninth year of Hoshea corresponds to the sixth year of Hezekiah and the year 722 or 721 B.C., in which the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed.

Ver. 6b. *The Israelites carried into exile.*—After the taking of Samaria, Salmanasar led Israel into captivity to Assyria, and assigned to those who were led away dwelling-places in *Chalach* and on the *Chabor*, or the river *Gozan*, and in cities of Media. According to these clear words of the text, the places to which the ten tribes were banished are not to be sought for in Mesopotamia, but in provinces of Assyria and Media. **חֶלָח** is neither the city of **חֶלָח** built by Nimrod (Gen. x. 11), nor the *Cholwan* of *Abulfeda* and the Syriac writers, a city five days' journey to the north of Bagdad, from which the district bordering on the Zagrus probably received the name of *Χαλωνίτις* or *Καλωνίτις*, but the province *Καλαχηνή* of Strabo (xi. 8, 4; 14, 12, and xvi. 1, 1), called *Καλακινή* by Ptolemæus (vi. 1), on the eastern side of the Tigris near Adiabene, to the north of Nineveh on the border of Armenia. **חֶבֶר** is not the **חֶבֶר** in Upper Mesopotamia (Ezek. i. 3, iii. 15, etc.), which flows into the

land;" to which he adds this explanatory remark: "there is no other way in which we can understand the brief words in ch. xvii. 4 as compared with ch. xviii. 9-11. . . . For if Hoshea had defended himself to the utmost, Salmanasar would not have had him arrested and incarcerated afterwards, but would have put him to death at once, as was the case with the king of Damascus." But Hoshea would certainly not have been so infatuated, after breaking away from Assyria and forming an alliance with *So* of Egypt, as to go at a simple summons from Salmanasar and present himself before him, since he could certainly have expected nothing but death or imprisonment as the result.



Euphrates near *Kirkesion* (*Carchemish*), and is called חַבּוּר (*Chebar*) or خَابُور (*Chabur*) by the Syriac writers, *Chabûr* by Abulfeda and Edrisi, *Χαβώρας* by Ptolemæus, *Ἀβόρῃας* (*Aboras*) by Strabo and others, as Michaelis, Gesenius, Winer, and even Ritter assume; for the epithet “river of *Gozan*” is not decisive in favour of this, since *Gozan* is not necessarily to be identified with the district of *Gauzanitis*, now *Kaushan*, situated between the rivers of *Chaboras* and *Saokoras*, and mentioned in Ptol. v. 18, 4, inasmuch as Strabo (xvi. 1, 1, p. 736) also mentions a province called *Χαζηνή* above Nineveh towards Armenia, between *Calachene* and *Adiabene*. Here in northern Assyria we also find both a mountain called *Χαβώρας*, according to Ptol. vi. 1, on the boundary of Assyria and Media, and the river *Chabor*, called by Yakut in the *Moshtarik* خَابُور الحسنیه (*Khabur Chasanice*), to distinguish it from the Mesopotamian *Chaboras* or *Chebar*. According to Marasz. i. pp. 333 sq., and Yakut, *Mosht.* p. 150, this *Khabur* springs from the mountains of the land of *Zauzan*, زوزان, i.e. of the land between the mountains of Armenia, Adserbeidjan, Diarbekr, and Mosul (Marasz. i. p. 522), and is frequently mentioned in Assemani as a tributary of the Tigris. It still bears the ancient name *Khabûr*, taking its rise in the neighbourhood of the upper *Zab* near *Amadîjeh*, and emptying itself into the Tigris a few hours below *Jezirah* (cf. Wichelhaus, pp. 471, 472; Asah. Grant, *Die Nestorianer*, v. *Preiswerk*, pp. 110 sqq.; and Ritter, *Erdk.* ix. pp. 716 and 1030). This is the river that we are to understand by חַבּוּר. It is a question in dispute, whether the following words נְהַר גּוֹזָן are in apposition to בְּחַבּוּר: “by the Chabor the river of *Gozan*,” or are to be taken by themselves as indicating a peculiar district “by the river *Gozan*.” Now, however the absence of the prep. בְּ, and even of the copula ו, on the one hand, and the words of Yakut, “*Khabur*, a river of *Chasania*,” on the other, may seem to favour the former view, we must decide in favour of the latter, for the simple reason that in 1 Chron. v. 26 נְהַר גּוֹזָן is separated from חַבּוּר by וְהָרָא. The absence of the preposition בְּ or of the copula ו before נְהַר ג' in the passage before us may be accounted for from the assumption that the first two names, in *Chalah* and on the *Khabur*, are more closely connected, and also the two which follow, “on the river *Gozan* and in the cities of *Media*.”

The river *Gozan* or of *Gozan* is therefore distinct from *חַבּוּר* (*Khabur*), and to be sought for in the district in which *Tav-ṣavía*, the city of Media mentioned by Ptol. (vi. 2), was situated. In all probability it is the river which is called *Kisil* (the red) *Ozan* at the present day, the *Mardos* of the Greeks, which takes its rise to the south-east of the Lake *Urumiah* and flows into the Caspian Sea, and which is supposed to have formed the northern boundary of Media.<sup>1</sup> The last locality mentioned agrees with this, viz. "and in the cities of Media," in which Thenius proposes to read *הָרִי*, mountains, after the LXX., instead of *עָרֵי*, cities, though without the least necessity.

Vers. 7-23. *The causes which occasioned this catastrophe.*—To the account of the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, and of the transportation of its inhabitants into exile in Assyria, the prophetic historian appends a review of the causes which led to this termination of the greater portion of the covenant-nation, and finds them in the obstinate apostasy of Israel from the Lord its God, and in its incorrigible adherence to idolatry. Ver. 7. *וַיְהִי כֵן*, "and it came to pass when" (not because, or that): compare Gen. vi. 1, xxvi. 8, xxvii. 1, xlv. 24, Ex. i. 21, Judg. i. 28, vi. 7, etc. The apodosis does not follow till ver. 18, as vers. 7-17 simply contain a further explanation of Israel's sin. To show the magnitude of the sin, the writer recalls to mind the great benefit conferred in the redemption from Egypt, whereby the Lord had laid His people under strong obligation to adhere faithfully to Him. The words refer to the first commandment (Ex. xx. 2, 3; Deut. v. 6, 7). It

<sup>1</sup> The explanation given in the text of the geographical names, receives some confirmation from the Jewish tradition, which describes northern Assyria, and indeed the mountainous region or the district on the border of Assyria and Media towards Armenia, as the place to which the ten tribes were banished (*vid.* Wichelhaus *ut sup.* pp. 474 sqq.). Not only Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 612), but also M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 159), has decided in favour of this view; the latter with this remark: "According to the present state of the investigations, Chalah and Chabor are no doubt to be sought for on the slope of the Gordyæan mountains in the Kalachene of Strabo, the Kalakine of Ptolemæus, and on the tributary of the Tigris, which is still called Chabur, therefore quite close to Nineveh. The *Yudhi* mountains in this region possibly bear this name with some allusion to the colony." But with reference to the river *Gozan*, Niebuhr is doubtful whether we are to understand by this the *Kisil Ozan* or the waters in the district of Gauzanitis by the Khebar, and gives the preference to the latter as the simpler of the two, though it is difficult to see in what respect it is simpler than the other.



is from this that the "fearing of other gods" is taken, whereas *מִתַּחַת יַד פְּרָעָה* recall Ex. xviii. 10.—Ver. 8. The apostasy of Israel manifested itself in two directions: 1. in their walking in the statutes of the nations who were cut off from before them, instead of in the statutes of Jehovah, as God had commanded (cf. Lev. xviii. 4, 5, and 26, xx. 22, 23, etc.; and for the formula *הַנְּגִידִים אֲשֶׁר הוֹרִישׁ וְנָוֶה*, which occurs repeatedly in our books—*e.g.* ch. xvi. 3, xxi. 2, and 1 Kings xiv. 24 and xxi. 26—compare Deut. xi. 23 and xviii. 12); and 2. in their walking in the statutes which the kings of Israel had made, *i.e.* the worship of the calves. *אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ*: it is evident from the parallel passage, ver. 19*b*, that the subject here stands before the relative.—Ver. 9. *וַיִּתְּפְּאוּ דְבָרִים*: "they covered words which were not right concerning Jehovah their God," *i.e.* they sought to conceal the true nature of Jehovah by arbitrary perversions of the word of God. This is the explanation correctly given by Hengstenberg (*Dissert.* vol. i. p. 210, transl.); whereas the interpretation proposed by Thenius, "they trifled with things which were not right against Jehovah," is as much at variance with the usage of the language as that of Gesenius (*thes.* p. 505), *per fide egerunt res . . . in Jehoram*, since *הִפָּא* with *עַל* simply means to cover over a thing (cf. Isa. iv. 5). This covering of words over Jehovah showed itself in the fact that they built *בָּמֹת* (altars on high places), and by worshipping God in ways of their own invention concealed the nature of the revealed God, and made Jehovah like the idols. "In all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city." *מִגְדַּל נֹצְרִים* is a tower built for the protection of the flocks in the steppes (2 Chron. xxvi. 10), and is mentioned here as the smallest and most solitary place of human abode in antithesis to the large and fortified city. Such *bamoth* were the houses of high places and altars built for the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, beside which no others are mentioned by name in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which restricts itself to the principal facts, although there certainly must have been others.—Ver. 10. They set up for themselves monuments and *asherim* on every high hill, etc.,—a practice condemned in 1 Kings xiv. 16, 23, as early as the time of Jeroboam. In this description of their idolatry, the historian, however, had in his mind not only the ten tribes, but also Judah, as is evident from ver. 13, "Jehovah testified against Israel *and* Judah through His

prophets," and also from ver. 19.—Ver. 11. "And burned incense there upon all the high places, like the nations which Jehovah drove out before them." הִגָּלָה, lit. to lead into exile, is applied here to the expulsion and destruction of the Canaanites, with special reference to the banishment of the Israelites.—Ver. 12. They served the clods, *i.e.* worshipped clods or masses of stone as gods (גִּלְלִים, see at 1 Kings xv. 12), notwithstanding the command of God in Ex. xx. 3 sqq., xxiii. 13, Lev. xxvi. 1, etc.—Vers. 13 sqq. And the Lord was not satisfied with the prohibitions of the law, but bore witness against the idolatry and image-worship of Israel and Judah through all His prophets, who exhorted them to turn from their evil way and obey His commandments. But it was all in vain; they were stiff-necked like their fathers. Judah is mentioned as well as Israel, although the historian is simply describing the causes of Israel's rejection to indicate beforehand that Judah was already preparing the same fate for itself, as is still more plainly expressed in vers. 19, 20; not, as Thenius supposes, because he is speaking here of that which took place before the division of the kingdom. The *Chethîb* כָּל-נְבִיאֵי כָל-חֹזֶה is not to be read כָּל-נְבִיאֵי וְכָל-חֹזֶה (Houbig., Then., Ew. § 156, c), but after the LXX. כָּל-נְבִיאֵי כָל-חֹזֶה, "through all His prophets, every seer," so that כָּל-חֹזֶה is in apposition to כָּל-נְבִיאֵי, and serves to bring out the meaning with greater force, so as to express the idea, "prophets of every kind, that the Lord had sent." This reading is more rhetorical than the other, and is recommended by the fact that in what follows the copula ו is omitted before חֲקֹתֶי also on rhetorical grounds. וַאֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחְתִּי וְנָבִיאִים: "and according to what I demanded of you through my servants the prophets." To the law of Moses there was added the divine warning through the prophets. יָקִישׁוּ אֶת-עֵרְפָם has sprung from Deut. x. 16. The stiff-necked fathers are the Israelites in the time of Moses.—Ver. 15. "They followed vanity and became vain:" *verbatim* as in Jer. ii. 5. A description of the worthlessness of their whole life and aim with regard to the most important thing, namely, their relation to God. Whatever man sets before him as the object of his life apart from God is הֶבֶל (cf. Deut. xxxii. 21) and idolatry, and leads to worthlessness, to spiritual and moral corruption (Rom. i. 21). "And (walked) after the nations who surrounded them," *i.e.* the heathen living near them. The concluding words of the verse have the ring of



Lev. xviii. 3.—Vers. 16 and 17. The climax of their apostasy : “They made themselves molten images, two (golden) calves” (1 Kings xii. 28), which are called *מִסְכָּה* after Ex. xxxii. 4, 8, and Deut. ix. 12, 16, “and Asherah,” *i.e.* idols of Astarte (for the fact, see 1 Kings xvi. 33), “and worshipped all the host of heaven (sun, moon, and stars), and served Baal”—in the time of Ahab and his family (1 Kings xvi. 32). The worshipping of all the host of heaven is not specially mentioned in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, but occurs first of all in Judah in the time of Manasseh (ch. xxi. 3). The fact that the host of heaven is mentioned between Asherah and Baal shows that the historian refers to the Baal and Astarte worship, and has borrowed the expression from Deut. iv. 19 and xvii. 3, to show the character of this worship, since both Baal and Astarte were deities of a sidereal nature. The first half of ver. 17 rests upon Deut. xviii. 10, where the worship of Moloch is forbidden along with soothsaying and augury. There is no allusion to this worship in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, although it certainly existed in the time of Ahab. The second half of ver. 17 also refers to the conduct of Ahab (see at 1 Kings xxi. 20).—Vers. 18 sqq. This conduct excited the anger of God, so that He removed them from His face, and only left the tribe (*i.e.* the kingdom) of Judah (see above, p. 179), although Judah also did not keep the commandments of the Lord and walked in the statutes of Israel, and therefore had deserved rejection. Ver. 19 contains a parenthesis occasioned by *רַק שְׁבֵט יְהוּדָה* (ver. 18b). The statutes of Israel in which Judah walked are not merely the worship of Baal under the Ahab dynasty, so as to refer only to Joram, Ahaziah, and Ahaz (according to ch. viii. 18, 27, and xvi. 3), but also the worship on the high places and worship of idols, which were practised under many of the kings of Judah.—Ver. 20. *וַיִּמָּאס* is a continuation of *וַיִּתְאַנֶּף יְהוָה* in ver. 18, but so that what follows also refers to the parenthesis in ver. 19. “Then the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel,” not merely the ten tribes, but all the nation, and humbled them till He thrust them from His face. *וַיִּמָּאס* differs from *וַיִּשְׁלֵךְ מִפְּנֵי*. The latter denotes driving into exile; the former, simply that kind of rejection which consisted in chastisement and deliverance into the hand of plunderers, that is to say, penal judgments by which the Lord sought to lead Israel and Judah to turn to Him and to His commandments, and to preserve

them from being driven among the heathen. נָתַן בְּיַד שָׁסִים as in Judg. ii. 14.—Ver. 21. כִּי קָרַע יְהוָה: “for He (Jehovah) rent Israel from the house of David.” This view is apparently more correct than that Israel rent the kingdom from the house of David, not only because it presupposes too harsh an ellipsis to supply אֶת־הַמְּמָלָכָה, but also because we never meet with the thought that Israel rent the kingdom from the house of David, and in 1 Kings xi. 31 it is simply stated that Jehovah rent the kingdom from Solomon; and to this our verse refers, whilst the following words וַיִּמְלִיכוּ יְהוָה recall 1 Kings xii. 20. The כִּי is explanatory: the Lord delivered up His people to the plunderers, for He rent Israel from the house of David as a punishment for the idolatry of Solomon, and the Israelites made Jeroboam king, who turned Israel away from Jehovah, etc. The *Chethîb* וַיִּדָּא is to be read וַיִּדָּא, the *Hiphil* of נָדָה = נָדָה, “he caused to depart away from the Lord.” The *Keri* וַיִּדָּח, *Hiphil* of נָדָה, he drove away, turned from the Lord (cf. Deut. xiii. 11), is not unusual, but it is an unnecessary gloss.—Vers. 22, 23. The sons of Israel (the ten tribes) walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, till the Lord removed them from His face, thrust them out of the land of the Lord, as He had threatened them through all His prophets, namely, from the time of Jeroboam onwards (compare 1 Kings xiv. 15, 16, and also Hos. i. 6, ix. 16, Amos iii. 11, 12, v. 27, Isa. xxviii. etc.). The banishment to Assyria (see ver. 6) lasted “unto this day,” *i.e.* till the time when our books were written.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As the Hebrew עַד, like the German *bis*, is not always used in an exclusive sense, but is frequently abstracted from what lies behind the *terminus ad quem* mentioned, it by no means follows from the words, “the Lord rejected Israel . . . to this day,” that the ten tribes returned to their own country after the time when our books were written, viz. about the middle of the sixth century B.C. And it is just as impossible to prove the opposite view, which is very widely spread, namely, that they are living as a body in banishment even at the present day. It is well known how often the long-lost ten tribes have been discovered, in the numerous Jewish communities of southern Arabia, in India, more especially in Malabar, in China, Turkistan, and Cashmir, or in Afghanistan (see Ritter's *Erdkunde*, x. p. 246), and even in America itself; and now Dr. Asahel Grant (*Die Nestorianer oder die zehn Stämme*) thinks that he has found them in the independent Nestorians and the Jews living among them; whereas others, such as Witsius (*Δεξαφύλ.* c. iv. sqq.), J. D. Michaelis (*de exilio decem tribuum*, comm. iii.), and last of all Robinson in the work quoted by Ritter, *l. c.* p. 245 (*The Nestorians*, etc., New York, 1841), have endeavoured to prove that the ten tribes became partly mixed



Vers. 24-41. THE SAMARITANS AND THEIR WORSHIP.—After the transportation of the Israelites, the king of Assyria brought colonists from different provinces of his kingdom into the cities of Samaria. The king of Assyria is not Salmanasar, for it is evident from ver. 25 that a considerable period intervened between the carrying away of the Israelites and the sending of colonists into the depopulated land. It is true that Salmanasar only is mentioned in what precedes, but the section vers. 24-41 is not so closely connected with the first portion of the chapter, that the same king of Assyria must necessarily be spoken of in both. According to Ezra iv. 2, it was Esarhaddon who removed the heathen settlers to Samaria. It is true that the attempt has been made to reconcile this with the assumption that the king

up with the Judæans during the Babylonian captivity, and partly attached themselves to the exiles who were led back to Palestine by Zerubbabel and Ezra; that a portion again became broken up at a still later period by mixing with the rest of the Jews, who were scattered throughout all the world after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and a further portion a long time ago by conversion to Christianity, so that every attempt to discover the remnants of the ten tribes anywhere must be altogether futile. This view is in general the correct one, though its supporters have mixed up the sound arguments with many that are untenable. For example, the predictions quoted by Ritter (p. 250), probably after Robinson (viz. Jer. i. 4, 5, 17, 19, and Ezek. xxxvii. 11 sqq.), and also the prophetic declarations cited by Witsius (v. §§ 11-14: viz. Isa. xiv. 1, Mic. ii. 12, Jer. iii. 12, xxx. 3, 4, xxxiii. 7, 8), prove very little, because for the most part they refer to Messianic times and are to be understood spiritually. So much, however, may certainly be gathered from the books of Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, that the Judæans whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive were not all placed in the province of Babylonia, but were also dispersed in the different districts that constituted first the Assyrian, then the Chaldæan, and afterwards the Persian empire on the other side of the Euphrates, so that with the cessation of that division which had been so strictly maintained to suit the policy of the Israelitish kings, the ancient separation would also disappear, and their common mournful lot of dispersion among the heathen would of necessity bring about a closer union among all the descendants of Jacob; just as we find that the kings of Persia knew of no difference between Jews and Israelites, and in the time of Xerxes the grand vizier Haman wanted to exterminate all the Jews (not the Judæans merely, but all the Hebrews). Moreover, the edict of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1-4), "who among you of *all* his people," and that of Artaxerxes (Ezra vii. 13), "whoever in my kingdom is willing of the *people of Israel*," gave permission to all the Israelites of the twelve tribes to return to Palestine. And who could maintain with any show of reason, that no one belonging to the ten tribes availed himself of this permission? And though Grant argues, on the other side, that with regard to the 50,000 whom Cyrus sent away to their home it is expressly stated that they were of those "whom

of Assyria mentioned in our verse is Salmanasar, by the conjecture that one portion of these colonists was settled there by Salmanasar, another by Esarhaddon; and it has also been assumed that in this expedition Esarhaddon carried away the last remnant of the ten tribes, namely, all who had fled into the mountains and inaccessible corners of the land, and to some extent also in Judæa, during Salmanasar's invasion, and had then collected together in the land again after the Assyrians had withdrawn. But there is not the smallest intimation anywhere of a second transplantation of heathen colonists to Samaria, any more than of a second removal of the remnant of the Israelites who were left behind in the land after the time of Salmanasar. The prediction in Isa. vii. 8, that in sixty-five years more

Nebuchadnezzar had carried away into Babylon" (Ezra ii. 1), with which ch. i. 5 may also be compared, "then rose up the heads of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites, etc.;" these words apply to the majority of those who returned, and undoubtedly prove that the ten tribes as such did not return to Palestine, but they by no means prove that a considerable number of members of the remaining tribes may not have attached themselves to the large number of citizens of the kingdom of Judah who returned. And not only Lightfoot (*Hor. hebr. in Ep. 1 ad Cor. Addenda ad c. 14, Opp. ii. p. 929*) and Witsius (p. 346), but the Rabbins long before them in *Seder Olam rab. c. 29, p. 86*, have inferred from the fact that the number of persons and families given separately in Ezra ii. only amounts to 30,360, whereas in ver. 64 the total number of persons who returned is said to have been 42,360 heads, besides 7337 men-servants and maid-servants, that this excess above the families of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, who are mentioned by name, may have come from the ten tribes. Moreover, those who returned did regard themselves as the representatives of the twelve tribes; for at the dedication of the new temple (Ezra vi. 17) they offered "sin-offerings for all Israel, according to the number of the twelve tribes." And those who returned with Ezra did the same. As a thanksgiving for their safe return to their fatherland, they offered in sacrifice "twelve oxen for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven sheep, and twelve he-goats for a sin-offering, all as a burnt-offering for Jehovah" (Ezra viii. 35). There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of those who returned with Zerubbabel and Ezra belonged to the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi; which may be explained very simply from the fact, that as they had been a much shorter time in exile, they had retained a much stronger longing for the home given by the Lord to their fathers than the tribes that were carried away 180 years before. But that they also followed in great numbers at a future time, after those who had returned before had risen to a state of greater ecclesiastical and civil prosperity in their own home, is an inference that must be drawn from the fact that in the time of Christ and His apostles, Galilee, and in part also Peræa, was very densely populated by Israelites; and this population cannot be traced back either to the Jews who returned to Jerusalem and Judæa



Ephraim was to be destroyed, so that it would be no longer a people, even if it referred to the transplantation of the heathen colonists to Samaria by Esarhaddon, as Usher, Hengstenberg, and others suppose, would by no means necessitate the carrying away of the last remnant of the Israelites by this king, but simply the occupation of the land by heathen settlers, with whom the last remains of the Ephraimites intermingled, so that Ephraim ceased to be a people. As long as the land of Israel was merely laid waste and deprived of the greater portion of its Israelitish population, there always remained the possibility that the exiles might one day return to their native land and once more form one people with those who were left behind, and so long might Israel be still regarded as a nation; just as the Judæans, when

under Zerubbabel and Ezra, or to the small number of Israelites who were left behind in the land when the Assyrian deportation took place. On the other hand, even the arguments adduced by Grant in support of his view, viz. (1) that we have not the slightest historical evidence that the ten tribes ever left Assyria again, (2) that on the return from the Babylonian captivity they did not come back with the rest, prove *as argumenta a silentio* but very little, and lose their force still more if the assumptions upon which they are based—namely, that the ten tribes who were transported to Assyria and Media had no intercourse whatever with the Jews who were led away to Babylon, but kept themselves unmixed and quite apart from the Judæans, and that as they did not return with Zerubbabel and Ezra, they did not return to their native land at any later period—are, as we have shown above, untenable. Consequently the further arguments of Grant, (3) that according to Josephus (*Ant.* xi. 5, 2) the ten tribes were still in the land of their captivity in the first century, and according to Jerome (*Comm. on the Prophets*) in the fifth; and (4) that in the present day they are still in the country of the ancient Assyrians, since the Nestorians, both according to their own statement and according to the testimony of the Jews there, are *Beni Yisrael*, and that of the ten tribes, and are also proved to be Israelites by many of the customs and usages which they have preserved (*Die Nestor.* pp. 113 sqq.); prove nothing more than that there may still be descendants of the Israelites who were banished thither among the Jews and Nestorians living in northern Assyria by the Uramiah-lake, and by no means that the Jews living there are the unmixed descendants of the ten tribes. The statements made by the Jews lose all their importance from the fact, that Jews of other lands maintain just the same concerning themselves. And the Mosaic manners and customs of the Nestorians prove nothing more than that they are of Jewish origin. In general, the Israelites and Jews who have come into heathen lands from the time of Salmanasar and Nebuchadnezzar onwards, and have settled there, have become so mixed up with the Jews who were scattered in all quarters of the globe from the time of Alexander the Great, and more especially since the destruction of the Jewish state by the Romans, that the last traces of the old division into tribes have entirely disappeared.

in exile in Babylon, did not cease to be a people, because they looked forward with certain hope to a return to their fatherland after a banishment of seventy years. But after heathen colonists had been transplanted into the land, with whom the remainder of the Israelites who were left in the land became fused, so that there arose a mixed Samaritan people of a predominantly heathen character, it was impossible to speak any longer of a people of Ephraim in the land of Israel. This transplantation of colonists out of Babel, Cutha, etc., into the cities of Samaria might therefore be regarded as the point of time at which the nation of Ephraim was entirely dissolved, without any removal of the last remnant of the Israelites having taken place. We must indeed assume this if the ten tribes were deported to the very last man, and the Samaritans were in their origin a purely heathen people without any admixture of Israelitish blood, as Hengstenberg assumes and has endeavoured to prove. But the very opposite of this is unmistakeably apparent from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9, according to which there were not a few Israelites left in the depopulated land in the time of Josiah. (Compare Kalkar, *Die Samaritaner ein Mischvolk*, in Pelt's *theol. Mittheilungen*, iii. 3, pp. 24 sqq.).—We therefore regard Esarhaddon as the Assyrian king who brought the colonists to Samaria. The object to יבא may be supplied from the context, more especially from יושב, which follows. He brought inhabitants from *Babel*, i.e. from the country, not the city of Babylon, from *Cuthah*, etc. The situation of *Cuthah* or *Cuth* (ver. 30) cannot be determined with certainty. M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 166) follows Josephus, who speaks of the Cuthæans in *Ant.* ix. 14, 3, and x. 9, 7, as a people dwelling in Persia and Media, and identifies them with the *Kossæans*, *Kissians*, *Khushiya*, *Chuzi*, who lived to the north-east of Susa, in the north-eastern portion of the present Khusistan; whereas Gesenius (*thes.* p. 674), Rosenmüller (*bibl. Althk.* i. 2, p. 29), and J. D. Michaelis (*Supplem. ad Lex. hebr.* p. 1255) have decided in favour of the *Cutha* (كوثى or كوٹا) in the Babylonian *Irak*, in the neighbourhood of the *Nahr Malca*, in support of which the fact may also be adduced, that, according to a communication from Spiegel (in the *Auslande*, 1864, No. 46, p. 1089), *Cutha*, a town not mentioned elsewhere, was situated by the wall in the north-east of Babylon, probably on the spot where the hill *Ohaimir* with its ruins stands. The greater



number of colonists appear to have come from *Cutha*, because the Samaritans are called כוּתִיִּים by the Rabbins. אַרְוָא, *Arva*, is almost always, and probably with correctness, regarded as being the same place as the עִרְוָה (*Irvah*) mentioned in ch. xviii. 34 and xix. 13, as the conjecture naturally suggests itself to every one that the *Arvæans* removed to Samaria by Esarhaddon were inhabitants of the kingdom of *Arva* destroyed by the Assyrian king, and the form עִרְוָה is probably simply connected with the appellative explanation given to the word by the Masoretes. As *Irvâh* is placed by the side of *Henah* in ch. xviii. 34 and xix. 13, *Arva* can hardly be any other than the country of *Hebeh*, situated on the Euphrates between *Anah* and the *Chabur* (M. v. Niebuhr, p. 167). *Hamath* is *Epiphania* on the Orontes: see at 1 Kings viii. 65 and Num. xiii. 21. *Sepharvaim* is no doubt the *Sippara* (Σιπφάρα) of Ptolem. (v. 18, 7), the southernmost city of Mesopotamia on the Euphrates, above the Nahr Malca, the Ἡλιούπολις ἐν Σιππάροισιν or Σιππαρηνῶν πόλις, which Berosus and Abydenus mention (in Euseb. *Præpar. evang.* ix. 12 and 41, and *Chron. Armen.* i. pp. 33, 36, 49, 55) as belonging to the time of the flood.—שְׁמֶרֶן: this is the first time in which the name is evidently applied to the kingdom of Samaria.—Vers. 25-28. In the earliest period of their settlement in the cities of Samaria the new settlers were visited by lions, which may have multiplied greatly during the time that the land was lying waste. The settlers regarded this as a punishment from Jehovah, *i.e.* from the deity of the land, whom they did not worship, and therefore asked the king of Assyria for a priest to teach them the right, *i.e.* the proper, worship of the God of the land; whereupon the king sent them one of the priests who had been carried away, and he took up his abode in Bethel, and instructed the people in the worship of Jehovah. The author of our books also looked upon the lions as sent by Jehovah as a punishment, according to Lev. xxvi. 22, because the new settlers did not fear Him. הָאֲרִיֹּת: the lions which had taken up their abode there. וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם: that they (the priest with his companions) went away and dwelt there. There is no need therefore to alter the plural into the singular.

The priest sent by the Assyrian king was of course an Israelitish priest of the calves, for he was one of those who had been carried away and settled in Bethel, the chief seat of Jeroboam's image-worship, and he also taught the colonists to

fear or worship Jehovah after the manner of the land. This explains the state of divine worship in the land as described in vers. 29 sqq. "Every separate nation (גוי גוי : see Ewald, § 313, *a*) made itself its own gods, and set them up in the houses of the high places (בית הבמות : see at 1 Kings xii. 31, and for the singular בית, Ewald, § 270, *c*) which the Samaritans (השִׁמְרֹנִים, not the colonists sent thither by Esarhaddon, but the former inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel, who are so called from the capital Samaria) had made (built); every nation in the cities where they dwelt."—Ver. 30. The people of Babel made themselves סִבּוֹת בָּנוֹת, *daughters' booths*. Selden (*de Diis Syr.* ii. 7), Münter (*Relig. der Babyl.* pp. 74, 75), and others understand by these the temples consecrated to Mylitta or Astarte, the *καμάραι*, or covered little carriages, or tents for prostitution (Herod. i. 199); but Beyer (*Addit. ad Seld.* p. 297) has very properly objected to this, that according to the context the reference is to idols or objects of idolatrous worship, which were set up in the בית הבמות. It is more natural to suppose that small tent-temples are meant, which were set up as idols in the houses of the high places along with the images which they contained, since according to ch. xxiii. 7 women wove בָּתִּים, little temples, for the Asherah, and Ezekiel speaks of patch-work *Bamoth*, *i.e.* of small temples made of cloth. It is possible, however, that there is more truth than is generally supposed in the view held by the Rabbins, that סִבּוֹת בָּנוֹת signifies an image of the "hen," or rather the constellation of "the clucking-hen" (*Gluckhenne*), the Pleiades,—*simulacrum gallinæ cælestis in signo Tauri nidulantis*, as a *symbolum Veneris cælestis*, as the other idols are all connected with animal symbolism. In any case the explanation given by Movers, *involucra seu secreta mulierum*, female lingams, which were handed by the hierodulæ to their paramours instead of the Mylitta-money (*Phöniz.* i. p. 596), is to be rejected, because it is at variance with the usage of speech and the context, and because the existence of female lingams has first of all to be proved. For the different views, see *Ges. thes.* p. 952, and Leyrer in Herzog's *Cycl.*—The Cuthæans made themselves as a god, נִרְגַל, *Nergal*, *i.e.*, according to Winer, Gesenius, Stuhr, and others, the planet *Mars*, which the Zabians call نـرـيـج, *Nerig*, as the god of war (*Codex Nasar.* i. 212, 224), the Arabs مـرـيـج, *Mirrig*; whereas older commentators identified *Nergal* with the sun-god *Bel*,



deriving the name from נִיר, light, and נַל, a fountain = fountain of light (Selden, ii. 8, and Beyer, *Add.* pp. 301 sqq.). But these views are both of them very uncertain. According to the Rabbins (Rashi, R. Salomo, Kimchi), *Nergal* was represented as a cock. This statement, which is ridiculed by Gesenius, Winer, and Thenius, is proved to be correct by the Assyrian monuments, which contain a number of animal deities, and among them the cock standing upon an altar, and also upon a gem a priest praying in front of a cock (see Layard's *Nineveh*). The pugnacious cock is found generally in the ancient ethnical religions in frequent connection with the gods of war (cf. J. G. Müller in Herzog's *Cycl.*). אֲשִׁימָא, *Ashima*, the god of the people of Hamath, was worshipped, according to rabbinical statements, under the figure of a bald he-goat (see Selden, ii. 9). The suggested combination of the name with the Phœnician deity *Esmun*, the Persian *Asuman*, and the Zendic *açmano*, i.e. heaven, is very uncertain.—Ver. 31. Of the idols of the *Avvæans*, according to rabbinical accounts in Selden, *l.c.*, *Nibchaz* had the form of a dog (נִבְחָז, *latrator*, from נָבַח), and *Tartak* that of an ass. Gesenius regards *Tartak* as a demon of the lower regions, because in Pehlwi *tar*—*thakh* signifies deep darkness or hero of darkness, and *Nibchaz* as an evil demon, the נִבְחָז of the Zabians, whom Norberg in his *Onomast. cod. Nasar.* p. 100, describes as *horrendus rex infernalis: posito ipsius throno ad telluris, i.e. lucis et caliginis confinium, sed imo acherontis fundo pedibus substrato*, according to *Codex Adami*, ii. 50, lin. 12.—With regard to the gods of the Sepharvites, *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech*, it is evident from the offering of children in sacrifice to them that they were related to Moloch. The name אֲדַרְפֶּלֶךְ, which occurs as a personal name in ch. xix. 37 and Isa. xxxvii. 38, has been explained either from the Semitic אֲדַר as meaning “glorious king,” or from the Persian اذر, *azr*, in which case it means “fire-king,” and is supposed to refer to the sun (see Ges. on *Isaiah*, ii. p. 347). עֲנַפְלֶךְ is supposed by Hyde (*de relig. vett. Persarum*, p. 131) to be the group of stars called *Cepheus*, which goes by the name of “the shepherd and flock” and “the herd-stars” in the Oriental astrognosis, and in this case עֲנַם might answer to the Arabic غنم = *ghanim*. Movers, on the other hand (*Phöniz.* i. pp. 410, 411), regards them as two names of the same deity, a

double-shaped Moloch, and reads the *Chethîb* אֱלֹהֵי סִבְרִים as the singular אֱלֹהֵי הַסִּבְרִים, the god of Sepharvaim. This double god, according to his explanation, was a sun-being, because Sepharvaim, of which he was πολιοῦχος, is designated by Berosus as a city of the sun. This may be correct; but there is something very precarious in the further assumption, that “*Adar-Melech* is to be regarded as the sun’s fire, and indeed, since *Adar* is Mars, that he is so far to be thought of as a destructive being,” and that *Anammelech* is a contraction of עֵין מֶלֶךְ, *oculus Molechi*, signifying the ever-watchful eye of Saturn; according to which *Adrammelech* is to be regarded as the solar Mars, *Anammelech* as the solar Saturn. The explanations given by Hitzig (*on Isa.* p. 437) and Benfey (*die Monatsnamen*, pp. 187, 188) are extremely doubtful.—Ver. 32. In addition to these idols, *Jehovah* also was worshipped in temples of the high places, according to the instructions of the Israelitish priest sent by the king of Assyria. וַיְהִי יִרְאִים: “and they were (also) worshipping Jehovah, and made themselves priests of the mass of the people” (מִקְצוֹתָם as in 1 Kings xii. 31). וַיְהִי עֹשִׂים לָהֶם: “and they (the priests) were preparing them (sacrifices) in the houses of the high places.”—Ver. 33 sums up by way of conclusion the description of the various kinds of worship.

Vers. 34–41. This mixed *cultus*, composed of the worship of idols and the worship of Jehovah, they retained till the time when the books of the Kings were written. “Unto this day they do after the former customs.” מִשְׁפָּטִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים can only be the religious usages and ordinances which were introduced at the settlement of the new inhabitants, and which are described in vers. 28–33. The prophetic historian observes still further, that “they fear not Jehovah, and do not according to their statutes and their rights, nor according to the law and commandment which the Lord had laid down for the sons of Jacob, to whom He gave the name of Israel” (see 1 Kings xviii. 31), *i.e.* according to the Mosaic law. מִשְׁפָּטִים and חֻקֹּתָם, “their statutes and their right,” stands in antithesis to הַתּוֹרָה וְהַמִּצְוָה which *Jehovah* gave to the children of Israel. If, then, the clause, “they do not according to their statutes and their right,” is not to contain a glaring contradiction to the previous assertion, “unto this day they do after their first (former) rights,” we must understand by חֻקֹּתָם וּמִשְׁפָּטִים the statutes and the right of the ten tribes, *i.e.* the worship of Jehovah under



the symbols of the calves, and must explain the inexactness of the expression "*their* statutes and *their* right" from the fact that the historian was thinking of the Israelites who had been left behind in the land, or of the remnant of the Israelitish population that had become mixed up with the heathen settlers (ch. xxiii. 19, 20; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9, 33). The meaning of the verse is therefore evidently the following: The inhabitants of Samaria retain to this day the *cultus* composed of the worship of idols and of Jehovah under the form of an image, and do not worship Jehovah either after the manner of the ten tribes or according to the precepts of the Mosaic law. Their worship is an amalgamation of the Jehovah image-worship and of heathen idolatry (cf. ver. 41).—To indicate the character of this worship still more clearly, and hold it up as a complete breach of the covenant and as utter apostasy from Jehovah, the historian describes still more fully, in vers. 35-39, how earnestly and emphatically the people of Israel had been prohibited from worshipping other gods, and urged to worship Jehovah alone, who had redeemed Israel out of Egypt and exalted it into His own nation. For ver. 35 compare Ex. xx. 5; for ver. 36, the exposition of ver. 7, also Ex. xxxii. 11, vi. 6, xx. 23; Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, etc. In ver. 37 the committal of the *thorah* to writing is presupposed. For ver. 39, see Deut. xiii. 5, xxiii. 15, etc.—Ver. 40. They did not hearken, however (the subject is, of course, the ten tribes), but they (the descendants of the Israelites who remained in the land) do after their former manner. מִשְׁפָּטֵם הָרָאשֹׁן is their manner of worshipping God, which was a mixture of idolatry and of the image-worship of Jehovah, as in ver. 34.—In ver. 41 this is repeated once more, and the whole of these reflections are brought to a close with the additional statement, that their children and grandchildren do the same to this day.—In the period following the Babylonian captivity the Samaritans relinquished actual idolatry, and by the adoption of the Mosaic book of the law were converted to monotheism. For the later history of the Samaritans, of whom a small handful have been preserved to the present day in the ancient Sichem, the present Nablus, see Theod. Guil. Joh. Juynboll, *commentarii in historiam gentis Samaritanæ*, Lugd. Bat. 1846, 4, and H. Petermann, *Samaria and the Samaritans*, in Herzog's *Cycl.*

## III.—HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF THE TEN TRIBES TO THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

## CHAPS. XVIII.—XXV.

At the time when the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed, Judah found itself in a state of dependence upon the imperial power of Assyria, into which it had been brought by the ungodly policy of Ahaz. But three years before the expedition of Salmanasar against Samaria, the pious Hezekiah had ascended the throne of his ancestor David in Jerusalem, and had set on foot with strength and zeal the healing of Judah's wounds, by exterminating idolatry and by restoring the legal worship of Jehovah. As Hezekiah was devoted to the Lord his God with undivided heart and trusted firmly in Him, the Lord also acknowledged him and his undertakings. When Sennacherib had overrun Judah with a powerful army after the revolt of Hezekiah, and had summoned the capital to surrender, the Lord heard the prayer of His faithful servant Hezekiah and saved Judah and Jerusalem from the threatening destruction by the miraculous destruction of the forces of the proud Sennacherib (ch. xviii. and xix.), whereby the power of Assyria was so weakened that Judah had no longer much more to fear from it, although it did chastise Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 sqq.). Nevertheless this deliverance, through and in the time of Hezekiah, was merely a postponement of the judgment with which Judah had been threatened by the prophets (Isaiah and Micah), of the destruction of the kingdom and the banishment of its inhabitants. Apostasy from the living God and moral corruption had struck such deep and firm roots in the nation, that the idolatry, outwardly suppressed by Hezekiah, broke out again openly immediately after his death; and that in a still stronger degree, since his son and successor Manasseh not only restored all the abominations of idolatry which his father had rooted out, but even built altars to idols in the courts of the temple of Jehovah, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood from one end to the other (ch. xxi.), and thereby filled up the measure of sins, so that the Lord had to announce through His prophets to the godless king and people His decree to destroy Jerusalem and cast out the remaining portion of the people of His inheritance



among the heathen, and to show the severity of His judgments in the fact that Manasseh was led away captive by the officers of the Assyrian king. And even though Manasseh himself renounced all gross idolatry and restored the legal worship in the temple after his release and return to Jerusalem, as the result of this chastisement, this alteration in the king's mind exerted no lasting influence upon the people generally, and was completely neutralized by his successor Amon, who did not walk in the way of Jehovah, but merely worshipped his father's idols. In this state of things even the God-fearing Josiah, with all the stringency with which he exterminated idolatry, more especially after the discovery of the book of the law, was unable to effect any true change of heart or sincere conversion of the people to their God, and could only wipe out the outward signs and traces of idolatry, and establish the external supremacy of the worship of Jehovah. The people, with their carnal security, imagined that they had done quite enough for God by restoring the outward and legal form of worship, and that they were now quite sure of the divine protection; and did not hearken to the voice of the prophets, who predicted the speedy coming of the judgments of God. Josiah had warded off the bursting forth of these judgments for thirty years, through his humiliation before God and the reforms which he introduced; but towards the end of his reign the Lord began to put away Judah from before His face for the sake of Manasseh's sins, and to reject the city which He had chosen that His name might dwell there (ch. xxii.—xxiii. 27). Necho king of Egypt advanced to extend his sway to the Euphrates and overthrow the Assyrian empire. Josiah marched to meet him, for the purpose of preventing the extension of his power into Syria. A battle was fought at Megiddo, the Judæan army was defeated, Josiah fell in the battle, and with him the last hope of the sinking state (ch. xxiii. 29, 30; 2 Chron. xxxv. 23, 24). In Jerusalem Jehoahaz was made king by the people; but after a reign of three months he was taken prisoner by Necho at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and led away to Egypt, where he died. Eliakim, the elder son of Josiah, was appointed by Necho as Egyptian vassal-king in Jerusalem, under the name of Jehoiakim. He was devoted to idolatry, and through his love of show (Jer. xxii. 13 sqq.) still further ruined the kingdom, which was already exhausted by the tribute to be paid to Egypt. In the fourth year of his

reign Pharaoh-Necho succumbed at Carchemish to the Chaldaean power, which was rising under Nebuchadnezzar upon the ruins of the Assyrian kingdom. At the same time Jeremiah proclaimed to the incorrigible nation that the Lord of Sabaoth would deliver Judah with all the surrounding nations into the hand of His servant Nebuchadnezzar, that the land of Judah would be laid waste and the people serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jer. xxv.). Nebuchadnezzar appeared in Judah immediately afterwards to follow up his victory over Necho, took Jerusalem, made Jehoiakim his subject, and carried away Daniel, with many of the leading young men, to Babylon (ch. xxiv. 1). But after some years Jehoiakim revolted; whereupon Nebuchadnezzar sent fresh troops against Jerusalem to besiege the city, and after defeating Jehoiachin, who had in the meantime followed his father upon the throne, led away into captivity to Babylon, along with the kernel of the nation, nobles, warriors, craftsmen, and smiths, and set upon the throne Mattaniah, the only remaining son of Josiah, under the name of Zedekiah (ch. xxiv. 2-17). But when he also formed an alliance with Pharaoh-Hophra in the ninth year of his reign, and revolted from the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar advanced immediately with all his forces, besieged Jerusalem, and having taken the city and destroyed it, put an end to the kingdom of Judah by slaying Zedekiah and his sons, and carrying away all the people that were left, with the exception of a very small remnant of cultivators of the soil (ch. xxiv. 18-xxv. 26), a hundred and thirty-four years after the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes.

CHAP. XVIII. REIGN OF KING HEZEKIAH. SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH AND THREATENS JERUSALEM.

Vers. 1-8. *Length and character of Hezekiah's reign.*<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 1, 2. In the third year of Hoshea of Israel, Hezekiah became

<sup>1</sup> On comparing the account of Hezekiah's reign given in our books (ch. xviii.-xx.) with that in 2 Chron. xxix.-xxxii., the different plans of these two historical works are at once apparent. The prophetic author of our books first of all describes quite briefly the character of the king's reign (ch. xviii. 1-8), and then gives an elaborate description of the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib and of his attempt to get Jerusalem into his power, together with the destruction of the proud Assyrian force and Sennacherib's



king over Judah, when he was twenty-five years old. According to vers. 9 and 10, the fourth and sixth years of Hezekiah corresponded to the seventh and ninth of Hoshea; consequently his first year apparently ran parallel to the fourth of Hoshea, so that Josephus (*Ant.* ix. 13, 1) represents him as having ascended the throne in the fourth year of Hoshea's reign. But there is no necessity for this alteration. If we assume that the commencement of his reign took place towards the close of the third year of Hoshea, the fourth and sixth years of his reign coincided for the most part with the sixth and ninth years of Hoshea's reign. The name הִזְקִיָּהּ or הִזְקִיָּהוּ (vers. 9, 13, etc.) is given in its complete form יְהוֹזָקִיָּהוּ, "whom Jehovah strengthens," in 2 Chron. xxix. sqq. and Isa. i. 1; and הִזְקִיָּהּ in Hos. i. 1 and Mic. i. 1. On his age when he ascended the throne, see the Comm. on ch. xvi. 2. The name of his mother, אֲבִי, is a strongly contracted form of אֲבִיָּה (2 Chron. xxix. 1).—Vers. 3 sqq. As ruler Hezekiah walked in the footsteps of his ancestor David. He removed the high places and the other objects of idolatrous worship, trusted in Jehovah, and adhered firmly to Him without wavering; therefore the Lord made all his undertakings prosper. הַבָּמֹת, הַמַּצֵּבֹת, and הָאֲשֵׁרָה (see at 1 Kings xiv. 23) embrace all the objects of idolatrous worship, which had been introduced into Jerusalem and Judah in the reigns of the former kings,

hasty return to Nineveh and death (ch. xviii. 13-19, 37); and, finally, he also gives a circumstantial account of Hezekiah's illness and recovery, and also of the arrival of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem, and of Hezekiah's conduct on that occasion (ch. xx.). The chronicler, on the other hand, has fixed his chief attention upon the religious reformation carried out by Hezekiah, and therefore first of all describes most elaborately the purification of the temple from all idolatrous abominations, the restoration of the Jehovah-cultus and the feast of passover, to which Hezekiah invited all the people, not only the subjects of his own kingdom, but the remnant of the ten tribes also (2 Chron. xxix.-xxxi.); and then simply gives in ch. xxxii. the most summary account of the attack made by Sennacherib upon Jerusalem and the destruction of his army, of the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, and of his great riches, the Babylonian embassy being touched upon in only the most casual manner. The historical character of the elaborate accounts given in the Chronicles of Hezekiah's reform of worship and his celebration of the passover, which Thenius follows De Wette and Gramberg in throwing doubt upon, has been most successfully defended by Bertheau as well as others.—On the disputed question, in what year of Hezekiah's reign the solemn passover instituted by him fell, see the thorough discussion of it by C. P. Caspari (*Beitr. z. Einleit. in d. B. Jesaja*, pp. 109 sqq.), and our Commentary on the Chronicles, which has yet to appear.

and more especially in that of Ahaz. The singular **הַאֲשֵׁרָה** is used in a collective sense = **הָאֲשֵׁרִים** (2 Chron. xxxi. 1). The only other idol that is specially mentioned is the brazen serpent which Moses made in the wilderness (Num. xxi. 8, 9), and which the people with their leaning to idolatry had turned in the course of time into an object of idolatrous worship. The words, "to this day were the children of Israel burning incense to it," do not mean that this took place without interruption from the time of Moses down to that of Hezekiah, but simply, that it occurred at intervals, and that the idolatry carried on with this idol lasted till the time of Hezekiah, namely, till this king broke in pieces the brazen serpent, because of the idolatry that was associated with it. For further remarks on the meaning of this symbol, see the Comm. on Num. xxi. 8, 9. The people called (**וַיִּקְרָא**, one called) this serpent **נְחָשְׁתָּן**, *i.e.* a brazen thing. This epithet does not involve anything contemptuous, as the earlier commentators supposed, nor the idea of "Brass-god" (Ewald).—Ver. 5. The verdict, "after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah," refers to Hezekiah's confidence in God (**בְּטָח**), in which he had no equal, whereas in the case of Josiah his conscientious adherence to the Mosaic law is extolled in the same words (ch. xxiii. 25); so that there is no ground for saying that there is a contradiction between our verse and ch. xxiii. 25 (Thenius).—Ver. 6. **יָדְבֵק בִּי**: he adhered faithfully to Jehovah (**דָּבַק** as in 1 Kings xi. 2), and departed not from Him, *i.e.* he never gave himself up to idolatry.—Ver. 7. The Lord therefore gave him success in all his undertakings (**הַשְׁכִּיל**, see at 1 Kings ii. 3), and even in his rebellion against the king of Assyria, whom he no longer served, *i.e.* to whom he paid no more tribute. It was through Ahaz that Judah had been brought into dependence upon Assyria; and Hezekiah released himself from this, by refusing to pay any more tribute, probably after the departure of Salmanasar from Palestine, and possibly not till after the death of that king. Sennacherib therefore made war upon Hezekiah to subjugate Judah to himself again (see vers. 13 sqq.).—Ver. 8. Hezekiah smote the Philistines to Gaza, and their territory from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city, *i.e.* all the towns from the least to the greatest (see at ch. xvii. 9). He thus chastised these enemies for their invasion of Judah in the time of Ahaz, wrested from them the cities which they had taken at that time (2 Chron.



xxviii. 18), and laid waste all their country to *Gaza*, i.e. *Ghuzzeh*, the most southerly of the chief cities of Philistia (see at Josh. xiii. 3). This probably took place after the defeat of Sennacherib (cf. 2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23).

In vers. 9-12 the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes by Salmanasar, which has already been related according to the annals of the kingdom of Israel in ch. xvii. 3-6, is related once more according to the annals of the kingdom of Judah, in which this catastrophe is also introduced as an event that was memorable in relation to all the covenant-nation.

Vers. 13-37. *Sennacherib invades Judah and threatens Jerusalem*.<sup>1</sup>—Sennacherib, סַנְחֶרִיב (*Sanchēribh*), Σενναχηρίμ (LXX.), Σενναχήριβος (Joseph.), Σαβαχάριβος (Herodot.), whose name has not yet been deciphered with certainty upon the Assyrian monuments or clearly explained (see J. Brandis *über den histor. Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyr. Inschriften*, pp. 103 sqq., and M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, p. 37), was the successor of Salmanasar (Sargina according to the monuments). He is called βασιλεὺς Ἀραβίων τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίων by Herodotus (ii. 141), and reigned, according to Berosus, eighteen years. He took all the fortified cities in Judah (יְהוּדָה, with the masculine suffix instead of the feminine: cf. Ewald, § 184, c). The בָּל, *all*, is not to be pressed; for, beside the strongly fortified capital Jerusalem, he had not yet taken the fortified cities of Lachish and Libnah (ver. 17 and ch. xix. 8) at the time, when, according to vers. 14 sqq., he sent a division of his army against Jerusalem, and summoned Hezekiah to surrender that city. According to Herodotus (*l.c.*), the real object of his campaign was Egypt, which is also apparent from ch. xix. 24, and is confirmed by Isa. x. 24; for which reason *Tirhaka* marched against him (ch. xix. 8; cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 171, 172).—Vers. 14 sqq. On the report of Sennacherib's approach, Hezekiah made provision at once for the safety of Jerusalem. He had the city fortified more strongly, and the fountain of the

<sup>1</sup> We have a parallel and elaborate account of this campaign of Sennacherib and his defeat (ch. xviii. 13-xix. 37), and also of Hezekiah's sickness and recovery and the arrival of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem (ch. xx. 1-19), in Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix., and a brief extract, with certain not unimportant supplements, in 2 Chron. xxxii. These three narratives, as is now generally admitted, are drawn independently of one another from a collection of the prophecies of Isaiah, which was received into the annals of the kingdom (2 Chron. xxxii. 32), and serve to confirm and complete one another.

upper Gihon and the brook near the city stopped up (see at ver. 17), to cut off the supply of water from the besiegers, as is stated in 2 Chron. xxxii. 2-8, and confirmed by Isa. xxii. 8-11. In the meantime Sennacherib had pressed forward to *Lachish*, i.e. *Um Lakis*, in the plain of Judah, on the south-west of Jerusalem, seven hours to the west of *Eleutheropolis* on the road to Egypt (see at Josh. x. 3); so that Hezekiah, having doubts as to the possibility of a successful resistance, sent ambassadors to negotiate with him, and promised to pay him as much tribute as he might demand if he would withdraw. The confession "I have sinned" is not to be pressed, inasmuch as it was forced from Hezekiah by the pressure of distress. Since Asshur had made Judah tributary by faithless conduct on the part of Tiglath-pileser towards Ahaz, there was nothing really wrong in the shaking off of this yoke by the refusal to pay any further tribute. But Hezekiah certainly did wrong, when, after taking the first step, he was alarmed at the disastrous consequences, and sought to purchase once more the peace which he himself had broken, by a fresh submission and renewal of the payment of tribute. This false step on the part of the pious king, which arose from a temporary weakness of faith, was nevertheless turned into a blessing through the pride of Sennacherib and the covenant-faithfulness of the Lord towards him and his kingdom. Sennacherib demanded the enormous sum of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold (more than two and a half million thalers, or £375,000); and Hezekiah not only gave him all the gold and silver found in the treasures of the temple and palace, but had the gold plates with which he had covered the doors and doorposts of the temple (2 Chron. xxix. 3) removed, to send them to the king of Assyria. *הַאֲמֹנֹת*, lit. the supports, i.e. the posts, of the doors.

These negotiations with Sennacherib on the part of Hezekiah are passed over both in the book of Isaiah and also in the Chronicles, because they had no further influence upon the future progress of the war.—Vers. 17 sqq. For though Sennacherib did indeed take the money, he did not depart, as he had no doubt promised, but, emboldened still further by this submissiveness, sent a detachment of his army against Jerusalem, and summoned Hezekiah to surrender the capital. "He sent Tartan, Rabсарis, and Rabshakeh." Rabshakeh only is mentioned in Isaiah, as the chief speaker in the negotiations



which follow, although in Isa. xxxvii. 6 and 24 allusion is evidently made to the other two. Tartan had no doubt the chief command, since he is not only mentioned first here, but conducted the siege of Ashdod, according to Isa. xx. 1. The three names are probably only official names, or titles of the offices held by the persons mentioned. For רַב־פָּרִיס means *princeps eunuchorum*, and רַב־שָׁקָה chief cup-bearer. תַּרְתָּן is explained by Hitzig on Isa. xx. 1 as derived from the Persian

تارتان, *Târ-tan*, "high person or vertex of the body," and in Jer. xxxix. 3 as "body-guard;" but this is hardly correct, as the other two titles are Semitic. These generals took up their station with their army "at the conduit of the upper pool, which ran by the road of the fuller's field," *i.e.* the conduit which flowed from the upper pool—according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, the basin of the upper *Gihon* (*Birket el Mamilla*)—into the lower pool (*Birket es Sultân*: see at 1 Kings i. 33). According to Isa. vii. 3, this conduit was in existence as early as the time of Ahaz. The "end" of it is probably the locality in which the conduit began at the upper pool or *Gihon*, or where it first issued from it. This conduit which led from the upper *Gihon* into the lower, and which is called in 2 Chron. xxxii. 30 "the outflow of the upper *Gihon*," Hezekiah stopped up, and conducted the water downwards, *i.e.* underground, towards the west into the city of David; that is to say, he conducted the water of the upper *Gihon*, which had previously flowed along the western side of the city outside the wall into the lower *Gihon* and so away down the valley of Ben-hinnom, into the city itself by means of a subterranean channel,<sup>1</sup> that he might retain this water for the use of the city in the event of a siege of Jerusalem, and keep it from the besiegers. This water was probably collected in the cistern (הַבְּרִכָּה) which Hezekiah made, *i.e.* ordered to be constructed (ch. xx. 20), or the reservoir "between the two walls for the waters of the old pool," mentioned in Isa. xxii. 11, *i.e.* most probably the reservoir still existing at some distance to the east of the Joppa gate on the western side of the road which leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the so-called "pool of Hezekiah," which the natives call *Birket el Hamman*,

<sup>1</sup> We may get some idea of the works connected with this aqueduct from the description of the "sealed fountain" of the Solomon's pool at *Ain Saleh* in Tobler, *Topogr. v. Jerus.* ii. pp. 857 sqq., *Dritte Wanderung*.

"Bathing-pool," because it supplies a bath in the neighbourhood, or *B. el Batrak*, "Patriarch's pool" (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 487, and *Fresh Researches into the Topography of Jerusalem*, pp. 111 sqq.), since this is still fed by a conduit from the *Mamilla* pool (see E. G. Schultz, *Jerusalem*, p. 31, and Tobler, *Denkblätter*, pp. 44 sqq.).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 18. Hezekiah considered it beneath his dignity to negotiate personally with the generals of Sennacherib. He sent three of his leading ministers out to the front of the city: *Eliakim* the son of Hilkiah, the captain of the castle, who had only received the appointment to this office a short time before in *Shebna's* place (Isa. xxii. 20, 21); *Shebna*, who was still secretary of state (סֹפֵר: see at 2 Sam. viii. 17); and *Joach* the son of Asaph, the chancellor (מִזְכִּיר: see at 2 Sam. viii. 16).

*Rabshakch* made a speech to these three (vers. 19–25), in which he tried to show that Hezekiah's confidence that he would be able to resist the might of the king of Assyria was perfectly vain, since neither Egypt (ver. 21), nor his God (ver. 22), nor his forces (ver. 23), would be able to defend him.—Ver. 19. "The great king:" the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian kings all assumed this title (cf. Ezek. xxvi. 7; Dan. ii. 37), because

<sup>1</sup> The identity of the בִּרְכָה, which Hezekiah constructed as a reservoir for the overflow of the upper Gihon that was conducted into the city (ch. xx. 20), with the present "pool of Hezekiah" is indeed very probable, but not quite certain. For in very recent times, on digging the foundation for the Evangelical church built on the northern slope of Zion, they lighted upon a large well-preserved arched channel, which was partly cut in the rock, and, where this was not the case, built in level layers and coated within with a hard cement about an inch thick and covered with large stones (Robinson, *New Inquiries as to the Topography of Jerusalem*, p. 113, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 318), and which might possibly be connected with the channel made by Hezekiah to conduct the water of the upper Gihon into the city, although this channel does not open into the pool of Hezekiah, and the walls, some remains of which are still preserved, may belong to a later age. The arguments adduced by Thenius in support of the assumption that the "lower" or "old pool" mentioned in Isa. xxii. 9 and 11 is different from the lower Gihon-pool, and to be sought for in the Tyropœon, are inconclusive. It by no means follows from the expression, "which lies by the road of the fuller's field," i.e. by the road which runs past the fuller's field, that there was another upper pool in Jerusalem beside the upper pool (Gihon); but this additional clause simply serves to define more precisely the spot by the conduit mentioned where the Assyrian army took its stand; and it by no means follows from the words of Isa. xxii. 11, "a gathering of waters have ye made between the two walls for the waters of the old pool," that this gathering of waters was made in the Tyropœon, and that this "old



kings of conquered lands were subject to them as vassals (see at Isa. x. 8). "What is this confidence that thou cherishest?" *i.e.* how vain or worthless is this confidence!—Ver. 20. "Thou sayest . . . it is only a lip-word . . . : counsel and might for battle;" *i.e.* if thou speakest of counsel and might for battle, that is only רִבֵּר שִׁפְתַּיִם, a word that merely comes from the lips, not from the heart, the seat of the understanding, *i.e.* a foolish and inconsiderate saying (cf. Prov. xiv. 23; Job xi. 2).—אֶמְרָתִי is to be preferred to the אֶמְרָתִי of Isaiah as the more original of the two. עַתָּה, now, *sc.* we will see on whom thou didst rely, when thou didst rebel against me.—Ver. 21. On Egypt? "that broken reed, which runs into the hand of any one who would lean upon it (thinking it whole), and pierces it through." This figure, which is repeated in Ezek. xxix. 6, 7, is so far suitably chosen, that the Nile, representing Egypt, is rich in reeds. What Rabshakeh says of Egypt here, Isaiah had already earnestly impressed upon his people (Isa. xxx. 3-5), to warn them against trusting in the support of Egypt, from which one party in the nation expected help against Assyria.—Ver. 22. Hezekiah (and Judah) had a stronger ground of confidence in Jehovah his God. Even this

pool," as distinguished from the lower pool (ver. 9), was an upper pool, which was above the king's pool mentioned in Neh. iii. 15. For even if בֵּין הַחֲמַתִּים occurs in ch. xxv. 4, Jer. xxxix. 4, lii. 7, in connection with a locality on the south-east side of the city, the Old Testament says nothing about two pools in the Tyropœon at the south-east corner of Jerusalem, but simply mentions a fountain gate, which probably derived its name from the present fountain of the Virgin, and the king's pool, also called *Shelach* in Neh. ii. 14, iii. 15, which was no doubt fed from that fountain like the present *Siloam*, and watered the royal gardens. (Compare Rob. *Pal.* i. pp. 565 sqq., and *Bibl. Res.* p. 189, and Tobler, *Die Siloah-quelle u. der Oelberg*, pp. 1 sqq.). The two walls, between which Hezekiah placed the reservoir, may very well be the northern wall of Zion and the one which surrounded the lower city (Acra) on the north-west, according to which the words in Isa. xxii. 11 would admirably suit the "pool of Hezekiah." Again, Hezekiah did not wait till the departure of Sennacherib before he built this conduit, which is also mentioned in Wisd. xlviii. 17, as Knobel supposes (on Isa. xxii. 11), but he made it when he first invaded Judah, before the appearance of the Assyrian troops in front of Jerusalem, when he made the defensive preparations noticed at ver. 14, as is evident from 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4, compared with ver. 30, since the stopping up of the fountain outside the city, to withdraw the water from the Assyrians, is expressly mentioned in vers. 3, 4 among the measures of defence; and in the concluding notices concerning Hezekiah in ch. xx. 20, and 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, there is also a brief allusion to this work, without any precise indication of the time when he had executed it.

Rabshakeh tried to shake, availing himself very skilfully, from his heathen point of view, of the reform which Hezekiah had made in the worship, and representing the abolition of the altars on the high places as an infringement upon the reverence that ought to be shown to God. "And if ye say, We trust in Jehovah our God, (I say :) is it not He whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar (in the temple) in Jerusalem?" Instead of **בִּי תֹאמַרְוּ**, according to which Rabshakeh turned to the deputies, we have in Isa. vii. 7 **בִּי תֹאמַר**, according to which the words are addressed to Hezekiah, as in ver. 20. **תֹאמַרְוּ** is preferred by Thenius, Knobel, and others, because in what follows Hezekiah is addressed in the third person. But the very circumstance that **תֹאמַרְוּ** is apparently more suitable favours the originality of **תֹאמַר**, according to which the king is still addressed in the person of his ambassadors, and Rabshakeh only speaks directly to the ambassadors when this argument is answered. The attack upon the confidence which the Judæans placed in their God commences with **הֲלוֹא הוּא**. The opinion of Thenius, that the second clause of the verse is a continuation of the words supposed to be spoken by the Judæans who trusted in God, and that the apodosis does not follow till ver. 23, is quite a mistake. The ambassadors of Hezekiah could not regard the high places and idolatrous altars that had been abolished as altars of Jehovah; and the apodosis could not commence with **וְעַתָּה**.—Vers. 23, 24. Still less could Hezekiah rely upon his military resources. **הִתְעַרְבִי נָא**: enter, I pray thee, (into contest) with my lord, and I will give thee 2000 horses, if thou canst set the horsemen upon them. The meaning, of course, is not that Hezekiah could not raise 2000 soldiers in all, but that he could not produce so many men who were able to fight as horsemen. "How then wilt thou turn back a single one of the smallest lieutenants of my lord?" **הֲשִׁיב אֶת־פָּנָי פֶּלֶא**, to repulse a person's face, means generally to turn away a person with his petition (1 Kings ii. 16, 17), here to repulse an assailant. **פָּחַת אֲחֵר** is one pasha; although **אֲחֵר**, which is grammatically subordinate to **פָּחַת**, is in the construct state, that the genitives which follow may be connected (for this subordination of **אֲחֵר** see Ewald, § 286, a). **פָּחַת** (see at 1 Kings x. 15), lit. under-vicegerent, i.e. administrator of a province under a satrap, in military states also a subordinate officer. **וְהַתְּבַמָּה**: and so (with thy military force so small) thou



trustest in Egypt 'לָרֶכֶב וְנוֹ', so far as war-chariots and horsemen are concerned.—Ver. 25. After Rabshakeh had thus, as he imagined, taken away every ground of confidence from Hezekiah, he added still further, that the Assyrian king himself had also not come without Jehovah, but had been summoned by Him to effect the destruction of Judah. It is possible that some report may have reached his ears of the predictions of the prophets, who had represented the Assyrian invasion as a judgment from the Lord, and these he used for his own purposes. Instead of *עַל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה*, against this place, *i.e.* Jerusalem, we have *עַל הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת* in Isaiah,—a reading which owes its origin simply to the endeavour to bring the two clauses into exact conformity to one another.

Vers. 26-37. It was very conceivable that Rabshakeh's boasting might make an impression upon the people; the ambassadors of Hezekiah therefore interrupted him with the request that he would speak to them in Aramæan, as they understood that language, and not in Jewish, on account of the people who were standing upon the wall. *אַרְמִית* was the language spoken in Syria, Babylonia, and probably also in the province of Assyria, and may possibly have been Rabshakeh's mother-tongue, even if the court language of the Assyrian kings was an Aryan dialect. With the close affinity between the Aramæan and the Hebrew, the latter could not be unknown to Rabshakeh, so that he made use of it, just as the Aramæan language was intelligible to the ministers of Hezekiah, whereas the people in Jerusalem understood only *יְהוּדִית*, Jewish, *i.e.* the Hebrew language spoken in the kingdom of Judah. It is evident from the last clause of the verse that the negotiations were carried on in the neighbourhood of the city wall of Jerusalem.—Ver. 27. But Rabshakeh rejected this proposal with the scornful remark, that his commission was not to speak to Hezekiah and his ambassadors only, but rather to the people upon the wall. The variation of the preposition *עַל* and *אֶל* in *עַל אֲדֹנָיִךְ*, to thy lord (Hezekiah), and *אֵלַי*, to thee (Eliakim as chief speaker), is avoided in the text of Isaiah. *עַל* is frequently used for *אֶל*, in the later usage of the language, in the sense of *to* or *at*. In the words "who sit upon the wall to eat their dung and drink their urine," Rabshakeh points to the horrors which a siege of Jerusalem would entail upon the inhabitants. For *חֲרִיָּהֶם* = *חֲרָאֵיהֶם*, *excrementa sua*, and *שִׁינֵיהֶם*, *urinas suas*, the Masoretes have substituted the euphemisms *צֹאֲתָם*, going forth,

and מֵימֵי רַגְלֵיהֶם, water of their feet.—Vers. 28 sqq. וַיַּעֲמֹד : not, he stood up, raised himself (Ges.), or came forward (Then.), but he stationed himself, assumed an attitude calculated for effect, and spoke to the people with a loud voice in the Jewish language, telling them to listen to the king of Assyria and not to be led astray by Hezekiah, *i.e.* to be persuaded to defend the city any longer, since neither Hezekiah nor Jehovah could defend them from the might of Sennacherib. אַל־יִשְׂיָא : let not Hezekiah deceive you, *sc.* by pretending to be able to defend or save Jerusalem. In מִיָּדוֹ, “out of his (the Assyrian’s) hand,” the speaker ceases to speak in the name of his king. On the construction of the passive הִנָּחַן with אֶת־הָעִיר, see Ewald, § 277, *d*, although in the instance before us he proposes to expunge the אֶת after Isa. xxxvi. 15.—Vers. 31 sqq. “Make peace with me and come out to me (*sc.* out of your walls, *i.e.* surrender to me), and ye shall eat every one his vine, . . . till I come and bring you into a land like your own land . . .” בְּרָכָה is used here to signify peace as the concentration of weal and blessing. The imperative וְאֶכְלִי expresses the consequence of what goes before (*vid.* Ewald, § 347, *b*). To eat his vine and fig-tree and to drink the water of his well is a figure denoting the quiet and undisturbed enjoyment of the fruits of his own possessions (*cf.* 1 Kings v. 5). Even in the event of their yielding, the Assyrian would transport the Jewish people into another land, according to the standing custom of Asiatic conquerors in ancient times (for proofs see Hengstenberg, *De rebus Tyriis*, pp. 51, 52). To make the people contented with this thought, the boaster promised that the king of Assyria would carry them into a land which was quite as fruitful and glorious as the land of Canaan. The description of it as a land with corn and new wine, etc., recalls the picture of the land of Canaan in Deut. viii. 8 and xxxiii. 28. זֵית יִצְהָר is the olive-tree which yields good oil, in distinction from the wild olive-tree. וְחַיִּי וְנֹי : and ye shall live and not die, *i.e.* no harm shall befall you from me (Thenius). This passage is abridged in Isa. xxxvi. 17.—Vers. 33 sqq. Even Jehovah could not deliver them any more than Hezekiah. As a proof of this, Rabshakeh enumerated a number of cities and lands which the king of Assyria had conquered, without their gods’ being able to offer any resistance to his power. “Where are the gods of Hamath, etc., that they might have delivered Samaria out of my hand?” Instead of כִּי הִצִּילֵנוּ we have וְכִי הִצֵּן,



and that they might have, which loosens the connection somewhat more between this clause and the preceding one, and makes it more independent. "Where are they?" is equivalent to they are gone, have perished (cf. ch. xix. 18); and "that they might have delivered" is equivalent to they have not delivered. The subject to **יְהוָה הַנְּגִיד** is **בְּיָהוּא**, which includes the God of Samaria. Sennacherib regards himself as being as it were one with his predecessors, as the representative of the might of Assyria, so that he attributes to himself the conquests of cities and lands which his ancestors had made. The cities and lands enumerated in ver. 34 have been mentioned already in ch. xvii. 24 as conquered territories, from which colonists had been transplanted to Samaria, with the exception of *Arpad* and *Hena*. **אַרְפַּד**, which is also mentioned in ch. xix. 13, Isa. x. 9, xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13, and Jer. xlix. 23, in connection with *Hamath*, was certainly situated in the neighbourhood of that city, and still exists, so far as the name is concerned, in the large village of **أَرْفَاد**, *Arfâd* (mentioned by Maraszid, i. 47), in northern Syria in the district of *Azâz*, which was seven hours to the north of Haleb, according to Abulf. *Tab. Syr. ed. Köhler*, p. 23, and Niebuhr, *Reise*, ii. p. 414 (see Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 112). **הֵנָּה**, *Hena*, which is also combined with 'Ivrah in ch. xix. 13 and Isa. xxxvii. 13, is probably the city of **عانة**, *Ana*, on the Euphrates, mentioned by Abulf., and **עֵנָה** is most likely the same as **עֵנָה** in ch. xvii. 24. The names **הֵנָּה** and **עֵנָה** are omitted from the text of Isaiah in consequence of the abridgment of Rabshakeh's address.—Ver. 35 contains the conclusion drawn from the facts already adduced: "which of all the gods of the lands are they who have delivered their land out of my hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" i.e. as not one of the gods of the lands named have been able to rescue his land from Assyria, Jehovah also will not be able to defend Jerusalem.—Vers. 36, 37. The people were quite silent at this address ("the people," **הָעָם**, to whom Rabshakeh had wished to address himself); for Hezekiah had forbidden them to make any answer, not only to prevent Rabshakeh from saying anything further, but that the ambassadors of Sennacherib might be left in complete uncertainty as to the impression made by their words. The deputies of Hezekiah returned to the

king with their clothes rent as a sign of grief at the words of the Assyrian, by which not only Hezekiah, but still more Jehovah, had been blasphemed, and reported what they had heard.

CHAP. XIX. JERUSALEM DELIVERED. DESTRUCTION OF THE ASSYRIAN ARMY AND DEATH OF SENNACHERIB. (Compare Isa. xxxvii.)

Vers. 1–4. When Hezekiah had heard from his counsellors the report of Rabshakeh's words, he rent his clothes with horror at his daring mockery of the living God (ver. 4), put on mourning clothes as a sign of the trouble of his soul and went into the temple, and at the same time sent Eliakim and Shebna with the oldest of the priests in mourning costume to the prophet Isaiah, to entreat him to intercede with the Lord in these desperate circumstances.<sup>1</sup> The order of the words: Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, is unusual (cf. ch. xiv. 25, xx. 1; 1 Kings xvi. 7, etc.), and is therefore altered in Isaiah into Isaiah the son of Amoz, the prophet.—Ver. 3. “A day of distress, and of chastisement, and of rejection is this day.” תּוֹכָחָה: the divine chastisement. נִאָצָה: contemptuous treatment, or rejection of the people on the part of God (compare נִאָץ, Deut. xxxii. 19, Jer. xiv. 21, Lam. ii. 6). “For children have come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.” A figure denoting extreme danger, the most desperate circumstances. If the woman in travail has not strength to bring forth the child which has come to the mouth of the womb, both the life of the child and that of the mother are exposed to the greatest danger; and this was the condition of the people here (see the similar figure in Hos. xiii. 13). For לָרָה instead of לָרָה, see Ges. § 69, 2 Anm.—Ver. 4. Perhaps Jehovah thy God will hear the blasphemies of the living God on the part of Rabshakeh. יִשְׁמַע: hear, equivalent to observe, take notice of, and in this case punish. אֱלֹהִים חַי: the living God, in contrast to the gods of the heathen, who are only lifeless idols (cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36). וְהוֹכִיחַ is not to be taken in connection with לְהַרְף, as if it stood for לְהוֹכִיחַ, “and to scold with words” (Luth.,

<sup>1</sup> “But the most wise king did not meet his blasphemies with weapons, but with prayer, and tears, and sackcloth, and entreated the prophet Isaiah to be his ambassador.”—THEODORET.



Ges., etc.), but is a *perf. rel.* or a progressive perfect (Ewald, § 234, *a*), and the continuation of יִשְׁמַע: "and will chastise (punish, *sc.* him) for the words which He has heard." וְנִשְׁאַתָּה תִּפֹּ: "therefore lift up prayer (to heaven) for the (still) existing remnant, *sc.* of the people of God;" nearly all Judah having come into the power of Sennacherib since the carrying away of the ten tribes.

Vers. 5-7. Isaiah replied with this comforting promise: Hezekiah was not to be afraid of the blasphemous words of the Assyrian king; the Lord would frighten him with a report, so that he would return to his own land, and there would He cause him to fall by the sword. נַעֲרֵי מַלְכָּא, the servants or young men of the Assyrian king, is a derogatory epithet applied to the officials of Assyria. "Behold, I put a spirit into him, so that he shall hear a report and return into his own land." שְׂמוּעָה does not refer to the report of the destruction of his army (ver. 35), as Thenius supposes, for Sennacherib did not hear of this through the medium of an army, but was with the army himself at the time when it was smitten by the angel of the Lord; it refers to the report mentioned in ver. 9. For even if he made one last attempt to secure the surrender of Jerusalem immediately upon hearing this report, yet after the failure of this attempt to shake the firmness of Hezekiah his courage must have failed him, and the thought of return must have suggested itself, so that this was only accelerated by the blow which fell upon the army. For, as O. v. Gerlach has correctly observed, "the destruction of the army would hardly have produced any decisive effect without the approach of Tirhakah, since the great power of the Assyrian king, especially in relation to the small kingdom of Judah, was not broken thereby. But at the prayer of the king the Lord added this miracle to the other, which His providence had already brought to pass.—For the fulfilment of the prophecy of Sennacherib's death, see ver. 37.

Vers. 8-13. In the meantime Rabshakeh had returned to his king at *Libnah* (see at ch. viii. 22), to which he had gone from Lachish, probably after having taken that fortress.—Ver. 9. There Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah was advancing to make war against him. *Tirhakah*, Θαρακά (LXX.), king of Cush, is the Ταράκος of Manetho, the successor of Sevechus (Shebek II.), the third king of the twenty-fifth (Ethiopian) dynasty, described

by Strabo (xv. 687), who calls him *Teápκων*, as a great conqueror. His name is spelt *Tāhālqa* or *Tāhargō* upon the monuments, and on the Pylon of the great temple at Medinet-Abu he is represented in the form of a king, cutting down enemies of conquered lands (Egypt, Syria, and *Tepopā*, an unknown land) before the god Ammon (see Brugsch, *hist. d'Egypte*, i. pp. 244, 245).<sup>1</sup>—On hearing the report of the advance of Tirhakah, Sennacherib sent ambassadors again to Hezekiah with a letter (ver. 14), in which he summoned him once more to give up his confidence in his God, and his assurance that Jerusalem would not be delivered into the hands of the king of Assyria, since the gods of no other nation had been able to save their lands and cities from the kings of Assyria who had preceded him. The letter contained nothing more, therefore, than a repetition of the arguments already adduced by Rabshakeh (ch. xviii. 19 sqq.), though a larger number of the lands conquered by the Assyrians are given, for the purpose of strengthening the impression intended to be made upon Hezekiah of the irresistible character of the Assyrian arms.—To offer a successful resistance to Tirhakah and overcome him, Sennacherib wanted above all things a firm footing in Judah; and for this the possession of Jerusalem was of the greatest importance, since it would both cover his back and secure his retreat. Fortifications like Lachish and Libnah could be quickly taken by a violent assault. But

<sup>1</sup> According to Jul. Afric. (in Syncell. i. p. 139, ed. Dind.) he reigned eighteen years, according to Euseb. (in Syncell. p. 140) twenty years. Both statements are incorrect; for, according to an Apis-stele published by Mariette, the birth of an Apis who died in the twentieth year of Psammetichus fell in the twenty-sixth year of Tirhakah, so that the reign of Tirhakah may be supposed to have lasted twenty-eight years (see Brugsch, *l.c.* p. 247). But the chronological conclusions respecting the date of his reign are very uncertain. Whereas M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 72) fixes his expedition against Sennacherib in the thirty-seventh *ær. Nab.*, i.e. 710 B.C., and the commencement of his reign over Egypt in 45 *ær. Nab.*, i.e. 702 B.C., and assumes that he marched against Sennacherib before he was king of Egypt, which is apparently favoured by the epithet king of Cush, not of Egypt; Brugsch (*l.c.* p. 292) has given the year 693 B.C. as the commencement of his reign. It is obvious that this statement is irreconcilable with the O. T. chronology, since the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, in which Sennacherib invaded Judah, corresponds to the year 714 or 713 B.C. These diversities simply confirm our remark (p. 411), that the chronological data as to the kings of Egypt before Psammetichus cannot lay any claim to historical certainty. For an attempt to solve this discrepancy see M. v. Niebuhr, pp. 458 sqq.



it was very different with Jerusalem. Salmanasar had stood before Samaria for three years before he was able to conquer it; and Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for two years before the city was starved out and it was possible to take it (ch. xxv. 1 sqq.). But as Tirhakah was approaching, Sennacherib had no time now for so tedious a siege. He therefore endeavoured to induce Hezekiah to surrender the city quietly by a boastful description of his own power. Instead of וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיִּשְׁלַח (ver. 9), we have in Isaiah וַיִּשְׁמַע וַיִּשְׁלַח, "when he heard this he sent," which is probably the more original, and indicates that when Sennacherib received the intelligence he sent at once (Drechsler).—Ver. 10. אַל יִשְׁיֵאֲךָ: "let not thy God deceive thee," i.e. do not allow yourself to be deceived by your confidence in your God. לֵאמֹר, to say, i.e. to think or believe, that Jerusalem will not be given, etc. To shatter this confidence, Sennacherib reminds him of the deeds of the Assyrian kings. לְהַחֲרִימָם, to ban them, i.e. by smiting them with the ban. The verb הַחֲרִים is chosen with emphasis, to express the unsparing destruction. וְאַתָּה הֲנָצִיל: and thou shouldst be saved?—a question implying a strong negative.—Ver. 12. "Have the gods of the nations delivered them?" אֲתָם is not a pronoun used in anticipation of the object, which follows in גִּזְוֹן וְגִזְוֹן (Thenius), but refers to כָּל-הָאֲרָצוֹת in ver. 11, a specification of which is given in the following enumeration. *Gozan* may be the province of *Gauzanitis* in Mesopotamia, but it may just as well be the country of *Gauzania* on the other side of the Tigris (see at ch. xvii. 6). The combination with *Haran* does not force us to the first assumption, since the list is not a geographical but a historical one.—*Haran* (*Charan*), i.e. the *Carrae* of the Greeks and Romans, where Abraham's father Terah died, a place in northern Mesopotamia (see at Gen. xi. 31), is probably not merely the city here, but the country in which the city stood.—*Rezep* (רֶצֶף), the Arabic رَصَافَة, a very widespread name, since Jakut gives nine cities of this name in his Geographical Lexicon, is probably the most celebrated of the cities of that name, the *Rusapha* of Syria, called *Ῥησάφα* in Ptol. v. 15, in Palmyrene, on the road from Racca to Emesa, a day's journey from the Euphrates (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 1308).—"The sons of *Eden*, which (were) in *Telassar*," were evidently a tribe whose chief settlement was in *Telassar*. By עֵדֶן we might understand the בֵּית-עֵדֶן of Amos i. 5, a city in a pleasant

region of Syria, called *Παράδεισος* by Ptol. (v. 15), since there is still a village called *Ehden* in that locality (cf. Burekhardt, *Syr.* p. 66, and v. Schubert, *Reise*, iii. p. 366), if we could only discover *Telassar* in the neighbourhood, and if the village of *Ehden* could be identified with *Παράδεισος* and the *Eden* of the Bible, as is done even by Gesenius on Burekhardt, p. 492, and *Thes.* p. 195; but this *Ehden* is spelt *اهدن* in Arabic, and is not to be associated with *עדן* (see Rob. *Bibl. Res.* pp. 586, 587). Moreover the *Thelscæ* near Damascus (in the *Itin. Ant.* p. 196, ed. Wess.) is too unlike *Telassar* to come into consideration. There is more to be said in favour of the identification of our *עדן* with the Assyrian *Eden*, which is mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 23 along with *Haran* and *Calneh* as an important place for trade, although its position cannot be more certainly defined; and neither the comparison with the tract of land called *مادون*, *Maadon*, which Assemani (*Biblioth. or.* ii. p. 224) places in Mesopotamia, towards the Tigris, in the present province of Diarbekr (Ges., Win.), nor the conjecture of Knobel that the tribe-name *Eden* may very probably have been preserved in the large but very dilapidated village of *Adana* or *Adna*, some distance to the north of Bagdad (Ker Porter, *Journey*, ii. p. 355, and Ritter, *Erdk.* ix. p. 493), can be established as even a probability. *תל־אשר*, *Telassar*, is also quite unknown. The name applies very well to *Thelser* on the eastern side of the Tigris (*Tab. Peut.* xi. e), where even the later Targums on Gen. x. 12 have placed it, interpreting Nimrod's *Resen* by *תל־אשר*, *תל־אֶסֶר*, though Knobel opposes this on the ground that a place in Assyria proper is unsuitable in such a passage as this, where the Assyrian feats of war outside Assyria itself are enumerated. Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 251) conjectures that the place referred to is *Thelassar* in *Terodon*, a leading emporium for Arabian wares on the Persian Gulf, and supposes that *Terodon* has sprung from *Teledon* with the Persian pronunciation of the *תל*, which is very frequent in the names of Mesopotamian cities. This conjecture is at any rate a more natural one than that of Knobel on Isa. xxxvii. 12, that the place mentioned in Assemani (*Bib. or.* iii. 2, p. 870), *تل بصر*, *Tel* on the *Szarszar*, to the west of the present Bagdad, is intended.—With regard to the places named in ver. 13, see at ch. xviii. 34.



Vers. 14-19. *Hezekiah's prayer*.—Ver. 14. Hezekiah took the letter, read it, went into the temple and spread it out before Jehovah, to lay open its contents before God. The contents of the letter are given in vers. 10-13 in the form of the message which the ambassadors delivered to Hezekiah from their king, because the ambassadors communicated to Hezekiah by word of mouth the essential contents of the writing which they conveyed, and simply handed him the letter as a confirmation of their words. סְפָרִים, like *litteræ*, means a letter; hence the singular suffix attached to וּפְרִשְׁהוּ, whereas in the case of וּקְרָאֵם, which stands nearer, the suffix follows the number of the noun to which it refers. The spreading out of the letter before God was an embodiment of the wish, which sprang from a child-like and believing trust, that the Lord would notice and punish that defiance of the living God which it contained. What Hezekiah meant by this action he expressed in the following prayer.—Ver. 15. In opposition to the delusion of the Assyrians, he describes Jehovah, the God of Israel, as the only God of all the kingdoms of the earth, since He was the Creator of heaven and earth. יֵשֶׁב הַכְרֻבִּים (see at 1 Sam. iv. 4 and Ex. xxv. 22) indicates the covenant-relation into which Jehovah, the almighty Creator and Ruler of the whole world, had entered towards Israel. As the covenant God who was enthroned above the cherubim the Lord was bound to help His people, if they turned to Him with faith in the time of their distress and entreated His assistance; and as the only God of all the world He had the power to help. In Isaiah, עֲבָאוֹת, which is very rare in historical prose, but very common in prophetic addresses, is added to the name יְהוָה, and thus Jehovah at the very outset is addressed as the God of the universe. On the meaning of עֲבָאוֹת, see at 1 Sam. i. 3. On אֲתָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים, see 2 Sam. vii. 28 and 1 Kings xviii. 39.—Ver. 16. The accumulation of the words, “bow down Thine ear, Jehovah, and hear; open, Jehovah, Thine eyes and see, and hear the words,” etc., indicates the earnestness and importunity of the prayer. The plural עֵינֶיךָ by the side of the singular אוְנֶיךָ is the correct reading, since the expression “to incline the ear” is constantly met with (Ps. xvii. 6, xxxi. 3, xlv. 11, etc.); and even in the plural, “incline ye your ear” (Ps. lxxviii. 1; Isa. lv. 3), and on the other hand “to open the eyes” (Job xxvii. 19; Prov. xx. 13; Zech. xii. 4; Dan. ix. 18), because a man always opens both eyes

to see anything, whereas he turns one ear to a person speaking. The עֵינָיו of Isaiah is also plural, though written defectively, as the Masora has already observed. The suffix in שְׁלַחוֹ, which is wanting in Isaiah, belongs to אֲשֶׁר, and refers with this to רַבִּי in the sense of speech: the speech which Sennacherib had made in his letter.—Vers. 17, 18. After the challenge, to observe the blasphemies of Sennacherib, Hezekiah mentions the fact that the Assyrians have really devastated all lands, and therefore that it is not without ground that they boast of their mighty power; but he finds the explanation of this in the impotence and nothingness of the gods of the heathen. אֱמֻנָם, truly, indeed—the kings of Asshur have devastated the nations and their land. Instead of this we find in Isaiah: “they have devastated all lands and their (own) land”—which is evidently the more difficult and also the more original reading, and has been altered in our account, because the thought that the Assyrians had devastated their own land by making war upon other lands, that is to say, had depopulated it and thereby laid it waste, was not easy to understand. “And have cast their gods into the fire, for they are not gods, but works of human hands, wood and stone, and have thus destroyed them.” Hezekiah does not mention this as a sign of the recklessness of the Assyrians (Knobel), but, because Sennacherib had boasted that the gods of no nation had been able to resist him (vers. 12, 13), to put this fact in the right light, and attach thereto the prayer that Jehovah, by granting deliverance, would make known to all the kingdoms of the earth that He alone was God. Instead of וְנִתְּנִי we have in Isaiah וְנִתָּן, the inf. absol.; in this connection the more difficult and more genuine reading. This also applies to the omission of אֱלֹהִים (ver. 19b) in Isa. xxxvii. 20, since the use of *Jehovah* as a predicate, “that Thou alone art Jehovah,” is very rare, and has therefore been misunderstood even by Gesenius. By the introduction of *Elohim*, the thought “that Thou Jehovah art God alone” is simplified.

Vers. 20–34. *The divine promise.*—Vers. 20, 21. When Hezekiah had prayed, the prophet Isaiah received a divine revelation with regard to the hearing of this prayer, which he sent, *i.e.* caused to be handed over, to the king. שָׁמַעְתִּי (ver. 21) is omitted in Isaiah, so that אֲשֶׁר הִתְפַּלֵּלְתָּ וְנִי is to be taken in the sense of “with regard to that which thou hast prayed to me,” whilst שָׁמַעְתִּי (I have heard) elucidates the thought and



simplifies the construction. The word of the Lord announced to the king, (1) the shameful retreat of Sennacherib as a just retribution for his mockery of the living God (vers. 21-28; Isa. xxxvii. 22-29); (2) the confirmation of this assurance through the indication of a sign by which Hezekiah was to recognise the deliverance of Jerusalem (vers. 29-31; Isa. xxxvii. 30-32), and through the distinct promise, that the Assyrian would neither come into the city nor besiege it, because the Lord was sheltering it (vers. 32-34; Isa. xxxvii. 33-35). In the first part the words are addressed with poetic vivacity directly to Sennacherib, and scourge his haughty boastings by pointing to the ridicule and scorn which would follow him on his departure from the land.—Ver. 21. “The virgin daughter Zion despises thee, the daughter Jerusalem shakes the head behind thee.” By daughter Zion, daughter Jerusalem, we are not to understand the inhabitants of Zion, or of Jerusalem, as though בַּת stood for בָּנִים or בְּנֵי (Ges., Hitzig, and others); but the city itself with its inhabitants is pictorially personified as a daughter and virgin, and the construct state בַּת-צִיּוֹן is to be taken, like נִהַר פָּרָת, as in apposition: “daughter Zion,” not daughter of Zion (*vid.* Ges. § 116, 5; Ewald, § 287, e). Even in the case of בְּתוּלָה the construct state expresses simply the relation of apposition. Zion is called a “virgin” as being an inviolable city to the Assyrians, *i.e.* one which they cannot conquer. Shaking the head is a gesture denoting derision and pleasure at another’s misfortune (cf. Ps. xxii. 8, cix. 25, etc.). “Behind thee,” *i.e.* after thee as thou goest away, is placed first as a pictorial feature for the sake of emphasis.—Vers. 22, 23. This derision falls upon the Assyrian, for having blasphemed the Lord God by his foolish boasting about his irresistible power. “Whom hast thou despised and blasphemed, and against whom hast thou lifted up the voice? and thou liftest up thine eyes against the Holy One of Israel.” Lifting up the voice refers to the tone of threatening assumption, in which Rabshakeh and Sennacherib had spoken. Lifting up the eyes on high, *i.e.* to the heavens, signifies simply looking up to the sky (cf. Isa. xl. 26), not “directing proud looks against God” (Ges.). Still less is מָרוֹם to be taken adverbially in the sense of haughtily, as Thenius and Knobel suppose. The bad sense of proud arrogance lies in the words which follow, “against the Holy One of Israel,” or in the case of Isaiah, where לֵץ stands for עַל, in the

context, viz. the parallelism of the members. God is called the Holy One of Israel as He who manifests His holiness in and upon Israel. This title of the Deity is one of the peculiarities of Isaiah's range of thought, although it originated with Asaph (Ps. lxxviii. 41 ; see at Isa. i. 4). This insult to the holy God consisted in the fact that Sennacherib had said through his servants (vers. 23, 24): "With my chariots upon chariots I have ascended the height of the mountains, the uttermost part of Lebanon, so that I felled the tallness of its cedars, the choice of its cypresses, and came to the shelter of its border, to the forest of its orchard. I have dug and drunk strange water, so that I dried up all the rivers of Egypt with the sole of my feet." The words put into the mouth of the Assyrian are expressive of the feeling which underlay all his blasphemies (Drechsler). The two verses are kept quite uniform, the second hemistich in both cases expressing the result of the first, that is to say, what the Assyrian intended still further to perform after having accomplished what is stated in the first hemistich. When he has ascended the heights of Lebanon, he devastates the glorious trees of the mountain. Consequently in ver. 24 the drying up of the Nile of Egypt is to be taken as the result of the digging of wells in the parched desert ; in other words, it is to be interpreted as descriptive of the devastation of Egypt, whose whole fertility depended upon its being watered by the Nile and its canals. We cannot therefore take these verses exactly as Drechsler does ; that is to say, we cannot assume that the Assyrian is speaking in the first hemistichs of both verses of what he (not necessarily Sennacherib himself, but one of his predecessors) has actually performed. For even if the ascent of the uttermost heights of Lebanon had been performed by one of the kings of Assyria, there is no historical evidence whatever that Sennacherib or one of his predecessors had already forced his way into Egypt. The words are therefore to be understood in a figurative sense, as an individualizing picture of the conquests which the Assyrians had already accomplished, and those which they were still intending to effect ; and this assumption does not necessarily exhibit Sennacherib "as a mere braggart, who boastfully heaps up in ridiculous hyperbole an enumeration of the things which he means to perform" (Drechsler). For if the Assyrian had not ascended with the whole multitude of his war-chariots to the loftiest summits of



Lebanon, to fell its cedars and its cypresses, Lebanon had set no bounds to his plans of conquest, so that Sennacherib might very well represent his forcing his way into Canaan as an ascent of the lofty peaks of this mountain range. Lebanon is mentioned, partly as a range of mountains that was quite inaccessible to war-chariots, and partly as the northern defence of the land of Canaan, through the conquest of which one made himself lord of the land. And so far as Lebanon is used synecdochically for the land of which it formed the defence, the hewing down of its cedars and cypresses, those glorious witnesses of the creation of God, denotes the devastation of the whole land, with all its glorious works of nature and of human hands. The chief strength of the early Asiatic conquerors consisted in the multitude of their war-chariots: they are therefore brought into consideration simply as signs of vast military resources; the fact that they could only be used on level ground being therefore disregarded. The *Chethîb* רֶכֶב רֶכֶבִי, "my chariots upon chariots," is used poetically for an innumerable multitude of chariots, as נֹב נֹבִי for an innumerable host of locusts (Nah. iii. 17), and is more original than the *Keri* רֶכֶב רֶכֶבִי, the multitude of my chariots, which simply follows Isaiah. The "height of the mountains" is more precisely defined by the emphatic יֶרֶכְתִּי לְבָנוֹן, the uttermost sides, *i.e.* the loftiest heights, of Lebanon, just as יֶרֶכְתִּי בֹר in Isa. xiv. 15 and Ezek. xxxii. 23 are the uttermost depths of Sheol. קֹמֶת אֲרָזָיו, his tallest cedars. מִבְּחֹר בְּרִשְׁיוֹ, his most select or finest cypresses. מֶלֶן קֶצֶה, for which Isaiah has the more usual מִרֹם קֶצֶה, "the height of his end," is the loftiest point of Lebanon on which a man can rest, not a lodging built on the highest point of Lebanon (Cler., Vitr., Ros.). יַעַר בְּרִמְלֹו, the forest of his orchard, *i.e.* the forest resembling an orchard. The reference is to the celebrated cedar-forest between the loftiest peaks of Lebanon at the village of *Bjerreh* (see at 1 Kings v. 20).—Ver. 24 refers to the intended conquest of Egypt. Just as Lebanon could not stop the expeditions of the Assyrians, or keep them back from the conquest of the land of Canaan, so the desert of *et Tih*, which separated Egypt from Asia, notwithstanding its want of water (cf. Herod. iii. 5; Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 262), was no hindrance to him, which could prevent his forcing his way through it and laying Egypt waste. The digging of water is, of course, not merely "a reopening of the wells that had

been choked with rubbish, and the cisterns that had been covered up before the approaching enemy" (Thenius), but the digging of wells in the waterless desert. מֵיִם וְרִים, strange water, is not merely water belonging to others, but water not belonging to this soil (Drechsler), *i.e.* water supplied by a region which had none at other times. By the perfects the thing is represented as already done, as exposed to no doubt whatever; we must bear in mind, however, that the desert of et Tih is not expressly named, but the expression is couched in such general terms, that we may also assume that it includes what the Assyrian had really effected in his expeditions through similar regions. The drying up of the rivers with the soles of the feet is a hyperbolical expression denoting the omnipotence with which the Assyrian rules over the earth. Just as he digs water in the desert where no water is to be had, so does he annihilate it where mighty rivers exist.<sup>1</sup> יְאֹרִי are the arms and canals of the *Yeor*, *i.e.* of the Nile. מְצֹר, a rhetorical epithet for Egypt, used not only here, but also in Isa. xix. 6 and Mic. vii. 12.—Vers. 25 sqq. To this foolish boasting the prophet opposes the divine purpose which had been formed long ago, and according to which the Assyrian, without knowing it or being willing to acknowledge it, had acted simply as the instrument of the Lord, who had given him the power to destroy, but who would soon restrain his ranting against Him, the true God.—Ver. 25. "Hast thou not heard? Long ago have I done this, from the days of olden time have I formed it! Now have I brought it to pass, that fortified cities should be to be destroyed into waste heaps." Ver. 26. "And their inhabitants, short of hand, were dismayed and put to shame; they were herb of the field and green of the turf, grass of the roofs and blighted corn before the stalk." Ver. 27. "And thy sitting and thy going out and thy coming I know, and thy raging against me." Ver. 28. "Because of thy raging against me and thy safety, which rise up into my ears, I put my ring into thy

<sup>1</sup> Compare the similar boasting of Alarich, already quoted by earlier commentators, in Claudian, *de bello Geth.* v. 526 sqq.:

*cum cesserit omnis*

*Obsequiis natura meis? subsidere nostris*

*Sub pedibus montes, arescere vidimus amnes.*

v. 532. *Fregi Alpes, galeis Padum victricibus hausi.*



nose, and my bridle into thy lips, and bring thee back by the way by which thou hast come." The words are still addressed to the Assyrian, of whom the Lord inquires whether he does not know that the destructive deeds performed by him had been determined very long before. "Hast thou not heard?" namely, what follows, what the Lord had long ago made known through His prophets in Judah (cf. Isa. vii. 7-9, xvi. 17-20, viii. 1-4 and 7, etc.). לְמִתְרוֹק, from distant time have I done it, etc., refers to the divine ordering and governing of the events of the universe, which God has purposed and established from the very beginning of time. The pronoun אֹתָהּ, and the suffixes attached to יִצְרֶתֶּיהָ and הִבִּיאֶתֶּיהָ, do not refer with vague generality to the substance of vers. 23 and 24, *i.e.* to the boastings of the Assyrians quoted there (Drechsler), but to יִתְּהִי לְהַשְׁוֹת, *i.e.* to the conquests and devastations which the Assyrian had really effected. The ו before יִצְרֶתֶּיהָ introduces the apodosis, as is frequently the case after a preceding definition of time (cf. Ges. § 155, *a*). יִתְּהִי לְהַשְׁוֹת, "that it may be to destroy" (לְהַשְׁוֹת), a contraction of לְהַשְׁאוֹת, *Keri* and Isaiah, from שָׂאָה; see Ewald, § 73, *c*, and 245, *b*), *i.e.* that it shall be destroyed,—according to a turn which is very common in Isaiah, like הָיָה לְבַעֵר, it is to burn = it shall be burned (cf. Isa. v. 5, vi. 13, xlv. 15, and Ewald, § 237, *c*). The rendering given by Ges., Knob., Then., and others, "that thou mayest be for destruction," is at variance with this usage.—Ver. 26 is closely connected, so far as the sense is concerned, with the last clause of ver. 25, but in form it is only loosely attached: "and their inhabitants were," instead of "that their inhabitants might be." קִצְרֵי יָד, of short hand, *i.e.* without power to offer a successful resistance (cf. Num. xi. 23, and Isa. l. 2, lix. 1).—They were herbage of the field, etc., just as perishable as the herbage, grass, etc., which quickly fade away (cf. Ps. xxxvii. 2, xc. 5, 6; Isa. xl. 6). The grass of the roofs fades still more quickly, because it cannot strike deep roots (cf. Ps. cxxix. 6). Blighted corn before the stalk, *i.e.* corn which is blighted and withered up, before it shoots up into a stalk. In Isaiah we have שְׂדֵמָה instead of שְׂרָפָה, with a change of the labials, probably for the purpose of preserving an assonance with קָמָה, which must not therefore be altered into שְׂדֵמָה. The thought in the two verses is this: The Assyrian does not owe his victories and conquests to his irresistible might, but purely to the fact that God had long ago resolved to deliver the nations into his hands, so that

it was possible to overcome them without their being able to offer any resistance. This the Assyrian had not perceived, but in his daring pride had exalted himself above the living God. This conduct of his the Lord was well acquainted with, and He would humble him for it. Sitting and going out and coming denote all the actions of a man, like sitting down and rising up in Ps. cxxxix. 2. Instead of rising up, we generally find going out and coming in (cf. Deut. xxviii. 6 and Ps. cxxi. 8). הִתְרַנֵּן, thy raging, *commotio furibunda, quæ ex ira nascitur superbiæ mixta* (Vitr.). We must repeat יָנִי before שְׁאֵנִי; and עָלָה בְּאָזְנִי is to be taken in a relative sense: on account of thy self-security, which has come to my ears. שְׁאֵנִי is the security of the ungodly which springs from the feeling of great superiority in power. The figurative words, "I put my ring into thy nose," are taken from the custom of restraining wild animals, such as lions (Ezek. xix. 4) and other wild beasts (Ezek. xxix. 4 and Isa. xxx. 28), in this manner. For "the bridle in the lips" of ungovernable horses, see Ps. xxxii. 9. To lead a person back by the way by which he had come, *i.e.* to lead him back disappointed, without having reached the goal that he set before him.

To confirm what he had said, the prophet gave to Hezekiah a sign (vers. 29 sqq.): "Eat this year what groweth in the fallow, and in the second year what groweth wild, and in the third year sow and reap and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof." That the words are not addressed to the king of Assyria as in ver. 28, but to Hezekiah, is evident from their contents. This sudden change in the person addressed may be explained from the fact that from ver. 29 the words contain a perfectly fresh train of thought. For וְהָיָה לְךָ הָאוֹת see Ex. iii. 12, 1 Sam. ii. 34 and xiv. 10; also Jer. xlv. 29. In all these passages אוֹת, σημεῖον, is not a (supernatural) wonder, a מִוִּפְתּ as in 1 Kings xiii. 3, but consists simply in the prediction of natural events, which serve as credentials to a prediction, whereas in Isa. vii. 14 and xxxviii. 7 a miracle is given as an אוֹת. The inf. abs. אָכַל is not used for the pret. (Ges., Then., and others), but for the imperf. or fut.: "one will eat." הַשָּׁנָה, the (present) year. קִפְיָה signifies the corn which springs up and grows from the grains that have been shaken out the previous year (Lev. xxv. 5, 11). קִפְיָה (in Isa. שְׁחִים) is explained by Abulw. as signifying the corn which springs up again from the roots of what has



been sown. The etymology of the word is uncertain, so that it is impossible to decide which of the two forms is the original one. For the fact itself compare the evidence adduced in the Comm. on Lev. xxv. 7, that in Palestine and other lands two or three harvests can be reaped from one sowing.—The signs mentioned do not enable us to determine with certainty how long the Assyrians were in the land. All that can be clearly gathered from the words, “in this and the following year will they live upon that which has sprung up without any sowing,” is that for two years, *i.e.* in two successive autumns, the fields could not be cultivated because the enemy had occupied the land and laid it waste. But whether the occupation lasted two years, or only a year and a little over, depends upon the time of the year at which the Assyrians entered the land. If the invasion of Judah took place in autumn, shortly before the time for sowing, and the miraculous destruction of the Assyrian forces occurred a year after about the same time, the sowing of two successive years would be prevented, and the population of Judah would be compelled to live for two years upon what had sprung up without sowing. Consequently both the prophecy of Isaiah and the fulfilment recorded in vers. 35, 36 would fall in the autumn, when the Assyrians had ruled for a whole year in the land; so that the prophet was able to say: in this year and in the second (*i.e.* the next) will they eat after-growth and wild growth; inasmuch as when he said this, the first year had not quite expired. Even if the overthrow of the Assyrians took place immediately afterwards (*cf.* ver. 35), with the extent to which they had carried out the desolation of the land, many of the inhabitants having been slain or taken prisoners, and many others having been put to flight, it would be utterly impossible in the same year to cultivate the fields and sow them, and the people would be obliged to live in the second or following year upon what had grown wild, until the harvest of the second year, when the land could be properly cultivated, or rather till the third year, when it could be reaped again.<sup>1</sup>

The sign is followed in vers. 30, 31 by the distinct promise

<sup>1</sup> There is no necessity, therefore, to explain the sign here given, either by the assumption of a sabbatical year, with or without a year of jubilee following, or by supposing that the Assyrians did not depart immediately after the catastrophe described in ver. 35, but remained till after they had attempted an expedition into Egypt, or indeed by any other artificial hypothesis.

of the deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem, for which Isaiah uses the sign itself as a type. "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah will again strike roots downwards and bear fruit upwards; for from Jerusalem will go forth a remnant, and that which is escaped from Mount Zion; the zeal of Jehovah will do this." יִסַּף שָׁרֵשׁ, to add roots. *i.e.* to strike fresh roots. The meaning is, that Judah will not succumb to this judgment. The remnant of the nation that has escaped from destruction by the Assyrians will once more grow and flourish vigorously; for from Jerusalem will a rescued remnant go forth. פְּלִיטָה denotes those who have escaped destruction by the judgment (*cf.* Isa. iv. 2, x. 20, etc.). The deliverance was attached to Jerusalem or to Mount Zion, not so much because the power of the Assyrians was to be destroyed before the gates of Jerusalem, as because of the greater importance which Jerusalem and Mount Zion, as the centre of the kingdom of God, the seat of the God-King, possessed in relation to the covenant-nation, so that, according to Isa. ii. 3, it was thence that the Messianic salvation was also to proceed. This deliverance is traced to the zeal of the Lord on behalf of His people and against His foes (*see at* Ex. xx. 5), like the coming of the Messiah in Isa. ix. 6 to establish an everlasting kingdom of peace and righteousness. The deliverance of Judah out of the power of Asshur was a prelude and type of the deliverance of the people of God by the Messiah out of the power of all that was ungodly. The צְבָאוֹת of Isaiah is omitted after יְהוָה, just as in ver. 15; though here it is supplied by the Masora as *Keri*. —In vers. 32–34 Isaiah concludes by announcing that Sennacherib will not come to Jerusalem, nor even shoot at the city and besiege it, but will return disappointed, because the Lord will defend and save the city for the sake of His promise. The result of the whole prophecy is introduced with לָכֵן: therefore, because this is how the matter stands, *viz.* as explained in what precedes. אֶל-מֶלֶךְ, with regard to the king, as in ver. 20. לֹא יִקְדָּמָנָה מִגֵּן, "he will not attack it with a shield," *i.e.* will not advance with shields to make an attack upon it. קָרַם with a double accusative, as in Ps. xxi. 4. It only occurs here in a hostile sense: to come against, as in Ps. xviii. 19, *i.e.* to advance against a city, to storm it. The four clauses of the verse stand in a graduated relation to one another: not to take, not even to shoot at and attack, yea, not even to besiege the city, will he



come. In ver. 33 $a$  we have ver. 28 $b$  taken up again, and ver. 32 $a$  is repeated in ver. 33 $b$  for the purpose of strengthening the promise. Instead of  $\text{יָבוֹא בָּהּ}$  we have in Isaiah  $\text{בָּהּ בָּא}$ : "by which he has come." The perfect is actually more exact, and the imperfect may be explained from the fact that Sennacherib was at that very time advancing against Jerusalem. In ver. 34 we have  $\text{לְעַלִּי}$  instead of the  $\text{עָלַי}$  of Isaiah;  $\text{עַל}$  is more correct than  $\text{לְעַלִּי}$ . "For my sake," as Hezekiah had prayed in ver. 19; and "for my servant David's sake," because Jehovah, as the unchangeably true One, must fulfil the promise which He gave to David (see at 1 Kings xi. 13).

Vers. 35-37. *The fulfilment of the divine promise.*—Ver. 35. "It came to pass in that night, that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the army of the Assyrian 185,000 men; and when they (those that were left, including the king) rose up in the morning, behold there were they all (*i.e.* all who had perished) dead corpses," *i.e.* they had died in their sleep.  $\text{מֵתִים}$  is added to strengthen  $\text{פְּגָרִים}$ : lifeless corpses.  $\text{בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא}$  is in all probability the night following the day on which Isaiah had foretold to Hezekiah the deliverance of Jerusalem. Where the Assyrian army was posted at the time when this terrible stroke fell upon it is not stated, since the account is restricted to the principal fact. One portion of it was probably still before Jerusalem; the remainder were either in front of Libnah (ver. 8), or marching against Jerusalem. From the fact that Sennacherib's second embassy (vers. 9 sqq.) was not accompanied by a body of troops, it by no means follows that the large army which had come with the first embassy (ch. xviii. 17) had withdrawn again, or had even removed to Libnah on the return of Rabshakeh to his king (ch. xix. 8). The very opposite may be inferred with much greater justice from ch. xix. 32. And the smiting of 185,000 men by an angel of the Lord by no means presupposes that the whole of Sennacherib's army was concentrated at one spot. The blow could certainly fall upon the Assyrians wherever they were standing or were encamped. The "angel of the Lord" is the same angel that smote as  $\text{הַמִּשְׁחִית}$  the first-born of Egypt (Ex. xii. 23, compared with vers. 12 and 13), and inflicted the pestilence upon Israel after the numbering of the people by David (2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16). The last passage renders the conjecture a very probable one, that the slaying of the Assyrians was also effected by a terrible pestilence. But

the number of the persons slain—185,000 in a single night—so immensely surpasses the effects even of the most terrible plagues, that this fact cannot be interpreted naturally; and the deniers of miracle have therefore felt obliged to do violence to the text, and to pronounce either the statement that it was “the same night” or the number of the slain a mythical exaggeration.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 36. This divine judgment compelled Sennacherib to retreat without delay, and to return to Nineveh, as Isaiah, 28 and 32, had predicted. The heaping up of the verbs: “he decamped, departed, and returned,” expresses the hurry of the march home. וַיָּשָׁב בְּנִינְיָה, “he sate, *i.e.* remained, in Nineveh,” implies not merely that Sennacherib lived for some time after his return, but also that he did not undertake any fresh expedition against Judah. On *Nineveh* see at Gen. x. 11.—Ver. 37 contains an account of Sennacherib’s death. When he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer slew him, and fled into the land of Ararat, and his son Esarhaddon became king in his stead. With regard to נִסְרוֹךְ, *Nisroch*, all that seems to be firmly established is that he was an eagle-deity, and represented by the eagle- or vulture-headed human figure with wings, which is frequently depicted upon the Assyrian monuments, “not only in colossal proportions upon the walls and watching the portals of the rooms, but also constantly in the groups upon the embroidered robes. When it

<sup>1</sup> The assertion of Thenius, that vers. 35–37 are borrowed from a different source from ch. xviii. 13–19, 34 and xx. 1–19, rests upon purely arbitrary suppositions and groundless assumptions, and is only made in the interest of the mythical interpretation of the miracle. And his conclusion, that “since the catastrophe was evidently (?) occasioned by the sudden breaking out of a pestilence, the scene of it was no doubt the pestilential Egypt,” is just as unfounded,—as if Egypt were the only land in which a pestilence could suddenly have broken out.—The account given by Herodotus (ii. 141), that on the prayer of king *Sethon*, a priest of Vulcan, the deity promised him victory over the great advancing army of Sennacherib, and that during the night mice spread among the enemy (*i.e.* in the Assyrian camp at Pelusium), and ate up the quivers and bows, and the leather straps of the shields, so that the next morning they were obliged to flee without their weapons, and many were cut down, is simply a legendary imitation of our account, *i.e.* an Egyptian variation of the defeat of Sennacherib in Judah. The eating up of the Assyrian weapons by mice is merely the explanation given to Herodotus by the Egyptian priests of the hieroglyphical legend on the standing figure of *Sethos* at Memphis, from which we cannot even gather the historical fact that Sennacherib really advanced as far as Pelusium.



is introduced in this way, we see it constantly fighting with other mythical animals, such as human-headed oxen or lions; and in these conflicts it always appears to be victorious," from which we may infer that it was a type of the supreme deity (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*). The eagle was worshipped as a god by the Arabs (Pococke, *Specim.* pp. 94, 199), was regarded as sacred to *Melkarth* by the Phoenicians (*Nonnus*, *Dionys.* xl. 495, 528), and, according to a statement of Philo, *Bybl.* (in Euseb. *Præpar. evang.* i. 10), that Zoroaster taught that the supreme deity was represented with an eagle's head, it was also a symbol of Ormuzd among the Persians; consequently Movers (*Phöniz.* i. pp. 68, 506, 507) regards *Nisroch* as the supreme deity of the Assyrians. It is not improbable that it was also connected with the constellation of the eagle (see Ideler, *Ursprung der Sternnamen*, p. 416). On the other hand, the current interpretation of the name from נִשְׂרָ (נִשְׂרָ, Chald.;

نسر, Arab.), eagle, vulture, with the Persian adjective termination *ok* or *ach*, is very doubtful, not merely on account of the ם in נִשְׂרָ, but chiefly because this name does not occur in Assyrian, but simply *Asar*, *Assar*, and *Asarak* as the name of a deity which is met with in many Assyrian proper names. The last is also adopted by the LXX., who (*ed. Aldin. Compl.*) have rendered נִשְׂרָ by Ἀσαράχ in Isaiah, and Εσοπάχ (*cod. Vatic.*) in 2 Kings, by the side of which the various readings Μεσεπάχ in our text (*cod. Vat.*) and Νασαπάχ in Isaiah are evidently secondary readings emended from the Hebrew, since Josephus (*Ant.* x. 1, 5) has the form Ἀρασκήs, which is merely somewhat "Græcized." The meaning of these names is still in obscurity, even if there should be some foundation for the assumption that *Assar* belongs to the same root as the name of the people and land, *Asshur*. The connection between the form *Nisroch* and *Asarak* is also still obscure. Compare the collection which J. G. Müller has made of the different conjectures concerning this deity in the Art. *Nisroch* in Herzog's *Cycl.*—*Adrammelech*, according to ch. xvii. 31, was the name of a deity of Sepharvaim, which was here borne by the king's son. שָׂרָזַר, *Sharezer*, is said to mean "prince of fire," and was probably also borrowed from a deity. בְּנִי (Isa.) is wanting in our text, but is supplied by the Masora in the *Keri*. The "land of *Ararat*" was a portion of the high land of Armenia; according to Moses v. Chorene, the central portion of it with

the mountains of the same name (see at Gen. viii. 4). The slaying of Sennacherib is also confirmed by Alex. Polyhistor, or rather Berosus (in Euseb. *Chron. Armen.* i. p. 43), who simply names, however, a son *Ardumusanus* as having committed the murder, and merely mentions a second *Asordanius* as viceroy of Babylon.<sup>1</sup> The identity of the latter with *Esarhaddon* is beyond all doubt. The name אֶסַר-חֲדָן, *Esar-cha-don*, consisting of two parts with the guttural inserted, the usual termination in Assyrian and Babylonian, *Assar-ach*, is spelt Ἀσορδάν in the LXX., Σαχερδονός in Tobit—probably formed from Ἀσερ-χ-δονοσορ by a transposition of the letters,—by Josephus Ἀσσαπαχόδδας, by Berosus (in the *armen. Euseb.*) *Asordanes*, by Abyden. *ibid.* *Axerdis*, in the *Canon Ptol.* Ἀσαράδιβος, and lastly in Ezra iv. 10 mutilated into אֶסְנַפֶּר, *Osnappar* (Chald.), and in the LXX. Ἀσσεναφάρ; upon the Assyrian monuments, according to Oppert, *Assur-akh-iddin* (cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* p. 38). The length of his reign is uncertain. The statements of Berosus, that he was first of all viceroy of Babylon, and then for eight years king of Assyria, and that of the *Canon Ptol.*, that he reigned for thirteen years in Babylon, are decidedly incorrect. Brandis (*Rerum Assy. tempora emend.* p. 41) conjectures that he reigned twenty-eight years, but in his work *Ueber den histor. Gewinn*, pp. 73, 74, he suggests seventeen years. M. v. Niebuhr (*ut sup.* p. 77), on the other hand, reckons his reign at twenty-four years.

CHAP. XX. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY. MERODACH  
BALADAN'S EMBASSY. DEATH OF HEZEKIAH.

Vers. 1–11. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY.—Compare the parallel account in Isa. xxxviii. with Hezekiah's psalm of thanksgiving for his recovery (vers. 9–20 of Isaiah).—Ver. 1. "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death." By the expression "in those days" the illness of Hezekiah is merely assigned in a general manner to the same time as the events previously described. That it did not occur after the departure

<sup>1</sup> With regard to the statement of Abydenus in Euseb. *l. c.* p. 53, that Sennacherib was followed by *Nergilus*, who was slain by his son *Adrameles*, who again was murdered by his brother *Axerdis*, and its connection with Berosus and the biblical account, see M. v. Niebuhr, *Geschichte Assurs*, pp. 361 sqq. *Nergilus* is probably the same person as *Sharezer*, and *Axerdis* as *Esarhaddon*.



of the Assyrians, but at the commencement of the invasion of Sennacherib, *i.e.* in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, is evident from ver. 6, namely, both from the fact that in answer to his prayer fifteen years more of life were promised him, and that he nevertheless reigned only twenty-nine years (ch. xviii. 2), and also from the fact that God promised to deliver him out of the hand of the Assyrians and to defend Jerusalem. The widespread notion that his sickness was an attack of plague, and was connected with the pestilence which had broken out in the Assyrian camp, is thereby deprived of its chief support, apart from the fact that the epithet שָׁחַז (ver. 7), which is applied to the sickness, does not indicate pestilence. Isaiah then called upon him to set his house in order. צוֹ לְבֵיתְךָ : set thy house in order, lit. command or order with regard to thy house, not declare thy (last) will to thy family (Ges., Knob.), for צוֹ is construed with the *accus. pers.* in the sense of commanding anything, whereas here לְ is synonymous with אֶל (2 Sam. xvii. 23). "For thou wilt die and not live;" *i.e.* thy sickness is to death, namely, without the miraculous help of God. Sickness to death in the very prime of life (Hezekiah was then in the fortieth year of his age) appeared to the godly men of the Old Testament a sign of divine displeasure. Hezekiah was therefore greatly agitated by this announcement, and sought for consolation and help in prayer. He turned his face to the wall, *sc.* of the room, not of the temple (Chald.). *i.e.* away from those who were standing round, to be able to pray more collectedly.—Ver. 3. In his prayer he appealed to his walking before the Lord in truth and with a thoroughly devoted heart, and to his acting in a manner that was well-pleasing to God, in perfect accordance with the legal standpoint of the Old Testament, which demanded of the godly righteousness of life according to the law. This did not imply by any means a self-righteous trust in his own virtue; for walking before God with a thoroughly devoted heart was impossible without faith. "And Hezekiah wept violently," not merely at the fact that he was to die without having an heir to the throne, since Manasseh was not born till three years afterwards (Joseph., Ephr. Syr., etc.), but also because he was to die in the very midst of his life, since God had promised long life to the righteous.—Vers. 4 sqq. This prayer of the godly king was answered immediately. Isaiah had not gone out of the midst of the city, when the word of

the Lord came to him to return to the king, and tell him that the Lord would cure him in three days and add fifteen years to his life, and that He would also deliver him from the power of the Assyrians and defend Jerusalem. הָעִיר הַתְּיִכָּה, the middle city, *i.e.* the central portion of the city, namely, the Zion city, in which the royal citadel stood. The *Keri* הָעִיר הַתְּיִכָּה, the central court, not of the temple, but of the royal citadel, which is adopted in all the ancient versions, is nothing more than an interpretation of the עִיר as denoting the royal castle, after the analogy of ch. x. 25. The distinct assurance added to the promise "I will heal thee," viz. "on the third day thou wilt go into the house of the Lord," was intended as a pledge to the king of the promised cure. The announcement that God would add fifteen years to his life is not put into the prophet's mouth *ex eventu* (Knobel and others); for the opinion that distinct statements as to time are at variance with the nature of prophecy is merely based upon an *a priori* denial of the supernatural character of prophecy. The words, "and I will deliver thee out of the hand of the Assyrians," imply most distinctly that the Assyrian had only occupied the land and threatened Jerusalem, and had not yet withdrawn. The explanation given by Vitranga and others, that the words contain simply a promise of deliverance out of the hand of the oppressor for the next fifteen years, puts a meaning into them which they do not contain, as is clearly shown by Isa. xxxvii. 20, where this thought is expressed in a totally different manner. וְנִנֹּחֲתִי עַל־הָעִיר וְנָוִי: as in ch. xix. 34, where the prophet repeated this divine promise in consequence of the attempt of Sennacherib to get Jerusalem into his power.—Ver. 7. Isaiah ordered a lump of figs to be laid upon the boil, and Hezekiah recovered (וַיֵּחַי: he revived again). It is of course assumed as self-evident, that Isaiah returned to the king in consequence of a divine revelation, and communicated to him the word of the Lord which he had received.<sup>1</sup> דְּבַלֶּת תְּאֵנִים is a mass consisting of compressed figs,

<sup>1</sup> The account is still more abridged in the text of Isaiah. In ver. 4 the precise time of the prayer is omitted; in ver. 5 the words, "behold, I will cure thee, on the third day thou shalt go into the house of the Lord;" and in ver. 6 the words, "for mine own sake and my servant David's sake." The four verses 8-11, which treat of the miraculous signs, are also very much contracted in Isaiah (vers. 7 and 8); and vers. 7 and 8 of our text are only given at the close of Hezekiah's psalm of praise in that of Isaiah (vers. 21 and 22).



which the ancients were in the habit of applying, according to many testimonies (see Celsii *Hierob.* ii. p. 373), in the case of plague-boils and abscesses of other kinds, because the fig *διαφορεῖ σκληρίας* (Dioscor.) and *ulcera aperit* (Plin.), and which is still used for softening ulcers. שֶׁחִין, an abscess, is never used in connection with plague or plague-boils, but only to denote the abscesses caused by leprosy (Job ii. 7, 8), and other abscesses of an inflammatory kind (Ex. ix. 9 sqq.). In the case of Hezekiah it is probably a carbuncle that is intended.

After the allusion to the cure and recovery of Hezekiah, we have an account in vers. 8 sqq. of the sign by which Isaiah confirmed the promise given to the king of the prolongation of his life. In the order of time the contents of ver. 7 follow ver. 11, since the prophet in all probability first of all disclosed the divine promise to the king, and then gave him the sign, and after that appointed the remedy and had it applied. At the same time, it is also quite possible that he first of all directed the lump of figs to be laid upon the boil, and then made known to him the divine promise, and guaranteed it by the sign. In this case וַיְהִי merely anticipates the order of events. The sign which Isaiah gave to the king, at his request, consisted in the miraculous movement of the shadow backward upon the sundial of Ahaz.—Ver. 9. הָלַךְ הַצֵּל: “the shadow is gone ten degrees, if it should go back ten degrees?” The rendering, *visne umbram solaris decem gradibus progredi an . . . regredi*, which Maurer still gives after the Vulgate, *vis an ut ascendat . . . an ut revertatur*, cannot be grammatically reconciled with the perfect הָלַךְ, and is merely a conjecture founded upon the answer of Hezekiah.<sup>1</sup> According to this answer, “it is easy for the shadow to decline (*i.e.* to go farther down) ten degrees; no (*sc.* that shall not be a sign to me), but if the shadow turn ten degrees backward,” Isaiah seems to have given the king a choice as to the sign, namely, whether the shadow should go ten degrees forward or backward. But this does not necessarily follow from the words quoted. Hezekiah may have understood the prophet’s words הָלַךְ הַצֵּל וגו’ hypothetically: “has the shadow gone (advanced) ten degrees, whether it should,” etc.; and may have

<sup>1</sup> Hitzig and Knobel would therefore read הָלַךְ, though without furnishing any proofs that the inf. abs. is used for the future in the first clause of a double question, especially if the ה interrog. is wanting, and there is no special emphasis upon the verbal idea.

replied, the advance of the shadow would not be a sure sign to him, but only its going back.—Ver. 11. Isaiah then prayed to the Lord, and the Lord “turned back the shadow (caused it to go back) upon the sun-dial, where it had gone down, on the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.” מַעְלֹת אָחָז cannot be understood, as it has been by the LXX., Joseph., Syr., as referring to a flight of steps at the palace of Ahaz, which was so arranged that the shadow of an object standing near indicated the hours, but is no doubt a gnomon, a sun-dial which Ahaz may have received from Babylonia, where sun-dials were discovered (Herod. ii. 109). Nothing further can be inferred from the words with regard to its construction, since the ancients had different kinds of sun-dials (cf. Martini *Abhandlung von den Sonnenuhren der Alten*, Lpz. 1777). The word מַעְלֹת, steps in the literal sense, is transferred to the *scala*, which the shadow had to traverse both up and down upon the disk of the sun-dial, and is used both to denote the separate degrees of this *scala*, and also for the sum-total of these *scala*, i.e. for the sun-dial itself, without there being any necessity to assume that it was an obelisk-like pillar erected upon an elevated place with steps running round it (Knobel), or a long portable scale of twice ten steps with a gnomon (Gumpach, *Alttestl. Studien*, pp. 181 sqq.). All that follows from the descent of the shadow is that the dial of the gnomon was placed in a vertical direction; and the fact that the shadow went ten degrees down or backward, simply presupposes that the gnomon had at least twenty degrees, and therefore that the degrees indicated smaller portions of time than hours. If, then, it is stated in ver. 8b of Isaiah that the sun went back ten degrees, whereas the going back of the shadow had been previously mentioned in agreement with our text, it is self-evident that the sun stands for the shining of the sun which was visible upon the dial-plate, and which made the shadow recede. We are not, of course, to suppose that the sun in the sky and the shadow on the sun-dial went back at the same time, as Knobel assumes. So far as the miracle is concerned, the words of the text do not require that we should assume that the sun receded, or the rotation of the earth was reversed, as Eph. Syr. and others supposed, but simply affirm that there was a miraculous movement backward of the shadow upon the dial, which might be accounted for from a miraculous refraction of the rays of the sun, effected by God at the



prophet's prayer, of which slight analoga are met with in the ordinary course of nature.<sup>1</sup> This miraculous sign was selected as a significant one in itself, to confirm the promise of a fresh extension of life which had been given to Hezekiah by the grace of God in opposition to the natural course of things. The retrograde movement of the shadow upon the sun-dial indicated that Hezekiah's life, which had already arrived at its close by natural means, was to be put back by a miracle of divine omnipotence, so that it might continue for another series of years.

Vers. 12-19. *The Babylonian embassy, and Hezekiah's imprudence* (cf. Isa. xxxix.).—Ver. 12. "At that time Berodach Baladan, king of Babel, sent a letter and a present to Hezekiah, because he had heard that Hezekiah was sick." By בָּעֵת הַהִיא the arrival of these ambassadors is merely assigned in the most general manner to the period following Hezekiah's recovery. But from the object of their mission, it is evident that they did not arrive in Jerusalem till after the overthrow and departure of Sennacherib, and therefore at least half a year after Hezekiah's recovery. The ostensible reason given is, that Berodach Baladan had heard of Hezekiah's illness, and therefore sent to congratulate him on his recovery; but in 2 Chron. xxxii. 31 the further reason is mentioned, that he wished to inquire concerning the miracle upon the sun-dial. But, as Josephus has shown, the true object, no doubt, was to make sure of Hezekiah's friendship in anticipation of his intended revolt from the Assyrian rule. *Berodach Baladan*, for *Merodach Baladan* (Isa.), with the labial changed, is the same person as the *Marodach Baladan* who reigned in Babylon for six months, according to Alex. Polyhistor, or rather Berosus (Euseb. *Chron. armen.* i. pp. 42, 43), and was slain by *Elibus*, and also the same as the *Mardokempad* who reigned, according to the *Can. Ptol.*, from 26 to 38 ær. *Nab.*, i.e. from 721 to 709 B.C. The first part of the name, מֶרֶדַךְ, occurs in Jer. l. 2 in connection with *Bel* as the name of a Babylonian idol; and the whole name is found on a cylinder

<sup>1</sup> As, for example, the phenomenon quoted by several commentators, which was observed at Metz in Lothringen in the year 1703 by the prior of the convent there, P. Romuald, and other persons, viz. that the shadow of a sun-dial went back an hour and a half.—The natural explanation of the miracle which is given by Thenius, who attributes it to an eclipse of the sun, needs no refutation.—For the different opinions of the earlier theologians, see Carpzov, *Apparat. crit.* p. 351 sqq.

(in the British Museum) which contains the first expeditions of Sennacherib against Babylon and Media, and upon the inscriptions at Khorsabad spelt either *Merodak-pal-dsana* (according to Brandis, *Ueber der Gewinn*, pp. 44 and 53) or *Marduk bal iddin* (according to Oppert).<sup>1</sup> Instead of **בִּי שָׁמַע** we have **וַיִּשְׁמַע** in Isaiah, which is not so clear, though it is probably more original; whereas the clause in Isaiah, **בִּי חָלָה וַיִּחַזַּק**, “that he had been sick and had become strengthened, *i.e.* well again,” is simply an elucidation of the **בִּי חָלָה הִזְקִיחוּ** of our text, in which the recovery is implied in the pluperfect “had been sick.”—In ver. 13 **וַיִּשְׁמַע** is apparently a copyist’s error for **וַיִּשְׁמַח** of Isaiah, which many of the codd. and ancient versions have even in our text. At the same time, the construction of **שָׁמַע** with **עַל** is also found in ch. xxii. 13.—**עָלֵיהֶם**, concerning them, *i.e.* the ambassadors who had brought the letter and the present. In his delight at the honour paid to him by this embassy, Hezekiah showed the ambassadors all his treasure-house, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the costly oil, and all his arsenal, etc. The literal meaning of **בֵּית נֶכֶחַ** is probably spice-house (Aquila, Symm., Vulg.), **נֶכֶחַ** being a contraction of **נִכְאֵחַ** in Gen. xxxvii. 25, whereas the derivation suggested from the Arabic

**كَيْت**, *farsit, implevit locum*, is much more wide of the mark.

The house received its name from the spices for the storing of which it was really intended, although it was also used for the storing of silver and gold. **שֶׁמֶן הַטֹּב** is not fine olive oil, but, according to the Rabbins and Movers (*Phöniz.* iii. p. 227), the valuable balsam oil which was obtained in the royal gardens; for olive oil, which was obtained in all Judæa, was not stored in the treasure-chambers along with gold, silver, and perfumes, but in special storehouses (1 Chron. xxvii. 28). **בְּכָל-מְשָׁלָיו**, in all his dominion, *i.e.* in all the district which he was able to govern or control.—The existence of such treasures, of which, according to ver. 17, the ancestors of Hezekiah had collected a very large store, at so short a period after the departure of the Assyrians, is not at variance with ch. xviii. 15, 16, according

<sup>1</sup> Compare M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* p. 40; and with regard to the chronological differences, on account of which many have called in question the identity of Merodach Baladan either with the *Marudach-Baladan* of Berosus or with the *Mardokempad* of the *Can. Ptol.*, see the discussion of this point at pp. 75 sqq.



to which Hezekiah had sent to Sennacherib all the silver in his treasuries, and even the gold plate upon the temple doors. For, in the first place, it is not stated that there was much silver and gold in the treasure-house, but the silver and gold are simply mentioned along with the spices ; and, secondly, Hezekiah may have kept back from Sennacherib many a valuable piece of silver or gold, and have taken off the gold plate from the temple doors, to show the ambassadors of Sennacherib, who came to receive the money demanded as compensation, that he was not in a condition to give anything more. Moreover a great deal may have flowed into the treasuries since the payment of that tribute, partly from the presents which Hezekiah received from many quarters after the overthrow of Sennacherib (2 Chron. xxxii. 23), and partly from the booty that had been collected in the camp of the Assyrians after their hurried departure. And again, the treasures which the ancestors of Hezekiah had collected (ver. 17) may not have consisted of gold and silver exactly, but of different jewels and objects of art, which could not be applied to the payment of the tribute demanded by Sennacherib. And, lastly, " we must not overlook the fact, that it answered the purpose of the reporter to crowd together as much as possible, in order to show how anxious Hezekiah was to bring out and exhibit everything whatever that could contribute to the folly" (Drechsler). Hezekiah evidently wanted to show all his glory, because the arrival of the Babylonian ambassadors had flattered his vanity. — Vers. 14 sqq. Isaiah therefore announced to him the word of the Lord, that all his treasures would one day be carried to Babel, and some even of his sons would serve as chamberlains in the palace of the king of Babel. The sin of vanity was to be punished by the carrying away of that of which his heart was proud. Isaiah did not go to Hezekiah by his own impulse, but by the direction of God. His inquiries : " What have these men said, and whence do they come to thee ?" were simply intended to lead the king to give expression to the thoughts of his heart. In the answer, " From a distant land have they come, from Babel," his vanity at the great honour that had been paid him comes clearly to light.—Ver. 18. The words, " of thy sons, which shall proceed from thee, which thou shalt beget," do not necessarily refer to actual *sons*, but only to *lineal* descendants. The *Chethib* חֶתִּיב, " will one take," is to be preferred to the חֶתֶּיב of Isaiah and the

*Keri*, as being the more difficult reading. סְרִיסִים, chamberlains, courtiers, not necessarily eunuchs, as in 1 Sam. viii. 15, etc.—For the fulfilment of this threat see Dan. i. 2. sqq.—Ver. 19. The first part of Hezekiah's reply, "Good is the word of Jehovah, which thou hast spoken," is an expression of submission to the will of the Lord, like Eli's answer in 1 Sam. iii. 18 (cf. 1 Kings ii. 38, 42);<sup>1</sup> the second part, which the repetition of וַיֹּאמֶר shows to have been spoken after a pause, and which was not addressed directly to Isaiah, "Is it not so (*i.e.* is it not purely goodness), if there are to be peace and truth in my days (during my life)?" is a candid acknowledgment of the grace and truth of the Lord.<sup>2</sup> הָלוֹא is used, as is frequently the case, in the sense of a lively affirmation. Instead of הָלוֹא אֵם we have in Isaiah כִּי, "for there will be peace and truth," by which this clause is attached more clearly to the first declaration as a reason for it: the word of the Lord is good, for the Lord proves His goodness and truth in the fact, that He will not inflict the merited punishment in my lifetime. "Peace and truth" are connected as in Jer. xxxiii. 6. אֱמֶת does not mean continuance (Ges.), security (Knobel), but *fides*, faithfulness,—not human faithfulness, however, which preserves peace, and observes a tacit treaty (Hitzig), but the faithfulness of God, which preserves the promised grace to the humble.

Vers. 20 and 21. Close of Hezekiah's reign.—On the basin (בְּרִכָּה) and the aqueduct constructed by him, see at ch. xviii. 17.

#### CHAP. XXI. REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON.

Vers. 1–18. REIGN OF MANASSEH (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1–20).—Ver. 1. Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, so that he was not born till after Hezekiah's dangerous illness (ch. xx. 1 sqq.).—Vers. 2 sqq. Having begun to reign at this early age, he did not choose his father's ways, but set up the idolatry of his father Ahab again, since the godless party in the

<sup>1</sup> "He calls that *good* in which it is right to acquiesce, as having proceeded from Him who does nothing but what is not only most just, but tempered with the greatest goodness, even when He inflicts punishment."—CLERICUS.

<sup>2</sup> "He praises the moderation of the divine decree, because when God, in accordance with His justice, might have brought this calamity upon him in his own person, for His mercy's sake He was willing to spare him and to put off the evil to a future day."—VITRINGA.



nation, at whose head chiefs, priests, and (false) prophets stood, and who would not hearken to the law of the Lord, and in the time of Hezekiah had sought help against Assyria not from Jehovah, but from the Egyptians (Isa. xxviii. 7, 14 sqq., xxx. 9 sqq.), had obtained control of the young and inexperienced king, and had persuaded him to introduce idolatry again. On ver. 2 cf. ch. viii. 18 and xvi. 3.—Ver. 3. וַיִּשָּׂב וַיִּבֶן, “he built again” the high places, which Hezekiah had destroyed (ch. xviii. 4), erected altars for Baal and an Asherah, like Ahab of Israel (1 Kings xvi. 32, 33). הַאֲשֵׁרָה is the image of Asherah mentioned in ver. 7, whereas in the Chronicles the thought is generalized by the plurals לַבַּעֲלִים and הַאֲשֵׁרוֹת. To these two kinds of idolatry, the idolatrous *bamoth* and the (true) Baal- and Asherah-worship, Manasseh added as a third kind the worship of all the host of heaven, which had not occurred among the Israelites before the Assyrian era, and was probably of Assyrian or Chaldæan origin. This worship differed from the Syrophœnician star-worship, in which sun and moon were worshipped under the names of Baal and Astarte as the bearers of the male and female powers of nature, and was pure star-worship, based upon the idea of the unchangeableness of the stars in contradistinction to the perishableness of everything earthly, according to which the stars were worshipped not merely as the originators of all rise and decay in nature, but also as the leaders and regulators of sublunary things (see Movers, *Phöniz.* i. pp. 65 and 161). This star-worship was a later development of the primary star-worship of Ssabism, in which the stars were worshipped without any image, in the open air or upon the housetops, by simple contemplation, the oldest and comparatively the purest form of the deification of nature, to which the earlier Arabians and the worshippers of the sun among the Ssabians (Zabians) were addicted (cf. Delitzsch on Job xxxi. 26, 27), and which is mentioned and forbidden in Deut. iv. 19 and xvii. 3. In this later form the sun had sacred chariots and horses as among the Persians (ch. xxiii. 11), and incense was offered to the stars, with the face turned towards the east, upon altars which were built either upon housetops, as in the case of the Nabatæans (Strabo, xvi. 784), or within the limits of the temple in the two courts (cf. Ezek. viii. 16, also ch. xxi. 5, xxiii. 12, and 2 Chron. xxxiii. 5, Jer. xix. 13, Zeph. i. 5). This burning of incense took place not merely to the sun and moon, but also to the signs of the zodiac and to all the

host of heaven, *i.e.* to all the stars (ch. xxiii. 5); by which we are no doubt to understand that the sun, moon, planets and other stars, were worshipped in conjunction with the zodiac, and with this were connected astrology, augury, and the casting of nativities, as in the case of the later so-called Chaldæans.<sup>1</sup> This star-worship is more minutely described in vers. 4 and 5. The two verses are closely connected. The *וּבְנֵה מִזְבֵּחַ* of ver. 4 is resumed in *וַיִּבֶן מִזְבֵּחַ* in ver. 5, and the *בְּבֵית י'* of ver. 4 is more minutely defined in the *בִּישְׁתֵּי הַצִּירוֹת בֵּית י'* of ver. 5. "In the two courts:" not merely in the outer court, but even in the court of the priests, which was set apart for the worship of Jehovah.—Ver. 6. He also offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch, like Ahaz (ch. xvi. 3), in the valley of Benhinnom (Chron. cf. ch. xxiii. 10), and practised soothsaying and witchcraft of every kind. On *עוֹנֵן וְנִחֵשׁ* see Deut. xviii. 10 and Lev. xix. 26. *עָשָׂה אֹזֵב*, he made, *i.e.* appointed, put into office, a "necromancer and wise people" (cf. Lev. xix. 31 and Deut. xviii. 11).—Ver. 7. Yea, he even placed the image of Asherah in the temple, *i.e.* in the Holy Place. In the description of his idolatry, which advances *gradatim*, this is introduced as the very worst crime. According to the express declaration of the Lord to David (2 Sam. vii. 13) and Solomon (1 Kings ix. 3 compared with ch. viii. 16), the temple was to serve as the dwelling-place of His name.—Ver. 8. The word of the Lord, "I will no more make the foot of Israel to move out of the land which I gave to their fathers," refers to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 10: "I will appoint my people a place, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and be stirred up no more," which had been fulfilled by the building of the temple as the seat of the name of the Lord, in the manner indicated in pp. 85 sqq. The lasting fulfilment of this promise, however, was made to rest upon the condition of Israel's faithful adherence to the commandments of God (cf. 1 Kings ix. 6 sqq.).—Ver. 9. This condition was not observed

<sup>1</sup> Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 65) correctly observes, that "in all the books of the Old Testament which are written before the Assyrian period there is no trace of any (?) *star-worship*; not that the Phœnician (Canaanitish) gods had not also a sidereal significance, but because this element was only a subordinate one, and the expressions, sun, moon, and stars, and all the host of heaven, which are not met with before, become for the first time common now,"—although his proofs of the difference between the Assyrian star-worship and the Phœnician and Babylonian image-worship stand greatly in need of critical sifting.



by the Israelites; Manasseh seduced them, so that they did more evil than the Canaanites, whom Jehovah had destroyed before them.—Vers. 10-15. The Lord therefore announced through the prophets, to the rebellious and idolatrous nation, the destruction of Jerusalem and the deliverance of Judah into the hands of its enemies; but, as is added in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10, they paid no heed to them. The prophets who foretold this terrible judgment are not named. According to 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, their utterances were entered in the annals of the kings. Habakkuk was probably one of them, since he (Hab. i. 5) predicted the Chaldean judgment as a fact which excited astonishment and appeared incredible. The *Amorites* are mentioned in ver. 11 *instar omnium* as the supporters of the Canaanitish ungodliness, as in 1 Kings xxi. 26, etc.—The phrase, “that whosoever heareth it, both his ears may tingle,” denotes such a judgment as has never been heard of before, and excites alarm and horror (cf. 1 Sam. iii. 11 and Jer. xix. 3). The *Keri* שְׁמָעָה is a correction, to bring the *pronom. suff.* into conformity with the noun רָעָה so far as the gender is concerned, whereas in the *Chethîb* שְׁמָעִי the masculine suffix is used in the place of the feminine, as is frequently the case.—Ver. 13. “I stretch over Jerusalem the measure of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab.” The measure (זֶרֶק) and the plummet (מִשְׁקָלֶת, lit. a level) were applied to what was being built (Zech. i. 16), and also to what was being made level with the ground, *i.e.* completely thrown down (Amos vii. 7). From this sprang the figurative expressions, measure of desolation and plummet of devastation (Isa. xxxiv. 11).—The measure of Samaria therefore denotes the measure which was applied to the destruction of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab denotes the extermination of the royal house of Ahab. The meaning is: I shall destroy Jerusalem as I have destroyed Samaria, and exterminate its inhabitants like the house of Ahab. In the second hemistich the same thing is expressed, if possible, still more strongly: “I wipe away Jerusalem as one wipes the dish, and (having) wiped (it), turns it upon its upper side (פָּנֶיהָ).” The wiping of a dish that has been used, and the turning over of the dish wiped, so as not to leave a single drop in it, are a figurative representation of the complete destruction of Jerusalem and the utter extermination of its inhabitants.—Ver. 14. With the destruction of Jerusalem the Lord forsakes the people of His possession, and gives it up to its enemies for a prey and spoil.

שְׁאֵרֵי נַחֲלָתִי: Judah is called the remnant of the people of God's inheritance with a reference to the rejection and leading away of the ten tribes, which have already taken place. On בְּזוֹ וּמִשְׁפָּחָה see Isa. xlii. 22, Jer. xxx. 16.

To this announcement of the judgment there is appended in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 sqq. the statement, that Jehovah caused Manasseh the king to be taken prisoner by the generals of the king of Assyria and led away to Babylon in chains; and that when he humbled himself before God there, and made supplication to Him, He brought him back to Jerusalem and placed him upon his throne again; whereupon Manasseh fortified the walls of Jerusalem still further, placed garrisons in the fortified cities, removed the idol from the temple, abolished from the city the idolatrous altars erected in Jerusalem and upon the temple-mountain, restored the altar of Jehovah, and commanded the people to offer sacrifice upon it.—This incident is omitted in our book, because the conversion of Manasseh was not followed by any lasting results so far as the kingdom was concerned; the abolition of outward idolatry in Jerusalem did not lead to the conversion of the people, and after the death of Manasseh even the idolatrous abominations that had been abolished were restored by Amon.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 16. Manasseh also sinned grievously by shedding innocent blood till Jerusalem was quite filled with it. לִפְּהָ, from one edge to the other, see at ch. x. 21. This statement has been paraphrased by Josephus thus (*Ant.* x. 3, 1): Manasseh slew πάντας ὁμῶς τοὺς δικαίους τοὺς ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις, and did not spare even the prophets, with the additional clause, which exaggerates the thing: καὶ τούτων δέ τινας καθ' ἡμέραν ἀπέσφαξε, ὥστε αἵματι ῥεῖσθαι τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα.<sup>2</sup>—Vers. 17, 18. Manasseh was buried “in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza.” “His house” cannot be the royal palace built by Solomon, because the garden is also called the garden of Uzza,

<sup>1</sup> The historical truth of these accounts, which Rosenmüller, Winer, and Hitzig called in question after the example of Gramberg, has been defended by Ewald, Bertheau, and even by Thenius; and the latest attack which has been made upon it by Graf in the *theol. Studien u. Krit.* 1859, iii., has been met by E. Gerlach in the same magazine of 1861. For further remarks see the Commentary on the Chronicles.

<sup>2</sup> The widespread Jewish and Christian legend, that Manasseh put to death the prophet Isaiah, and indeed had him sawn in sunder, to which there is an allusion in Heb. xi. 37, also belongs here. (See Delitzsch, *Comm. on Isaiah*, p. 5.)



evidently from the name of its former possessor. "His house" must therefore have been a summer palace belonging to Manasseh, the situation of which, however, it is impossible to determine more precisely. The arguments adduced by Thenius in support of the view that it was situated upon Ophel, opposite to Zion, are perfectly untenable. Robinson (*Pal.* i. p. 394) conjectures that the garden of Uzza was upon Zion. The name עֲזָא (עֲזָה) occurs again in 2 Sam. vi. 8, 1 Chron. viii. 7, Ezra ii. 49, and Neh. vii. 51.

Vers. 19-26. REIGN OF AMON (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21-25).—Amon reigned only two years, and that in the spirit of his father, that is to say, worshipping all his idols. The city of Jotbah, from which his mother sprang, was, according to Jerome (in the *Onom.* s. v. Jethaba), *urbs antiqua Judææ*; but it is not further known.—Vers. 23, 24. His servants conspired against him and slew him in his palace; whereupon the people of the land, *i.e.* the population of Judah (עַם הָאָרֶץ = עַם יְהוּדָה, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1), put the conspirators to death and made Josiah the son of Amon king, when he was only eight years old.—Ver. 26. Amon was buried "in his grave in the garden of Uzza," *i.e.* in the grave which he had had made in the garden of Uzza by the side of his father's grave. He had probably resided in this palace of his father. יְקִבֵּר, one buried him.

#### CHAP. XXII. 1-XXIII. 30. REIGN OF KING JOSIAH.

After a brief account of the length and spirit of the reign of the pious Josiah (vers. 1 and 2), we have a closely connected narrative, in ver. 3-xxiii. 24, of what he did for the restoration of the true worship of Jehovah and the extermination of idolatry; and the whole of the reform effected by him is placed in the eighteenth year of his reign, because it was in this year that the book of the law was discovered, through which the reformation of worship was carried to completion. It is evident that it was the historian's intention to combine together everything that Josiah did to this end, so as to form one grand picture, from the circumstance that he has not merely placed the chronological datum, "it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah," at the beginning, but has repeated it at the close (ch. xxiii. 23). If we run over the

several facts which are brought before us in this section,—the repairing of the temple (ch. xxii. 3–7); the discovery of the book of the law; the reading of the book to the king; the inquiry made of the prophetess Huldah, and her prophecy (vers. 8–20); the reading of the law to the assembled people in the temple, with the renewal of the covenant (ch. xxiii. 1–3); the eradication of idolatry not only from Jerusalem and Judah, but from Bethel also, and all the cities of Samaria (vers. 4–20); and, lastly, the passover (vers. 21–23),—there is hardly any need to remark, that all this cannot have taken place in the one eighteenth year of his reign, even if, with Usher (*Annales ad a.m.* 3381), we were to place the solemn passover at the close of the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, which is hardly suitable, and by no means follows from the circumstance that the chronological datum, "in the eighteenth year," stands at the commencement of the complete account of the reform of worship introduced by that king. For we may clearly infer that the several details of this account are not arranged chronologically, but according to the subject-matter, and that the historian has embraced the efforts of Josiah to restore the legal worship of Jehovah, which spread over several years, under the one point of view of a discovery of the law, and therefore within the eighteenth year of his reign, from the fact that he introduces the account of the repairing of the temple (ch. xxii. 3–7) in a period by itself, and makes it subordinate to the account of the discovery of the book of the law, and indeed only mentions it in a general manner, because it led to the finding of the book of the law. It is true that the other facts are attached to one another in the narrative by *Vav consec.*; but, on a closer inspection of the several details, there cannot be any doubt whatever that the intention is not to arrange them in their chronological order. The repairing of the temple must have commenced before the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, inasmuch as in that year, in which the incident occurred which led to the discovery of the book of the law (ch. xxii. 3–7), not only were the builders occupied with the repairs of the temple, but money had been brought by all the people to the house of God to carry on this work, and had been collected by the Levites who kept the door. Moreover, from the very nature of the case, we cannot conceive of the restoration of the temple, that had fallen to decay, without the removal of the idolatrous



abominations found in the temple. And the assumption is an equally inconceivable one, that all the people entered into covenant with the Lord (ch. xxiii. 3), before any commencement had been made towards the abolition of the prevailing idolatry, or that the pious king had the book of the law read in the temple and entered into covenant with the Lord, so long as the Ashera was standing in the temple and the idolatrous altars erected by Manasseh in the courts, together with the horses and chariots dedicated to the sun. If the conclusion of a covenant in consequence of the public reading of the book of the law was to be an act in accordance with the law, the public memorials of idolatry must be destroyed at all events in the neighbourhood of the temple. And is it likely that the king, who had been so deeply moved by the curses of the law, would have undertaken so solemn a transaction in sight of the idolatrous altars and other abominations of idolatry in the house of Jehovah, and not rather have seen that this would be only a daring insult to Jehovah? These reasons are quite sufficient to prove that the extermination of idolatry had commenced before the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, and had simply been carried out with greater zeal throughout the whole kingdom after the discovery of the book of the law.

This view of our account is simply confirmed by a comparison with the parallel history in 2 Chron. xxxiv. and xxxv. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3 sqq., Josiah began to seek the God of his father David in the eighth year of his reign, when he was still a youth, that is to say, not more than sixteen years old, and in the twelfth year of his reign began to purify Judah and Jerusalem from idolatry; and, according to vers. 8 sqq., in the eighteenth year of his reign, at the purification of the land and temple, and the renovation of the temple, the book of the law was found by the high priest, and handed over to the king and read before him (vers. 8-28), after which the renewal of the covenant took place, and all the abominations of idolatry that still remained in the land were swept away (vers. 29-33), and, lastly, a solemn passover was celebrated, of which we have an elaborate account in ch. xxxv. 1-19. Consequently the account given in the Chronicles is, on the whole, arranged with greater chronological precision, although even there, after the commencement of the extermination of idolatry has been mentioned, we have a brief and comprehensive statement of all

that Josiah did to accomplish that result ; so that after the renewal of the covenant (ch. xxxiv. 33) we have nothing more than a passing allusion, by way of summary, to the complete abolition of the abominations of idolatry throughout the whole land.

Vers. 1 and 2. *Length and spirit of Josiah's reign.*—Josiah (for the name, see at 1 Kings xiii. 2), like Hezekiah, trode once more in the footsteps of his pious forefather David, adhering with the greatest constancy to the law of the Lord. He reigned thirty-one years. As a child he had probably received a pious training from his mother ; and when he had ascended the throne, after the early death of his godless father, he was under the guidance of pious men who were faithfully devoted to the law of the Lord, and who turned his heart to the God of their fathers, as was the case with Joash in ch. xii. 3, although there is no allusion to guardianship. His mother *Jedidah*, the daughter of Adaiah, was of *Boscath*, a city in the plain of Judah, of which nothing further is known (see at Josh. xv. 39). The description of his character, “ he turned not aside to the right hand and to the left,” *sc.* from that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, is based upon Deut. v. 29, xvii. 11, 20, and xxviii. 14, and expresses an unwavering adherence to the law of the Lord.

Vers. 3–8. *Repairing of the temple, and discovery of the book of the law* (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8–18).—When Josiah sent Shaphan the secretary of state (סֹפֵר, see at 2 Sam. viii. 17) into the temple, in the eighteenth year of his reign, with instructions to Hilkiah the high priest to pay to the builders the money which had been collected from the people for repairing the temple by the Levites who kept the door, Hilkiah said to Shaphan, “ I have found the book of the law.” Vers. 3–8 form a long period. The apodosis to וַיְהִי יוֹם, “ it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah—the king had sent Shaphan,” etc., does not follow till ver. 8 : “ that Hilkiah said,” etc. The principal fact which the historian wished to relate, was the discovery of the book of the law ; and the repairing of the temple is simply mentioned because it was when Shaphan was sent to Hilkiah about the payment of the money to the builders that the high priest informed the king's secretary of state of the discovery of the book of the law in the temple, and handed it over to him to take to the king. שָׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ, in ver. 3, forms the commencement



to the minor clauses inserted within the principal clause, and subordinate to it: "the king had sent Shaphan," etc. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8, the king had deputed not only Shaphan the state-secretary, but also Maaseiah the governor of the city and Joach the chancellor, because the repairing of the temple was not a private affair of the king and the high priest, but concerned the city generally, and indeed the whole kingdom. In vers. 4, 5 there follows the charge given by the king to Shaphan: "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may make up the money, . . . and hand it over to the workmen appointed over the house of Jehovah," etc. **יָתַם**, from **תָּמַם**, *Hiphil*, signifies to finish or set right, *i.e.* not pay out (Ges., Dietr.), but make it up for the purpose of paying out, namely, collect it from the door-keepers, count it, and bind it up in bags (see ch. xii. 11). **יָתַם** is therefore quite appropriate here, and there is no alteration of the text required. The door-keepers had probably put the money in a chest placed at the entrance, as was the case at the repairing of the temple in the time of Joash (ch. xii. 10). In ver. 5 the *Keri* **יִתְּנֵהוּ** is a bad alteration of the *Chethib* **יִתְּנָה**, "and give (it) into the hand," which is perfectly correct. **עֲשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה** might denote both the masters and the workmen (builders), and is therefore defined more precisely first of all by **הַמְּפַקְדִּים בְּבֵית י'**, "who had the oversight at the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the masters or inspectors of the building, and secondly by **אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית י'**, who were (occupied) at the house of Jehovah, whilst in the Chronicles it is explained by **אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂים ב' י'**. The *Keri* **בֵּית י'** is an alteration after ver. 9, whereas the combination **מְפַקְדִּים בְּבֵית** is justified by the construction of **הַפְּקִיר** *c. acc. pers.* and **ב** *rei* in Jer. xl. 5. The masters are the subject to **וַיִּתְּנֵי**; they were to pay the money as it was wanted, either to the workmen, or for the purchase of materials for repairing the dilapidations, as is more precisely defined in ver. 6. Compare ch. xii. 12, 13; and for ver. 7 compare ch. xii. 16. The names of the masters or inspectors are given in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.—The execution of the king's command is not specially mentioned, that the parenthesis may not be spun out any further.—Ver. 8. Hilkiah the high priest (cf. 1 Chron. v. 39) said, "I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah." **סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה**, *the book of the law* (not *a* law-book or a roll of laws), cannot mean anything else, either grammatically or historically, than the Mosaic book of the law (the Pentateuch), which is so designated, as is generally admitted,

in the Chronicles, and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.<sup>1</sup> The finding of the book of the law in the temple presupposes that the copy deposited there had come to light. But it by no means follows from this, that before its discovery there were no copies in the hands of the priests and prophets. The book of the law that was found was simply the temple copy,<sup>2</sup> deposited, according to Deut. xxxi. 26, by the side of the ark of the covenant, which had been lost under the idolatrous kings Manasseh and Amon, and came to light again now that the temple was being repaired. We cannot learn, either from the account before us, or from the words of the Chronicles (ch. xxxiv. 14), "when they were taking out the money brought into the house of Jehovah, Hilkiah found the book of the law of the Lord," in what part of the temple it had hitherto lain; and this is of no importance so far as the principal object of the history is concerned. Even the words of the Chronicles simply point out the occasion on which the book was discovered, and do not affirm that it had

<sup>1</sup> Thenius has correctly observed, that "the expression shows very clearly, that the allusion is to something already known, not to anything that had come to light for the first time;" but he is greatly mistaken when, notwithstanding this, he supposes that what we are to understand by this is merely a collection of the commandments and ordinances of Moses, which had been worked up in the Pentateuch, and more especially in Deuteronomy. For there is not the smallest proof whatever that any such collection of commandments and ordinances of Moses, or, as Bertheau supposes, the collection of Mosaic law contained in the three middle books of the Pentateuch, or Deuteronomy ch. i.-xxviii. (according to Vaihinger, Reuss, and others), was ever called ספר התורה, or that any such portions had had an independent existence, and had been deposited in the temple. These hypotheses are simply bound up with the attacks made upon the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and ought to be given up, since De Wette, the great leader of the attack upon the genuineness of the Pentateuch, in § 162a of the later editions of his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, admits that the account before us contains the first certain trace of the existence of our present Pentateuch. The only loophole left to modern criticism, therefore, is that Hilkiah forged the book of the law discovered by him under the name of Moses,—a conclusion which can only be arrived at by distorting the words of the text in the most arbitrary manner, turning "find" into "forge," but which is obliged either to ignore or forcibly to set aside all the historical evidence of the previous existence of the whole of the Pentateuch, including Deuteronomy.

<sup>2</sup> Whether the original written by Moses' own hand, as Grotius inferred from the בִּיר מִשָּׁה of the Chronicles, or a later copy of this, is a very superfluous question; for, as Hävernicks says, "even in the latter case it was to be regarded just in the same light as the autograph, having just the same claims, since the temple repaired by Josiah was the temple of Solomon still."



been lying in one of the treasure-chambers of the temple, as Josephus says. The expression וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ does not imply that Shaphan read the whole book through immediately.

Vers. 9-14. *The reading of the book of the law to the king, and the inquiry made of the prophetess Huldah concerning it.*—

Vers. 9, 10. When Shaphan informed the king of the execution of his command, he also told him that Hilkiyah had given him a book, and read it to the king. הָשִׁיב דְּבַר, to bring an answer, to give a report as to a commission that has been received. הֵחִיכוּ, they poured out the money, *i.e.* out of the chest in which it was collected, into bags. וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ, “he read it to the king,” is simplified in the Chronicles (ver. 18) by וַיִּקְרָא בוֹ, “he read therein.” That יִקְרָאֵהוּ does not signify that the whole was read, is evident from a comparison of ch. xxiii. 2, where the reading of the whole is expressed by כָּל-דְּבָרָיִם. Which passages or sections Shaphan read by himself (ver. 8), and which he read to the king, it is impossible to determine exactly. To the king he most likely read, among other things, the threats and curses of the law against those who transgressed it (Deut. xxviii.), and possibly also Lev. xxvi., because the reading made such an impression upon him, that in his anguish of soul he rent his clothes. Nor is it possible to decide anything with certainty, as to whether the king had hitherto been altogether unacquainted with the book of the law, and had merely a traditional knowledge of the law itself, or whether he had already had a copy of the law, but had not yet read it through, or had not read it with proper attention, which accounted for the passages that were read to him now making so deep and alarming an impression upon him. It is a well-known experience, that even books which have been read may, under peculiar circumstances, produce an impression such as has not been made before. But in all probability Josiah had not had in his possession any copy of the law, or even read it till now; although the thorough acquaintance with the law, which all the prophets display, places the existence of the Pentateuch in prophetic circles beyond the reach of doubt.—Ver. 11. In his alarm at the words of the book of the law that had been read to him, Josiah rent his clothes, and sent a deputation to the prophetess Huldah, to make inquiry of Jehovah through her concerning the things which he had heard from the law. The deputation consisted of the high priest Hilkiyah, Ahikam the supporter of Jeremiah (Jer. xxvi. 24) and the father of

Gedaliah the governor (ch. xxv. 22 ; Jer. xxxix. 14, etc.), Achbor the son of Michaiiah, Shaphan the state-secretary (ver. 3), and Asahiah the servant (*i.e.* an officer) of the king.—Ver. 13. From the commission, “Inquire ye of Jehovah for me and for the people and for all Judah (*i.e.* the whole kingdom) concerning the words of this book of the law that has been found, for great is the wrath of the Lord which has been kindled against us, because our fathers have not heard . . .,” we may infer that the curses of the law upon the despisers of the commandments of God in Lev. xxvi., Deut. xxviii., and other passages, had been read to the king. *דָּרַשׁ אֶת־יְיָ* means to inquire the will of the Lord, what He has determined concerning the king, his people, and the kingdom. *שָׁמַע עַל* signifies here to hearken to anything, to observe it, for which *אֶל* is used elsewhere. *בְּתַב עַל*, to prescribe for performance. *עָלֵינוּ*, “prescribed for us,” is quite appropriate, since the law was not only given to the fathers to obey, but also to the existing generation,—a fact which Thenius has overlooked with his conjecture *עָלָיו*. To render the king’s alarm and his fear of severe judgments from God intelligible, there is no need for the far-fetched and extremely precarious hypothesis, that just at that time the Scythians had invaded and devastated the land.—Ver. 14. Nothing further is known of the prophetess *Huldah* than what is mentioned here. All that we can infer from the fact that the king sent to her is, that she was highly distinguished on account of her prophetical gifts, and that none of the prophets of renown, such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah, were at that time in Jerusalem. Her father *Shallum* was *keeper of the clothes*, *i.e.* superintendent over either the priests’ dresses that were kept in the temple (according to the Rabbins and Wits. *de proph.* in his *Miscell.* ss. i. p. 356, ed. 3), or the king’s wardrobe. The names of his ancestors *תְּקֵה* and *חֲרָהם* are written *תְּקֵהָה* and *חֲרָהָה* in the Chronicles. *Huldah* lived at Jerusalem *בְּמִשְׁנֵה*, “in the second part” or district of the city, *i.e.* in the lower city, upon the hill “*Ἀκρα* (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 391), which is called *הַמִּשְׁנֵה* in Zeph. i. 10, and *הָעִיר מִשְׁנֵה* in Neh. xi. 9, and *ἄλλη πόλις* in Joseph. *Ant.* xv. 11, 5.

Vers. 15–20. *The reply of Huldah the prophetess.*—*Huldah* confirmed the fear expressed by Josiah, that the wrath of the Lord was kindled against Jerusalem and its inhabitants on account of their idolatry, and proclaimed first of all (vers. 16, 17), that the Lord would bring upon Jerusalem and its inhabitants



all the punishments with which the rebellious and idolaters are threatened in the book of the law; and secondly (vers. 18-20), to the king himself, that on account of his sincere repentance and humiliation in the sight of God, he would not live to see the predicted calamities, but would be gathered to his fathers in peace. The first part of her announcement applies "to the man who has sent you to me" (ver. 15), the second "to the king of Judah, who has sent to inquire of the Lord" (ver. 18). "The man" who had sent to her was indeed also the king; but Huldah intentionally made use of the general expression "the man," etc., to indicate that the word announced to him applied not merely to the king, but to every one who would hearken to the word, whereas the second portion of her reply had reference to the king alone. הַמְּקוֹם הַזֶּה, in vers. 16, 19, and 20, is Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom. In ver. 16, כָּל-דְּבָרֵי, הַפֶּפֶר is an explanatory apposition to רָעָה. Ver. 17. "With all the work of their hands," *i.e.* with the idols which they have made for themselves (cf. 1 Kings xvi. 7). The last clause in ver. 18, "the words which thou hast heard," is not to be connected with the preceding one, "thus saith the Lord," and עַל or לְ to be supplied; but it belongs to the following sentence, and is placed at the head absolutely: as for the words, which thou hast heard—because thy heart has become soft, *i.e.* in despair at the punishment with which the sinners are threatened (cf. Deut. xx. 3; Isa. vii. 4), and thou hast humbled thyself, when thou didst hear, etc.; therefore, behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, etc. לִהְיוֹת לְשָׂמָה, "that they (the city and inhabitants) may become a desolation and curse." These words, which are often used by the prophets, but which are not found connected like this except in Jer. xlv. 22, rest upon Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii., and show that these passages had been read to the king out of the book of the law.—Ver. 20. To gather to his fathers means merely to let him die, and is generally applied to a peaceful death upon a sick-bed, like the synonymous phrase, to lie with one's fathers; but it is also applied to a violent death by being slain in battle (1 Kings xxii. 40 and 34), so that there is no difficulty in reconciling this comforting assurance with the slaying of Josiah in battle (ch. xxiii. 29). בְּשָׁלוֹם, in peace, *i.e.* without living to witness the devastation of Jerusalem, as is evident from the words, "thine eyes will not see," etc.

Ch. xxiii. 1-30. Instead of resting content with the fact that he was promised deliverance from the approaching judgment, Josiah did everything that was in his power to lead the whole nation to true conversion to the Lord, and thereby avert as far as possible the threatened curse of rejection, since the Lord in His word had promised forgiveness and mercy to the penitent. He therefore gathered together the elders of the nation, and went with them, with the priests and prophets and the assembled people, into the temple, and there had the book of the law read to those who were assembled, and concluded a covenant with the Lord, into which the people also entered. After this he had all the remnants of idolatry eradicated, not only in Jerusalem and Judah, but also in Bethel and the other cities of Samaria, and directed the people to strengthen themselves in their covenant fidelity towards the Lord by the celebration of a solemn passover.—Vers. 1-3. *Reading of the law in the temple, and renewal of the covenant* (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29-32). Beside the priests, Josiah also gathered together the prophets, including perhaps Jeremiah and Zedekiah, that he might carry out the solemn conclusion of the covenant with their co-operation, and, as is evident from Jer. i.-xi., that they might then undertake the task, by their impressive preaching in Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, of making the people conscious of the earnestness of the covenant duties which they had so recently undertaken (see Oehler in Herzog's *Cycl.*). Instead of the prophets, the Levites are mentioned in the Chronicles, probably only because the Levites are mentioned along with the priests in other cases of a similar kind. וִיקְרָא, he read, i.e. had it read; for the duty of reading the law in the temple devolved upon the priests as the keepers of the law (Deut. xxxi. 9 sqq.).—Ver. 3. The king stood עַל הָעַמּוּד, as in ch. xi. 14. For וַיִּכְרֹת וְגו' see ch. xi. 17. לָלֶכֶת, i.e. he bound himself solemnly to walk after the Lord, that is to say, in his walk to follow the Lord and keep His commandments (see at 1 Kings ii. 3).—וַיַּעֲמֹד . . . בְּכָרִית, all the people entered into the covenant (Luther and others); not *perstitit*, stood firm, continued in the covenant (Maurer, Ges.), which would be at variance with Jer. xi. 9, 10, xxv. 3 sqq., and other utterances of the prophets.

Vers. 4-20. *The eradication of idolatry.*—According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3-7, this had already begun, and was simply continued and carried to completion after the renewal of the



covenant. — Vers. 4-14. *In Jerusalem and Judah.* Ver. 4. The king commanded the high priest and the other priests, and the Levites who kept the door, to remove from the temple everything that had been made for Baal and Asherah, and to burn it in the valley of Kidron. כֹּהֲנֵי הַמִּשְׁנָה, *sacerdotes secundi ordinis* (Vulg., Luth., etc.), are the common priests as distinguished from הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל, the high priest. The Rabbins are wrong in their explanation *vicarii summi sacerdotis*, according to which Thenius would alter the text and read כֹּהֵן for כֹּהֲנֵי. שְׁמָרֵי הַפֶּתַח, the keepers of the threshold, are the Levites whose duty it was to watch the temple, as in ch. xxii. 4 (cf. 1 Chron. xxiii. 5). כָּל-הַהֲבִלִים (*alles Zeug*, Luth.), i.e. all the apparatus, consisting of altars, idols, and other things, that had been provided for the worship of Baal and Astarte. Josiah had these things burned, according to the law in Deut. vii. 25, and that outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron valley. שְׂדֵמוֹת קִדְרוֹן (fields of Kidron) are probably to be sought for to the north-east of Jerusalem, where the Kidron valley is broader than between the city and the Mount of Olives, and spreads out into a basin of considerable size, which is now cultivated and contains plantations of olive and other fruit-trees (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 405). "And he had their dust carried to Bethel," i.e. the ashes of the wooden objects which were burned, and the dust of those of stone and metal which were ground to powder, to defile the idolatrous place of worship at Bethel as the chief seat of idolatry and false worship.—Ver. 5. "He abolished the high priests." כֹּמָרִים are also mentioned in Hos. x. 5 and Zeph. i. 4: they were not idolatrous priests or prophets of Baal, but priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to offer incense upon the altars of the high places; for they are distinguished from the idolatrous priests, or those who burnt incense to Baal, the sun, etc. In Hos. x. 5 the priests appointed in connection with the golden calf at Bethel are called כֹּמָרִים; and in Zeph. i. 4 the כֹּמָרִים are not exclusively idolatrous priests, but such as did service sometimes for Jehovah, who had been degraded into a Baal, and sometimes to actual idols. Now as כֹּהֲנִים who burnt incense upon high places are also mentioned in ver. 8, we must understand by the כֹּמָרִים non-Levitical priests, and by the כֹּהֲנִים in ver. 8 Levitical priests who were devoted to the worship on the high places. The primary signification of כֹּמָר is disputed. In Syriac the word signifies the priest, in Hebrew spurious priests, probably from

כָּמַר in the sense of to bring together, or complete, as the performers of sacrifice, like ἑρδων, the sacrificer (Dietr.); whereas the connection suggested by Hitzig (on Zeph.) with כִּפֵּר, to be unbelieving, in the opposite sense of the religious, is very far-fetched, and does not answer either to the Hebrew or the Syriac use of the word.<sup>1</sup> The singular וַיִּקְטֹר is striking, inasmuch as if the imperf. c. *Vav rel.* were a continuation of נִתְּנִי, we should expect the plural, “and who had burnt incense,” as it is given in the Chaldee. The LXX., Vulg., and Syr. have rendered לִקְטֹר, from which וַיִּקְטֹר has probably arisen by a mistake in copying. In the following clause, “and those who had burnt incense to Baal, to the sun and to the moon,” etc., *Baal* is mentioned as the deity worshipped in the sun, the moon, and the stars (see at ch. xxi. 3). מִזְלוֹת, synonymous with מִזְרוֹת in Job xxxviii. 32, does not mean the twenty-eight *naxatra*, or Indian stations of the moon,<sup>2</sup> but the twelve signs or constellations of the zodiac, which were regarded by the Arabs as *menâzil*, i.e. station-houses, in which the sun took up its abode in succession when describing the circuit of the year (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 869, and Delitzsch on Job xxxviii. 32).—Ver. 6. The image of Asherah (הָאֲשֵׁרָה = פֶּסֶל הָאֲשֵׁרָה, ch. xxi. 3, 7), which Manasseh placed in the temple and then removed after his return from Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 15), but which Amon had replaced, Josiah ordered to be burned and ground to powder in the valley of Kidron, and the dust to be thrown upon the graves of the common people. וַיִּדְק, from דָּקַק, to make fine, to crush, refers to the metal covering of the image (see at Ex. xxxii. 10). Asa had already had an idol burned in the Kidron valley (1 Kings xv. 13), and Hezekiah had ordered the idolatrous abominations to be taken out of the city and carried thither (2 Chron. xxix. 16); so that the valley had already been defiled. There was a burial-place there for בְּנֵי הָעָם, i.e. the common people (cf. Jer. xxvi. 23), who had no graves of their own, just as at the present day the burial-ground

<sup>1</sup> In any case the derivation from כָּמַר, to be black (Ges. *Thes.* p. 693), and the explanation given by Furst from *vi occultandi magicasque, h. e. arcanas et reconditas artes exercendi*, and others given in Iken's *Dissertatt. theol. philol.* i. diss. 12, are quite untenable.

<sup>2</sup> According to A. Weber, *Die vedischen Nachrichten von den naxatra*, in the *Abhandlungen der Berl. Acad. d. Wiss.* 1860 and 1861. Compare, on the other hand, Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibliographie*, 1861, No. 22, pp. 93, 94, his article in the *Deutsch. morgld. Zeitschrift*, 1864, p. 118 sqq.



of the Jews there lies to the north of *Kefr Silwân*. Josiah ordered the ashes to be cast upon these graves, probably in order to defile them as the graves of idolaters.—Ver. 7. בְּתֵי הַקְדָּשִׁים, the houses (places of abode) of the paramours (for הַקְדָּשִׁים see at 1 Kings xiv. 24), were probably only tents or huts, which were erected in the court of the temple for the paramours to dwell in, and in which there were also women who wove tent-templates (בְּתֵים) for Asherah (see at ch. xvii. 30).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 8. All the (Levitical) priests he sent for from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, and defiled the altars of the high places, upon which they had offered incense, from Geba to Beersheba, *i.e.* throughout the whole kingdom. *Geba*, the present *Jeba*, about three hours to the north of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 24), was the northern frontier of the kingdom of Judah, and *Beersheba* (*Bir-seba*: see the Comm. on Gen. xxi. 31) the southern frontier of Canaan. It is evident from ver. 9 that כֹּהֲנִים are Levitical priests. He ordered them to come to Jerusalem, that they might not carry on illegal worship any longer in the cities of Judah. He then commanded that the unlawful high places should be defiled throughout the whole land, for the purpose of suppressing this worship altogether. He also destroyed “the altars of the high places at the gates, (both that) which was at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, (and also that) which was at the left of every one (entering) by the city gate.” The two clauses beginning with אֲשֶׁר contain a more precise description of בָּמֹת הַשְּׁעָרִים. The gate of Joshua the governor of the city is not mentioned anywhere else, but it was probably near to his home, *i.e.* near the citadel of the city; but whether it was the future gate of *Gennath*, as Thenius supposes, or some other, it is impossible to determine. This also applies to the opinion that שַׁעַר הָעִיר is the valley gate or Joppa gate (Thenius) as being the gate of greatest traffic; for the traffic through the northern or Ephraim gate was certainly not less. עַל-שְׂמֹאל, at the left of every one, *sc.* going into the city.—Ver. 9.

<sup>1</sup> On this worship Movers has the following among other remarks (*Phön.* i. p. 686): “The mutilated Gallus (קֹדֶשׁ) fancies that he is a woman: *negant se viros esse . . . mulieres se volunt credi* (Firmic.). He lives in close intimacy with the women, and they again are drawn towards the Galli by peculiar affection.” He also expresses a conjecture “that the women of Jerusalem gave themselves up in honour of the goddess in the tents of the Galli which were pitched in the temple circle, on which account the כֹּהֵן מֵהֵרָבָה went to the temple treasury.”

"Only the priests of the high places did not sacrifice, . . . but ate unleavened bread in the midst of their brethren." The תִּסְּ is connected with ver. 8: Josiah did not allow the priests, whom he had brought out of the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, to offer sacrifice upon the altar of Jehovah in the temple, *i.e.* to perform the sacrificial service of the law, though he did allow them "to eat that which was unleavened," *i.e.* to eat of the sacred altar-gifts intended for the priests (Lev. vi. 9, 10 and 22); only they were not allowed to consume this at a holy place, but simply in the midst of their brethren, *i.e.* at home in the family. They were thus placed on a par with priests who were rendered incapable of service on account of a bodily defect (Lev. xxi. 17-22).—Ver. 10. He also defiled the place of sacrifice in the valley of Benhinnom, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of Moloch. Moloch's place of sacrifice is called הַתִּפְתָּ, as an object of abhorrence, or one to be spat at (תִּפְּ: Job xvii. 6), from תִּפַּ, to spit, or spit out (cf. Roediger in *Ges. thes.* p. 1497, where the other explanations are exploded).<sup>1</sup> On the valley *Bne* or *Ben-Hinnom*, at the south side of Mount Zion, see at Josh. xv. 8.—Ver. 11. He cleared away the horses dedicated to the sun, and burned up the chariots of the sun. As the horses were only cleared away (וַיִּטְּבֵהוּ), whereas the chariots were burned, we have not to think of images of horses (Selden, *de Diis Syr.* ii. 8), but of living horses, which were given to the sun, *i.e.* kept for the worship of the sun. Horses were regarded as sacred to the sun by many nations, viz. the Armenians, Persians, Massagetæ, Ethiopians, and Greeks, and were sacrificed to it (for proofs see Bochart, *Hicroz.* i. lib. ii. c. 10); and there is no doubt that the Israelites received this worship first of all from Upper Asia, along with the actual sun-worship, possibly through the Assyrians. "The kings of Judah" are Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon. These horses were hardly kept to be offered to the sun in sacrifice (Bochart and others), but, as we must infer from the "chariots of the sun," were used for processions in connection with the worship of the sun, probably, according to the unanimous opinion of the Rabbins, to

<sup>1</sup> Jerome (on Jer. vii. 31) says: *THOPHET, quæ est in valle filiorum Enom, illum locum significat, qui Siloë fontibus irrigatur et est amœnus atque nemorosus, hodieque hortorum præbet delicias.* From the name *Gehinnom* the Rabbins formed the name *Γέεννα*, *Gehenna* (Matt. v. 22, 29, etc.), with special reference to the children burnt here to Moloch, to signify hell and hell-fire.



drive and meet the rising sun. The definition "מִבֵּית י" 'from the coming into the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* near the entrance into the temple, is dependent upon נָתַנִּי, "they had given (placed) the horses of the sun near the temple entrance," אֶל-לְשַׁבֵּת, "in the cell of Nethanmelech." אֶל does not mean *at* the cell, *i.e.* in the stable by the cell (Thenius), because the ellipsis is too harsh, and the cells built in the court of the temple were intended not merely as dwelling-places for the priests and persons engaged in the service, but also as a depôt for the provisions and vessels belonging to the temple (Neh. x. 38 sqq.; 1 Chron. ix. 26). One of these depôts was arranged and used as a stable for the sacred horses. This cell, which derived its name from Nethanmelech, a chamberlain (סָרִיס), of whom nothing further is known, possibly the builder or founder of it, was בְּפָרוֹרִים, in the *Pharvurs*. פְּרוֹרִים, the plural of פָּרוֹר, is no doubt identical with פָּרְבַּר in 1 Chron. xxvi. 18. This was the name given to a building at the western or hinder side of the outer temple-court by the gate *Shalleket* at the ascending road, *i.e.* the road which led up from the city standing in the west into the court of the temple (1 Chron. xxvi. 16 and 18). The meaning of the word פָּרוֹר is uncertain. Gesenius (*thes.* p. 1123) explains it by *porticus*, after the Persian فَرَوَار, summer-house, an open kiosk. Böttcher (*Proben*, p. 347), on the other hand, supposes it to be "a separate spot resembling a suburb," because in the Talmud פָּרוֹרִין signifies *suburbia, loca urbi vicina*.—Ver. 12. The altars built upon the roof of the *aliyah* of Ahaz were dedicated to the host of heaven (Zeph. i. 5; Jer. xix. 13, xxxii. 29), and certainly built by Ahaz; and inasmuch as Hezekiah had undoubtedly removed them when he reformed the worship, they had been restored by Manasseh and Amon, so that by "the kings of Judah" we are to understand these three kings as in ver. 11. We are unable to determine where the עֲלִיָּה, the upper chamber, of Ahaz really was. But since the things spoken of both before and afterwards are the objects of idolatry found in the temple, this *aliyah* was probably also an upper room of one of the buildings in the court of the temple (Thenius), possibly at the gate, which Ahaz had built when he removed the outer entrance of the king into the temple (ch. xvi. 18), since, according to Jer. xxxv. 4, the buildings at the gate had upper stories. The altars built by Manasseh in the two courts of the temple (see ch. xxi. 5) Josiah destroyed,

מִשָּׁם וַיִּרְצֵן, "and crushed them to powder from thence," and cast their dust into the Kidron valley. וַיִּרְצֵן, not from רָץ, to run, but from רָצַץ, to pound or crush to pieces. The alteration proposed by Thenius into וַיִּרְצֵן, he caused to run and threw = he had them removed with all speed, is not only arbitrary, but unsuitable, because it is impossible to see why Josiah should merely have hurried the clearing away of the dust of these altars, whereas רָצַץ, to pound or grind to powder, was not superfluous after נָתַן, to destroy, but really necessary, if the dust was to be thrown into the Kidron. וַיִּרְצֵן is substantially equivalent to וַיִּדְקֵן in ver. 6.—Vers. 13, 14. The places of sacrifice built by Solomon upon the southern height of the Mount of Olives (see at 1 Kings xi. 7) Josiah defiled, reducing to ruins the monuments, cutting down the Asherah idols, and filling their places with human bones, which polluted a place, according to Num. xix. 16. Ver. 14 gives a more precise definition of הַר הַמִּשְׁחָה in ver. 13 in the form of a simple addition (with *Var cop.*). הַר הַמִּשְׁחָה, mountain of destruction (not *unctionis* = הַמִּשְׁחָה, Rashi and Cler.), is the southern peak of the Mount of Olives, called in the tradition of the Church *mons offensionis* or *scandali* (see at 1 Kings xi. 7). For מַצֵּבוֹת and אֲשֵׁרִים see at 1 Kings xiv. 23. מְקוֹמָם are the places where the *Mazzeboth* and *Asherim* stood by the altars that were dedicated to Baal and Astarte, so that by defiling them the altar-places were also defiled.

Vers. 15–20. *Extermination of idolatry in Bethel and the cities of Samaria.*—In order to suppress idolatry as far as possible, Josiah did not rest satisfied with the extermination of it in his own kingdom Judah, but also destroyed the temples of the high places and altars and idols in the land of the former kingdom of the ten tribes, slew all the priests of the high places that were there, and burned their bones upon the high places destroyed, in order to defile the ground. The warrant for this is not to be found, as Hess supposes, in the fact that Josiah, as vassal of the king of Assyria, had a certain limited power over these districts, and may have looked upon them as being in a certain sense his own territory, a power which the Assyrians may have allowed him the more readily, because they were sure of his fidelity in relation to Egypt. For we cannot infer that Josiah was a vassal of the Assyrians from the imprisonment and release of Manasseh by the king of Assyria, nor is there any historical evidence whatever to prove it. The only reason that



can have induced Josiah to do this, must have been that after the dissolution of the kingdom of the ten tribes he regarded himself as the king of the whole of the covenant-nation, and availed himself of the approaching or existing dissolution of the Assyrian empire to secure the friendship of the Israelites who were left behind in the kingdom of the ten tribes, to reconcile them to his government, and to win them over to his attempt to reform; and there is no necessity whatever to assume, as Thenius does, that he asked permission to do so of the newly arisen ruler Nabopolassar. For against this assumption may be adduced not only the improbability that Nabopolassar would give him any such permission, but still more the circumstance that at a still earlier period, even before Nabopolassar became king of Babylon, Josiah had had taxes collected of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel for the repairing of the temple (2 Chron. xxxiv. 9), from which we may see that the Israelites who were left behind in the land were favourably disposed towards his reforms, and were inclined to attach themselves in religious matters to Judah (just as, indeed, even the Samaritans were willing after the captivity to take part in the building of the temple, Ezra iv. 2 sqq.), which the Assyrians at that time were no longer in a condition to prevent.—Ver. 15. “Also the altar at Bethel, the high place which Jeroboam had made—this altar also and the high place he destroyed.” It is grammatically impossible to take הַבִּמָּה as an accusative of place (Thenius); it is in apposition to הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, serving to define it more precisely: the altar at Bethel, namely the high place; for which we have afterwards the altar and the high place. By the appositional הַבִּמָּה the altar at Bethel is described as an illegal place of worship. “He burned the בָּמָה,” *i.e.* the buildings of this sanctuary, ground to powder everything that was made of stone or metal, *i.e.* both the altar and the idol there. This is implied in what follows: “and burned Asherah,” *i.e.* a wooden idol of Astarte found there, according to which there would no doubt be also an idol of Baal, a מַצֵּבָה of stone. The golden calf, which had formerly been set up at Bethel, may, as Hos. x. 5, 6 seems to imply, have been removed by the Assyrians, and, after the settlement of heathen colonists in the land, have been supplanted by idols of Baal and Astarte (*cf.* ch. xvii. 29).—Vers. 16 sqq. In order to desecrate this idolatrous site for all time, Josiah had human bones taken out of the graves that were to be found upon

the mountain, and burned upon the altar, whereby the prophecy uttered in the reign of Jeroboam by the prophet who came out of Judah concerning this idolatrous place of worship was fulfilled; but he spared the tomb of that prophet himself (cf. 1 Kings xiii. 26–32). The mountain upon which Josiah saw the graves was a mountain at Bethel, which was visible from the *lamah* destroyed. צֵיִן, a sepulchral monument, probably a stone erected upon the grave. וַיִּצְלְטוּ: “so they rescued (from burning) his bones (the bones of the prophet who had come from Judah), together with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria,” i.e. of the old prophet who sprang from the kingdom of the ten tribes and had come to Bethel (1 Kings xiii. 11). בָּא בָּא מִיְהוּדָה in antithesis to בָּא מִיְהוּדָה denotes simply descent from the land of Samaria.<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 19, 20. All the houses of the high places that were in the (other) cities of Samaria Josiah also destroyed in the same way as that at Bethel, and offered up the priests of the high places upon the altars, i.e. slew them upon the altars on which they had offered sacrifice, and burned men’s bones upon them (the altars) to defile them. The severity of the procedure towards these priests of the high places, as contrasted with the manner in which the priests of the high places in Judah were treated (vers. 8 and 9), may be explained partly from the fact that the Israelitish priests of the high places were not Levitical priests, but chiefly from the fact that they were really idolatrous priests.

Vers. 21–23. *The passover* is very briefly noticed in our account, and is described as such an one as had not taken place since the days of the judges. Ver. 21 simply mentions the appointment of this festival on the part of the king, and the execution of the king’s command has to be supplied. Ver. 22 contains a remark concerning the character of the passover. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 1–19 we have a very elaborate description of it. What distinguished this passover above every other was, (1) that “all the nation,” not merely Judah and Benjamin, but

<sup>1</sup> Vers. 16–18 are neither an interpolation of the editor, i.e. of the author of our books of Kings (Staehelin), nor an interpolation from a supplement to the account in 1 Kings xiii. 1–32 (Thenius). The correspondence between the נֶגֶם in ver. 15 and the נֶגֶם in ver. 18 does not require this assumption; and the pretended discrepancy, that after Josiah had already reduced the altar to ruins (ver. 15) he could not possibly defile it by burning human bones upon it (ver. 16), is removed by the very natural solution, that הַמִּזְבֵּחַ in ver. 16 does not mean the altar itself, but the site of the altar that had been destroyed.



also the remnant of the ten tribes, took part in it, or, as it is expressed in 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, "all Judah and Israel;" (2) that it was kept in strict accordance with the precepts of the Mosaic book of the law, whereas in the passover instituted by Hezekiah there were necessarily many points of deviation from the precepts of the law, more especially in the fact that the feast had to be transferred from the first month, which was the legal time, to the second month, because the priests had not yet purified themselves in sufficient numbers and the people had not yet gathered together at Jerusalem, and also that even then a number of the people had inevitably been allowed to eat the passover without the previous purification required by the law (2 Chron. xxx. 2, 3, 17-20). This is implied in the words, "for there was not holden such a passover since the days of the judges and all the kings of Israel and Judah." That this remark does not preclude the holding of earlier passovers, as Thenius follows De Wette in supposing, without taking any notice of the refutations of this opinion, was correctly maintained by the earlier commentators. Thus Clericus observes: "I should have supposed that what the sacred writer meant to say was, that during the times of the kings no passover had ever been kept *so strictly by every one, according to all the Mosaic laws*. Before this, even under the pious kings, they seem to have followed custom rather than the very words of the law; and since this was the case, many things were necessarily changed and neglected." Instead of "since the days of the judges who judged Israel," we find in 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, "since the days of Samuel the prophet," who is well known to have closed the period of the judges.

Vers. 24-30. *Conclusion of Josiah's reign.*—Ver. 24. As Josiah had the passover kept in perfect accordance with the precepts of the law, so did he also exterminate the necromancers, the teraphim and all the abominations of idolatry, throughout all Judah and Jerusalem, to set up the words of the law in the book of the law that had been found, *i.e.* to carry them out and bring them into force. For הַאֲבוֹת and הַיִּדְעָנִים see at ch. xxi. 6. הַתְּרָפִים, *penates*, domestic gods, which were worshipped as the authors of earthly prosperity and as oracular deities (see at Gen. xxxi. 19). הַגִּלְלִים and הַשִּׁקְצִים, connected together, as in Deut. xxix. 16, as a contemptuous description of idols in general.—In ver. 25 the account of the efforts made by Josiah to restore the true worship of Jehovah closes with a general verdict concerning his

true piety. See the remarks on this point at ch. xviii. 5. He turned to Jehovah with all his heart, etc. : there is an evident allusion here to Deut. vi. 5. Compare with this the sentence of the prophet Jeremiah concerning his reign (Jer. xxii. 15, 16). —Ver. 26. Nevertheless the Lord turned not from the great fierceness of His wrath, wherewith He had burned against Judah on account of all the provocations “with which Manasseh had provoked Him.” With this sentence, in which אֵלֹהִים לֹא שָׁב forms an unmistakeable word-play upon אֲשֶׁר שָׁב אֵלַי, the historian introduces the account not merely of the end of Josiah’s reign, but also of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah. Manasseh is mentioned here and at ch. xxiv. 3 and Jer. xv. 4 as the person who, by his idolatry and his unrighteousness, with which he provoked God to anger, had brought upon Judah and Jerusalem the unavoidable judgment of rejection. It is true that Josiah had exterminated outward and gross idolatry throughout the land by his sincere conversion to the Lord, and by his zeal for the restoration of the lawful worship of Jehovah, and had persuaded the people to enter into covenant with its God once more ; but a thorough conversion of the people to the Lord he had not been able to effect. For, as Clericus has correctly observed, “although the king was most religious, and the people obeyed him through fear, yet for all that the mind of the people was not changed, as is evident enough from the reproaches of Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and other prophets, who prophesied about that time and a little after.” With regard to this point compare especially the first ten chapters of Jeremiah, which contain a *resumé* of his labours in the reign of Josiah, and bear witness to the deep inward apostasy of the people from the Lord, not only before and during Josiah’s reform of worship, but also afterwards. As the Holy One of Israel, therefore, God could not forgive any more, but was obliged to bring upon the people and kingdom, after the death of Josiah, the judgment already foretold to Manasseh himself (ch. xxi. 12 sqq.).—Ver. 27. The Lord said : I will also put away Judah (in the same manner as Israel : cf. ch. xvii. 20, 23) from my face, etc. וַיֹּאמֶר expresses the divine decree, which was announced to the people by the prophets, especially Jeremiah and Zephaniah.—Vers. 29 and 30 : compare 2 Chron. xxxv. 20–24. The predicted catastrophe was brought to pass by the expedition of Necho the king of Egypt against Assyria. “In his days (*i.e.* towards the end



of Josiah's reign) Pharaoh *Necho* the king of Egypt went up against the king of Asshur to the river Euphrates." *Necho* (נֶכֶחַ or נֶכֶחַ, 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, Jer. xlv. 2; called *Nεχαώ* by Josephus, Manetho in Jul. Afric., and Euseb., after the LXX.; and *Nεκῶς* by Herod. ii. 158, 159, iv. 42, and Diod. Sic. i. 33; according to Brugsch, *hist. d'Eg.* i. p. 252, *Nekâou*) was, according to Man., the sixth king of the twenty-sixth (Saitic) dynasty, the second Pharaoh of that name, the son of Psammetichus I. and grandson of Necho I.; and, according to Herodotus, he was celebrated for a canal which he proposed to have cut in order to connect the Nile with the Red Sea, as well as for the circumnavigation of Africa (compare Brugsch, *l.c.*, according to whom he reigned from 611 to 595 B.C.). Whether "the king of Asshur" against whom Necho marched was the last ruler of the Assyrian empire, *Asardanpal* (*Sardanapal*), *Saracus* according to the monuments (see Brandis, *Ueber den Gewinn*, p. 55; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 110 sqq. and 192), or the existing ruler of the Assyrian empire which had already fallen, Nabopolassar the king of Babylon, who put an end to the Assyrian monarchy in alliance with the Medes by the conquest and destruction of Nineveh, and founded the Chaldæan or Babylonian empire, it is impossible to determine, because the year in which Nineveh was taken cannot be exactly decided, and all that is certain is that Nineveh had fallen before the battle of Carchemish in the year 606 B.C. Compare M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 109 sqq. and 203, 204.—King Josiah went against the Egyptian, and "he (Necho) slew him at Megiddo when he saw him," *i.e.* caught sight of him. This extremely brief notice of the death of Josiah is explained thus in the Chronicles: that Necho sent ambassadors to Josiah, when he was taking the field against him, with an appeal that he would not fight against him, because his only intention was to make war upon Asshur, but that Josiah did not allow himself to be diverted from his purpose, and fought a battle with Necho in the valley of Megiddo, in which he was mortally wounded by the archers. What induced Josiah to oppose with force of arms the advance of the Egyptian to the Euphrates, notwithstanding the assurance of Necho that he had no wish to fight against Judah, is neither to be sought for in the fact that Josiah was dependent upon Babylon, which is at variance with history, nor in the fact that the kingdom of Judah had taken possession of all the territory of

the ancient inheritance of Israel, and Josiah was endeavouring to restore all the ancient glory of the house of David over the surrounding nations (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 707), but solely in Josiah's conviction that Judah could not remain neutral in the war which had broken out between Egypt and Babylon, and in the hope that by attacking Necho, and frustrating his expedition to the Euphrates, he might be able to avert great distress from his own land and kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

This battle is also mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 159); but he calls the place where it was fought *Μάγδολον*, i.e. neither *Migdol*, which was twelve Roman miles to the south of Pelusium (Forbiger, *Hdb. d. alten Geogr.* ii. p. 695), nor the perfectly apocryphal *Magdala* or *Migdal Zebaiiah* mentioned by the Talmudists (Reland, *Pal.* p. 898, 899), as Movers supposes. We might rather think with Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 708) of the present *Mejdel*, to the south-east of Acca, at a northern source of the Kishon, and regard this as the place where the Egyptian camp was pitched, whereas Israel stood to the east of it, at the place still called *Rummane*, at *Hadad-Rimmon* in the valley of Megiddo, as Ewald assumes (*Gesch.* iii. p. 708). But even this combination is overthrown by the fact that *Rummane*, which lies to the east of *el Mejdel* at the distance of a mile and three-quarters (geogr.), on the southern edge of the plain of Buttauf, cannot possibly be the *Hadad-Rimmon* mentioned in Zech. xii. 11, where king Josiah died after he had been wounded in the battle. For since *Megiddo* is identical with the Roman *Legio*, the present *Lejun*, as Robinson has proved (see at Josh. xii. 21), and as is generally admitted even by C. v. Raumer (*Pal.* p. 447, note, ed. 4), *Hadad-Rimmon* must be the same as the village of *Rümmuni* (*Rummane*), which is three-quarters of an hour to the

<sup>1</sup> M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 364) also calls Josiah's enterprise "a perfectly correct policy. Nineveh was falling (if not already fallen), and the Syrian princes, both those who had remained independent, like Josiah, and also the vassals of Asshur, might hope that, after the fall of Nineveh, they would succeed in releasing Syria from every foreign yoke. How well-founded this hope was, is evident from the strenuous exertions which Nabukdrussur was afterwards obliged to make, in order to effect the complete subjugation of Syria. It was therefore necessary to hinder at any price the settlement of the Egyptians now. Even though Necho assured Josiah that he was not marching against him (2 Chron. xxxv. 21), Josiah knew that if once the Egyptians were lords of Coele-Syria, his independence would be gone."



south of Lejun, where the Scottish missionaries in the year 1839 found many ancient wells and other traces of Israelitish times (V. de Velde, *R.* i. p. 267; *Memoir*, pp. 333, 334). But this Rummane is four geographical miles distant from *el Mejdol*, and Megiddo three and a half, so that the battle fought at Megiddo cannot take its name from *el Mejdol*, which is more than three miles off. The *Magdolon* of Herodotus can only arise from some confusion between it and *Megiddo*, which was a very easy thing with the Greek pronunciation *Μαγεδδῶ*, without there being any necessity to assume that Herodotus was thinking of the Egyptian *Migdol*, which is called *Magdolo* in the *Itin. Ant.* p. 171 (cf. Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschriften altägypt. Denkmäler*, i. pp. 261, 262). If, then, Josiah went to Megiddo in the plain of Esdrelom to meet the king of Egypt, and fell in with him there, there can be no doubt that Necho came by sea to Palestine and landed at Acco, as des Vignoles (*Chronol.* ii. p. 427) assumed.<sup>1</sup> For if the Egyptian army had marched by land through the plain of Philistia, Josiah would certainly have gone thither to meet it, and not have allowed it to advance into the plain of Megiddo without fighting a battle.—Ver. 30. The brief statement, “his servants carried him dead from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem,” is given with more minuteness in the Chronicles: his servants took him, the severely wounded king, by his own

<sup>1</sup> This is favoured by the account in Herodotus (ii. 159), that Necho built ships: *τρίηρες αἱ μὲν ἐπὶ τῇ βορρῇ θαλάσῃ . . . αἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ Ἀραβίῳ κόλπῳ* (*triremes in septentrionale et australe mare mittendas.* Bähr)—*καὶ ταυτησί τε ἐχρᾶτο ἐν τῷ δέοντι· καὶ Σύροις πεζῇ ὁ Νεκὼς συμβαλὼν ἐν Μαγδόλῳ ἐνίκησε*; from which we may infer that Necho carried his troops by sea to Palestine, and then fought the battle on the land. M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 365) also finds it very improbable that Necho used his fleet in this war; but he does not think it very credible “that he embarked his whole army, instead of marching them by the land route so often taken by the Egyptian army, the key of which, viz. the land of the Philistines, was at least partially subject to him,” because the *ἑλκαδεις* (ships of burden) required for the transport of a large army were hardly to be obtained in sufficient numbers in Egypt. But this difficulty, which rests upon mere conjecture, is neutralized by the fact, which M. Duncker (*Gesch.* i. p. 618) also adduces in support of the voyage by sea, namely, that the decisive battle with the Jews was fought to the north-west of Jerusalem, and when the Jews were defeated, the way to Jerusalem stood open for their retreat. Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 1, p. 420), who also imagines that Necho advanced with a large land-army towards the frontier of Palestine, has therefore transferred the battle to Magdolo on the Egyptian frontier; but he does this by means of the most arbitrary interpretation of the account given by Herodotus.

command, from his chariot to his second chariot, and drove him to Jerusalem, and he died and was buried, etc. Where he died the Chronicles do not affirm; the occurrence of *וַיָּמָת* after the words "they brought him to Jerusalem," does not prove that he did not die till he reached Jerusalem. If we compare Zech. xii. 11, where the prophet draws a parallel between the lamentation at the death of the Messiah and the lamentation of Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo, as the deepest lamentation of the people in the olden time, with the account given in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 of the lamentation of the whole nation at the death of Josiah, there can hardly be any doubt that Josiah died on the way to Jerusalem at Hadad-Rimmon, the present Rummane, to the south of Lejun (see above), and was taken to Jerusalem dead.—He was followed on the throne by his younger son Jehoahaz, whom the people (*עַם הָאָרֶץ*, as in ch. xxi. 24) anointed king, passing over the elder, Eliakim, probably because they regarded him as the more able man.

CHAP. XXIII. 31—XXIV. 17. REIGNS OF THE KINGS JEHOAHAZ,  
JEHOIAKIM, AND JEHOIACHIN.

Vers. 31–35. REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1–4). —*Jehoahaz*, called significantly by Jeremiah (xxii. 11) *Shallum*, i.e. "to whom it is requited," reigned only three months, and did evil in the eyes of the Lord as all his fathers had done. The people (or the popular party), who had preferred him to his elder brother, had apparently set great hopes upon him, as we may judge from Jer. xxii. 10–12, and seem to have expected that his strength and energy would serve to avert the danger which threatened the kingdom on the part of Necho. Ezekiel (ch. xix. 3) compares him to a young lion which learned to catch the prey and devoured men, but, as soon as the nations heard of him, was taken in their pit and led by nose-rings to Egypt, and thus attributes to him the character of a tyrant disposed to acts of violence; and Josephus accordingly (*Ant.* x. 5, 2) describes him as *ἀσεβής καὶ μιὰρὸς τὸν τρόπον*.—Ver. 33. "Pharaoh Necho put him in fetters (*וַיִּאֶסְרֵהוּ*) at Riblah in the land of Hamath, when he had become king at Jerusalem." In 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3 we have, instead of this, "the king of Egypt deposed him (*וַיִּסְרֵהוּ*) at Jerusalem." The Masoretes have substituted as *Keri* *מִפְּלֵךְ*, "away from being king," or "that he might be no



longer king," in the place of בְּמֶלֶךְ, and Thenius and Bertheau prefer the former, because the LXX. have τοῦ μὴ βασιλεύειν not in our text only, but in the Chronicles also; but they ought not to have appealed to the Chronicles, inasmuch as the LXX. have not rendered the Hebrew text there, but have simply repeated the words from the text of the book of Kings. The *Keri* is nothing more than an emendation explaining the sense, which the LXX. have also followed. The two texts are not contradictory, but simply complete each other: for, as Clericus has correctly observed, "Jehoahaz would of course be removed from Jerusalem before he was cast into chains; and there was nothing to prevent his being dethroned at Jerusalem before he was taken to Riblah." We are not told in what way Necho succeeded in getting Jehoahaz into his power, so as to put him in chains at Riblah. The assumption of J. D. Michaelis and others, that his elder brother Eliakim, being dissatisfied with the choice of Jehoahaz as king, had recourse to Necho at Riblah, in the hope of getting possession of his father's kingdom through his instrumentality, is precluded by the fact that Jehoahaz would certainly not have been so foolish as to appear before the enemy of his country at a mere summons from Pharaoh, who was at Riblah, and allow him to depose him, when he was perfectly safe in Jerusalem, where the will of the people had raised him to the throne. If Necho wanted to interfere with the internal affairs of the kingdom of Judah, it would never have done for him to proceed beyond Palestine to Syria after the victory at Megiddo, without having first deposed Jehoahaz, who had been raised to the throne at Jerusalem without any regard to his will. The course of events was therefore probably the following: After the victory at Megiddo, Necho intended to continue his march to the Euphrates; but on hearing that Jehoahaz had ascended the throne, and possibly also in consequence of complaints which Eliakim had made to him on that account, he ordered a division of his army to march against Jerusalem, and while the main army was marching slowly to Riblah, he had Jerusalem taken, king Jehoahaz dethroned, the land laid under tribute, Eliakim appointed king as his vassal, and the deposed Jehoahaz brought to his headquarters at Riblah, then put into chains and transported to Egypt; so that the statement in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3, "he deposed him at Jerusalem," is to be taken quite literally, even if Necho did not come to Jerusalem *in propria personâ*, but simply effected

this through the medium of one of his generals.<sup>1</sup> *Riblah* has been preserved in the miserable village of *Rible*, from ten to twelve hours to the S.S.W. of Hums (Emesa) by the river el Ahsy (Orontes), in a large fruitful plain of the northern portion of the Bekaa, which was very well adapted to serve as the camping ground of Necho's army as well as of that of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. xxv. 6, 20, 21), not only because it furnished the most abundant supply of food and fodder, but also on account of its situation on the great caravan-road from Palestine by Damascus, Emesa, and Hamath to Thapsacus and Carchemish on the Euphrates (cf. *Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 542–546 and 641).—In the payment imposed upon the land by Necho, one talent of gold (c. 25,000 thalers: £3750) does not seem to bear any correct proportion to 100 talents of silver (c. 250,000 thalers, or £37,500), and consequently the LXX. have 100 talents of gold, the Syr. and Arab. 10 talents; and Thenius supposes this to have been the original reading, and explains the reading in the text from the dropping out of a ' (= 10), though without reflecting that as a rule the number 10 would require the plural כֶּכָּרִים.—Ver. 34. From the words "Necho made Eliakim the son

<sup>1</sup> Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 720) also observes, that "Necho himself may have been in Jerusalem at the time for the purpose of installing his vassal:" this, he says, "is indicated by the brief words in 2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34, and nothing can be found to say against it in other historical sources;" though he assumes that Jehoahaz had allowed himself to be enticed by Necho to go to Riblah into the Egyptian camp, where he was craftily put into chains, and soon carried off as a prisoner to Egypt.—We should have a confirmation of the taking of Jerusalem by Necho in the account given by Herodotus (ii. 159): μετὰ δὲ τὴν μάχην (i.e. after the battle at Megiddo) Κάδουτιν πόλιν τῆς Συρίας εὐῶσαν μεγάλην εἶλε, if any evidence could be brought to establish the opinion that by Κάδουτις we are to understand Jerusalem. But although what Herodotus says (iii. 5) concerning Κάδουτις does not apply to any other city of Palestine so well as to Jerusalem, the use of the name Κάδουτις for Jerusalem has not yet been sufficiently explained, since it cannot come from הַקֹּדֶשׁ, the holy city, because the *q* of this word does not pass into *k* in any Semitic dialect, and the explanation recently attempted by Böttcher (*N. ex. Krit. Aehrenlese*, ii. pp. 119 sqq.) from the Aramæan כְּדִיתָא, the renewed city (new-town), is based upon many very questionable conjectures. At the same time so much is certain, that the view which Hitzig has revived (*de Cadyti urbe Herod.* Gott. 1829, p. 11, and *Urgeschichte der Philister*, pp. 96 sqq.), and which is now the prevalent one, viz. that Κάδουτις is Gaza, is exposed to some well-founded objections, even after what Stark (*Gaza*, pp. 218 sqq.) has adduced in its favour. The description which Herodotus gives (iii. 5) of the land-road to Egypt: ἀπὸ Φοινίκης μέχρι ὤρων τῶν Καδύτιος πόλιος, ἥ ἐστὶ Σύρων τῶν Παλαιστινίων καλεομένων



of Josiah king *in the place of his father Josiah*," it follows that the king of Egypt did not acknowledge the reign of Jehoahaz, because he had been installed by the people without his consent. "And changed his name into Jehoiakim." The alteration of the name was a sign of dependence. In ancient times princes were accustomed to give new names to the persons whom they took into their service, and masters to give new names to their slaves (cf. Gen. xli. 45, Ezra v. 14, Dan. i. 7, and Hävernicks on the last passage).—But while these names were generally borrowed from heathen deities, Eliakim, and at a later period Mattaniah (xxiv. 17), received genuine Israelitish names, *Jehoiakim*, i.e. "Jehovah will set up," and *Zidkiyahu*, i.e. "righteousness of Jehovah;" from which we may infer that Necho and Nebuchadnezzar did not treat the vassal kings installed by them exactly as their slaves, but allowed them to choose the new names for themselves, and simply confirmed them as a sign of their supremacy. *Eliakim* altered his name into *Jehoiakim*, i.e. *El* (God) into *Jehovah*, to set the allusion to the establishment of the kingdom, which is implied in the name, in a still more definite relation to Jehovah the covenant God, who had promised to establish the seed of David (2 Sam. vii. 14), possibly with an

ἀπὸ δὲ Καδύτιος, εἰούσης πόλιος (ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκέει) Σαρδίων οὐ πολλῶν ἐλάσσονος, ἀπὸ ταύτης τὰ ἐμπόρια τὰ ἐπὶ θαλάσσης μέχρι Ἰηνύσου πόλιός ἐστι τοῦ Ἀραβίου does not apply to Gaza, because there were no commercial towns on the sea-coast between the district of Gaza and the town of *Yenysus* (the present *Khan Yūnas*); but between the district of Jerusalem and the town of *Yenysus* there were the Philistian cities Ashkelon and Gaza, which Herodotus might call τὰ ἐμπόρια τοῦ Ἀραβίου, whereas the comparison made between the size of Kadytis and that of Sardes points rather to Jerusalem than to Gaza. Still less can the *datum* in Jer. xlvi. 1, "before Pharaoh smote Gaza," be adduced in support of Gaza. If we bear in mind that Jeremiah's prophecy (ch. xlvii.) was not uttered before the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, and therefore that Pharaoh had not smitten Gaza at that time, supposing that this Pharaoh was really Necho, it cannot have been till after his defeat at Carchemish that Necho took Gaza on his return home. Ewald, Hitzig, and Graf assume that this was the case; but, as M. v. Niebuhr has correctly observed, it has "every military probability" against it, and even the incredibility that "a routed Oriental army in its retreat, which it evidently accomplished in one continuous march, notwithstanding the fact that on its line of march there were the strongest positions, on the Orontes, Lebanon, etc., at which it might have halted, should have taken the city upon its flight." And, lastly, the name *Καδύτις* does not answer to the name *Gaza*, even though the latter was spelt *Gazatu* in early Egyptian (Brugsch, *Geograph. Inschr.* ii. p. 32), since the *v* (*y*) of the second syllable still remains unexplained.

intentional opposition to the humiliation with which the royal house of David was threatened by Jeremiah and other prophets. —“ But Jehoahaz he had taken (לָקַח, like יָקַח in ch. xxiv. 12), and he came to Egypt and died there ”—when, we are not told. —In ver. 35, even before the account of Jehoiakim's reign, we have fuller particulars respecting the payment of the tribute which Necho imposed upon the land (ver. 33), because it was the condition on which he was appointed king.—“ The gold and silver Jehoiakim gave to Pharaoh; yet (אֲדָּ = but in order to raise it) he valued (הָעֵרִיף) as in Lev. xxvii. 8) the land, to give the money according to Pharaoh's command; of every one according to his valuation, he exacted the silver and gold of the population of the land, to give it to Pharaoh Necho.” נָגַשׁ, to exact tribute, is construed with a double accusative, and אִישׁ בְּעֵרְבוֹ placed first for the sake of emphasis, as an explanatory apposition to אֶת־עַם הָאָרֶץ.

Ver. 36—ch. xxiv. 7. REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5–8).—Jehoiakim reigned eleven years in the spirit of his ungodly forefathers (compare ver. 37 with ver. 32). Jeremiah represents him (ch. xxii. 13 sqq.) as a bad prince, who enriched himself by the unjust oppression of his people, “ whose eyes and heart were directed upon nothing but upon gain, and upon innocent blood to shed it, and upon oppression and violence to do them ” (compare ch. xxiv. 4 and Jer. xxvi. 22, 23). Josephus therefore describes him as τῇν φύσιν ἄδικος καὶ κακοῦργος, καὶ μήτε πρὸς Θεὸν ὁσIOS, μήτε πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἐπιεικής (Ant. x. 5, 2). The town of *Rumah*, from which his mother sprang, is not mentioned anywhere else, but it has been supposed to be identical with *Aruma* in the neighbourhood of Shechem (Judg. ix. 41).

Ch. xxiv. ver. 1. “ In his days Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, came up; and Jehoiakim became subject to him three years, then he revolted from him again.” נְבֻכַדְנֶאצַּר, *Nebuchadnezzar*, or נְבוּכַדְרֶאצַּר, *Nebuchadrezzar* (Jer. xxi. 2, 7, xxii. 25, etc.), Ναβουχοδονόσορ (LXX.), Ναβουχοδονόσορος (Beros. in Jos. c. Ap. i. 20, 21), Ναβοκοδρόσορος (Strabo, xv. 1, 6), upon the Persian arrow-headed inscriptions at Bisutun *Nabhukudracara* (according to Oppert, composed of the name of God, *Nabhu* (Nebo), the Arabic *kadr*, power, and *zar* or *sar*, prince), and in still other forms (for the different forms of the name see M. v.



Niebuhr's *Gesch.* pp. 41, 42). He was the son of Nabopolassar, the founder of the Chaldæan monarchy, and reigned, according to Berosus (*Jos. l.c.*), Alex. Polyh. (*Eusebii Chron. arm.* i. pp. 44, 45), and the *Canon* of Ptol., forty-three years, from 605 to 562 B.C. With regard to his first campaign against Jerusalem, it is stated in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, that "against him (Jehoiakim) came up Nebuchadnezzar, and bound him with brass chains, to carry him (לְהוֹלִיכוֹ) to Babylon;" and in Dan. i. 1, 2, that "in the year three of the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and besieged it; and the Lord gave Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, into his hand, and a portion of the holy vessels, and he brought them (the vessels) into the land of Shinar, into the house of his god," etc. Bertheau (*on Chr.*) admits that all three passages relate to Nebuchadnezzar's first expedition against Jehoiakim and the first taking of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon, and rejects the alteration of לְהוֹלִיכוֹ, "to lead him to Babylon" (*Chr.*), into ἀπήγαγεν αὐτόν (LXX.), for which Thenius decides in his prejudice in favour of the LXX. He has also correctly observed, that the chronicler intentionally selected the infinitive with ל, because he did not intend to speak of the actual transportation of Jehoiakim to Babylon. The words of our text, "Jehoiakim became servant (עֶבֶד) to him," *i.e.* subject to him, simply affirm that he became tributary, not that he was led away. And in the book of Daniel also there is nothing about the leading away of Jehoiakim to Babylon. Whilst, therefore, the three accounts agree in the main with one another, and supply one another's deficiencies, so that we learn that Jehoiakim was taken prisoner at the capture of Jerusalem and put in chains to be led away, but that, inasmuch as he submitted to Nebuchadnezzar and vowed fidelity, he was not taken away, but left upon the throne as vassal of the king of Babylon; the statement in the book of Daniel concerning the time when this event occurred, which is neither contained in our account nor in the Chronicles, presents a difficulty when compared with Jer. xxv. and xlvi. 2, and different attempts, some of them very constrained, have been made to remove it. According to Jer. xlvi. 2, Nebuchadnezzar smote Necho the king of Egypt at Carchemish, on the Euphrates, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. This year is not only called the first year of Nebuchadnezzar in Jer. xxv. 1, but is represented by the prophet as the turning-point of the kingdom of Judah by the announce-

ment that the Lord would bring His servant Nebuchadnezzar upon Judah and its inhabitants, and also upon all the nations dwelling round about, that he would devastate Judah, and that these nations would serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jer. xxv. 9-11). Consequently not only the defeat of Necho at Carchemish, but also the coming of Nebuchadnezzar to Judah, fell in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and not in the third. To remove this discrepancy, some have proposed that the time mentioned, "in the fourth year of Jehoiakim" (Jer. xlvi. 2), should be understood as relating, not to the year of the battle at Carchemish, but to the time of the prophecy of Jeremiah against Egypt contained in ch. xlvi., and that Jer. xxv. should also be explained as follows, that in this chapter the prophet is not announcing the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, but is proclaiming a year after this the destruction of Jerusalem and the devastation of the whole land, or a total judgment upon Jerusalem and the rest of the nations mentioned there (M. v. Nieb. *Gesch.* pp. 86, 87, 371). But this explanation is founded upon the erroneous assumption, that Jer. xlvi. 3-12 does not contain a prediction of the catastrophe awaiting Egypt, but a picture of what has already taken place there; and it is only in a very forced manner that it can be brought into harmony with the contents of Jer. xxv.<sup>1</sup> We must rather take "the year three of the reign of Jehoiakim" (Dan. i. 1) as the extreme *terminus a quo* of Nebuchadnezzar's coming, *i.e.* must understand the statement thus: that in the year referred to Nebuchadnezzar commenced the expedition against Judah, and smote Necho at Carchemish at the commencement of the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xlvi. 2), and then, following up this victory, took Jerusalem in the same year, and made Jehoiakim tributary, and at the same time carried off to Babylon a portion of the sacred vessels, and some young men of royal blood as hostages, one of whom was Daniel (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2 sqq.). The fast mentioned in Jer. xxxvi. 9, which took place in the fifth year

<sup>1</sup> Still less tenable is the view of Hofmann, renewed by Zündel (*Krit. Unterss. üb. d. Abfassungszeit des B. Daniel*, p. 25), that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim, and that it was not till the following, or fourth year, that he defeated the Egyptian army at Carchemish, because so long as Pharaoh Necho stood with his army by or in Carchemish, on the Euphrates, Nebuchadnezzar could not possibly attempt to pass it so as to effect a march upon Jerusalem.



of Jehoiakim, cannot be adduced in disproof of this; for extraordinary fast-days were not only appointed for the purpose of averting great threatening dangers, but also after severe calamities which had fallen upon the land or people, to expiate His wrath by humiliation before God, and to invoke the divine compassion to remove the judgment that had fallen upon them. The objection, that the godless king would hardly have thought of renewing the remembrance of a divine judgment by a day of repentance and prayer, but would rather have desired to avoid everything that could make the people despair, falls to the ground, with the erroneous assumption upon which it is founded, that by the fast-day Jehoiakim simply intended to renew the remembrance of the judgment which had burst upon Jerusalem, whereas he rather desired by outward humiliation before God to secure the help of God to enable him to throw off the Chaldæan yoke, and arouse in the people a religious enthusiasm for war against their oppressors.—Further information concerning this first expedition of Nebuchadnezzar is supplied by the account of Berosus, which Josephus (*Ant.* x. 11, and *c. Ap.* i. 19) has preserved from the third book of his Chaldæan history, namely, that when Nabopolassar received intelligence of the revolt of the satrap whom he had placed over Egypt, Coele-Syria, and Phœnicia, because he was no longer able on account of age to bear the hardships of war, he placed a portion of his army in the hands of his youthful son Nebuchadnezzar and sent him against the satrap. Nebuchadnezzar defeated him in battle, and established his power over that country again. In the meantime Nabopolassar fell sick and died in Babylon; and as soon as the tidings reached Nebuchadnezzar, he hastened through the desert to Babylon with a small number of attendants, and directed his army to follow slowly after regulating the affairs of Egypt and the rest of the country, and to bring with it the prisoners *from the Jews*, Syrians, Phœnicians, and Egyptian tribes, and with the heavily-armed troops. So much, at any rate, is evident from this account, after deducting the motive assigned for the war, which is given from a Chaldæan point of view, and may be taken as a historical fact, that even before his father's death Nebuchadnezzar had not only smitten the Egyptians, but had also conquered Judah and penetrated to the borders of Egypt. And there is no discrepancy between the statement of Berosus, that Nebuchadnezzar was not yet king, and the fact

that in the biblical books he is called king proleptically, because he marched against Judah with kingly authority.

Vers. 2-7. To punish Jehoiakim's rebellion, Jehovah sent hosts of Chaldæans, Aramæans, Moabites, and Ammonites against him and against Judah to destroy it (לְהַאֲבִידוֹ). Nebuchadnezzar was probably too much occupied with other matters relating to his kingdom, during the earliest years of his reign after his father's death, to be able to proceed at once against Jehoiakim and punish him for his revolt.<sup>1</sup> He may also have thought it a matter of too little importance for him to go himself, as there was not much reason to be afraid of Egypt since its first defeat (cf. M. v. Niebuhr, p. 375). He therefore merely sent such troops against him as were in the neighbourhood of Judah at the time. The tribes mentioned along with the Chaldæans were probably all subject to Nebuchadnezzar, so that they attacked Judah at his command in combination with the Chaldæan tribes left upon the frontier. How much they effected is not distinctly stated; but it is evident that they were not able to take Jerusalem, from the fact that after the death of Jehoiakim his son was able to ascend the throne (ver. 6).—The sending of these troops is ascribed to Jehovah, who, as the supreme controller of the fate of the covenant-nation, punished Jehoiakim for his rebellion. For, after the Lord had given Judah into the hands of the Chaldæans as a punishment for its apostasy from Him, all revolt from them was rebellion against the Lord. "According to the word of Jehovah, which He spake by His servants the prophets," viz. Isaiah, Micah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and others.—Vers. 3, 4. "וְכַל־עַל־פִּי : "only according to the mouth (command) of Jehovah did this take place against Judah," i.e. for no other reason than because the Lord had determined to put away Judah from before His face because of Manasseh's sins (cf. ch. xxi. 12-16, and xxiii. 27). "And Jehovah would not

<sup>1</sup> Compare the remarks of M. v. Niebuhr on this point (*Gesch.* pp. 208, 209) and his summary at p. 209: "Nebuchadnezzar had enough to do in Babylon and the eastern half of his kingdom, to complete the organization of the new kingdom, to make the military roads to the western half of the kingdom along the narrow valley of the Euphrates and through the desert, and also to fortify them and provide them with watering stations and every other requisite, to repair the damages of the Scythian hordes and the long contest with Nineveh, to restore the shattered authority, and to bring Arabs and mountain-tribes to order. All this was more important than a somewhat more rapid termination of the Egyptian war and the pacification of Syria."



forgive," even if the greatest intercessors, Moses and Samuel, had come before Him (Jer. xv. 1 sqq.), because the measure of the sins was full, so that God was obliged to punish according to His holy righteousness. We must repeat נָפַח from the preceding words before הִנֵּנִי וְנָפַח.—Ver. 6. "Jehoiakim lay down to (fell asleep with) his fathers, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his stead." That this statement is not in contradiction to the prophecies of Jer. xxii. 19: "Jehoiakim shall be buried like an ass, carried away and cast out far away from the gates of Jerusalem," and xxxvi. 30: "no son of his shall sit upon the throne of David, and his body shall lie exposed to the heat by day and to the cold by night," is now generally admitted, as it has already been by J. D. Michaelis and Winer. But the solution proposed by Michaelis, Winer, and M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 376) is not sufficient, namely, that at the conquest of Jerusalem, which took place three months after the death of Jehoiakim, his bones were taken out of the grave, either by the victors out of revenge for his rebellion, or by the fury of the people, and cast out before the city gate; for Jeremiah expressly predicts that he shall have no funeral and no burial whatever. We must therefore assume that he was slain in a battle fought with the troops sent against him, and was not buried at all; an assumption which is not at variance with the words, "he laid himself down to his fathers," since this formula does not necessarily indicate a peaceful death by sickness, but is also applied to king Ahab, who was slain in battle (1 Kings xxii. 40, cf. 2 Kings xxii. 20).<sup>1</sup>—And even though his son Jehoiachin ascended the throne after his father's death and maintained his position for three months against the Chaldeans, until at length he fell into their hands and was carried away alive to Babylon, the prophet might very truly describe this short reign as not sitting upon the throne of David (cf. Graf on Jer. xxii. 19).—To the death of Jehoiakim there is appended the notice in ver. 7, that the king of Egypt did not go out of his own land any more, because the king of Babylon had taken away everything that had belonged to the king of Egypt,

<sup>1</sup> The supposition of Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 733), that Jehoiakim was enticed out of the capital by a stratagem of the enemy, and taken prisoner, and because he made a furious resistance was hurried off in a scuffle and mercilessly slaughtered, is at variance with the fact that, according to ver. 10, it was not till after his death that the army of the enemy advanced to the front of Jerusalem and commenced the siege.

from the brook of Egypt to the river Euphrates. The purpose of this notice is to indicate, on the one hand, what attitude Necho, whose march to the Euphrates was previously mentioned, had assumed on the conquest of Judah by the Chaldæans, and on the other hand, that under these circumstances a successful resistance to the Chaldæans on the part of Judah was not for a moment to be thought of.

Vers. 8–17 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9 and 10). Jehoiachin, יְהוֹיָכִין or יֹיָכִין (Ezek. i. 2), *i.e.* he whom Jehovah fortifies, called יְכִנְיָהוּ in 1 Chron. iii. 16, 17, and Jer. xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, etc., and יְכִנְיָהוּ in Jer. xxii. 24, 28, xxxvii. 1, probably according to the popular twisting and contraction of the name Jehoiachin, was eighteen years old when he ascended the throne (the eight years of the Chronicles are a slip of the pen), and reigned three months, or, according to the more precise statement of the Chronicles, three months and ten days, in the spirit of his father. Ezekiel (xix. 5–7) describes him not only as a young lion, who learned to prey and devoured men, like Jehoahaz, but also affirms of him that he knew their (the deceased men's) widows, *i.e.* ravished them, and destroyed their cities,—that is to say, he did not confine his deeds of violence to individuals, but extended them to all that was left behind by those whom he had murdered, viz. to their families and possessions; and nothing is affirmed in Jer. xxii. 24 and 28 respecting his character at variance with this. His mother *Nehushta* was a daughter of Elnathan, a ruler of the people, or prince, from Jerusalem (Jer. xxvi. 22, xxxvi. 12, 25).—Ver. 10. “At that time,” *i.e.* when Jehoiachin had come to the throne, or, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, “at the turn of the year,” *i.e.* in the spring (see at 1 Kings xx. 22), the servants (generals) of Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. The *Keri* עָלִי is substantially correct, but is an unnecessary alteration of the *Chethib* עָלָה, since the verb when it precedes the subject is not unfrequently used in the singular, though before a plural subject (cf. Ewald, § 316, a). The עֲבָרֵי נָבֹ is different from the נְדָרִים of ver. 2. As the troops sent against Jehoiakim had not been able to conquer Judah, especially Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar sent his generals with an army against Jerusalem, to besiege the city and take it.—Ver. 11. During the siege he came himself to punish Jehoiakim's revolt in the person of his successor.—Ver. 12. Then Jehoiachin went out to the king of Babylon to yield himself up



to him, because he perceived the impossibility of holding the city any longer against the besiegers, and probably hoped to secure the favour of Nebuchadnezzar, and perhaps to retain the throne as his vassal by a voluntary submission. Nebuchadnezzar, however, did not show favour any more, as he had done to Jehoiakim at the first taking of Jerusalem, but treated Jehoiachin as a rebel, made him prisoner, and led him away to Babylon, along with his mother, his wives (ver. 15), his princes and his chamberlains, as Jeremiah had prophesied (ch. xxii. 24 sqq.), in the eighth year of his (Nebuchadnezzar's) reign. The reference to the king's mother in vers. 12 and 15 is not to be explained on the ground that she still acted as guardian over the king, who was not yet of age (J. D. Mich.), but from the influential position which she occupied in the kingdom as הַנְּבִיָּה (Jer. xxix. 2: see at 1 Kings xiv. 21). The eighth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar is reckoned from the time when his father had transferred to him the chief command over the army to make war upon Necho, according to which his *first* year coincides with the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xxv. 1). As Nebuchadnezzar acted as king, so far as the Jews were concerned, from that time forward, although he conducted the war by command of his father, this is always reckoned as the point of time at which his reign commenced, both in our books and also in Jeremiah (cf. ch. xxv. 8; Jer. xxxii. 1). According to this calculation, his reign lasted forty-four years, viz. the eight years of Jehoiakim and the thirty-six years of Jehoiachin's imprisonment, as is evident from ch. xxv. 27.—Ver. 13. Nebuchadnezzar thereupon, that is to say, when he had forced his way into the city, plundered the treasures of the temple and palace, and broke the gold off the vessels which Solomon had made in the temple of Jehovah. וַיִּצֹק, to cut off, break off, as in ch. xvi. 17, *i.e.* to bear off the gold plates. Nebuchadnezzar had already taken a portion of the golden vessels of the temple away with him at the first taking of Jerusalem in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and had placed them in the temple of his god at Babylon (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2). They were no doubt the smaller vessels of solid gold,—basins, scoops, goblets, knives, tongs, etc.,—which Cyrus delivered up again to the Jews on their return to their native land (Ezra i. 7 sqq.). This time he took the gold off the larger vessels, which were simply plated with that metal, such as the altar of burnt-offering, the table of shew-bread

and ark of the covenant, and carried it away as booty, so that on the third conquest of Jerusalem, in the time of Zedekiah, beside a few gold and silver basins and scoops (ch. xxv. 15) there were only the large brazen vessels of the court remaining (ch. xxv. 13-17; Jer. xxvii. 18 sqq.). The words, "as Jehovah had spoken," refer to ch. xx. 17 and Isa. xxxix. 6, and to the sayings of other prophets, such as Jer. xv. 13, xvii. 3, etc.—Vers. 14-16. Beside these treasures, he carried away captive to Babylon the cream of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, not only the most affluent, but, as is evident from Jer. xxiv., the best portion in a moral respect. In ver. 14 the number of those who were carried off is simply given in a general form, according to its sum-total, as 10,000; and then in vers. 15 and 16 the details are more minutely specified. "All Jerusalem" is the whole of the population of Jerusalem, which is first of all divided into two leading classes, and then more precisely defined by the clause, "nothing was left except the common people," and reduced to the cream of the citizens. The king, queen-mother, and king's wives being passed over and mentioned for the first time in the special list in ver. 15, there are noticed here כָּל-הַשָּׂרִים and כָּל-נְבוֹרֵי הַחֵיל, who form the first of the leading classes. By the שָׂרִים are meant, according to ver. 15, the כְּרִיסִים, chamberlains, *i.e.* the officials of the king's court in general, and by אוֹלֵי הָאָרֶץ ("the mighty of the land") all the heads of the tribes and families of the nation that were found in Jerusalem; and under the last the priests and prophets, who were also carried away, according to Jer. xxix. 1, with Ezekiel among them (Ezek. i. 1), are included as the spiritual heads of the people. The נְבוֹרֵי הַחֵיל are called אֲנָשֵׁי הַחֵיל in ver. 16; their number was 7000. The persons intended are not warriors, but men of property, as in ch. xv. 20. The second class of those who were carried away consisted of כָּל-הַהָרָשׁ, all the workers in stone, metal, and wood, that is to say, masons, smiths, and carpenters; and הַמְּסָגֵר, the locksmiths, including probably not actual locksmiths only, but makers of weapons also. There is no need for any serious refutation of the marvellous explanation given of מְסָגֵר by Hitzig (on Jer. xxiv. 1), who derives it from מַס and גֵּר, and supposes it to be an epithet applied to the remnant of the Canaanites, who had been made into tributary labourers, although it has been adopted by Thenius and Graf, who make them into artisans of the foreign socagers. דָּלַת-הָאָרֶץ = דָּלַת עַם-הָאָרֶץ (ch. xxv. 12), the poor people



of the land, *i.e.* the lower portion of the population of Jerusalem, from whom Nebuchadnezzar did not fear any rebellion, because they possessed nothing (Jer. xxxix. 10), *i.e.* neither property (money nor other possessions), nor strength and ability to organize a revolt. The antithesis to these is formed by the *גְּבוּרִים עֲשֵׂי מְלָחָמָה*, the strong or powerful men, who were in a condition to originate and carry on a war; for this category includes all who were carried away, not merely the thousand workmen, but also the seven thousand *אֲנָשֵׁי הַחֵל*, and the king's officers and the chiefs of the nation, whose number amounted to two thousand, since the total number of the exiles was ten thousand. There is no special allusion to warriors or military, because in the struggle for the rescue of the capital and the kingdom from destruction every man who could bear arms performed military service, so that the distinction between warriors and non-warriors was swept away, and the actual warriors are swallowed up in the ten thousand. *Babel* is the country of Babylonia, or rather the Babylonian empire.—Ver. 17. Over the lower classes of the people who had been left behind Nebuchadnezzar placed the paternal uncle of the king, who had been led away, *viz.* Mattaniah, and made him king under the name of Zedekiah. He was the youngest son of Josiah (Jer. i. 3, xxxvii. 1); was only ten years old when his father died, and twenty-one years old when he ascended the throne; and as the uncle of Jehoiachin, who being only a youth of eighteen could not have a son capable of reigning, had the first claim to the throne. Instead of *יָרֵדוּ*, his uncle, we have in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10 *אָחִיו*, his brother, *i.e.* his nearest relation. On the change in the name see at ch. xxiii. 34. The name *צִדְקִיָּהוּ*, *i.e.* he who has Jehovah's righteousness, was probably chosen by Mattaniah in the hope that through him or in his reign the Lord would create the righteousness promised to His people.

CHAP. XXIV. 18-XXV. 30. REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH, DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH, AND FATE OF THE PEOPLE LEFT BEHIND, AND OF KING JEHOIACHIN.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 18-20. *Length and spirit of Zedekiah's reign* (cf. Jer. lii. 1-3, and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11-13).—Zedekiah's mother Ha-

<sup>1</sup> To this section the historical appendix to the book of Jeremiah (Jer. lii.) furnishes a parallel, which agrees with it for the most part word for word,

mital, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah, was also the mother of Jehoahaz (ch. xxiii. 31); consequently he was his own brother and the half-brother of Jehoiakim, whose mother was named Zebidah (ch. xxiii. 36). His reign lasted eleven years, and in its attitude towards the Lord exactly resembled that of his brother Jehoiakim, except that Zedekiah does not appear to have possessed so much energy for that which was evil. According to Jer. xxxviii. 5 and 24 sqq., he was weak in character, and completely governed by the great men of his kingdom, having no power or courage whatever to offer resistance. But, like them, he did not hearken to the words of the Lord through Jeremiah (Jer. xxxvii. 2), or, as it is expressed in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, "he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spake to him out of the mouth of the Lord."—Ver. 20. "For because of the wrath of the Lord it happened concerning Judah and Jerusalem." The subject to הִיָּתָה is to be taken from what precedes, viz. Zedekiah's doing evil, or that such a God-resisting man as Zedekiah became king. "Not that it was of God that Zedekiah was wicked, but that Zedekiah, a man (if we believe Brentius, *in loc.*) simple, dependent upon counsellors, yet at the same time despising the word of God and impenitent (2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, 13), became king, so as to be the cause of Jerusalem's destruction" (Seb. Schm.). On עַד הַשְּׁלִיכוֹ וְגו' cf. ver. 3, and ch. xvii. 18, 23. "And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babel," who, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13, had made him swear by God, to whom he was bound

omitting only the short account of the murder of Gedaliah and of the flight of the people to Egypt (vers. 22–26), and adding instead a computation of the number of the people who were led away to Babel by Nebuchadnezzar (vers. 28–30). Apart from the less important variations, which have arisen in part simply from copyists' errors, we have in Jer. lii. 18, and especially in vers. 21 and 22, by no means unimportant notices concerning the vessels of the temple, especially concerning the ornaments of the brazen pillars, which do not occur anywhere in our books. It is evident from this that our text was not derived from Jer. lii. (Hävernick), and that Jer. lii. was not borrowed from our books of Kings and appended to the book of Jeremiah's prophecies (Ros., Maur., Ew., Graf). On the contrary, the two accounts are simply brief extracts from one common and more elaborate history of the later times of the kingdom of Judah, possibly composed by Jeremiah or Baruch, analogous to the two extracts from the history of Hezekiah in 2 Kings xviii.–xx. and Isa. xxxv.–xxxix.—More minute accounts of this space of time are given in the historical portions of the prophecies of Jeremiah (ch. xxxix.–xliv.), which form an explanatory commentary to the section before us.



by oath to render fealty. This breach of covenant and frivolous violation of his oath Ezekiel also condemns in sharp words (Ezek. xvii. 13 sqq.), as a grievous sin against the Lord. Zedekiah also appears from the very first to have had no intention of keeping the oath of fealty which he took to the king of Babel with very great uprightness. For only a short time after he was installed as king he despatched an embassy to Babel (Jer. xxix. 3), which, judging from the contents of the letter to the exiles that Jeremiah gave to the ambassadors to take with them, can hardly have been sent with any other object than to obtain from the king of Babel the return of those who had been carried away. Then in the fourth year of his reign he himself made a journey to Babel (Jer. xli. 59), evidently to investigate the circumstances upon the spot, and to ensure the king of Babel of his fidelity. And in the fifth month of the same year, probably after his return from Babel, ambassadors of the Moabites, Ammonites, Tyrians, and Sidonians came to Jerusalem to make an alliance with him for throwing off the Chaldæan yoke (Jer. xxvii. 3). Zedekiah also had recourse to Egypt, where the enterprising Pharaoh *Hophra* (*Apries*) had ascended the throne; and then, in spite of the warnings of Jeremiah, trusting to the help of Egypt, revolted from the king of Babel, probably at a time when Nebuchadnezzar (according to the combinations of M. v. Nieb., which are open to question however) was engaged in a war with Media.

Ch. xxv. 1-7. *Siege and conquest of Jerusalem; Zedekiah taken prisoner and led away to Babel* (cf. Jer. lii. 4-11 and xxxix. 1-7).—Ver. 1. In the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar marched with all his forces against Jerusalem and commenced the siege (cf. Jer. xxxix. 1), after he had taken all the rest of the fortified cities of the land, with the exception of Lachish and Azekah, which were besieged at the same time as Jerusalem (Jer. xxxiv. 7). On the very same day the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem was revealed to the prophet Ezekiel in his exile (Ezek. xxiv. 1). “And they built against it (the city) siege-towers round about.” פִּיִּי, which only occurs here and in Jeremiah (lii. 4) and Ezekiel (iv. 2, xvii. 17, xxi. 27, xxvi. 8), does not mean either a line of circumvallation (J. D. Mich., Hitzig), or the outermost enclosure constructed of palisades (Thenius, whose assertion that פִּיִּי is always mentioned as the

first work of the besiegers is refuted by Ezek. xvii. 17 and xxi. 27), but a *watch*, and that in a collective sense: watch-towers or siege-towers (cf. Ges. *thes.* p. 330, and Hävernicks on Ezek. iv. 2).—Ver. 2. “And the city was besieged till the eleventh year of king Zedekiah,” in which the northern wall of the city was broken through on the ninth day of the fourth month (ver. 3). That Jerusalem could sustain a siege of this duration, namely eighteen months, shows what the strength of the fortifications must have been. Moreover the siege was interrupted for a short time, when the approach of the Egyptian king Hophra compelled the Chaldæans to march to meet him and drive him back, which they appear to have succeeded in doing without a battle (cf. Jer. xxxvii. 5 sqq., Ezek. xvii. 7).—Vers. 3, 4. Trusting partly to the help of the Egyptians and partly to the strength of Jerusalem, Zedekiah paid no attention to the repeated entreaties of Jeremiah, that he would save himself with his capital and people from the destruction which was otherwise inevitable, by submitting to the Chaldæans (cf. Jer. xxi. 37 and 38), but allowed things to reach their worst, until the famine became so intense, that inhuman horrors were perpetrated (cf. Lam. ii. 20, 21, iv. 9, 10), and eventually a breach was made in the city wall on the ninth day of the fourth month. The statement of the month is omitted in our text, where the words **בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָרְבִיעִי** (Jer. lii. 6, cf. xxxix. 2) have fallen out before **בְּחֹשֶׁעַה** (ver. 3, commencement) through the oversight of a copyist. The overwhelming extent of the famine is mentioned, not “because the people were thereby rendered quite unfit to offer any further resistance” (Seb. Schm.), but as a proof of the truth of the prophetic announcements (Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 53–57; Jer. xv. 2, xxvii. 13; Ezek. iv. 16, 17). **עַם הָאָרֶץ** are the common people in Jerusalem, or the citizens of the capital. From the more minute account of the entrance of the enemy into the city in Jer. xxxix. 3–5 we learn that the Chaldæans made a breach in the northern or outer wall of the lower city, *i.e.* the second wall, built by Hezekiah and Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxii. 5, xxxiii. 14), and forced their way into the lower city (**הַמִּשְׁנָה**, xxii. 14), so that their generals took their stand at the gate of the centre, which was in the wall that separated the lower city from the upper city upon Zion, and formed the passage from the one to the other. When Zedekiah saw them here, he fled by night with the soldiers out of the city, through the gate



between the two walls at or above the king's garden, on the road to the plain of the Jordan, while the Chaldæans were round about the city. In ver. 4 a faulty text has come down to us. In the clause **וּבְלֹא־אֲנִשִּׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** the verb **יִבְרְחוּ** is omitted, if not even more, namely **וַיֵּצְאוּ מִן הָעִיר**, "fled and went out of the city." And if we compare Jer. xxxix. 4, it is evident that before **וּבְלֹא־אֲנִשִּׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** still more has dropped out, not merely **הַמִּלְחָמָה**, which must have stood in the text, since according to ver. 5 the king was among the fugitives; but most probably the whole clause **וַיְהִי כִּאֲשֶׁר רָאָם צִדְקִיָּהוּ מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה**, since the words **וּבְלֹא־אֲנִשִּׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה** have no real connection with what precedes, and cannot form a circumstantial clause so far as the sense is concerned. The "gate between the two walls, which (was) at or over (**עַל**) the king's garden," was a gate at the mouth of the Tyropæon, that is to say, at the south-eastern corner of the city of Zion; for, according to Neh. iii. 15, the king's garden was at the pool of Siloah, *i.e.* at the mouth of the Tyropæon (see Rob. *Pal.* ii. 142). By this defile, therefore, the approach to the city was barred by a double wall, the inner one running from Zion to the Ophel, whilst the outer one, at some distance off, connected the Zion wall with the outer surrounding wall of the Ophel, and most probably enclosed the king's garden. The subject to **וַיֵּלֶךְ** is **הַמִּלְחָמָה**, which has dropped out before **וּבְלֹא־אֲנִשִּׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה**. **הָעֵרְבָה** is the lowland valley on both sides of the Jordan (see at Deut. i. 1).—Ver. 5. As the Chaldæans were encamped around the city, the flight was immediately discovered. The Chaldæan army pursued him, and overtook him in the steppes of Jericho, whilst his own army was dispersed, all of which Ezekiel had foreseen in the Spirit (Ezek. xii. 3 sqq.). **עֲרֵבוֹת יֵרֵחוֹ** are that portion of the plain of the Jordan which formed the country round Jericho (see at Josh. iv. 13).—Ver. 6. Zedekiah having been seized by the Chaldæans, was taken to the king of Babel in the Chaldæan headquarters at Riblah (see at ch. xxiii. 33), and was there put upon his trial. According to ver. 1, Nebuchadnezzar had commenced the siege of Jerusalem in person; but afterwards, possibly not till after the Egyptians who came to relieve the besieged city had been repulsed, he transferred the continuance of the siege, which was a prolonged one, to his generals, and retired to Riblah, to conduct the operations of the whole campaign from thence. **דָּבַר מִשְׁפָּט אֶת־כָּל־אֶחָד**, to conduct judicial proceedings with any one, *i.e.* to hear and judge him. For this

Jeremiah constantly uses the plural מִשְׁפָּטִים, not only in ch. lii. 9 and xxxix. 5, but also in ch. i. 16 and iv. 12.—Ver. 7. The punishment pronounced upon Zedekiah was the merited reward of the breach of his oath, and his hardening himself against the counsel of the Lord which was announced to him by Jeremiah during the siege, that he should save not only his own life, but also Jerusalem from destruction, by a voluntary submission to the Chaldæans, whereas by obstinate resistance he would bring an ignominious destruction upon himself, his family, the city, and the whole people (Jer. xxxviii. 17 sqq., xxxii. 5, xxxiv. 3 sqq.). His sons, who, though not mentioned in ver. 4, had fled with him and had been taken, and (according to Jer. lii. 10 and xxxix. 6) all the nobles (princes) of Judah, *sc.* those who had fled with the king, were slain before his eyes. He himself was then blinded, and led away to Babel, chained with double chains of brass, and kept a prisoner there till his death (Jer. lii. 11); so that, as Ezekiel (xii. 13) had prophesied, he came to Babel, but did not see the land, and died there. Blinding by pricking out the eyes was a common punishment for princes among the Babylonians and Persians (cf. Herod. vii. 18, and Brisson, *de regio Pers. princip.* p. 589). נְהִשְׁתִּים, double brazen chains, are brazen fetters for the hands and feet. Samson was treated in the same manner by the Philistines (Judg. xvi. 21).

Vers. 8–21. *Destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The people carried away to Babel* (cf. Jer. lii. 12–27, and xxxix. 8–10).—In this section we have first a general account of the destruction of the temple and city (vers. 8–10), and of the carrying away of the people (vers. 11 and 12), and then a more particular description of what was done with the metal vessels of the temple (vers. 13–17), and how the spiritual and secular leaders of the people who had been taken prisoners were treated (vers. 18–21).—Vers. 8–10. The destruction of Jerusalem, by the burning of the temple, of the king's palace, and of all the larger buildings, and by throwing down the walls, was effected by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the body-guard of Nebuchadnezzar, on the seventh day of the fifth month in the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Instead of the *seventh* day we have the *tenth* in Jer. lii. 12. This difference might be reconciled, as proposed by earlier commentators, on the assumption that the burning of the city lasted several days, commencing on the seventh and ending on the tenth. But since there are



similar differences met with afterwards (vers. 17 and 19) in the statement of numbers, which can only be accounted for from the substitution of similar numeral letters, we must assume that there is a change of this kind here. Which of the two dates is the correct one it is impossible to determine. The circumstance that the later Jews kept the ninth as a fast-day cannot be regarded as decisive evidence in favour of the date given in Jeremiah, as Thenius supposes; for in Zech. vii. 3 and viii. 19 the fasting of the fifth month is mentioned, but no day is given; and though in the Talmudic times the ninth day of the month began to be kept as a fast-day, this was not merely in remembrance of the Chaldæan destruction of Jerusalem, but of the Roman also, and of three other calamities which had befallen the nation (see the statement of the Gemara on this subject in Lightfoot, *Opp.* ii. p. 139, ed. Leusden, and in Köhler on Zech. vii. 3), from which we see that the Gemarists in the most unhistorical manner grouped together different calamitous events in one single day. The nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar corresponds to the eleventh of Zedekiah (see at ch. xxiv. 12). Nebuzaradan is not mentioned in Jer. xxxix. 3 among the Chaldæan generals who forced their way into the city, so that he must have been ordered to Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar after the taking of the city and the condemnation of Zedekiah, to carry out the destruction of the city, the carrying away of the people, and the appointment of a deputy-governor over those who were left behind in the land. This explains in a very simple manner how a month could intervene between their forcing their way into the city, at all events into the lower city, and the burning of it to the ground, without there being any necessity to assume, with Thenius, that the city of Zion held out for a month, which is by no means probable, for the simple reason that the fighting men had fled with Zedekiah and had been scattered in their flight. שַׂר הַטְּבָחִים = רֶב־טְבָחִים in Gen. xxxvii. 36, xxxix. 1, was with the Babylonians, as with the Egyptians, the chief of the king's body-guard, whose duty it was to execute the sentences of death (see at Gen. xxxvii. 36). הַטְּבָחִים answers to the הַכְּרִיתִי of the Israelites (2 Sam. viii. 18, etc.). In Jer. lii. 12 we have עָמַד לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ instead of עָבַד מֶלֶךְ, without the אֲשֶׁר, which is rarely omitted in prose, and בִּירוּשָׁלַם instead of יְרוּשָׁלַם: he came into Jerusalem, not he forced a way into the real Jerusalem (Thenius). The meaning is not altered

by these two variations.—Ver. 9. By the words, “every great house,” **אֵת כָּל־בֵּיתִי יִר** is more minutely defined: not all the houses to the very last, but simply all the large houses he burned to the very last, together with the temple and the royal palaces. The victors used one portion of the dwelling-houses for their stay in Jerusalem. He then had all the walls of the city destroyed. In Jeremiah **כָּל** is omitted before **חֹמֹת**, as not being required for the sense; and also the **אֵת** before **רַב טַבָּחִים**, which is indispensable to the sense, and has fallen out through a copyist’s oversight.—Vers. 11, 12. The rest of the people he led away, both those who had been left behind in the city and the deserters who had gone over to the Chaldæans, and the remnant of the multitude. **יֵתֶר הַהֶמְּוֹן**, for which we have **יֵתֶר הָאָמֹן** in Jer. lii. 15, has been interpreted in various ways. As **אָמֹן** signifies an artist or artificer in Prov. viii. 30, and **יֵתֶר הָעָם** has just preceded it, we might be disposed to give the preference to the reading **הָאָמֹן**, as Hitzig and Graf have done, and understand by it the remnant of the artisans, who were called **הַחֲרָשׁ וְהַמְּסָנֵר** in ch. xxiv. 14, 16. But this view is precluded by Jer. xxxix. 9, where we find **יֵתֶר הָעָם** instead of **יֵתֶר הָאָמֹן** or **יֵתֶר הַהֶמְּוֹן**. These words cannot be set aside by the arbitrary assumption that they crept into the text through a copyist’s error; for the assertion that they contain a purposeless repetition is a piece of dogmatical criticism, inasmuch as there is a distinction drawn in Jer. xxxix. 9 between **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים** and **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים בְּעִיר**. Consequently **הָאָמֹן** is simply another form for **הַהֶמְּוֹן** (**ה** and **א** being interchanged) in the sense of a mass of people, and we have simply the choice left between two interpretations. Either **יֵתֶר הָעָם** means the fighting people left in the city, as distinguished from the deserters who had fled to the Chaldæans, and **הָאָמֹן** = **יֵתֶר הַהֶמְּוֹן** in Jer. lii. 15, or **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים** in Jer. xxxix. 9, the rest of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; or **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁ** is the people left in Jerusalem (warriors and non-warriors), and **יֵתֶר הַהֶמְּוֹן** the rest of the population of the land outside Jerusalem. The latter is probably the preferable view, not only because full justice is thereby done to **בְּעִיר** in the first clause, but also because it is evident from the exception mentioned in ver. 12 that the deportation was not confined to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but extended to the population of the whole land. The “poor people,” whom he allowed to remain in the land as vine-dressers and husbandmen, were the common



people, or people without property, not merely in Jerusalem, but throughout the whole land.  $\text{יָלַח עַם־הָאָרֶץ} = \text{יָלַח הָאָרֶץ}$  (ch. xxiv. 14). Instead of  $\text{מִדֹּלַת}$  we have in Jeremiah  $\text{מִדֹּלוֹת}$ : the plural used in an abstract sense, "the poverty," i.e. the lower people, "the poor who had nothing" (Jer. xxxix. 10). Instead of the *Chethîb*  $\text{לִינְבִים}$  from  $\text{נִב}$ , *secuit, aravit*, the *Keri* has  $\text{לִינְבִים}$  from  $\text{יִנַּב}$ , in the same sense, after Jer. lii. 16.—Vers. 13-17. The brazen vessels of the temple were broken in pieces, and the brass, and smaller vessels of brass, silver, and gold, were carried away. Compare Jer. lii. 17-23, where several other points are mentioned that have been passed over in the account before us. The pillars of brass (see 1 Kings vii. 15 sqq.), the stands (see 1 Kings vii. 27 sqq.), and the brazen sea (1 Kings vii. 23 sqq.), were broken in pieces, because it would have been difficult to carry these colossal things away without breaking them up. On the smaller vessels used in the worship (ver. 14) see 1 Kings vii. 40. In Jer. lii. 18  $\text{הַמְּזֻקָּת}$  are also mentioned. Ver. 15 is abridged still more in contrast with Jer. lii. 19, and only  $\text{הַמְּחֻתָּוֹת}$  and  $\text{הַמְּזֻקָּת}$  are mentioned, whereas in Jeremiah six different things are enumerated beside the candlesticks.  $\text{אֲשֶׁר יָרָב . . . כֶּסֶף}$ , "what was of gold, gold, what was of silver, silver, the captain of the guard took away," is a comprehensive description of the objects carried away. To this there is appended a remark in ver. 16 concerning the quantity of the brass of the large vessels, which was so great that it could not be weighed; and in ver. 17 a supplementary notice respecting the artistic work of the two pillars of brass.  $\text{הַעֲטֻדִים וְגו'}$  is placed at the head absolutely: as for the pillars, etc., the brass of all these vessels was not to be weighed. In Jer. lii. 20, along with the brazen sea, the twelve brazen oxen under it are mentioned; and in the description of the pillars of brass (vers. 21 sqq.) there are several points alluded to which are omitted in our books, not only here, but also in 1 Kings vii. 16 sqq. For the fact itself see the explanation given at pp. 97-103. The omission of the twelve oxen in so condensed an account as that contained in our text does not warrant the inference that these words in Jeremiah are a spurious addition made by a later copyist, since the assumption that Ahaz sent the brazen oxen to king Tiglath-pileser cannot be proved from ch. xvi. 17 (see p. 407). Instead of  $\text{שֵׁלֶשׁ אַמָּה}$  we must read  $\text{חֲמִשָּׁה אַמָּה}$ , *five cubits*, according to Jer. lii. 22 and 1 Kings vii. 16. The  $\text{עַל־הַשִּׁבְכָּה}$  at the end of the verse is

very striking, since it stands quite alone, and when connected with 'וְכִאֵלֶּה וְגו' does not appear to yield any appropriate sense, as the second pillar was like the first not merely with regard to the trellis-work, but in its form and size throughout. At the same time, it is possible that the historian intended to give especial prominence to the similarity of the two pillars with reference to this one point alone.—Vers. 18–21 (cf. Jer. lii. 24–27). The principal officers of the temple and city, and sixty men of the population of the land, who were taken at the destruction of Jerusalem, Nebuzaradan sent to his king at Riblah, where they were put to death. *Seraiah*, the high priest, is the grandfather or great-grandfather of Ezra the scribe (Ezra vii. 1 ; 1 Chron. v. 40). *Zephaniah*, a priest of the second rank (זִפְנָה ; מִשְׁנֵה ; in Jer. הַמִּשְׁנֵה : see at ch. xxiii. 4), is probably the same person as the son of Maaseiah, who took a prominent place among the priests, according to Jer. xxi. 1, xxix. 25 sqq., and xxxvii. 3. The “three keepers of the threshold” are probably the three superintendents of the Levites, whose duty it was to keep guard over the temple, and therefore were among the principal officers of the sanctuary.—Ver. 19. From the city, *i.e.* from the civil authorities of the city, Nebuzaradan took a king's chamberlain (סָרִיס), who was commander of the men of war. Instead of אֲשֶׁר הָיָה פֶּ' we find in Jer. lii. 25 אֲשֶׁר הוּא פָקִיד, who had been commander, with an allusion to the fact that his official function had terminated when the city was conquered. “And *five* (according to Jeremiah *seven*) men of those who saw the king's face,” *i.e.* who belonged to the king's immediate circle, *de intimis consiliariis regis*, and “the scribe of the commander-in-chief, who raised the people of the land for military service,” or who enrolled them. Although הַסֵּפֶר has the article, which is omitted in Jeremiah, the following words שַׂר הָעֶבֶא are governed by it, or connected with it in the construct state (Ewald, § 290, *d*). שַׂר הָעֶבֶא is the commander-in-chief of the whole of the military forces, and הַמַּעֲבָא וְגו' a more precise definition of הַסֵּפֶר, and not of שַׂר הָעֶבֶא, which needed no such definition. “And sixty men of the land-population who were found in the city.” They were probably some of the prominent men of the rural districts, or they may have taken a leading part in the defence of the city, and therefore were executed in Riblah, and not merely deported with the rest of the people.—The account of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah closes with וַיָּגֵל יְהוּדָה



in ver. 21, "thus was Judah carried away out of its own land;" and in vers. 22-26 there follows merely a brief notice of those who had been left behind in the land, in the place of which we find in Jer. lii. 28-40 a detailed account of the number of those who were carried away.

Vers. 22-26. *Installation of Gedaliah the governor. His assassination, and the flight of the people to Egypt.*—Much fuller accounts have been handed down to us in Jer. xl.-xliv. of the events which are but briefly indicated here.—Vers. 22, 23. Over the remnant of the people left in the land Nebuchadnezzar placed Gedaliah as governor of the land, who took up his abode in Mizpah. *Gedaliah*, the son of Ahikam, who had interested himself on behalf of the prophet Jeremiah and saved his life (Jer. xxvi. 24), and the grandson of Shaphan, a man of whom nothing more is known (see at ch. xxii. 12), had his home in Jerusalem, and, as we may infer from his attitude towards Jeremiah, had probably secured the confidence of the Chaldæans at the siege and conquest of Jerusalem by his upright conduct, and by what he did to induce the people to submit to the judgment inflicted by God; so that Nebuchadnezzar entrusted him with the oversight of those who were left behind in the land—men, women, children, poor people, and even a few princesses and court-officials, whom they had not thought it necessary or worth while to carry away (Jer. xl. 7, xli. 10, 16), *i.e.* he made him governor of the conquered land. Mizpah is the present *Nebi Samwil*, two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 26).—On hearing of Gedaliah's appointment as governor, there came to him "all the captains of the several divisions of the army and their men," *i.e.* those portions of the army which had been scattered at the flight of the king (ver. 5), and which had escaped from the Chaldæans, and, as it is expressed in Jer. xl. 7, had dispersed themselves "in the field," *i.e.* about the land. Instead of וְהָאֲנָשִׁים we have in Jer. xl. 7 the clearer expression וְאֲנָשֵׁיהֶם, "and their men," whilst וְהָאֲנָשִׁים in our text receives its more precise definition from the previous word הַחֲיִלִּים. Of the military commanders the following are mentioned by name: Ishmael, etc. (the ׀ before יִשְׁמָעֵאל is explic., "and indeed Ishmael"). Ishmael, son of Mattaniah and grandson of Elishama, probably of the king's secretary mentioned in Jer. xxxvi. 12 and 20, of royal blood. Nothing further is known about the other names. We simply learn from Jer. xl. 13 sqq. that Johanan had warned Gedaliah

against the treachery of Ishmael, and that when Gedaliah was slain by Ishmael, having disregarded the warning, he put himself at the head of the people and marched with them to Egypt, notwithstanding the dissuasions of Jeremiah (Jer. xli. 15 sqq.). Instead of "Johanan the son of Kareah," we have in Jer. xl. 8 "Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah;" but it is uncertain whether יִוְנָתָן has crept into the text of Jeremiah from the previous יְהוֹנָתָן merely through a mistake, and this mistake has brought with it the alteration of בֶּן into בְּנֵי (Ewald), or whether יִוְנָתָן has dropped out of our text through an oversight, and this omission has occasioned the alteration of בְּנֵי into בֶּן (Thenius, Graf, etc.). The former supposition is favoured by the circumstance that in Jer. xl. 13, xli. 11, 16, Johanan the son of Kareah alone is mentioned. In Jer. xl. 8 יְבִנִי עֹפַי (*Chethîb עיפי*) stands before הַנְּטָפְתִּי, according to which it was not Seraiah who sprang from Netophah, but Ophai whose sons were military commanders. He was called *Netophathite* because he sprang from *Netopha* in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem (Neh. vii. 26; Ezra ii. 22), the identity of which with *Beit Nettif* is by no means probable (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 28). The name יִמְנִיָּהוּ is written יִמְנִיָּהוּ in Jeremiah; he was the son of the Maachathite, i.e. his father sprang from the Syrian district of Maacah in the neighbourhood of the Hermon (see at Deut. iii. 14).—Ver. 24. As these men were afraid of the vengeance of the Chaldeans because they had fought against them, Gedaliah assured them on oath that they had nothing to fear from them if they would dwell peaceably in the land, be submissive to the king of Babel, and cultivate the land (cf. Jer. xl. 9 and 10). "Servants of the Chaldees" are Chaldean officials who were subordinate to the governor Gedaliah.—Ver. 25. In the seventh month, i.e. hardly two months after the destruction of Jerusalem, came Ishmael with ten men to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and murdered him together with the Jews and Chaldeans, whom he had with him as soldiers to do his bidding and for his protection. This occurred, according to Jer. xli. 1 sqq., when Gedaliah had received them hospitably and had invited them to eat with him. Ishmael was instigated to commit this murder by the Ammonitish king Baalis, and Gedaliah had previously been made acquainted with the intended crime and put upon his guard by Johanan, but had put no faith in the information (Jer. xl. 13–16).—Ver. 26. After Ishmael had performed this deed, and



had also treacherously murdered a number of men, who had come to the temple with a sacrifice from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria, he took the Jews who were at Mizpah prisoners, with some kings' daughters among them, intending to take them over to the Ammonites; but as soon as his deed became known, he was pursued by Johanan and the rest of the military chiefs and was overtaken at Gibeon, whereupon those who had been led away by him went over to Johanan, so that he was only able to make his escape with eight men and get away to the Ammonites (Jer. xli. 4-15). Johanan then went with the rest of the military commanders and the people whom he had brought back into the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, with the intention of fleeing to Egypt for fear of the Chaldæans. There they did indeed have recourse to the prophet Jeremiah, to inquire of him the word of the Lord; but they did not allow themselves to be diverted from their intention by the word of the Lord which he announced to them, that if they remained in the land they need not fear anything from the king of Babel, but if they went to Egypt they should all perish there with sword, hunger, and pestilence, or by the prediction that the Lord would also deliver Pharaoh Hophra into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xlii.). They went to Egypt notwithstanding, taking the prophet himself with them, and settled in different cities of Egypt, where they gave themselves up to idolatry, and did not suffer themselves to be drawn away from it even by the severe judgments which the prophet Jeremiah predicted as sure to fall upon them (Jer. xliii. and xliv.). In the verse before us we have simply a brief allusion to the eventual result of the whole affair. "Because they were afraid of the Chaldæans," namely, that they might possibly take vengeance upon them for the murder of the governor.

Vers. 27-30. *Jehoiachin delivered from prison, and exalted to royal honours* (cf. Jer. lii. 31-34).—In the thirty-seventh year after his deportation Jehoiachin was taken out of prison by Evil-merodach when he came to the throne. בִּשְׁנַת מָלְכוֹ, in the year of his becoming king, probably immediately after he had ascended the throne, for it was no doubt an act of grace at the commencement of his reign. נָשָׂא אֶת־רֹאשׁ, to lift up a person's head, *i.e.* to release him from prison and exalt him to civil honours and dignities (cf. Gen. xl. 13). On the coincidence of the thirty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's imprisonment and the

commencement of the reign of Evil-merodach see the remarks at ch. xxiv. 12. Instead of the 27th day of the month, the 25th is given in Jeremiah, again through the substitution of similar numeral letters (see at ver. 8). *Evil-merodach*: אֵיל מֶרֶדַּח, *Eύιαλ Μαρώδαχ* or *Εύιαλμαρωδέκ* (LXX.); Ἰλλοαροόδαμος, possibly a copyist's error for Ἰλμαροόδακος, in the *Can. Ptol.*, and in other forms also: see M. v. Nieb. *Gesch. Ass.* p. 42, and *Ges. thes.* p. 41; compounded from the name of the Babylonian god *Mero-dach* (see at ch. xx. 12) and the prefix *Evil*, which has not yet been explained with certainty. He reigned two years, according to Berosus in Jos. c. *Ap.* i. 20, and the *Can. Ptol.*; and according to the verdict of Berosus, προστάς τῶν πραγμάτων ἀνόμως καὶ ἀσελγῶς; and was murdered by his brother-in-law Neriglissor. The statement in Jos. *Ant.* x. 11, 2, to the effect that he reigned eighteen years, and that of Alex. Polyh. in Euseb. *Chron. arm.* i. p. 45, that he reigned twelve years, are evidently false.—Ver. 28. “He spake kindly to him (cf. Jer. xii. 6), and set his throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babel.” This is not to be understood literally, as signifying that he assigned him a loftier throne than the other kings (Hitzig, Thenius), but figuratively: *loco honestiore eum habuit* (Ros.). The “kings with him” were dethroned kings, who were kept at the court like Jehoiachin to add to its splendour, just as Cyrus kept the conquered Cræsus by his side (Herod. i. 88).—Vers. 29, 30. “And he (Jehoiachin) changed his prison garments,” *i.e.* took them off and put other regal clothing on (cf. Gen. xli. 42). “And ate continually before him all his life,” *i.e.* ate at the king's table (cf. 2 Sam. ix. 7). Moreover a daily ration of food was supplied to him by the king for the maintenance of his retainers, who formed his little court. The כָּל־יְמֵי יָדָיו of ver. 30, upon which Thenius throws suspicion without any reason, refers to Jehoiachin like that in ver. 29; for the historian intended to show how Jehoiachin had fared from the day of his elevation to the end of his life. At the same time, we cannot infer from this with any certainty that Jehoiachin died before Evil-merodach; for the favour shown to him might be continued by Evil-merodach's successor. We cannot make any safe conjecture as to the motives which induced Evil-merodach to pardon Jehoiachin and confer this distinction upon him. The higher ground of this joyful termination of his imprisonment lay in the gracious decree of God, that the seed of David,



though severely chastised for its apostasy from the Lord, should not be utterly rejected (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15). At the same time, this event was also intended as a comforting sign to the whole of the captive people, that the Lord would one day put an end to their banishment, if they would acknowledge that it was a well-merited punishment for their sins that they had been driven away from before His face, and would turn again to the Lord their God with all their heart.

**THE END.**

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BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT

BY

C. F. KEIL, D.D. AND F. DELITZSCH, D.D.

PROFESSORS OF THEOLOGY

THE BOOKS OF THE CHRONICLES

BY

C. F. KEIL

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY ANDREW HARPER, B.D.





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# INTRODUCTION

TO THE

## HAGIOGRAPHIC HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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**B**ESIDES the prophetico-historic writings—Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings—which describe from a prophetic point of view the development of the kingdom of God established by means of the mediatorial office of Moses, from the time of the bringing of the tribes of Israel into the land promised to the fathers till the Babylonian exile, the Old Testament contains five historical books,—Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. These latter stand in the Hebrew canon among the *כְּתוּבִים*, *i.e.* in the hagiography, and are at once distinguished from the above-mentioned prophetico-historic writings by this characteristic, that they treat only of single parts of the history of the covenant people from individual points of view. The book of Ruth gives a charming historical picture from the life of the ancestors of King David. The Chronicles, indeed, extend over a very long period of the historical development of the Israelite kingdom of God, embrace the history from the death of King Saul till the Babylonian exile, and go back in the genealogies which precede the narrative of the history to Adam, the father of the human race; yet neither in the genealogical part do they give a perfect review of the genealogical ramifications of the twelve tribes of the covenant people, nor in their historical portion contain the history of the whole people from the death of Saul till the exile. Besides the tables of the first progenitors of

humanity and the tribal ancestors of the people of Israel, borrowed from Genesis, the genealogical part contains only a collection of genealogical and topographical fragments differing in plan, execution, and extent, relating to the chief families of the most prominent tribes and their dwelling-places. The historical part contains, certainly, historical sketches from the history of all Israel during the reigns of the kings David and Solomon; but from the division of the kingdom, after the death of Solomon, they contain only the history of the kingdom of Judah, with special reference to the Levitical worship, to the exclusion of the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes. From a comparison of the manner of representing the history in the Chronicles with that in the books of Samuel and the Kings, we can clearly see that the chronicler did not purpose to portray the development of the Israelitic theocracy in general, nor the facts and events which conditioned and constituted that development objectively, according to their general course. He has, on the contrary, so connected the historical facts with the attitude of the kings and the people to the Lord, and to His law, that they teach how the Lord rewarded fidelity to His covenant with blessing and success both to people and kingdom, but punished with calamity and judgments every faithless revolt from His covenant ordinances. Now since Israel, as the people and congregation of Jahve, could openly show its adherence to the covenant only by faithful observance of the covenant laws, particularly of the ordinances for worship, the author of the Chronicles has kept this side of the life of the people especially in view, in order that he might hold up before his contemporaries as a mirror the attitude of the fathers to the God-appointed dwelling-place of His gracious presence in the holy place of the congregation. He does this, that they might behold how the faithful maintenance of communion with the covenant God in His temple would assure to them the fulfilment of the gracious promises of the covenant, and how falling away into idolatry, on the contrary, would bring misfortune and destruction. This special reference to the worship meets us also in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which describe the deliverance of the Jews from exile, and their restoration as the covenant people in the land of their fathers. The book of Ezra narrates, on the one hand, the return out of the Babylonian exile into the land of their fathers of a great part of the Jews who had been led away by Nebuchadnezzar,—partly in the first



year of the reign of Cyrus over Babylon, with Zerubbabel, a prince of the royal race of David, and Joshua the high priest as leaders; partly at a later period with the scribe Ezra, under Artaxerxes. On the other hand, it relates the restoration of the altar of burnt-offering, and of the divine service; together with the re-erection of the temple, and the effort of Ezra to regulate the affairs of the community according to the precepts of the Mosaic law, by doing away with the illegal marriages with heathen women. And Nehemiah describes in his book what he had accomplished in the direction of giving a firm foundation to the civil welfare of the newly-founded community in Judah: in the first place, by building the walls of Jerusalem so as to defend the city and holy place against the attacks and surprises of the hostile peoples in the neighbourhood; and secondly, by various measures for the strengthening of the capital by increasing the number of its inhabitants, and for the more exact modelling of the civil, moral, and religious life of the community on the precepts of the law of Moses, in order to lay enduring foundations for the prosperous development of the covenant people. In the book of Esther, finally, it is recounted how the Jewish inhabitants of the various parts of the great Persian kingdom were delivered by the Jewess Esther (who had been raised to the position of queen by a peculiar concatenation of circumstances) from the destruction which the Grand Vizier Haman, in the reign of King Ahashverosh (*i.e.* Xerxes), had determined upon, on account of the refusal of adoration by the Jew Mordecai.

Now, if we look somewhat more narrowly at the relation of these five historical books to the prophetic-historic writings, more especially in the first place in reference to their contents, we see that the books of Ruth and the Chronicles furnish us with not unimportant additions to the books of Samuel and Kings. The book of Ruth introduces us into the family life of the ancestors of King David, and shows the life-spring from which proceeded the man after God's own heart, whom God called from being a shepherd of sheep to be the shepherd of His people, that He might deliver Israel out of the power of his enemies, and found a kingdom, which received the promise of eternal duration, and which was to be established to all eternity through Christ the Son of David and the Son of God. The Chronicles supplement the history of the covenant people, principally during the period of the kings, by detailed accounts of

the *form* of the public worship of the congregation; from which we see how, in spite of the continual inclination of the people to idolatry, and to the worship of heathen gods, the service in the temple, according to the law, was the spiritual centre about which the pious in Israel crowded, to worship the Lord their God, and to serve Him by sacrifice. We see, too, how this holy place formed throughout a lengthened period a mighty bulwark, which prevented moral and religious decay from gaining the upper hand, until at length, through the godless conduct of the kings Asa and Manasseh, the holy place itself was profaned by the idolatrous abomination, and judgment broke in upon the incorrigible race in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the driving out of Judah from the presence of the Lord. But the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther are the only historical writings we possess concerning the times of the restoration of the covenant people after their emancipation from the captivity, and their return into the promised land; and even in this respect they are very valuable component parts of the Old Testament canon. The first two show how God the Lord fulfilled His promise, that He would again receive His people into favour, and collect them out of their dispersion among the heathen, if they should, in their misery, under the oppression of the heathen, come to a knowledge of their sins, and turn unto Him; and how, after the expiry of the seventy years of the Babylonian exile which had been prophesied, He opened up to them, through Cyrus the king of Persia, their return into the land of their fathers, and restored Jerusalem and the temple, that He might preserve inviolate, and thereafter perfect, by the appearance of the promised David who was to come, that gracious covenant which He had entered into with their fathers. But the providence of God ruled also over the members of the covenant people who had remained behind in heathen lands, to preserve them from the ruin which had been prepared for them by the heathen, in order that from among them also a remnant might be saved, and become partakers of the salvation promised in Christ. To show this by a great historical example is the aim of the book of Esther, and the meaning of its reception into the canon of the Holy Scriptures of the old covenant.

If, finally, we consider the style of historical writing found in these five books, we can scarcely characterize it in its relation to the prophetic books by a fitting word. The manner of writing



history which is prevalent in the hagiography has been, it is true, called the national (*volksthümlich*) or annalistic, but by this name the peculiarity of it has in no respect been correctly expressed. The narrative bears a national impress only in the book of Esther, and relatively also in the book of Ruth; but even between these two writings a great difference exists. The narrative in Ruth ends with the genealogy of the ancestors of King David; whereas in the book of Esther all reference to the theocratic relation, nay, even the religious contemplation of the events, is wholly wanting. But the books of the Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, have no national impress; in them, on the contrary, the Levitico-priestly manner of viewing history prevails. Still less can the hagiographic histories be called annalistic. The books of Ruth and Esther follow definite aims, which clearly appear towards the end. Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah contain, it is true, in the genealogical, geographical, and historical registers, a mass of annalistic material; but we find this also in the prophetic-historic works, and even in the books of Moses. The only thing which is common to and characteristic of the whole of the hagiographic historical books, is that the prophetic contemplation of the course of history according to the divine plan of salvation which unfolds itself in the events, either falls into the background or is wanting altogether; while in its place individual points of view appear which show themselves in the pursuit of parænetico-didactic aims, which have acted as a determining influence on the selection and treatment of the historical facts, as the introduction to the individual writings will show.





# INTRODUCTION

## § 1. NAME, CONTENTS, PLAN, AND AIM OF THE CHRONICLES.



THE two books of the Chronicles originally formed one work, as their plan at once makes manifest, and were received into the Hebrew canon as such. Not only were they reckoned as one in the enumeration of the books of the Old Testament (cf. Joseph. *c. Apion*, i. 8; Origen, in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* vi. 25; and Hieronym. *Prolog. galeat.*), but they were also regarded by the Masorites as one single work, as we learn from a remark of the Masora at the end of the Chronicle, that the verse 1 Chron. xxvii. 25 is the middle of the book. The division into two books originated with the Alexandrian translators (LXX.), and has been transmitted by the Latin translation of Hieronymus (Vulgata) not only to all the later translations of the Bible, but also, along with the division into chapters, into our versions of the Hebrew Bible. The first book closes, chap. xxix. 29 f., with the end of the reign of David, which formed a fitting epoch for the division of the work into two books. The Hebrew name of this book in our Bible, by which it was known even by Hieronymus, is דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים, *verba*, or more correctly *res gestæ dierum*, events of the days, before which סִפּוּר is to be supplied (cf. *e.g.* 1 Kings xiv. 19, 29, xv. 7, 23).

Its full title therefore is, Book of the Events of the Time (*Zeitereignisse*), corresponding to the annalistic work so often quoted in our canonical books of Kings and Chronicles, the Book of the Events of the Time (Chronicle) of the Kings of Israel and Judah. Instead of this the LXX. have chosen the name *Παραλειπόμενα*, in order to mark more exactly the relation of our work to the earlier historical books of the Old Testament, as containing much historical information which is not to be found in them. But the name is not used in the sense of *supplementa*,—"fragments of other historical works," as Movers, *die Bibl. Chron.* S. 95, interprets it,—but in the signification "*prætermissa*;" because, according to the explanation in the

*Synopsis script. sacr.* in Athanasii *Opera*, ii. p. 84, παραλειφθέντα πολλά ἐν ταῖς βασιλείαις (i.e. in the books of Samuel and Kings) περιέχεται ἐν τούτοις, "many things passed over in the Kings are contained in these." Likewise Isidorus, lib. vi. *Origin.* c. i. p. 45: *Paralipomenon græce dicitur, quod prætermissorum vel reliquorum nos dicere possumus, quia ea quæ in lege vel in Regum libris vel omissa vel non plene relata sunt, in isto summatim et breviter explicantur.* This interpretation of the word παραλειπόμενα is confirmed by Hieronymus, who, in his *Epist. ad Paulin.* (Opp. t. i. ed. Vallars, p. 279), says: *Paralipomenon liber, id est instrumenti veteris epitome tantus et talis est, ut absque illo, si quis scientiam scripturarum sibi voluerit arrogare, seipsum irrideat; per singula quippe nomina juncturasque verborum et prætermissæ in Regum libris tanquantur historiæ et innumerabiles explicantur Evangelii quæstiones.* He himself, however, suggested the name *Chronicon*, in order more clearly to characterize both the contents of the work and at the same its relation to the historical books from Gen. i. to 2 Kings xxv.; as he says in *Prolog. galeat.*: רברי הימים, i.e. *verba dierum*, quod significantius *chronicon* totius divinæ historiæ possumus appellare, qui liber apud nos *Paralipomenon* primus et secundus inscribitur. Through Hieronymus the name *Chronicles* came into use, and became the prevailing title.

*Contents.*—The *Chronicles* begin with genealogical registers of primeval times, and of the tribes of Israel (1 Chron. i.–ix.); then follow the history of the reign of King David (chap. x.–xxix.) and of King Solomon (2 Chron. i.–ix.); the narrative of the revolt of the ten tribes from the kingdom of the house of David (chap. x.); the history of the kingdom of Judah from Rehoboam to the ruin of the kingdom, its inhabitants being led away into exile to Babylon (chap. xi.–xxxvi. 21); and at the close we find the edict of Cyrus, which allowed the Jews to return into their country (xxxvi. 22, 23). Each of the two books, therefore, falls into two, and the whole work into four divisions. If we examine these divisions more minutely, six groups can be without difficulty recognised in the genealogical part (1 Chron. i.–ix.). These are: (1) The families of primeval and ancient times, from Adam to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and his sons Edom and Israel, together with the posterity of Edom (chap. i.); (2) the sons of Israel and the families of Judah, with the sons and posterity of David (ii.–iv. 23); (3)



the families of the tribe of Simeon, whose inheritance lay within the tribal domain of Judah, and those of the trans-Jordanic tribes Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh (iv. 24–v. 26); (4) the families of Levi, or of the priests and Levites, with an account of the dwelling-places assigned to them (v. 27–vi. 66); (5) the families of the remaining tribes, viz. Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, the half-tribe of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher (only Dan and Zebulun being omitted), with the genealogy of the house of Saul (vii. viii.); and (6) a register of the former inhabitants of Jerusalem (ix. 1–34), and a second enumeration of the family of Saul, preparing us for the transition to the history of the kingdom of Israel (ix. 35–44). The history of David's kingship which follows is introduced by an account of the ruin of Saul and his house (chap. x.), and then the narrative falls into two sections. (1) In the first we have David's election to be king over all Israel, and the taking of the Jebusite fort in Jerusalem, which was built upon Mount Zion (xi. 1–9); then a list of David's heroes, and the valiant men out of all the tribes who made him king (xi. 10–xii. 40); the removal of the ark to Jerusalem, the founding of his house, and the establishment of the Levitical worship before the ark in Zion (xiii.–xvi.); David's design to build a temple to the Lord (xvii.); then his wars (xviii.–xx.); the numbering of the people, the pestilence which followed, and the fixing of the place for the future temple (xxi.). (2) In the second section are related David's preparations for the building of the temple (xxii.); the numbering of the Levites, and the arrangement of their service (xxiii.–xxvi.); the arrangement of the military service (xxvii.); David's surrender of the kingdom to his son, and the close of his life (xxviii. and xxix.). The history of the reign of Solomon begins with his solemn sacrifice at Gibeon, and some remarks on his wealth (2 Chron. i.); then follows the building of the temple, with the consecration of the completed holy place (chap. ii.–vii.). To these are added short aphoristic accounts of the cities which Solomon built, the statute labour which he exacted, the arrangement of the public worship, the voyage to Ophir, the visit of the queen of Sheba, and of the might and glory of his kingdom, closing with remarks on the length of his reign, and an account of his death (viii.–ix.). The history of the kingdom of Judah begins with the narrative of the revolt of the ten tribes from Rehoboam (chap. x.), and then in chap. xi.–xxxvi. it flows on according to the succession of the

kings of Judah from Rehoboam to Zedekiah, the reigns of the individual kings forming the sections of the narrative.

*Plan and Aim.*—From this general sketch of the contents of our history, it will be already apparent that the author had not in view a general history of the covenant people from the time of David to the Babylonian exile, but purposed only to give an outline of the history of the kingship of David and his successors, Solomon and the kings of the kingdom of *Judah* to its fall. If, however, in order to define more clearly the plan and purpose of the historical parts of our book in the first place, we compare them with the representation given us of the history of Israel in those times in the books of Samuel and Kings, we can see that the chronicler has passed over much of the history. (a) He has omitted, in the history of David, not only his seven years' reign at Hebron over the tribe of Judah, and his conduct to the fallen King Saul and to his house, especially towards Ishbosheth, Saul's son, who had been set up as rival king by Abner (2 Sam. i.-iv. and ix.), but in general has passed over all the events referring to and connected with David's family relations. He makes no mention, for instance, of the scene between David and Michal (2 Sam. vi. 20-23); the adultery with Bathsheba, with its immediate and more distant results (2 Sam. xi. 2-12); Amnon's outrage upon Tamar, the slaying of Amnon by Absalom and his flight to the king of Geshur, his return to Jerusalem, his rising against David, with its issues, and the tumult of Sheba (2 Sam. xiii.-xx.); and, finally, also omits the thanksgiving psalm and the last words of David (2 Sam. xxii. 1-xxiii. 7). Then (b) in the history of Solomon there have been left unrecorded the attempt of Adonijah to usurp the throne, with the anointing of Solomon at Gihon, which it brought about; David's last command in reference to Joab and Shimei; the punishment of these men and of Adonijah; Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kings i. 1-iii. 3); his wise judgment, the catalogue of his officials, the description of his royal magnificence and glory, and of his wisdom (1 Kings iii. 16-v. 14); the building of the royal palace (1 Kings vii. 1-12); and Solomon's polygamy and idolatry, with their immediate results (1 Kings xi. 1-40). Finally, (c) there is no reference to the history of the kingdom of Israel founded by Jeroboam, or to the lives of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, which are related in such detail in the books of Kings, while mention is made of the kings of the kingdom of the ten tribes only in so far as they came into



hostile struggle or friendly union with the kingdom of Judah. But, in compensation for these omissions, the author of the Chronicle has brought together in his work a considerable number of facts and events which are omitted in the books of Samuel and the Kings. For example, in the history of David, he gives us the list of the valiant men out of all the tribes who, partly before and partly after the death of Saul, went over to David to help him in his struggle with Saul and his house, and to bring the royal honour to him (1 Chron. xii.); the detailed account of the participation of the Levites in the transfer of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, and of the arrangements made by David for worship around this sanctuary (chap. xv. and xvi.); and the whole section concerning David's preparations for the building of the temple, his arrangements for public worship, the regulation of the army, and his last commands (chap. xxii.-xxix.). Further, the history of the kingdom of Judah from Rehoboam to Joram is narrated throughout at greater length than in the books of Kings, and is considerably supplemented by detailed accounts, not only of the work of the prophets in Judah, of Shemaiah under Rehoboam (chap. xii. 5-8), of Azariah and Hanani under Asa (xv. 1-8, xvi. 7-9), of Jehu son of Hanani, Jehaziel, and Ebenezer son of Dodava, under Jehoshaphat (xix. 1-3, xx. 14-20 and 37), and concerning Elijah's letter under Joram (xxi. 12-15); but also of the efforts of Rehoboam (xi. 5-17), Asa (xiv. 5-7), and Jehoshaphat (xvii. 2, 12-19) to fortify the kingdom, of Asa to raise and vivify the Jahve-worship (xv. 9-15), of Jehoshaphat to purify the administration of justice and increase the knowledge of the law (xvii. 7-9 and xix. 5-11), of the wars of Abijah against Jeroboam, and his victories (xiii. 3-20), of Asa's war against the Cushite Zerah (xiv. 8-14), of Jehoshaphat's conquest of the Ammonites and Moabites (xx. 1-30), and, finally, also of the family relations of Rehoboam (xi. 18-22), the wives and children of Abijah (xiii. 21), and Joram's brothers and his sickness (xxi. 2-4 and 18 f.). Of the succeeding kings also various undertakings are reported which are not found in the books of Kings. In this way we are informed of Joash's defection from the Lord, and his fall into idolatry after the death of the high priest Jehoiada (xxiv. 15-22); how Amaziah increased his military power (xxv. 5-10), and worshipped idols (xxv. 14-16); of Uzziah's victorious wars against the Philistines and Arabs, and his fortress-building, etc. (xxvi.

6-15); of Jotham's fortress-building, and his victory over the Ammonites (xxvii. 4-6); of the increase of Hezekiah's riches (xxxii. 27-30); of Manasseh's capture and removal to Babylon, and his return out of captivity (xxxiii. 11-17). But the history of Hezekiah and Josiah more especially is rendered more complete by special accounts of reforms in worship, and of celebrations of the passover (xxix. 3-31, 21, and xxxv. 2-15); while we have only summary notices of the godless conduct of Ahaz (chap. xxviii.) and Manasseh (xxxiii. 3-10), of the campaign of Sennacherib against Jerusalem and Judah, of Hezekiah's sickness and the reception of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem (chap. xxxii., cf. 2 Kings xviii. 13-20, xix.); as also of the reigns of the last kings, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. From all this, it is clear that the author of the Chronicle, as Bertheau expresses it, "has turned his attention to *those times* especially in which Israel's religion had showed itself to be a power dominating the people and their leaders, and bringing them prosperity; and to *those men* who had endeavoured to give a more enduring form to the arrangements for the service of God, and to restore the true worship of Jahve; and to *those events* in the history of the worship so intimately bound up with Jerusalem, which had important bearings."

This purpose appears much more clearly when we take into consideration the narratives which are common to the Chronicle and the books of Samuel and Kings, and observe the difference which is perceptible in the mode of conception and representation in those parallel sections. For our present purpose, however, those narratives in which the chronicler supplements and completes the accounts given in the books of Samuel and Kings by more exact and detailed information, or shortens them by the omission of unimportant details, come less into consideration.<sup>1</sup> For both additions and abridgments show only that the chronicler has not drawn his information from the canonical books of Samuel and Kings, but from other more circumstantial original

<sup>1</sup> Additions are to be found, *e.g.*, in the list of David's heroes, 1 Chron. xii. 42-47; in the history of the building and consecration of Solomon's temple; in the enumeration of the candlesticks, tables, and courts, 2 Chron. i. 6-9; in the notice of the copper platform on which Solomon knelt at prayer, vi. 12, 13; and of the fire which fell from heaven upon the burnt-offering, vii. 1 ff. Also in the histories of the wars they are met with, 1 Chron. xi. 6, 8, 23, cf. 2 Sam. v. 8, 9, xxiii. 21; 1 Chron. xviii. 8, 12,



documents which he had at his command, and has used these sources independently. Much more important for a knowledge of the plan of the Chronicle are the variations in the parallel places between it and the other narrative; for in them the point of view from which the chronicler regarded, and has described, the events clearly appears. In the number of such passages is to be reckoned the narrative of the transfer of the ark (1 Chron. xiii. and xv., cf. 2 Sam. vi.), where the chronicler presents the fact in its religious import as the beginning of the restoration of the worship of Jahve according to the law, which had fallen into decay; while the author of the books of Samuel describes it only in its political import, in its bearing on the Davidic kingship. Of this character also is the narrative of the raising of Joash to the throne (2 Chron. xxiii., cf. 2 Kings xi.), where the share of the Levites in the completion of the work begun by the high priest Jehoiada is prominently brought forward, while in Kings it is not expressly mentioned. The whole account also of the reign of Hezekiah, as well as other passages, belong to this category. Now from these and other descriptions of the part the Levites played in events, and the share they took in assisting the efforts of the pious kings to revivify and maintain the temple worship, the conclusion has been rightly drawn that the chronicler describes with special interest the fostering of the Levitic worship according to the precepts of the law of Moses, and holds it up to his contemporaries for earnest imitation; yet this has been too often done in such a way as to cause this one element in the plans of the Chronicle to be looked upon as its main object, which has led to a very onesided conception of the character of the book. The chronicler does not desire to bring honour to the Levites and to the temple worship: his object is rather to draw from the history of the kingship in Israel a proof that faithful adherence to the covenant which the Lord had made with Israel brings happiness and blessing; the forsaking of it, on the contrary, ensures ruin and a curse. But Israel could show its faithfulness to the covenant only by walking according to the

cf. 2 Sam. viii. 8, 13, etc. More may be found in my *Handbook of Introd.* § 139, 5. Abridgments by the rejection of unimportant details are very frequent; e.g. the omission of the Jebusites' mockery of David's attack on their fortress, 1 Chron. xi. 5, 6, cf. 2 Sam. v. 6, 8; of the details of the storming of Rabbah, 1 Chron. xx. 1, 2, cf. 2 Sam. xii. 27-29; and of many more, *vide* my *Handbook of Introduction*, § 139, 8.

ordinances of the law given by Moses, and in worshipping Jahve, the God of their fathers, in His holy place in that way which He had established by the ceremonial ordinances. The author of the Chronicle attaches importance to the Levitic worship only because the fidelity of Israel to the covenant manifested itself in the careful maintenance of it.

This point of view appears clearly in the selection and treatment of the material drawn by our historian from older histories and prophetic writings. His history begins with the death of Saul and the anointing of David to be king over the whole of Israel, and confines itself, after the division of the kingdom, to the history of the kingdom of Judah. In the time of the judges especially, the Levitic worship had fallen more and more into decay; and even Samuel had done nothing for it, or perhaps *could* do nothing, and the ark remained during that whole period at a distance from the tabernacle. Still less was done under Saul for the restoration of the worship in the tabernacle; for "Saul died," as we read in 1 Chron. x. 13 f., "for his transgression which he had transgressed against the Lord; . . . and because he inquired not of the Lord, therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse." After the death of Saul the elders of all Israel came to David with the confession, "Jahve thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel; and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel" (1 Chron. xi. 2). David's first care, after he had as king over all Israel conquered the Jebusite hold on Mount Zion, and made Jerusalem the capital of the kingdom, was to bring the ark from its obscurity into the city of David, and to establish the sacrificial worship according to the law near that sanctuary (1 Chron. xiii. 15, 16). Shortly afterwards he formed the resolution of building for the Lord a permanent house (a temple), that He might dwell among His people, for which he received from the Lord the promise of the establishment of his kingdom for ever, although the execution of his design was denied to him, and was committed to his son (chap. xvii.). Only *after* all this has been related do we find narratives of David's wars and his victories over all hostile peoples (chap. xviii.-xx.), of the numbering of the people, and the pestilence, which, in consequence of the repentant resignation of David to the will of the Lord, gave occasion to the determination of the place for the erection of the temple (chap. xxi.). The second section of the history of



the Davidic kingship contains the preparations for the building of the temple, and the laying down of more permanent regulations for the ordering of the worship; and that which David had prepared for, and so earnestly impressed upon his son Solomon at the transfer of the crown, Solomon carried out. Immediately after the throne had been secured to him, he took in hand the building of the temple; and the account of this work fills the greater part of the history of his reign, while the description of his kingly power and splendour and wisdom, and of all the other undertakings which he carried out, is of the shortest. When ten tribes revolted from the house of David after his death, Rehoboam's design of bringing the rebellious people again under his dominion by force of arms was checked by the prophet Shemaiah with the words, "Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren, for this thing is done of me" (2 Chron. xi. 4). But in their revolt from the house of David, which Jeroboam sought to perpetuate by the establishment of an idolatrous national worship, Israel of the ten tribes had departed from the covenant communion with Jahve; and on this ground, and on this account, the history of that kingdom is no further noticed by the chronicler. The priests and Levites came out of the whole Israelite dominion to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons expelled them from the priesthood. After them, from all the tribes of Israel came those who gave their hearts to seek Jahve the God of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to Jahve the God of their fathers (2 Chron. xi. 13-16), for "Jerusalem is the city which Jahve has chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put His name there" (xii. 13). The priests, Levites, and pious people who went over from Israel made the kingdom of Judah strong, and confirmed Rehoboam's power, for they walked in the ways of David and Solomon (xi. 17). But when the kingdom of Rehoboam had been firmly established, he forsook the law of Jahve, and all Israel with him (xii. 1). Then the Egyptian king Shishak came up against Jerusalem, "because they had transgressed against the Lord" (xii. 2). The prophet Shemaiah proclaimed the word of the Lord: "Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak" (xii. 5). Yet when Rehoboam and the princes of Israel humbled themselves, the anger of the Lord turned from him, that He would not destroy him altogether (xii. 6, 12). King Abijah reproaches

Jeroboam in his speech with his defection from Jahve, and concludes with the words, "O children of Israel, fight not ye against the Lord God of your fathers, for ye shall not prosper" (xiii. 12); and when the men of Judah cried unto the Lord in the battle, and the priests blew the trumpets, then did God smite Jeroboam and all Israel (xiii. 15). "Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers" (xiii. 18). King Asa commanded his subjects to seek Jahve the God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandments (xiv. 3). In the war against the Cushites, he cried unto Jahve his God, "Help us, for we rest on Thee;" and Jahve smote the Cushites before Judah (xiv. 10). After this victory Asa and Judah sacrificed unto the Lord of their spoil, and entered into a covenant to seek Jahve the God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul. And the Lord was found of them, and the Lord gave them rest round about (xv. 11 ff.). But when Asa afterwards, in the war against Baasha of Israel, made an alliance with the Syrian king Benhadad, the prophet Hanani censured this act in the words, "Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and hast not relied on Jahve thy God, therefore has the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thy hand. . . . Herein thou hast done foolishly," etc. (xvi. 7-9). Jehoshaphat became mighty against Israel, and Jahve was with him; for he walked in the ways of his father David, and sought not unto the Baals, but sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. And Jahve established his kingdom in his hand, and he attained to riches and great splendour (xvii. 1-5).

After this fashion does the chronicler show how God blessed the reigns and prospered all the undertakings of all the kings of Judah who sought the Lord and walked in His commandments; but at the same time also, how every defection from the Lord brought with it misfortune and chastisement. Under Joram of Judah, Edom and Libnah freed themselves from the supremacy of Judah, "because Joram had forsaken Jahve the God of his fathers" (xxi. 10). Because Joram had walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and had seduced the inhabitants of Jerusalem to whoredom (*i.e.* idolatry), and had slain his brothers, God punished him in the invasion of Judah by the Philistines and Arabs, who stormed Jerusalem, took away with them all the fur-



niture of the royal palace, and took captive his sons and wives, while He smote him besides with incurable disease (xxi. 11 ff., 16-18). Because of the visit which Ahaziah made to Joram of Israel, when he lay sick of his wound at Jezreel, the judgment was (xxii. 7) pronounced: "The destruction of Ahaziah was of God by his coming to Joram." When Amaziah, after his victory over the Edomites, brought back the gods of Seir and set them up for himself as gods, before whom he worshipped, the anger of Jahve was kindled against him. In spite of the warning of the prophets, he sought a quarrel with King Joash of Israel, who likewise advised him to abandon his design. "But Amaziah would not hear; for it was of God, that He might deliver them over, because they had sought the gods of Edom" (xxv. 20). With this compare ver. 27: "After the time that Amaziah turned away from following Jahve, they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem." Of Uzziah it is said (xxvi. 5), so long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper, so that he conquered his enemies and became very mighty. But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, so that he transgressed against Jahve his God, by forcing his way into the temple to offer incense; and for this he was smitten with leprosy. Of Jotham it is said, in xxvii. 6, "He became mighty, because he established his ways before Jahve his God."

From these and similar passages, which might easily be multiplied, we clearly see that the chronicler had in view not only the Levitic worship, but also and mainly the attitude of the people and their princes to the Lord and to His law; and that it is from this point of view that he has regarded and written the history of his people before the exile. But it is also not less clear, from the quotations we have made, in so far as they contain practical remarks of the historian, that it was his purpose to hold up to his contemporaries as a mirror the history of the past, in which they might see the consequences of their own conduct towards the God of their fathers. He does not wish, as the author of the books of Kings does, to narrate the events and facts objectively, according to the course of history; but he connects the facts and events with the conduct of the kings and people towards the Lord, and strives to put the historical facts in such a light as to teach that God rewards fidelity to His covenant with happiness and blessing, and avenges faithless defection from it with punitive judgments. Owing to this peculiarity, the historical narrative

acquires a hortative character, which gives occasion for the employment of a highly rhetorical style. The hortative-rhetorical character impressed upon his narrative shows itself not only in many of the speeches of the actors in the history which are interwoven with it, but also in many of the historical parts. For example, the account given in 2 Chron. xxi. 16 of the punitive judgments which broke in upon Joram for his wickedness is rhetorically arranged, so that the judgments correspond to the threatenings contained in the letter of Elijah, vers. 12-15. But this may be much more plainly seen in the description of the impious conduct of King Ahaz, and of the punishments which were inflicted upon him and the kingdom of Judah (chap. xxviii.); as also in the descriptions of the crime of Manasseh (chap. xxxiii. 3-13; cf. especially vers. 7 and 8), and of the reign of Zedekiah, and the ruin of the kingdom of Judah (chap. xxxvi. 12-21). Now the greater part of the differences between the chronicler's account and the parallel narrative in the books of Samuel and Kings, together with the omission of unimportant circumstances, and the careful manner in which the descriptions of the arrangements for worship and the celebration of feasts are wrought out, can be accounted for by this hortatory tendency so manifest in his writing, and by his subjective, reflective manner of regarding history. For all these peculiarities clearly have it for their object to raise in the souls of the readers pleasure and delight in the splendid worship of the Lord, and to confirm their hearts in fidelity to the Lord and to His law.

With this plan and object, the first part of our history (1 Chron. i.-ix.), which contains genealogies, with geographical sketches and isolated historical remarks, is in perfect harmony. The genealogies are intended to exhibit, on the one hand, the connection of the people of Israel with the whole human race; on the other, the descent and genealogical ramifications of the tribes and families of Israel, with the extent to which they had spread themselves abroad in the land received as a heritage from the Lord. In both of these respects they are the necessary foundation for the following history of the chosen people, which the author designed to trace from the time of the foundation of the promised kingdom till the people were driven away into exile because of their revolt from their God. And it is not to be considered as a result of the custom prevalent among the later Arabian historians, of beginning their histories and chronicles *ab ovo* with



Adam, that our author goes back in this introduction to Adam and the beginnings of the human race; for not only is this custom far too modern to allow of any inference being drawn from it with reference to the Chronicle, but it has itself originated, beyond a doubt, in an imitation of our history. The reason for going back to the beginnings of the human race is to be sought in the importance for the history of the world of the people of Israel, whose progenitor Abraham had been chosen and separated from all the peoples of the earth by God, that his posterity might become a blessing to all the families of the earth. But in order to see more perfectly the plan and object of the historian in his selection and treatment of the historical material at his command, we must still keep in view the age in which he lived, and for which he wrote. In respect to this, so much in general is admitted, viz. that the Chronicle was composed after the Babylonian exile. With their release from exile, and their return into the land of their fathers, Israel did not receive again its former political importance. That part of the nation which had returned remained under Persian supremacy, and was ruled by Persian governors; and the descendants of the royal race of David remained subject to this governor, or at least to the kings of Persia. They were only allowed to restore the temple, and to arrange the divine service according to the precepts of the Mosaic law; and in this they were favoured by Cyrus and his successors. In such circumstances, the efforts and struggles of the returned Jews must have been mainly directed to the re-establishment and permanent ordering of the worship, in order to maintain communion with the Lord their God, and by that means to prove their fidelity to the God of their fathers, so that the Lord might fulfil His covenant promises to them, and complete the restoration of Judah and Jerusalem. By this fact, therefore, may we account for the setting forth in our history of the religious and ecclesiastical side of the life of the Israelitish community in such relief, and for the author's supposed "fondness" for the Levitic worship. If the author of the Chronicle wished to strengthen his contemporaries in their fidelity to Jahve, and to encourage them to fulfil their covenant duties by a description of the earlier history of the covenant people, he could not hope to accomplish his purpose more effectively than by so presenting the history as to bring accurately before them the ordinances and arrangements of the worship, the blessings of

fidelity to the covenant, and the fatal fruits of defection from the Lord.

The chronicler's supposed predilection for genealogical lists arose also from the circumstances of his time. From Ezra ii. 60 ff. we learn that some of the sons of priests who returned with Zerubbabel sought their family registers, but could not find them, and were consequently removed from the priesthood; besides this, the inheritance of the land was bound up with the families of Israel. On this account the family registers had, for those who had returned from the exile, an increased importance, as the means of again obtaining possession of the heritage of their fathers; and perhaps it was the value thus given to the genealogical lists which induced the author of the Chronicle to include in his book all the old registers of this sort which had been received from antiquity.

## § 2. AGE AND AUTHOR OF THE CHRONICLES.

The Chronicle cannot have been composed before the time of Ezra, for it closes with the intelligence that Cyrus, by an edict in the first year of his reign, allowed the Jews to return to their country (2. xxxvi. 22 f.), and it brings down the genealogical tree of Zerubbabel to his grandchildren (1. iii. 19-21). The opinion brought into acceptance by de Wette and Ewald, that the genealogy (1. iii. 19-24) enumerates six or seven other generations after Zerubbabel, and so reaches down to the times of Alexander the Great or yet later, is founded on the undemonstrable assumption that the twenty-one names which in this passage (ver. 21*b*) follow בני רפיה are the names of direct descendants of Zerubbabel. But no exegetical justification can be found for this assumption; since the list of names, "the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah," etc. (vers. 21*b*-24), is connected neither in form nor in subject-matter with the grandsons of Zerubbabel, who have been already enumerated, but forms a genealogical fragment, the connection of which with Zerubbabel's grandchildren is merely asserted, but can neither be proved nor even rendered probable. (*Vide* the commentary on these verses.) Other grounds for the acceptance of so late a date for the composition of the Chronicle are entirely wanting; for the orthography and language of the book



point only in general to the post-exilic age, and the mention of the Daric, a Persian coin, in 1. xxix. 7, does not bring us further down than the period of the Persian rule over Judæa. On the other hand, the use of the name בֵּיִרָה (1. xxix. 1, 19) for the temple can scarcely be reconciled with the composition of the book in the Macedonian or even the Seleucidian age, since an author who lived after Nehemiah, when Jerusalem, like other Persian cities, had received in the fortress built by him (Neh. ii. 8, vii. 2), and afterwards called *Bâpis* and *Arx Antonia*, its own בֵּיִרָה, would scarcely have given this name to the temple.

In reference to the question of the authorship of our book, the matter which most demands consideration is the identity of the end of the Chronicle with the beginning of the book of Ezra. The Chronicle closes with the edict of Cyrus which summons the Jews to return to Jerusalem to build the temple; the book of Ezra begins with this same edict, but gives it more completely than the Chronicle, which stops somewhat abruptly with the word וַיַּעַל, "and let him go up," although in this וַיַּעַל everything is contained that we find in the remaining part of the edict communicated in the book of Ezra. From this relation of the Chronicle to the book of Ezra, many Rabbins, Fathers of the church, and older exegetes, have drawn the conclusion that Ezra is also the author of the Chronicle. But of course it is not a very strong proof, since it can be accounted for on the supposition that the author of the book of Ezra has taken over the conclusion of the Chronicle into his work, and set it at the commencement, so as to attach his book to the Chronicle as a continuation. In support of this supposition, moreover, the further fact may be adduced, that it was just as important for the Chronicle to communicate the terms of Cyrus' edict as it was for the book of Ezra. It was a fitting conclusion of the former, to show that the destruction of Jerusalem and the leading away of the inhabitants of Judah to Babylon, was not the final destiny of Judah and Jerusalem, but that, after the dark night of exile, the day of the restoration of the people of God had dawned under Cyrus; and for the latter it was an indispensable foundation and point of departure for the history of the new immigration of the exiles into Jerusalem and Judah. Yet it still remains more probable that one author produced both writings, yet not as a single book, which has been divided at some later time by another hand. For no reason can be perceived for any such later division,

especially such a division as would make it necessary to repeat the edict of Cyrus.<sup>1</sup> The introduction of this edict with the words, "And it came to pass in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, *that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished,*" connects it so closely with the end of the account of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the carrying away into Babylon, contained in the words, "And they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia, *to fulfil the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, . . . to fulfil the seventy years*" (ver. 20 f.), that it cannot be separated from what precedes. Rather it is clear, that the author who wrote verses 20 and 21, representing the seventy years' exile as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, must be the same who mentions the edict of Cyrus, and sets it forth in its connection with the utterances of the same prophet. This connecting of the edict with the prophecy gives us an irrefragable proof that the verses which contain the edict form an integral part of the Chronicle. But, at the same time, the way in which the edict is broken off in the Chronicle with *לְכָן*, makes it likely that the author of the Chronicle did not give the contents of the edict in their entirety, only because he intended to treat further of the edict, and the fulfilment of it by the return of the Jews from Babylon, in a second work. A later editor would certainly have given the entire edict in both writings (the Chronicle and the book

<sup>1</sup> What Bertheau (p. xxi.) says in this connection (following Ewald, *Gesch. des V. Isr.* i. S. 264, der 2 Aufl.), viz., that "perhaps at first only that part of the great historical work which contains the history of the new community itself, to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, and the history of these its two heroes, was added to the books of the Old Testament, because it seemed unnecessary to add our present Chronicle, on account of its agreement in great part with the contents of the books of Samuel and Kings," is a supposition which merely evades giving a reason for the division of the work into two, by holding the division to have been made before the book came into the canon. But unless the division had been made before, no one would ever have thought of considering the first half of this book, i.e. our present Chronicle, unworthy of a place in the canon, since it contains, in great part, new information not found in the books of Samuel and Kings, and supplements in a variety of ways even the narratives which are contained in these books. And even supposing that the Chronicle was received into the canon as a supplement, after the books of Ezra and Nehemiah had already received a definite place in it, the verses 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22 f. could scarcely have been added to the Chronicle from the book of Ezra, to call attention to the fact that the Chronicle had received an unsuitable place in the canon, as it ought to have stood before the book of Ezra.



of Ezra), and would, moreover, hardly have altered כָּפִי (Chron.) into מִפִּי (Ezra), and יְהִי אֱלֹהֵי עַמּוֹ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי עַמּוֹ into יְהִי אֱלֹהֵי עַמּוֹ.

The remaining grounds which are usually urged for the original unity of the two writings, prove nothing more than the possibility or probability that both originated with one author; certainly they do not prove that they originally formed one work. The long list of phenomena in Bertheau's Commentary, pp. xvi-xx, by which a certainty is supposed to be arrived at that the Chronicle and Ezra originally was one great historical work, compiled from various sources, greatly requires the help of critical bias. 1. "The predilection of the author for genealogical lists, for detailed descriptions of great feasts, which occurred at the most various times, for exact representations of the arrangement of the public worship, and the business of the Levites and priests, with their classifications and ranks," cannot be proved to exist in the book of Ezra. That book contains only one very much abridged genealogy, that of Ezra (vii. 1-5); only two lists,—those, namely, of the families who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Ezra (chap. ii. and viii.); only one account of the celebration of a feast, the by no means detailed description of the consecration of the temple (vi. 16); short remarks on the building of the altar, the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, and the laying of the foundation-stone of the temple, in chap. iii.; and it contains nothing whatever as to the divisions and ranks of the priests and Levites. That in these lists and descriptions some expressions should recur, is to be expected from the nature of the case. Yet all that is common to both books is the word הַתִּיחַשׁ, the use of כַּמִּשְׁפָּט in the signification, "according to the Mosaic law" (1 Chron. xxiii. 31, 2 Chron. xxxv. 13, Ezra iii. 4, and Neh. viii. 18), and the liturgical formulæ הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה, which occurs also in Isa. xii. 4 and Ps. xxxiii. 2, and לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלֵּל with the addition, "Jahve is God, and His mercy endureth for ever" (1 Chron. xvi. 34, 41; 2 Chron. vii. 6; Ezra iii. 11). The other expressions enumerated by Bertheau are met with also in other writings: נִקְבוּ בְשֵׁמוֹת in Num. i. 17; רָאשֵׁי אֲבוֹת and רָאשֵׁי בֵית-אֲבוֹת, Ex. vi. 14 ff.; and the formula (בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה) בְּכָתוּב בְּתוֹרָה or לְכָל-הַכָּתוּב (1 Chron. xvi. 40; 2 Chron. xxxv. 12, 26; Ezra iii. 2, 4) is just as common in other writings: cf. Josh. i. 8, viii. 31, 34; 1 Kings ii. 3; 2 Kings xiv. 6, xxii. 13, xxiii. 21. Bertheau further remarks: "In those sections in which the regulation of the public worship, the duties, classification, and offices of the priests and Levites

are spoken of, the author seizes every opportunity to tell of the musicians and doorkeepers, their duties at the celebration of the great festivals, and their classification. He speaks of the musicians, 1 Chron. vi. 16 ff., ix. 14-16, 33, xv. 16-22, 27 f., xvi. 4-42, xxiii. 5, xxv.; 2 Chron. v. 12 f., vii. 6, viii. 14 f., xx. 19, 21, xxiii. 13, 18, xxix. 25-28, 30, xxx. 21 f., xxxi. 2, 11-18, xxxiv. 12, xxxv. 15; Ezra iii. 10 f.; Neh. xi. 17, xii. 8, 24, 27-29, 45-47, xiii. 5. The doorkeepers are mentioned nearly as often, and not seldom in company with the singers: 1 Chron. ix. 17-29, xv. 18, 23, 24, xvi. 38, xxiii. 5, xxvi. 1, 12-19; 2 Chron. viii. 14, xxiii. 4, 19, xxxi. 14, xxxiv. 13, xxxv. 15; Ezra ii. 42, 70, vii. 7, x. 24; Neh. vii. 1, 45, x. 29, xi. 19, xii. 25, 45, 47, xiii. 5. Now if these passages be compared, not only are the same expressions met with (*e.g.* מְשִׁימֵי only in Chron., Ezra, and Neh.; מְשִׁימֵי and מְשִׁימֵי likewise only in these books, but here very frequently, some twenty-eight times), and also very often in different places the same names (*cf.* 1 Chron. ix. 17 with Neh. xii. 25); but everywhere also we can easily trace the same view as to the importance of the musicians and doorkeepers for the public worship, and see that all information respecting them rests upon a very well-defined view of their duties and their position." But does it follow from this "well-defined view" of the business of the musicians and doorkeepers, that the Chronicle, Ezra, and Nehemiah form a single book? Is this view an idea peculiar to the author of this book? In all the historical books of the Old Testament, from Exodus and Leviticus to Nehemiah, we find the idea that the laying of the sacrifice upon the altar is the business of the priest; but does it follow from that, that all those books were written by one man? But besides this, the representation given by Bertheau is very one-sided. The fact is, that in the Chronicle, and in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, mention is made of the priests just as often as of the Levitical musicians, and oftener than the doorkeepers are spoken of, as will be seen from the proofs brought forward in the following remarks; nor can any trace be discovered of a "fondness" on the part of the chronicler for the musicians and porters. They are mentioned only when the subject demanded that they should be mentioned.

2. As to the language.—Bertheau himself admits, after the enumeration of a long list of linguistic peculiarities of the Chronicle and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, that all these



phenomena are to be met with separately in other books of the Old Testament, especially the later ones; only their frequent use can be set down as the linguistic peculiarity of *one* author. But does the mere numbering of the places where a word or a grammatical construction occurs in this or that book really serve as a valid proof for the unity of the authorship? When, for example, the form בָּנָה, 2 Chron. xiv. 13, xxviii. 14, Ezra ix. 7, Neh. iii. 36, occurs elsewhere only in Esther and Daniel, or קָבַל in 1 Chron. xii. 18, xxi. 11, 2 Chron. xxix. 16, 22, and Ezra viii. 30, is elsewhere found only in Proverbs once, in Job once, and thrice in Esther, does it follow that the Chronicle and the book of Ezra are the work of one author? The greater number of the linguistic phenomena enumerated by Bertheau, such as the use of הָאֱלֹהִים for יהוה; the frequent use of לְ, partly before the infinitive to express shall or must, partly for subordinating or introducing a word; the multiplication of prepositions,—*e.g.* in עַד לְאֵין, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; עַד לְמָאֹד, 2 Chron. xvi. 14; עַד לְמַעַל, 2 Chron. xvi. 12, xvii. 12, xxvi. 8,—are characteristics not arising from a peculiar use of language by our chronicler, but belonging to the later or post-exilic Hebrew in general. The only words and phrases which are characteristic of and common to the Chronicle and the book of Ezra are: כַּבֹּד (bowl), 1 Chron. xxviii. 17, Ezra i. 10, viii. 27; the infinitive Hophal הוֹסֵד, used of the foundation of the temple, 2 Chron. iii. 3, Ezra iii. 11; פְּלִגָּה, of the divisions of the Levites, 2 Chron. xxxv. 5 and Ezra vi. 18; הַתְּנוּבָה, of offerings, 1 Chron. xxix. 5, 6, 9, 14, 17, Ezra i. 6, ii. 68, iii. 5; עַד לְמִרְחֹק (with three prepositions), 2 Chron. xxvi. 15, Ezra iii. 13; and הִכֵּן לְרִשְׁתָּהֶם, 2 Chron. xii. 14, xix. 3, xxx. 19, and Ezra vii. 10. These few words and constructions would *per se* not prove much; but in connection with the fact that neither in the language nor in the ideas are any considerable differences or variations to be observed, they may serve to strengthen the probability, arising from the relation of the end of the Chronicle to the beginning of the book of Ezra, that both writings were composed by the priest and scribe Ezra.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The opinion first propounded by Ewald, and adopted by Bertheau, Dillmann (art. "Chronik" in *Herzog's Realencykl.*), and others, that "the author belonged to the guild of musicians settled at the temple in Jerusalem" (*Gesch. des V. Isr.* i. p. 235), has no tenable ground for its support, and rests merely on the erroneous assumption that the author has not the same sympathy with the priests as he shows in speaking of the Levites, more especially

## § 3. THE SOURCES OF THE CHRONICLES.

The genealogical list in chap. i., which gives us the origin of the human race and of the nations, and that which contains the names of the sons of Jacob (ii. 1 and 2), are to be found in and have been without doubt extracted from Genesis, to be placed together here. For it is scarcely probable that genealogical lists belonging to primeval time and the early days of Israel should have been preserved till the post-exilic period. But all the genealogical registers which follow, together with the geographical and historical remarks interwoven with them (chap. ii. 3-viii. 40), have not been derived from the older historical books of the Old Testament: for they contain for the most part merely the names of the originators of those genealogical lines, of the grandsons and some of the great-grandsons of Jacob, and of the ancestors, brothers, and sons of David: but nowhere do they contain the whole lines. Moreover, in the parallel places the names often differ greatly, so that all the variations cannot be ascribed to errors of transcription. Compare the comparative table of these parallel places in my *apolog. Versuch über die Chron.* S. 159 ff., and in the *Handbook of Introduction*, § 139, 1. All these catalogues, together with that of the cities of the Levites (chap. vi. 59-66), have been derived from other, extra-biblical sources.

of the singers and doorkeepers (Berth.). If this assertion were true, the author might have been just as well a Levitical doorkeeper as a musician. But it is quite erroneous, as may be seen on a comparison of the passages adduced *supra*, p. 26, from Bertheau's commentary. In all the passages in which the musicians and doorkeepers are mentioned the priests are also spoken of, and in such a way that to both priests and Levites that is ascribed which belonged to their respective offices: to the priests, the sacrificial service and the blowing of the trumpets: to the Levites, the external business of the temple, and the execution of the instrumental music and psalm-singing introduced by David. From this it is clear that there is no reason why the priest and scribe Ezra might not have composed the Chronicle. The passages supporting the assertion that where musicians and doorkeepers are spoken of the priests are also mentioned, are: 1 Chron. vi. 34 ff., ix. 10-13, xv. 24, xvi. 6, 30 f., xxiii. 2, 13, 28, 32, xxiv. 1-19; 2 Chron. v. 7, 11-14, vii. 6, viii. 14 f., xiii. 9-12, xvii. 8, xix. 8, 11, xx. 28, xxiii. 4, 6, 18, xxvi. 17, 20, xxix. 4, 16, 21-24, 34, xxx. 3, 15, 21, 25, 27, xxxi. 2, 17, 19, xxxiv. 30, xxxv. 2, 8, 10, 14, 18; Ezra i. 5, ii. 61, 70, iii. 2, 8, 10-12, vi. 16, 18, 20, vii. 7, 24, viii. 15, 24-30, 33; Neh. ii. 16, iii. 1, vii. 73, viii. 13, x. 1-9, 29, 35, 39 f., xi. 3, 10 ff., xii. 1 ff., 30, 35, 41, 44, 47, xiii. 30.



But as Bertheau, S. xxxi, rightly remarks: "We cannot hold the lists to be the result of historical investigation on the part of the author of the Chronicle, in the sense of his having culled the individual names carefully either out of historical works or from traditions of the families, and then brought them into order: for in reference to Gad (chap. v. 12) we are referred to a genealogical register prepared in the time of Jotham king of Judah and Jeroboam king of Israel; while as to Issachar (chap. vii. 2) the reference is to the numbering of the people which took place in the time of David; and it is incidentally (?) stated (chap. ix. 1) that registers had been prepared of all Israelites (*i.e.* the northern tribes)." Besides this, in 1 Chron. xxiii. 3, 27, and xxvi. 31, numberings of the Levites, and in 1 Chron. xxvii. 24 the numbering of the people undertaken by Joab at David's command, are mentioned. With regard to the latter, however, it is expressly stated that its results were not incorporated in the סִפְרֵי הַיָּמִים, *i.e.* in the book of the chronicles of King David, while it is said that the results of the genealogical registration of the northern tribes of Israel were written in the book of the kings of Israel. According to this, then, it might be thought that the author had taken his genealogical lists from the great historical work made use of by him, and often cited, in the history of the kings of Judah—"the *national* annals of Israel and Judah." But this can be accepted only with regard to the short lists of the tribes of the northern kingdom in chap. v. and vii., which contain nothing further than the names of families and fathers'-houses, with a statement of the number of males in these fathers'-houses. It is possible that these names and numbers were contained in the national annals; but it is not likely that these registers, which are of a purely genealogical nature, giving the descent of families or famous men in longer or shorter lines of ancestors, were received into the national annals (*Reichsannalen*), and it does not at all appear from the references to the annals that this was the case. These genealogical lists were most probably in the possession of the heads of the tribes and families and households, from whom the author of the Chronicle would appear to have collected all he could find, and preserved them from destruction by incorporating them in his work.

In the historical part (1 Chron. x.—2 Chron. xxxvi.), at the death of almost every king, the author refers to writings in which the events and acts of his reign are described. Only in the case

of Joram, Abaziah, Athaliah, and the later kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiahin, and Zedekiah, are such references omitted. The books which are thus named are: (1) For David's reign, Dibre of Samuel the seer, of the prophet Nathan, and of Gad the seer (1 Chron. xxix. 29): (2) as to Solomon, the Dibre of the prophet Nathan, the prophecy (מִשְׁכָּנִי) of Abijah the Shilonite, and the visions (חֲזִיוֹנִי) of the seer Iddo against Jeroboam the son of Nebat (2 Chron. ix. 29): (3) for Rehoboam, Dibre of the prophet Shemaiah and the seer Iddo (chap. xii. 15): (4) for Abijah's reign, Midrash of the prophet Iddo (xiii. 22): (5) for Asa, the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (xvi. 11): (6) as to Jehoshaphat, Dibre of Jehu the son of Hanani, which had been incorporated with the book of the kings of Israel (xx. 34): (7) for the reign of Joash, Midrash-Sopher of the kings (xxiv. 27): (8) for the reign of Amaziah, the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (xxv. 26): (9) in reference to Uzziah, a writing (כְּתָב) of the prophet Isaiah (xxvi. 22): (10) as to Jotham, the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (xxvii. 7): (11) for the reign of Ahaz, the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (xxviii. 26): (12) for Hezekiah, the vision (חֲזִיוֹנִי) of the prophet Isaiah, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (xxviii. 32): (13) as to Manasseh, Dibre of the kings of Israel, and Dibre of Hosai (xxxiii. 18 and 19): (14) for the reign of Josiah, the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (xxxv. 27): and (15) for Jehoiakim, the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (xxxvi. 8).

From this summary, it appears that two classes of writings, of historical and prophetic contents respectively, are quoted. The book of the kings of Judah and Israel (No. 5, 8, 11), the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (10, 14, 15), the histories (הִיסְטוֹרִיָּה) of the kings of Israel (13), and the Midrash-book of kings (7), are all historical. The first three titles are, as is now generally admitted, only variations in the designation of one and the same work, whose complete title, "Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel" (or Israel and Judah), is here and there altered into "Book of the Events (or History) of the Kings of Israel," i.e. of the whole Israelitish people. This work contained the history of the kings of both kingdoms, and must have been essentially the same as to contents with the two annalistic writings cited in the canonical books of Kings: the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, and the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah. This conclusion is forced upon us by the fact that the



extracts from them contained in our canonical books of Kings, coincide with the extracts from the books of the kings of Israel and Judah contained in our Chronicle where they narrate the same events, either verbally, or at least in so far that the identity of the sources from which they have been derived cannot but be recognised. The only difference is, that the author of the Chronicle had the two writings which the author of the book of Kings quotes as two separate works, before him as one work, narrating the history of both kingdoms in a single composition. For he cites the book of the kings of Israel even for the history of those kings of Judah who, like Jotham and Hezekiah, had nothing to do with the kingdom of Israel (*i.e.* the ten tribes), and even after the kingdom of the ten tribes had been already destroyed, for the reigns of Manasseh, Josiah, and Jehoiakim. But we are entirely without any means of answering with certainty the question, in how far the merging of the annals of the two kingdoms into *one* book of the kings of Israel was accompanied by remoulding and revision. The reasons which Bertheau, in his commentary on Chronicles, p. xli. ff., brings forward, after the example of Thenius and Ewald, for thinking that it underwent so thorough a revision as to become a different book, are without force. The difference in the title is not sufficient, since it is quite plain, from the different names under which the chronicler quotes the work which is used by him, that he did not give much attention to literal accuracy. The character of the parallel places in our books of Kings and the Chronicle, as Bertheau himself admits, forms no decisive criterion for an accurate determination of the relation of the chronicler to his original documents, which is now in question, since neither the author of the books of Samuel and Kings nor the author of the Chronicle intended to copy with verbal exactness: they all, on the contrary, treated the historical material which they had before them with a certain freedom, and wrought it up in their own writings in accordance with their various aims.

It is questionable if the work quoted for the reign of Joash, מִדְּרֵשׁ סֵפֶר הַמַּלְכִּים (No. 7), is identical with the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, or whether it be not a commentary on it, or perhaps a revision of that book, or of a section of the history of the kings for purposes of edification. The narrative in the Chronicle of the chief events in the reign of Joash, his accession, with the fall of Athaliah, and the repairing of the temple (2

Chron. xxiii. and xxiv.), agrees with the account of these events in 2 Kings xi. and xii. where the annals of the kings of Judah are quoted, to such an extent, that both the authors seem to have derived their accounts from the same source, each making extracts according to his peculiar point of view. But the Chronicle recounts, besides this, the fall of Joash into idolatry, the censure of this defection by the prophet Zechariah, and the defeat of the numerous army of the Jews by a small Syrian host (xxiv. 15-25); from which, in Bertheau's opinion, we may come, without much hesitation, to the conclusion that the connection of these events had been already very clearly brought forward in a Midrash of that book of Israel and Judah which is quoted elsewhere. This is certainly possible, but it cannot be shown to be more than a possibility; for the further remark of Bertheau, that in the references which occur elsewhere it is not so exactly stated as in 2 Chron. xxiv. 27 what the contents of the book referred to are, is shown to be erroneous by the citation in chap. xxxiii. 18 and 19. It cannot, moreover, be denied that the title מִדְּרָשׁ סֵפֶר instead of the simple סֵפֶר is surprising, even if, with Ewald, we take מִדְּרָשׁ in the sense of "composition" or "writing," and translate it "writing-book" (*Schriftbuch*), which gives ground for supposing that an expository writing is here meant. Even taking the title in this sense, it does not follow with any certainty that the Midrash extended over the whole history of the kings, and still less is it proved that this expository writing may have been used by the chronicler here and there in places where it is not quoted.

So much, however, is certain, that we must not, with Jahn, Movers, Staehelin, and others, hold these annals of the kings of Israel and Judah, which are quoted in the canonical books of Kings and the Chronicle, to be the official records of the acts and undertakings of the kings prepared by the מִזְכִּירִים.<sup>1</sup> They are

<sup>1</sup> Against this idea Bahr also has very justly declared (*die Bücher der Könige*, in J. P. Lange's *theol. homilet. Bibelwerke*, S. x. f.), and among other things has rightly remarked, that in the separated kingdom of Israel there is no trace whatever of court or national historians. But he goes much too far when he denies the existence of national annals in general, even in the kingdom of Judah, and under David and Solomon. For even granting that the מִזְכִּיר derives his name from this, "that his duty was, as מְזַכֵּר, to bring to the recollection of the king all the state affairs which were to be cared for, and give advice in reference to them;" yet this function is so intimately connected with the recording and preserving of the national



rather annalistic national histories composed by prophets, partly from the archives of the kingdom and other public documents, partly from prophetic monographs containing prophecy and history, either composed and continued by various prophets in succession during the existence of both kingdoms, or brought together in a connected form shortly before the ruin of the kingdom out of the then existing contemporary historical documents and prophetic records. Two circumstances are strongly in favour of the latter supposition. On the one hand, the references to these annals in both kingdoms do not extend to the last kings, but end in the kingdom of Israel with Pekah (2 Kings xv. 31), in the kingdom of Judah with Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 5 and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 8). On the other hand, the formula "until this day" occurs in reference to various events; and since it for the most part refers not to the time of the exile, but to times when the kingdom still existed (cf. 1 Kings viii. 8 with 2 Chron. v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 13, 21, with 2 Chron. viii. 8; 1 Kings xii. 19 with 2 Chron. x. 19; 2 Kings viii. 22 with 2 Chron. xxi. 10, 2 Kings ii. 22, x. 27, xiv. 7, and xvi. 6), it cannot be from the hand of the authors of our canonical books of Kings and Chronicles, but must have come down to us from the original documents, and is in them possible only if they were written at some shorter or longer period after the events. When Bähr, in the place already quoted, says, on the contrary, that the time shortly before the fall of the kingdom, the time of complete uprooting, would appear to be the time least of all suited for the collection and editing of national year-books, this arises from his not having fully weighed the fact, that at that very time prophets like Jeremiah lived and worked, and, as is clear from documents of the kingdom and of all royal ordinances, that from it the composition of official annals of the kingdom follows almost as a matter of course. The existence of such national annals, or official year-books of the kingdom, is placed by 1 Chron. ix. 1 and xxvii. 24 beyond all doubt. According to ix. 1, a genealogical record of the whole of Israel was prepared and inserted in the book of the kings of Israel; and according to xxvii. 24, the result of the numbering of the people, carried out by Joab under David, was not inserted in the book of the "Chronicles of King David." Bähr's objections to the supposition of the existence of national annals, rest upon the erroneous presupposition that all judgments concerning the kings and their religious conduct which we find in our canonical histories, would have also been contained in the annals of the kingdom, and that thus the authors of our books of Kings and Chronicles would have been mere copyists giving us some excerpts from the original documents.

the prophecies of Jeremiah, gave much time to the accurate study of the older holy writings.

The book composed by the prophet Isaiah concerning the reign of King Uzziah (9) was a historical work; as was also probably the Midrash of the prophet Iddo (4). But, on the other hand, we cannot believe, as do Ewald, Bertheau, Bähr, and others, that the other prophetic writings enumerated under 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, and 13, were merely parts of the books of the kings of Israel and Judah; for the grounds which are brought forward in support of this view do not appear to us to be tenable, or rather, tend to show that those writings were independent books of prophecy, to which some historical information was appended. 1. The circumstance that it is said of two of those writings, the Dibre of Jehu and the דִּבְרֵי of Isaiah (6 and 12), that they were incorporated or received into the books of the Kings, does not justify the conclusion "that, since two of the above-named writings are expressly said to be parts of the larger historical work, probably by the others also only parts of this work are meant" (Ew., Berth. S. xxxiv). For in the citations, those writings are not called parts of the book of Kings, but are only said to have been received into it as component parts; and from that it by no means follows that the others, whose reception is not mentioned, were parts of that work. The admission of one writing into another book can only then be spoken of when the book is different from the writing which is received into it. 2. Since some of the writings are denominated דְּבָרֵי of a prophet, from the double meaning of the word דְּבָרִים, *verba* and *res*, this title might be taken in the sense of "events of the prophets," to denote historical writings. But it is much more natural to think, after the analogy of the superscriptions in Amos i. 1, Jer. i. 1, of books of prophecies like the books of Amos and Jeremiah, which contained prophecies and prophetic speeches along with historical information, just as the sections Amos vii. 10-17, Jer. chap. xl.-xlv. do, and which differed from our canonical books of prophecies, in which the historical relations are mentioned only in exceptional cases, only by containing more detailed and minute accounts of the historical events which gave occasion to the prophetic utterances. On account of this fulness of historical detail, such prophetic writings, without being properly histories, would yet be for many periods of the history of the kings very abundant sources of history. The above-mentioned difference between our canonical



books of prophecy and the books now under discussion is very closely connected with the historical development of the theocracy, which showed itself in general in this, that the action of the older prophets was specially directed to the present, and to *vivâ voce* speaking, while that of those of a later time was more turned towards the future, and the consummation of the kingdom of God by the Messiah (cf. Küper, *das Prophetenthum des A. Bundes*, 1870, S. 93 ff.). This signification of the word דְּבָרִי is, in the present case, placed beyond all doubt by the fact that the writings of other prophets which are mentioned along with these are called נְבִיאָה, חֲזוֹן, and חֲזוֹן,—words which never denote historical writings, but always only prophecies and visions of the prophets. In accordance with this, the חֲזוֹן of Isaiah (12) is clearly distinguished from the writing of the same prophet concerning Uzziah, for which כְּתָב is used; while in the reign of Manasseh, the speeches of Hozai are named along with the events, *i.e.* the history of the kings of Israel (2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, 19), and a more exact account of what was related about Manasseh in each of these two books is given. From this we learn that the historical book of Kings contained the words which prophets had spoken against Manasseh; while in the writing of the prophet Hozai, of whom we know nothing further, information as to the places where his idolatry was practised, and the images which were the objects of it, was to be found. After all these facts, which speak decidedly against the identification of the prophetic writings cited in the book of Kings with that book itself, the enigmatic לְהַתִּיחֵשׁ, after the formula of quotation, “They are written in the words (speeches) of the prophet Shemaiah and of the seer Iddo” (2 Chron. xii. 15), can naturally not be looked upon as a proof that here prophetic writings are denominated parts of a larger historical work. 3. Nor can we consider it, with Bertheau, decisive, “that for the whole history of David (דְּבָרֵי דָוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ הָרִאשׁוֹנִים וְהָאַחֲרֵינִים), Solomon, Rehoboam, and Jehoshaphat, prophetic writings are referred to; while for the whole history of Asa, Amaziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Josiah, the references are to the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.” From this fact no further conclusion can be drawn than that, in reference to the reigns of some kings the prophetic writings, and in reference to those of others the history of the kingdom, contained all that was important, and that the history of the kingdom contained also information as to the work of the prophets in

the kingdom, while the prophetic writings contained likewise information as to the undertakings of the kings. The latter might contain more detailed accounts in reference to some kings, the former in reference to others; and this very circumstance, or some other reason which cannot now be ascertained by us, may have caused the writer of the Chronicle to refer to the former in reference to one king, and to the latter in reference to another.

Finally, 4. Bähr remarks, S. viii. f.: "Quite a number of sections of our books (of Kings) are found in the Chronicle, where the words are identical, and yet the reference there is to the writings of single definite persons, and not to the three original documents from which the Kings is compiled. Thus, in the first place, in the history of Solomon, in which the sections 2 Chron. vi. 1-40 and 1 Kings viii. 12-50, 2 Chron. vii. 7-22 and 1 Kings viii. 64-ix. 9, 2 Chron. viii. 2-x. 17 and 1 Kings ix. 17-xxiii. 26, 2 Chron. ix. 1-28 and 1 Kings x. 1-28, etc., are identical, the Chronicle refers not to the book of the history of Solomon (as 1 Kings xi. 41), but to the דְּבָרֵי of the prophet Nathan, etc. (2 Chron. ix. 29); consequently the book of the history of Solomon must either have been compiled from those three prophetic writings, or at least have contained considerable portions of them. The case is identical with the second of the original documents, the book of the history of the kings of Judah (1 Kings xiv. 29 and elsewhere). The narrative as to Rehoboam is identical in 2 Chron. x. 1-19 and 1 Kings xii. 1-19, as also in 2 Chron. xi. 1-4 and 1 Kings xii. 20-24; further, in 2 Chron. xii. 13 f. as compared with 1 Kings xiv. 21 f.; but the history of the kings of Judah is not mentioned as an authority, as is the case in 1 Kings xiv. 29, but the דְּבָרֵי of the prophet Shemaiah and the seer Iddo (2 Chron. xii. 15). In the history of King Abijah we are referred, in the very short account, 1 Kings xv. 1-8, for further information to the book of the history of the kings of Judah; while the Chronicle, on the contrary, which gives further information, quotes from the מִדְּבָרֵי of the prophet Iddo (2 Chron. xiii. 22). The case is similar in the history of the kings Uzziah and Manasseh: our author refers in reference to both to the book of the kings of Judah (2 Kings xv. 6, xx. 17); the chronicler quotes, for the first the כְּתָב of the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz (2 Chron. xxvi. 22), for the latter דְּבָרֵי חֲזִי (2 Chron. xxxiii. 19). By all these quotations it is satisfactorily shown that the book of the kings of Judah is compiled from the historical writ-



ings of various prophets or seers." But this conclusion is neither valid nor necessary. It is not valid, for this reason, that the Chronicle, besides the narratives concerning the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah, Uzziah, and Manasseh, which it has in common with the books of Kings, and which are in some cases identical, contains a whole series of narratives peculiar to itself, which perhaps were not contained at all in the larger historical work on the kings of Judah, or at least were not there so complete as in the special prophetic writings cited by the chronicler. As to Solomon also, the Chronicle has something peculiar to itself which is not found in the book of Kings. Nor is the conclusion necessary; for from a number of identical passages in our canonical books of Kings and Chronicles, the only certain conclusion which can be drawn is, that these narratives were contained in the authorities quoted by both writers, but not that the variously named authorities form one and the same work.

By all this we are justified in maintaining the view, that the writings quoted by the author of the Chronicle under the titles, Words, Prophecy, Visions of this and that prophet, with the exception of the two whose incorporation with the book of Kings is specially mentioned, lay before him as writings separate and distinct from the "Books of the Kings of Israel and Judah," that these writings were also in the hands of many of his contemporaries, and that he could refer his readers to them. On this supposition, we can comprehend the change in the titles of the works quoted; while on the contrary supposition, that the special prophetic writings quoted were parts of the larger history of the kings of Israel and Judah, it remains inexplicable. But the references of the chronicler are not to be understood as if all he relates, for example, of the reign of David was contained in the words of the seer Samuel, of the prophet Nathan, and of the seer Gad, the writings he quotes for that reign. He may, as Berth. S. xxxviii. has already remarked, "have made use also of authorities which he did not feel called upon to name,"—as, for example, the lists of David's heroes, 1 Chron. xi. 10–47, and of those who gave in their adherence to David before the death of Saul, and who anointed him king in Hebron, chap. xii. Such also are the catalogues of the leaders of the host, of the princes of the tribes, and the stewards of the royal domains, chap. xxvii.; of the fathers'-houses of the Levites, and the divisions of the priests, Levites, and singers, etc., chap. xxiii.–xxvi. These lists contain records to whose sources

he did not need to refer, even if he had extracted them from the public annals of the kingdom during the reign of David, because he has embodied them in their integrity in his book.

But our canonical books of Samuel and Kings are by no means to be reckoned among the sources possibly used besides the writings which are quoted. It cannot well be denied that the author of the Chronicle knew these books; but that he has used them as authorities, as de Wette, Movers, Ewald, and others think, we must, with Bertheau and Dillmann, deny. The single plausible ground which is usually brought forward to prove the use of these writings, is the circumstance that the Chronicle contains many narratives corresponding to those found in the books of Samuel and Kings, and often verbally identical with them. But that is fully accounted for by the fact that the chronicler used the same more detailed writings as the authors of the books of Samuel and Kings, and has extracted the narratives in question, partly with verbal accuracy, partly with some small alterations, from them. Against the supposition that the above-named canonical books were used by the chronicler, we may adduce the facts that the chronicle, even in those corresponding passages, differs in many ways as to names and events from the account in those books, and that it contains, on an average, more than they do, as will be readily seen on an exact comparison of the parallel sections. Other and much weaker grounds for believing that the books of Samuel and Kings were used by the chronicler, are refuted in my *Handbook of Introduction*, § 141, 2; and in it, at § 139, is to be found a synoptical arrangement of the parallel sections.

#### § 4. THE HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF THE CHRONICLES.

The historic truth or credibility of the books of the Chronicle, which de Wette, in the *Beitr. zur Einleit.* 1806, violently attacked, in order to get rid of the evidence of the Chronicle for the Mosaic origin of the Sinaitic legislation, is now again in the main generally recognised.<sup>1</sup> The care with which the chronicler

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bertheau, *Com. S.* xliii, and Dillmann, *loc cit.* The decision of the latter is as follows, S. 693: "This work has a great part of its narratives and information in common with the older canonical historical books, and very often corresponds verbally, or almost verbally, with them; but another and equally important part is peculiar to itself. This relationship was, formerly,



has used his authorities may be seen, on a comparison of the narratives common to the Chronicle with the books of Samuel and Kings, not only from the fact that in these parallel sections the story of the chronicler agrees in all essential points with the accounts of these books, but also from the variations which are to be met with. For these variations, in respect to their matter, give us in many ways more accurate and fuller information, and in every other respect are of a purely formal kind, in great part affecting only the language and style of expression, or arising from the hortatory-didactic aim of the narrative. But this hortatory aim has nowhere had a prejudicial effect on the objective truth of the statement of historical facts, as appears on every hand on deeper and more attentive observation, but has only imparted to the history a more subjective impress, as compared with the objective style of the books of Kings.

Now, since the parallel places are of such a character, we are, as Bertheau and Dillmann frankly acknowledge, justified in believing that the author of the Chronicle, in the communication of narratives not elsewhere to be found in the Old Testament, has followed his authorities very closely, and that not only the many registers which we find in his work—the lists in 1 Chron. xii., xxiii.–xxvi., xxvii.; the catalogue of cities fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xi. 6–12; the family intelligence, chap. xi. 18–23, xxi. 2, and such matters—have been communicated in exact accordance with his authorities, but also the accounts of the wars

in the time of the specially negative criticism, explained by the supposition that the chronicler had derived the information which he has in common with these books from them, and that every difference and peculiarity arose from misunderstanding, misinterpretation, a desire to ornament, intentional misrepresentation, and pure invention (so especially de Wette in his *Beitr.*, and Gramberg, *die Chronik nach ihrem geschichtl. Karakter*, 1823). The historic credibility of the Chronicle has, however, been long ago delivered from such measureless suspicions, and recognised (principally by the efforts of Keil, *apologet. Versuch*, 1833; Movers, *die bibl. Chronik*, 1834; Haevernick, in the *Einleitung*, 1839; and Ewald, in the *Geschichte Israels*). It is now again acknowledged that the chronicler has written everywhere from authorities, and that intentional fabrications or misrepresentations of the history can no more be spoken of in connection with him." Only K. H. Graf has remained so far behind the present stage of Old Testament inquiry as to seek to revive the views of de Wette and Gramberg as to the Chronicle and the Pentateuch. For further information as to the attacks of de Wette and Gramberg, and their refutation, see my *apologet. Versuche über die BB. der Chronik*, 1833, and in the *Handbook of Introduction*, § 143 and 144.

of Rehoboam, Abijah, Jehoshaphat (chap. xx.), Amaziah, etc. Only here and there, Bertheau thinks, has he used the opportunity offered to him to treat the history in a freer way, so as to represent the course of the more weighty events, and such as specially attracted his attention, according to his own view. This appears especially, he says, (1) in the account of the speeches of David, 1 Chron. xiii. 2 f., xv. 12 f., xxviii. 2-10, 20 f., xxix. 1-5 and 10-19, where, too, there occur statements of the value of the precious metals destined for the building of the temple (1 Chron. xxix. 4, 7), which clearly do not rest upon truthful historical recollection, and can by no means have been derived from a trustworthy source; as also in the reports of those of Abijah (2 Chron. xiii. 5-10) and of Asa (chap. xiv. 10, etc.); then (2) in the description of the religious ceremonies and feasts (1 Chron. xv. and xvi.; 2 Chron. v. 1-vii. 10, chap. xxix.-xxxi., chap. xxxv.): for in both speeches and descriptions expressions and phrases constantly recur which may be called current expressions with the chronicler. Yet these speeches stand quite on a level with those of Solomon, 2 Chron. i. 8-10, chap. vi. 4-11, 12-42, which are also to be found in the books of Kings (1. iii. 6-9, chap. viii. 14-53), from which it is to be inferred that the author here has not acted quite independently, but that in this respect also older histories may have served him as a model. But even in these descriptions information is not lacking which must rest upon a more accurate historical recollection, *e.g.* the names in 1 Chron. xv. 5-11, 17-24; the statement as to the small number of priests, and the help given to them by the Levites, in 2 Chron. xxix. 14 f., xxx. 17. Yet we must, beyond doubt, believe that the author of the Chronicle "has in these descriptions transferred that which had become established custom in his own time, and which according to general tradition rested upon ancient ordinance, without hesitation, to an earlier period." Of these two objections so much is certainly correct, that in the speeches of the persons acting in the history, and in the descriptions of the religious feasts, the freer handling of the authorities appears most strongly; but no alterations of the historical circumstances, nor additions in which the circumstances of the older time have been unhistorically represented according to the ideas or the taste of the post-exilic age, can, even here, be anywhere pointed out. With regard, first of all, to the speeches in the Chronicle, they are certainly not given according to the sketches or written reports of the hearers,



but sketched and composed by the historian according to a truthful tradition of the fundamental thoughts. For although, in all the speeches of the Chronicle, certain current and characteristic expressions and phrases of the author of this book plainly occur, yet it is just as little doubtful that the speeches of the various persons are essentially different from one another in their thoughts, and characteristic images and words. By this fact it is placed beyond doubt that they have not been put into the mouths of the historical persons either by the chronicler or by the authors of the original documents upon which he relies, but have been composed according to the reports or written records of the ear-witnesses. For if we leave out of consideration the short sayings or words of the various persons, such as 1 Chron. xi. 1 f., xii. 12 f., xv. 12 f., etc., which contain nothing characteristic, there are in the Chronicle only three longer speeches of King David (1 Chron. xxii. 7-16, xxviii. 2-10, 12-22, and xxix. 1-5), all of which have reference to the transfer of the kingdom to his son Solomon, and in great part treat, on the basis of the divine promise (2 Sam. vii. and 1 Chron. xvii.), of the building of the temple, and the preparations for this work. In these speeches the peculiarities of the chronicler come so strongly into view, in contents and form, in thought and language, that we must believe them to be free representations of the thoughts which in those days moved the soul of the grey-haired king. But if we compare with these David's prayer (1 Chron. xxix. 10-19), we find in it not only that multiplication of the predicates of God which is so characteristic of David (cf. Ps. xviii.), but also, in vers. 11 and 15, definite echoes of the Davidic psalms. The speech of Abijah, again, against the apostate Israel (2 Chron. xiii. 4-12), moves, on the whole, within the circle of thought usual with the chronicler, but contains in ver. 7 expressions such as אֲנָשִׁים רַקִּים and בְּנֵי בְלִיעַל, which are quite foreign to the language of the Chronicle, and belong to the times of David and Solomon, and consequently point to sources contemporaneous with the events. The same thing is true of Hezekiah's speech (2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8), in which the expression זֶרַע בָּשָׂר, "the arm of flesh," recalls the intimacy of this king with the prophet Isaiah (cf. Isa. xxxi. 3). The sayings and speeches of the prophets, on the contrary, are related much more in their original form. Take, for instance, the remarkable speech of Azariah ben Oded to King Asa (2 Chron. xv. 1-7), which, on account of its obscurity, has been

very variously explained, and which, as is well known, is the foundation of the announcement made by Christ of the destruction of Jerusalem and the last judgment (Matt. xxiv. 6, 7; Luke xxi. 19). As C. P. Caspari (*der syrisch-ephraimit. Krieg.*, Christiania 1849, S. 54) has already remarked, it is so peculiar, and bears so little of the impress of the Chronicle, that it is impossible that it can have been produced by the chronicler himself: it must have been taken over by him from his authorities almost without alteration. From this one speech, whose contents he could hardly have reproduced accurately in his own words, and which he has consequently left almost unaltered, we can see clearly enough that the chronicler has taken over the speeches he communicates with fidelity, so far as their contents are concerned, and has only clothed them formally, more or less, in his own language. This treatment of the speeches in the Chronicle is, however, not a thing peculiar and confined to the author of this book, but is, as Delitzsch has shown (*Isaiah*, p. 17 ff. tr.), common to all the biblical historians; for even in the prophecies in the books of Samuel and Kings distinct traces are observable throughout of the influence of the narrator, and they bear more or less visibly upon them the impress of the writer who reproduces them, without their historical kernel being thereby affected.

Now the historical truth of the events is just as little interfered with by the circumstance that the author of the Chronicle works out rhetorically the descriptions of the celebration of the holy feasts, represents in detail the offering of the sacrifices, and has spoken in almost all of these descriptions of the musical performances of the Levites and priests. The conclusion which has been drawn from this, that he has here without hesitation transferred to an earlier time that which had become established custom in his own time, would only then be correct if the restoration of the sacrificial worship according to the ordinance of Leviticus, or the introduction of instrumental music and the singing of psalms, dated only from the time of the exile, as de Wette, Gramberg, and others have maintained. If, on the contrary, these arrangements and regulations be of Mosaic, and in a secondary sense of Davidic origin, then the chronicler has not transferred the customs and usages of his own time to the times of David, Asa, Hezekiah, and others, but has related what actually occurred under these circumstances, only giving to the description an individual colouring. Take, for example, the



hymn (1 Chron. xvi. 8-36) which David caused to be sung by Asaph and his brethren in praise of the Lord, after the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem into the tabernacle prepared for it (1 Chron. xvi. 7). If it was not composed by David for this ceremony, but has been substituted by the chronicler, in his endeavour to represent the matter in a vivid way, from among the psalms sung in his own time on such solemn occasions, for the psalm which was then sung, but which was not communicated by his authority, nothing would be altered in the historical fact that then for the first time, by Asaph and his brethren, God was praised in psalms ; for the psalm given adequately expresses the sentiments and feelings which animated the king and the assembled congregation at that solemn festival. To give another example : the historical details of the last assembly of princes which David held (1 Chron. xxviii.) are not altered if David did not go over with his son Solomon, one by one, all the matters regarding the temple enumerated in 1 Chron. xxviii. 11-19.

There now remains, therefore, only some records of numbers in the Chronicle which are decidedly too large to be considered either accurate or credible. Such are the sums of gold mentioned in 1 Chron. xxii. 14 and xxix. 4, 7, which David had collected for the building of the temple, and which the princes of the tribes expended for this purpose ; the statements as to the greatness of the armies of Abijah and Jeroboam, of the number of the Israelites who fell in battle (2 Chron. xiii. 3, 17), of the number of King Asa's army and that of the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv 7 f.), of the military force of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xvii. 14-18), and of the women and children who were led away captive under Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 8). But these numbers cannot shake the historical credibility of the Chronicle in general, because they are too isolated, and differ too greatly from statements of the Chronicle in other places which are in accordance with fact. To estimate provisionally and in general these surprising statements, the more exact discussion of which belongs to the Commentary, we must consider, (1) that they all contain round numbers, in which thousands only are taken into account, and are consequently not founded upon any exact enumeration, but only upon an approximate estimate of contemporaries, and attest nothing more than that the greatness of the armies, and the multitude of those who had fallen in battle or were taken prisoner, was estimated at so high a number ; (2) that the actual

amount of the mass of gold and silver which had been collected by David for the building of the temple cannot with certainty be reckoned, because we are ignorant of the weight of the shekel of that time; and (3) that the correctness of the numbers given is very doubtful, since it is indubitably shown, by a great number of passages of the Old Testament, that the Hebrews have from the earliest times expressed their numbers not by words, but by letters, and consequently omissions might very easily occur, or errors arise, in copying or writing out in words the sums originally written in letters. Such textual errors are so manifest in not a few places, that their existence cannot be doubted; and that not merely in the books of the Chronicle, but in all the historical books of the Old Testament. The Philistines, according to 1 Sam. xiii. 5, for example, brought 30,000 chariots and 6000 horsemen into the field; and according to 1 Sam. vi. 19, God smote of the people at Beth-shemesh 50,070 men. With respect to these statements, all commentators are now agreed that the numbers 30,000 and 50,000 are incorrect, and have come into the text by errors of the copyists; and that instead of 30,000 chariots there were originally only 1000, or at most 3000, spoken of, and that the 50,000 in the second passage is an ancient gloss. There is, moreover, at present no doubt among investigators of Scripture, that in 1 Kings v. 6 (in English version, iv. 26) the number 40,000 (stalls) is incorrect, and that instead of it, according to 2 Chron. ix. 25, 4000 should be read; and further, that the statement of the age of King Ahaziah at 42 years (2 Chron. xxii. 22), instead of 22 years (2 Kings viii. 26), has arisen by an interchange of the numeral signs  $\beth$  and  $\daleth$ . A similar case is to be found in Ezra ii. 69, compared with Neh. vii. 70-72, where, according to Ezra, the chiefs of the people gave 61,000 darics for the restoration of the temple, and according to Nehemiah only 41,000 (viz. 1000 + 20,000 + 20,000). In both of these chapters a multitude of differences is to be found in reference to the number of the exiled families who returned from Babylon, which can only be explained on the supposition of the numeral letters having been confounded. But almost all these different statements of numbers are to be found in the oldest translation of the Old Testament, that of the LXX., from which it appears that they had made their way into the MSS. before the settlement of the Hebrew text by the Masoretes, and that consequently the use of letters as numeral signs was customary in the



pre-Masoretic times. This use of the letters is attested and presupposed as generally known by both Hieronymus and the rabbins, and is confirmed by the Maccabean coins. That it is a primeval custom, and reaches back into the times of the composition of the biblical books, is clear from this fact, that the employment of the alphabet as numeral signs among the Greeks coincides with the Hebrew alphabet. This presupposes that the Greeks received, along with the alphabet, at the same time the use of the letters as numeral signs from the Semites (Phœnicians or Hebrews). The custom of writing the numbers in words, which prevails in the Masoretic text of the Bible, was probably first introduced by the Masoretes in settling the rules for the writing of the sacred books of the canon, or at least then became law.

After all these facts, we may conclude the Introduction to the books of the Chronicle, feeling assured of our result, that the books, in regard to their historical contents, notwithstanding the hortatory-didactic aim of the author in bringing the history before us, have been composed with care and fidelity according to the authorities, and are fully deserving of belief.

As to the exegetical literature, see my *Handbook of Introduction*, § 138.






## EXPOSITION

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### THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.

#### I. GENEALOGIES, WITH HISTORICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL NOTES.—CHAP. I.-IX.

N order to show the connection of the tribal ancestors of Israel with the peoples of the earth, in chap. i. are enumerated the generations of the primeval world, from Adam till the Flood, and those of the post-diluvians to Abraham and his sons, according to the accounts in Genesis; in chap. ii.-viii., the twelve tribal ancestors of the people of Israel, and the most important families of the twelve tribes, are set down; and finally, in chap. ix., we have a list of the former inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the genealogical table of King Saul. The enumeration of the tribes and families of Israel forms, accordingly, the chief part of the contents of this first part of the Chronicle, to which the review of the families and tribes of the primeval time and the early days of Israel form the introduction, and the information as to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the family of King Saul the conclusion and the transition, to the following historical narrative. Now, if we glance at the order in which the genealogies of the tribes of Israel are ranged,—viz. (*a*) those of the families of Judah and of the house of David, chap. ii. 1-iv. 23; (*b*) those of the tribe of Simeon, with an account of their dwelling-place, chap. iv. 24-43; (*c*) those of the trans-Jordanic tribes, Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, chap. v. 1-26; (*d*) of the tribe of Levi, or the priests and Levites, chap. v. 27-vi. 66; (*e*) of the remaining tribes, viz. Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, cis-Jordanic Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher, chap. vii.; and of some still remaining families of Benjamin, with the family of Saul, chap. viii.,—it is at once seen that this arrangement is

the result of regarding the tribes from two points of view, which are closely connected with each other. On the one hand, regard is had to the historical position which the tribes took up, according to the order of birth of their tribal ancestors, and which they obtained by divine promise and guidance; on the other hand, the geographical position of their inheritance has been also taken into account. That regard to the historical position and importance of the tribes was mainly determinative, is plain from the introductory remarks to the genealogies of the tribe of Reuben, chap. v. 1, 2, to the effect that Reuben was the first-born of Israel, but that, because of his offence against his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, although they are not specified as possessors of it in the family registers; while it is narrated that Judah, on the contrary, came to power among his brethren, and that out of Judah had come forth the prince over Israel. Judah is therefore placed at the head of the tribes, as that one out of which God chose the king over His people; and Simeon comes next in order, because they had received their inheritance within the tribal domain of Judah. Then follows Reuben as the first-born, and after him are placed Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, because they had received their inheritance along with Reuben on the other side of the Jordan. After Reuben, according to age, only Levi could follow, and then after Levi come in order the other tribes. The arrangement of them, however — Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher, and again Benjamin—is determined from neither the historical nor by the geographical point of view, but probably lay ready to the hand of the chronicler in the document used by him, as we are justified in concluding from the character of all these geographical and topographical lists.

For if we consider the character of these lists somewhat more carefully, we find that they are throughout imperfect in their contents, and fragmentary in their plan and execution. The imperfection in the contents shows itself in this, that no genealogies of the tribes of Dan and Zebulun are given at all, only the sons of Naphtali being mentioned (vii. 13); of the half tribe of Manasseh beyond Jordan we have only the names of some heads of fathers'-houses<sup>1</sup> (v. 24); and even in the relatively

<sup>1</sup> It may perhaps be useful to notice *here* our author's use of the words *Geschlecht*, *Vaterhaus*, and *Familie*, and the rendering of them in English. As he states in a subsequent page, the *Geschlechter* are the larger divisions of



copious lists of the tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin, only the genealogies of single prominent families of these tribes are enumerated. In Judah, little more is given than the families descended from Pharez, chap. ii. 5-iv. 20, and a few notices of the family of Shelah; of Levi, none are noticed but the succession of generations in the high-priestly line of Aaron, some descendants of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, and the three Levites, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, set over the service of song; while of Benjamin we have only the genealogies of three families, and of the family of Saul, which dwelt at Gibeon. But the incompleteness of these registers comes still more prominently into view when we turn our attention to the extent of the genealogical lists, and see that only in the cases of the royal house of David and the high-priestly line of Eleazar do the genealogies reach to the Babylonian exile, and a few generations beyond that point; while all the others contain the succession of generations for only short periods. Then, again, in regard to their plan and execution, these genealogies are not only unsymmetrical in the highest degree, but they are in many cases fragmentary. In the tribe of Judah, besides the descendants of David, chap. iii., two quite independent genealogies of the families of Judah are given, in chap. ii. and iv. 1-23. The same is the case with the two genealogies of the Levites, the lists in chap. vi. differing from those in chap. v. 27-41 surprisingly, in vi. 1, 28, 47, 56, Levi's eldest son being called Gershom, while in chap. v. 27 and 1 Chron. xxiii. 61, and in the Pentateuch, he is called Gershon. Besides this, there is in chap. vi. 35-38 a fragment containing the names of some of Aaron's descendants, who had been already completely enumerated till the Babylonian exile in chap. v. 29-41. In the genealogies of Benjamin, too, the family of Saul is twice entered, viz. in chap. viii. 29-40 and in chap. ix. 35-44. The genealogies of the remaining tribes are throughout defective in the highest degree. Some consist merely of an enumeration of a number of heads of houses or families, with mention of their

the tribes tracing their descent from the *sons* of the twelve patriarchs; the *Väterhäuser* are the subdivisions descended from their grandsons or great-grandsons; while the *Familien* are the component parts of the *Väterhäuser*. The author's use of these words is somewhat vacillating; but *Geschlecht*, in this connection, has always been rendered by "family," *Väterhaus* by "father's-house," *Familie* by "household," and *Familiengruppen* by "groups of related households."—Tr.

dwelling-place: as, for instance, the genealogies of Simeon, chap. iv. 24-43; of Reuben, Gad, half Manasseh, chap. v. 1-24; and Ephraim, chap. vii. 28, 29. Others give only the number of men capable of bearing arms belonging to the individual fathers' houses, as those of Issachar, Benjamin, and Asher, chap. vii. 2-5, 7-11, 40; and finally, of the longer genealogical lists of Judah and Benjamin, those in chap. iv. 1-20 and in chap. viii. consist only of fragments, loosely ranged one after the other, giving us the names of a few of the posterity of individual men, whose genealogical connection with the larger divisions of these tribes is not stated.

By all this, it is satisfactorily proved that all these registers and lists have not been derived from one larger genealogical historical work, but have been drawn together from various old genealogical lists which single races and families had saved and carried with them into exile, and preserved until their return into the land of their fathers; and that the author of the Chronicle has received into his work all of these that he could obtain, whether complete or imperfect, just as he found them. Nowhere is any trace of artificial arrangement or an amalgamation of the various lists to be found.

Now, when we recollect that the Chronicle was composed in the time of Ezra, and that up to that time, of the whole people, for the most part only households and families of the tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin had returned to Canaan, we will not find it wonderful that the Chronicle contains somewhat more copious registers of these three tribes, and gives us only fragments bearing on the circumstances of præ-exilic times in the case of the remaining tribes.

#### CHAP. I. — THE FAMILIES OF PRIMEVAL TIME, AND OF THE ANTIQUITY OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1-4. *The patriarchs from Adam to Noah and his sons.* —The names of the ten patriarchs of the primeval world, from the Creation to the Flood, and the three sons of Noah, are given according to Gen. v., and grouped together without any link of connection whatever: it is assumed as known from Genesis, that the first ten names denote generations succeeding one another, and that the last three, on the contrary, are the names of brethren.



Vers. 5-23. *The peoples and races descended from the sons of Noah.*—These are enumerated according to the table in Gen. x.; but our author has omitted not only the introductory and concluding remarks (Gen. x. 1, 21, 32), but also the historical notices of the founding of a kingdom in Babel by Nimrod, and the distribution of the Japhetites and Shemites in their dwelling-places (Gen. x. 5, 9-12, 18b-20, and 30 and 31). The remaining divergences are partly orthographic,—such as תַּבְל, ver. 5, for תִּיבַל, Gen. x. 2, and רַעְמָא, ver. 9, for רַעְמָה, Gen. x. 7; and partly arising from errors of transcription,—as, for example, רִיפַת, ver. 6, for רִיפַת, Gen. x. 3, and conversely, רוֹדְנִים, ver. 7, for דְּרֹדְנִים, Gen. x. 4, where it cannot with certainty be determined which form is the original and correct one; and finally, are partly due to a different pronounciation or form of the same name,—as תַּרְשִׁישָׁה, ver. 7, for תַּרְשִׁישִׁי, Gen. x. 4, the ā of motion having been gradually fused into one word with the name, לוֹדִיִּים, ver. 11, for לוֹדִים, Gen. x. 13, just as in Amos ix. 7 we have בּוֹשִׁיִּים for בּוֹשִׁים; in ver. 22, עִיבַל for עֹיבַל, Gen. x. 28, where the LXX. have also *Eὐάλ*, and מִשְׁנָה, ver. 17, for מִשֵּׁ, Gen. x. 23, which last has not yet been satisfactorily explained, since מִשְׁנָה is used in Ps. cxx. 5 with קָדָר of an Arabian tribe. Finally, there is wanting in ver. 17 יִבְנֵי אֲרָם before עֵיִן, Gen. x. 23, because, as in the case of Noah's sons, ver. 4, where their relationship is not mentioned, so also in reference to the peoples descended from Shem, the relationship subsisting between the names Uz, Hul, etc., and Aram, is supposed to be already known from Genesis. Other suppositions as to the omission of the words יִבְנֵי אֲרָם are improbable. That this register of seventy-one persons and tribes, descended from Shem, Ham, and Japhet, has been taken from Gen. x., is placed beyond doubt, by the fact that not only the names of our register exactly correspond with the table in Gen. x., with the exception of the few variations above mentioned, but also the plan and form of both registers is quite the same. In vers. 5-9 the sections of the register are connected, as in Gen. x. 2-7, by יִבְנֵי; from ver. 10 onwards by יָלַד, as in Gen. ver. 8; in ver 17, again, by בְּנֵי, as in Gen. ver. 22; and in ver. 18 by יָלַד, and ver. 19 by יָלַד, as in Gen. vers. 24 and 25. The historical and geographical explanation of the names has been given in the commentary to Gen. x. According to Bertheau, the peoples descended from the sons of Noah amount to seventy, and fourteen of these are enumerated as descendants of Japhet, thirty of Ham, and twenty-six of Shem.

These numbers he arrives at by omitting Nimrod, or not enumerating him among the sons of Ham; while, on the contrary, he takes Arphaxad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, and Joktan, all of which are the names of persons, for names of peoples, in contradiction to Genesis, according to which the five names indicate persons, viz. the tribal ancestors of the Terahites and Joktanites, peoples descended from Eber by Peleg and Joktan.

Vers. 24-27. *The patriarchs from Shem to Abraham.*—The names of these, again, are simply ranged in order according to Gen. xi. 10-26, while the record of their ages before the begetting and after the birth of sons is omitted. Of the sons of Terah only Abram is named, without his brothers; with the remark that Abram is Abraham, in order to point out to the reader that he was the progenitor of the chosen people so well known from Genesis (cf. chap. xvii.).

Vers. 28-34. *The sons of Abraham.*—In ver. 28 only Isaac and Ishmael are so called; Isaac first, as the son of the promise. Then, in vers. 29-31, follow the posterity of Ishmael, with the remark that Ishmael was the first-born; in vers. 32 and 33, the sons of Keturah; and finally in ver. 34, the two sons of Isaac. —Ver. 29 ff. The names of the generations (תולדות) of Ishmael (Hebr. Yishma'el) correspond to those in Gen. xxv. 12-15, and have been there explained. In ver. 32 f. also, the names of the thirteen descendants of Abraham by Keturah, six sons and seven grandsons, agree with Gen. xxv. 1-4 (see commentary on that passage); only the tribes mentioned in Gen. xxv. 3, which were descended from Dedan the grandson of Keturah, are omitted. From this Bertheau wrongly concludes that the chronicler probably did not find these names in his copy of the Pentateuch. The reason of the omission is rather this, that in Genesis the great-grandchildren are not themselves mentioned, but only the tribes descended from the grandchildren, while the chronicler wished to enumerate only the sons and grandsons. Keturah is called פִּלְגִישׁ after Gen. xxv. 6, where Keturah and Hagar are so named. —Ver. 34. The two sons of Isaac. Isaac has been already mentioned as a son of Abram, along with Ishmael, in ver. 28. But here the continuation of the genealogy of Abraham is prefaced by the remark that Abraham begat Isaac, just as in Gen. xxv. 19, where the begetting of Isaac the son of Abraham is introduced with the same remark. Hence the supposition that the registers of the posterity of Abraham by Hagar and Keturah



(vers. 28-33) have been derived from Gen. xxv., already in itself so probable, becomes a certainty.

Vers. 35-42. *The posterity of Esau and Seir*.—An extract from Gen. xxxvi. 1-30. Ver. 35. The five sons of Esau are the same who, according to Gen. xxxvi. 4 f., were born to him of his three wives in the land of Canaan. עֵשָׂו is another form of עֵשָׂא, Gen. ver. 5 (Kethibh).—Vers. 36, 37. The grandchildren of Esau. In ver. 36 there are first enumerated five sons of his son Eliphaz, as in Gen. xxxvi. 11, for עֵשָׂא is only another form of עֵשָׂא (Gen.). Next to these five names are ranged in addition תִּמְנָה וְאַמְלֵק, “Timna and Amalek,” while we learn from Gen. xxxvi. 12 that Timna was a concubine of Eliphaz, who bore to him Amalek. The addition of the two names *Timna* and *Amalek* in the Chronicle thus appears to be merely an abbreviation, which the author might well allow himself, as the posterity of Esau were known to his readers from Genesis. The name Timna, too, by its form (a feminine formation), must have guarded against the idea of some modern exegetes that Timna was also a son of Eliphaz. Thus, then, Esau had through Eliphaz six grandchildren, who in Gen. xxxvi. 12 are all set down as sons of Adah, the wife of Esau and the mother of Eliphaz. (*Vide com.* to Gen. xxxvi. 12, where the change of Timna into a son of Eliphaz is rejected as a misinterpretation.)—Ver. 37. To Reuel, the son of Esau by Bashemath, four sons were born, whose names correspond to those in Gen. xxxvi. 13. These ten (6 + 4) grandsons of Esau were, with his three sons by Aholibamah (Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah, ver. 35), the founders of the thirteen tribes of the posterity of Esau. They are called in Gen. xxxvi. 15 אֲלֵפֵי בְנֵי עֵשָׂו, heads of tribes (φύλαρχοι) of the children of Esau, *i.e.* of the Edomites, but are all again enumerated, vers. 15-19, singly.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The erroneous statement of Bertheau, therefore, that “according to Genesis the Edomite people was also divided into twelve tribes, five tribes from Eliphaz, four tribes from Reuel, and the three tribes which were referred immediately to Aholibamah the wife of Esau. It is distinctly stated that Amalek was connected with these twelve tribes only very loosely, for he appears as the son of the concubine of Eliphaz,”—must be in so far corrected, that neither the Chronicle nor Genesis knows anything of the twelve tribes of the Edomites. Both books, on the contrary, mention thirteen grandsons of Esau, and these thirteen grandsons are, according to the account of Genesis, the thirteen phylarchs of the Edomite people, who are distributed according to the three wives of Esau; so that the thirteen families may be grouped together in three tribes. Nor is Amalek connected only in a loose way with the other tribes in

—Vers. 38–42. When Esau with his descendants had settled in Mount Seir, they subdued by degrees the aboriginal inhabitants of the land, and became fused with them into one people. For this reason, in Gen. xxxvi. 20–30 the tribal princes of the Seirite inhabitants of the land are noticed; and in our chapter also, ver. 38, the names of these seven בְּנֵי שֵׁעִיר, and in vers. 39–42 of their sons (eighteen men and one woman, Timna), are enumerated, where only Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, also mentioned in Gen. xxxvi. 25, is omitted. The names correspond, except in a few unimportant points, which have been already discussed in the Commentary on Genesis. The inhabitants of Mount Seir consisted, then, after the immigration of Esau and his descendants, of twenty tribes under a like number of phylarchs, thirteen of whom were Edomite, of the family of Esau, and seven Seirite, who are called in the Chronicle בְּנֵי שֵׁעִיר, and in Genesis חֲרִי, Troglodytes, inhabitants of the land, that is, aborigines.

If we glance over the whole posterity of Abraham as they are enumerated in vers. 28–42, we see that it embraces (*a*) his sons Ishmael and Isaac, and Isaac's sons Israel and Esau (together 4 persons); (*b*) the sons of Ishmael, or the tribes descended from Ishmael (12 names); (*c*) the sons and grandsons of Keturah (13 persons or chiefs); (*d*) the thirteen phylarchs descended from Esau; (*e*) the seven Seirite phylarchs, and eighteen grandsons and a granddaughter of Seir (26 persons). We have thus in all the names of sixty-eight persons, and to them we must add Keturah, and Timna the concubine of Eliphaz, before we get seventy persons. But these seventy must not by any means be reckoned as seventy tribes, which is the result Bertheau arrives at by means of strange calculations and errors in numbers.<sup>1</sup>

Genesis; he is, on the contrary, not only included in the number of the sons of Adah in ver. 12, probably because Timna stood in the same relationship to Adah the wife of Esau as Hagar held to Sarah, but also is reckoned in ver. 16 among the Allutim of the sons of Eliphaz. Genesis therefore enumerates not five but six tribes from Eliphaz; and the chronicler has not “completely obliterated the twelvefold division,” as Bertheau further maintains, but the thirteen sons and grandsons of Esau who became phylarchs are all introduced; and the only thing which is omitted in reference to them is the title אֲלֻפִּים בְּנֵי שֵׁעִיר, it being unnecessary in a genealogical enumeration of the descendants of Esau.

<sup>1</sup> That the Chronicle gives no countenance to this view appears from Bertheau's calculation of the 70 tribes: from Ishmael, 12; from Keturah, 13; from Isaac, 2; from Esau, 5 sons and 7 grandchildren by Eliphaz (Timna,



Upon this conclusion he founds his hypothesis, that as the three branches of the family of Noah are divided into seventy peoples (which, as we have seen at page 51 f., is not the case), so also the three branches of the family of Abraham are divided into seventy tribes; and in this again he finds a remarkable indication "that even in the time of the chronicler, men sought by means of numbers to bring order and consistency into the lists of names handed down by tradition from the ancient times."

Vers. 43-50. *The kings of Edom* before the introduction of the kingship into Israel.—This is a verbally exact repetition of Gen. xxxvi. 31-39, except that the introductory formula, Gen. ver. 32, "and there reigned in Edom," which is superfluous after the heading, and the addition "ben Achbor" (Gen. ver. 39) in the account of the death of Baal-hanan in ver. 50, are omitted; the latter because even in Genesis, where mention is made of the death of other kings, the name of the father of the deceased king is not repeated. Besides this, the king called Hadad (ver. 46 f.), and the city פָּעִי (ver. 50), are in Genesis Hadar (ver. 35 f.) and פָּעִי (ver. 39). The first of these variations has arisen from a transcriber's error, the other from a different pronunciation of the name. A somewhat more important divergence, however, appears, when in Gen. ver. 39 the death of the king last named is not mentioned, because he was still alive in the time of Moses; while in the Chronicle, on the contrary, not only of him also is it added, וַיָּמָת הָדָד, because at the time of the writing of the Chronicle he had long been dead, but the list of the names of the territories of the phylarchs, which in Genesis follows the introductory formula וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת, is here connected with the enumeration of the kings by וַיְהִי, "Hadad died, and there were chiefs of Edom." This may mean that, in the view of the ver. 36, being included in the number), and 4 grandsons by Reuel—16 in all; from Seir 7 sons, and from these 20 other descendants, 27 in all, which makes the sum of 70. But the biblical text mentions only 19 other descendants of Seir, so that only 26 persons came from Seir, and the sum is therefore  $12 + 13 + 2 + 16 + 26 = 69$ . But we must also object to other points in Bertheau's reckoning: (1) the arbitrary change of Timna into a grandchild of Esau; (2) the arbitrary reckoning of Esau and Israel (= Jacob) without Ishmael. Was Esau, apart from his sons, the originator of a people? Had the author of the Chronicle cherished the purpose attributed to him by Bertheau, of bringing the lists of names handed down by tradition to the round or significant number 70, he would certainly in ver. 33 not have omitted the three peoples descended from Dedan (Gen. xxv. 3), as he might by these names have completed the number 70 without further trouble.

chronicler, the reign of the phylarchs took the place of the kingship after the death of the last king, but that interpretation is by no means necessary. The ׀ consec. may also merely express the succession of thought, only connecting logically the mention of the princes with the enumeration of the kings; or it may signify that, besides the kings, there were also tribal princes who could rule the land and people. The contents of the register which follows require that יְהוּדָה should be so understood.

Vers. 51–54. *The princes of Edom.*—The names correspond to those in Gen. xxxvi. 40–43, but the heading and the subscription in Genesis are quite different from those in the Chronicle. Here the heading is, “and the Allufim of Edom were,” and the subscription, “these are the Allufim of Edom,” from which it would be the natural conclusion that the eleven names given are proper names of the phylarchs. But the occurrence of two female names, Timna and Aholibamah, as also of names which are unquestionably those of races, *e.g.* Aliah, Pinon, Teman, and Mibzar, is irreconcilable with this interpretation. If we compare the heading and subscription of the register in Genesis, we find that the former speaks of the names “of the Allufim of Edom according to their habitations,<sup>1</sup> according to their places in their names,” and the latter of “the Allufim of Edom according to their habitations in the land of their possession.” It is there unambiguously declared that the names enumerated are not the names of persons, but the names of the dwelling-places of the Allufim, after whom they were wont to be named. We must therefore translate, “the Alluf of Timna, the Alluf of Aliah,” etc., when of course the female names need not cause any surprise, as places can just as well receive their names from women as their possessors as from men. Nor is there any greater difficulty in this, that only eleven dwelling-places are mentioned, while, on the contrary, the thirteen sons and grandsons of Esau are called Allufim. For in the course of time the number of phylarchs might have decreased, or in the larger districts two phylarchs may have dwelt together. Since the author of the Chronicle has taken this register also from Genesis, as the identity of the names clearly shows he did, he might safely assume that the matter was already known from that book, and so might

<sup>1</sup> So it is given by the author, “nach ihren Wohnsitzen;” but this must be a mistake, for the word is מִשְׁפְּחוֹתָם = their families, not מִשְׁכָּנָתָם, as it is in the subscription.—TR.



allow himself to abridge the heading without fearing any misunderstanding; seeing, too, that he does not enumerate אֱלֹפִי of Esau, but אֱלֹפִי אֱדוֹם, and Edom had become the name of a country and a people.

CHAP. II.—IV. 23.—THE TWELVE SONS OF ISRAEL AND THE FAMILIES OF JUDAH.

The list of the twelve sons of Israel (ii. 1, 2) serves as foundation and starting-point for the genealogies of the tribes of Israel which follow, chap. ii. 3–viii. The enumeration of the families of the tribe of Judah commences in ver. 3 with the naming of Judah's sons, and extends to chap. iv. 23. The tribe of Judah has issued from the posterity of only three of the five sons of Judah, viz. from Shelah, Pharez, and Zerah; but it was subdivided into five great families, as Hezron and Hamul, the two sons of Pharez, also founded families. The lists of our three chapters give us: (1) from the family of Zerah only the names of some famous men (ii. 6–8); (2) the descendants of Hezron in the three branches corresponding to the three sons of Hezron, into which they divided themselves (ii. 9), viz. the descendants of Ram to David (ii. 10–17), of Caleb (ii. 18–24), and of Jerahmeel (ii. 25–41). Then there follow in chap. ii. 42–55 four other lists of descendants of Caleb, who peopled a great number of the cities of Judah; and then in chap. iii. we have a list of the sons of David and the line of kings of the house of David, down to the grandsons of Zerubbabel; and finally, in chap. iv. 1–23, other genealogical fragments as to the posterity of Pharez and Shelah. Of Hamul, consequently, no descendants are noticed, unless perhaps some of the groups ranged together in chap. iv. 8–22, whose connection with the heads of the families of Judah is not given, are of his lineage. The lists collected in chap. iv. 1–20 are clearly only supplements to the genealogies of the great families contained in chap. ii. and iii., which the author of the Chronicle found in the same fragmentary state in which they are communicated to us.

Vers. 1, 2. *The twelve sons of Israel*, arranged as follows: first, the six sons of Leah; then Dan, the son of Rachel's handmaid; next, the sons of Rachel; and finally, the remaining sons of the handmaids. That a different place is assigned to Dan, viz. before the sons of Rachel, from that which he holds in the

list in Gen. xxxv. 23 ff., is perhaps to be accounted for by Rachel's wishing the son of her maid Bilhah to be accounted her own (*vide* Gen. xxx. 3-6).

Vers. 3-5. *The sons of Judah and of Pharez*, ver. 3 f.—The five sons of Judah are given according to Gen. xxxviii., as the remark on Er which is quoted from ver. 7 of that chapter shows, while the names of the five sons are to be found also in Gen. xli. 12. The two sons of Pharez are according to Gen. xli. 12, cf. Num. xxvi. 21.

Vers. 6-8. *Sons and descendants of Zerah*.—In ver. 6, five names are grouped together as בָּנָיו of Zerah, which are found nowhere else so united. The first, Zimri, may be strictly a son; but זִמְרִי may perhaps be a mistake for זִכְרִי, for Achan, who is in ver. 7 the son of Carmi, is in Josh. vii. 1 called the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah. But זִכְרִי (Josh.) may also be an error for זִמְרִי, or he may have been a son of Zimri, since in genealogical lists an intermediate member of the family is often passed over. Nothing certain can, however, be ascertained; both names are found elsewhere, but of persons belonging to other tribes: Zimri as prince of the Simeonites, Num. xxv. 14; as Benjamite, 1 Chron. viii. 36, ix. 42; and as king of Israel, 1 Kings xvi. 9; Zabdi, 1 Chron. viii. 19 (as Benjamite), and xxvii. 27, Neh. xi. 17. The four succeeding names, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, are met with again in 1 Kings v. 11, where it is said of Solomon he was wiser than the Ezrahite Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Machol, with the unimportant variation of דָּרַע for דָּרַע. On this account, Movers and Bertheau, following Clericus on 1 Kings iv. 31 (v. 11), hold the identity of the wise men mentioned in 1 Kings v. 11 with the sons (descendants) of Zerah to be beyond doubt. But the main reason which Clericus produces in support of this supposition, the *consensus quatuor nominum et quidem unius patris filiorum*, and the difficulty of believing that in *alia familia Hebraea* there should have been *quatuor fratres cognomines quatuor filiis Zerachi Judæ filii*, loses all its force from the fact that the supposition that the four wise men in 1 Kings v. 11 are brothers by blood, is a groundless and erroneous assumption. Since Ethan is called the Ezrahite, while the last two are said to be the sons of Machol, it is clear that the four were not brothers. The mention of them as men famous for their wisdom, does not at all require that we should think the men contem-



porary with each other. Even the enumeration of these four along with Zimri as בְּנֵי זֵרַח in our verse does not necessarily involve that the five names denote brothers by blood; for it is plain from vers. 7 and 8 that in this genealogy only single famous names of the family of Zerah the son of Judah and Tamar are grouped together. But, on the other hand, the reasons which go to disprove the identity of the persons in our verse with those named in 1 Kings v. 11 are not of very great weight. The difference in the names דָּרַע and דָּרַע is obviously the result of an error of transcription, and the form דָּאֶזְרָחִי (1 Kings v. 11) is most probably a patronymic from זֵרַח, notwithstanding that in Num. xxvi. 20 it appears as זֵרָחִי, for even the appellative אֶזְרָח, *indigena*, is formed from זֵרַח. We therefore hold that the persons who bear the same names in our verse and in 1 Kings v. 11 are most probably identical, in spite of the addition בְּנֵי מָחֹל to Calcol and Darda (1 Kings v. 11). For that this addition belongs merely to these two names, and not to Ezrah, appears from Ps. lxxxviii. 1 and lxxxix. 1, which, according to the superscription, were composed by the Ezrahites Heman and Ethan. The authors of these psalms are unquestionably the Heman and Ethan who were famed for their wisdom (1 Kings v. 11), and therefore most probably the same as those spoken of in our verse as sons of Zerah. It is true that the authors of these psalms have been held by many commentators to be Levites, nay, to be the musicians mentioned in 1 Chron. xv. 17 and 19; but sufficient support for this view, which I myself, on 1 Kings v. 11, after the example of Hengstenberg, *Beitr.* ii. S. 61, and on Ps. lxxxviii. defended, cannot be found. The statement of the superscription of Ps. lxxxviii. 1—"a psalm of the sons of Korah"—from which it is inferred that the Ezrahite Heman was of Levitic origin, does not justify such a conclusion.<sup>1</sup> For though the musician Heman the son of Joel was a Korahite of the race of Kohath (1 Chron. vi. 18-23), yet the musician Ethan the son of Kishi, or Kushaiah, was neither Korahite nor Kohathite, but a Merarite (vi. 29 ff.). Moreover, the Levites Heman and Ethan could not be enumerated among the Ezra-

<sup>1</sup> The above quoted statement of the superscription of Ps. lxxxviii. 1 can contain no information as to the author of the psalm, for this reason, that the author is expressly mentioned in the next sentence of the superscription. The psalm can only in so far be called a song of the children of Korah, as it bears the impress peculiar to the Korahite psalms in contents and form.

hites, that is, the descendants of Zerah, a man of Judah. The passages which are quoted in support of the view that the Levites were numbered with the tribes in the midst of whom they dwelt, and that, consequently, there were Judæan and Ephraimite Levites,—as, for example, 1 Sam. i. 1, where the father of the Levite Samuel is called an Ephrathite because he dwelt in Mount Ephraim; and Judg. xvii. 7, where a Levite is numbered with the family of Judah because he dwelt as sojourner (יָרַח) in Bethlehem, a city of Judah,—certainly prove that the Levites were reckoned, as regards citizenship, according to the tribes or cities in which they dwelt, but certainly do not show that they were incorporated genealogically with those tribes because of their place of residence.<sup>1</sup> The Levites Heman and Ethan, therefore, cannot be brought forward in our verse “as adopted sons of Zerah, who brought more honour to their father than his proper sons” (Hengsth.). This view is completely excluded by the fact that in our verse not only Ethan and Heman, but also Zimri, Calcol, and Dara are called sons of Zerah, yet these latter were not adopted sons, but true descendants of Zerah. Besides, in ver. 8, there is an actual son or descendant of Ethan mentioned, and consequently יִזְחִי and יִזְחִי cannot possibly be understood in some cases as implying only an adoptive relationship, and in the others actual descent. But the similarity of the names is not of itself sufficient to justify us in identifying the persons. As the name Zerah again appears in chap. vi. 26 in the genealogy of the Levite Asaph, so also the name Ethan occurs in the same genealogy, plainly showing that more than one Israelite bore this name. The author of the Chronicle, too, has sufficiently guarded against the opinion that Zerah’s sons Ethan and Heman are identical with the Levitical musicians who bear the same names, by tracing back in chap. vi. the family of these musicians to Levi, without calling them Ezrahites.<sup>2</sup> But to hold, with Movers, S. 237, that the recurrences of the same names in various races are contradictions, which are to be explained only on the supposition of genealogical combinations by various authors, will enter into

<sup>1</sup> Not even by intermarrying with heiresses could Levites become members of another tribe; for, according to the law, Num. xxxvi. 5 ff., heiresses could marry only men of their own tribe; and the possibility of a man of Judah marrying an heiress of the tribe of Levi was out of the question, for the Levites possessed no inheritance in land.

<sup>2</sup> The supposition of Ewald and Bertheau, that these two great singers of



the head of no sensible critic. We therefore believe the five persons mentioned in our verse to be actual descendants of the Judæan Zerah; but whether they were sons or grandsons, or still more distant descendants, cannot be determined. It is certainly very probable that Zimri was a son, if he be identical with the Zabdi of Josh. vii. 1; Ethan and Heman may have been later descendants of Zerah, if they were the wise men mentioned in 1 Kings v. 11; but as to Calcol and Dara no further information is to be obtained. From vers. 7 and 8, where of the sons (בְּנֵי) of Zimri and Ethan only one man in each case is named, it is perfectly clear that in our genealogy only individuals, men who have become famous, are grouped together out of the whole posterity of Zerah. The plural בְּנֵי in vers. 7 and 8, etc., even where only one son is mentioned, is used probably only in those cases where, out of a number of sons or descendants, one has gained for himself by some means a memorable name. This is true at least of Achan, ver. 7, who, by laying hands on the accursed spoils of Jericho, had become notorious (Josh. vii.). Because Achan had thus troubled Israel (עָכָר), he is called here at once Achar. As to Carmi, *vide* on iv. 1.—Ver. 9. The only name given here as that of a descendant of Ethan is Azariah, of whom nothing further is known, while the name recurs frequently. Nothing more is said of the remaining sons of Zerah; they are merely set down as famous men of antiquity (Berth.). There follows in

Vers. 9-41. *The family of Hezron*, the first-born son of Pharez, which branches off in three lines, originating with his three sons respectively. The three sons of Hezron are Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai; but the families springing from them are enumerated in a different order. First (vers. 10-17) we have the family of Ram, because King David is descended from him; then (vers. 18-24) the family of Chelubai or Caleb, from whose lineage came the illustrious Bezaleel; and finally (vers. 25-41), the posterity of the first-born, Jerahmeel.—Ver. 9. וְאִשָּׁר נִוְלַד לוֹ, what was born to him. The passive stands impersonally instead of the more definite active, “to whom one bore,” so that the

the tribe of Judah had been admitted into their guild by the Levitic musical schools, and on that account had been received also into their family, and so had been numbered with the tribe of Levi, is thus completely refuted, even were it at all possible that members of other tribes should have been received into the tribe of Levi.

following names are subordinated to it with **אִתּוֹ**. The third person singular Niph. occurs thus also in iii. 4 and xxvi. 6; the construction of Niph. with **אִתּוֹ** frequently (Gen. iv. 18, xxi. 5, and elsewhere). Ram is called, in the genealogy in Matt. i. 3, 4, Aram; comp. **אַרְם**, Job xxxii. 2, with **אַרְם**, Gen. xxii. 21. **כְּלָבִי** is called afterwards **כָּלָב**; cf. on ver. 18.

Vers. 10–17 *The family of Ram* (vers. 10–12), traced down through six members to Jesse.—This genealogy is also to be found in Ruth iv. 19–21; but only here is Nahshon made more prominent than the others, by the addition, “prince of the sons of Judah.” Nahshon was a prince of Judah at the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt (Num. i. 7, ii. 3, vii. 12). Now between him, a contemporary of Moses, and Pharez, who at the immigration of Jacob into Egypt was about fifteen years old, lies a period of 430 years, during which the Israelites remained in Egypt. For that time only three names—Hezron, Ram, and Amminadab—are mentioned, from which it is clear that several links must have been passed over. So also, from Nahshon to David, for a period of over 400 years, four generations—Salma, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse—are too few; and consequently here also the less famous ancestors of David are omitted. **שֵׁלֶמְיָהוּ** is called in Ruth iv. 20, 21, **שֵׁלֶמְיָה** and **שֵׁלֶמִי**. In vers. 13–15, seven sons and two daughters of Jesse, with those of their sons who became famous (vers. 16, 17), are enumerated. According to 1 Sam. xvii. 12, Jesse had eight sons. This account, which agrees with that in 1 Sam. xvi. 8–12, may be reconciled with the enumeration in our verse, on the supposition that one of the sons died without posterity. In 1 Sam. xvi. 6 ff. and xvii. 13, the names of the eldest three—Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah—occur. Besides **שָׁמַי**, we meet with the form **שָׁמַיִל** (ver. 13); and the name **שָׁמַי** is only another form of **שָׁמַיִל**, which is found in 2 Sam. xiii. 3 and in 1 Chron. xx. 7, and is repeated in 2 Sam. xiii. 32 and xxi. 21 in the Kethibh (**שָׁמַי**). The names of the other three sons here mentioned (vers. 14 and 15) are met with nowhere else.—Ver. 16 f. The sisters of David have become known through their heroic sons. Zeruiah is the mother of the heroes of the Davidic history, Abishai, Joab, and Asahel (cf. 1 Sam. xxvi. 6; 2 Sam. ii. 18, iii. 39, viii. 16, and elsewhere). Their father is nowhere mentioned, “because their more famous mother challenged the greater attention” (Berth.). Abigail was, according to 2 Sam. xvii. 25, the daughter of Nahash, a sister of Zeruiah, and so was



only a half-sister of David, and was the mother of Amasa the captain of the host, so well known on account of his share in the conspiracy of Absalom; cf. 2 Sam. xvii. 25, xix. 14, and xx. 10. His father was Jether, or Jithra, the Ishmaelite, who in the Masoretic text of 2 Sam. xvii. 25 is called, through a copyist's error, **הַיִּשְׁמְעֵאֵלִי** instead of **הַיִּשְׁמְעֵאֵלִי**; see comm. on passage.

Vers. 18-24. *The family of Caleb.*—That **כָּלֵב** is merely a shortened form of **כְּלֹבִי**, or a form of that word resulting from the friction of constant use, is so clear from the context, that all exegetes recognise it. We have first (vers. 18-20) a list of the descendants of Caleb by two wives, then descendants which the daughter of the Gileadite Machir bore to his father Hezron (vers. 21-23), and finally the sons whom Hezron's wife bore him after his death (ver. 24). The grouping of these descendants of Hezron with the family of Caleb can only be accounted for by supposing that they had, through circumstances unknown to us, come into a more intimate connection with the family of Caleb than with the families of his brothers Ram and Jerahmeel. In vers. 42-55 follow some other lists of descendants of Caleb, which will be more fully considered when we come to these verses. The first half of the 18th verse is obscure, and the text is probably corrupt. As the words stand at present, we must translate, "Caleb the son of Hezron begat with Azubah, a woman, and with Jerioth, and these are her (the one wife's) sons, Jeshar," etc. **בְּנֵיהָ**, *filiæ ejus*, suggests that only one wife of Caleb had been before mentioned; and, as appears from the "and Azubah died" of ver. 19, Azubah is certainly meant. The construction **הוֹלִיד אֶת**, "he begat with," is, it is true, unusual, but is analogous to **הוֹלִיד מִן**, viii. 9, and is explained by the fact that **הוֹלִיד** may mean to cause to bear, to bring to bearing; cf. Isa. lxvi. 9: therefore properly it is, "he brought Azubah to bearing." The difficulty of the verse lies in the **אִשָּׁה וְאֶת־יְרִיעוֹת**, for, according to the usual phraseology, we would have expected **אִשָּׁתוֹ** instead of **אִשָּׁה**. But **אִשָּׁה** may be, under the circumstances, to some extent justified by the supposition that Azubah is called indefinitely "woman," because Caleb had several wives. **וְאֶת־יְרִיעוֹת** gives no suitable meaning. The explanation of Kimchi, "with Azubah a woman, and with Jerioth," cannot be accepted, for only the sons of Azubah are hereafter mentioned; and the idea that the children of the other wives are not enumerated here because the list used by the chronicler

was defective, is untenable: for after two wives had been named in the enumeration of the children of one of them, the mother must necessarily have been mentioned; and so, instead of בְּנֵיהֶם, we should have had בְּנֵי עֲזֻבָּה. Hiller and J. H. Michaelis take וְאִתָּהּ as explicative, "with Azubah a woman, viz. with Jerioth;" but this is manifestly only the product of exegetical embarrassment. The text is plainly at fault, and the easiest conjecture is to read, with the Peschito and the Vulgate, וְאִתָּהּ אִשְׁתּוֹ instead of וְאִתָּהּ, "he begat with Azubah his wife, Jerioth (a daughter); and these are her sons." In that case אִשְׁתּוֹ would be added to עֲזֻבָּה, to guard against עֲזֻבָּה being taken for acc. obj. The names of the sons of Azubah, or of her daughter Jerioth, do not occur elsewhere.—Ver. 19. When Azubah died, Caleb took Ephrath to wife, who bore him Hur. For אֶפְרַתָּה we find in ver. 50 the lengthened feminine form אֶפְרַתָּה; cf. also iv. 4. From Hur descended, by Uri, the famous Bezaleel, the skilful architect of the tabernacle (Ex. xxxi. 2, xxxv. 30).—Vers. 21–24. The descendants of Hezron numbered with the stock of Caleb: (a) those begotten by Hezron with the daughter of Machir, vers. 21–23; (b) those born to Hezron after his death, ver. 24.—Ver. 21. Afterwards (אֲחֵרָיִם), i.e. after the birth of the sons mentioned in ver. 9, whose mother is not mentioned, when he was sixty years old, Hezron took to wife the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, who bore him Segub. Machir was the first-born of Manasseh (Gen. i. 23; Num. xxvi. 29). But Machir is not called in vers. 21 and 23 the father of Gilead because he was the originator of the Israelite population of Gilead, but אָבִי has here its proper signification. Machir begot a son of the name of Gilead (Num. xxvi. 29); and it is clear from the genealogy of the daughters of Zelophead, communicated in Num. xxvii. 1, that this expression is to be understood in its literal sense. Machir is distinguished from other men of the same name (cf. 2 Sam. ix. 4, xvii. 27) by the addition, father of Gilead. Segub the son of Hezron and the daughter of Machir begat Jair. This Jair, belonging on his mother's side to the tribe of Manasseh, is set down in Num. xxxii. 40 f., Deut. iii. 14, as a descendant of Manasseh. After Moses' victory over Og king of Bashan, Jair's family conquered the district of Argob in Bashan, i.e. in the plain of Jaulan and Hauran; and to the conquered cities, when they were bestowed upon him for a possession by Moses, the name Havvoth-Jair, i.e. Jair's-life, was given. Cf. Num. xxxii. 41



and Deut. iii. 14, where this name is explained. These are the twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead, *i.e.* Peräa.—Ver. 23. These cities named *Jair's-life* were taken away from the *Jairites* by Geshur and Aram, *i.e.* by the Arameans of Geshur and of other places. Geshur denotes the inhabitants of a district of Aram, or Syria, on the north-western frontier of Bashan, in the neighbourhood of Hermon, on the east side of the upper Jordan, which had still its own kings in the time of David (2 Sam. iii. 3, xiii. 37, xiv. 23, xv. 8), but which had been assigned to the Manassites by Moses; cf. Josh. xiii. 13. The following אֶת־קִנְתָּ וְגו' must not be taken as an explanatory apposition to אֶת־חַיֵּי יָאִיר: "*Jair's-life, Kenath and her daughters, sixty cities*" (Berth.). For since מֵאֶתָּם refers to the collective name *Jair*, Geshur and Aram could not take away from *Jair* sixty cities, for *Jair* only possessed twenty-three cities. But besides this, according to Num. xxxii. 42, *Kenath* with her daughters had been conquered by *Nobah*, who gave his own name to the conquered cities; and according to Deut. iii. 4, the kingdom of *Og* in Bashan had sixty fenced cities. But this kingdom was, according to Num. xxxii. 41 and 42, conquered by two families of *Manasseh*, by *Jair* and *Nobah*, and was divided between them; and as appears from our passage, twenty-three cities were bestowed upon *Jair*, and all the rest of the land, viz. *Kenath* with her daughters, fell to *Nobah*. These two domains together included sixty fenced cities, which in Deut. iii. 14 are called *Jair's-life*; while here, in our verse, only twenty-three cities are so called, and the remaining thirty-seven are comprehended under the name of *Kenath* and her daughters. We must therefore either supply a ו copul. before אֶת־קִנְתָּ, or we must take אֶת־ק' in the signification "*with Kenath,*" and refer שְׁשִׁים עִיר to both *Jair's-life* and *Kenath*. Cf. herewith the discussion on Deut. iii. 12-14; and for *Kenath*, the ruins of which still exist under the name *Kanuat* on the western slope of the *Jebel Hauran*, see the remarks on Num. xxxii. 42. The time when these cities were taken away by the Arameans is not known. From Judg. x. 4 we only learn that the *Jair* who was judge at a later time again had possession of thirty of these cities, and renewed the name *Jair's-life*. בְּלִי־אֵלֶּה is not all these sixty cities, but the before-mentioned descendants of *Hezron*, who are called sons, that is offspring, of *Machir*, because they were begotten with the daughter of *Machir*. Only two names, it is true, *Segub* and *Jair*, are enumerated; but from

these two issue the numerous families which took Jair's-life. To these, therefore, must we refer the בֵּל-אֵלָה.—Ver. 24. After the death of Hezron there was born to him by his wife Abiah (the third wife, cf. vers. 9 and 21) another son, Ashur, the father of Tekoa, whose descendants are enumerated in chap. iv. 5-7. Hezron's death took place בְּכֶלֶב אֶפְרַתָּה, "in Caleb Ephrathah." This expression is obscure. According to 1 Sam. xxx. 14, a part of the Negeb (south country) of Judah was called Negeb Caleb, as it belonged to the family of Caleb. According to this analogy, the town or village in which Caleb dwelt with his wife Ephrath may have been called Caleb of Ephrathah, if Ephrath had brought this place as a dower to Caleb, as in the case mentioned in Josh. xv. 18 f. Ephrathah, or Ephrath, was the ancient name of Bethlehem (Gen. xxxiii. 19, xlviii. 1), and with it the name of Caleb's wife Ephrath (ver. 19) is unquestionably connected; probably she was so called after her birthplace. If this supposition be well founded, then Caleb of Ephrathah would be the little town of Bethlehem. Ashur is called father (אֲבִי) of Tekoa, i.e. lord and prince, as the chief of the inhabitants of Tekoa, now Tekua, two hours south of Bethlehem (*vide* on Josh. xv. 59).

Vers. 25-41. *The family of Jerahmeel*, the first-born of Hezron, which inhabited a part of the Negeb of Judah called after him the south of the Jerahmeelites (1 Sam. xxvii. 10, xxx. 29).—Ver. 25. Four sons were born to Jerahmeel by his first wife. Five names indeed follow; but as the last, אֶתֶּר, although met with elsewhere as a man's name, is not ranged with the others by a copul., as those that precede are with each other, it appears to be the name of a woman, and probably a מ has fallen out after the immediately preceding מ. So Cler., J. II. Mich., Berth. This conjecture gains in probability from the mention in ver. 26 of another wife, whence we might expect that in ver. 25 the first wife would be named.—Ver. 26. Only one son of the second wife is given, Onam, whose posterity follows in vers. 28-33; for in ver. 27 the three sons of Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel, are enumerated.—Ver. 28. Onam had two sons, Shammai and Jada; the second of these, again, two sons, Nadab and Abishur.—Ver. 29. To Abishur his wife Abihail bore likewise two sons, with whom his race terminates.—In vers. 30, 31, Nadab's posterity follow, in four members, ending with Ahlai, in the fourth generation. But Ahlai cannot well have been a son, but must have been a daughter, the heiress



of Sheshan; for, according to ver. 34, Sheshan had no sons, but only daughters, and gave his daughter to an Egyptian slave whom he possessed, to wife, by whom she became the mother of a numerous posterity. The  $\text{בְּנֵי שֵׁשָׁן}$  is not irreconcilable with this, for  $\text{בְּנֵי}$  denotes in genealogies only descendants in general, and has been here correctly so explained by Hiller in *Onomast.* p. 736: *quicquid habuit liberorum, sive nepotum, sustulit ex unica filia Achlai.*—Vers. 32 and 33. The descendants of Jada, the brother of Shammai, in two generations, after which this genealogy closes with the subscription, “these were the sons of Jerahmeel.”<sup>1</sup>—In vers. 34-41 there follows the family of Sheshan, which was originated by the marriage of his daughter with his Egyptian slave, and which is continued through thirteen generations. The name of this daughter is in ver. 25 f. not mentioned, but she is without doubt the Ahlai mentioned in ver. 31. But since this Ahlai is the tenth in descent from Judah through Pharez, she was probably born in Egypt; and the Egyptian slave Jarha was most likely a slave whom Sheshan had in Egypt, and whom he adopted as his son for the propagation of his race, by giving him his daughter and heir to wife. If this be the case, the race begotten by Jarha with the daughter of Sheshan is traced down till towards the end of the period of the judges. The Egyptian slave Jarha is not elsewhere met with; and though the names which his posterity bore are found again in various parts of the Old Testament, of none of them can it be proved that they belonged to men of this family, so as to show that one of these persons had become famous in history.

Vers. 42-55. *Other renowned descendants of Caleb.*—First of all there are enumerated, in vers. 42-49, three lines of descendants of Caleb, of which the two latter, vers. 46-49, are the issue of concubines.—The first series, vers. 42-45, contains some things which are very obscure. In ver. 42 there are mentioned, as sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel, Mesha his first-born,

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau reckons up to “the concluding subscription in ver. 33” the following descendants of Judah: “Judah’s sons=5; Hezron and Hamul=2; Zerah’s sons=5; Karmi, Akar, and Azariah=3; Ram and his descendants (including the two daughters of Jesse, and Jeter the father of Amasa)=21; Kaleb and his descendants=10; Jerahmeel and his descendants=24: together =70.” But this number also is obtained only by taking into account the father and mother of Amasa as two persons, contrary to the rule according to which only the father, without the mother, is to be counted, or, in case the mother be more famous than the father, or be an heiress, only the mother.

with the addition, "this is the father of Ziph; and the sons of Mareshah, the father of Hebron," as it reads according to the traditional Masoretic text. Now it is here not only very surprising that the sons of Mareshah stand parallel with Mesha, but it is still more strange to find such a collocation as "sons of Mareshah the father of Hebron." The last-mentioned difficulty would certainly be greatly lessened if we might take Hebron to be the city of that name, and translate the phrase "father of Hebron," lord of the city of Hebron, according to the analogy of "father of Ziph," "father of Tekoa" (ver. 24), and other names of that sort. But the continuation of the genealogy, "and the sons of Hebron were Korah, and Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema" (ver. 43), is irreconcilable with such an interpretation. For of these names, Tappuah, *i.e.* apple, is indeed met with several times as the name of a city (Josh. xii. 17, xv. 34, xvi. 8); and Rekem is the name of a city of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 27), but occurs also twice as the name of a person—once of a Midianite prince (Num. xxxi. 8), and once of a Manassite (1 Chron. vii. 16); but the other two, Korah and Shema, only occur as the names of persons. In ver. 44 *f.*, moreover, the descendants of Shema and Rekem are spoken of, and that, too, in connection with the word הוֹלִיד, "he begat," which demonstrably can only denote the propagation of a race. We must therefore take Hebron as the name of a person, as in v. 28 and Ex. vi. 18. But if Hebron be the name of a man, then Mareshah also must be interpreted in the same manner. This is also required by the mention of the sons of Mareshah parallel with Mesha the first-born; but still more so by the circumstance that the interpretation of Mareshah and Hebron, as names of cities, is irreconcilable with the position of these two cities, and with their historical relations. Bertheau, indeed, imagines that as Mareshah is called the father of Hebron, the famous capital of the tribe of Judah, we must therefore make the attempt, however inadmissible it may seem at first sight, to take Mareshah, in the connection of our verse, as the name of a city, which appears as father of Hebron, and that we must also conclude that the ancient city Hebron (Num. xiii. 23) stood in some sort of dependent relationship to Mareshah, perhaps only in later times, although we cannot at all determine to what time the representation of our verse applies. But at the foundation of this argument there lies an error as to the position of the city Mareshah. Mareshah lay in the Shephelah (Josh. xv. 44), and exists at present as the



ruin Marasch, twenty-four minutes south of Beit-Jibrin: *vide* on Josh. xv. 44; and Tobler, *Dritte Wanderung*, § 129 and 142 f. Ziph, therefore, which is mentioned in 2 Chron. xi. 8 along with Mareshah, and which is consequently the Ziph mentioned in our verse, cannot be, as Bertheau believes, the Ziph situated in the hill country of Judah, in the wilderness of that name, whose ruins are still to be seen on the hill Zif, about four miles south-east from Hebron (Josh. xv. 55). It can only be the Ziph in the Shephelah (Josh. xv. 24), the position of which has not indeed been discovered, but which is to be sought in the Shephelah at no great distance from Marasch, and thus far distant from Hebron. Since, then, Mareshah and Ziph were in the Shephelah, no relation of dependence between the capital, Hebron, situated in the mountains of Judah, and Mareshah can be thought of, neither in more ancient nor in later time. The supposition of such a dependence is not made probable by the remark that we cannot determine to what time the representation of our verse applies; it only serves to cover the difficulty which renders it impossible. That the verse does not treat of post-exilic times is clear, although even after the exile, and in the time of the Maccabees and the Romans, Hebron was not in a position of dependence on Marissa. Bertheau himself holds Caleb, of whose son our verses treat, for a contemporary of Moses and Joshua, because in ver. 49 Achsa is mentioned as daughter of Caleb (Josh. xv. 16; Judg. i. 12). The contents of our verse would therefore have reference to the first part of the period of the judges. But since Hebron was never dependent on Mareshah in the manner supposed, the attempt, which even at first sight appeared so inadmissible, to interpret Mareshah as the name of a city, loses all its support. For this reason, therefore, the city of Hebron, and the other cities named in ver. 43 ff., which perhaps belonged to the district of Mareshah, cannot be the sons of Mareshah here spoken of; and the fact that, of the names mentioned in vers. 43 and 44, at most two may denote cities, while the others are undoubtedly the names of persons, points still more clearly to the same conclusion. We must, then, hold Hebron and Mareshah also to be the names of persons. Now, if the Masoretic text be correct, the use of the phrase, "and the sons of Mareshah the father of Hebron," instead of "and Mareshah, the sons of the father of Hebron," can only have arisen from a desire to point out, that besides Hebron there were also other sons of Mareshah

who were of Caleb's lineage. But the mention of the sons of Mareshah, instead of Mareshah, and the calling him the father of Hebron in this connection, make the correctness of the traditional text very questionable. Kimchi has, on account of the harshness of placing the sons of Mareshah on a parallel with Mesha the first-born of Caleb, supposed an ellipse in the expression, and construes 'ובני מר' *et ex filiis Ziphli Mareshah*. But this addition cannot be justified. If we may venture a conjecture in so obscure a matter, it would more readily suggest itself that מרשה is an error for מרשה, and that אבני הכרם is to be taken as a *nomen compos.*, when the meaning would be, "and the sons of Mesha were Abi-Hebron." The probability of the existence of such a name as Abihebron along with the simple Hebron has many analogies in its favour: cf. Dan and Abidan, Num. i. 11; Ezer, xii. 9, Neh. iii. 19, with Abi-ezer; Nadab, Ex. vi. 23, and Abinadab. In the same family even we have Abiner, or Abner, the son of Ner (1 Sam. xiv. 50 f.; 2 Sam. ii. 8; cf. Ew. § 273, S. 666, 7th edition). Abihebron would then be repeated in ver. 43, in the shortened form Hebron, just as we have in Josh. xvi. 8 Tappuah, instead of En-Tappuah, Josh. xvii. 7. The four names introduced as sons of Hebron denote persons, not localities: cf. for Korah, i. 35, and concerning Tappuah and Rekem the above remark (p. 68). In ver. 44 are mentioned the sons of Rekem and of Shema, the latter a frequently recurring man's name (cf. v. 8, viii. 13, xi. 44; Neh. viii. 4). Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkam. The name ירקם is quite unknown elsewhere. The LXX. have rendered it Ἰεκλάν, and Bertheau therefore holds Jorkam to be the name of a place, and conjectures that originally ירקם (Josh. xv. 56) stood here also. But the LXX. give also Ἰεκλάν for the following name רקם, from which it is clear that we cannot rely much on their authority. The LXX. have overlooked the fact that רקם, ver. 44, is the son of the Hebron mentioned in ver. 43, whose descendants are further enumerated. Shammai occurs as a man's name also in ver. 28, and is again met with in iv. 17. His son is called in ver. 45 Maon, and Maon is the father of Bethzur. בֵּית-צִיּוֹר is certainly the city in the mountains of Judah which Rehoboam fortified (2 Chron. xi. 7), and which still exists in the ruin Bet-sur, lying south of Jerusalem in the direction of Hebron. Maon also was a city in the mountains of Judah, now Main (Josh. xv. 55); but we cannot allow that this city is meant by the



name מַעֲזָה, because Maon is called on the one hand the son of Shammai, and on the other is father of Bethzur, and there are no well-ascertained examples of a city being represented as son (בֶּן) of a man, its founder or lord, nor of one city being called the father of another. Dependent cities and villages are called daughters (not sons) of the mother city. The word מַעֲזָה, "dwelling," does not *per se* point to a village or town, and in Judg. x. 12 denotes a tribe of non-Israelites.

Vers. 46-49. *Descendants of Caleb by two concubines.*—The name מַעֲזָה occurs in ver. 47 and i. 33 as a man's name. Caleb's concubine of this name bore three sons: Haran, of whom nothing further is known; Moza, which, though in Josh. xviii. 26 it is the name of a Benjamite town, is not necessarily on that account the name of a town here; and Gazez, unknown, perhaps a grandson of Caleb, especially if the clause "Haran begat Gazez" be merely an explanatory addition. But Haran may also have given to his son the name of his younger brother, so that a son and grandson of Caleb may have borne the same name.—Ver. 47. The genealogical connection of the names in this verse is entirely wanting; for Jahdai, of whom six sons are enumerated, appears quite abruptly. Hiller, in *Onomast.*, supposes, but without sufficient ground, that יַהֲדַי is another name of Moza. Of his sons' names, Jotham occurs frequently of different persons; Ephah, as has been already remarked, is in i. 33 the name of a chief of a Midianite tribe; and lastly, Shaaph is used in ver. 49 of another person.—Ver. 48 f. Another concubine of Caleb was called Maachah, a not uncommon woman's name; cf. iii. 2, vii. 16, viii. 29, xi. 43, etc. She bore Sheber and Tirhanah, names quite unknown. The masc. מַלְכָּה instead of the fem. מַלְכָּה, ver. 46, is to be explained by the supposition that the father who begat was present to the mind of the writer. Ver. 49. Then she bore also Shaaph (different from the Shaaph in ver. 47), the father of Madmannah, a city in the south of Judah, perhaps identical with Miniay or Minieh, southwards from Gaza (see on Josh. xv. 31). Sheva (David's Sopher (scribe) is so called in the Keri of 2 Sam. xx. 25), the father of Machbenah, a village of Judah not further mentioned, and of Gibeaz, perhaps the Gibeah mentioned in Josh. xv. 57, in the mountains of Judah, or the village Jeba mentioned by Robinson, *Palest.* ii. p. 327, and Tobler, *Dritte Wanderung*, S. 157 f., on a hill in the Wady Musurr (*vide* on Josh. xv. 57). This list closes with the abrupt remark, "and

one, that the first הַתִּיכְנָה may have been an error of the pen for הַתְּחִתָּנָה, in which case הַצֵּלֶע does not signify the side room, but is used in a collective sense for the row of side rooms in one story, as in Ezek. xli. 5, 9, 11. That this door was made from the outside, *i.e.* in the outer wall of the side building, and did not lead into the side rooms "from the interior of the Holy Place," would hardly need a remark, if Böttcher (*Proben alttestl. Schrifterkl.* p. 339) and Schnaase (*Gesch. der bildenden Künste*, Bd. 1) had not really supported this view, which is so thoroughly irreconcilable with the dignity of the sanctuary.<sup>1</sup> The only question is, whether it was made in the middle of the right side or in the front by the side of the porch. If the Masoretic text is correct, there is no doubt about the former. But if we read הַתְּחִתָּנָה, the text leaves the question undecided. The winding staircase was not constructed in the outer wall itself, because this was not thick enough for the purpose, and the text states pretty clearly that it led from the lower story into the middle one, and thence still higher, so that it was in the centre of the building.

In vers. 9 and 10 the description of the exterior of the temple building is brought to a close. "So he built the house, and finished it, and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar." וַיִּסְפֵּן is not to be understood as relating to the internal panelling of the temple-house, for this is spoken of first in the section which follows (ver. 15), but to the roofing; סָפַן means to conceal (Deut. xxxiii. 21) and cover in all the other passages, even in Hag. i. 4 and Jer. xxii. 14, where סָפַן is generally, though incorrectly, translated "panelled." As a verb signifying clothing, it is construed with the accusative. גִּבִּים does not mean boards, but beams, though not "an arched covering" (Thenius), because beams cut in the form of an arch would have been too weak in the middle, nor yet rafters (Böttcher), because the roofs of oriental buildings are flat. שִׁרְיֹת בְּאֲרָזִים, "rows, *i.e.* tablets (consisting) of cedars," *i.e.* cedar tablets, which were inserted in rows between the beams. This cedar-work was certainly provided with a strong covering to protect the roof and the building itself against rain; and at the sides it had no doubt a parapet, as in the case of dwelling-houses (Deut. xxii. 8).—

<sup>1</sup> The perfectly groundless assumption of Thenius, that the outer building had most probably an inner door as well, which connected it with the temple, does just as much violence to the decorum of the Holy Place.



Ver. 10. "And he built the outbuildings to the whole house (*i.e.* all round the temple-house, with the exception of the front: see ver. 5); five cubits was its height," *i.e.* the height of each story, the suffix in קומתו being made to agree with הצינע through an inaccuracy which has arisen from condensation, although, as in ver. 5, it denotes the whole of the side buildings, which consisted of three stories. The height given must also be understood as referring to the height within. Consequently the side buildings had an internal height of  $3 \times 5$  cubits, and reckoning the floorings and the roof of the whole building an external height of 18 or 20 cubits; so that the temple-house, which was thirty cubits high within and about thirty-two without, rose about twelve or fourteen cubits above the side building, and there was plenty of room for the windows in the side walls. וַיִּצְנַע וְהָיָה: "and it (the side building) held to the house with cedar beams." The meaning is, that the building was fastened to the house by the joists of the cedar beams belonging to the different stories, which rested upon rebates of the temple wall, so that it was firmly attached to the temple-house, without any injurious insertions into the sanctuary itself. This is apparently the only explanation, that can be grammatically sustained, of words that have received such different interpretations. For the translation given by Thenius, which coincides with this,—viz. "he fastened it (each separate story of the building) to the temple-house with cedar wood, namely, with the cedar beams which formed the flooring and roofing of the three stories,"—is exposed to this grammatical objection, that the suffix is wanting in וַיִּצְנַע, and that וְהָיָה is never followed by וְהָיָה in the sense of *with*. All the other explanations are unsuitable. וַיִּצְנַע signifies neither "he covered the house" (Chald., Vulg., Luther), nor "he overlaid the house;" moreover, the roofing of the house has been already mentioned in ver. 9, and there is no trace to be found of any overlaying or covering of the outside with cedar wood.

If, therefore, we reckon the thickness of the temple wall at six cubits, and that of the outer wall of the side building and the front wall of the porch at three cubits each, the whole building would be ninety-three cubits long (externally) and forty-eight cubits broad. The height of the temple-house was about thirty-two cubits externally, and that of the side stories from eighteen to twenty cubits, without the socle upon which the whole building rested. This is not mentioned indeed, as being a subordinate

matter, but would certainly not be omitted.<sup>1</sup> The number of rooms in the side buildings is not given, but may be set down at thirty in each story, if their length corresponded to their breadth in the lower story. These rooms had of course windows, although they are not mentioned in the account, but each one would have only a small window sufficient to give it the requisite light. And as to the number of the temple windows also, we can simply make conjectures. We can hardly assume that there were more than six on each side, and there were probably none at the back.

Vers. 11-13. PROMISE OF GOD DURING THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.—In what way this promise was communicated to Solomon is not more precisely stated. But the expression “And the word of Jehovah came” seems to point to a prophetic medium. And this is in harmony with ch. ix. 2, according to which Jehovah only revealed Himself to Solomon twice by an actual appearance.—Ver. 12. הַבַּיִת וְגו' is placed at the head absolutely: “As for the house which thou art building (בִּנְיָה, a participle), if thou walkest in my statutes, . . . I will set up my word, which I spake to thy father David.” The reference is to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq. of the everlasting establishment of his throne. God would fulfil this for Solomon if he would walk in the commandments of the Lord, as his father had already urged upon him when he handed over the kingdom (ch. ii. 3). The promise in ver. 13, “I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel,” does not contain a second promise added to the one given in 2 Sam. vii. 12 sqq., but simply a special application of it to the building of the temple which had already been commenced. The eternal establishment

<sup>1</sup> Thenius, on the other hand, reckons the length of the whole building at a hundred cubits and its breadth at fifty-two, because, on the unfounded assumption that the temple in Ezekiel's vision was simply a copy of Solomon's temple, he sets down the thickness of the temple wall in front and along the two sides at six cubits, and that of the hinder wall at seven. Moreover, he not only reckons the internal length of the house at sixty-two cubits, in opposition to the statement in the text, that the length of the house (which was divided into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies) was sixty cubits; but in opposition to ver. 16, according to which the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies were separated by boards of cedar, he assumes that there was a wall of two cubits in thickness between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, according to Ezek. xli. 3; and, lastly, for no other reason than the wish to get the round number 100, he takes for granted that the hinder wall of the temple was a cubit thicker than that on the other sides.



of the throne of David involved the dwelling of God among His people, or rather is founded upon it. This dwelling of God is now to receive a new and lasting realization. The temple is to be a pledge that the Lord will maintain for His people His covenant of grace and His gracious presence. In this respect the promise, "I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel, and not forsake my people Israel," is a confirmation of the word which Jehovah had spoken to David, although, so far as the actual words are concerned, it is more closely connected with Lev. xxvi. 11, when the highest blessing attendant upon the faithful observance of the commandments of God is summed up in the promise, "I will make my abode among you, and my soul will not despise you."

Vers. 14-35. THE INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE TEMPLE-HOUSE.—Vers. 14-22. *Internal covering of the house, and division into Holy and Most Holy.*—Ver. 14 (cf. ver. 9) resumes the description of the building of the temple, which had been interrupted by the divine promise just communicated.—Ver. 15. "He built (*i.e.*, so far as the sense is concerned, he covered) the walls of the house within with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the walls of the ceiling he overlaid it with wood within, and overlaid the floor with cypress boards." The expression קירות, "walls of the ceiling," is very striking here, and renders it probable that קירות is only a copyist's error for קורות, "beams of the ceiling." The whole of the inside of the house was covered with wood, so that nothing was to be seen of the stone wall (ver. 18). On the other hand, the biblical text knows nothing of any covering of the outer walls also with wood, as many have assumed.—Vers. 16, 17. "And he built אֶת־עֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה, the twenty cubits (*i.e.* the space of twenty cubits), of the hindermost side of the house with boards of cedar," from the floor to the beams (of the roof). עֲדֵי־הַקִּירוֹת is to be explained from עַד קִירוֹת הַסָּפֵן in ver. 15. "And built them for it (the house — לוֹ pointing back to הַבַּיִת) into the hinder room, into the Most Holy." קֹדֶשׁ is more precisely defined by the apposition הַקִּדְשִׁים, and therefore denotes the Most Holy Place. But there is a doubt as to its derivation and true meaning. Aquila and Symmachus render it χρηματιστήριον, Jerome λαλητήριον, or in the Vulg. *oraculum*, so that they derive it from דָּבַר, to speak; and Hengstenberg adopts this derivation in Ps. xxviii. 2 : דָּבַר, lit. that which is spoken, then the place where the speaking

takes place. Most of the more recent commentators, on the other hand, follow the example of C. B. Michaelis and J. Simonis, and render it, after the Arabic, the hinder portion or back room, which is favoured by the antithesis **הַיִּכָּל לְפָנָי**, the front sanctuary (ver. 17). The words of the text, moreover, are not to be understood as referring to a cedar wall in front of the Most Holy Place which rose to the height of twenty cubits, but to all four walls of the Most Holy Place, so that the wall which divided the hinder room from the Holy Place is not expressly mentioned, simply because it is self-evident. The words also imply that the *whole* of the hinder space of the house to the length of twenty cubits was cut off for the Most Holy Place, and therefore the party wall must also have filled the whole height of the house, which was as much as thirty cubits, and reached, as is expressly stated, from the floor to the roof. There remained therefore forty cubits of the house (in length) for **הַיִּכָּל לְפָנָי**, the front palace, *i.e.* the Holy Place of the temple (ver. 17). **לְפָנָי**, *anterior*, formed from **לָפַי** (cf. Ewald, § 164, *a*).—In ver. 18 there is inserted in a circumstantial clause the statement as to the internal decoration of both rooms; and the further description of the Most Holy Place is given in vers. 19 sqq. “And cedar wood was (placed) against the house inside, sculpture of gourds (*colocynthides*) and open buds.” **מְקֻלָּעַת** is in apposition to **אָרְזוֹ**, containing a more minute description of the nature of the covering of cedar. **מְקֻלָּעַת** signifies sculpture, half-raised work (*basso relievo*); not, however, “that kind of bas-relief in which the figures, instead of rising above the surface on which they are wrought, are simply separated from it by the chiselling out of their outlines, and their being then rounded off according to these outlines” (Thenius). For although the expression **מְקֻלָּעוֹת** (ver. 29) appears to favour this, yet “merely engraved work” does not harmonize with the decorations of the brazen stands in ch. vii. 31, which are also called **מְקֻלָּעוֹת**. **מְקֻלָּעִים** are figures resembling the **פְּקֻעֹת**, or wild gourds (2 Kings iv. 39), *i.e.* oval ornaments, probably running in straight rows along the walls. **פְּטוּרֵי צִצִּים** are open flower-buds; not hangings or garlands of flowers (Thenius), for this meaning cannot be derived from **פֶּטֶר** in the sense of loosening or setting free, so as to signify flowers loosened or set free (= garlands), which would be a marvellous expression! The objection that, “according to Num. xvii. 23, flowers not yet opened, *i.e.* flower-buds, were not **צִצִּים**, but **פְּרָחִים**,” rests upon a



false interpretation of the passage referred to.—Ver. 19. “And (= namely) he prepared a hinder room in the house within, to place the ark of the covenant of Jehovah there.” *וַתֵּינֶן*, as ch. xvii. 14 shows, is not a future (*ut reponeres*), but the infinitive *וַתֵּינֶן* with a repeated syllable *נֶן* (see Ewald, § 238, c).—Ver. 20. “And the interior of the hinder room was twenty cubits the length, twenty cubits the breadth, and twenty cubits its height.” The word *לִפְנֵי* I agree with Kimchi in regarding as the construct state of the noun *לִפְנִים*, which occurs again in ver. 29 in the sense of the inner part or interior, as is evident from the antithesis *לְחִיצוֹן* (on the outside). “And he overlaid it with fine gold.” *וְהָבָה קָנֹר* (= *קָנֹר* in Job xxviii. 15) unquestionably signifies fine or costly gold, although the derivation of this meaning is still questionable; viz. whether it is derived from *קָנֹר* in the sense of to shut up, *i.e.* gold shut up or carefully preserved, after the analogy of *כָּתַם*; or is used in the sense of taking out or selecting, *i.e.* gold selected or pure; or in the sense of closed, *i.e.* gold condensed or unadulterated (Fürst and Delitzsch on Job xxviii. 15).

The Most Holy Place had therefore the form of a perfect cube in the temple as well as in the tabernacle, only on an enlarged scale. Now, as the internal elevation of the house, *i.e.* of the whole of the temple-house, the hinder portion of which formed the Most Holy Place, was thirty cubits, there was a space of about ten cubits in height above the Most Holy Place and below the roof of the temple-house for the upper rooms mentioned in 2 Chron. iii. 9, on the nature and purpose of which nothing is said in the two accounts.<sup>1</sup> “And he overlaid (clothed) the altar with cedar wood.” There is something very striking in the allusion to the altar in this passage, since the verse itself treats simply of the Most Holy Place; and still more striking is the expression *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר לְדִבְרִי*, “the altar belonging to the *Debir*,” in ver. 22, since there was no altar in the Most Holy

<sup>1</sup> This upper room does not presuppose, however, that the party wall, which follows as a matter of course from ver. 16, was not merely a cedar wall, but a wall two cubits thick. The supposed difficulty of setting up a cedar wall thirty cubits high is not so great as to necessitate assumptions opposed to the text. For we cannot possibly see why it could not have been made secure “without injuring the temple wall.” The wood panelling must have been nailed firmly to the wall without injuring the wall itself; and therefore this could be done just as well in the case of the cedar beams or boards of the party wall.

Place. We cannot remove the strangeness of these sentences by such alterations as Thenius and Böttcher propose, because the alterations suggested are much too complicated to appear admissible. The allusion to the altar in both these verses is rather to be explained from the statements in the Pentateuch as to the position of the altar of incense; viz. Ex. xxx. 6, "Thou shalt place it before the curtain, which is above the ark of the testimony before the capporeth over the testimony;" and Ex. xl. 5, "before the ark of the testimony;" whereby this altar, although actually standing "before the inner curtain," *i.e.* in the Holy Place, according to Ex. xl. 26, was placed in a closer relation to the Most Holy Place than the other two things which were in the Holy Place. The clothing of the altar with cedar presupposes that it had a heart of stone; and the omission of the article before **מִזְבֵּחַ** may be explained on the ground that it is mentioned here for the first time, just as in ver. 16, where **דִּבְרִי** was first mentioned, it had no article.—Ver. 21. To the gilding of the Most Holy Place, and the allusion to the altar of incense, which in a certain sense belonged to it, there is now appended in ver. 21 the gilding of the Holy Place. "Solomon overlaid the house from within with fine gold." **הַבַּיִת מִפְּנִימָה** cannot be the party wall between the Holy Place and the Most Holy, as I formerly supposed, but is the Holy Place as distinguished from the Most Holy. The following words **וַיַּעֲבֵר וְגו'** are very obscure. If we rendered them, "he caused to pass over in (with) golden chains before the hinder room," we could only think of an ornament consisting of golden chains, which ran along the wall in front of the hinder room and above the folding doors. But this would be very singularly expressed. We must therefore take **עָבַר**, as Gesenius, de Wette, and many of the earlier commentators do, according to the Chaldæan usage in the sense of bolting or fastening: "he bolted (fastened) with golden chains before the hinder room;" and must assume with Merz and others that the doors into the Most Holy Place (except on the day of atonement) were closed and fastened with golden chains, which were stretched across the whole breadth of the door and stood out against the wall.<sup>1</sup>—The following expres-

<sup>1</sup> The conjecture of Thenius, that **אֶת־הַפָּרֹכֶת** (the curtain) has dropped out of the text and should be restored ("he carried the curtain across with golden chains"), is very properly described by Merz as "certainly untenable," since, apart from the fact that not one of the older versions contains



sion, וַיִּצְפֹּהוּ זָהָב, "and he overlaid it with gold," can only refer to the altar mentioned in the previous verse, the gilding of which has not yet been noticed, however surprising the separation of these words from ver. 20 may be.—In ver. 22 what has already been stated with regard to the gilding is repeated once more in a comprehensive manner, which brings this subject to a close. The whole house (כָּל־הַבַּיִת) is the Holy Place and the Most Holy, but not the porch or hall, as this is expressly distinguished from the house. הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, the whole altar, not merely a portion of it.

Vers. 23-28. *The large cherub-figures in the Most Holy Place.*—Ver. 23. He made (caused to be made) in the hinder room two cherubs of olive wood, *i.e.* wood of the *oleaster* or wild olive-tree, which is very firm and durable, and, according to 2 Chron. iii. 10, מַעֲשֵׂה צִעְצֻעִים, *i.e.*, according to the Vulgate, *opus statuarium*, a peculiar kind of sculpture, which cannot be more precisely defined, as the meaning of צִנֹּעַ is uncertain. "Ten cubits was the height of it" (*i.e.* of the one and of the other). The figures had a human form, like the golden cherubs upon the ark of the covenant, and stood upright upon their feet (2 Chron. iii. 13), with extended wings of five cubits in length, so that one wing of the one reached to one wing of the other in the centre of the room, and the other wing of each reached to the opposite wall, and consequently the four extended wings filled the entire breadth of the Most Holy Place (a breadth of twenty cubits), and the two cherubs stood opposite to one another and ten cubits apart. The wings were evidently fastened to the back and placed close to one another upon the shoulder-blades, so that the small space between their starting-points is not taken into consideration in the calculation of their length. The figures were completely overlaid with gold. The ark of the covenant was placed between these cherubs, and under the wings which pointed towards one another. As they were made like those upon the ark, they had evidently the same meaning, and simply served to strengthen the idea which was symbolized in the cherub, and which we have expounded in the Com-

the missing words, chains would have impeded the moving of the curtain. It is true that, according to 2 Chron. iii. 14, there was a curtain before the Most Holy Place; but as it is not mentioned so early as this even in the Chronicles, this would not be its proper position in the account before us, but it would be most suitably mentioned either in connection with or after the reference to the doors of the Most Holy Place in vers. 31 and 32.

mentary on Ex. xxv. 20 sqq. Only their faces were not turned towards one another and bent down towards the ark, as in the case of the golden cherubim of the ark; but, according to 2 Chron. iii. 13, they were turned לְבֵית, towards the house, *i.e.* the Holy Place, so as to allow of the extension of the wings along the full length of the Most Holy Place.

Vers. 29–35. *Ornaments of the walls; the floors and doors.*—Ver. 29. All the walls of the house (the Holy Place and the Most Holy) round about (מִסָּב, adverb) he made engraved work (carving) of cherubs, palms, and open flowers from within to the outside (*i.e.* in the Most Holy as well as in the Holy Place). לְבֵית . . מִן = אֶל . . מִן; and לְפָנִים as in ver. 20. This completes the account of the nature of the covering of wood. In addition to the oval figures and open flowers (ver. 18), there were also figures of cherubim and palm-trees carved in the wooden panels. Nothing is said as to the distribution of these figures. But a comparison with Ezek. xli. 18 shows at any rate so much, that the palm-trees alternated with the cherubs, so that there was always one cherub standing between two palm-trees. The gourd-shaped figures and the open flowers probably formed the upper and lower setting of the rows of palms and cherubs, the flowers hanging in the form of garlands above the palms and cherubs, and the rows of gourds arranged in bars constituting the boundary lines both above and below. It is a disputed question whether there was only one row of palms and cherubs running round the walls, or whether there were two, or possibly even three. There is more probability in the second or third of these assumptions than in the first, inasmuch as on the walls of the Egyptian temples there were often three or four rows of mythological characters in relief arranged one above another (compare my work on the Temple, pp. 70 sqq.).—Ver. 30. The floor of the house he overlaid with gold within and without, *i.e.* in the Most Holy Place and in the Holy Place also.—Vers. 31, 32. He made the entrance to the back room, doors (*i.e.* consisting of doors; cf. Ewald, § 284, *α, β*) of olive wood, which moved, according to ch. vii. 50, on golden hinges. הָאֵיל וְגו', "the projection of the door-posts was a fifth" (מִזוֹת is construed freely as an explanatory apposition to הָאֵיל, to which it is really subordinate; cf. Ewald, § 290, *e*). These obscure words, which have been interpreted in very different ways (see Ges. *Thes.* pp. 43 sq.), can hardly have any other meaning than this: the projecting



framework of the doors occupied the fifth part of the breadth of the wall. For the explanation given by Böttcher and Thenius, "the entrance framework with posts of fifth strength," has no real support in Ezek. xli. 3. To justify the rendering given to חֲמִשִּׁית (fifth strength), חֲמִשִּׁית is supplied, though not in the sense of projection, but in the thoroughly unwarranted sense of strength or thickness of the wall; and in addition to this, a wall two cubits thick is postulated between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, in direct contradiction to ver. 16. The further evidence, which Thenius finds in ch. viii. 8, in support of this explanation, has been already rejected by Böttcher as unsustained. It would indeed be extremely strange for the thickness of the door-posts which formed the setting of the entrance to be given, whereas nothing is said about the size of the doors. According to our explanation, "a fifth of the breadth of the wall," the entrance was four cubits broad including the projecting door-posts, and each of the two wings of the folding doors about a cubit and a half broad, if we reckon the projecting framework on either side at half a cubit in breadth.—Ver. 32. "And two doors (*i.e.* folding doors, *sc.* he made; וַיַּעַשׂ is also governed by עָשָׂה in ver. 31) of olive wood, and carved upon them carved work," etc., as upon the walls (ver. 29), "and overlaid them with gold, spreading the gold upon the cherubs and palms" (וַיִּרֶם, *hiphil* of וָרַם), *i.e.* he spread gold-leaf upon them, so that, as Rashi observes, all the figures, the elevations and depressions of the carved work, were impressed upon the coating of gold-leaf, and were thus plainly seen. Thenius infers from this explanatory clause, that the gilding upon the walls and doors was most probably confined to the figures engraved, and did not extend over the whole of the walls and doors, because, if the doors had been entirely overlaid with gold, the gilding of the carved work upon them would have followed as a matter of course. But this inference is a very doubtful one. For if it followed as a matter of course from the gilding of the entire doors that the carved work upon them was overlaid with gold, it would by no means follow that the overlaying was such as to leave the carved work visible or prominent, which this clause affirms. Moreover, a partial gilding of the walls would not coincide with the expression וַיִּגְדְּלוּם כָּל-הַבַּיִת in ver. 22, since these words, which are used with emphasis, evidently affirm more than "that such (partial) gilding was carried out everywhere throughout the temple proper."

The doors in front of the Most Holy Place did not render the curtain mentioned in 2 Chron. iii. 14 unnecessary, as many suppose. This curtain may very well have been suspended within the doors; so that even when the doors were opened outwards on the entrance of the high priest, the curtain formed a second covering, which prevented the priests who were ministering in the Holy Place and court from looking in.<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 33, 34. “And thus he made upon the door of the Holy Place posts of olive wood from a fourth (of the wall),” *i.e.* a framework which occupied a fourth of the breadth of the wall, or was five cubits broad (see at ver. 31), “and two doors of cypress wood, two leaves each door turning,” *i.e.* each of the folding doors consisting of two leaves, each of which was made to turn by itself, so that it could be opened and shut alone (without the other; קַלָּעִים is probably only a copyist’s error for צִלְעִים). Cypress wood was chosen for the folding doors of the Holy Place, and not olive wood, as in the case of the Most Holy Place, probably because it is lighter in weight, and therefore less likely to sink. It is questionable here what idea we are to form of the division of each folding door into two leaves, each of which turned by itself: whether we are to think of each wing as divided lengthwise into two narrow leaves, or as divided half way up, so that the lower half could be opened without the upper. I agree with Merz in thinking the latter the more probable assumption; for the objection made by Thenius, on the ground that doors of this kind are only seen in the houses of the peasantry, is an idle assertion which cannot be proved. In a doorway of five cubits in breadth, after reckoning the doorposts the width of the two wings could not be more than two cubits each. And if such a door had been divided into two halves, each half would have been only one cubit wide, so that when open it would not have furnished the requisite room for one man conveniently to pass through. On the other hand, we may assume that a folding door of four cubits in breadth, if made in just proportions, would be eight cubits high. And a door of such a height might easily be

<sup>1</sup> H. Merz (Herzog’s *Cycl.*) now admits this, whereas he formerly agreed with Ewald and others in denying the existence of the curtain in Solomon’s temple, and regarded the curtain (veil) in Matt. xxvii. 51, 52 as an arbitrary addition made by Herod out of his princely caprice, thus overlooking the deep symbolical meaning which the veil or curtain possessed.



divided into two halves, so that only the lower half (of two cubits in breadth and about four in height) was opened for the daily entrance of the priests into the Holy Place. These doors probably opened outwards, like those in front of the Most Holy Place.—Ver. 35. Carving and gilding: as upon the doors before the hinder room. The gold was levelled or smoothed over that which had been engraved, *i.e.* it was beaten out thin and laid upon the carving in such a manner that the gold plate fitted closely to the figures. Gilding was generally effected in ancient times by the laying on of gold plate, which was fastened with tacks (compare 2 Chron. iii. 9).

Ver. 36. *The courts.*—"He built the inner court three rows of hewn stones and one row of hewn cedar beams." The epithet inner court applied to the "court of the priests" (2 Chron. iv. 9) presupposes an outer one, which is also mentioned in 2 Chron. iv. 9, and called "the great court." The inner one is called the *upper* (higher) court in Jer. xxxvi. 10, from which it follows that it was situated on a higher level than the outer one, which surrounded it on all sides. It was enclosed by a low wall, consisting of three rows of hewn stones, or square stones, laid one upon another, and a row of hewn cedar beams, which were either laid horizontally upon the stones, after the analogy of the panelling of the temple walls on the inside, or placed upright so as to form a palisading, in order that the people might be able to see through into the court of the priests. According to 2 Chron. iv. 9, the outer court had gates lined with brass, so that it was also surrounded with a high wall. Around it there were chambers and cells (2 Kings xxiii. 11; Jer. xxxv. 4, xxxvi. 10) for the priests and Levites, the plans for which had already been made by David (1 Chron. xxviii. 12). The principal gate was the east gate (Ezek. xi. 1). Other gates are mentioned in 2 Kings xi. 6, 2 Chron. xxiii. 5, Jer. xx. 2, 2 Kings xii. 10, 2 Chron. xxiv. 8. The size of these courts is not given. At the same time, following the analogy of the tabernacle, and with the reduplication of the rooms of the tabernacle which is adopted in other cases in the temple, we may set down the length of the court of the priests from east to west at 200 cubits, and the breadth from south to north at 100 cubits; so that in front of the temple-building on the east there was a space of 100 cubits in length and breadth, or 10,000 square cubits, left free for the altar of burnt-offering and the other

vessels, in other words, for the sacrificial worship. The outer or great court will therefore, no doubt, have been at least twice as large, namely, 400 cubits long and 200 cubits broad, *i.e.*, in all, 80,000 square cubits; so that the front space before the court of the priests (on the eastern side) was 150 cubits long from east to west, and 200 cubits broad from south to north, and 50 cubits in breadth or depth still remained for the other three sides.

Vers. 37, 38. *The time consumed in building.*—The foundation was laid in the fourth year in the month Ziv (see ver. 1), and it was finished in the eleventh year in the month *Bul*, *i.e.* the eighth month, so that it was built in seven years, or, more precisely, seven years and a half, “according to all its matters and all its due.” *יָרַח בִּיל* for *יָבִיל* signifies *proventus*; *יָרַח בִּיל* is therefore the fruit month, the month of tree fruits. The name probably originated with the Phœnicians, with whom the fruit ripened later; and it is said to be found upon the great Sidonian inscription (compare Dietrich on Ges. *Lex. s.v.*). For other explanations see Ges. *Thes.* p. 560. In comparison with other large buildings of antiquity,<sup>1</sup> and also of modern times, the work was executed in a very short time. But we must bear in mind that the building was not a very large one, notwithstanding all its splendour; that an unusually large number of workmen were employed upon it; and that the preparation of the materials, more especially the hewing of the stones, took place at Lebanon, and for the most part preceded the laying of the foundation of the temple, so that this is not to be included in the seven years and a half. Moreover, the period mentioned probably refers to the building of the temple-house and court of the priests only, and to the general arrangement of the outer court, and does not include the completion of the underground works which were necessary to prepare the space required for them, and of which only a portion may have been carried out by Solomon.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to Pliny (*H. N.* 36, c. 14), all Asia was building at the celebrated temple of Diana at Ephesus for 220 years.

<sup>2</sup> The account given by Josephus of these substructures does not show very clearly how much originated with Solomon, and how much belongs to the following centuries. At the close of his description of Solomon's temple (*Ant.* viii. 3, 9), he states that, in order to obtain the same level for the *ἑξωθεν ἱερόν*, *i.e.* the outer court of the temple, as that of the *ναός*, he had large valleys filled up, into which it was difficult to look down on account of their depth, by raising the ground to the height of 400 cubits, so as to make them



The importance of the temple is clearly expressed in ch. viii. 13, 27, ix. 3, 2 Chron. vi. 2, and other passages. It was to be a house built as the dwelling-place for Jehovah, a place for His seat for ever; not indeed in any such sense as that the house could contain God within its space, when the heavens of heavens cannot contain Him (ch. viii. 27), but a house where the name of Jehovah is or dwells (ch. viii. 16 sqq.; 2 Chron. vi. 5; cf. 2 Sam. vii. 13, etc.), *i.e.* where God manifests His presence in

level with the top of the mountain; and in the *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, after describing the temple-mountain as a mighty hill, the summit of which hardly sufficed for the temple-house and altar when the building was commenced, because it sloped off on all sides, he adds: "Solomon therefore caused a wall to be raised on the eastern side, and had a porch built upon the ground that was heaped up, and on the other sides the temple (*ναός*) was naked (*γυμνός*)." But in the description of the temple of Herod (*Ant.* xv. 11, 3) he says: "The temple was surrounded by enormous porticos (*στοαί*), which rested upon a large wall, and were the largest work of which men have ever heard. It was a steep rocky hill, rising gradually towards the eastern part of the city up to the highest point. This hill Solomon surrounded with a wall by very great works up to the very apex, and walled it round, commencing at the root, which is surrounded by a deep ravine, with stones which were fastened together with lead, . . . and continuing to the top, so that the size and height of the building, which was completed as a square, were immense," etc. The flat obtained in this manner is then described by Josephus as a *περίβολος* of four stadia in circumference, namely, one stadium on each side. Now, although it was the outer court of the temple of Herod (the court of the Gentiles) which first had this circumference (see my *biibl. Archäol.* i. pp. 143, 144), and Josephus, *de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1, relates that subsequently (*τοῖς ἐξῆς αἰῶσιν*) the levelling of the hill was carried out to even a greater extent, as the people still continued to heap up earth, it is quite conceivable that Solomon may have planned the area of the temple with this circumference. And this conjecture acquires great probability from the fact that, according to the researches of Robinson (*Pal.* i. pp. 420 sqq.; *Recent Investigations concerning the Topography of Jerusalem*, pp. 68 sqq.; and *Later Biblical Researches*, pp. 173 sqq.), there are layers of enormous square stones in the lowest part of the south-western and south-eastern corners of the present Haram wall, the dimensions of which, apart from the fact that they are hewn with grooved edges, point to an early Israelitish origin, so that they might very well be relics of the Solomonian substructures of the temple-hill. There is also the remnant of the arch of a bridge of the same construction on the southern portion of the western wall of the Haram, which points to a bridge that led across from Moriah to Zion, and "appears to remove all the objections to the identity of this part of the enclosure of the mosque with that of the ancient temple" (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 426). "Here then," adds Robinson (*Pal.* i. pp. 427, 428), "we have indisputable remains of Jewish antiquity, consisting of an important portion of the western wall of

a real manner to His people, and shows Himself to them as the covenant God, so that Israel may there worship Him and receive an answer to its prayers. The temple had therefore the same purpose as the tabernacle, whose place it took, and which it resembled in its fundamental form, its proportions, divisions, and furniture. As the glory of the Lord entered into the tabernacle in the cloud, so did it into the temple also at its dedication, to sanctify it as the place of the gracious presence of God (ch. viii.

the ancient temple area. They are probably to be referred to a period long antecedent to the days of Herod; for the labours of this splendour-loving tyrant appear to have been confined to the body of the temple and the porticos around the court. The magnitude of the stones also, and the workmanship, as compared with other remaining monuments of Herod, seem to point to an earlier origin. In the accounts we have of the destruction of the temple by the Chaldæans, and its rebuilding by Zerubbabel under Darius, no mention is made of these exterior walls. The former temple was destroyed by fire, which would not affect these foundations; nor is it probable that a feeble colony of returning exiles could have accomplished works like these. There seems, therefore, little room for hesitation in referring them back to the days of Solomon, or rather of his successors, who, according to Josephus, built up here immense walls, 'inmoveable for all time.'

But however probable this assumption may be, the successors of Solomon cannot come into consideration at all, since Josephus says nothing of the kind, and the biblical accounts are not favourable to this conjecture. With the division of the kingdom after the death of Solomon the might of the kings of Judah was broken; and the accounts of the new court which Jehoshaphat built, *i.e.* of the restoration of the inner court (2 Chron. xx. 5), and of the repairs of the temple by Joash (2 Kings xii. 5 sqq.; 2 Chron. xxiv. 4 sqq.) and Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 5 sqq.; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8 sqq.), do not produce the impression that walls so costly or so large could have been built at that time. The statement of Josephus (*l.c. de Bell. Jud.* v. 5, 1) concerning the gradual extension of the levelled hill, has reference to the enlargement of the temple area towards the north, inasmuch as he adds to the words already quoted: "and cutting through the *north* wall, they took in as much as was afterwards occupied by the circumference of the whole temple."—If, therefore, the remains of the ancient wall which have been mentioned, with their stones of grooved edges, are of early Israelitish origin, we must trace them to Solomon; and this is favoured still further by the fact, that when Solomon had a magnificent palace built for himself opposite to the temple (see ch. vii. 1–12), he would assuredly connect the temple-mountain with Zion by a bridge.—Even J. Berggren (*Bibel u. Josephus über Jerus. u. d. heil. Grab.*) thinks it probable that "the so-called remains of an arch in the western Haram wall may be, as Robinson at first indicated, a relic of that ancient and marvellous xystus bridge, with which the Davidic steps on the two steep sides of the valley of the Tyropœum, constructed for the purpose of going from Moriah to Zion or from Zion to Moriah, were connected."



10; 2 Chron. v. 14). The temple thereby became not only a visible pledge of the lasting duration of the covenant, by virtue of which God would dwell among His people, but also a copy of the kingdom of God, which received at its erection an embodiment answering to its existing condition at the time. As the tabernacle, with its resemblance to a nomad's tent, answered to the time when Israel had not yet found rest in the promised land of the Lord; so was the temple, regarded as an immoveable house, a pledge that Israel had now acquired its lasting inheritance in Canaan, and that the kingdom of God on earth had obtained a firm foundation in the midst of it.—This relation between the temple and the tabernacle will serve to explain all the points of difference which present themselves between these two sanctuaries, notwithstanding their agreement in fundamental forms and in all essential particulars. As a house or palace of Jehovah, the temple was not only built of solid and costly materials, with massive walls of square stones, and with floors, ceilings, walls, and doors of cedar, cypress, and olive woods—these almost imperishable kinds of wood—but was also provided with a hall like the palaces of earthly kings, and with side buildings in three stories in which to keep the utensils requisite for a magnificent ceremonial, though care was taken that these adjoining and side buildings were not attached directly to the main building so as to violate the indestructibility and perfectness of the house of God, but merely helped to exalt it and elevate its dignity. And the increased size of the inner rooms, whilst the significant forms and measures of the tabernacle were preserved, was also essentially connected with this. Whereas the length and breadth of the dwelling were doubled, and the height of the whole house tripled, the form of a cube was still retained for the Most Holy Place as the stamp of the perfected kingdom of God (see *Comm. on Pent.* vol. ii. p. 184), and the space was fixed at twenty cubits in length, breadth, and height. On the other hand, in the case of the Holy Place the sameness of height and breadth were sacrificed to the harmonious proportions of the house or palace, as points of inferior importance; and the measurements were thirty cubits in height, twenty cubits in breadth, and forty cubits in length; so that ten as the number of perfectness was preserved as the standard even here. And in order to exhibit still further the perfectness and glory of the house of God, the walls were not constructed of ordinary quarry-

stone, but of large square stones prepared at the quarry, and the walls were panelled within with costly wood after the manner of the palaces of Hither Asia, the panelling being filled with carved work and overlaid with gold plate. And whereas the overlaying of the whole of the interior with gold shadowed forth the glory of the house as the residence of the heavenly King, the idea of this house of God was still more distinctly expressed in the carved work of the walls. In the tabernacle the walls were decorated with tapestries in costly colours and interwoven figures of cherubim; but in the temple they were ornamented with carved work of figures of cherubim, palms, and opening flowers. To the figures of cherubim, as representations of the heavenly spirits which surround the Lord of glory and set forth the psychical life at its highest stage, there are thus added flowers, and still more particularly palms, those "princes of the vegetable kingdom," which, with their fine majestic growth, and their large, fresh, evergreen leaves, unite within themselves the whole of the fulness and glory of the vegetable life; to set forth the sanctuary (probably with special reference to Canaan as the land of palms, and with an allusion to the glory of the King of peace, inasmuch as the palm is not only the sign of Palestine, but also the symbol of peace) "as a place that was ever verdant, abiding in all the freshness of strength, and enfolding within itself the fulness of life," and thereby to make it a scene of health and life, of peace and joy, a "paradise of God," where the righteous who are planted there flourish, and blossom, and bear fruit to old age (Ps. xcii. 13). And this idea of the house, as an immoveable dwelling-place of God, is in perfect harmony with the setting up of two colossal cherubim in the Most Holy Place, which filled the whole space with their outspread wings, and overshadowed the ark of the covenant, to show that the ark of the covenant with its small golden cherubim upon the Capporeth, which had journeyed with the people through the desert to Canaan, was henceforth to have there a permanent and unchangeable abode.

CHAP. VII. SOLOMON'S PALACE AND THE FURNITURE OF THE  
TEMPLE.

Vers. 1-12. *Erection of the royal palace.*—Ver. 1 is closely connected in form with ch. vi. 38, and contains a summary account of the building, which is more minutely described in



vers. 2-12. "And Solomon built his house (his palace) in thirteen years, and finished (in that time) all his house." The thirteen years are to be reckoned after the completion of the temple in seven years, so that the two buildings were executed in twenty years (ch. ix. 10). The expression כָּל-בֵּיתוֹ is used, because the palace consisted of several buildings connected together; namely, (1) the house of the forest of Lebanon (vers. 2-5); (2) the pillar-hall with the porch (ver. 6); (3) the throne-room and judgment-hall (ver. 7); (4) the king's dwelling-house and the house of Pharaoh's daughter (ver. 8). That all these buildings were only different portions of the one royal palace, and the house of the forest of Lebanon was not a summer residence of Solomon erected on Lebanon itself, as many of the earlier commentators supposed, is indisputably evident, not only from the first verse when correctly interpreted, but also and still more clearly from the fact that when the buildings of Solomon are spoken of afterwards (see ch. ix. 1, 10, 15, and x. 12), we only read of the house of Jehovah and the house of the king, that is to say, of the temple and *one* palace. The description of the several portions of this palace is so very brief, that it is impossible to form a distinct idea of its character. The different divisions are given in vers. 1-8 in their natural order, commencing at the back and terminating with the front (ver. 8), and there then follows in vers. 9-12 the description of the stones that were used.—Vers. 2-5. *The house of the forest of Lebanon.*—This building—so named because it was built, so to speak, of a forest of cedar pillars—is called in the Arabic the "house of his arms," because, according to ch. x. 17, it also served as a keeping-place for arms: "it is hardly to be regarded, however, as simply an arsenal, but was probably intended for other purposes also. He built it "a hundred cubits its length, fifty cubits its breadth, and thirty cubits its height, on four rows of cedar pillars, and hewn cedar beams (were) over the pillars." As the building was not merely a hall of pillars, but, according to ver. 3, had side-rooms (צִלְעֵי, cf. ch. vi. 5) above the pillars, the construction of it can hardly be represented in any other way than this, that the rooms were built upon four rows of pillars, which ran round all four sides of the building, which was 100 cubits long and fifty cubits broad in the inside, and thus surrounded the inner courtyard on all sides. Of course the building could not rest merely upon pillars, but was surrounded on the outside with a strong

wall of hewn square stones (ver. 9), so that the hewn beams which were laid upon the pillars had their outer ends built into the wall, and were supported by it, so as to give to the whole building the requisite strength.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 3. “And roofing in (of) cedar was above over the side-rooms upon the pillars, five and forty; fifteen the row.” סָפֵן is to be understood of the roofing, as in ch. vi 15. (compare סָפֵן, ch. vi. 15). The numbers “forty-five and fifteen the row” cannot refer to הָעַמּוּדִים, but must refer, as Thenius assumes, to הַצִּלְעוֹת as the main idea, which is more precisely defined by עַל הָעַמּוּדִים. If we took it as referring to the pillars, as I myself have formerly done, we should have to assume that there were only galleries or pillar-halls above the lower rows of pillars, which is at variance with הַצִּלְעוֹת. There were forty-five side-rooms, therefore, built upon the lower rows of pillars, in ranges of fifteen each. This could only be done by the ranges of rooms being built, not side by side, but one over the other, in other words, by the forty-five side-rooms forming three stories, as in the side buildings of the temple, so that each

<sup>1</sup> Thenius therefore supposes that “the lower part of the armoury formed a peristyle, a *fourfold* row of pillars running round inside its walls and enclosing a courtyard, so that the Vulgate alone gives the true sense, *quatuor deambulacra inter columnas cedrinas* ;” and he points to the court of the palace of *Luxor*, which has a double row of pillars round it. The number of pillars is not given in the text, but Thenius in his drawing of this building sets it down at 400, which would certainly present a forest-like aspect to any one entering the building. Nevertheless we cannot regard this assumption as correct, because the pillars, which we cannot suppose to have been less than a cubit in thickness, would have been so close to one another that the four rows of pillars could not have formed four *deambulacra*. As the whole building was only fifty cubits broad, and this breadth included the inner courtyard, we cannot suppose that the sides of the building were more than ten cubits deep, which would leave a breadth of thirty cubits for the court. If then four pillars, each of a cubit in thickness, stood side by side or one behind the other in a space of ten cubits in depth, the distance between the pillars would be only a cubit and a half, that is to say, would be only just enough for *one* man and no more to walk conveniently through. And what could have been the object of crowding pillars together in this way, so as to render the entire space almost useless? It is on this ground, probably, that Hermann Weiss assumes that each side of the oblong building, which was half as broad as it was long, was supported by one row, and therefore all the sides together by four rows of cedar pillars, and the beams of the same material which rested upon them. But this view is hardly a correct one; for it not only does not do justice to the words of the text, “four rows of pillars,” but it is insufficient in itself, for the simple reason that one row of pillars on each side would not have afforded the requisite strength and stability to the three stories built upon them, even



story had a "row" of fifteen side-rooms round it. This view receives support from ver. 4: "and beam-layers (שִׁקְפִים, beams, as in ch. vi. 4) were three rows, and outlook against outlook three times;" *i.e.* the rows of side-rooms were built one over the other by means of layers of beams, so that the rooms had windows opposite to one another three times; that is to say, the windows looking out upon the court were so arranged in the three stories that those on the one side were *vis à vis* to those on the opposite side of the building. The expression in ver. 5, מִלִּמְחֹה אֶל־מִמְחֹה, "window over against window," compels us to take אֶל־מִמְחֹה in the sense of "opposite to the window" (אֶל, *versus*), and not, as Thenius proposes, "outlook against outlook," according to which אֶל is supposed to indicate that the windows were only separated from one another by slender piers. מִמְחֹה, which only occurs here, is different from חֲלוֹן, the ordinary window, and probably denotes a large opening affording a wide outlook.—Ver. 5. "And all the doorways and mouldings were square of beams" (שִׁקְפִי is an accusative of free subordination, denoting the material or the mode of execution; cf. Ewald, § 284, *a*, *β*). "Square with a

if we should not suppose the rooms in these stories to be very broad, since the further three rows of pillars, which Weiss assumes in addition, according to ver. 3, as the actual supporters of the upper building, have no foundation in the text. The words "four rows of cedar pillars" do not absolutely require the assumption that there were four rows side by side or one behind the other on every side of the building; for the assertion that טֹר does not denote a row in the sense of a straight line, but generally signifies a row surrounding and enclosing a space, is refuted by Ex. xxviii. 17, where we read of the four טֹרִים of precious stones upon the breastplate of the high priest.—Is it not likely that the truth lies midway between these two views, and that the following is the view most in accordance with the actual fact, namely, that there were four rows of pillars running along the full length of the building, but that they were distributed on the two sides, so that there were only two rows on each side? In this case a person entering from the front would see four rows of pillars running the whole length of the building. In any case the rows of pillars would of necessity be broken in front by the entrance itself.

The utter uncertainty as to the number and position of the four rows of pillars is sufficient in itself to render it quite impossible to draw any plan of the building that could in the slightest degree answer to the reality. Moreover, there is no allusion at all in the description given in the text to either entrance or exit, or to staircases and other things, and the other buildings are still more scantily described, so that nothing certain can be determined with regard to their relative position or their probable connection with one another. For this reason, after studying the matter again and again, I have been obliged to relinquish the intention to illustrate the description in the text by drawings.

straight upper beam" (Thenius) cannot be the correct rendering of רַבְעִים שָׁקָף. Thenius proposes to read וְהַמְּזוֹת for וְהַמְּזוֹת, after the reading αἱ χῶραι of the Seventy, who have also rendered מַחֲזֵה in ver. 4 by χῶρα, a broad space. It may be pleaded in support of this, that רַבְעִים is less applicable to the doorposts or mouldings than to the doorways and outlooks (windows), inasmuch as, if the doorways were square, the square form of the moulding or framework would follow as a matter of course. הַפֶּתָחִים are both the doors, through which the different rooms were connected with one another, and also those through which the building and its stories were reached, of course by stairs, probably winding staircases, as in the side stories of the temple. The stairs were placed, no doubt, at the front of the building. The height given is thirty cubits, corresponding to that of the whole building (ver. 2). If we reckon the height of the lower pillars at eight cubits, there were twenty-two cubits left for the stories; and assuming that the roofing of each was one cubit in thickness, there remained eighteen cubits in all for the rooms of the three stories; and this, if equally distributed, would give an internal height of six cubits for each story, or if arranged on a graduated scale, which would probably be more appropriate, a height of seven, six, and five cubits respectively.

Vers. 6–8. *The other buildings.*—Ver. 6. "And he made the pillar-hall, fifty cubits its length, and thirty cubits its breadth, and a hall in front of them, and pillars and a threshold in front of them." With regard to the situation of this hall in relation to the other parts of the building, which is not precisely defined, we may infer, from the fact that it is mentioned between the house of the forest of Lebanon and the throne and judgment halls, that it stood between these two. The length of this building (fifty cubits) corresponds to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon; so that, according to the analogy of the temple-hall (ch. vi. 3), we might picture to ourselves the length given here as running parallel to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon, and might therefore assume that the pillar-hall was fifty cubits broad and thirty cubits deep. But the statement that there was a hall *in front of* the pillar-hall is irreconcilable with this assumption. We must therefore understand the length in the natural way, as signifying the measurement from back to front, and regard the pillar-hall as a portico fifty cubits long and thirty cubits broad, in front of which there was also a porch as



an entrance. **עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם**, in front of them, *i.e.* in front of the pillars which formed this portico. The last words, "and pillars and threshold in front of them," refer to the porch. This had also pillars, probably on both sides of the doorway, which carried the roof; and in front of them was **עֵב**, *i.e.*, according to the Chaldee **סְקַפְתָּא**, the moulding or framework of the threshold, a threshold-like entrance, with steps.—Ver. 7. "And the *throne-hall*, where he judged, the judgment-hall, he made and (indeed) covered with cedar, from floor to floor." The throne-hall and the judgment-hall are therefore one and the same hall, which was both a court of judgment and an audience-chamber, and in which, no doubt, there stood the splendid throne described in ch. x. 18-20. But it is distinguished from the pillar-hall by the repetition of **עֵצָה**. It probably followed immediately upon this, but was clearly distinguished from it by the fact that it was covered with cedar, **מִהַקְרָקַע עַד הַקְרָקַע**. These words are very obscure. The rendering given by Thenius, "panelled from the floor to the beams of the roof," is open to these objections: (1) that **סָפֵן** generally does not mean to *panel*, but simply to *cover*, and that **סָפֵן בָּאֵז** in particular cannot possibly be taken in a different sense here from that which it bears in ver. 3, where it denotes the roofing of the rooms built above the portico of pillars; and (2) that the alteration of the second **הַקְרָקַע** into **הַקִּירוֹת** has no critical warrant in the rendering of the Syriac, *a fundamento ad cælum ejus usque*, or in that of the Vulgate, *a pavimento usque ad summitatem*, whereas the LXX. and Chald. both read **עַד הַקְרָקַע**. But even if we were to read **הַקִּירוֹת**, this would not of itself signify the roof beams, inasmuch as in ch. vi. 16 **הַקִּירוֹת** or **הַקִּירוֹת** receives its more precise definition from the expression **קִירוֹת הַסָּפֵן** (קוֹרוֹת) in ver. 15. The words in question cannot have any other meaning than this: "from the one floor to the other," *i.e.* either from the floor of the throne-hall to the floor of the pillar-hall (described in ver. 6), or more probably from the lower floor to the upper, inasmuch as there were rooms built over the throne-room, just as in the case of the house of the forest of Lebanon; for **קְרָקַע** may denote not only the lower floor, but also the floor of upper rooms, which served at the same time as the ceiling of the lower rooms. So much, at any rate, may be gathered from these words, with all their obscurity, that the throne-hall was not an open pillar-hall, but was only open in front, and was shut in by solid walls on the other three sides.—

Ver. 8. After (behind) the throne and judgment hall then followed the king's own palace, the principal entrance to which was probably through the throne-hall, so that the king really delivered judgment and granted audiences in the gate of his palace. "His house, where he dwelt, in the other court inwards from the (throne) hall was like this work," *i.e.* was built like the throne-hall; "and a (dwelling) house he made for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken, like this hall." The construction of the dwelling-places of the king and queen cannot be ascertained from these words, because the hall with which its style is compared is not more minutely described. All that can be clearly inferred from the words, "in the other court inside the hall," is, that the abode of the king and his Egyptian wife had a court of its own, and when looked at from the entrance, formed the hinder court of the whole palace. The house of Pharaoh's daughter was probably distinct from the dwelling-place of the king, so that the palace of the women formed a building by itself, most likely behind the dwelling-house of the king, since the women in the East generally occupy the inner portion of the house. The statement that the dwelling-place of the king and queen formed a court by itself within the complex of the palace, warrants the further inference, that the rest of the buildings (the house of the forest of Lebanon, the pillar-hall, and the throne-hall) were united together in one first or front court.

Vers. 9–12. "All these (*viz.* the whole of the buildings described in vers. 2–8) were costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, sawn with the saw within and without (*i.e.* on the inner and outer side of the halls and buildings), and from the foundation to the corbels, and from without to the great court." **הַמַּפְּחוֹת**, the corbels, upon which the beams of the roof rest. The Sept. renders it *ἕως τῶν γεισῶν*. Thenius understands by this the battlements which protected the flat roofs, and therefore interprets **מַפְּחוֹת** as signifying the stone border of the roof of the palace. But *γεισος*, or *γεισος*, *γεισος*, merely signifies the projection of the roof, and, generally speaking, every projection in a building resembling a roof, but not the battlement-like protection or border of the flat roof, which is called **מַעֲקֵה** in Deut. xxii. 8. **חוּץ**, the outside in distinction from the great court, can only be the outer court; and as **הַחֲצֵר הַנְּדִלָּה** is no doubt identical with **הַחֲצֵר הָאֲחֵרֶת** (ver. 8), and therefore refers to the court surrounding the king's



dwelling-house, חוץ is to be understood as relating to the courtyard or fore-court surrounding the front halls.—Vers. 10, 11. “And the foundation was laid with costly, large stones of ten and eight cubits (*sc.* in length, and of corresponding breadth and thickness). And above (the foundation, and therefore the visible walls, were) costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, and cedars.”—Ver. 12. And (as for) the great court, there were round it three rows (*i.e.* it was formed of three rows) of hewn stones and a row of hewn cedar beams, as in the inner court of the house of Jehovah (see at ch. vi. 36) and the hall of the house. וְלַחֲצַר signifies “and so with the court,” *Vav* serving as a comparison, as in Prov. xxv. 3, 20, and frequently in Proverbs (see Dietrich in Ges. *Lex. s.v.* ו, and Ewald, § 340, *b*), so that there is no necessity for the un-Hebraic conjecture of Thenius, בְּלַחֲצַר הַבַּיִת. לְאוֹלָם הַבַּיִת in all probability refers not to the temple-hall, but to the pillar-hall of the palace, the surrounding wall of which was of the same nature as the wall of the great, *i.e.* the other or hinder, court.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 13–51. THE METALLIC VESSELS OF THE TEMPLE (compare 2 Chron. ii. 13, 14, and iii. 15–v. 1).—Vers. 13, 14. To

<sup>1</sup> The situation of this palace in Jerusalem is not defined. Ewald supposes (*Gesch.* iii. p. 317) that it was probably built on the southern continuation of the temple-mountain, commonly called *Ophel*, *i.e.* Hill. But “nothing more is needed to convince us that it cannot have stood upon Ophel, than a single glance at any geographical outline of Ophel on one of the best of the modern maps, and a recollection of the fact that, according to Neh. iii. 26, 31, it was upon Ophel, where the king’s palace is said to have stood, that the temple-socagers and shopkeepers had their places of abode after the captivity” (Thenius). The view held by earlier travellers and pilgrims to Zion, and defended by Berggren (p. 109 sqq.), namely, that the ancient Solomonian and Asmonæan palaces stood upon Moriah on the western side of the temple, is equally untenable. For the xystus, above which, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 16, 3, the Asmonæan palace stood, was connected with the temple by a bridge, and therefore did not stand upon Moriah, but upon Zion or the *ἀνω πόλιν*, since this bridge, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vi. 6, 2, connected the temple with the upper city. Moreover, it clearly follows from the passages of Josephus already noticed (p. 84 sq.), in which he refers to the substructures of the temple area, that the temple occupied the whole of Moriah towards the west, and extended as far as the valley of the Tyropœon, and consequently there was no room for a palace on that side. When Josephus affirms, therefore (*Ant.* viii. 5, 2), that Solomon’s palace stood opposite to the temple (*ἀντικρυς ἔχων ναόν*), it can only have been built on the north-east side of Zion, as most of the modern writers assume (see W. Krafft,

make these vessels king Hiram had sent to Solomon, at his request (2 Chron. ii. 6), a workman named *Hiram* of Tyre. Ver. 13 contains a supplementary remark, in which וַיִּשְׁלַח must be rendered in the pluperfect (compare the remarks on Gen. ii. 19). King Solomon had sent and fetched *Hiram* from Tyre. This artisan bore the same name as the king, הִירָם or הִירוֹם (ver. 40), in 2 Chron. ii. 13 הִירָם (*Huram*), with the epithet אָבִי, *i.e.* my father, אָב being a title of honour equivalent to master or counsellor, as in Gen. xlv. 8. He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was אִישׁ צִרִי, *i.e.* a Tyrian by birth. According to 2 Chron. ii. 13, his mother was "of the daughters of Dan," *i.e.* of the tribe of Dan. Both statements may easily be united thus: she was a Danite by birth, and married into the tribe of Naphtali. When her husband died, she was married again as the widow of a Naphtalite, and became the wife of a Tyrian, to whom she bore a son, *Hiram*. This explanation is also adopted by Bertheau (on the Chronicles); and the conjecture of Lundius, Thenius, and others, that the mother was an Israelitish widow of the city of Dan in the tribe of Naphtali, which was quite close to Tyre, is less in harmony with the expression "of the daughters of Dan." חֹרֶשׁ נְחֹשֶׁת, "a brass-worker," refers to הִיא (he), *i.e.* *Hiram*, and not to his father (Thenius). The skill of Hiram is described in almost the same terms as that of Bezaleel in Ex. xxxi. 3 sqq., with this exception, that Bezaleel's skill is attributed to his being filled with the Spirit of God, *i.e.* is described rather as a supernatural gift, whereas in the case of Hiram the more indefinite expression, "he was filled with wisdom, etc.," is used, representing it rather as a natural endowment. In the account given here, Hiram is merely described as a worker in brass, because he is only mentioned at the commencement of the section which treats of the preparation of the brazen vessels of the temple. According to 2 Chron. ii. 14, he was able to work in gold, silver, brass, iron, stone, wood, purple, etc. There is nothing improbable in this extension of his skill to wood and to

*Topographie Jerus.* p. 114 sqq., and *Berggr.* p. 110). This is sustained not only by the probability that the Asmonæans would hardly build their palace anywhere else than on the spot where the palace of the kings of Judah built by Solomon stood, but also by the account of the elevation of Joash to the throne in 2 Kings xi. and 2 Chron. xxiii., from which it is perfectly obvious that the royal palace stood upon Zion opposite to the temple.



the art of weaving. Bezaleel also combined in himself all these talents. Of course Hiram was merely a foreman or leader of these different branches of art; and he certainly did not come alone, but brought several assistants with him, who carried out the different works under his superintendence.—The enumeration of them commences with the pillars of the temple-hall.

Vers. 15-22. *The brazen pillars of the porch* (compare 2 Chron. iii. 15-17).—He formed the two brazen pillars, which were erected, according to 2 Chron. iii. 15, “before the (temple) house, *i.e.* in front of the hall of the temple. One was eighteen cubits high, and a thread of twelve cubits surrounded (spanned) the other pillar.” The statement of the height of the one pillar and that of the circumference of the other is to be understood as an abbreviated expression, signifying that the height and thickness mentioned applied to the one as well as to the other, or that they were alike in height and circumference. According to the Chronicles, they were thirty-five cubits long; which many expositors understand as signifying that the length of the two together was thirty-five cubits, so that each one was only  $17\frac{1}{2}$  cubits long, for which the full number 18 is substituted in our text. But this mode of reconciling the discrepancy is very improbable, and is hardly in harmony with the words of the Chronicles. The number 35 evidently arose from confounding the numeral letters  $\text{יח} = 18$  with  $\text{לח} = 35$ . The correctness of the number 18 is confirmed by 2 Kings xxv. 17 and Jer. lii. 21. The pillars were hollow, the brass being four finger-breadths in thickness (Jer. lii. 21); and they were cast in the Jordan valley (ver. 46).—Ver. 16. “And he made two capitals ( $\text{בִּתְרוֹת}$ ), to set them on the heads of the pillars, cast in brass, five cubits the height of the one and of the other capital.” If, on the other hand, in 2 Kings xxv. 17 the height of the capital is said to have been three cubits, this discrepancy cannot be explained on the supposition that the capitals had been reduced two cubits in the course of time; but the statement rests, like the parallel passage in Jer. lii. 22, upon an error of the text, *i.e.* upon the substitution of  $\text{ג}$  (3) for  $\text{ה}$  (5).—Ver. 17. “Plait (*i.e.* ornaments of plait), plait-work and cords (twist, resembling) chain-work, were on the capitals, which were upon the heads of the pillars, seven on the one capital and seven on the other capital.” Consequently this decoration consisted of seven twists arranged as festoons, which were hung round the capitals of the

pillars.—Ver. 18. “And he made pomegranates, and indeed two rows round about the one twist, to cover the capitals which were upon the head of the pillars; and so he did with the other capital.” In the Masoretic text the words **הָרִמָּנִים** and **הָעֲמֻדִים** are confused together, and we must read, as some of the Codd. do, in the first clause **אֶת־הָרִמָּנִים** for **אֶת־הָעֲמֻדִים**, and in the middle clause **עַל־רֹאשׁ הָרִמָּנִים** for **עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעֲמֻדִים**. This is not only required by the sense, but sustained by a comparison with ver. 19. The relation between the two rows of pomegranates and the plaited work is indeed not precisely defined; but it is generally and correctly assumed, that one row ran round the pillars below the plaited work and the other above, so that the plaited work, which was formed of seven cords plaited together in the form of festoons, was enclosed above and below by the rows of pomegranates. If we compare with this the further statements in vers. 41 and 42, 2 Chron. iii. 16 and iv. 12, 13, and Jer. lii. 23, **הַכְּתָרִית** is there more precisely designated **נִלּוֹת הַכְּתָרִית**, “bowls of the capitals,” from which it is evident that the lower portion of the capitals, to which the braided work was fastened, was rounded in the form of a pitcher or caldron. The number of the pomegranates on the two festoons is given at 400, so that there were 200 on each capital, and consequently each row contained 100 (2 Chron. iii. 16); and according to Jer. (*l.c.*) there were 96 **רוּחָה**, “windwards,” and in all 100 on the braided work round about. **רוּחָה**, “windwards,” can hardly be taken in any other sense than this: in the direction of the wind, *i.e.* facing the four quarters of the heavens. This meaning is indisputably sustained by the use of the word **רִיחַ**, to denote the quarters of the heavens, in statements of the aspect of buildings (Ezek. xlii. 16–18), whereas there is no foundation whatever for such meanings as “airwards=uncovered” (Böttcher, Thenius), or hanging freely (Ewald).<sup>1</sup>—In vers. 19 and 20 a second decoration of the capitals of the pillars

<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to observe, that the expression **נִשְׁאַף רוּחַ**, to gasp for air, in Jer. ii. 24, xiv. 6, does not warrant our giving to **רוּחָה** the meaning open or uncovered, as Böttcher supposes. But when Thenius follows Böttcher (*Proben*, p. 335) in adducing in support of this the fact “that the tangent, which is drawn to any circle divided into a hundred parts, covers exactly four of these parts,” the fact rests upon a simple error, inasmuch as any drawing will show that a tangent only touches *one* point of a circle divided into a hundred parts. And the remark of Böttcher, “If you describe on the outside of a circle of twelve cubits in circumference a hundred small circles of twelve-hundredths of a cubit in diameter, a tangent drawn thereupon will



is mentioned, from which we may see that the rounding with the chain-like plaited work and the pomegranates enclosing it did not cover the capital to the very top, but only the lower portion of it. The decoration of the upper part is described in ver. 19: "And capitals, which were upon the top of the pillars, were (or, Hiram made) lily-work after the manner of the hall, four cubits." The lily-work occupied, according to ver. 20, the upper portion of the capitals, which is here called כְּתֹרֶת, as a crown set upon the lower portion. It was lily-work, *i.e.* sculpture in the form of flowering lilies. The words בְּאוֹלָם אֲרָבַע אַמּוֹת are obscure. According to Böttcher and Thenius, בְּאוֹלָם is intended to indicate the position of the pillars within the hall, so that their capitals sustained the lintel of the doorway. But even if בְּאוֹלָם were rendered, within the hall, as it is by Böttcher, it is impossible to see how this meaning could be obtained from the words "capitals upon the head of the pillars lily-work within the hall." In that case we must at least have "the pillars within the hall;" and בְּאוֹלָם would be connected with הָעַמּוּדִים, instead of being separated from it by מַעֲשֵׂה שִׁישׁ. Even if we were to introduce a stop after שִׁישׁ and take בְּאוֹלָם by itself, the expression "in (or at) the hall" would not in itself indicate the position of the pillars in the doorway, to say nothing of the fact that it is only in ver. 21 that anything is said concerning the position of the pillars. Again, the measurement "four cubits" cannot be understood, as it is by Thenius, as denoting the diameter of the capitals of the pillars; it must rather indicate the measure of the lily-work, that is to say, it affirms that there were four cubits of lily-work on the capitals, which were five cubits high, —in other words, the lily-work covered the four upper cubits of the capitals; from which it still further follows, that the plaited work which formed the decoration of the lower portion of the capitals was only one cubit broad or high. Consequently בְּאוֹלָם cannot be understood in any other sense than "in the manner of or according to the hall," and can only express the thought, that there was lily-work on the capitals of the pillars as there was on the hall. For the vindication of this use of בְּ

cover to the eye exactly four small circles, although mathematically it touches only one of them in one point," is not correct according to any measurement. For if the tangent touches one of these smaller circles with mathematical exactness, to the eye there will be covered either three or five half circles, or even seven, but never four.

see Ges. *Lex.* by Dietrich, s.v. ב.<sup>1</sup> There is no valid objection to the inference to which this leads, namely, that on the frontispiece of the temple-hall there was a decoration of lily-work. For since the construction of the hall is not more minutely described, we cannot expect a description of its decorations.—In ver. 20 a more precise account is given of the position in which the crowns consisting of lily-work were placed on the capitals of the columns, so that this verse is to be regarded as an explanation of ver. 19: namely, capitals upon the pillars (did he make) also above near the belly, which was on the other side of the plait-work.” הַבֶּטֶן, the belly, i.e. the belly-shaped rounding, can only be the rounding of the lower portion of the capitals, which is called בֶּטֶן in vers. 41, 42. Hence לְעֵבֶר הַשִּׁבְכָה (*Keri*), “on the other side of the plaited work,” can only mean behind or under the plait, since we cannot suppose that there was a belly-shaped rounding above the caldron-shaped rounding which was covered with plaited work, and between this and the lily-work. The belly-shaped rounding, above or upon which the plaited work lay round about, might, when looked at from without, be described as being on the other side of it, i.e. behind it. In the second half of the verse: “and the pomegranates two hundred in rows round about on the second capital,” the number of the pomegranates placed upon the capitals, which was omitted in ver. 18, is introduced in a supplementary form.<sup>2</sup>—Ver. 21. “And

<sup>1</sup> This is the way in which the earlier translators appear to have understood it: e.g., LXX. ἔργον κρίνου κατὰ τὸ αὐτὰρ τεσσάρων πηχῶν (“lily-work according to the hall four cubits”); Vulg. *Capitella . . . quasi opere lili fabricata erant in porticu quatuor cubitorum*; Chald. עֹבֵר שְׁשִׁנְתָּא לְקִיט בְּאַלְמָא אַרְבַּע אַמִּין (*opus liliaceum collectum in porticu quatuor cubitorum*); Syr. *opus liliaceum idem fecit* (ܐܘܡܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ) in porticu quatuor cubitis. These readings appear to be based upon the view supported by Rashi (בְּאַלְמָא): lily-work as it was in the hall.

<sup>2</sup> Hermann Weiss (*Kostümkunde*, i. p. 367) agrees in the main with the idea worked out in the text; but he assumes, on the ground of monumental views, that the decoration was of a much simpler kind, and one by no means out of harmony with the well-known monumental remains of the East. In his opinion, the pillars consisted of “a shaft nineteen cubits in height, surrounded at the top, exactly after the fashion of the ornamentation of the Egyptian pillars, with seven bands decorated like plaited work, which unitedly covered a cubit, in addition to which there was the lily-work of five cubits in height, i.e. a slender capital rising up in the form of the calyx of a lily, ornamented with pomegranates.” Our reasons for dissenting from this opinion are given in the exposition of the different verses.



he set up the pillars at the hall of the Holy Place, and set up the right pillar, and called its name *Jachin*, and . . . the left . . . *Boaz*." Instead of לְאַלֹמֹת הַהֵיכָל we have in 2 Chron. iii. 15 לְפָנֵי הַבַּיִת, and in ver. 17 עַל-פְּנֵי הַהֵיכָל, "before the house," "before the Holy Place." This unquestionably implies that the two brazen pillars stood unconnected in front of the hall, on the right and left sides of it, and not within the hall as supporters of the roof. Nevertheless many have decided in favour of the latter view. But of the four arguments used by Thenius in proof that this was the position of the pillars, there is no force whatever in the first, which is founded upon Amos ix. 1, unless we assume, as Merz and others do, that the words of the prophet, "Smite the capital, that the thresholds may shake, and break them (the capitals of the pillars), that they may fall upon the head of all," refer to the temple at Jerusalem, and not, as Thenius and others suppose, to the temple erected at Bethel for the calf-worship. For even if the temple at Bethel had really had a portal supported by pillars, it would by no means follow that the pillars Jachin and Boaz in Solomon's temple supported the roof of the hall, as it is nowhere stated that the temple of Jeroboam at Bethel was an exact copy of that of Solomon. And even with the only correct interpretation, in which the words of Amos are made to refer to the temple at Jerusalem, the argument founded upon them in support of the position of the pillars as bearers of the hall rests upon the false idea, that the סָפִים, which are shaken by the smiting of the capital, are the beams lying upon the top of the pillars, or the *superliminaria* of the hall. It is impossible to prove that סָף has any such meaning. The beam over the entrance, or upon the doorposts, is called מִשְׁקוֹף in Ex. xii. 7, 22, 23, whereas סָף denotes the threshold, *i.e.* the lower part of the framework of the door, as is evident from Judg. xix. 27. The words of the prophet are not to be interpreted architecturally, but to be taken in a rhetorical sense; "so that by the blow, which strikes the capital, and causes the thresholds to tremble, such a blow is intended as shakes the temple in all its joints" (Baur on Amos ix. 1). "הַכְּפֹתוֹר, a kind of ornament at the top of the pillars, and הַסָּפִים, the thresholds, are opposed to one another, to express the thought that the building is to be shaken and destroyed *a summo usque ad imum, a capite ad calcem*" (Hengstenberg, *Christol.* i. p. 366 transl.). The other arguments derived from

Ezek. xl. 48 and 49, and from Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 3, 4, prove nothing at all. From the words of Josephus, *τούτων τῶν κιονῶν τὸν μὲν ἕτερον κατὰ τὴν δεξιὰν ἔστησε τοῦ προπυλαίου παραστάδα . . . τὸν δὲ ἕτερον, κ.τ.λ.*, it would only follow "that the pillars (according to the view of Josephus) must have stood in the doorway," if it were the case that *παραστάς* had no other meaning than *doorpost*, and *προπύλαιον* could be understood as referring to the temple-hall generally. But this is conclusively disproved by the fact that Josephus always calls the temple-hall *πρόναον* (*l.c.*, and viii. 3, 2 and 3), so that *προπύλαιον* can only denote the fore-court, and *παραστάς* a pillar standing by itself. Consequently Josephus regarded the pillars Jachin and Boaz as *propylaea* erected in front of the hall. We must therefore adhere to the view expressed by Bähr (*d. Tempel*, p. 35 sqq.), that these pillars did not support the roof of the temple-hall, but were set up in front of the hall on either side of the entrance. In addition to the words of the text, this conclusion is sustained (1) by the circumstance that the two pillars are not mentioned in connection with the building of the temple and the hall, but are referred to for the first time here in the enumeration of the sacred vessels of the court that were made of brass. "If the pillars had formed an essential part of the construction and had been supporters of the hall, they would certainly have been mentioned in the description of the building, and not have been placed among the articles of furniture" (Schnaase); and moreover they would not have been made of metal like the rest of the vessels, but would have been constructed of the same building materials as the hall and the house, namely, of stone or wood (Bähr). And to this we may add (2) the monumental character of the pillars, which is evident from the names given to them. No architectural portion of the building received a special name.<sup>1</sup> *Jachin* (יָכִין): "he establishes," *stabiliet templum* (Simonis *Onom.* p. 430); and *Boaz* (בֹּאֵז), *ex בּוֹ בּוֹ in illo, sc. Domino, robur* (Sim. p. 460). Kimchi has correctly interpreted the first name thus: "Let this temple

<sup>1</sup> Stieglitz (*Gesch. der Baukunst*, p. 127) aptly observes in relation to this: "The architect cannot subscribe to Meyer's view (that the pillars were supporters of the hall), since it was only through their independent position that the pillars received the solemn character intended to be given to them, and by their dignity subverted the end designed, of exalting the whole building and calling attention to the real purpose of the whole."



stand for ever;" and the second, "Solomon desired that God would give it strength and endurance." The pillars were symbols of the stability and strength, which not only the temple as an outward building, but the kingdom of God in Israel as embodied in the temple, received from the Lord, who had chosen the temple to be His dwelling-place in the midst of His people.<sup>1</sup>—In ver. 22 it is stated again that there was lily-work upon the head of the pillars,—a repetition which may be explained from the significance of this emblem of the capitals of the pillars; and then the words, "So was the work of the capitals finished," bring the account of this ornament of the temple to a close.

Vers. 23-26. *The brazen sea* (cf. 2 Chron. iv. 2-5).—"He made the molten sea—a water-basin called יָם (*mare*) on account of its size—ten cubits from one upper rim to the other," *i.e.* in diameter measured from the upper rim to the one opposite to it, "rounded all round, and five cubits its (external) height, and a line of thirty cubits encircled it round about," *i.e.* it was thirty cubits in circumference. The *Chethib* קוה is to be read קוה here and in Zech. i. 16 and Jer. xxxi. 39, for which the *Keri* has קו in all these passages. קוה or קו means a line for measuring, which is expressed in ver. 15 by חוט. The relation of the diameter to the circumference is expressed in whole numbers which come very near to the mathematical proportions. The more exact proportions would be as 7 to 22, or 113 to 355.—Ver. 24. And colocynths (gourds) ran round it under its brim, ten to the cubit, surrounding the sea in two rows; the colocynths "cast in its casting," *i.e.* cast at the same time as the vessel itself. Instead of פִּקְעִים, gourds (see at ch. vi. 18), we find דְּמוֹת בָּקָרִים, figures of oxen, in the corresponding text of the Chronicles, and in the last clause merely הַפִּקָּר, an evident error of the pen, בָּקָרִים being substituted by mistake for פִּקְעִים, and afterwards interpreted דְּמוֹת בָּקָרִים. The assumption by which the early expositors removed the discrepancy, namely, that they were casts of bullocks' heads, is not to be thought of, for the simple reason that בָּקָרִים signifies oxen and not the *heads* of oxen. How far apart the two rows of gourd-like ornaments were, it is impossible

<sup>1</sup> There is no necessity to refute the fanciful notion of Ewald, that these pillars, "when they were erected and consecrated, were certainly named after men who were held in estimation at that time, probably after the younger sons of Solomon," and that of Thenius, that יָבִין בָּעֵץ, "He (the Lord) establishes with strength," was engraved upon them as an inscription.

to decide. Their size may be estimated, from the fact that there were ten within the space of a cubit, at a little over two inches in diameter.—Ver. 25. This vessel stood (rested) upon twelve brazen oxen, three turning to the north, three to the west, three to the south, and three to the east, “and the sea above upon them, and all their backs (turned) inwards;” *i.e.* they were so placed that three of their heads were directed towards each quarter of the heavens. The size of the oxen is not given; but we must assume that it was in proportion to the size and height of the sea, and therefore about five cubits in height up to the back. These figures stood, no doubt, upon a metal plate, which gave them a fixed and immoveable position (see the engraving in my *bibl. Archäol.* Taf. iii. fig. 1).—Ver. 26. “And its thickness (*i.e.* the thickness of the metal) was a handbreadth” = four finger-breadths, as in the case of the brazen pillars (see at ver. 15), “and its upper rim like work of a goblet (or of a goblet-rim, *i.e.* bent outwards), lily-blossom,” *i.e.* ornamented with lily-flowers. It held 2000 baths; according to the Chronicles, 3000 baths. The latter statement has arisen from the confusion of א (3) with ב (2); since, according to the calculation of Thenius, the capacity of the vessel, from the dimensions given, could not exceed 2000 baths. This vessel, which took the place of the laver in the tabernacle, was provided for the priests to wash themselves (2 Chron. iv. 6), that is to say, that a supply of water might be kept in readiness to enable the priests to wash their hands and feet when they approached the altar to officiate, or were about to enter the Holy Place (Ex. xxx. 18 sqq.). There were no doubt taps by which the water required for this purpose was drawn off from the sea.<sup>1</sup>—The artistic form of the vessel corresponded to its sacred purpose. The rim of the basin, which rose upwards in the form of a lily, was intended to point to the holiness and loveliness of that life which issued from the sanctuary. The twelve oxen, on which it rested, pointed to the twelve tribes of Israel as a priestly nation, which cleansed itself

<sup>1</sup> For the different conjectures on this subject, see Lundius, *jud. Heiligtümer*, p. 356. Thenius supposes that there was also a provision for filling the vessel, since the height of it would have rendered it a work of great labour and time to fill it by hand, and that there was probably a pipe hidden behind the figures of the oxen, since, according to Aristeas, *histor. LXX. Interp.*, Oxon. 1692, p. 32 (also Eusebii *præp. evang.* ix. 38), there were openings concealed at the foot of the altar, out of which water was allowed to run at certain seasons for the requisite cleansing of the pavement of the court from



here in the persons of its priests, to appear clean and holy before the Lord. Just as the number twelve unquestionably suggests the allusion to the twelve tribes of the covenant nation, so, in the choice of oxen or bullocks as supporters of the basin, it is impossible to overlook the significance of this selection of the first and highest of the sacrificial animals to represent the priestly service, especially if we compare the position of the lions on Solomon's throne (ch. x. 20).

Vers. 27-39. THE BRAZEN STANDS AND THEIR BASINS.<sup>1</sup>—He made ten stands of brass, each four cubits long, four cubits broad, and three cubits high. מְכֻנֹת, stands or stools (Luther), is the name given to these vessels from their purpose, viz. to serve as supports to the basins which were used for washing the flesh of the sacrifices. They were square chests cast in brass, of the dimensions given.—Vers. 28, 29. Their work (their construction) was the following: they had מְסָנִיֹת, lit. surroundings, i.e. panels or flat sides, and that between שְׁלָבִים, commissuræ, i.e. frames or borders, which enclosed the sides, and were connected together at the angles; and upon the panels within the borders (there were figures of) lions, oxen, and cherubim. The statement in Josephus, that each centre was divided into three compartments, has nothing to support it in the biblical text, nor is it at all probable in itself, inasmuch as a division of this kind would have rendered the figures placed upon them insignificantly small. “And upon the borders was a base above.” בָּזֵי is a noun, and has been rendered correctly by the Chaldee בְּנֵתָא, basis. The meaning is, above, over the borders, there was a pedestal for the basin upon the chest, which is more fully described in ver. 31. To take בָּזֵי as an adverb does not give a suitable sense. For if we adopt the rendering, and upon the corner borders (or ledges) likewise above (De Wette and Ewald),—i.e. there were also figures of lions, oxen, and cherubim upon the corner borders, the blood of the sacrifices; and there is still a fountain just in the neighbourhood of the spot on which, according to ver. 39, the brazen sea must have stood (see Schultz's plan); and in the time of the Crusaders there was a large basin, covered by a dome supported by columns (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. 446). But even if the later temple was supplied with the water required by means of artificial water-pipes, the Solomonian origin of these arrangements or designs is by no means raised even to the rank of probability.

<sup>1</sup> The description which follows will be more easily understood by comparing with it the sketch given in my *biblische Archäologie*, Taf. iii. fig. 4.

—it is impossible to tell what the meaning of מַמְעַל can be, to say nothing of the fact that on the corner borders there could hardly be room for such figures as these. This last argument also tells against the rendering adopted by Thenius: “and upon the corner borders, above as well as below the lions and oxen, (there were) wreaths;” in which, moreover, it is impossible to attach any supportable meaning to the לָּ. When, on the other hand, Thenius objects to our view that the pedestal in question is spoken of for the first time in ver. 31, and that the expression “above the corner borders (ledges)” would be extremely unsuitable, since the pedestal in question was above the whole stand; the former remark is not quite correct, for ver. 31 merely contains a more minute description of the character of the pedestal, and the latter is answered by the fact that the pedestal derived its strength from the corner borders or ledges. “And below the lions and oxen were wreaths, pendant work.” לִיּוֹת, here and at ver. 36, is to be explained from לָּיָה in Prov. i. 9 and iv. 9, and signifies twists or wreaths. מַעֲשֵׂה מוֹרָר is not “work of sinking,” i.e. sunken work (Thenius), which never can be the meaning of מוֹרָר, but pendant work, festoons, by which, however, we cannot understand festoons hanging *freely*, or floating in the air.—Ver. 30. “Every stool had four brazen wheels and brazen axles, and the four feet thereof had shoulder-pieces; below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast, beyond each one (were) wreaths.” The meaning is that the square chests stood upon axles with wheels of brass, after the style of ordinary carriage wheels (ver. 33), so that they could be driven or easily moved from one place to another; and that they did not rest directly upon the axles, but stood upon four feet, which were fastened upon the axles. This raised the chest above the rim of the wheels, so that not only were the sides of the chest which were ornamented with figures left uncovered, but, according to ver. 32, the wheels stood below the panels, and not, as in ordinary carriages, at the side of the chest. With regard to the connection between the axles and the wheels, Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 972) and Thenius suppose that the axles were fastened to the wheels, as in the Roman *plaustra* and at the present day in Italy, so as to turn with them; and Thenius argues in support of this, that לָּהֶם is to be connected not only with what immediately precedes, but also with פָּרְנֵי נְהִשָּׁת. But this latter is unfounded; and the idea is altogether irreconcilable with the fact that the wheels had naves (חֲשָׁקִים),



ver. 33), from which we must infer that they revolved upon the axles. The words *וְאַרְבַּעַת פַּעֲמֹתָיו בְּתַפְתָּ לָהֶם* are ambiguous. They may either be rendered, "and its four feet had shoulder-pieces," or, as Thenius supposes, "and its four feet served as shoulder-pieces." *פַּעֲמֹת* means stepping feet, feet bent out as if for stepping (Ex. xxv. 12). The suffix attached to *פַּעֲמֹתָיו* refers to *מְכוֹנָה*, the masculine being often used indefinitely instead of the feminine, as in *לָהֶם* in ver. 28. Thenius compares these feet to the *ἀμαξόποδες* of the Greeks, and imagines that they were divided below, like fork-shaped upright contrivances, in which, as in forks, the wheels turned with the axles, so that the axle-peg, which projected outwards, had a special apparatus, instead of the usual pin, in the form of a stirrup-like and on the lower side hand-shaped holder (*יָד*), which was fastened to the lower rim of the *מְכוֹנָה*, and descended perpendicularly so as to cover the foot, and the general arrangement of the wheels themselves received greater strength in consequence. These feet, which were divided in the shape of forks, are supposed to be called *בְּתַפְתָּ* (shoulders), because they were not attached underneath at the edge of the stand, but being cast with the corner rims passed down in the inner angles, so that their uppermost portion was *under the basin*, and the lowest portion was under the stand, which we are to picture to ourselves as without a bottom, and projecting as a split foot, held the wheel, and so formed its shoulder-pieces. But we cannot regard this representation as either in accordance with the text, or as really correct. Even if *בְּתַפְתָּ לָהֶם* could in any case be grammatically rendered, "they served them (the wheels and axles) as shoulders," although it would be a very questionable course to take *לָהֶם* in a different sense here from that which it bears in the perfectly similar construction in ver. 28, the feet which carried the stand could not possibly be called the shoulders of the wheels and their axles, since they did not carry the wheels, but the *מְכוֹנָה*. Moreover, this idea is irreconcilable with the following words: "below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast." If, for example, as Thenius assumes, the *mechonah* had a cover which was arched like a dome, and had a neck in the centre into which the basin was inserted by its lower rim, the shoulder-pieces, supposing that they were cast upon the inner borders of the chest, would not be *below the basin*, but simply below the corners of the lid of the chest, so that they would stand in no direct

relation whatever to the basin. We must therefore give the preference to the rendering, which is grammatically the most natural one, "and its feet had shoulder-pieces," and understand the words as signifying that from the feet, which descended of course from the four corner borders of the chest down to the axles, there ascended shoulder-pieces, which ran along the outside of the chest and reached to the lower part of the basin which was upon the lid of the chest, and as shoulders either supported or helped to support it. According to ver. 34, these shoulder-pieces were so cast upon the four corners of the chest, that they sprang out of it as it were. מַעֲבָר אִישׁ לְאִתּוֹ, opposite to each one were wreaths. Where these festoons were attached, the various senses in which מַעֲבָר is used prevent our deciding with certainty. At any rate, we must reject the alteration proposed by Thenius, of לְאִתּוֹ into לְאִתּוֹת, for the simple reason that אִישׁ לְאִתּוֹ in the sense of "one to the other" would not be Hebraic.—In ver. 31 we have a description of the upper portion of the *mechonah*, which formed the pedestal for the basin, and therewith an explanation of מִתְּחַת לְבֵיט. "And the mouth of it (the basin) was within the crown and upwards with a cubit, and the mouth of it (the crown) was rounded, stand-work, a cubit and a half (wide), and on its mouth also there was engraved work, and its panels were square, not round." To understand this verse, we must observe that, according to ver. 35, the *mechonah* chest was provided at the top with a dome-shaped covering, in the centre of which there was an elevation resembling the capital of a pillar (הַכֶּתֶרֶת, the crown), supporting the basin, which was inserted into it by its lower rim. The suffix in פִּיהוּ (its mouth) is supposed by Thenius to refer to the *mechonah* chest, and he questions the allusion to the basin, on the ground that this was so flat that a *mouth*-like opening could not possibly be spoken of, and the basins were never within the *mechonah*. But however correct these two remarks may be in themselves, they by no means demonstrate the necessity of taking פִּיהוּ as referring to the *mechonah* chest. For פֶּה (the mouth) is not necessarily to be understood as denoting a mouth-like opening to the basin; but just as פִּי רֹאשׁ in Ex. xxviii. 32 signifies the opening of the clothes for the head, *i.e.* for putting the head through when putting on the clothes, so may פִּיהוּ (its mouth) be the opening or mouth for the basin, *i.e.* the opening into which the basin fitted and was emptied, the water in the



basin being let off into the *mechonah* chest through the head-shaped neck by means of a tap or plug. The mouth was really the lower or contracted portion of the shell-shaped basin, which was about a cubit in height within the neck and upwards, that is to say, in all, inasmuch as it went partly into the neck and rose in part above it. The פִּיָּה (the mouth thereof) which follows is the (upper) opening of the crown-like neck of the lid of the *mechonah*. This was rounded, מַעֲשֵׂה-כֵן, stand-work, *i.e.*, according to De Wette's correct paraphrase, formed after the style of the foot of a pillar, a cubit and a half in diameter. "And also upon the mouth of it (the *mechonah*) was carved work." The זַם (also) refers to the fact that the sides of the *mechonah* were already ornamented with carving. מִסְגֵּרֵיהֶם, the panels of the crown-like neck (בְּתֵרָה) and its mouth (פִּיָּה) were square, like the panels of the sides of the *mechonah* chest. The fact that panels are spoken of in connection with this neck, may be explained on the assumption that with its height of one cubit and its circumference of almost five cubits (which follows from its having a diameter of a cubit and a half) it had stronger borders of brass to strengthen its bearing power, while between them it consisted of thinner plates, which are called fillings or panels.—In vers. 32, 33, the wheels are more minutely described. Every stool had four wheels under the panels, *i.e.* not against the sides of the chest, but under them, and יָדוֹת, hands or holders of the wheels, *i.e.* special contrivances for fastening the wheels to the axles, probably larger and more artistically worked than the linch-pins of ordinary carriages. These יָדוֹת were only required when the wheels turned upon the axles, and not when they were fastened to them. The height of the wheel was a cubit and a half, *i.e.* not half the height, but the whole. For with a half height of a cubit and a half the wheels would have been three cubits in diameter; and as the chest was only four cubits long, the hinder wheels and front wheels would almost have touched one another. The work (construction) of the wheels resembled that of (ordinary) carriage wheels; but everything about them (holders, felloes, spokes, and naves) was cast in brass.—In ver. 34 the description passes to the upper portion of the *mechonah*. "And he made four shoulder-pieces at the four corners of one (*i.e.* of every) stand; out of the stand were its shoulder-pieces." בְּתֵפּוֹת are the shoulder-pieces already mentioned in ver. 30, which were attached to the feet below, or

which terminated in feet. They were fastened to the corners in such a way that they seemed to come out of them; and they rose above the corners with a slight inclination (curve) towards the middle of the neck or capital, till they came under the outer rim of the basin which rested upon the capital of the lid of the chest, so as to support the basin, which turned considerably outwards at the top.—Ver. 35. “And on the upper part of the stand (the *mechonah* chest) half a cubit high was rounded all round, and on the upper part were its holders, and its panels out of it. ראש המכונה is the upper portion of the square chest. This was not flat, but rounded, *i.e.* arched, so that the arching rose half a cubit high above the height of the sides. This arched covering (or lid) had ידות, holders, and panels, which were therefore upon the upper part of the מכונה. The *holders* we take to be strong broad borders of brass, which gave the lid the necessary firmness; and the fillings or panels are the thinner plates of brass between them. They were both מִמֶּנָּה, “out of it,” out of the upper part of the *mechonah*, *i.e.* cast along with it. With regard to the decoration of it, ver. 36 states that “he cut out (engraved) upon the plates of its holders, and upon its panels, cherubim, lions, and palms, according to the empty space of every one, and wreaths all round.” We cannot determine anything further with regard to the distribution of these figures.—Vers. 37, 38. “Thus he made the ten stools of one kind of casting, measure, and form, and also ten brazen basins (בִּירוֹת), each holding forty baths, and each basin four cubits.” In a round vessel this can only be understood of the diameter, not of the height or depth, as the basins were set upon (עַל) the stands. בְּיֹד אֶחָד עַל-הַמְּכוֹנָה is dependent upon וַיַּעַשׂ: he made ten basins, . . . one basin upon a stand for the ten stands, *i.e.* one basin for each stand. If then the basins were a cubit in diameter at the top, and therefore their size corresponded almost exactly to the length and breadth of the stand, whilst the crown-like neck, into which they were inserted, was only a cubit and a half in diameter (ver. 31), their shape must have resembled that of wide-spreading shells. And the form thus given to them required the shoulder-pieces described in vers. 30 and 34 as supports beneath the outer rim of the basins, to prevent their upsetting when the carriage was wheeled about.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 39. And he put

<sup>1</sup> The description which Ewald has given of these stands in his *Geschichte*, iii. pp. 311, 312, and still more elaborately in an article in the *Göttingen*



the stands five on the right side of the house and five on the left; and the (brazen) sea he put upon the right side eastwards, opposite to the south. The right side is the south side, and the left the north side. Consequently the stands were not placed on the right and left, *i.e.* on each side of the altar of burnt-offering, but on each side of the house, *i.e.* of the temple-hall; while the brazen sea stood farther forward between the hall and the altar, only more towards the south, *i.e.* to the south-east of the hall and the south-west of the altar of burnt-offering. The basins upon the stands were for washing (according to 2 Chron. iv. 6), namely, "the work of the burnt-offering," that is to say, for cleansing the flesh and fat, which were to be consumed upon the altar of burnt-offering. By means of the stands on wheels, they could not only easily bring the water required near to the priests who were engaged in preparing the sacrifices, but could also let down the dirty water into the chest of the stand by means of a special contrivance introduced for the purpose, and afterwards take it away. As the introduction of carriages for the basins arose from the necessities of the altar-service, so the preparation of ten such stands, and the size of the basins, was occasioned by the greater extension of the sacrificial worship, in which it often happened that a considerable number of sacrifices had to be made ready for the altar at the same time. The artistic work of these stands and their decoration with figures were intended to show that these vessels were set apart for the service of the sanctuary. The emblems are to some extent the same as those on the walls of the sanctuary, *viz.* cherubim, palms, and flowers, which had therefore naturally the same meaning here as they had there; the only difference being that they were executed there in gold, whereas here they were in brass, to correspond to the character of the court. Moreover, there were also figures of lions and oxen, pointing no doubt to the royal and priestly characters, which were combined,

*Gelehrten Nachr.* 1859, pp. 131-146, is not only obscure, but almost entirely erroneous, since he proposes in the most arbitrary way to make several alterations in the biblical text, on the assumption that the Solomonian stands were constructed just like the small bronze four-wheeled kettle-carriages (hardly a foot in size) which have been discovered in Mecklenburg, Steyermark, and other places of Europe. See on this subject G. C. F. Lisch, "über die ehernen Wagenbecken der Bronzezeit," in the *Jahrb. des Vereins f. Mecklenb. Geschichte*, ix. pp. 373, 374, where a sketch of a small carriage of this kind is given.

according to Ex. xix. 6, in the nation worshipping the Lord in this place.

Vers. 40–51. *Summary enumeration of the other vessels of the temple.*—In ver. 40 the brazen vessels of the court are given. In vers. 41–47 the several portions of the brazen pillars, the stands and basins, the brazen sea and the smaller vessels of brass, are mentioned once more, together with notices of the nature, casting, and quantity of the metal used for making them. And in vers. 48–50 we have the golden vessels of the Holy Place. This section agrees almost word for word with 2 Chron. iv. 11–v. 1, where, moreover, not only is the arrangement observed in the previous description of the temple-building a different one, but the making of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, of the golden candlesticks, and of the table of shew-bread, and the arrangement of the great court (2 Chron. iv. 7–9) are also described, to which there is no allusion whatever in the account before us; so that these notices in the Chronicles fill up an actual gap in the description of the building of the temple which is given here.—Ver. 40*a*. *The smaller brazen vessels.*—Hiram made the pots, shovels, and bowls. הַפִּירוֹת is a slip of the pen for הַפִּירוֹת, pots, as we may see by comparing it with ver. 45 and the parallel passages 2 Chron. iv. 11 and 2 Kings xxv. 14. The pots were used for carrying away the ashes; הַזֵּעִים, the shovels, for clearing the ashes from the altar; הַמְּזִיקוֹת were the bowls used for catching the blood, when the sacrificial animals were slaughtered: compare Ex. xxvii. 3 and Num. iv. 14, where forks and fire-basins or coal-pans are also mentioned.—Ver. 40*b* introduces the recapitulation of all the vessels made by Hiram. בֵּית יְהוָה, in the house of the Lord (cf. Ewald, § 300, *b*); in 2 Chron. iv. 11 more clearly, בְּבֵית יְיָ; we find it also in ver. 45, for which we have in 2 Chron. iv. 16 לְבֵית יְהוָה, for the house of Jehovah. The several objects enumerated in vers. 41–45 are accusatives governed by לַעֲשׂוֹת.—Vers. 41–44, the brazen pillars with the several portions of their capitals; see at vers. 15–22. The inappropriate expression עַל-פְּנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים (upon the face of the pillars) in ver. 42 is probably a mistake for עַל-שְׁנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים, “upon the two pillars,” for it could not properly be said of the capitals that they were upon the surface of the pillars.—Ver. 43. The ten stands and their basins: see at vers. 27–37; ver. 44, the brazen sea: *vid.* vers. 23–26; lastly, ver. 45, the pots, etc., as at ver. 40. The *Chethîb* הָאֵהָל is a



mistake for הָאֵלֶּה (*Keri*).<sup>1</sup> נְהַשֵּׁת מְמָרִם, of polished brass—accusative of the material governed by עָשָׂה.—Ver. 46. “In the Jordan valley he cast them—in thickened earth between Succoth and Zarthan,” where the ground, according to Burckhardt, *Syr.* ii. p. 593, is marly throughout. בְּמַעֲבֵה הָאֲדָמָה, “by thickening of the earth,” the forms being made in the ground by stamping together the clayey soil. *Succoth* was on the other side of the Jordan,—not, however, at the ford near Bethsean (Thenius), but on the south side of the Jabbok (see at Judg. viii. 5 and Gen. xxxiii. 17). *Zarthan* or *Zereda* was in the Jordan valley on this side, probably at *Kurn Sartabeh* (see at Judg. vii. 22 and Josh. iii. 16). The casting-place must have been on this side of the Jordan, as the (eastern) bank on the other side has scarcely any level ground at all. The circumstance that a place on the other side is mentioned in connection with one on this side, may be explained from the fact that the two places were obliquely opposite to one another, and in the valley on this side there was no large place in the neighbourhood above Zarthan which could be appropriately introduced to define the site of the casting-place.—Ver. 47. Solomon left all these vessels of excessive number unweighed. וַיֵּן does not mean he laid them down (= set them up: Movers), but he let them lie, *i.e.* unweighed, as the additional clause, “the weight of the brass was not ascertained,” clearly shows. This large quantity of brass, according to 1 Chron. xviii. 8, David had taken from the cities of Hadadezer, adding also the brass presented to him by Toi.—Vers. 48-50. *The golden vessels of the Holy Place* (cf. 2 Chron. iv. 19-22). The vessels enumerated here are divided, by the repetition of זָהָב קָנִיר in vers. 49 and 50, into two classes, which were made of fine gold; and to this a third class is added in ver. 50b which was made of gold of inferior purity. As זָהָב קָנִיר is governed in both instances by וַיַּעַשׂ as an accusative of the material, the זָהָב (gold) attached to the separate vessels must be taken as an adjective. “Solomon made all the vessels in the house of Jehovah (*i.e.* had them

<sup>1</sup> After וְאֵת כָּל-הַפְּלִים הָאֵלֶּה the LXX. have the interpolation, καὶ οἱ στῦλοι τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ὀκτώ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τοῦ οἴκου Κυρίου, which is proved to be apocryphal by the marvellous combination of the king's house and the house of God, though it is nevertheless regarded by Thenius as genuine, and as an interesting notice respecting certain pillars in the enclosure of the inner court of the temple, and in the king's palace!

made): the golden altar, and the golden table on which was the shew-bread, and the candlesticks . . . of costly gold (כָּנֹר: see at ch. vi. 20). *The house of Jehovah* is indeed here, as in ver. 40, the temple with its courts, and not merely the Holy Place, or the temple-house in the stricter sense; but it by no means follows from this that כָּל-הַכֵּלִים, "all the vessels," includes both the brazen vessels already enumerated and also the golden vessels mentioned afterwards. A decisive objection to our taking the כָּל (all) as referring to those already enumerated as well as those which follow, is to be found in the circumstance that the sentence commencing with וַיַּעַשׂ is only concluded with וְזֶה כָּנֹר in ver. 49. It is evident from this that כָּל-הַכֵּלִים is particularized in the several vessels enumerated from אֵת מִזְבֵּחַ onwards. These vessels no doubt belonged to the Holy Place or temple-house only; though this is not involved in the expression "the house of Jehovah," but is apparent from the context, or from the fact that all the vessels of the court have already been enumerated in vers. 40-46, and were made of brass, whereas the *golden* vessels follow here. That these were intended for the Holy Place is assumed as well known from the analogy of the tabernacle. אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָה merely affirms that the vessels mentioned afterwards belonged to the house of God, and were not prepared for the palace of Solomon or any other earthly purpose. We cannot infer from the expression "*Solomon made*" that the golden vessels were not made by Hiram the artist, as the brazen ones were (Thenius). Solomon is simply named as the builder of the temple, and the introduction of his name was primarily occasioned by ver. 47. The "golden altar" is the altar of incense in the Holy Place, which is called golden because it was overlaid with gold-plate; for, according to ch. vi. 20, its sides were covered with cedar wood, after the analogy of the golden altar in the tabernacle (Ex. xxx. 1-5). "And the table, upon which the shew-bread, of gold." זֶה כָּנֹר belongs to הַשֻּׁלְחָן, to which it stands in free subjection (*vid.* Ewald, § 287, *h*), signifying "the golden table." Instead of הַשֻּׁלְחָן we have הַשֻּׁלְחָנוֹת in 2 Chron. iv. 19 (the tables), because there it has already been stated in ver. 8 that ten tables were made, and put in the Holy Place. In our account that verse is omitted; and hence there is only a notice of *the* table upon which the loaves of shew-bread generally lay, just as in 2 Chron. xxix. 18, in which the chronicler does not contradict



himself, as Thenius fancies. The number ten, moreover, is required and proved to be correct in the case of the tables, by the occurrence of the same number in connection with the candlesticks. In no single passage of the Old Testament is it stated that there was only one table of shew-bread in the Holy Place of Solomon's temple.<sup>1</sup> The tables were certainly made of wood, like the Mosaic table of shew-bread, probably of cedar wood, and only overlaid with gold (see at Ex. xxv. 23-30). "And the candlesticks, five on the right and five on the left, before the back-room." These were also made in imitation of the Mosaic candlestick (see Ex. xxv. 31 sqq.), and were probably placed not near to the party wall in a straight line to the right and left of the door leading into the Most Holy Place, but along the two longer sides of the Holy Place; and the same with the tables, except that they stood nearer to the side walls with the candlesticks in front of them, so that the whole space might be lighted more brilliantly. The altar of burnt-offering, on the contrary, stood in front of and very near to the entrance into the Most Holy Place (see at ch. vi. 20).—In the following clause (vers. 49*b* and 50*a*) the ornaments of the candlesticks are mentioned first, and then the rest of the smaller golden vessels are enumerated. הַפֶּרֶחַ, the flower-work, with which the candlesticks were ornamented (see Ex. xxv. 33). The word is evidently used collectively here, so that the נְבִיעִים mentioned along with them in the book of Exodus (*l.c.*) are included. הַנֵּירֹת, the lamps, which were placed upon the shaft and arms of the candlestick (Ex. xxv. 37). הַמִּלְקָחִים, the snuffers (Ex. xxv. 38). כַּפּוֹת, basins in Ex. xii. 22, here probably deep dishes (*Schalen*). מִזְמוֹרוֹת, knives. מִזְרוֹקוֹת, bowls (*Schalen*) or cans with spouts for the wine for the libations; according to 2 Chron. iv. 8, there were a hundred of these made. כַּפּוֹת, small flat vessels,

<sup>1</sup> Nothing can be learned from 2 Chron. xxix. 18 concerning the number of the vessels in the Holy Place. If we were to conclude from this passage that there were no more vessels in the Holy Place than are mentioned there, we should also have to assume, if we would not fall into a most unscientific inconsistency, that there was neither a candlestick nor a golden altar of incense in the Holy Place. The correct meaning of this passage may be gathered from the words of king Abiam in 2 Chron. xiii. 11: "We lay the shew-bread upon *the* pure table, and light *the* golden candlestick every evening;" from which it is obvious that here and there only the table and the candlestick are mentioned, because usually only one table had shew-bread upon it, and only one candlestick was lighted.

probably for carrying the incense to the altar. מִחְתָּוֹת, extinguishers; see at Ex. xxv. 38.—Ver. 50*b*. The פִּתּוֹת were also of gold, possibly of inferior quality. These were either the *hinges* of the doors, or more probably the sockets, in which the pegs of the doors turned. They were provided for the doors of the inner temple, viz. the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. We must supply *Váv* before לְדִלְתֵי.

All the vessels mentioned in vers. 48 and 49 belonged to the Holy Place of the temple, and were the same as those in the tabernacle; so that the remarks made in the Comm. on Ex. xxv. 30 and 39, and xxx. 1–10, as to their purpose and signification, apply to them as well. Only the number of the tables and candlesticks was ten times greater. If a multiplication of the number of these two vessels appeared appropriate on account of the increase in the size of the room, the number was fixed at ten, to express the idea of completeness by that number. No new vessel was made for the Most Holy Place, because the Mosaic ark of the covenant was placed therein (ch. viii. 4: compare the remarks on this at Ex. xxv. 10–22).—The account of the vessels of the temple is brought to a close in ver. 51: “So was ended all the work that king Solomon made in the house of the Lord; and Solomon brought all that was consecrated by his father, (namely) the silver and the gold (which were not wrought), and the vessels he placed in the treasuries of the house of Jehovah.” As so much gold and brass had already been expended upon the building, it might appear strange that Solomon should not have used up all the treasures collected by his father, but should still be able to bring a large portion of it into the treasuries of the temple. But according to 1 Chron. xxii. 14, 16, and xxix. 2 sqq., David had collected together an almost incalculable amount of gold, silver, and brass, and had also added his own private treasure and the freewill offerings of the leading men of the nation (1 Chron. xxix. 7–9). Solomon was also able to devote to the building of the temple a considerable portion of his own very large revenues (cf. ch. x. 14), so that a respectable remnant might still be left of the treasure of the sanctuary, which was not first established by David, but had been commenced by Samuel and Saul, and in which David’s generals, Joab and others, had deposited a portion of the gold and silver that they had taken as booty (1 Chron. xxvi. 20–28). For it is evident that not a little had found its



way into this treasure through the successful wars of David, from the fact that golden shields were taken from the generals of Hadadezer, and that these were consecrated to the Lord along with the silver, golden, and brazen vessels offered as gifts of homage by king Toi of Hamath, in addition to the gold and silver which David had consecrated from the defeated Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Amalekites (2 Sam. viii. 7, 11, 12; 1 Chron. xviii. 7, 10, 11).<sup>1</sup>

#### CHAP. VIII. DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

This solemn transaction consisted of three parts, and the chapter arranges itself in three sections accordingly: viz. (a) the conveyance of the ark and the tabernacle, together with its vessels, into the temple, with the words spoken by Solomon on the occasion (vers. 1-21); (b) Solomon's dedicatory prayer (vers. 22-53); (c) the blessing of the congregation, and the offering of sacrifice and observance of a feast (vers. 54-66).—The parallel account to this in 2 Chron. v. 2-vii. 10, in addition to certain minor alterations of words and constructions, intro-

<sup>1</sup> The amazing extent to which this booty may possibly have reached, may be inferred from the accounts we have concerning the quantity of the precious metals in Syria in the Macedonian age. In the *gaza regia* of Damascus, Alexander found 2600 talents of gold and 600 talents of uncoined silver (Curt. iii. 13, 16, cf. Arrian, ii. 11, 10). In the temple of Jupiter at Antioch there was a statue of this god of solid silver fifteen cubits high (Justin, xxxix. 2, 5. 6); and in the temple at Hierapolis there was also a golden statue (Lucian, *de Dea Syr.* § 31). According to Appian (*Parth.* 28, ed. Schweigh.), this temple was so full of wealth, that Crassus spent several days in weighing the vessels of silver and gold. And from the unanimous testimony of the ancients, the treasures of the palaces and temples of Asia in the earlier times were greater still. Of the many accounts which Bähr (*Symbolik*, i. p. 258 sqq.) and Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 40 sqq.) have collected together on this subject, we will mention only a few here, the credibility of which cannot be disputed. According to Varro (in Plin. xxxiii. 15), Cyrus had taken 34,000 pounds of gold as booty after the conquest of Asia, beside the gold wrought into vessels and ornaments, and 500,000 talents of silver. In Susa, Alexander took 40,000, or, according to other accounts, 50,000, talents from the royal treasury; or, as it is still more definitely stated, 40,000 talents of uncoined gold and silver, and 9000 talents of coined dariks. Alexander had these brought to Ecbatana, where he accumulated 180,000 talents. Antigonus afterwards found in Susa 15,000 talents more in vessels and wrought gold and silver. In Persepolis, Alexander took 120,000 talents, and in Pasargada 6000 talents. For the proofs, see Movers, pp. 42, 43.

duced for the most part merely for the sake of elucidation, contains here and there, and more especially towards the end, a few deviations of greater extent, partly omissions and partly additions. But in other respects it agrees almost word for word with our account.

With regard to the time of the dedication, it is merely stated in ver. 2 that the heads of the nation assembled at Jerusalem to this feast in the seventh month. The year in which this took place is not given. But as the building of the temple was finished, according to ch. vi. 38, in the *eighth* month of the eleventh year of Solomon's reign, the dedication which followed in the *seventh* month cannot have taken place in the same year as the completion of the building. Ewald's opinion, that Solomon dedicated the building a month before it was finished, is not only extremely improbable in itself, but is directly at variance with ch. vii. 51. If we add to this, that according to ch. ix. 1-10 it was not till after the lapse of twenty years, during which he had built the two houses, the temple, and his palace, that the Lord appeared to Solomon at the dedication of the temple and promised to answer his prayer, we must decide in favour of the view held by Thenius, that the dedication of the temple did not take place till twenty years after the building of it was begun, or thirteen years after it was finished, and when Solomon had also completed the building of the palace, which occupied thirteen years, as the LXX. have indicated at the commencement of ch. viii. 1 by the interpolation of the words, καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς συνετέλεσε Σαλωμών τοῦ οἰκοδομῆσαι τὸν οἶκον Κυρίου καὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ μετὰ εἴκοσι ἔτη.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 1-21. The FIRST ACT of the solemnities consisted (1) in the removal of the ark of the covenant into the Most Holy Place of the temple (vers. 1-11); and (2) in the words with which Solomon celebrated the entrance of the Lord into the new temple (vers. 12-21).—Vers. 1-11. *Removal of the ark of the covenant into the temple.*—This solemn transaction was founded entirely upon the solemnities with which the ark was conveyed in the time of David from the house of Obed-edom into the holy tent upon Zion (2 Sam vi. 12 sqq.; 1 Chron. xv.

<sup>1</sup> From the whole character of the Alexandrian version, there can be no doubt that these words have been transferred by the LXX. from ch. ix. 1, and have not dropped out of the Hebrew text, as Thenius supposes.



2 sqq.). Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses (נְשִׂאֵי הָאָבוֹת, contracted from נְשִׂאֵי בֵּית הָאָבוֹת) of the Israelites, as representatives of the whole congregation, to himself at Jerusalem, to bring the ark of the covenant out of the city of David, *i.e.* from Mount Zion (see the Comm. on 2 Sam. vi. 16, 17), into the temple which he had built upon Moriah. (On the use of the contracted form of the imperfect יִקְהַל after אָז, see Ewald, § 233, *b*).—Ver. 2. Accordingly “all the men of Israel (*i.e.* the heads of the tribes and families mentioned in ver. 1) assembled together to the king in the month Ethanim, *i.e.* the seventh month, at the feast.” Gesenius explains the name הָאֶתָנִים (in 55 codd. הָאֶתָנִים) as meaning “month of the flowing brooks,” after אֶתָּן in Prov. xiii. 15; Böttcher, on the other hand, supposes it to denote the equinox. But apart from other grounds, the plural by no means favours this. Nor does the seventh month answer to the period between the middle of our September and the middle of October, as is supposed by Thenius, who founds upon this supposition the explanation already rejected by Böttcher, *viz.* “month of gifts;” but it corresponds to the period between the new moon of October and the new moon of November, during which the rainy season commences in Palestine (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 96 sqq.), so that this month may very well have received its name from the constant flowing of the brooks. The explanation, “that is the seventh month,” is added, however (here as in ch. vi. 1, 38), not because the arrangement of the months was a different one before the captivity (Thenius), but because different names came into use for the months during the captivity. בִּפְתִּי is construed with the article: “because the feast intended was one that was well known, and had already been kept for a long time (*viz.* the feast of tabernacles).” The article overthrows the explanation given by Thenius, who supposes that the reference is to the festivities connected with the dedication of the temple itself.—Vers. 3, 4. After the arrival of all the elders (*i.e.* of the representatives of the nation, more particularly described in ver. 1), the priests carried the ark and brought it up (*sc.* into the temple), with the tabernacle and all the holy vessels in it. The expression וַיַּעֲלוּ אֹתָם, which follows, introduces as a supplementary notice, according to the general diffuseness of the early Hebrew style of narrative, the more precise statement that the priests and Levites brought up these

sacred vessels. **אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד** is not the tent erected for the ark of the covenant upon Zion, which can be proved to have been never so designated, and which is expressly distinguished from the former in 2 Chron. i. 4 as compared with ver. 3, but is the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon in front of which Solomon had offered sacrifice (ch. iii. 4). The tabernacle with the vessels in it, to which, however, the ark of the covenant, that had long been separated from it, did not belong, was probably preserved as a sacred relic in the rooms above the Most Holy Place. The ark of the covenant was carried by priests on all solemn occasions, according to the spirit of the law, which enjoined, in Num. iii. 31 and iv. 5 sqq., that the ark of the covenant and the rest of the sacred vessels should be carried by the Levites, after the priests had carefully wrapped them up; and the Levites were prohibited from directly touching them, on pain of death. When, therefore, the ark of the covenant was carried in solemn procession, as in the case before us, probably uncovered, this could only be done by the priests, more especially as the Levites were not allowed to enter the Most Holy Place. Consequently, by the statement in ver. 3b, that the priests and Levites carried *them* (**אֹתָם**), viz. the objects mentioned before, we are to understand that the ark of the covenant was carried into the temple by the priests, and the tabernacle with its vessels by the Levites.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 5. “And king Solomon and the whole congregation, that had gathered round him, were with him before the ark sacrificing sheep and oxen in innumerable multitude.” This took place while the ark of the covenant was carried up, no doubt when it was brought into the court of the temple, and was set down there for a time either within or in front of the hall. Then was this magnificent sacrifice “offered” there “in front of the ark” (**לִפְנֵי הָאֹרֶן**).—Ver. 6. After this sacrificing was ended, the priests carried the ark to its place, into the back-room of the house, into the Most Holy under the wings of the cherubim (already described in ch.

<sup>1</sup> Instead of **כֹּהֲנִים** in ver. 3, we have **הַלְוִיִּם** in 2 Chron. v. 4; and instead of **הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם** in ver. 4, we have **הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם**, “the Levitical priests.” These variations are to be attributed to inexactness in expression. For it is obvious that Thenius is wrong in his notion that the chronicler mentioned the Levites instead of the priests, from the simple fact that he states in ver. 7 that “the priests carried the ark,” etc., in exact agreement with our account.



vi. 23 sqq.). The latter statement is explained in ver. 7. "For the cherubim were spreading out wings towards the place of the ark, and so covered (lit. threw a shade) over the ark and over its poles from above." If the outspread wings of the great cherubic figures threw a shade not only over the ark of the covenant, but also over its poles, the ark was probably so placed that the poles ran from north to south, and not from east to west, as they are sketched in my *Archäologie*.—Ver. 8. "And the poles were long, and there were seen their heads (*i.e.* they were so long that their heads were seen) from the Holy Place before the hinder room; but on the outside (outside the Holy Place, say in the porch) they were not seen." יָאֲרָכֻ cannot be rendered: they had lengthened the poles, from which Kimchi and others have inferred that they had made new and longer carrying-poles, since the form of the tense in this connection cannot be the pluperfect, and in that case, moreover, the object would be indicated by אֵת as in ch. iii. 14; but הָאֲרָיָה is used intransitively, "to be long," lit. to show length, as in Ex. xx. 12, Deut. v. 16, etc. The remark to the effect that the poles were visible, indicates that the precept of the law in Ex. xxv. 15, according to which the poles were to be left in the ark, was observed in Solomon's temple also. Any one could convince himself of this, for the poles were there "to this day." The author of our books has retained this chronological allusion as he found it in his original sources; for when he composed his work, the temple was no longer standing. It is impossible, however, to ascertain from this statement how the heads of the poles could be seen in the Holy Place,—whether from the fact that they reached the curtain and formed elevations therein, if the poles ran from front to back; or whether, if, as is more probable, they ran from south to north, the front heads were to be seen, simply when the curtain was drawn back.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 9. "There was nothing in the ark but the two tables of stone, which Moses had put there at Horeb, when Jehovah concluded the covenant with Israel." The intention of this remark is

<sup>1</sup> The proof which Thenius has endeavoured to give by means of a drawing of the correctness of the latter view, is founded upon untenable assumptions (see Böttcher, *Ährenl.* ii. p. 69). It by no means follows from the expression עַל-פְּנֵי דְבַיִר that the heads of the poles were visible as far off as the door of the Holy Place, but simply that they could be seen in the Holy Place, though not outside.

also simply to show that the law, which enjoined that the ark should merely preserve the stone tables of the covenant (Ex. xxv. 16, xl. 20), had not been departed from in the lapse of time. **אֲשֶׁר** before **כִּי** is not a pronoun, but a conjunction: when, from the time that, as in Deut. xi. 6, etc. **כִּי** without **בְּרִית**, signifying the conclusion of a covenant, as in 1 Sam. xx. 16, xxii. 8, etc. *Horeb*, the general name for the place where the law was given, instead of the more definite name *Sinai*, as in Deuteronomy (see the Comm. on Ex. xix. 1, 2).<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 10, 11. At the dedication of the tabernacle the glory of Jehovah in the cloud filled the sanctuary, so that Moses could not enter (Ex. xl. 34, 35); and so was it now. When the priests came out of the sanctuary, after putting the ark of the covenant in its place, the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not stand to minister. The signification of this fact was the same on both occasions. The cloud, as the visible symbol of the gracious presence of God, filled the temple, as a sign that Jehovah the covenant-God had entered into it, and had chosen it as the scene of His gracious manifestation in Israel. By the inability of the priests to stand, we are not to understand that the cloud drove them away; for it was not till the priests had come out that it filled the temple. It simply means that they could not remain in the Holy Place to perform service, say to offer an incense-offering upon the altar to consecrate it, just as sacrifices were offered upon the altar of burnt-offering after the dedicatory prayer (vers. 62, 63).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The statement in Heb. ix. 4, to the effect that the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were also to be found in the ark, which is at variance with this verse, and which the earlier commentators endeavoured to bring into harmony with it by forced methods of different kinds, simply rests upon an erroneous interpretation of **לְפָנֵי הָעֵדוּת** in Ex. xvi. 33, 34, and Num. xvii. 25, which had become traditional among the Jews; since this merely affirms that the objects mentioned had been deposited in front of the testimony, *i.e.* in front of the ark which contained the testimony, and not within it, as the Jews supposed.—Still less are De Wette and others warranted in deducing from this verse an argument against the existence of the Mosaic book of the law in the time of Solomon, inasmuch as, according to the precept in Deut. xxxi. 26, the book of the law was not to be kept *in* the ark, but by the side of it, or near it.

<sup>2</sup> Bertheau's opinion (on 2 Chron. v. 14), that the priests could not remain in the hall and in front of it on account of the cloud, namely, "the cloud of smoke, which, ascending from the sacrifices burned upon the altar of burnt-offering, concealed the glory of the Lord," is decidedly erroneous. For the



The glory of the Lord, which is like a consuming fire (Ex. xxiv. 17 ; Deut. iv. 24, ix. 3), before which unholy man cannot stand, manifested itself in the cloud. This marvellous manifestation of the glory of God took place only at the dedication ; after that the cloud was only visible in the Most Holy Place on the great day of atonement, when the high priest entered it. —The Chronicles contain a long account at this place of the playing and singing of the Levites at these solemnities (*vid.* 2 Chron. v. 12-14).

Vers. 12-21. *Solomon extols this marvellous proof of the favour of the Lord.*—Ver. 12. Then spake Solomon, “Jehovah hath spoken to dwell in the darkness.” “Solomon saw that the temple was filled with a cloud, and remembered that God had been pleased to appear in a cloud in the tent of Moses also. Hence he assuredly believed that God was in this cloud also, and that, as formerly He had filled the tabernacle, so He would now fill the temple and dwell therein” (Seb. Schmidt). אָמַר יְהוָה וְנִי, which Thenius still renders incorrectly, “the Lord intends to dwell in the darkness,” refers, as Rashi, C. a Lap., and others have seen, to the utterances of God in the Pentateuch concerning the manifestation of His gracious presence among His people, not merely to Lev. xvi. 2 (I will appear in the cloud), but also to Ex. xix. 9, where the Lord said to Moses, “I come to thee בְּעָנַב הָעָנָן,” and still more to Ex. xx. 21 and Deut. iv. 11, v. 19, according to which God came down upon Sinai בְּעַרְפָּל. Solomon took the word עַרְפָּל from these passages. That he meant by this the black, dark cloud which filled the temple, is perfectly obvious from the combination הָעָנָן וְהָעַרְפָּל in Deut. v. 19 and iv. 11.<sup>1</sup> Solomon saw this word of Jehovah realized in

cloud which hindered the priests from performing the service was, according to the distinct words of the text, the cloud which filled the house ; and the explanatory clause, “for the glory of the Lord filled the house of Jehovah,” indicates in the most unmistakeable terms that it was the vehicle of the glory of God, and therefore was not a cloud of smoke formed by the burning sacrifices, but the cloud in which God manifested His invisible being to His people,—the very same cloud in which Jehovah was to appear above the Cappareth, when the high priest entered the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement, so that he was commanded not to enter it at all times, and, when he entered, to cover the Cappareth with the cloud of the burning incense (Lev. xvi. 2, 13).

<sup>1</sup> Thenius, however, has built up all kinds of untenable conjectures as to alterations of the text, upon the erroneous assumption that עָנָן means the

the filling of the temple with the cloud, and learned therefrom that the Lord would dwell in this temple. Hence, being firmly convinced of the presence of Jehovah in the cloud which filled the sanctuary, he adds in ver. 13: "I have built Thee a house to dwell in, a place for Thy seat for ever." We are not to understand עֲלָיִים as signifying that Solomon believed that the temple built by him would stand for ever; but it is to be explained partly from the contrast to the previous abode of God in the tabernacle, which from the very nature of the case could only be a temporary one, inasmuch as a tent, such as the tabernacle was, is not only a moveable and provisional dwelling, but also a very perishable one, and partly from the promise given to David in 2 Sam vii. 14-16, that the Lord would establish the throne of his kingdom for his seed for ever. This promise involved the eternal duration of the gracious connection between God and Israel, which was embodied in the dwelling of God in the temple. This connection, from its very nature, was an eternal one; even if the earthly form, from which Solomon at that moment abstracted himself, was temporal and perishable.—Solomon had spoken these words with his face turned to the Most Holy Place. He then (ver. 14) turned his face to the congregation, which was standing in the court, and blessed it. The word "blessed" (יְבָרַךְ) denotes the wish for a blessing with which the king greeted the assembled congregation, and introduced the praise of God which follows.—In vers. 15-21 he praises the Lord for having now fulfilled with His hand what He spake with His mouth to his father David (2 Sam. vii.).—Ver. 16. The promise of God, to choose Jerusalem as the place for the temple and David as prince, is taken freely from 2 Sam. vii. 7, 8. In 2 Chron. vi. 6, before "I chose David," we find "and I chose Jerusalem, that my name might be there;" so that the affirmation answers more precisely to the preceding negation, whereas in the account before us this middle term is omitted.—Vers. 17-19. David's intention to build the temple, and the answer of God that his son was to execute this work, are so far copied from 2 Sam. vii. 2, 12, 13, that God approves the intention of David as such. הֵטִיבָהּ, "Thou didst well that it was in thy mind."—Vers. 20, 21. light and radiant cloud, and cannot be synonymous with עָרָפֶל. Böttcher adopts the same opinion, without taking any notice of the striking remarks of Bertheau on 2 Chron. v. 14.



"And Jehovah has set up His word." וַיִּקֶם יְהוָה supplies the explanation of כָּלָא בְיָדוֹ (hath fulfilled with his hand) in ver. 15. God had caused Solomon to take possession of the throne of David; and Solomon had built the temple and prepared a place there for the ark of the covenant. The ark is thereby declared to be the kernel and star of the temple, because it was the throne of the glory of God.

Vers. 22-53. SECOND ACT of the feast of dedication: *Solomon's dedicatory prayer* (cf. 2 Chron. vi. 12-42).—Ver. 22. "Then Solomon stood before the altar of Jehovah in front of all the assembly of Israel, and stretched out his hands towards heaven." It is evident from ver. 54 that Solomon uttered the prayer which follows upon his knees. The Chronicles contain the same account as we have here, with this addition, that it is said to have taken place on a "scaffold," or kind of pulpit (בֵּינִי) specially erected for the purpose.<sup>1</sup> The altar, to the front of which Solomon went, was the altar of burnt-offering in the court, where the congregation was gathered together. The expression נָגַד יְהוָה כָּל-קֶהֱל יִשְׂרָאֵל favours the idea that Solomon offered the prayer upon his knees with his face turned towards the congregation, and not with his back to the people and his face turned towards the temple, as Thenius supposes.—The substance of the prayer is closely connected with the prayer of Moses, especially with the blessings and curses therein (*vid.* Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.). Commencing with the praise of God, who "keepeth covenant and truth" towards His servants, and has thus far performed to His servant David the promise that He gave him (vers. 23, 24), Solomon entreats the Lord still further to fulfil this promise of His (vers. 25, 26), and to keep His eyes constantly open over the temple, to hearken to the prayers of His people, and to avert the curse threatened against sinners from all who shall call upon Him in this temple (vers. 27-53).—Vers. 23, 24. By granting the blessing promised to His people, the Lord has

<sup>1</sup> Böttcher is right in his assertion, that the opinion expressed by Thenius and Cappellus, that this passage in the Chronicles has been dropped out of our text through a copyist's oversight, is a very improbable one; although the reasons he assigns are for the most part untenable. The omission may be explained in a very simple manner, from the fact that the introduction of this circumstance had no bearing upon the design or contents of the dedicatory prayer.

hitherto proved Himself to be the true and only God in heaven and on earth, who keepeth covenant and mercy with those who walk before Him with all their heart. This acknowledgment produces the requisite confidence for offering the prayer which is sure of an answer (Matt. xxi. 22; Mark xi. 24; Jas. i. 6). For *אֵין-כְּמוֹד אֵל*, compare Ex. xv. 11 with Deut. iv. 39; 2 Sam. vii. 22, xxii. 32; Ps. lxxxvi. 8. "Who keepeth covenant and mercy," *verbatim* the same as in Deut. vii. 9. The promise given to His servant David (2 Sam. vii.), the fulfilment of which the commencement now lay before their eyes (cf. vers. 20, 21), was an emanation from the covenant faithfulness of God. "As it is this day," as in ch. iii. 6.—Ver. 25. The expression "and now" (*וְעַתָּה*) introduces the prayer for the further fulfilment of the promise, never to allow a successor upon the throne to be wanting to David, in the same conditional form in which David had uttered the hope in ch. ii. 4, and in which the Lord had renewed the promise to Solomon during the building of the temple (ch. vi. 12, 13). In *מִלְפָּנַי יָשֹׁב עַל-כִּפָּא*, instead of *מִעַל כִּפָּא* in ch. ii. 4, the divine rejection is more distinctly indicated.—Ver. 26 is not merely a repetition of the prayer in ver. 25, as Thenius supposes, but forms the introduction to the prayers which follow for the hearing of all the prayers presented before the Lord in the temple. The words, "let Thy words be verified, which Thou spakest unto Thy servant David," contain something more than a prayer for the continual preservation of the descendants of David upon the throne, for the fulfilment of which Solomon prayed in ver. 25. They refer to the whole of the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12–16. The plural *יְבָרִיךְ* (*Chethîb*) points back to *כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים* in 2 Sam. vii. 17, and is not to be altered into the singular after the *Keri*. The singular *יֵאָמֶן* is used as it frequently is with the subject in the plural, when the verb precedes (cf. Ewald, § 316, α, 1). Solomon has here in mind one particular point in the promise, viz. that God would not withdraw His mercy from the seed of David, even when it sinned. This is evident from what follows, where he mentions simply cases of transgression, and prays that they may be forgiven.—Vers. 26–28 sqq. are closely connected in this sense: keep Thy words that were spoken to David; for although this temple cannot hold Thine infinite divine nature, I know that Thou wilt have respect to the prayer of Thy servant, to keep Thine eyes open over this temple, to hear every prayer which



Thy people shall bring before Thee therein. וּפָנִית in ver. 28 continues the optative וְאָמֵן נָא in ver. 26 ; and ver. 27 contains an intermediate thought, with which Solomon meets certain contracted ideas of the gracious presence of God in the temple. כִּי (ver. 27) signifies neither but, nevertheless, *atqui* (Böttcher), nor “as” (Thenius, Bertheau) ; and the assertion that ver. 27 is the commencement of a new section is overthrown by the inadmissible rendering of וּפָנִית, “but Thou turnest Thyself” (Thenius).—With the words, “Should God really dwell upon the earth ! behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens (*i.e.* the heavens in their widest extent, cf. Deut. x. 14) cannot contain Thee, to say nothing (וְאֵף כִּי ; cf. Ewald, § 354, *c*) of this house which I have built,” in which the infinitude of God and His exaltation above the world are expressed as clearly and forcibly as possible, Solomon does not intend to guard against the delusion that God really dwells in temples (J. D. Mich.), but simply to meet the erroneous idea that He dwells in the temple as men dwell in a house, namely, shut up within it, and not also outside and above it,—a delusion which sometimes forced its way into the unspiritual nation, but which was always attacked by the prophets (cf. Mic. iii. 11 ; Jer. vii. 4, etc.). For it is evident that Solomon did combine with his clear perception of the infinite exaltation of God a firm belief in His real presence in the temple, and did not do homage to the abstract idealism of the rationalists, not merely from his declaration in vers. 12 sqq. that he had built this temple as a dwelling-place for God, but also from the substance of all the following prayers, and primarily from the general prayer in vers. 28 and 29, that God would take this temple under His special protection, and hearken to every prayer directed towards it. The distinction between תְּפִלָּה, תַּחֲנֻנָּה, and רִנָּה is the following : תְּפִלָּה denotes prayer in general, praise, supplication, and thanksgiving ; תַּחֲנֻנָּה, supplication or entreaty, prayer for help and mercy ; and רִנָּה, jubilation, prayer as the joyous utterance of praise and thanksgiving.—Ver. 29. “That Thine eyes may be open upon this house night and day.” אֶל־הַבַּיִת, *speciali quadam providentia in hanc domum directi* (Mich.). The following clause, “upon the place of which Thou hast said, My name shall be there” (namely, 2 Sam. vii. 13, *implicite*), contains within itself the ground upon which the prayer rests. Because the name of God will be in the temple, *i.e.* because God will mani-

fest His gracious presence there, He will also keep His eyes open upon it, so as to hear the prayer of Solomon directed towards it. אֶל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה (toward this place): because Solomon also was praying in the court towards the temple.—In ver. 30, “and hear the supplication of Thy servant and of Thy people Israel,” he begins by asking that those prayers may be heard which the king and people shall henceforth bring before God in the temple. וְשָׁמְעָה corresponds to וּפָנִיָּה in ver. 28, and is more precisely defined by the following וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁמַע (as for these prayers), Thou wilt hear them up to the place of Thine abode, to heaven. שָׁמַע אֵל is a pregnant expression: to hear the prayer, which ascends to heaven. In the Chronicles we find throughout the explanatory מִן. The last words, “hear and forgive,” must be left in their general form, and not limited by anything to be supplied. Nothing but forgiveness of sin can remove the curse by which transgression is followed.

This general prayer is then particularized from ver. 31 onwards by the introduction of *seven* special petitions for an answer in the different cases in which, in future, prayers may be offered to God in the temple. The *first* prayer (vers. 31, 32) has reference to the oaths sworn in the temple, the sanctity of which God is asked to protect. “If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him, to cause him to swear, and he come (and) swear before the altar in this house, then wilt Thou hear,” etc. אֵת אֲשֶׁר does not mean either “granted that” (Thenius) or “just *when*” (Ewald, § 533, *a*), although אֵם is used in the Chronicles, and we might render it freely “*when* ;” but אֵת is simply an accusative particle, serving to introduce the following clause, in the sense of “as for,” or “with regard to” (such a case as) that a man sins” (*vid.* Ewald, § 277, *a*). וּבָא אֵלָה cannot be taken as anything but an *asyndeton*. For if אֵלָה were a substantive, it would have the article (הָאֵלָה) provided it were the subject, and the verb would be written בָּאָהּ; and if it were the object, we should have בָּאֵלָה, as in Neh. x. 30 (*cf.* Ezek. xvii. 13). The prayer refers to the cases mentioned in Ex. xxii. 6–12 and Lev. v. 21–24, when property entrusted to any one had been lost or injured, or when a thing had been found and the finding was denied, or when an act of fraud had been committed; in which cases the law required not only compensation with the addition of a fifth of its value, but also a trespass-offering as an expiation of the sin committed by taking



a false oath. But as this punishment could only be inflicted when the guilty person afterwards confessed his guilt, many false oaths might have been sworn in the cases in question and have remained unpunished, so far as men were concerned. Solomon therefore prays that the Lord will hear every such oath that shall have been sworn before the altar, and work (עָשִׂיתָ), *i.e.* actively interpose, and judge His servants, to punish the guilty and justify the innocent. The construction תִּשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם (vers. 32, 34, 36, etc.) can be explained more simply from the adverbial use of the accusative (Ewald, § 300, *b*), than from אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם in ver. 30. תַּת הָרֶכֶב בְּרֹאשׁוֹ, to give (bring) his way upon his head, *i.e.* to cause the merited punishment to fall upon him (cf. Ezek. ix. 10, xi. 21, etc.). הָרָשָׁע רָשָׁע and הַצָּדִיק צָדִיק recall Deut. xxv. 2. For תַּת לוֹ בְּצַדִּיקוֹתָיו compare 2 Sam. xxii. 21, 25.—The following cases are all taken from Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii.

Vers. 33 and 34. The *second* petition,—“If Thy people Israel are smitten by the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and they turn to Thee and confess Thy name, . . . then hear . . . and bring them back into the land,”—refers to the threatenings in Lev. xxvi. 17 and Deut. xxviii. 25, where the nation is threatened with defeat and subjugation on the part of enemies, who shall invade the land, in which case prisoners of war are carried away into foreign lands, but the mass of the people remain in the land, so that they who are beaten can pray to the Lord in the temple, that He will forgive them their sin, save them out of the power of the enemy, and bring back the captives and fugitives into their fatherland.

Vers. 35 and 36. The *third* prayer refers to the remission of the punishment of drought threatened against the land, when the heaven is shut up, according to Lev. xxvi. 19, Deut. xi. 17, xxviii. 23. כִּי תַעֲנִים, because Thou humblest them (LXX., Vulg.); not “that Thou hearest them” (Chald. and others). כִּי תוֹרֵם, because Thou teachest them the good way. These words correspond to כִּי תַעֲנִים, and contain a motive for forgiveness. Because God teaches His people and seeks by means of chastisements to bring them back to the good way when they fail to keep His commandments, He must forgive when they recognise the punishment as a divine chastisement and come to Him with penitential prayer.

Vers. 37-40. The *fourth* prayer relates to the removal of other land-plagues: famine (Lev. xxvi. 19, 20, and 26; Deut. xxviii. 23); pestilence (Lev. xxvi. 25); blight and mildew

in the corn (Deut. xxviii. 22); locusts (הַסִּיל, devourer, is connected with אֶרְבֶּה without a copula,—in the Chronicles by *Váv*,—to depict the plague of locusts more vividly before their eyes after Deut. xxviii. 38); oppression by enemies in their own land; lastly, plagues and diseases of all kinds, such as are threatened against the rebellious in Lev. xxvi. 16 and Deut. xxviii. 59–61. יָצַר is not the imperfect *Kal* of צִיר (Ges., Dietr., Fürst, Olsh. *Gramm.* p. 524), but the imperfect *Hiphil* of הָצַר in Deut. xxviii. 52, as in Neh. ix. 27; and the difficult expression בְּאַרְצוֹ שְׁעָרָיו is probably to be altered into בְּאַרְצוֹ שׁ, whilst שְׁעָרָיו is either to be taken as a second object to יָצַר, as Luther supposes, or as in apposition to בְּאַרְצוֹ, in the land (in) his gates, as Bertheau assumes. The assertion of Thenius, that all the versions except the Vulgate are founded upon the reading בְּאַחַת עָרָיו, is incorrect. בִּי יְהוָה is omitted after בְּלִמְחָלָה, since Solomon dropped the construction with which he commenced, and therefore briefly summed up all the prayers, addressed to God under the various chastisements here named, in the expression בְּלִמְחָלָה בְּלִמְחָנָה, which is placed absolutely at the opening of ver. 38. אֲשֶׁר יֵדְעֵן וְגו' *i.e.* not *dolor animi quem quisque sentit* (Vatab., C. a Lap.), but the plague regarded as a blow falling upon the heart, in other words, as a chastisement inflicted upon him by God. In all these cases may God hear his prayer, and do and give to every one according to his way. אֲשֶׁר יֵדַע, “as Thou knowest his heart,” *i.e.* as is profitable for every one according to the state of his heart or his disposition. God can do this, because He knows the hearts of all men (cf. Jer. xvii. 10). The purpose assigned for all this hearing of prayer (ver. 40), viz. “that they may fear Thee,” etc., is the same as in Deut. iv. 10.

Vers. 41–43. The *fifth* prayer has reference to the hearing of the prayers of foreigners, who shall pray in the temple. Solomon assumes as certain that foreigners will come and worship before Jehovah in His temple; even Moses himself had allowed the foreigners living among the Israelites to offer sacrifice at the temple (Num. xv. 14 sqq.), and the great name and the arm of the Lord, that had manifested itself in deeds of omnipotence, had become known in the times of Moses to the surrounding nations (Ex. xv. 14, xviii. 1; Josh. v. 1), and the report of this had reached Balaam even in Mesopotamia (see the Comm. on Num. xxii.). אֵל הַנִּכְבֵּר does not mean “as for the



foreigners" (Thenius), for **לֹא** is never used in this sense; but it is to be connected with **הַשָּׁמַע** in ver. 43, as **שָׁמַע אֵל** frequently occurs (Bertheau).—Ver. 42 is a parenthesis inserted in explanation of **לִמְעַן שָׁמְךָ**: "for they will hear," etc. The strong hand and the outstretched arm are connected together as a standing expression for the wondrous manifestations of the divine omnipotence in the guidance of Israel, as in Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, etc. With **וְהַתְּפִלָּה** the **וּבָא מֵאֶרֶץ** in ver. 41 is resumed, and the main thought continued.—Ver. 43. The reason for the hearing of the prayers of foreigners is "that all nations may know Thy name to fear Thee," etc., as in Deut. xxviii. 10. An examination of this original passage, from which **בִּי שְׁמֶךָ נִקְרָא** 'עַל יְהוָה' is taken and transferred to the temple, shows that the common explanations of this phrase, viz. "that this house is called after Thy name," or "that Thy name is invoked over this temple (at its dedication)," are erroneous. The name of the Lord is always used in the Scriptures to denote the working of God among His people or in His kingdom (see at 2 Sam. vi. 2). The naming of this name over the nation, the temple, etc., presupposes the working of God within it, and denotes the confession and acknowledgment of that working. This is obvious from such passages as Jer. xiv. 9, where the expression "Thy name is called over us" is only a further explanation of the word "Thou art in the midst of us;" and from Isa. lxiii. 19, where "we are they over whom Thou hast not ruled from eternity" is equivalent to "over whom Thy name has not been called." The name of Jehovah will be named over the temple, when Jehovah manifests His gracious presence within it in such a manner, that the nations who pray towards it experience the working of the living God within His sanctuary. It is in this sense that it is stated in 2 Sam. vi. 2 that the name of Jehovah is named above the ark of the covenant (see the Comm. *in loc.*).—There are no cases on record of the worship of foreigners in connection with Solomon's temple, though there are in connection with the temple built after the captivity (*vid.* Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8, 5, that of Alexander the Great; xii. 2, 5 sqq., that of Ptolemaeus Philadelphus; and 2 Macc. iii. 2, 3, that of Seleucus).

Finally, in vers. 44-50 Solomon also asks, that when prayers are directed towards the temple by those who are far away both from Jerusalem and the temple, they may be heard. The *sixth* case, in vers. 44 and 45, is, if Israel should be engaged in war

with an enemy by the appointment of God; and the *seventh*, in vers. 46–50, is, if it should be carried away by enemies on account of its sins.<sup>1</sup> By the expression in ver. 44, “in the way which Thou sendest them,” the war is described as one undertaken by the direction of God, whether waged against an enemy who has invaded the land, or outside the land of Canaan for the chastisement of the heathen dwelling around them. “And shall pray *דָּרָךְ הָעִיר וְגו’* :” i.e. in the direction towards the chosen city and the temple, namely, in faith in the actual presence of the covenant God in the temple. *אֶל יְהוָה*, “to Jehovah,” instead of “to Thee,” is probably introduced for the sake of greater clearness. *וַעֲשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטָם*, and secure them justice (cf. Deut. x. 18, Ps. ix. 5, etc.).—Vers. 46 sqq. In the seventh prayer, viz. if Israel should be given up to its enemies on account of its sins and carried away into the land of the enemy, Solomon had the threat in Lev. xxvi. 33 and 44 in his eye, though he does not confine his prayer to the exile of the whole nation foretold in that passage and in Deut. xxviii. 45 sqq., 64 sqq., and xxx. 1–5, but extends it to every case of transportation to an enemy’s land. *וַהֲשִׁיבוּ אֶל לִבָּם*, “and they take it to heart,” compare Deut. iv. 39, and without the object, Deut. xxx. 1; not “they feel remorse,” as Thenius supposes, because the *Hiphil* cannot have this reflective signification (Böttcher). The confession of sin in ver. 47, *הִטָּאנוּ וְהִעֲוִינוּ רַשָּׁעִנוּ*, was adopted by the Jews when in captivity as the most exhaustive expression of their deep consciousness of guilt (Dan. ix. 5; Ps. cvi. 6). *הִטָּא*, to slip, *labi*, depicts sin as a wandering from right;

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau (on Chron.) has already proved that there is no force in the arguments by which Thenius attempts to show, on doctrinal grounds, that vers. 44–51 are an interpolated addition. As he correctly observes, “it is, on the contrary, quite in harmony with the original plan, that the two cases are also anticipated, in which the prayers of Israelites who are at a distance from the seat of the sanctuary are directed towards the temple, since it is perfectly appropriate that the prayers of the Israelites at the place of the sanctuary are mentioned first, then the prayers of foreigners at the same place, and lastly the prayers of Israelites, who, because they are not in Jerusalem, are obliged to content themselves with turning their faces towards the temple. We might also point to the fact that it is probably intentional that exactly *seven* cases are enumerated, inasmuch as in enumerations of this kind, which are not restricted by the nature of the case to any definite measure, such a number as seven easily furnishes an outward limit,”—or more correctly: because seven as a sacred or covenant number was more appropriate than any other to embrace *all* prayers addressed to God.



הַעֲוֹה, to act perversely, as a conscious perversion of justice; and רִשָּׁע as a passionate rebellion against God (cf. Isa. lvii. 20).—Ver. 50. וַיַּנְחֵם לְרַחֲמֵם: literally, “and make (place) them for compassion before their captors, that they may have compassion upon them,” *i.e.* cause them to meet with compassion from their enemies, who have carried them away.—In vers. 51-53 Solomon closes with general reasons, which should secure the hearing of his prayer on the part of God. Bertheau follows the earlier commentators in admitting that these reasons refer not merely to the last petitions, but to all the preceding ones.<sup>1</sup> The plea “for they are Thy people,” etc. (ver. 51), is taken from Deut. iv. 10; and that in ver. 53, “Thou didst separate them,” etc., is taken from Lev. xx. 24, 26, compared with Ex. xix. 5. לִהְיוֹת עֵינֶיךָ וְנֹ, “that Thine eyes may be opened,” follows upon וְשָׁמַעְתָּ (“then hear Thou”) in ver. 49; just as ver. 29 at the commencement of the prayer follows upon וּפָנִיָּה in ver. 28. The recurrence of the same expression shows that the prayer is drawing to a close, and is rounded off by a return to the thought with which it opened. “As Thou spakest by Moses” points back to Ex. xix. 5.—In 2 Chron. vi. 40-42 the conclusion of the prayer is somewhat altered, and closes with the appeal to the Lord to cause salvation and grace to go forth from the temple over His people.

Vers. 54-66. CONCLUDING ACT of the dedication of the temple. Vers. 54-61. *Blessing the congregation*.—After the conclusion of the prayer, Solomon rose up from his knees and blessed all the assembled congregation. וּכְפָיו פְּרוּשׁוֹת is a circumstantial clause, which must be connected with the previous words and rendered thus: “from lying upon his knees *with* his hands spread out towards heaven.” “And he stood,” *i.e.* he came from the altar and stood nearer to the assembled congregation. The blessing begins with praise to the Lord for the fulfilment of His promises (ver. 16), and consists in the petition that the Lord will always fulfil his (Solomon’s) prayers, and

<sup>1</sup> Seb. Schmidt has already given the following explanation: “These things which I have asked for myself and for my people do Thou, O Lord, because it is for Thy people that I have prayed, and I am their king: therefore hear Thou the prayers of Thy servant and Thy people. For in ver. 52 he makes mention of his own case and of the cases of all the rest, in which they would call upon the Lord.

grant His people the promised salvation.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 56. The praise of Jehovah rests, so far as the first part is concerned, upon the promise in Deut. xii. 9, 10, and upon its fulfilment in Josh. xxi. 44, 45 and xxiii. 14; and the second part is founded upon Lev. xxvi. 3–13 and Deut. xxviii. 1–14, where the “good word, which the Lord spake by Moses,” is more precisely described as the blessing which the Lord had promised to His people and had hitherto bestowed upon them. He had already given Israel rest by means of Joshua when the land of Canaan was taken; but since many parts of the land still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, this rest was only fully secured to them by David’s victories over all their enemies. This glorious fulfilment warranted the hope that the Lord would also fulfil in the future what He had promised His servant David (2 Sam. vii. 10), if the people themselves would only faithfully adhere to their God. Solomon therefore sums up all his wishes for the good of the kingdom in vers. 57–61 in the words, “May Jehovah our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us nor forsake us, to incline our heart to Himself, that we may walk in all His ways,” etc.—that the evil word predicted by Moses in Lev. xxvi. 14 sqq., Deut. xxviii. 15, may not fall upon us. For ver. 57 compare Deut. xxxi. 6, 8, and Josh. i. 5. אֵל יִרְפֶּךָ corresponds to אֵל יִטְשֶׁנִּי in these passages. In the Pentateuch נָטַשׁ is used but once of men who forsake the Lord, viz. Deut. xxxii. 15; in other cases it is only used in the general sense of casting away, letting alone, and other similar meanings. It is first used of God, in the sense of for-

<sup>1</sup> This blessing is omitted from the Chronicles, because it is simply a recapitulation of the longer prayer; but instead of it we have a statement, in 2 Chron. vii. 1–4, to the effect that fire fell from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering upon the altar. This statement, which even Movers regards as a traditional, *i.e.* a legendary addition, according to his erroneous view of the sources of the Chronicles, is confirmed by the similar miracle which occurred at the dedication of the temple. It is omitted, like so many other things in the account before us, because all that was essential in this occurrence was contained *implicite* in the filling of the temple with the glory of the Lord. Just as at the consecration of the Mosaic sanctuary the Lord did not merely manifest His gracious presence through the cloud which filled the tent, but also kindled the first sacrifice with fire from heaven (Lev. ix. 24), to sanctify the altar as the legitimate place of sacrifice; so also at the temple the miraculous kindling of the first sacrifice with fire from heaven was the immediate and even necessary consequence of the filling of the temple with the cloud, in which the presence of Jehovah was embodied.



saking His people, in Ps. xxvii. 9 in connection with עֵינָב; and it frequently occurs afterwards in Jeremiah.—Ver. 59. May these my words, which I have prayed (vers. 25-43), be near to Jehovah our God day and night, that He may secure the right of His servant (the king) and of His people, as every day demands. דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ, as in Ex. v. 13, xvi. 4.—For ver. 60 compare ver. 43.—Ver. 61. Let your heart be 'שְׁלֵם עִם יי, wholly, undividedly devoted to the Lord (cf. ch. xi. 4, xv. 3, 14, etc.).

Vers. 62-66. *Sacrifices and feast*.—Vers. 62, 63. The dedicatory prayer was followed by a magnificent sacrifice offered by the king and all Israel. The thank-offering (זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים) consisted, in accordance with the magnitude of the manifestation of divine grace, of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. This enormous number of sacrificial animals, in which J. D. Michaelis found serious difficulties, Thenius endeavours to set aside as too large, by calculating that as these sacrifices were offered in seven days, reckoning the sacrificial day at twelve full hours, there must have been about five oxen and about twenty-five sheep slaughtered and offered in sacrifice every minute for the king alone. This calculation would be conclusive, if there were any foundation for the three assumptions upon which it rests: namely, (1) that the number of sacrifices mentioned was offered for the king alone; (2) that the slaughtering and preparation of the sacrificial animals could only be performed by the priests and Levites; and (3) that the whole of the flesh of these sacrificial animals was to be consumed upon the altar. But these three assumptions are all erroneous. There is nothing in the account about their being “for the king alone.” For it is obvious that the words “and Solomon offered a sacrifice” are not to be understood as signifying that the king had these sacrifices offered for himself alone, but that the words refer to the sacrifices offered by the king and all Israel for the consecration of the temple, from the simple fact that in ver. 62 “Solomon and all Israel” are expressly mentioned as offering sacrifice, and that after the statement of the number of the sacrifices we find these words in ver. 63: “so the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of Jehovah.” Moreover it is very evident from the law in Lev. i. and iii. that at the offering of sacrifice the slaughtering, flaying, and preparation of the sacrificial animals were performed by any Israelite, and that it was only the sprinkling of the blood against the

altar and the burning of the sacrificial portions upon the altar which were the exclusive province of the priests. In order to form a correct idea of the enormous number of sacrifices which could be slaughtered on any one day, we will refer again to the notice in Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 9, 3) already mentioned in the *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, vol. iii. p. 51 (translation), that in the reign of the emperor Nero the procurator *Cestius* directed the priests to count the number of the paschal lambs, and that they counted 250,000, which were slaughtered for the passover between the ninth and eleventh hours of the day, and of which the blood was sprinkled upon the altar. If then it was possible at that time to slaughter more than 250,000 lambs in three hours of the afternoon, and to sprinkle the blood upon the altar, there can have been no difficulty in slaughtering and sacrificing 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep at the dedication of the temple on each of the seven days of the festival. As all Israel from Hamath to the brook of Egypt came to Jerusalem to this festival, we shall not be above the mark if we estimate the number of the heads of houses present at 100,000. And with very little trouble they could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep a day and prepared them for sacrificing. How many priests took an active part in this, we do not indeed know, in fact we have no information as to the number of the priests in Solomon's time; but we know that in the time of David the number of Levites qualified for service, reckoning from their thirtieth year, was 38,000, so that we may certainly assume that there were two or three thousand priests. Now if only the half of these Levites and priests had come to Jerusalem to the dedication of the temple, they alone could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep every day. And would not a thousand priests have been sufficient to sprinkle the blood of so many animals upon the altar and to burn the fat between the morning and evening sacrifice? If we divided these sacrifices among a thousand priests, each one would only have had to attend to the sprinkling of the blood and burning of the fat of three oxen and eighteen sheep each day.—But the brazen altar of burnt-offering might not have been large enough for the burning of so many sacrifices, notwithstanding the fact that only the fat portions of the thank-offerings were consumed, and they did not require much room; since the morning and evening burnt-offerings were added daily, and as festal offerings



they would certainly not consist of a lamb only, but at least of one bullock, and they were burned whole, although the altar of burnt-offering with a surface of 144 square yards (see my *bibl. Archäol.* i. p. 127) would hold a very large quantity of sacrificial flesh at once. In ver. 64, however, it is expressly stated that Solomon sanctified the middle of the court, which was before the house of Jehovah, to burn the burnt-offering and meat-offering and the fat portions of the thank-offerings there, because the brazen altar was too small to hold these sacrifices. "The middle of the court" (תֹּךְ הַחֲצֵר) is the whole of the inner portion of the court of the priests, which was in front of the temple-house and formed the centre of the court surrounding the temple. Of course we have not to imagine that the sacrifices were offered upon the stone pavement of the court, but must assume that there were auxiliary altars erected in the inner court around the brazen altar. By the burnt-offering and the meat-offering (belonging to it: אֶת־הָעֹלָה וְאֶת־הַמִּנְחָה) we are not to understand certain burnt-offerings, which were offered for a definite number of thank-offerings, as Thenius supposes. The singular and the definite article are both at variance with this. The reference is rather to the (well-known) daily morning and evening burnt-offerings with their meat-offering, and in this case, no doubt, to such a festal sacrifice as is prescribed in Num. xxviii. for the great yearly feasts.—Ver. 65. Thus Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from the neighbourhood of Hamath to the brook of Egypt, *i.e.* from the whole land in its fullest extent from north to south. "The district of *Hamath*," *i.e.* *Epiphania* on the Orontes, is mentioned as the northern boundary (cf. Num. xxxiv. 8, xiii. 21, Josh. xiii. 5, etc.); and "the brook of Egypt" (נַחַל מִצְרַיִם), *Rhinocorura*, as the southern boundary (cf. Num. xxxiv. 8, Josh. xv. 4). "The feast" (הַחֵג), which Solomon held with the people "seven days and seven days, fourteen days," is not the feast of the dedication, but, as in ver. 2, the feast of tabernacles, which fell in the seventh month; and the meaning of the verse is, that on that occasion the feast of the seventh month was kept for fourteen days, namely, seven days as the feast of the dedication, and seven days as the feast of tabernacles. We are obliged to take the words in this way, partly on account of the evident reference to בָּהֵג (at the feast) in ver. 2 in the expression אֶת־הַחֵג (the feast) in this verse, and partly on account of the statement which follows in

ver. 66, "and on the eighth day he sent the people away." The "eighth day" is not the first day of the feast of tabernacles (Thenius); but the eighth day, as the conclusion of the feast of tabernacles, *עֶצְרַת* (Lev. xxiii. 36). The correctness of this view is placed beyond all doubt by the context in the Chronicles, which states more clearly that, "Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him . . . and they kept *עֶצְרַת* (the closing feast) on the eighth day; for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days; and on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away." The feast of tabernacles lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st, with a closing festival on the eighth day, *i.e.* the 22d of the month (Lev. xxiii. 33-39). This festival was preceded by the dedication of the temple from the 8th to the 14th of the month. The statement in ver. 66, "on the eighth day he sent the people away," if we take the words in their strict sense, is at variance with the statement in the Chronicles, "on the 23d day," since the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles was the 22d day of the month; but it may easily be accounted for from want of precision in a well-known matter. Solomon sent the people away on the eighth day, *i.e.* on the afternoon or evening of the *atzereth* of the feast of tabernacles, so that on the morning of the next day, *i.e.* on the 23d of the month, the people took their journey home, "joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to His servant David and to the people." *David* is mentioned, because the completion of the building of the temple was the fulfilment of the divine promise given to him. "Tents," for houses, as in 2 Sam. xx. 1, Judg. vii. 8, and other passages.

CHAP. IX. THE ANSWER TO SOLOMON'S PRAYER. THE MEANS  
EMPLOYED FOR THE ERECTION OF HIS BUILDINGS.

Vers. 1-9. THE ANSWER OF THE LORD TO SOLOMON'S DEDICATORY PRAYER (cf. 2 Chron. vii. 11-22).—Vers. 1, 2. When Solomon had finished the building of the temple, and of his palace, and of all that he had a desire to build, the Lord appeared to him the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon, *i.e.* by night in a dream (see ch. iii. 5), to promise him that his prayer should be answered. For the point of time, see at ch. viii. 1. *כָּל־חֵשֶׁק*, all Solomon's desire or pleasure, is para-



phrased thus in the Chronicles: כָּל-הַבָּא עַל לֵב, "all that came into his mind," and, in accordance with the context, is very properly restricted to these two principal buildings by the clause, "in the house of Jehovah and in his own house."—Vers. 3 sqq. The divine promise to Solomon, that his prayer should be answered, is closely connected with the substance of the prayer; but in our account we have only a brief summary, whereas in the Chronicles it is given more elaborately (*vid.* 2 Chron. vii. 12-16). "I have sanctified this house which thou hast built, to put my name there." For the expression, see Deut. xii. 11. The sanctifying consisted in the fact, that Jehovah put His name in the temple; *i.e.* that by filling the temple with the cloud which visibly displayed His presence, He consecrated it as the scene of the manifestation of His grace. To Solomon's prayer, "May Thine eyes stand open over this house" (ch. viii. 29), the Lord replies, giving always more than we ask, "My eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually."—Vers. 4 and 5 contain the special answer to ch. viii. 25 and 26.—Vers. 6-9 refer to the prayer for the turning away of the curse, to which the Lord replies: If ye and your children turn away from me, and do not keep my commandments, but worship other gods, this house will not protect you from the curses threatened in the law, but they will be fulfilled in all their terrible force upon you and upon this temple. This threat follows the Pentateuch exactly in the words in which it is expressed; ver. 7 being founded upon Deut. xxviii. 37, 45, and 63, and the curse pronounced upon Israel in Deut. xxix. 23-26 being transferred to the temple in vers. 8 and 9.—נִשְׁלַח מִעַל פָּנַי, to dismiss, *i.e.* to reject from before my face. "This house will be עָלִיז," *i.e.* will stand high, or through its rejection will be a lofty example for all that pass by. The temple stood upon a high mountain, so that its ruins could not fail to attract the attention of all who went past. The expression עָלִיז is selected with an implied allusion to Deut. xxvi. 19 and xxviii. 1. God there promises to make Israel עָלִיז, high, exalted above all nations. This blessing will be turned into a curse. The temple, which was high and widely renowned, shall continue to be high, but in the opposite sense, as an example of the rejection of Israel from the presence of God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The conjecture of Böttcher, Thenius, and Bertheau, that עָלִיז should be altered into עֵיז, has no support in Mic. iii. 12, Jer. xxvi. 18, and Ps. lxxix. 1,

Vers. 10-28. THE MEANS BY WHICH THE BUILDINGS WERE ERECTED.—In order that all which still remained to be said concerning Solomon's buildings might be grouped together, different notices are introduced here, namely, as to his relation to Hiram, the erection of several fortresses, and the tributary labour, and also as to his maritime expeditions; and these heterogeneous materials are so arranged as to indicate the resources which enabled Solomon to erect so many and such magnificent buildings. These resources were: (1) his connection with king Hiram, who furnished him with building materials (vers. 10-14); (2) the tributary labour which he raised in his kingdom (vers. 15-25); (3) the maritime expedition to Ophir, which brought him great wealth (vers. 26-28). But these notices are very condensed, and, as a comparison with the parallel account in 2 Chron. viii. shows, are simply incomplete extracts from a more elaborate history. In the account of the tributary labour, the enumeration of the cities finished and fortified (vers. 15-19) is interpolated; and the information concerning the support which was rendered to Solomon in the erection of his buildings by Hiram (vers. 11-14), is merely supplementary to the account already given in ch. v. Vers. 24 and 25 point still more clearly to an earlier account, since they would be otherwise unintelligible.—In 2 Chron. viii. the arrangement is a simpler one: the buildings are first of all enumerated in vers. 1-6, and the account of the tributary labour follows in vers. 7-11.

Vers. 10-14. The notices concerning *Solomon's connection with Hiram* are very imperfect; for ver. 14 does not furnish a conclusion either in form or substance. The notice in 2 Chron. viii. 1, 2 is still shorter, but it supplies an important addition to the account before us.—Vers. 10 and 11 form one

and has all the ancient versions against it; for they all contain the Masoretic text, either in a verbal translation (LXX.), or in a paraphrase, as for example the Chaldee, "the house that was high shall be destroyed;" the Syriac and Arabic, "this house will be destroyed;" and the Vulgate, *domus hæc erit in exemplum*.—In 2 Chron. vii. 21 the thought is somewhat varied by the alteration of יהיה into אִשֶּׁר הָיָה. For it would never enter the mind of any sober critic to attribute this variation to a misinterpretation of our text. Still less can it be an unsuccessful attempt to explain or rectify our text, as Böttcher imagines, since the assertion of this critic, that עֲלִיּוֹן is only used to signify an exalted position, and never the exaltation of dignity or worth, is proved to be erroneous by Deut. xxvi. 19 and xxviii. 1.



period.  $\text{אֵין יָתֵן}$  (then he gave) in ver. 11 introduces the apodosis to  $\text{וַיְהִי כֵן}$  (and it came to pass, etc.) in ver. 10; and ver. 11 contains a circumstantial clause inserted as a parenthesis. Hiram had supported Solomon according to his desire with cedar wood and cypress wood, and with gold; and Solomon gave him in return, after his buildings were completed, twenty cities in the land of *Galil*. But these cities did not please Hiram. When he went out to see them, he said, "What kind of cities are these ( $\text{מָה}$  in a contemptuous sense) which thou hast given me, my brother?"  $\text{אָחִי}$  as in ch. xx. 32, 1 Macc. x. 18, xi. 30, 2 Macc. xi. 22, as a conventional expression used by princes in their intercourse with one another. "And he called the land *Cabul* unto this day;" *i.e.* it retained this name even to later times. The land of *Galil* is a part of the country which was afterwards known as *Galilæa*, namely, the northern portion of it, as is evident from the fact that in Josh. xx. 7, xxi. 32, *Kedes* in the mountains of Naphtali, to the north-west of Lake *Huleh*, is distinguished from the Kadesh in southern Palestine by the epithet  $\text{בְּנִלָל}$ . It is still more evident from 2 Kings xv. 29 and Isa. viii. 23 that *Galil* embraced the northern part of the tribe of Naphtali; whilst the expression used by Isaiah,  $\text{בְּנִלָל הַגּוֹיִם}$ , also shows that this district was for the most part inhabited by heathen (*i.e.* non-Israelites). The twenty cities in *Galil*, which Solomon gave to Hiram, certainly belonged therefore to the cities of the Canaanites mentioned in 2 Sam. xxiv. 7; that is to say, they were cities occupied chiefly by a heathen population, and in all probability they were in a very bad condition. Consequently they did not please Hiram, and he gave to the district the contemptuous name of the land of *Cabul*. Of the various interpretations given to the word *Cabul* (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 656), the one proposed by Hiller (*Onomast.* p. 435), and adopted by Reland, Ges., Maurer, and others, viz. that it is a contraction of  $\text{בְּהִבּוּל}$ , *sicut id quod evanuit tanquam nihil*, has the most to support it, since this is the meaning required by the context. At the same time it is possible, and even probable, that it had originally a different signification, and is derived from  $\text{קָבַל} = \text{חָבַל}$  in the sense of to pawn, as Gesenius and Dietrich suppose. This is favoured by the occurrence of the name *Cabul* in Josh. xix. 27, where it is probably derivable from  $\text{קָבַל}$ , to fetter, and signifies literally a fortress or castle; but in this instance it has no connection with

the land of *Cabul*, since it is still preserved in the village of Cabul to the south-east of Acre (see the Comm. on Josh. *l.c.*). The "land of Cabul" would therefore mean the pawned land; and in the mouths of the people this would be twisted into "good for nothing." In this case יִקְרָא would have to be taken impersonally: "they called;" and the notice respecting this name would be simply an explanation of the way in which the people interpreted it. Hiram, however, did not retain this district, but gave it back to Solomon, who then completed the cities (2 Chron. viii. 2.).<sup>1</sup> The only way in which we can give to ver. 14 a meaning in harmony with the context, is by taking it as a supplementary explanation of נִשָּׂא . . . חִירָם in ver. 11, and so rendering וַיִּשְׁלַח as a pluperfect, as in ch. vii. 13: "Hiram had sent the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold." If we reckon the value of gold as being ten times the worth of silver, a hundred and twenty talents of gold would be 3,141,600 *thalers* (about £471,240: Tr.). This is no doubt to be regarded as a loan, which Solomon obtained from Hiram to enable him to complete his buildings. Although David may have collected together the requisite amount of precious metals for the building of the temple, and Solomon had also very considerable yearly revenues, derived partly from tribute paid by subjugated nations and partly from trade, his buildings were so extensive, inasmuch as he erected a large number of cities beside the temple and his splendid palace (vers. 15–19), that his revenues might not suffice for the completion of these costly works; and therefore, since he would not apply the consecrated treasures of the temple to the erection of cities and palaces, he might find himself compelled to procure a loan from the wealthy king Hiram, which he probably intended to cover by ceding to him twenty cities on the border of the Phœnician territory. But as these cities did not please the king of Tyre and he gave them back to Solomon, the latter will no doubt have repaid the amount borrowed during the last twenty years of his reign.

<sup>1</sup> This simple method of reconciling the account before us with the apparently discrepant notice in the Chronicles, concerning which even Movers (*die biblische Chronik*, p. 159) observes, that the chronicler interpolated it from a second (?) source, is so natural, that it is difficult to conceive how Bertheau can object to it; since he admits that the accounts in the books of Kings and Chronicles are incomplete extracts from common and more elaborate sources.



Vers. 15-23. *Solomon's tribute service, and the building of the cities.* (Cf. 2 Chron. viii. 3-10.) The other means by which Solomon made it possible to erect so many buildings, was by compelling the remnants of the Canaanitish population that were still in the land to perform tributary labour. **זֶה דְּבַר הַמָּס**, "this is the case with regard to the tribute." For **הַעֲלָה מִס**, compare ch. v. 27. To the announcement of the object which Solomon had in view in raising tributary labourers, namely, to build, etc., there is immediately appended a list of all the buildings completed by him (vers. 15-19); and it is not till ver. 20 that we have more precise details concerning the tribute itself. *Millo*, the wall of Jerusalem, and the cities enumerated, are for the most part not new buildings, but simply fortifications, or the completion of buildings already in existence. David had already built the castle of *Millo* and the wall of Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 9); so that Solomon's building was in both cases merely fortifying more strongly. On *Millo* see the fuller remarks at 2 Sam. v. 9; and on the building of the wall, those at ch. iii. 1 and xi. 27. As Solomon thereby closed the breach of the city of David according to ch. xi. 27, he probably extended the city wall so as to enclose the temple mountain; and he may possibly have also surrounded the lower city with a wall, since David had only built a fortification round about the upper city upon Zion (see at 2 Sam. v. 9).—*Hazor*: an old royal city of the Canaanites above Lake *Huleh*, which has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Megiddo*; *i.e.* *Lcjun* (see at ch. iv. 12). *Gezer*: also an old Canaanitish royal city, which stood close to the Philistian frontier, probably on the site of the present village of *el Kubab* (see at Josh. x. 33).—Ver. 16. This city had been taken and burned down by the king of Egypt; its Canaanitish inhabitants had been put to death; and the city itself had been given as a marriage portion to his daughter who was married to Solomon. Nothing is known concerning the occasion and object of Pharaoh's warlike expedition against this city. The conjecture of Thenius, that the Canaanitish inhabitants of Gezer had drawn upon themselves the vengeance of Pharaoh, mentioned here, through a piratical raid upon the Egyptian coast, is open to this objection, that according to all accounts concerning its situation, Gezer was not situated near the sea-coast, but very far inland.—Ver. 17. This city Solomon built: *i.e.* he not only rebuilt it, but also fortified it. He did the same also to *Lower*

*Bethhoron*, i.e. *Beit-Ur Tachta*, on the western slope of the mountains, four hours' journey from Gibeon. According to 2 Chron. viii. 5, Solomon also fortified *Upper Bethhoron*, which was separated by a deep wady from Lower Bethhoron, that lay to the west (see Comm. on Josh. x. 10 and xvi. 3). The two Bethhorons and Gezer were very important places for the protection of the mountainous country of Benjamin, Ephraim, and Judah against hostile invasions from the Philistian plain. The situation of Megiddo on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, through which the high road from the western coast to the Jordan ran, was equally important; and so also was Hazor as a border fortress against Syria in the northern part of the land.—Ver. 18. Solomon also built, i.e. fortified, *Baalath* and *Tadmor* in the desert. According to Josh. xix. 44, *Baalath* was a city of Dan, and therefore, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 1) justly observes, was not far from Gezer; and consequently is not to be identified with either Baalgad or Baalbek in Coele-syria (Iken, Mich. Rosenm.; cf. Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 519). חֶתִּיב (*Chethîb*) is either to be read חֶתִּיב, or according to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 344) חֶתִּיב, palm, a palm-city. The *Keri* requires חֶתִּיב (Tadmor, after 2 Chron. viii. 4), a pronunciation which may possibly have simply arisen from Aramaean expansion, but which is still the name for the city current among the Arabs even in the present day (تَدْمُر, *locus palmarum ferax*). The Greeks and Romans called it *Palmyra*. It was situated in what is certainly now a very desolate oasis of the Syrian desert, on the caravan road between Damascus and the Euphrates,—according to modern accounts, not more than seventeen hours' journey from that river; and there are still magnificent ruins which attest the former glory of this wealthy and, under queen Zenobia, very powerful city (cf. Ritter, *Erdk.* xvii. 2, p. 1486 sqq., and E. Osiander in Herzog's *Cycl.*). The correctness of this explanation of the name is placed beyond all doubt by the words "in the wilderness;" and consequently even Movers has given up his former opinion, viz. that it was the city of *Thamar* in southern Judah (Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28), which Thenius has since adopted, and has decided in favour of *Palmyra*, without being led astray by the attempt of Hitzig to explain the name from the Sanscrit (*vid. Deutsche morgld. Ztschr.* viii. p. 222 sqq.). The expression חֶתִּיב appears superfluous, as all the cities



named before were situated in the land or kingdom of Solomon, and *Tadmor* is sufficiently defined by *בְּמִדְבָּר* (in the desert). The text is evidently faulty, and either the name of the land, namely *Hamath* (according to 2 Chron. viii. 4), has dropped out, or *בְּאֶרֶץ* is to be taken in connection with what follows (according to the Cod. Al. of the LXX.), and the cop. ו before *אֶת כָּל-עָרֵי* must be erased and inserted before *בְּאֶרֶץ* ("and in the land of all the magazine-cities").—Ver. 19. The "magazine-cities" (*עָרֵי הַמִּסְכְּנוֹת*) were fortified cities, in which the produce of the land was collected, partly for provisioning the army, and partly for the support of the rural population in times of distress (2 Chron. xvii. 12, xxxii. 28), similar to those which Pharaoh had built in the land of Goshen (Ex. i. 11). If they were situated on the great commercial roads, they may also have served for storing provisions for the necessities of travellers and their beasts of burden. The cities for the war-chariots (*הָרֶכֶב*) and cavalry (*הַפָּרָשִׁים*) were probably in part identical with the magazine-cities, and situated in different parts of the kingdom. There were no doubt some of these upon Lebanon, as we may on the one hand infer from the general importance of the northern frontier to the security of the whole kingdom, and still more from the fact that Solomon had an opponent at Damascus in the person of Rezin (ch. xi. 24), who could easily stir up rebellion in the northern provinces, which had only just been incorporated by David into the kingdom; and as we may on the other hand clearly gather from 2 Chron. xvi. 4, according to which there were magazine-cities in the land of Naphtali. Finally, the words "and what Solomon had a desire to build" embrace all the rest of his buildings, which it would have occupied too much space to enumerate singly. That the words *אֶת הַשֶּׁק* are not to be so pressed as to be made to denote simply "the buildings undertaken for pure pleasure," like the works mentioned in Eccles. ii. 4 sqq., as Thenius and Bertheau suppose, is evident from a comparison of ver. 1, where all Solomon's buildings except the temple and palace, and therefore the fortifications as well as others, are included in the expression "all his desire."—Fuller particulars concerning the tributary workmen are given in ver. 20 sqq. The Canaanitish population that was left in the land were made use of for this purpose,—namely, the descendants of the Canaanites who had not been entirely exterminated by the Israelites. "Their children,"

etc., supplies a more precise definition of the expression "all the people," etc., in ver. 20. (For the fact itself, see the commentary on ch. v. 27, 28.)—Ver. 22. Solomon did not make Israelites into tributary slaves; but they were warriors, ministers, and civil and military officers. עֲבָדִים are the king's servants; שָׂרִים, the heads of the military and civil service; שְׁלִישִׁים, royal adjutants (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8); שָׂרֵי רֶכֶב וּפָרָשָׁיו, captains over the royal war-chariots and cavalry.—For ver. 23 compare ch. v. 30.

Vers. 24 and 25 contain two notices, with which the account of Solomon's buildings is brought to a close. Both verses point back to ch. iii. 1–4 (viz. ver. 24 to ch. iii. 1, and ver. 25 to ch. iii. 2–4), and show how the incongruities which existed at the commencement of Solomon's reign were removed by his buildings. When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, he brought her into the city of David (ch. iii. 1), until he should have finished his palace and built her a house of her own within it. After this building was completed, he had her brought up from the city of David into it. עָלָה, came up, inasmuch as the palace stood upon the loftier summit of Zion. אֵד is to be connected with אֵז which follows, in the sense of *only* or *just as*: as soon as Pharaoh's daughter had gone up into the house built for her, Solomon built Millo.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 25. After the building of the temple, the practice of sacrificing upon the altars of the high places could be brought to an end (ch. iii. 2). Solomon now offered burnt-offerings and thank-offerings three times a year upon the altar which he had built to the Lord, i.e. upon the altar of burnt-offering in the temple, or as 2 Chron. viii. 12 adds by way of explanation, "before the porch." "Three times in the year:" i.e. at the three great yearly feasts—passover, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles

<sup>1</sup> Nothing certain can be gathered from this notice as to the situation of this castle. The remark made by Thenius, to the effect that it must have joined that portion of the palace in which the harem was, rests upon the assumption that Millo was evidently intended to shelter the harem,—an assumption which cannot be raised into a probability, to say nothing of a certainty. The building of Millo immediately after the entrance of Pharaoh's daughter into the house erected for her, may have arisen from the fact that David (? Solomon—Tr.) could not undertake the fortification of Jerusalem by means of this castle till after his own palace was finished, because he had not the requisite labour at command for carrying on all these buildings at the same time.



(2 Chron. viii. 13). The words which follow, וְהִקְטִיר אֹתוֹ, "and indeed burning (the sacrifice) at the (altar) which was before Jehovah," cannot be taken as parallel to the preceding clause, and understood as referring to the incense, which was offered along with the bleeding sacrifices, because הִקְטִיר is not a preterite, but an inf. absol., which shows that this clause merely serves as an explanation of the preceding one, in the sense of, "namely, burning the sacrifices at the altar which was before Jehovah." הִקְטִיר is the technical expression here for the burning of the portions of the sacrificial flesh upon the altar, as in Ex. xxix. 18, Lev. i. 9, etc. On the use of אִשָּׁר after אֹתוֹ, which Thenius and Böttcher could not understand, and on which they built up all kinds of conjectures, see Ewald, § 333, *a*, note.—וַיִּשְׁלֵם אֶת־הַבַּיִת, "and made the house complete," *i.e.* he put the temple into a state of completion, by offering the yearly sacrifices there from that time forward, or, as Böttcher explains it, gave it thereby its full worth as a house of God and place of worship. וַיִּשְׁלֵם is to be taken grammatically as a continuation of the inf. abs. הִקְטִיר.

Vers. 26-28. *He sends ships to Ophir.*—Solomon built a fleet (אֲנִי is collective, ships or fleet; the *nom. unitatis* is אֲנִיָּה) at Eziongeber, near Eloth, on the coast of the Red Sea (יַם־סוּף: see at Ex. x. 19), in the land of Edom; and Hiram sent in the fleet "shipmen that had knowledge of the sea" along with Solomon's servants to Ophir, whence they brought to king Solomon 420 talents of gold. *Eziongeber*, a harbour at the north-eastern end of the Elanitic Gulf, was probably the "large and beautiful town of *Asziun*" mentioned by Makrizi (see at Num. xxxiii. 35), and situated on the great bay of *Wady Emrag* (see Rüppell, *Reisen in Nubien*, pp. 252-3). *Eloth* (lit. trees, a grove, probably so named from the large palm-grove in the neighbourhood), or *Elath* (Deut. ii. 8; 2 Kings xiv. 22: see at Gen. xiv. 6), the *Aila* and *Ælana* of the Greeks and Romans, Arab. *Aileh*, was situated at the northern point of the (Elanitic) gulf, which took its name from the town; and in the time of the Fathers it was an important commercial town. It was not far from the small modern fortress of *Akaba*, where heaps of rubbish still show the spot on which it formerly stood (compare Rüppell, *Nub.* p. 248, with plates 6 and 7, and Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 251 sqq.).—The corresponding text, 2 Chron. viii. 17, 18, differs in many respects from the account before us. The state-

ment in the Chronicles, that Solomon went to Eziongeber and Elath, is but a very unimportant deviation ; for the building of the fleet makes it a very probable thing in itself that Solomon should have visited on that account the two towns on the Elanitic Gulf, which were very near to one another, to make the requisite arrangements upon the spot for this important undertaking. There is apparently a far greater deviation in ver. 27, where, in the place of the statement that Hiram sent יָמַי, in the (or a) fleet, his servants as sailors who had knowledge of the sea, the chronicler affirms that Hiram sent by his servants ships and men who had knowledge of the sea. For the only way in which Hiram could send ships to Eziongeber was either by land or (as Ritter, *Erdk.* xiv. p. 365, supposes) out of the Persian Gulf, supposing that the Tyrians had a fleet upon that sea at so early a date as this. The statement in the Chronicles receives an apparent confirmation from 1 Kings x. 22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram," if indeed this passage also refers to the trade with Ophir, as is generally supposed ; for then these words affirm that Hiram sent ships of his own to Ophir along with those of Solomon. We do not think it probable, however, that the words "Hiram sent ships by his own men" are to be so pressed as to be taken to mean that he had whole ships, or ships taken to pieces, conveyed to Eziongeber either from Tyre or out of the Mediterranean Sea, although many cases might be cited from antiquity in support of this view.<sup>1</sup> In all probability the words affirm nothing more than that Hiram supplied the ships for this voyage, that is to say, that he had them built at Eziongeber by his own men, and the requisite materials conveyed thither, so

<sup>1</sup> Thus, for example, according to Arriani *exped. Alex.* l. v. p. 329, and vii. p. 485 (ed. Blanc), Alexander the Great had ships transported from Phœnicia to the Euphrates, and out of the Indus into the Hydaspes, the ships being taken to pieces for the land transport (*ἐτμήθησαν*), and the pieces (*τμήματα*) afterwards joined together again. Plutarch relates (*vita Anton.* p. 948, ed. Frkf. 1620) that Cleopatra would have had her whole fleet carried across the isthmus which separates Egypt from the Red Sea, and have escaped by that means, had not the Arabs prevented the execution of her plan by burning the first ships that were drawn up on the land. According to Thucydides, *bell. Pelop.* iv. 8, the Peloponnesians conveyed sixty ships which lay at Coreyra across the Leucadian isthmus. Compare also Polyæni *strateg.* v. 2, 6, and Ammian. Marcell. xxiv. 7, and from the middle ages the account of Makrizi in Burckhardt's *Reisen in Syrien*, p. 331.



far as they were not to be obtained upon the spot. At any rate, Solomon was obliged to call the Tyrians to his help for the building of the ships, since the Israelites, who had hitherto carried on no maritime trade at all, were altogether inexperienced in shipbuilding. Moreover, the country round Ezion-geber would hardly furnish wood adapted for the purpose, as there are only palms to be found there, whose spongy wood, however useful it may be for the inside of houses, cannot be applied to the building of ships. But if Hiram had ships built for Solomon by his own men and sent him sailors who were accustomed to the sea, he would certainly have some of his own ships engaged in this maritime trade; and this explains the statement in ch. x. 22.

The destination of the fleet was *Ophir*, whence the ships brought 420 or (according to the Chronicles) 450 talents of gold. The difference between 420 and 450 may be accounted for from the substitution of the numeral letter ם (50) for כ (20). The sum mentioned amounted to eleven or twelve million dollars (from £1,600,000 to £1,800,000—Tr.), and the question arises, whether this is to be taken as the result of one voyage, or as the entire profits resulting from the expeditions to Ophir. The words admit of either interpretation, although they are more favourable to the latter than to the former, inasmuch as there is no allusion whatever to the fact that they brought this amount all at once or on every voyage. (See also at ch. x. 14 and 22.) The question as to the situation of Ophir has given rise to great dispute, and hitherto no certain conclusion has been arrived at; in fact, it is possible that there are no longer any means of deciding it. Some have endeavoured to prove that it was in southern Arabia, others that it was on the eastern coast of Africa, and others again that it was in Hither India.<sup>1</sup> The decision is dependent upon a

<sup>1</sup> Compare the thorough examination of the different views concerning Ophir in C. Ritter's *Erdk.* xiv. pp. 348-431, with the briefer collection made by Gesenius in his *Thes.* p. 141 sq. and in the *Allgem. Encyclop. der Wissenschaft u. Künste*, 3 Sect. Bd. 4, p. 201 sqq., and by Pressel, art. "Ophir," in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*.—We need not dwell upon the different opinions held by the earlier writers. But among modern authors, Niebuhr, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, and Seetzen decide in favour of Arabia; Quatremère (*Mémoire sur le pays d'Ophir* in *Mém. de l'Institut. roy.* 1845, t. xv. P. ii. p. 350 sqq.) and Movers, who takes Ophir to be the name of an emporium on the eastern coast of Africa, in favour of Sofala; while Chr. Lassen (*Indische Alterthumskunde*,

previous question, whether ch. x. 22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram; once in three years came the Tarshish fleet, bringing gold, silver," etc., also applies to the voyage to Ophir. The expression "Tarshish fleet;" the word בָּיִם ("on the sea"), which naturally suggests that sea to which the Israelites applied the special epithet תִּיִם, namely the Mediterranean; and lastly, the difference in the cargoes,—the ships from Ophir bringing gold and *algummim* wood (ver. 28 and ch. x. 11), and the Tarshish fleet bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks (ch. x. 22),—appear to favour the conclusion that the Tarshish fleet did not sail to Ophir, but upon the Mediterranean Sea to Tarshish, *i.e.* Tartessus in Spain; to which we may add the fact that אֲנִי תַרְשִׁישִׁי is reproduced in 2 Chron. ix. 21 by אֲנִיֹּת הַלְכוֹת תַרְשִׁישִׁי, "ships going to Tarshish." Nevertheless, however plausible these arguments may appear, after a renewed investigation of the subject I cannot regard them as having decisive weight: for (1) the expression "Tarshish fleet" is used in ch. xxii. 49 in connection with ships that were intended to go to Ophir; (2) בָּיִם (upon the sea) might receive its more precise definition from what precedes; and (3) the difference in the cargoes reduces itself to this, that in addition to the gold, which was the chief production of Ophir, there are a few other articles of trade mentioned, so that the account in ch. x. 22 is more complete than that in ch. ix. 28 and x. 11. The statement concerning the Tarshish fleet in ch. x. 22 contains a passing remark, like that in ch. x. 11, from which we must infer that both passages treat in the same manner simply of the voyage to Ophir, and therefore that the term "Tarshish ships," like our *Indiamen* (*Indienfahrer*), was applied to ships intended for long voyages. If, in addition to the ships sailing to Ophir, Solomon had also had a fleet upon the Mediterranean Sea which sailed with the Phœnicians to Tartessus, this would certainly have been mentioned here (ch. ix. 27, 28) at the same time as the Ophir voyage. On all

i. p. 537 sqq., ii. p. 552 sqq.) and C. Ritter are the principal supporters of India. On the other hand, Albr. Roscher (*Ptolemäus und die Handelsstrassen in Central-Africa*, Gotha 1857, p. 57 sqq.) has attempted to connect together all these views by assuming that the seamen of Hiram and Solomon fetched the gold of Western Africa from the island of Dahlak in the Red Sea, and having taken it to India to exchange, returned at the end of a three years' voyage enriched with gold and the productions of India.



these grounds we can come to no other conclusion than that the expression in 2 Chron. ix. 21, "ships going to Tarshish," is simply a mistaken exposition of the term "Tarshish fleet,"—a mistake which may easily be explained from the fact, that at the time when the Chronicles were written, the voyages not only of the Israelites but also of the Tyrians both to Ophir and Tarshish had long since ceased, and even the geographical situation of these places was then unknown to the Jews (see my *Introduction to the Old Test.* p. 442, ed. 2).

The name *Ophir* occurs first of all in Gen. x. 29 among the tribes of Southern Arabia, that were descended from Joktan, between Seba and Havilah, *i.e.* the Sabæans and Chaulotæans. Hence it appears most natural to look for the gold-land of Ophir in Southern Arabia. But as there is still a possibility that the Joktanide tribe of Ophir, or one branch of it, may subsequently have emigrated either to the eastern coast of Africa or even to Hither India, and therefore that the Solomonian Ophir may have been an Arabian colony outside Arabia, the situation of this gold country cannot be determined without further evidence from Gen. x. 29 alone; but before arriving at an actual decision, we must first of all examine the arguments that may be adduced in support of each of the three countries named. *Sofala* in Eastern Africa, in the Mozambique Channel, has nothing in common with the name *Ophir*, but is the Arabic سَفَاة (Heb. שַׁפְלָה), *i.e.* lowland or sea-coast; and the old Portuguese accounts of the gold mines in the district of *Fura* there, as well as the pretended walls of the queen of Saba, have far too little evidence to support them, to have any bearing upon the question before us. The supposed connection between the name *Ophir* and the city of Σουπάρα mentioned by Ptolemæus, or Οὔππαρα by Periplus (*Geogr. min.* i. p. 30), in the neighbourhood of Goa, or the shepherd tribe of *Abhira*, cannot be sustained. Σουπάρα or *Sufâra* (Edrisi) answers to the Sanscrit *Supâra*, *i.e.* beautiful coast (cf. Lassen, *Ind. Alterthk.* i. p. 107); and Οὔππαρα in Periplus is no doubt simply a false reading for Σουπάρα, which has nothing in common with אוֹפִיר. And the shepherd tribe of *Abhira* can hardly come into consideration, because the country which they inhabited, to the south-east of the mouths of the Indus, has no gold.—Again, the hypothesis that India is intended derives just as little support from the circumstance that, with

the exception of Gen. x. 29, the LXX. have always rendered אוֹפִיר either Σωφίρα or Σουφίρ, which is, according to the Coptic lexicographers, the name used by the Copts for India, and that Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 4), who used the Old Test. in the Alexandrian version, has given India as the explanation of Ophir, as it does from this supposed resemblance in the names. For, according to the geographical ideas of the Alexandrians and later Greeks, India reached to Ethiopia, and Ethiopia to India, as Letronne has conclusively proved (see his *Mémoire sur une mission arienne*, etc., in *Mém. de l'Institut. Acad. des Inscript. et Bell. Lettres*, t. x. p. 220 sqq.).

Greater stress has been laid upon the duration of the voyages to Ophir,—namely, that the Tarshish fleet came once in three years, according to ch. x. 22, and brought gold, etc. But even Lassen, who follows Heeren, observes quite truly, that “this expression need not be understood as signifying that three whole years intervened between the departure and return, but simply that the fleet returned once in the course of three years.” Moreover, the stay in Ophir is to be reckoned in as part of the time occupied in the voyage; and that this is not to be estimated as a short one, is evident from the fact that, according to Homer, *Odyss.* xv. 454 sqq., a Phœnician merchantman lay for a whole year at one of the Cyclades before he had disposed of his wares of every description, in return for other articles of commerce, and filled his roomy vessel. If we add to this the slowness of the voyage,—considering that just as at the present day the Arabian coasters go but very slowly from port to port, so the combined fleet of Hiram and Solomon would not be able to proceed with any greater rapidity, inasmuch as the Tyrians were not better acquainted with the dangerous Arabian Sea than the modern Arabians are, and that the necessary provisions for a long voyage, especially the water for drinking, could not be taken on board all at once, but would have to be taken in at the different landing-places, and that on these occasions some trade would be done,—we can easily understand how a voyage from Eziongeber to the strait of Bab el Mandeb and the return might occupy more than a year,<sup>1</sup> so that the time occupied in

<sup>1</sup> It is no proof to the contrary, that, according to the testimony of ancient writers, as collected by Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 190 sqq.), the Phœnicians sailed almost as rapidly as the modern merchant ships; for this evidence simply applies to the voyages on the Mediterranean Sea with which they were



the voyage as given here cannot furnish any decisive proof that the fleet sailed beyond Southern Arabia to the East Indies.

And lastly, the same remarks apply to the goods brought from Ophir, which many regard as decisive evidence in favour of India. The principal article for which Ophir became so celebrated, viz. the gold, is not found either in *Sufâra* near Goa, or in the land of *Abhira*. Even if India be much richer in gold than was formerly supposed (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 592), the rich gold country lies to the north of Cashmir (see Lassen, ii. pp. 603-4). Moreover, not only is it impossible to conceive what goods the Phœnicians can have offered to the Indian merchants for their gold and the other articles named, since large sums of gold were sent to India every year in the Roman times to pay for the costly wares that were imported thence (see Roscher, pp. 53, 54); but it is still less possible to comprehend how the shepherd tribe of Abhira could have come into possession of so much gold as the Ophir fleet brought home. The conjecture of Ritter (*Erdk.* xiv. p. 399) and Lassen (ii. p. 592), that this tribe had come to the coast not very long before from some country of their own where gold abounded, and that as an uncultivated shepherd tribe they attached but very little value to the gold, so that they parted with it to the Phœnicians for their purple cloths, their works in brass and glass, and for other things, has far too little probability to appear at all admissible. If the Abhira did not know the value of the gold, they would not have brought it in such quantities out of their original home into these new settlements. We should therefore be obliged to assume that they were a trading people, and this would be at variance with all the known accounts concerning this tribe.—As a rule, the gold treasures of Hither Asia were principally obtained from Arabia in the most ancient times. If we leave Havilah (Gen. ii. 11) out of the account, because its position cannot be determined

familiar, and to the period when the Phœnician navigation had reached its fullest development, so that it has no bearing upon the time of Solomon and a voyage upon the Arabian Sea, with which the Phœnicians were hitherto quite unacquainted.—Again, the calculation made by Lassen (ii. pp. 590-1), according to which a voyage from Eziongeber to the mouth of the Indus could have been accomplished in a hundred days, is founded upon the assumption that the Phœnicians were already acquainted with the monsoon and knew what was the best time for the navigation of the Red Sea,—an assumption which can neither be proved nor shown to be probable.

with certainty, the only other place specially referred to in the Old Testament besides Ophir as being celebrated as a gold country is Saba, in the south-western portion of Yemen. The Sabæans bring gold, precious stones, and incense (Isa. lx. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 22); and the queen of Saba presented Solomon with 120 talents of gold, with perfumes and with precious stones (1 Kings x. 10). This agrees with the accounts of the classical writers, who describe Arabia as very rich in gold (cf. Strabo, xvi. 777 sq. and 784; Diod. Sic. ii. 50, iii. 44; also Bochart, *Phaleg*, l. ii. c. 27). These testimonies, which we have already given in part at Ex. xxxviii. 31, are far too distinct to be set aside by the remark that there is no gold to be found in Arabia at the present time. For whilst, on the one hand, the wealth of Arabia in gold may be exhausted, just as Spain no longer yields any silver, on the other hand we know far too little of the interior of Southern Arabia to be able distinctly to maintain that there is no gold in existence there.—Silver, the other metal brought from Ophir, was also found in the land of the Nabatæans, according to Strabo, xvi. p. 784, although the wealth of the ancient world in silver was chiefly derived from Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain (cf. Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 36 sqq., where the different places are enumerated in which silver was found).—That precious stones were to be found in Arabia is evident from the passages cited above concerning the Sabæans.—On the other hand, however, it has been supposed that the remaining articles of Ophir could only have been brought from the East Indies.

According to ch. x. 12, the Ophir ships brought a large quantity of עֵצֵי אֱלֻמִּים (almuggim wood: 2 Chron. ii. 7, אֱלֻמִּים). According to Kimchi (on 2 Chron. ii. 7), the אֱלֻמִּים or אֱלֻגִּים is *arbor rubri coloris, dicta lingua arabica albakam* (البقم), *vulgo brasilica*. This tree, according to Abulfadl (Celsius, *Hierob.* i. p. 176), is a native of India and Ethiopia; and it is still a question in dispute, whether we are to understand by this the *Pterocarpus Santal.*, from which the true sandal-wood comes, and which is said to grow only in the East Indies on Malabar and Java, or the *Casalpinia Sappan L.*, a tree which grows in the East Indies, more especially in Ceylon, and also in different parts of Africa, the red wood of which is used in Europe chiefly for dyeing. Moreover the true explanation of the Hebrew name



is still undiscovered. The derivation of it from the Sanscrit *Valgu*, i.e. *pulcher* (Lassen and Ritter), has been set aside by Gesenius as inappropriate, and *mocha*; *mochâta*, which is said to signify sandal-wood in Sanscrit, has been suggested instead. But no evidence has been adduced in its favour, nor is the word to be found in Wilson's *Sanscrit Lexicon*. If, however, this derivation were correct, לֹא would be the Arabic article, and the introduction of this article in connection with the word *mocha* would be a proof that the sandal-wood, together with its name, came to the Hebrews through merchants who spoke Arabic.—The other articles from Ophir mentioned in ch. x. 22 are שֵׁנֵה־הַיָּם, ὀδόντες ἐλεφάντινοι (LXX.), *dentes elephantorum* or *ebur* (Vulg.), שֵׁן דָּפִיל, elephants' teeth (Targ.). But however certain the meaning of the word may thus appear, the justification of this meaning is quite as uncertain. In other cases ivory is designated by the simple term שֵׁן (ch. x. 18, xxii. 39; Ps. xlv. 9; Amos iii. 15, etc.), whereas Ezekiel (xxvii. 15) calls the whole tusk קַרְנוֹת שֵׁן, horns of the tooth. הַיָּם is said to signify elephants here; and according to Benary it is contracted from הַאֲבִים, the Sanscrit word *ibha*, elephant; according to Ewald, from הַלָּבִים, from the Sanscrit *Kalabha*; and according to Hitzig, from נַהֲבִים = לִהְבִּים, *Libyi*; or else שֵׁנֵה־הַיָּם is a false reading for שֵׁן וְהַבָּנִים, ivory and ebony, according to Ezek. xxvii. 15 (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 1453). Of these four derivations the first two are decidedly wrong: the first, because *ibha* as a name for the elephant only occurs, according to Weber, in the later Indian writings, and is never used in the earlier writings in this sense (*vid.* Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 115); the second, because *Kalabha* does not signify the elephant, but *catulum elephanti*, before it possesses any teeth available for ivory. The third is a fancy which its originator himself has since given up; and the fourth a conjecture, which is not raised to a probability even by the attempt of Böttcher to show that הַיָּם is a case of backward assimilation from הַבָּנִים, because the asyndeton שֵׁן הַיָּם between two couples connected by ו is without any analogy, and the passages adduced by Böttcher, viz. Deut. xxix. 22, Josh. xv. 54 sqq., and even Ezek. xxvii. 33, are to be taken in quite a different way.—The rendering of לָפִים by apes, and the connection of the name not only with the Sanscrit and Malabar *kapi*, but also with the Greek κῆπος and κῆβος, also κείβος, are much surer; but, on the other hand, the assumption

that the Greeks, like the Semitic nations, received the word from the Indians along with the animals, is very improbable: for *κῆπος* in Greek does not denote the ape (*πίθηκος*) generally, but simply a species of long-tailed apes, the native land of which, according to the testimony of ancient writers, was Ethiopia,<sup>1</sup> and the Ethiopian apes are hardly likely to have sprung from India.—And lastly, even in the case of תְּכֵיִם, according to the ancient versions *peacocks*, the derivation from the Malabaric or Tamul *tôgai* or *tôghai* (cf. Roediger in *Ges. Thes.* p. 1502) is not placed beyond the reach of doubt.

If, in conclusion, we look through all the articles of commerce that were brought to Jerusalem from the Ophir voyages, apart from the gold and silver, which were not to be found in the land of Abhira, the ivory and ebony (supposing that we ought to read שֵׁן וְהַבָּנִים for שֵׁן וְהַבָּנִים) furnish no evidence in support of India, inasmuch as both of them could have been brought from Ethiopia, as even Lassen admits (ii. p. 554). And even if the words *Almuggim*, *Kophim*, and *Tucchijim* really came from India along with the objects to which they belonged, it would by no means follow with certainty from this alone that Ophir was situated in India.—For since, for example, there are indisputable traces of very early commercial intercourse between India and Hither Asia and Africa, especially Southern Arabia and Ethiopia, reaching far beyond the time of Solomon, the seamen of Hiram and Solomon may have obtained these articles either in Arabia or on the Ethiopian coast. For even if the statements of Herodotus and Strabo, to the effect that the Phœnicians emigrated from the islands of the Erythræan Sea, Tylos (or Tyros?) and Arados, to the Phœnician coast, do not prove that the Phœnicians had already extended their commercial enterprise as far as India even before the twelfth century, as Lassen (ii. 597 and 584–5) supposes; if the Tyrians and Aradians, who were related to them by tribe, still continued to dwell upon the islands of the Persian Gulf, from which they could much more easily find the way to

<sup>1</sup> Compare Aristoteles, *hist. animal.* ii. 8: ἔστι δὲ ὁ μὲν κῆβος πίθηκος ἔχων οὐράν. Strabo, xvii. p. 812: ἔστι δὲ ὁ κῆπος τὸ μὲν πρόσωπον ὅμοιος Σατύρω, τ' ἄλλα δὲ κυνὸς καὶ ἄρκτου μεταξὺ· γεννᾶται δ' ἐν Αἰθιοπία. Plinius, *h. n.* viii. 19 (28): *Idem* (the games of Pompey the Great) *ostenderunt ex Æthiopia quas vocant κῆπους, quarum pedes posteriores pedibus humanis et cruribus, priores manibus fuere similes.* Solinus Polyh. says the same (Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. lib. iii. c. 31).



India by sea,—since the historical character of these statements has been disputed by Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 1, p. 38 sqq.) on very weighty grounds; yet it is evident that there was a very early intercourse between East India and Africa, reaching far beyond all historical testimony, from the following well-established facts: that the Egyptians made use of indigo in the dyeing of their stuffs, and this could only have been brought to them from India; that muslins, which were likewise of Indian origin, are found among the materials in which the mummies are enveloped; and that in the graves of the kings of the eighteenth dynasty, who ceased to reign in the year 1476 B.C., there have been discovered vases of Chinese porcelain (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 596). And the intercourse between the southern coast of Arabia and Hither India may have been quite as old, if not older; so that Indian productions may have been brought to Hither Asia by the Sabæans long before the time of Solomon (*vid.* Lassen, ii. pp. 593-4, and Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, pp. 247, 256). But the commercial intercourse between Arabia and the opposite coast of Ethiopia, by which African productions reached the trading inhabitants of Arabia, was unquestionably still older than the trade with India. If we weigh well all these points, there is no valid ground for looking outside Arabia for the situation of the Solomonian Ophir. But we shall no doubt be obliged to give up the hope of determining with any greater precision that particular part of the coast of Arabia in which Ophir was situated, inasmuch as hitherto neither the name Ophir nor the existence of gold-fields in Arabia has been established by modern accounts, and moreover the interior of the great Arabian peninsula is still for the most part a *terra incognita*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If the notice of Eupolemus contained in a fragment in Eusebius (*præpar. ev.* ix. 30), to the effect that *David* (a mistake for Solomon) sent miners to the island of *Oûρφῆ* (for which Gesenius conjectures that we should read *Oûρρῆ* or *Oûφῆρ*) in the Red Sea, which was rich in gold mines, and that they brought gold thence to Judæa, could be proved to be historical through any earlier testimony, Ophir would have been an island of the Erythræan Sea, either *Dahlak* inside Bab el Mandeb, or *Diu Zokatara* (the Sanscrit *Dwipa Sukhatara*, i.e. the happy island) by the present Cape Guardafui. But this notice is evidently simply a conjecture founded upon the Old Testament, having no historical value.

## CHAP. X. THE QUEEN OF SABA. SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND SPLENDOUR.

Vers. 1-13. VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SABA (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 1-12).—When the fame of Solomon's great wisdom came to the ears of the queen of Saba, probably through the Ophir voyages, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem, to convince herself of the truth of the report which had reached her, by putting it to the test by means of enigmas. שְׁבָא, Σαβά, is not Ethiopia or Meroë, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 5), who confounds שְׁבָא with סְבָא, and the Abyssinian Christians suppose (*vid.* Ludolfi *hist. Æth.* ii. 3), but the kingdom of the *Sabæans*, who were celebrated for their trade in incense, gold, and precious stones, and who dwelt in Arabia Felix, with the capital *Saba*, or the *Μαρίαβα* of the Greeks. This queen, who is called *Balkis* in the Arabian legend (cf. Koran, *Sur.* 27, and Pococke, *Specim. hist. Arab.* p. 60), heard the fame of Solomon לְשֵׁם יְהוָה; *i.e.* not “at the naming of the name of Jehovah” (Böttcher), nor “in respect of the glory of the Lord, with regard to that which Solomon had instituted for the glory of the Lord” (Thenius); nor even “serving to the glorification of God” (de Wette and Maurer); but literally, “belonging to the name of the Lord;” in other words, the fame which Solomon had acquired through the name of the Lord, or through the fact that the Lord had so glorified Himself in him (Ewald and Dietrich in *Ges. Lex. s.v.* לְ). “She came to try him with riddles,” *i.e.* to put his wisdom to the test by carrying on a conversation with him in riddles. The love of the Arabs for riddles, and their superiority in this *jeu d'esprit*, is sufficiently well known from the immense extent to which the Arabic literature abounds in *Mashals*. We have only to think of the large collections of proverbs made by Ali ben Abi Taleb and Meidani, or the *Makamen* of Hariri, which have been made accessible to all by F. Rückert's masterly translation into German, and which are distinguished by an amazing fulness of word-play and riddles. חִידָה, a riddle, is a pointed saying which merely hints at the deeper truth and leaves it to be guessed.—Vers. 2, 3. As the queen of a wealthy country, she came with a very large retinue. חֵיל does not mean a military force or an armed escort (Thenius), but riches, property; namely, her numerous retinue of men (עֲבָדִים, ver. 13), and camels laden with valuable treasures. The words יְקָרָה . . . נִמְלִים are an explanatory circumstantial clause, both here and also in the Chronicles,



where the cop. *Vav* stands before נִמְלִים (cf. Ewald, § 341, *a, b*). "And spake to Solomon all that she had upon her heart," *i.e.* in this connection, whatever riddles she had it in her mind to lay before him; "and Solomon told her all her sayings," *i.e.* was able to solve all her riddles. There is no ground for thinking of sayings of a religious nature, as the earlier commentators supposed, but simply of sayings the meaning of which was concealed, and the understanding of which indicated very deep wisdom.—Vers. 4, 5. She saw הֶבֶית, *i.e.* Solomon's palace, not the temple, and "the food of his table," *i.e.* both the great variety of food that was placed upon the king's table (ch. v. 2, 3), and also the costly furniture of the table (ver. 21), and "the seat of his retainers and the standing of his servants," *i.e.* the places in the palace assigned to the ministers and servants of the king, which were contrived with wisdom and arranged in a splendid manner. עֲבָדִים are the chief officers of the king, *viz.* ministers, counsellors, and *aides de camp*; מְשִׁרְתִּים, the court servants; מִוֶּשֶׁב, the rooms of the courtiers in attendance; מַעֲמָד, the standing-place, *i.e.* the rooms of the inferior servants, "and their clothing," which they received from the king; and מִשְׁקֵי, not his cup-bearers (LXX., Vulg.), but as in Gen. xl. 21, the drink, *i.e.* probably the whole of the drinking arrangements; וְעֹלָתוֹ, and his ascent, by which he was accustomed to go into the house of Jehovah. עֹלָה does not mean burnt-offering here, as the older translators have rendered it, but ascent, as in Ezek. xl. 26, and as the Chronicles have correctly explained it by עֲלִיתוֹ. For burnt-offering is not to be thought of in this connection, because the queen had nothing to see or to be astonished at in the presentation of such an offering. עֲלִיתוֹ is most likely "the king's outer entrance" into the temple, mentioned in 2 Kings xvi. 18; and the passage before us would lead us to suppose that this was a work of art, or an artistic arrangement. וְלֹא הָיָה וְגו', "and there was no more spirit in her:" she was beside herself with amazement, as in Josh. v. 1, ii. 11.—Vers. 6-9. She then said with astonishment to Solomon, that of what her eyes now saw she had not heard the half, through the report which had reached her of his affairs and of his wisdom, and which had hitherto appeared incredible to her; and not only congratulated his servants, who stood continually near him and could hear his wisdom, but also praised Jehovah his God, that out of His eternal love to His people Israel He had given them a king

to do justice and righteousness. The earlier theologians inferred from this praising of Jehovah, which involved faith in the true God, when taken in connection with Matt. xii. 42, that this queen had been converted to the true God, and conversed with Solomon on religious matters. But, as we have already observed at ch. v. 21, an acknowledgment of Jehovah as the God of Israel was reconcilable with polytheism. And the fact that nothing is said about her offering sacrifice in the temple, shows that the conversion of the queen is not to be thought of here.—Ver. 10. She thereupon presented to Solomon a hundred and twenty talents of gold (more than three million thalers [nearly half a million sterling—Tr.]), and a very large quantity of spices and precious stones. The **בְּשָׁמִים** probably included the genuine balsam of Arabia, even if **בִּנְשָׁם** was not the specific name of the genuine balsam. “There never more came so much of such spices to Jerusalem.” Instead of **לֹא בָּא . . . עוֹד לְרֹב** we find in the Chronicles, ver. 9, simply **לֹא הָיָה**, “there was nothing like this balsam,” which conveys the same meaning though expressed more indefinitely, since **כְּבִשְׁמֵם הָיָה** points back to the preceding words, “balsam (spices) in great quantity.”<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 11, 12. The allusion to these costly presents leads the historian to introduce the remark here, that the Ophir fleet also brought, in addition to gold, a large quantity of *Algummim* wood (see at ch. ix. 28) and precious stones. Of this wood Solomon had **מִסְעָר** or **מִסְלֹת** made for the temple and palace. **מִסְעָר**, from **סָעַר**, signifies a support, and **מִסְלָה** may be a later form for **סֵלָם**, a flight of steps or a staircase, so that we should have to think of steps with bannisters. This explanation is at any rate a safer one than that of “divans” (Thenius), which would have been quite out of place in the temple, or “narrow pannelled stripes on the floor” (Bertheau), which cannot in the smallest degree be deduced from **מִסְעָר**, or “support = moveables, viz. tables, benches, footstools, boxes, and drawers” (Böttcher), which neither harmonizes with the temple, where there was no such furniture, nor with the **מִסְלֹת** of the Chronicles. “And guitars and harps for the singers,” probably for the temple singers. **בְּנֹר** and **נָבֵל** are string instruments; the former resembling our guitar

<sup>1</sup> It was this which gave rise to the legend in Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 6), that it was through this queen that the root of the true balsam (*Opobalsamum*), which was afterwards cultivated in gardens at Jericho and Engedi, was first of all brought to Palestine (cf. Movers, *Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 226 sqq.).



rather than the harp, the strings being carried over the sounding-board upon a bridge, the latter being of a pitcher shape without any sounding bridge, as in the case of the harps.—Ver. 13. Solomon gave the queen of Saba all that she wished and asked for, beside what he gave her “according to the hand,” *i.e.* the might, of the king; that is to say, in addition to the presents answering to his might and his wealth, which he was obliged to give as a king, according to the Oriental custom. In the Chronicles (ver. 12) we find “beside that which she had brought (הַבִּיאָה) to the king,” which is an abbreviated expression for “beside that which he gave her in return for what she had brought to him,” or beside the return presents corresponding to her gifts to him, as it has been already correctly paraphrased by the Targum.

Vers. 14-22. SOLOMON'S WEALTH AND THE USE HE MADE OF IT (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 13-21).—Ver. 14. The gold which Solomon received in one year amounted to 666 talents,—more than seventeen million thalers (two million and a half sterling—Tr.). 666 is evidently a round number founded upon an approximative valuation. בִּשְׁנָה אָחַת is rendered in the Vulg. *per annos singulos*; but this is hardly correct, as the Ophir fleet, the produce of which is at any-rate included, did not arrive every year, but once in three years. Thenius is wrong in supposing that this revenue merely applies to the direct taxes levied upon the Israelites. It includes all the branches of Solomon's revenue, whether derived from his commerce by sea and land (cf. vers. 28, 29) or from the royal domains (1 Chron. xxvii. 26-31), or received in the form of presents from foreign princes, who either visited him like the queen of Saba or sent ambassadors to him (vers. 23, 24), excepting the duties and tribute from conquered kings, which are specially mentioned in ver. 15. לְבַר מֵאֲנָשֵׁי הָאֶרֶץ, beside what came in (בָּא לְשִׁלְמוֹה) from the travelling traders and the commerce of the merchants, and from all the kings, etc. אֲנָשֵׁי הַתְּהָרִים (a combination resembling our merchantmen; cf. Ewald, § 287, *e*, p. 721) are probably the tradesmen or smaller dealers who travelled about in the country, and רִבְלִים the wholesale dealers. This explanation of תְּהָרִים cannot be rendered doubtful by the objection that תִּיר only occurs elsewhere in connection with the wandering about of spies; for רִבֵּל signified originally to go about, spy out, or retail scandal, and after that to trade, and go about as a tradesman. מַלְכֵי הָעָרֹב are not kings of the auxiliary

and allied nations (Chald., Ges.), but kings of the mixed population, and according to Jer. xxv. 24, more especially of the population of Arabia Deserta (הַשְׁכָּנִים בְּמִדְבָּר), which bordered upon Palestine; for עָרַב is a mixed crowd of all kinds of men, who either attach themselves to a nation (Ex. xii. 38), or live in the midst of it as foreigners (Neh. xiii. 3), hence a number of mercenaries (Jer. l. 37). In 2 Chron. ix. 14, הָעָרַב is therefore correctly explained by the term עָרַב, which does not mean the whole of Arabia, but "only a tract of country not very extensive on the east and south of Palestine" (Gesenius), as these tribes were tributary to Solomon. פְּחוֹת הָאָרֶץ, the governors of the land, are probably the officers named in ch. iv. 7-19. As they collected the duties in the form of natural productions and delivered them in that form, so also did the tradesmen and merchants pay their duties, and the subjugated pastoral tribes of Arabia their tribute, *in natura*. This explains in a very simple manner why these revenues are separated from the revenue of Solomon which came in the form of money. פָּחָה is a foreign word, which first found its way into the Hebrew language after the times of the Assyrians, and sprang from the Sanscrit *paksha*, a companion or friend, which took the form of *pakkha* in Prakrit, and probably of *pakha* in the early Persian (*vid.* Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 195).—Vers. 16, 17. Solomon had 500 ornamental shields made, 200 larger ones (צִנִּים, *scuta*, targets), and 300 smaller (מִנִּים, *clypei*). These shields, like all the shields of the ancients, were made of wood or basket-work, and covered with gold plate instead of leather (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. pp. 296 sqq.). זָהָב שְׁחוּט does not mean *aurum jugulatum*, i.e. gold mixed with metal of a different kind, but, as Kimchi has shown, *aurum diductum*, beaten gold, from שָׁחַט, to stretch; since Solomon would certainly use pure gold for these ornamental shields. "Six hundred shekels of gold he spread upon one target," that is to say, he used for gilding one target. Six hundred shekels would weigh about 17½ lbs., so that the value of the gold upon a target would be more than 5000 thalers (£750), supposing that the Mosaic shekel is meant. But this is rendered doubtful by the fact that the gold upon the small shields is estimated at three minæ. If, for example, the three minæ are equal to three hundred shekels, according to 2 Chron. ix. 16, as is generally assumed, a hundred shekels are reckoned as one mina; and as the mina only contained fifty Mosaic shekels, according to Ezek.



xliv. 12, the reference must be to shekels after the king's weight (2 Sam. xiv. 26), which were only half the sacred shekel (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. p. 135). Consequently the gold plate upon one target was not quite 9 lbs., and that upon a shield not quite  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. These shields were intended for the body-guard to carry on state occasions (ch. xiv. 27, 28; 2 Chron. xii. 10), and were kept in the house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. vii. 2). —Vers. 18-20. Solomon had a great throne of ivory made, and had it overlaid with fine gold. כְּפֶאֱשָׁן is not a throne made of ivory, but one merely ornamented with ivory; and we are to imagine the gilding as effected by laying the gold simply upon the wood, and inserting the ivory within the gold plate. מִיָּפֹז, a *hophal* participle of פָּזַז: *aurum depuratum*, hence = מְהוֹר in 2 Chron. ix. 17. The throne had six steps, and a “rounded head on the hinder part thereof,” *i.e.* a back which was arched above or rounded off,<sup>1</sup> and יָרֵת, arms, *i.e.* arms on both sides of the seat (מְקוֹם הַשֵּׁבֶת), and two lions standing by the side of the arms. Beside this there were twelve lions upon the six steps, namely two upon each step, one on this side and one on that. Instead of אֲרָיִים (ver. 20) we find אֲרִיּוֹת in ver. 19, just as we do in both verses of the Chronicles, not because the reference is to artificial, inanimate figures and not to natural lions, as Thenius supposes, but because the plural ending יִם is an unusual one with this word; and even where natural lions are spoken of, we always find אֲרִיּוֹת in other passages (cf. Judg. xiv. 5; 2 Sam. i. 23; 2 Kings xvii. 25; Song of Sol. iv. 8, etc.). The lions were symbols of the ruler's authority; and the twelve lions upon the steps may possibly have pointed to the rule over the twelve tribes of Israel, which was concentrated in the throne; not “watchers of the throne,” as Thenius thinks. This throne was so splendid a work, that the historian observes that nothing of the kind had ever been made for any other kingdom. Upon the

<sup>1</sup> Instead of מֵאֲחֲרָיו לְכֶסֶּף עֲגוֹל רֹאשׁ עֲגוֹל we have in the Chronicles וְכִבֵּשׁ עֲגוֹל לְכֶסֶּף מֵאֲחֲרָיו, “and a footstool in gold fastened to the throne” (the plural מֵאֲחֲרָיו refers to the footstool and the steps). Now, however easily מֵאֲחֲרָיו may have been written by mistake for מֵאֲחֲרָיו, כִּבֵּשׁ וְזֶה cannot have grown out of רֹאשׁ עֲגוֹל by any such mistake. The *quid-pro-quo* of the LXX. for רֹאשׁ עֲגוֹל, προτομαλ μύσχα, in which עֲגוֹל is certainly confounded with עֲגוֹל, does not warrant the conjecture of Thenius, that the Chronicler found עֲגוֹל in his original and substituted כִּבֵּשׁ (lamb), whereupon כִּבֵּשׁ (lamb) was changed by another hand into כִּבְשָׁ, footstep, and רֹאשׁ was dropped altogether.

early Assyrian monuments we do indeed find high seats depicted, which are very artistically worked, and provided with backs and arms, and some with the arms supported by figures of animals (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 301), but none resembling Solomon's throne. It is not till a later age that the more splendid thrones appear (*vid.* Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenland*, iii. pp. 176 sqq.).—Vers. 21, 22. The drinking vessels of Solomon also were all of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon of costly gold (כָּנִיֹּר: see at ch. vi. 20). Silver was counted as nothing, because the Tarshish fleet arrived once in three years, bringing gold, silver, etc. (see at ch. ix. 28).

In vers. 23–29 everything that had to be stated concerning the wealth, wisdom, and revenue of Solomon is summed up as a conclusion (cf. 2 Chron. ix. 22–28 and i. 14–17).—Vers. 23 and 24 point back to ch. v. 9–14. וַיִּגְדַּל: Solomon became greater, not was greater, on account of the *Vāv consec.* בְּלִהְיוֹתָרְוֹ, all the world, corresponds to בְּלִהְיוֹתָרְוֹ in ch. v. 14. The foreigners out of all lands, who came on account of his wisdom, brought Solomon presents: gold and silver vessels, clothes (שְׂלֵמֹת, court dresses, which are still customary presents in the East), נִשְׂק, armour, spices, horses and mules.—Ver. 26 is simply a repetition of ch. v. 6 (compare also ch. ix. 19); and ver. 27 is merely a further extension of ver. 21. The words of ver. 27, “Solomon made silver like stones in Jerusalem, and cedars like the sycamores in the lowland for abundance,” are a hyperbolical description of his collection of enormous quantities of precious metals and costly wood. שִׁקְמִים, *sycomori*, mulberry fig-trees, are very rare in Palestine in its present desolate state (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 27), and are only met in any abundance in Egypt; but in ancient times they abounded in the lowlands of Palestine to such an extent, that they were used as common building wood (*vid.* Isa. ix. 9, on which Theodoret observes, *τούτων (συκαμίνων) ἡ Παλαιστίνη πεπλήρωται*). According to 1 Chron. xxvii. 28, the sycamore forests in the lowland of Judah were royal domains.—Vers. 28, 29 (cf. 2 Chron. i. 16, 17). “And (as for) the going out of horses from Egypt for Solomon, a company of king's merchants fetched (horses) for a definite price.” This is the only possible explanation of the verse according to the Masoretic punctuation; but to obtain it, the first מִקְנֵה must be connected with סוֹחְרֵי in opposition to the accents, and the second must be pointed מִקְנֵה. This is the rendering adopted by Ge-



senius in his *Thesaurus* and *Lexicon* (ed. Dietr. s. v. מִקָּוָה). The meaning company or troop may certainly be justified from Gen. i. 10, Ex. vii. 19, and Lev. xi. 36, where the word signifies an accumulation of water. Still there is something very strange not only in the application of the word both to a company of traders and also to a troop of horses, but also in the omission of כּוֹסִים (horses) after the second מִקָּוָה. Hence the rendering of the LXX. and Vulgate deserves attention, and may possibly be the one to be preferred (as Michaelis, Bertheau *on Chron.*, and Movers assume). The translators of these versions have taken מִקָּוָה as the name of a place, ἐξ Ἑκουέ, or rather ἐκ Κουέ, *de Coa*.<sup>1</sup> According to this, the rendering would be: "And as for the going out of horses from Egypt and Koa (or Kawe) for Solomon, the king's traders fetched them from Koa (Kawe) for a fixed price." It is true that the situation of *Koa* cannot be more precisely defined; but there seems to be very little doubt that it was a place for the collection of customs upon the frontier of Egypt.—Ver. 29. "And there came up and went out a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty shekels; and so (in the same manner as for Solomon) they led them out for all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram through their hand." מִרְכָּבָה, like רֶכֶב in 2 Sam. viii. 4, x. 18, and Ezek. xxxix. 20, denotes a chariot with the team of horses belonging to it, possibly three horses (see at ch. v. 6), not *quadriga* (Clericus and others), or two draught horses and two as a reserve (Thenius). For the inference, that if a horse cost 150 shekels, a team of four would be obtained for 600, is not quite a certain one, since the chariot itself would certainly not be given in. A hundred and fifty shekels are a little more than 130 thalers (£19, 10s.—Tr.), and 600 would be 525 thalers (£78, 15s.). These amounts are sufficient to show how untenable the opinion of Movers is, that the sums mentioned are not the prices paid for horses and chariots, but the payment made for their exit, or the customs duty. And his other opinion is equally erroneous, namely that the chariots and horses were state carriages and horses of luxury intended for the king.—The merchants are called the king's

<sup>1</sup> That Κουέ or Κωέ is the earliest reading of the LXX., and not the ἐκ Ἑκουέ of the Cod. Vat. and Alex., is very evident from the statement which we find in the *Onomast.* of Eusebius (ed. Larsow et Parth. p. 260), Κώδ, πλῆσιον Αἰγύπτου; for which Jerome has *Coa, quæ est juxta Ægyptum*, after the Vulgate.

traders, not because a portion of their profits went into the royal treasury as the tax upon trade (Bertheau), nor as the brokers who bought for the king (Thenius), but because they carried on their trade for the king's account. בִּירָם cannot be adduced as evidence to the contrary; for linguists require no proof that this cannot mean "*auf ihre Hand*," as Thenius assumes. Böttcher's explanation is the right one, namely, "through their hand," inasmuch as they brought the horses and chariots themselves even to those kings who lived at a greater distance, without employing intermediate agents. The kings of the חֵתִים, the Hittites in the wider sense (= Canaanites, as in Josh. i. 4, 2 Kings vii. 6, Ezek. xvi. 3), and of Aram, were in part Solomon's vassals, since his rule extended over all the Canaanites with the exception of the Phœnicians, and over several kingdoms of Aram.

CHAP. XI. SOLOMON'S POLYGAMY AND IDOLATRY. HIS OPPONENTS,  
AND HIS DEATH.

The idolatry into which Solomon fell in his old age appears so strange in a king so wise and God-fearing as Solomon showed himself to be at the dedication of the temple, that many have been quite unable to reconcile the two, and have endeavoured to show either that Solomon's worship of idols was psychologically impossible, or that the knowledge of God and the piety attributed to him are unhistorical. But great wisdom and a refined knowledge of God are not a defence against the folly of idolatry, since this has its roots in the heart, and springs from sensual desires and the lust of the flesh. The cause assigned in the biblical account for Solomon's falling away from the Lord, is that he loved many strange, *i.e.* foreign or heathen, wives, who turned his heart from Jehovah to their own gods in his old age. Consequently the falling away did not take place suddenly, but gradually, as Solomon got old, and was not a complete renunciation of the worship of Jehovah, to whom he offered solemn sacrifices three times a year, and that certainly to the day of his death (ch. ix. 25), but consisted simply in the fact that his heart was no longer thoroughly devoted to the Lord (ch. xi. 4), and that he inclined towards the idols of his foreign wives and built them altars (vers. 5-8); that is to say, it consisted merely in a syncretic mixture of Jehovah-worship and idolatry, by which the worship which should be paid solely



and exclusively to the true God was not only injured, but was even turned into idolatry itself, Jehovah the only true God being placed on a level with the worthless gods of the heathen. —Love to foreign wives no doubt presupposed an inclination to foreign customs ; it was not, however, idolatry in itself, but was still reconcilable with that sincere worship of Jehovah which is attributed to Solomon in the earlier years of his reign. At the same time it was a rock on which living faith and true adherence to the Lord might at last suffer shipwreck. And we may even infer from the repeated warnings of God (ch. iii. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4), that from the earliest years of his reign Solomon was in danger of falling into idolatry. This danger did, indeed, spring in his case from his inclination to foreign customs ; but this inclination was again influenced by many of the circumstances of his reign, which we must regard as contributing more remotely to his eventual fall. And among the first of these we must place the splendour and glory of his reign. Through long and severe conflicts David had succeeded in conquering all the enemies of Israel, and had not only helped his people to peace and prosperity, but had also raised the kingdom to great power and glory. And Solomon inherited these fruits of his father's reign. Under the blessings of peace he was not only able to carry out the work of building a splendid temple, which his father had urged upon him, but was also able, by a wise use of the sources already existing and by opening new ones, still further to increase the treasures which he had collected, and thereby to exalt the splendour of his kingdom. The treaty with Hiram of Tyre, which enabled him to execute the intended state buildings in Jerusalem, was followed by alliances for the establishment of a widespread commerce both by sea and land, through which ever increasing treasures of gold and silver, and other costly goods, were brought to the king. As this accumulation of riches helped to nourish his inclination to a love of show, and created a kind of luxury which was hardly reconcilable with the simplicity of manners and the piety of a servant of God, so the foreign trade led to a toleration of heathen customs and religious views which could not fail to detract from the reverence paid to Jehovah, however little the trade with foreigners might be in itself at variance with the nature of the Old Testament kingdom of God. And again, even the great wisdom of king Solomon might also become a rock en-

dangering his life of faith, not so much in the manner suggested by J. J. Hess (*Gesch. Dav. u. Sal.* ii. p. 413), namely, that an excessive thirst for inquiry might easily seduce him from the open and clearer regions of the kingdom of truth into the darker ones of the kingdom of lies, *i.e.* of magic, and so lead him to the paths of superstition; as because the widespread fame of his wisdom brought distinguished and wise men from distant lands to Jerusalem and into alliance with the king, and their homage flattered the vanity of the human heart, and led to a greater and greater toleration of heathen ways. But these things are none of them blamed in the Scriptures, because they did not of necessity lead to idolatry, but might simply give an indirect impulse to it, by lessening the wall of partition between the worship of the true God and that of heathen deities, and making apostasy a possible thing. The Lord Himself had promised and had given Solomon wisdom, riches, and glory above all other kings for the glorification of his kingdom; and these gifts of God merely contributed to estrange his heart from the true God for the simple reason, that Solomon forgot the commandments of the Lord and suffered himself to be besotted by the lusts of the flesh, not only so as to love many foreign wives, but so as also to take to himself wives from the nations with which Israel was not to enter into any close relationship whatever.

Vers. 1-13. SOLOMON'S LOVE OF MANY WIVES AND IDOLATRY. —Vers. 1, 2. "Solomon loved many foreign wives, and that along with the daughter of Pharaoh." וְאֶת-בֵּת פ', standing as it does between נָשִׁים נִכְרִיּוֹת ר' and מוֹאָבִיּוֹת, cannot mean "and especially the daughter of P.," as Thenius follows the earlier commentators in supposing, but must mean, as in ver. 25, "and that with, or along with," *i.e.* actually beside the daughter of Pharaoh. She is thereby distinguished from the foreign wives who turned away Solomon's heart from the Lord, so that the blame pronounced upon those marriages does not apply to his marriage to the Egyptian princess (see at ch. iii. 1). All that is blamed is that, in opposition to the command in Deut. xvii. 17, Solomon loved (1) *many* foreign wives, and (2) Moabitish, Ammonitish, and other wives, of the nations with whom the Israelites were not to intermarry. All that the law expressly prohibited was marriage with Canaanitish women (Deut. vii. 1-3; Ex. xxxiv. 16); consequently the words "of the nations," etc., are



not to be taken as referring merely to the Sidonian and Hittite women (J. D. Mich.); but this prohibition is extended here to all the tribes enumerated in ver. 2, just as in Ezra ix. 2 sqq., x. 3, Neh. xiii. 23; not from a rigour surpassing the law, but in accordance with the spirit of the law, namely, because the reason appended to the law, *ne in idololatriam a superstitionibus mulieribus pellicerentur* (Clericus), applied to all these nations. The Moabites and Ammonites, moreover, were not to be received into the congregation at all, not even to the tenth generation, and of the Edomites only the children in the third generation were to be received (Deut. xxiii. 4, 8, 9). There was all the less reason, therefore, for permitting marriages with them, that is to say, so long as they retained their nationality or their heathen ways. The words *לֹא-תִבְנֶה בָּכֶם* . . . are connected in form with Josh. xxiii. 12, but, like the latter, they really rest upon Ex. xxxiv. 16 and Deut. vii. 1-3. In the last clause *בָּהֶם* is used with peculiar emphasis: Solomon clave to these nations, of which God had said such things, to love, *i.e.* to enter into the relation of love or into the marriage relation, with them. *יָדַבֵּק* is used of the attachment of a man to his wife (Gen. ii. 4) and also to Jehovah (Deut. iv. 4, x. 20, etc.).—Vers. 3-8 carry out still further what has been already stated. In ver. 3 the taking of *many* wives is first explained. He had seven hundred *נָשִׁים שָׂרוֹת*, women of the first rank, who were exalted into princesses, and three hundred concubines. These are in any case round numbers, that is to say, numbers which simply approximate to the reality, and are not to be understood as affirming that Solomon had all these wives and concubines at the same time, but as including all the women who were received into his harem during the whole of his reign, whereas the sixty queens and eighty concubines mentioned in Song of Sol. vi. 8 are to be understood as having been present in the court at one time. Even in this respect Solomon sought to equal the rulers of other nations, if not to surpass them.<sup>1</sup>—These women “inclined his heart,” *i.e.* determined the inclina-

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless these numbers, especially that of the wives who were raised to the rank of princesses, appear sufficiently large to suggest the possibility of an error in the numeral letters, although Oriental rulers carried this custom to a very great length, as for example Darius Codomannus, of whom it is related that he took with him 360 *pellices* on his expedition against Alexander (see Curtius, iii. 3, 24; Athen. *Deipnos*. iii. 1).

tion of his heart. Ver. 4. In the time of old age, when the flesh gained the supremacy over the spirit, they turned his heart to other gods, so that it was no longer wholly with Jehovah, his God. **שֵׁלֵם**, *integer*, i.e. entirely devoted to the Lord (cf. ch. viii. 61), like the heart of David his father, who had indeed grievously sinned, but had not fallen into idolatry. —Vers. 5–8. He walked after the Ashtaroth, etc. According to ver. 7, the idolatry here condemned consisted in the fact that he built altars to the deities of all his foreign wives, upon which they offered incense and sacrifice to their idols. It is not stated that he himself also offered sacrifice to these idols. But even the building of altars for idols was a participation in idolatry which was irreconcilable with true fidelity to the Lord. **עֲשֵׂתוֹרַת**, Astarte, was the chief female deity of all the Canaanitish tribes; her worship was also transplanted from Tyre to Carthage, where it flourished greatly. She was a moon-goddess, whom the Greeks and Romans called sometimes *Aphrodite*, sometimes *Urania*, *Σεληναίη*, *Celestis*, and *Juno* (see the Comm. on Judg. ii. 13). **מִלְכָּם**, which is called **מִלְכָּה** (without the article) in ver. 7, and **מִלְכָּם** in Jer. xlix. 1, 3, and Amos i. 15, the abomination of the Ammonites, must not be confounded with the *Molech* (**מֹלֵךְ**, always with the article) of the early Canaanites, to whom children were offered in sacrifice in the valley of Benhinnom from the time of Ahaz onwards (see the Comm. on Lev. xviii. 21), since they had both of them their separate places of worship in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 10 and 13), and nothing is ever said about the offering of children in sacrifice to Milcom; although the want of information prevents us from determining the precise distinction between the two. *Milcom* was at any rate related to the *Chemosh* of the Moabites mentioned in ver. 7; for Chemosh is also described as a god of the Ammonites in Judg. xi. 24, whereas everywhere else he is called the god of the Moabites (Num. xxi. 29; Amos i. 15, etc.). *Chemosh* was a sun-god, who was worshipped as king of his people and as a god of war, and as such is depicted upon coins with a sword, lance, and shield in his hands, and with two torches by his side (see at Num. xxi. 29). The enumeration of the different idols is incomplete; Chemosh being omitted in ver. 5, and Astarte, to whom Solomon also built an altar in Jerusalem, according to 2 Kings xxiii. 13, in ver. 7. Still this incompleteness does not warrant our filling



up the supposed gaps by emendations of the text. וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע וְנֹו, as in Judg. ii. 11, iii. 7, etc. מִלֵּא אַחֲרֵי יי, a pregnant expression for מִלֵּא לְלֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי יי, as in Num. xiv. 24, xxxii. 11, 12, etc. —These places of sacrifice (בְּמָה, see at ch. iii. 2) Solomon built upon the mountain in front, *i.e.* to the east, of Jerusalem, and, according to the more precise account in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, to the right, that is to say, on the southern side, of the Mount of Corruption,—in other words, upon the southern peak of the Mount of Olives; and consequently this peak has been called in church tradition from the time of Brocardus onwards, either *Mons Offensionis*, after the Vulgate rendering of הַר הַמִּשְׁחָה in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, or *Mons Scandali*, Mount of Offence (*vid.* Rob. Pal. i. 565 and 566).—Ver. 8. “So did he for all his foreign wives,” *viz.* built altars for their gods; for instance, in addition to those already named, he also built an altar for Astarte. These three altars, which are only mentioned in the complete account in 2 Kings xxiii. 13, were sufficient for all the deities of the foreign wives. For the Hittites and Edomites do not appear to have had any deities of their own that were peculiar to themselves. The Hittites no doubt worshipped Astarte in common with the Sidonians, and the Edomites probably worshipped Milcom. In the whole of the Old Testament the only place in which gods of the Edomites are mentioned is 2 Chron. xxv. 20, and there no names are given. Of course we must except Pharaoh’s daughter, according to ver. 1, and the remarks already made in connection with that verse; for she brought no idolatrous worship to Jerusalem, and consequently even in later times we do not find the slightest trace of Egyptian idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah.<sup>1</sup> Burning incense (מִקְטֹרֶת) is mentioned before sacrificing (מִזְבְּחֹת), because vegetable offerings took precedence of animal sacrifices in the nature-worship of Hither Asia (*vid.* Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 237 sqq.).—Vers. 9 sqq. Through this apostasy from the Lord his God, who had appeared

<sup>1</sup> From the fact that these places of sacrifice still existed even in the time of Josiah, notwithstanding the reforms of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, and Hezekiah, which rooted out all public idolatry, at least in Jerusalem, Movers infers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 207), and that not without reason, that there was an essential difference between these sacred places and the other seats of Israelitish idolatry which were exterminated, namely, that in their national character they were also the places of worship for the foreigners settled in and near Jerusalem, *e.g.* the Sidonian, Ammonitish, and Moabitish merchants, which were under the protection of treaties, since this is the only ground on which

to him twice (ch. iii. 5 sqq. and ix. 2 sqq.) and had warned him against idolatry (וַיִּצַח is a continuation of the participle הַנִּרְאָה), Solomon drew down upon himself the anger of Jehovah. The emphasis lies upon the fact that God had appeared to him Himself for the purpose of warning him, and had not merely caused him to be warned by prophets, as Theodoret has explained. In consequence of this, the following announcement is made to him, no doubt through the medium of a prophet, possibly Ahijah (ver. 29): "Because this has come into thy mind, and thou hast not kept my covenant, . . . I will tear the kingdom from thee and give it to thy servant; nevertheless I will not do it in thy lifetime for thy father David's sake: howbeit I will not tear away the whole kingdom; one tribe I will give to thy son." In this double limitation of the threatened forfeiture of the kingdom there is clearly manifested the goodness of God (δείκνυσιν τὴν ἀμετρον ἀγαθότητα—Theodoret); not, however, with reference to Solomon, who had forfeited the divine mercy through his idolatry, but with regard to David and the selection of Jerusalem: that is to say, not from any special preference for David and Jerusalem, but in order that the promise made to David (2 Sam. vii.), and the choice of Jerusalem as the place where His name should be revealed which was connected with that promise, might stand immoveably as an act of grace, which no sin of men could overturn (*vid.* ver. 36). For שָׁבַט אָהֵר see the Comm. on vers. 31, 32.

Vers. 14–40. SOLOMON'S OPPONENTS.—Although the punishment with which Solomon was threatened for his apostasy was not to be inflicted till after his death, the Lord raised up several adversaries even during his lifetime, who endangered the peace of his kingdom, and were to serve as constant reminders that he owed his throne and his peaceable rule over the whole of the kingdom inherited from his father solely to the mercy, the fidelity, and the long-suffering of God.—The rising up of Hadad and Rezon took place even before the com- we can satisfactorily explain their undisturbed continuance at Jerusalem. But this would not preclude their having been built by Solomon for the worship of his foreign wives; on the other hand, it is much easier to explain their being built in the front of Jerusalem, and opposite to the temple of Jehovah, if from the very first regard was had to the foreigners who visited Jerusalem. The objection offered by Thenius to this view, which Bertheau had already adopted (*zur Gesch. der Isr.* p. 323), has been shown by Böttcher (*N. exeg. Ährenl.* ii. p. 95) to be utterly untenable.



mencement of Solomon's idolatry, but it is brought by יָקָם יְהוָה (ver. 14) into logical connection with the punishment with which he is threatened in consequence of that idolatry, because it was not till a later period that it produced any perceptible effect upon his government, yet it ought from the very first to have preserved him from self-security.

Vers. 14-22. The *first* adversary was *Hadad* the Edomite, a man of royal birth. The name הָדָד (אֲדָד in ver. 17, according to an interchange of ה and א which is by no means rare) was also borne by a præ-Mosaic king of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 35), from which we may see that it was not an uncommon name in the royal family of the Edomites. But the conjecture of Ewald and Thenius, that our Hadad was a grandson of Hadar, the last of the kings mentioned there, is quite a groundless one, since it rests upon the false assumption that Hadar (called Hadad in the Chronicles by mistake) reigned in the time of David (see the Comm. on Gen. xxxvi. 31 sqq.). הָדָד before בְּאֲדָוִם stands in the place of the relative אֲשֶׁר: "of royal seed he = who was of the royal seed in Edom" (cf. Ewald, § 332, a).—Vers. 15 sqq. When David had to do with the Edomites, . . . Hadad fled. הָיָה אֵת is analogous to הָיָה עִם, to have to do with any one, though in a hostile sense, as in the phrase to go to war with (אֵת) a person, whereas עִם generally means to be upon the side of any one. The correctness of the reading בְּהִיּוֹת is confirmed by all the ancient versions, which have simply paraphrased the meaning in different ways. For Böttcher has already shown that the LXX. did not read בְּהִכּוֹת, as Thenius supposes. The words from בְּעָלֹת to the end of ver. 16 form explanatory circumstantial clauses. On the circumstance itself, compare 2 Sam. viii. 13, 14, with the explanation given there. "The slain," whom Joab went to bury, were probably not the Israelites who had fallen in the battle in the Salt valley (2 Sam. viii. 13), but those who had been slain on the invasion of the land by the Edomites, and still remained unburied. After their burial Joab defeated the Edomites in the valley of Salt, and remained six months in Edom till he had cut off every male. "All Israel" is the whole of the Israelitish army. "Every male" is of course only the men capable of bearing arms, who fell into the hands of the Israelites; for "Hadad and others fled, and the whole of the Idumæan race was not extinct" (Clericus). Then *Hadad* fled, while yet a little boy, with some of his father's

Edomitish servants, to go to Egypt, going first of all to Midian and thence to Paran. The country of *Midian* cannot be more precisely defined, inasmuch as we meet with Midianites sometimes in the peninsula of Sinai on the eastern side of the Elanitic Gulf, where Edrisi and Abulfeda mention a city of Madian (see at Ex. ii. 15), and sometimes on the east of the Moabitish territory (see at Num. xxii. 4 and Judg. vi. 1). Here, at any rate, we must think of the neighbourhood of the Elanitic Gulf, though not necessarily of the city of Madian, five days' journey to the south of Aela; and probably of the country to which Moses fled from Egypt. *Paran* is the desert of that name between the mountains of Sinai and the south of Canaan (see at Num. x. 12), through which the Haj route from Egypt by Elath to Mecca still runs. Hadad would be obliged to take the road by Elath in order to go to Egypt, even if he had taken refuge with the Midianites on the east of Moab and Edom.—Vers. 18 sqq. From Paran they took men with them as guides through the desert. Thus Hadad came to Egypt, where Pharaoh received him hospitably, and gave them a house and maintenance (לָחֵם), and also assigned him land (אֲרָץ) to cultivate for the support of the fugitives who had come with him, and eventually, as he found great favour in his eyes, gave him for a wife the sister of his own wife, queen *Tachpenes*, who bare him a son, *Genubath*. This son was weaned by Tachpenes in the royal palace, and then brought up among (with) the children of Pharaoh, the royal princes. According to Rosellini and Wilkinson (*Ges. Thes.* p. 1500), Tachpenes was also the name of a female deity of Egypt. The wife of Pharaoh is called הַנְּבִיָּרָה, i.e. the mistress among the king's wives, as being the principal consort. In the case of the kings of Judah this title is given to the king's mother, probably as the president in the harem, whose place was taken by the reigning queen after her death. The weaning, probably a family festival as among the Hebrews (Gen. xxi. 8) and other ancient nations (*vid.* Dougtæi *Analecta* ss. i. 22 sq.), was carried out by the queen in the palace, because the boy was to be thereby adopted among the royal children, to be brought up with them.—Vers. 21, 22. When Hadad heard in Egypt of the death of David and Joab, he asked permission of Pharaoh to return to his own country. Pharaoh replied, "What is there lacking to thee with me?" This answer was a pure expression



of love and attachment to Hadad, and involved the request that he would remain. But Hadad answered, "No, but let me go." We are not told that Pharaoh then let him go, but this must be supplied; just as in Num. x. 32 we are not told what Hobab eventually did in consequence of Moses' request, but it has to be supplied from the context. The return of Hadad to his native land is clearly to be inferred from the fact that, according to vers. 14 and 25, he rose up as an adversary of Solomon.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 23-25. A *second* adversary of Solomon was *Rezon*, the son of Eliadah (for the name see at ch. xv. 18), who had fled from his lord Hadadezer, king of Zobah, and who became the captain of a warlike troop (רִצְיָה), when David smote *them* (דָּהָה), i.e. the troops of his lord (2 Sam. viii. 3, 4). Rezon probably fled from his lord for some reason which is not assigned,

<sup>1</sup> The LXX. have supplied what is missing *e conjectura*: καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν Ἀδερ (i.e. Hadad) εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ· αὐτὴ ἡ κακία ἣν ἐποίησεν Ἀδερ καὶ ἐβαρύνθησεν Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν γῇ Ἐδὼμ. Thenius proposes to alter the Hebrew text accordingly, and draws this conclusion, that "shortly after the accession of Solomon, Hadad, having returned from Egypt, wrested from the power of the Israelites the *greatest* part of Edom, probably the true mountain-land of Edom, so that certain places situated in the plain, particularly Ezion-geber, remained in the hands of the Israelites, and intercourse could be maintained with that port through the *Arabah*, even though not quite without disturbance." This conclusion, which is described as "historical," is indeed at variance with 1 Kings xxii. 48, according to which Edom had no king even in the time of Jehoshaphat, but only a vicegerent, and also with 2 Kings viii. 20, according to which it was not till the reign of Jehoshaphat's son Joram that Edom fell away from Judah. But this discrepancy Thenius sets aside by the remark at 1 Kings xxii. 48, that in Jehoshaphat's time the family of Hadad had probably died out, and Jehoshaphat prudently availed himself of the disputes which arose concerning the succession to enforce Judah's right of supremacy over Edom, and to appoint first a vicegerent and then a new king, though perhaps one not absolutely dependent upon him. But this conjecture as to the relation in which Jehoshaphat stood to Edom is proved to be an imaginary fiction by the fact that, although the history does indeed mention a revolt of the Edomites from Judah (2 Chron. xx.; see at 1 Kings xxii. 48), it not only says nothing whatever about the dying out of the royal family of Hadad or about disputes concerning the succession, but it does not even hint at them.—But with regard to the additions made to this passage by the LXX., to which even Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 276) attributes historical worth, though without building upon them such confident historical combinations as Thenius, we may easily convince ourselves of their critical worthlessness, if we only pass our eye over the whole section (vers. 14-25), instead of merely singling out those readings of the LXX. which support our preconceived opinions, and overlooking all the rest, after the thoroughly unscientific mode of criticism adopted by a Thenius or Böttcher.

when the latter was engaged in war with David, before his complete overthrow, and collected together a company from the fugitives, with which he afterwards marched to Damascus, and having taken possession of that city, made himself king over it. This probably did not take place till towards the close of David's reign, or even after his death, though it was at the very beginning of Solomon's reign; for "he became an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon (*i.e.* during the whole of his reign), and that with (beside) the mischief which Hadad did, and he abhorred Israel (*i.e.* became disgusted with the Israelitish rule), and became king over Aram." אֲשֶׁר הָדָד is an abbreviated expression, to which עָשָׂה may easily be supplied, as it has been by the LXX. (*vid.* Ewald, § 292, *b*, *Anm.*). It is impossible to gather from these few words in what the mischief done by Hadad to Solomon con-

For example, the LXX. have connected together the two accounts respecting the adversaries Hadad and Rezon who rose up against Solomon (ver. 14 and ver. 23), which are separated in the Hebrew text, and have interpolated what is stated concerning Rezon in vers. 23 and 24 after הָאֲרָמִי in ver. 14, and consequently have been obliged to alter וַיְהִי שָׁמָּה וְגו' in ver. 25 into καὶ ἦσαν Σατάν, because they had previously cited Hadad and Rezon as adversaries, whereas in the Hebrew text these words apply to Rezon alone. But the rest of ver. 25, namely the words from וְאֶת-הָרֶעָה onwards, they have not given till the close of ver. 22 (LXX.); and in order to connect this with what precedes, they have interpolated the words καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν Ἀδερ εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ. The Alexandrians were induced to resort to this intertwining of the accounts concerning Hadad and Rezon, which are kept separate in the Hebrew text, partly by the fact that Hadad and Rezon are introduced as adversaries of Solomon with the very same words (vers. 14 and 23), but more especially by the fact that in ver. 25 of the Hebrew text the injury done to Solomon by Hadad is merely referred to in a supplementary manner in connection with Rezon's enterprise, and indeed is inserted parenthetically within the account of the latter. The Alexandrian translators did not know what to make of this, because they did not understand וְאֶת-הָרֶעָה and took וְאֶת for וְאֵת, αὐτὴ ἡ κακία. With this reading וַיִּקֶּץ which follows was necessarily understood as referring to Hadad; and as Hadad was an Edomite, וַיִּמְלֶךְ עַל-אֲרָם had to be altered into ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν γῇ Ἐδῶμ. Consequently all the alterations of the LXX. in this section are simply the result of an arbitrary treatment of the Hebrew text, which they did not really understand, and consist of a collocation of all that is homogeneous, as every reader of this translation who is acquainted with the original text must see so clearly even at the very beginning of the chapter, where the number of Solomon's wives is taken from ver. 3 of the Hebrew text and interpolated into ver. 1, that, as Thenius observes, "the true state of the case can only be overlooked from superficiality of observation or from preconceived opinion."



sisted.<sup>1</sup> Rezon, on the other hand, really obtained possession of the rule over Damascus. Whether at the beginning or not till the end of Solomon's reign cannot be determined, since all that is clearly stated is that he was Solomon's adversary during the whole of his reign, and attempted to revolt from him from the very beginning. If, however, he made himself king of Damascus in the earliest years of his reign, he cannot have maintained his sway very long, since Solomon afterwards built or fortified Tadmor in the desert, which he could not have done if he had not been lord over Damascus, as the caravan road from Gilead to Tadmor (Palmyra) went past Damascus.<sup>2</sup>

Vers. 26-40. *Attempted rebellion of Jeroboam the Ephraimite.*—Hadad and Rezon are simply described as adversaries (שָׁטָן) of Solomon; but in the case of Jeroboam it is stated that "he lifted up his hand against the king," i.e. he stirred up a tumult or rebellion. הָרִים יָדָּב is synonymous with נִשָּׂא יָדָּב in 2 Sam. xviii. 28, xx. 21. It is not on account of this rebellion, which was quickly suppressed by Solomon, but on account of the later enterprise of Jeroboam, that his personal history is so minutely detailed. Jeroboam was an Ephraimite (אֶפְרַתִּי, as in 1 Sam. i. 1, Judg. xii. 5) of Zereda, i.e. Zarthan, in the Jordan valley (see ch. vii. 46), son of a widow, and עֶבֶר, i.e. not a subject (Then.), but an officer, of Solomon. All that is related of his rebellion against the king is the circumstances under which it took place. זֶה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר, this is how it stands with, as in Josh. v. 4. Solomon built Millo (ch. ix. 15), and closed the rent (the defile?) in the city of David. פֶּרֶץ, *ruptura*, cannot be a rent or breach in the wall of the city of David, inasmuch as חוֹמָה is not added, and since the fortification of the city by David (2 Sam. v. 9) no

<sup>1</sup> What Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 7, 6) relates concerning an alliance between Hadad and Rezon for the purpose of making hostile attacks upon Israel, is merely an inference drawn from the text of the LXX., and utterly worthless.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 276. It is true that more could be inferred from 2 Chron. viii. 3, if the conquest of the city of Hamath by Solomon were really recorded in that passage, as Bertheau supposes. But although חָזַק עָלֵי is used to signify the conquest of tribes or countries, we cannot infer the conquest of the city of Hamath from the words, "Solomon went to Hamath Zobah וַיַּחֲזֶק עָלֶיהָ and built Tadmor," etc., since all that וַיַּחֲזֶק עָלֶיהָ distinctly expresses is the establishment of his power over the land of Hamath Zobah. And this Solomon could have done by placing fortifications in that province, because he was afraid of rebellion, even if Hamath Zobah had not actually fallen away from his power.

hostile attack had ever been made upon Jerusalem; but in all probability it denotes the ravine which separated Zion from Moriah and Ophel, the future *Tyropæon*, through the closing of which the temple mountain was brought within the city wall, and the fortification of the city of David was completed (Thenius, Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 330). Compare מִפְּרֵץ, a gap in the coast, a bay. On the occasion of this building, Jeroboam proved himself a גִּבּוֹר הָיִל, *i.e.* a very able and energetic man; so that when Solomon saw the young man, that he was doing work, *i.e.* urging it forward, he committed to him the oversight over all the heavy work of the house of Joseph. It must have been while occupying this post that he attempted a rebellion against Solomon. This is indicated by זֶה הַדָּבָר וְגו' in ver. 27. According to ch. xii. 4, the reason for the rebellion is to be sought for in the appointment of the Ephraimites to heavy works. This awakened afresh the old antipathy of that tribe to Judah, and Jeroboam availed himself of this to instigate a rebellion.—Vers. 29 sqq. At that time the prophet Ahijah met him in the field and disclosed to him the word of the Lord, that he should become king over Israel. בָּעֵת הַהִיא: at that time, *viz.* the time when Jeroboam had become overseer over the heavy works, and not after he had already stirred up the rebellion. For the whole of the account in vers. 29–39 forms part of the explanation of וַיְהִי בָּעֵת הַהִיא which commences with ver. 27b, so that וַיְהִי בָּעֵת הַהִיא is closely connected with וַיִּפְקֹד אֹתוֹ in ver. 28, and there is no such gap in the history as is supposed by Thenius, who builds upon this opinion most untenable conjectures as to the intertwining of different sources. At that time, as Jeroboam was one day going out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah of Shilo (Seilun) met him by the way (בַּדֶּרֶךְ), with a new upper garment wrapped around him; and when they were alone, he rent the new garment, that is to say, his own, not Jeroboam's, as Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 388) erroneously supposes, into twelve pieces, and said to Jeroboam, "Take thee ten pieces, for Jehovah saith, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and give thee ten tribes; and one tribe shall remain to him (Solomon) for David's sake," etc. The new שָׁלְמָה was probably only a large four-cornered cloth, which was thrown over the shoulders like the *Heik* of the Arabs, and enveloped the whole of the upper portion of the body (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. pp. 36, 37). By the tearing of the new garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam



was to take *ten* for himself, the prophetic announcement was symbolized in a very emphatic manner. This symbolical action made the promise a completed fact. "As the garment was torn in pieces and lay before the eyes of Jeroboam, so had the division of the kingdom already taken place in the counsel of God" (O. v. Gerlach). There was something significant also in the circumstance that it was a *new* garment, which is stated twice, and indicates the newness, *i.e.* the still young and vigorous condition, of the kingdom (Thenius).

In the word of God explaining the action it is striking that Jeroboam was to receive *ten* tribes, and the *one* tribe was to remain to Solomon (vers. 31, 32, 35, 36, as in ver. 13). The nation consisted of twelve tribes, and Ahijah had torn his garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam was to take ten; so that there were two remaining. It is evident at once from this, that the numbers are intended to be understood symbolically and not arithmetically. *Ten* as the number of completeness and totality is placed in contrast with *one*, to indicate that all Israel was to be torn away from the house of David, as is stated in ch. xii. 20, "they made Jeroboam king over *all* Israel," and only one single fragment was to be left to the house of Solomon out of divine compassion. This one tribe, however, is not Benjamin, the one tribe beside Judah, as Hupfeld (on Ps. lxxx.), C. a Lap., Mich., and others suppose, but, according to the distinct statement in ch. xii. 20, "the tribe of Judah only." Nevertheless Benjamin belonged to Judah; for, according to ch. xii. 21, Rehoboam gathered together the whole house of Judah *and the tribe of Benjamin* to fight against the house of Israel (which had fallen away), and to bring the kingdom again to himself. And so also in 2 Chron. xi. 3 and 23 Judah and Benjamin are reckoned as belonging to the kingdom of Rehoboam. This distinct prominence given to Benjamin by the side of Judah overthrows the explanation suggested by Seb. Schmidt and others, namely, that the description of the portion left to Rehoboam as *one* tribe is to be explained from the fact that Judah and Benjamin, on the border of which Jerusalem was situated, were regarded in a certain sense as one, and that the little Benjamin was hardly taken into consideration at all by the side of the great Judah. For if Ahijah had regarded Benjamin as one with Judah, he would not have torn his garment into twelve pieces, inasmuch as if Benjamin was to be merged in Judah, or was not

to be counted along with it as a distinct tribe, the whole nation could only be reckoned as eleven tribes. Moreover the twelve tribes did not so divide themselves, that Jeroboam really received ten tribes and Rehoboam only one or only two. In reality there were three tribes that fell to the kingdom of Judah, and only nine to the kingdom of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh being reckoned as two tribes, since the tribe of Levi was not counted in the political classification. The kingdom of Judah included, beside the tribe of Judah, both the tribe of Benjamin and also the tribe of Simeon, the territory of which, according to Josh. xix. 1-9, was within the tribe-territory of Judah and completely surrounded by it, so that the Simeonites would have been obliged to emigrate and give up their tribe-land altogether, if they desired to attach themselves to the kingdom of Israel. But it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. xv. 9 and xxxiv. 6 that an emigration of the whole tribe had taken place (see also at ch. xii. 17). On the other hand, whilst the northern border of the tribe of Benjamin, with the cities of Bethel, Ramah, and Jericho, fell to the kingdom of Jeroboam (ch. xii. 29, xv. 17, 21, xvi. 34), several of the cities of the tribe of Dan were included in the kingdom of Judah, namely, Ziklag, which Achish had presented to David, and also Zorea and Ajalon (2 Chron. xi. 10, xxviii. 18), in which Judah obtained compensation for the cities of Benjamin of which it had been deprived.<sup>1</sup> Consequently there

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the fact that in Ps. lxxx. 2 Benjamin is placed between Ephraim and Manasseh is no proof that it belonged to the kingdom of Israel; nor can this be inferred from the fact that Benjamin, as the tribe to which Saul belonged, at the earlier split among the tribes took the side of those which were opposed to David, and that at a still later period a rebellion originated with Benjamin. For in Ps. lxxx. 2 the exposition is disputed, and the jealousy of Benjamin towards Judah appears to have become extinct with the dying out of the royal house of Saul. Again, the explanation suggested by Oehler (Herzog's *Cycl.*) of the repeated statement that the house of David was to receive only *one* tribe, namely, that there was not a single whole tribe belonging to the southern kingdom beside Judah, is by no means satisfactory. For it cannot be proved that any portion of the tribe of Simeon ever belonged to the kingdom of Israel, although the number ten was not complete without it. And it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. xv. 9 that Simeonites had settled outside their tribe-territory. And, as a rule, single families or households that may have emigrated cannot be taken into consideration as having any bearing upon the question before us, since, according to the very same passage of the Chronicles, many members of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh had emigrated to the kingdom of Judah.



only remained nine tribes for the northern kingdom. For *לְמַעַן עֲבַדִּי וְגו'* see at ver. 13. For ver. 33 compare vers. 4-8. The plurals *עֲזָבוּנִי*, *יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ*, and *הֵלְכִי* are not open to critical objection, but are used in accordance with the fact, since Solomon did not practise idolatry alone, but many in the nation forsook the Lord along with him. *צִרְנִין*, with a Chaldaic ending (see Ges. § 87, 1, *a*). In vers. 34-36 there follows a more precise explanation: Solomon himself is not to lose the kingdom, but to remain prince all his life, and his son is to retain one tribe; both out of regard to David (*vid.* vers. 12 and 13). *כִּי נָשִׂיא*, *אֲשֶׁתֶּנִּי*, "but I will set him for prince," inasmuch as leaving him upon the throne was not merely a divine permission, but a divine act. "That there may be a light to my servant David always before me in Jerusalem." This phrase, which is repeated in ch. xv. 4, 2 Kings viii. 19, 2 Chron. xxi. 7, is to be explained from 2 Sam. xxi. 17, where David's regal rule is called the light which God's grace had kindled for Israel, and affirms that David was never to want a successor upon the throne.—Vers. 37-39. The condition on which the kingdom of Jeroboam was to last was the same as that on which Solomon had also been promised the continuance of his throne in ch. iii. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4, namely, faithful observance of the commandments of God. The expression, "be king over all that thy soul desireth," is explained in what follows by "all Israel." It is evident from this that Jeroboam had aspired after the throne. On the condition named, the Lord would build him a lasting house, as He had done for David (see at 2 Sam. vii. 16). In the case of Jeroboam, however, there is no allusion to a lasting duration of the *מַמְלָכָה* (kingdom) such as had been ensured to David; for the division of the kingdom was not to last for ever, but the seed of David was simply to be chastised. *לְמַעַן זֹאת*, for this, *i.e.* because of the apostasy already mentioned; "only not all the days," *i.e.* not for ever. *וְאֶעֱנֶה* is explanatory so far as the sense is concerned: "for I will humble." Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, and therefore his house was extirpated at the death of his son (ch. xv. 28 sqq.).—Ver. 40 is a continuation of *וַיִּרְם יָד בַּמֶּלֶךְ* in ver. 26; for vers. 27-39 contain simply an explanation of Jeroboam's lifting up his hand against Solomon. It is obvious from this that Jeroboam had organized a rebellion against Solomon; and also, as ver. 29 is closely connected with ver. 28, that this did not take place till after the

prophet had foretold his reigning over ten tribes after Solomon's death. But this did not justify Jeroboam's attempt; nor was Ahijah's announcement an inducement or authority to rebel. Ahijah's conduct was perfectly analogous to that of Samuel in the case of Saul, and is no more to be attributed to selfish motives than his was, as though the prophetic order desired to exalt itself above the human sovereign (Ewald; see, on the other hand, Oehler's article in Herzog's *Cycl.*). For Ahijah expressly declared to Jeroboam that Jehovah would let Solomon remain prince over Israel during the remainder of his life. This deprived Jeroboam of every pretext for rebellion. Moreover the prophet's announcement, even without this restriction, gave him no right to seize with his own hand and by means of rebellion upon that throne which God intended to give to him. Jeroboam might have learned how he ought to act under these circumstances from the example of David, who had far more ground, according to human opinion, for rebelling against Saul, his persecutor and mortal foe, and who nevertheless, even when God had delivered his enemy into his hand, so that he might have slain him, did not venture to lay his hand upon the anointed of the Lord, but waited in pious submission to the leadings of his God, till the Lord opened the way to the throne through the death of Saul. By the side of David's behaviour towards Saul the attempt of Jeroboam has all the appearance of a criminal rebellion, so that Solomon would have been perfectly justified in putting him to death, if Jeroboam had not escaped from his hands by a flight into Egypt.—On *Shishak* see at ch. xiv. 25.

Vers. 41–43. *Conclusion of the history of Solomon.*—Notice of the original works, in which further information can be found concerning his acts and his wisdom (see the Introduction); the length of his reign, viz. forty years; his death, burial, and successor. Solomon did not live to a very great age, since he was not more than twenty years old when he ascended the throne.—Whether Solomon turned to the Lord again with all his heart, a question widely discussed by the older commentators (see Pfeifferi *Dubia rex.* p. 435; Buddei *hist. eccl.* ii. p. 273 sqq.), cannot be ascertained from the Scriptures. If the Preacher *Koheleth*) is traceable to Solomon so far as the leading thoughts are concerned, we should find in this fact an evidence of his conversion, or at least a proof that at the close of his life Solomon



discovered the vanity of all earthly possessions and aims, and declared the fear of God to be the only abiding good, with which a man can stand before the judgment of God.

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## II.—HISTORY OF THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FORMER.

### CHAP. XII.—2 KINGS XVII.

After the death of Solomon the Israelitish kingdom of God was rent asunder, through the renunciation of the Davidic sovereignty by the ten tribes, into the two kingdoms of Israel (the ten tribes) and Judah; and through this division not only was the external political power of the Israelitish state weakened, but the internal spiritual power of the covenant nation was deeply shaken. And whilst the division itself gave rise to two small and weak kingdoms in the place of one strong nation, the power of both was still further shaken by their attitude towards each other.—The history of the two kingdoms divides itself into three epochs. In the *first* epoch, *i.e.* the period from Jeroboam to Omri in Israel, and from Rehoboam to Asa in Judah (1 Kings xii.—xvi.), they maintained a hostile attitude towards each other, until Israel sustained a severe defeat in a great war with Judah; and on the renewal of its attacks upon Judah, king Asa called the Syrians to his help, and thereby entangled Israel in long and severe conflicts with this powerful neighbouring state. The hostility terminated in the *second* epoch, under Ahab and his sons Ahaziah and Joram in Israel, and under Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah of Judah, since the two royal families connected themselves by marriage, and formed an alliance for the purpose of a joint attack upon their foreign foes, until the kings of both kingdoms, *viz.* Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, were slain at the same time by Jehu (1 Kings xvii.—2 Kings x. 27). This period of union was followed in the *third* epoch, from Jehu in Israel and Joash in Judah onwards, by further estrangement and reciprocal attacks, which led eventually to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians through the untheoretical policy of Ahaz.

If we take a survey of the attitude of the two kingdoms towards the Lord, the invisible God-King of His people, during these three epochs, to all appearance the idolatry was stronger in the kingdom of Judah than in the kingdom of Israel. For in the latter it is only under Ahab and his two sons, under whom the worship of Baal was raised into the state religion at the instigation of Jezebel the Phœnician wife of Ahab, that we meet with the actual worship of idols. Of the other kings both before and afterwards, all that is related is, that they walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and did not desist from his sin, the worship of the calves. In the kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, out of thirteen kings, only five were so truly devoted to the Lord that they promoted the worship of Jehovah and opposed idolatry (viz. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, and Hezekiah). Of the others, it is true that Joash and Amaziah walked for a long time in the ways of the Lord, but in the closing years of their reign they forsook the God of their fathers to serve idols and worship them (2 Chron. xxiv. 18 and xxv. 14 sqq.). Even Rehoboam was strengthened at the outset in the worship of Jehovah by the Levites who emigrated from the kingdom of the ten tribes to Judah; but in the course of three years he forsook the law of the Lord, and Judah with him, so that altars of high places, Baal columns, and Asherah idols, were set up on every hill and under every green tree, and there were even male prostitutes in the land, and Judah practised all the abominations of the nations that were cut off before Israel (1 Kings xiv. 23, 24; 2 Chron. xi. 13–17, xii. 1). In all these sins of his father Abijam also walked (1 Kings xv. 3). At a later period, in the reign of Joram, the worship of Baal was transplanted from Israel to Judah and Jerusalem, and was zealously maintained by Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah. It grew still worse under Ahaz, who even went so far as to set up an idolatrous altar in the court of the temple and to close the temple doors, for the purpose of abolishing altogether the legal worship of Jehovah. But notwithstanding this repeated spread of idolatry, the apostasy from the Lord was not so great and deep in the kingdom of Judah as in the kingdom of Israel. This is evident from the fact that idolatry could not strike a firm root there, inasmuch as the kings who were addicted to it were always followed by pious and God-fearing rulers, who abolished the idolatrous abominations, and nearly all of whom had long



reigns ; so that during the 253 years which intervened between the division of the kingdom and the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, idolatry did not prevail in Judah for much more than fifty-three years,<sup>1</sup> and for about 200 years the worship of the true God was maintained according to the commandment of the law. This constant renewal of a victorious reaction against the foreign deities shows very clearly that the law of God, with its ordinances and institutions for divine worship, had taken firm and deep root in the people and kingdom, and that the reason why idolatry constantly revived and lifted up its head afresh was, that the worship of Jehovah prescribed in the law made no concessions to the tendency to idolatry in hearts at enmity against God. It was different with the kingdom of the ten tribes. There the fact that idolatry only appeared in the reigns of Ahab and his sons and successors, is to be accounted for very simply from the attitude of that kingdom towards the Lord and His lawful worship. Although, for instance, the secession of the ten tribes from the house of David was threatened by God, as a punishment that would come upon Solomon and his kingdom on account of Solomon's idolatry ; on the part of the rebellious tribes themselves it was simply the ripe fruit of their evil longing for a less theocratic and more heathen kingdom, and nothing but the work of opposition to the royal house appointed by Jehovah, which had already shown itself more than once in the reign of David, though it had been suppressed again by the weight of his government, which was strong in the Lord.

This opposition became open rebellion against the Lord, when Jeroboam, its head, gave the ten tribes a religious constitution opposed to the will of God for the purpose of establishing his throne, and not only founded a special sanctuary for his subjects, somewhat after the model of the tabernacle or of the temple at Jerusalem, but also set up golden calves as symbols and images of Jehovah the invisible God, to whom no likeness can be made. This image-worship met the wishes and religious cravings of the sensual and carnally-minded people, because it so far filled up the gap between the legal

<sup>1</sup> Namely, fourteen years under Rehoboam, three under Abijah, six under Joram, one under Ahaziah, six under Athaliah, and sixteen under Ahaz,—in all forty-six years ; to which we have also to add the closing years of the reigns of Joash and Amaziah.

worship of Jehovah and the worship of the nature-deities, that the contrast between Jehovah and the Baalim almost entirely disappeared, and the principal ground was thereby removed for the opposition on the part of the idolatrous nation to the stringent and exclusive worship of Jehovah. In this respect the worship of the calves worked more injuriously upon the religious and moral life of the nation than the open worship of idols. This sin of Jeroboam is therefore "the ground, the root and cause of the very sinful development of the kingdom of Israel, which soon brought down the punishment of God, since even from the earliest time one judgment after another fell openly upon the kingdom. For beside the sin of Jeroboam, that which was the ground of its isolation continued to increase, and gave rise to tumult, opposing aspirants to the throne, and revolutionary movements in the nation, so that the house of Israel was often split up within itself" (Ziegler). Therefore the judgment, with which even from the time of Moses the covenant nation had been threatened in case of obstinate rebellion against its God, namely the judgment of dispersion among the heathen, fell upon the ten tribes much earlier than upon Judah, because Israel had filled up the measure of sin earlier than Judah.

The chronological computation of this period, both as a whole and in its separate details, is one of the more difficult features connected with this portion of the history of the Israelitish kingdom. As our books give not only the length of time that every king both of Israel and Judah reigned, but also the time when every king of Israel ascended the throne, calculated according to the year of the reign of the contemporaneous king of Judah, and *vice versa*, these accounts unquestionably furnish us with very important help in determining the chronology of the separate data; but this again is rendered difficult and uncertain by the fact, that the sum-total of the years of the several kings is greater, as a rule, than the number of years that they can possibly have reigned according to the synchronistic accounts of the contemporaneous sovereigns in the other kingdom. Chronologists have therefore sought from time immemorial to reconcile the discrepancies by assuming inaccuracies in the accounts, or regencies and interregna. The necessity for such assumptions is indisputable, from the fact that the discrepancies in the numbers of the years are absolutely



irreconcilable without them.<sup>1</sup> But if the application of them in the several cases is not to be dependent upon mere caprice, the reconciliation of the sum-totals of the years that the different kings reigned with the differences which we obtain from the chronological data in the synchronistic accounts must be effected upon a fixed and well-founded historical principle, regencies and interregna being only assumed in cases where there are clear indications in the text. Most of the differences can be reconciled by consistently observing and applying the principle pointed out in the Talmud, viz. that the years of the kings are reckoned from Nisan to Nisan, and that with such precision, that even a single day before or after Nisan is reckoned as equal to a year,—a mode of reckoning which is met with even in the New Testament, *e.g.* in the statement that Jesus rose from the dead after three days, or on the third day, and also in the writings of Josephus, so that it is no doubt an early Jewish custom,<sup>2</sup>—for, according to this, it is not necessary to assume a single interregnum in the kingdom of Judah, and only one regency (that

<sup>1</sup> This is indirectly admitted even by O. Wolff (in his *Versuch die Widersprüche in den Jahrreihen der Könige Juda's und Israel's und andere Differenzen in der bibl. Chronologie auszugleichen*; *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1858, p. 625 sqq.), though for the most part he declares himself opposed to such assumptions as arbitrary loopholes, inasmuch as, with his fundamental principle to adhere firmly to the years of the reigns of the kings of Judah as normative, he is only able to effect a reconciliation by shortening at his pleasure the length of the reigns given in the text for the kings of Israel in the period extending from Rehoboam to the death of Ahaziah of Judah, and in the following period by arbitrarily interpolating a thirty-one years' interregnum of the Israelitish kings in the kingdom of Judah between Amaziah and Uzziah.

<sup>2</sup> Compare *Gemara babyl. tract. ראש השנה*, c. i. fol. 3, p. 1, ed. Amstel.: אין מונין להם למלכים אלא מניסן, “non numerant in regibus nisi a Nisano” (*i.e.* *regum annos non nisi a Nisano numerant*). After quoting certain passages, he says as a proof of this, חסדא לא שני אלא למלכי ישראל, “dixit R. Chasda: hoc non docent nisi de regibus Israelitarum.”—*Ibid.* fol. 2, p. 2: ניסן ראש השנה למלכים ויום אחד בשנה השוב שנה, “Nisanus initium anni regibus, ac dies quidem unus in anno (*videl. post calendas Nisani*) instar anni computatur.”—*Ibid.*: יום אחד בסוף שנה השוב שנה, “unus dies in fine anni pro anno computatur.” For the examples of the use of this mode of calculation in Josephus, see Wieseler, *chronol. Synopse der vier Evangelien* (Hamb. 1852), p. 52 sqq. They are sufficient of themselves to refute the assertion of Joach. Hartmann, *Systema chronol. bibl.*, Rostoch. 1777, p. 253 sq., that this is a mere invention of the Rabbins and later commentators, even though the biblical writers may not have carried it out to such an extent as to reckon one single day before or after the commencement of Nisan as equal to a whole year, as is evident from 2 Kings xv. 17 and 23.

of Joram with his father Jehoshaphat), which is clearly indicated in the text (2 Kings viii. 16); and in the kingdom of Israel there is no necessity to assume a single regency, and only two interregna (the first after Jeroboam II., the second between Pekah and Hoshea). — If, for example, we arrange the chronological data of the biblical text upon this principle, we obtain for the period between the division of the kingdom and the Babylonian captivity the following table, which only differs from the statements in the text in two instances,<sup>1</sup> and has a guarantee of its correctness in the fact that it coincides with the well-established chronological data of the universal history of the ancient world.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Namely, in the fact that the commencement of the reign of Jehoahaz of Israel is placed in the twenty-second year of Joash of Judah, and not in the twenty-third, according to 2 Kings xiii. 1, and that that of Azariah or Uzziah of Judah is placed in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam of Israel, and not the twenty-seventh, according to 2 Kings xv. 1. The reasons for this will be given in connection with the passages themselves.

<sup>2</sup> Not only with the ordinary chronological calculation as to the beginning and end of this entire period, which has been adopted in most text-books of the biblical history, and taken from Usseii *Annales Vet. et Novi Test.*, but also with such data of ancient history as have been astronomically established. For the fourth year of Jehoiakim, with which the captivity or seventy years' servitude of the Jews in Babylon commences, coincides with the twenty-first year of the reign of Nabopolassar, in the fifth year of whose reign an eclipse of the moon, recorded in *Almagest*, was observed, which eclipse, according to the calculation of Ideler (in the *Abhdl. der Berliner Academie der Wissensch. für histor. Klasse* of the year 1814, pp. 202 and 224), took place on April 22 of the year 621 B.C. Consequently the twenty-first year of Nabopolassar, in which he died, coincides with the year 605 B.C.; and the first conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which occurred before the death of Nabopolassar, took place in the year 606 B.C.—Compare with this Marc. Niebuhr's *Geschichte Assurs und Babels*, p. 47. Among other things, this scholar observes, at p. 5, note 1, that "the whole of the following investigation has given us no occasion whatever to cherish any doubts as to the correctness of the narratives and numbers in the Old Testament;" and again, at p. 83 sqq., he has demonstrated the agreement of the chronological data of the Old Testament from Azariah or Uzziah to the captivity with the Canon of Ptolemy, and in so doing has only deviated two years from the numbers given in our chronological table, by assigning the battle at Carchemish to the year 143 *æra Nabonas.*, i.e. 605 B.C., the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, 144 *æra Nab.*, or 604 B.C., and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple to the year 162 *æra Nab.*, or 586 B.C.,—a difference which arises chiefly from the fact that Niebuhr reckons the years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar given in the Old Test. from the death of Nabopolassar in the year 605, and assumes that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar corresponded to the year 605 B.C.



*Chronological View of the Principal Events from the Division of  
the Kingdom to the Babylonian Captivity.*

Year from the division of the Kingdom.	Kingdom of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah.	Kingdom of Israel.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Israel.	Kingdoms of the World.	Year before the birth of Christ.
1	Rehoboam, reigned 17 years	1	Jeroboam, reigned 22 years	1	Shishak of Egypt, plunders Jeru- salem . . .	975
18	Abijam, r. 3 y.	—	. . . . .	18	. . . . .	971
20	Asa, r. 41 y.	—	. . . . .	20	. . . . .	957
22	. . . . .	2	Nadab, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	955
23	. . . . .	3	Baasha, r. 24 y.	—	. . . . .	953
					Serah the Cushite	952
					Benhadad I. of Syria . . .	940
45	. . . . .	26	Ela, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	939
46	. . . . .	27	Simri, r. 7 days	—	. . . . .	930
46	. . . . .	27	Tibni & Omri, r. 4 years	—	. . . . .	929
50	. . . . .	31	Omri alone, r. 8 y.	—	. . . . .	929
					Ithobal, king of Tyre and Sidon.	925
57	. . . . .	38	Ahab, r. 22 y.	—	. . . . .	918
61	Jehoshaphat, r. 25 years	—	. . . . .	4	. . . . .	914
					Benhadad II. in Syria.	
78	. . . . .	17	Ahaziah, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	897
79	. . . . .	18	Joram, r. 12 y.	—	. . . . .	896
	Joram, regent 2 y.	(23)	. . . . .	5	. . . . .	891
86	Jehoshaphat †.	—	. . . . .	(7)	. . . . .	889
	Joram r. 6 y. more	—	. . . . .	12	. . . . .	884
91	Ahaziah, r. 1 y.	—	. . . . .		Hazael in Syria.	
92	Athaliah, r. 6 y.	—	Jehu, r. 28 y.	—	. . . . .	883
98	Joash, r. 40 y.	—	. . . . .	7	. . . . .	877
119	. . . . .	22?	Jehoahaz, r. 17 y.	—	. . . . .	856
135	. . . . .	37	Jehoash, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . .	840
					Benhadad III. in Syria.	
137	Amaziah, r. 29 y.	—	. . . . .	2	. . . . .	838
151	. . . . .	15	Jeroboam II. r. 41 y.	—	. . . . .	824
165	Uzziah, r. 52 y.	—	. . . . .	15?	. . . . .	810
192	. . . . .	(27)	Jeroboam †. An- archy 11 years	—	. . . . .	783
203	. . . . .	38	Zechariah, r. 6 months	—	. . . . .	772
204	. . . . .	39	Shallum, r. 1 mon.	—	. . . . .	771
204	. . . . .	39	Menahem, r. 10 y.	—	. . . . .	771
					Pul, king of As- syria.	
215	. . . . .	50	Pekahiah, r. 2 y.	—	. . . . .	760
216	. . . . .	52	Pekah, r. 20 y.	—	. . . . .	759

Year from the division of the Kingdom.	Kingdom of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah.	Kingdom of Israel.	Year of the reign Kings of Israel.	Kingdoms of the World.	Year before the birth of Christ.
217	Jotham, r. 16 y.	—	. . . . .	2		758
					Building of Rome	753
233	Ahaz, r. 16 y.	—		17	Nabonasar . .	747
236	. . . . .	4	Pekah †. Anarchy 8½ months	—	Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria	742
245		12	Hoshea, r. 9 y.	—	So, king of Egypt	739
248	Hezekiah, r. 29 y.	—		3		730
253	. . . . .	6	Destruction of the Kingdom	—	Salmanasar, king of Assyria	727
						722
261	. . . . .		Sennacherib, king of Assyria, besieges Jerusalem Merodach-Baladan's embassy.			714
277	Manasseh, r. 55 y.		Esarhaddon sends colonists to Samaria.			698
332	Amon, r. 2 y.					643
334	Josiah, r. 31 y.					641
			Nabopolasar, king of Babylon . . . . .			626
365	Jehoahaz, r. 3 mon.		Battle at Megiddo with Pharaoh-Necho . . . . .			610
365	Jehoiakim, r. 11 y.					610
369	Beginning of the Captivity		Battle at Carchemish and conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar			606
			Nabopolasar † . . . . .			605
376	Jehoiachin, r. 3 months		Second conquest of Jerusalem and deportation			599
376	Zedekiah, r. 11 y.					599
			Pharaoh-Hophra, king of Egypt.			599
387	Destruction of Jerusalem					588
	Jehoiachin's ele- vation		Evil-merodach . . . . .			562
	End of the Cap- tivity		Cyrus sole ruler . . . . .			536

1. FROM THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM TO THE ASCENT OF THE THRONE BY AHAB IN THE 38TH YEAR OF ASA KING OF JUDAH.

CHAP. XII.—XVI. 28.

This epoch embraces only fifty-seven years, which are filled up in the kingdom of Judah by the reigns of three kings, and in the kingdom of Israel by six rulers from four different houses, Jeroboam's sin of rebellion against the ordinance and commandment of God having produced repeated rebellions, so that one



dynasty was ever rising up to overthrow and exterminate another. —Commencing with the secession of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, we have first of all an account of the founding of the kingdom of Israel (ch. xii.), and of the predictions of the prophets concerning the introduction of the calf-worship (ch. xiii.) and the rejection of Jeroboam and his house by God (ch. xiv. 1–20); and after this the most important facts connected with the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijam, and Asa are given (ch. xiv. 21–xv. 24); and, finally, a brief history of the kingdom of Israel from the ascent of the throne by Nadab to the death of Omri (ch. xv. 25–xvi. 28).

CHAP. XII. SECESSION OF THE TEN TRIBES FROM THE HOUSE  
OF DAVID, AND FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

The jealousy which had prevailed from time immemorial between Ephraim and Judah, the two most powerful tribes of the covenant nation, and had broken out on different occasions into open hostilities (Judg. viii. 1 sqq.; 2 Sam. ii. 9, xix. 42 sqq.), issued, on the death of Solomon, in the division of the kingdom; ten tribes, headed by Ephraim, refusing to do homage to Rehoboam, the son and successor of Solomon, and choosing Jeroboam the Ephraimite as their king. Now, although the secession of the ten tribes from the royal house of David had been ordained by God as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry, and not only had Solomon been threatened with this punishment, but the sovereignty over ten tribes had been promised to Jeroboam by the prophet Ahijah, whilst the secession itself was occasioned by Rehoboam's imprudence; yet it was essentially a rebellion against the Lord and His anointed, a conspiracy on the part of these tribes against Judah and its king Rehoboam. For apart from the fact that the tribes had no right to choose at their pleasure a different king from the one who was the lawful heir to the throne of David, the very circumstance that the tribes who were discontented with Solomon's government did not come to Jerusalem to do homage to Rehoboam, but chose Sichem as the place of meeting, and had also sent for Jeroboam out of Egypt, showed clearly enough that it was their intention to sever themselves from the royal house of David; so that the harsh reply given by Rehoboam to their petition that the service imposed upon them might be lightened, furnished them with the

desired opportunity for carrying out the secession upon which they had already resolved, and for which Jeroboam was the suitable man. And we have already shown at ch. xi. 40 that the promise of the throne, which Jeroboam had already received from God, neither warranted him in rebelling against Solomon, nor in wresting to himself the government over the tribes that were discontented with the house of David after Solomon's death. The usurpation of the throne was therefore Jeroboam's first sin (vers. 1-24), to which he added a second and much greater one immediately after his ascent of the throne, namely, the establishment of an unlawful worship, by which he turned the political division into a religious schism and a falling away from Jehovah the God-King of His people (vers. 25-33).

Vers. 1-24. SECESSION OF THE TEN TRIBES (cf. 2 Chron. x. 1-xi. 4).—Vers. 1-4. Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel had come thither to make him king. "All Israel," according to what follows (cf. vers. 20 and 21), was the ten tribes beside Judah and Benjamin. The right of making king the prince whom God had chosen, *i.e.* of anointing him and doing homage to him (compare 1 Chron. xii. 38, where הַמֶּלֶךְ alternates with מִשְׁפָּחַ לְמֶלֶךְ, 2 Sam. ii. 4, v. 3), was an old traditional right in Israel, and the tribes had exercised it not only in the case of Saul and David (1 Sam. xi. 15; 2 Sam. ii. 4, v. 3), but in that of Solomon also (1 Chron. xxix. 22). The ten tribes of Israel made use of this right on Rehoboam's ascent of the throne; but instead of coming to Jerusalem, the residence of the king and capital of the kingdom, as they ought to have done, and doing homage there to the legitimate successor of Solomon, they had gone to Sichem, the present Nablus (see at Gen. xii. 6 and xxxiii. 18), the place where the ancient national gatherings were held in the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xxiv. 1), and where Abimelech the son of Gideon had offered himself as king in the time of the Judges (Judg. ix. 1 sqq.). On the choice of Sichem as the place for doing homage Kimchi has quite correctly observed, that "they sought an opportunity for transferring the government to Jeroboam, and therefore were unwilling to come to Jerusalem, but came to Sichem, which belonged to Ephraim, whilst Jeroboam was an Ephraimite." If there could be any further doubt on the matter, it would be removed by the fact that they had sent for Jeroboam the son of Nebat to come from Egypt, whither he had



fled from Solomon (ch. xi. 40), and attend this meeting, and that Jeroboam took the lead in the meeting, and no doubt suggested to those assembled the demand which they should lay before Rehoboam (ver. 4).<sup>1</sup>—The construction of vers. 2 and 3 is a complicated one, since it is only in **וַיָּבֹאוּ** in ver. 3 that the apodosis occurs to the protasis **וַיְהִי בִשְׁמוֹעַ וְגו'**, and several circumstantial clauses intervene. "And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard, *sc.* that Solomon was dead and Rehoboam had been made king . . . he was still in Egypt, however, whither he had fled from king Solomon; and as Jeroboam was living in Egypt, they had sent and called him . . . that Jeroboam came and the whole congregation of Israel," etc. On the other hand, in 2 Chron. x. 2 the construction is very much simplified, and is rendered clearer by the alteration of **וַיָּשֶׁב יִר'** **בְּמִצְרַיִם**, "and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt," into **וַיָּשֶׁב יִר' מִמִּצְרַיִם**, "that Jeroboam returned from Egypt."<sup>2</sup>—Ver. 4. The persons assembled desired that the burdens which Solomon had laid upon them should be lightened, in which case they would serve Rehoboam, *i.e.* would yield obedience to him as their king. **הֲקֵל מֵעֲבֹדֶת אָבִיךָ**, "make light away from the service of thy father,"

<sup>1</sup> "This pretext was no doubt furnished to the people by Jeroboam, who, because he had formerly been placed above Ephraim as superintendent of the works, could most craftily suggest calumnies, from the things which he knew better than others."—(Seb. Schmidt.)

<sup>2</sup> At the same time, neither this explanation in the Chronicles, nor the fact that the Vulgate has the same in our text also, warrants our making alterations in the text, for the simple reason that the deviation in the Chronicles and Vulgate is so obviously nothing but an elucidation of our account, which is more obscurely expressed. There is still less ground for the interpolation, which Thenius has proposed, from the clauses contained in the Septuagint partly after ch. xi. 43, partly in ch. xii. between vers. 24 and 25, and in an abbreviated form once more after ch. xiii. 34, so as to obtain the following more precise account of the course of the rebellion which Jeroboam instigated, and of which we have not a very minute description in ch. xi. 26: "Solomon having appointed Jeroboam superintendent of the tributary labour in Ephraim, for the purpose of keeping in check the Sichemites, who were probably pre-eminently inclined to rebel, directed him to make a fortress, which already existed upon Mount Gerizim under the name of *Millo*, into a strong prison (**צִירָה**), from which the whole district of Gerizim, the table-land, received the name of the land of *Zerirah*, and probably made him governor of it and invested him with great power. When holding this post, Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon, but was obliged to flee. Having now returned from Egypt, he assembled the members of his own tribe, and with them he first of all besieged this prison, for the purpose of making himself lord of the surrounding district.

*i.e.* reduce what was imposed upon us by thy father. Solomon had undoubtedly demanded greater performances from the people than they had previously been accustomed to, not only to meet the cost of maintaining the splendour of his court, but also and principally to carry out his large and numerous buildings. But in return for this, he had secured for his people not only the blessings of undisturbed peace throughout his whole reign, but also great wealth from the trade and tribute of the subjugated nations, so that there cannot have been any well-grounded occasion for complaint. But when, as is too often the case, men overlooked the advantages and blessings which they owed to his government, and fixed their attention in a one-sided manner merely upon the performances which the king demanded, it might appear as though he had oppressed his people with excessive burdens.

Vers. 5–24. In order that the request of the tribes might be maturely weighed, Rehoboam directed them to appear before him again in three days, and in the meantime discussed the matter with the older counsellors, who had served his father.—Ver. 7. These counsellors said (the singular יִדְבָרִי is

Now this castle was the citadel of the city in which Jeroboam was born, to which he had just returned, and from which they fetched him to take part in the negotiations with Rehoboam. Its ruins are still in existence, according to Robinson (*Pal.* iii. p. 99), and from all that has been said it was not called Zeredah (ch. xi. 26), but (after the castle) Zerira." This is what Thenius says. But if we read the two longer additions of the LXX. quite through, we shall easily see that the words ἠκοδόμησε τῷ Σαλαμών τὴν ἐν ὄρει Ἐφραΐμ do not give any more precise historical information concerning the building of the Millo mentioned in ch. xi. 27, since this verse is repeated immediately afterwards in the following form: οὗτος ἠκοδόμησε τὴν ἄκραν ἐν ταῖς ἄρσεσιν οἴκου Ἐφραΐμ, οὗτος συνέκλεισε τὴν πόλιν Δαβίδ,—but are nothing more than a legendary supplement made by an Alexandrian, which has no more value than the statement that Jeroboam's mother was named *Sarira* and was γυνὴ πόρνη. The name of the city Σαριρά is simply the Greek form of the Hebrew צֶרֶה, which the LXX. have erroneously adopted in the place of צֶרֶה as the reading in ch. xi. 26. But in the additional clauses in question in the Alexandrian version, Σαριρά is made into the residence of king Jeroboam and confounded with *Thirza*; what took place at *Thirza* according to ch. xiv. 17 (of the Hebrew text) being transferred to *Sarira*, and the following account being introduced, viz. that Jeroboam's wife went ἐκ Σαριρά to the prophet Ahijah to consult him concerning her sick son, and on returning heard of the child's death as she was entering the city of *Sarira*.—These remarks will be quite sufficient to prove that the Alexandrian additions have not the least historical worth.



used, because one of them spoke in the name of the whole), "If thou wilt be subservient to this people to-day (now), and servest them, and hearkenest to them, . . . they will serve thee for ever."—Vers. 8 sqq. But Rehoboam forsook this advice, and asked the younger ministers who had grown up with him. They advised him to overawe the people by harsh threats. "My little finger is stronger than my father's loins." קִטְיָ, from קָטַן, littleness, *i.e.* the little finger (for the form, see Ewald, § 255, b),—a figurative expression in the sense of, I possess much greater might than my father. "And now, my father laid a heavy yoke upon you, and I will still further add to your yoke (lay still more upon you): my father chastised you with whips, I will chastise you with scorpions." עֲקָרְבִּים, *scorpiones*, are whips with barbed points like the point of a scorpion's sting.<sup>1</sup> This advice was not only imprudent, "considering all the circumstances" (Seb. Schmidt), but it was unwise in itself, and could only accelerate the secession of the discontented. It was the language of a tyrant, and not of a ruler whom God had placed over His people. This is shown in vers. 13, 14: "The king answered the people harshly, and forsook the counsel of the old men," *i.e.* the counsellors who were rich in experience, and spoke according to the counsels of the young men, who flattered his ambition. It is very doubtful, indeed, whether the advice of the old men would have been followed by so favourable a result; it might probably have been so for the moment, but not for a permanency. For the king could not become the עֲבָר of the people, *serve* the people, without prejudicing the authority entrusted to him by God; though there is no doubt that if he had consented to such condescension, he would have deprived the discontented tribes of all pretext for rebellion, and not have shared in the sin of their secession.—Ver. 15. "And the king hearkened not to the people (to their request for their burdens to be reduced), for it was סִבָּה יְהוָה מֵעַם יִשְׂרָאֵל, a turning from the Lord, that He might establish His word" (ch. xi. 31 sqq.), *i.e.* by a divine decree, that Rehoboam

<sup>1</sup> The Rabbins give this explanation: *virgæ spinis instructæ*. Isidor. Hispal. *Orig.* v. c. 27, explains it in a similar manner: *virga si est nodosa vel aculeata, scorpio vocatur*. The Targ. and Syr., on the other hand, מִרְגָּנִין, מִרְגָּנִין, *i.e.* the Greek *μάργα*, a whip. See the various explanations in Bochart, *Hieroz.* iii. p. 554 sq. ed. Ros.

contributed to the fulfilment of the counsel of God through his own folly, and brought about the accomplishment of the sentence pronounced upon Solomon.—Ver. 16. The harsh word supplied the discontented with an apparently just occasion for saying, “What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse! To thy tents, O Israel! Now see to thy house, David!” *i.e.* take care of thy house. David, the tribe-father, is mentioned in the place of his family. These words, with which Sheba had once preached rebellion in the time of David (2 Sam. xx. 1), give expression to the deep-rooted aversion which was cherished by these tribes towards the Davidic monarchy, and that in so distinct and unvarnished a manner, that we may clearly see that there were deeper causes for the secession than the pretended oppression of Solomon’s government; that its real foundation was the ancient jealousy of the tribes, which had been only suppressed for the time by David and Solomon, but had not been entirely eradicated, whilst this jealousy again had its roots in the estrangement of these tribes from the Lord, and from His law and righteousness.—Ver. 17. But the sons of Israel, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, over these Rehoboam became king. These “sons of Israel” are members of the ten tribes who had settled in Judah in the course of ages (*cf.* ver. 23); and the Simeonites especially are included, since they were obliged to remain in the kingdom of Judah from the very situation of their tribe-territory, and might very well be reckoned among the Israelites who dwelt in the cities of Judah, inasmuch as at first the whole of their territory was allotted to the tribe of Judah, from which they afterwards received a portion (Josh. xix. 1). The verse cannot possibly mean that “the tribe of Judah declared in favour of their countryman Rehoboam as king” (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 399).—Ver. 18. In order to appease the agitated tribes and commence negotiations with them, Rehoboam sent Adoram, the superintendent of the tribute, to them (*see at* ch. iv. 6). Rehoboam entrusted him with the negotiation, because the tribes had complained that the tribute burdens were too severe, and the king was no doubt serious in his wish to meet the demands of the people. But the very fact that he sent this man only increased the bitterness of feeling, so that they stoned him to death, and Rehoboam himself was obliged to summon up all his strength (הִתְאַמֵּץ) to escape a similar fate by



a speedy flight to his chariot.—Ver. 19. Thus Israel fell away from the house of David “unto this day” (for this formula, see p. 13). — Ver. 20. The secession was completed by the fact that all Israel (of the ten tribes) called Jeroboam to the assembly of the congregation and made him king “over all Israel,” so that the tribe of Judah alone adhered to the house of David (see at ch. xi. 32). Ver. 20 commences in the same manner as ver. 2, to indicate that it closes the account commenced in ver. 2.—Vers. 21-24. But after the return of Rehoboam to Jerusalem he was still desirous of bringing back the seceders by force of arms, and raised for that purpose an army of 180,000 men out of all Judah, the tribe of Benjamin, and the rest of the people, *i.e.* the Israelites dwelling in the cities of Judah,—a number which does not appear too large according to 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. But the prophet Shemaiah, a prophet who is not mentioned again, received instructions from God to forbid the king to go to war with their brethren the Israelites, “for this thing was from the Lord.” הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, “this thing, *i.e.* his being deprived of the sovereignty over ten tribes, but not their rebellion” (Seb. Schmidt). For the fact itself, see the remark on ver. 15. The king and the people hearkened to this word. יָשׁוּבוּ לָלֶכֶת, “they turned to go,” *i.e.* they gave up the intended expedition and returned home. In 2 Chron. xi. 4 we have the explanatory phrase יָשׁוּבוּ מִלֶּכֶת.

Vers. 25-33. FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 25. When Jeroboam had become king, it was his first care to give a firmer basis to his sovereignty by the fortification of Sichem and Pnuel. בָּנָה, to build, is used here in the sense of fortifying, because both cities had stood for a long time, and nothing is known of their having been destroyed under either Solomon or David, although the tower of Sichem had been burnt down by Abimelech (Judg. ix. 49), and the tower of Pnuel had been destroyed by Gideon (Judg. viii. 17). *Sichem*, a place well known from the time of Abraham downwards (Gen. xii. 6), was situated upon the mountains of Ephraim, between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, and still exists under the name of *Nabulus* or *Nablûs*, a name corrupted from *Flavia Neapolis*. Jeroboam dwelt therein, *i.e.* he chose it at first as his residence, though he afterwards resided in Thirza (see ch. xiv. 17). *Pnuel* was situated, according to Gen. xxxii. 31, on the

other side of the Jordan, on the northern bank of the Jabbok (not the southern side, as Thenius supposes); and judging from Gen. xxxii. 22 sqq. and Judg. viii. 8 sqq., it was on the caravan road, which led through Gilead to Damascus, and thence past Palmyra and along the Euphrates to Mesopotamia. It was probably on account of its situation that Jeroboam fortified it, to defend his sovereignty over Gilead against hostile attacks from the north-east and east.—Vers. 26 sqq. In order also to give internal strength to his kingdom, Jeroboam resolved to provide for his subjects a substitute for the sacrificial worship in the temple by establishing new *sacra*, and thus to take away all occasion for making festal journeys to Jerusalem, from which he apprehended, and that probably not without reason, a return of the people to the house of David, and consequently further danger for his own life. “If this people go up to perform sacrifice in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, their heart will turn to their lord, king Rehoboam,” etc.—Ver. 28. He therefore consulted, *sc.* with his counsellors, or the heads of the nation, who had helped him to the throne, and made two calves of gold. עֲגֵלֵי זָהָב are young oxen, not of pure gold however, or cast in brass and gilded, but in all probability like the golden calf which Aaron had cast for the people at Sinai, made of a kernel of wood, which was then covered with gold plate (see the Comm. on Ex. xxxii. 4). That Jeroboam had in his mind not merely the Egyptian *Apis*-worship generally, but more especially the image-worship which Aaron introduced for the people at Sinai, is evident from the words borrowed from Ex. xxxii. 4, with which he studiously endeavoured to recommend his new form of worship to the people: “Behold, this is thy God, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.” רַב־לָכֶם מַעֲלֹת, it is too much for you to go to Jerusalem; not “let your going suffice,” because לָכֶם is not to be taken in a partitive sense here, as it is in Ex. ix. 28 and Ezek. xlv. 6. What Jeroboam meant to say by the words, “Behold thy God,” etc., was, “this is no new religion, but this was the form of worship which our fathers used in the desert, with Aaron himself leading the way” (Seb. Schmidt). And whilst the verbal allusion to that event at Sinai plainly shows that this worship was not actual idolatry, *i.e.* was not a worship of Egyptian idols, from which it is constantly distinguished in our books as well as in Hosea and Amos, but that Jehovah was worshipped under the image of the calves or



young oxen ; the choice of the places in which the golden calves were set up also shows that Jeroboam desired to adhere as closely as possible to ancient traditions. He did not select his own place of residence, but Bethel and Dan. *Bethel*, on the southern border of his kingdom, which properly belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 13 and 22), the present *Beitin*, had already been consecrated as a divine seat by the vision of Jehovah which the patriarch Jacob received there in a dream (Gen. xxviii. 11, 19), and Jacob gave it the name of *Bethel*, house of God, and afterwards built an altar there to the Lord (Gen. xxxv. 7). And Jeroboam may easily have fancied, and have tried to persuade others, that Jehovah would reveal Himself to the descendants of Jacob in this sacred place just as well as He had done to their forefather.—*Dan*, in the northern part of the kingdom, on the one source of the Jordan, formerly called *Laish* (Judg. xviii. 26 sqq.), was also consecrated as a place of worship by the image-worship established there by the Danites, at which even a grandson of Moses had officiated ; and regard may also have been had to the convenience of the people, namely, that the tribes living in the north would not have to go a long distance to perform their worship.—Ver. 30. But this institution became a sin to Jeroboam, because it violated the fundamental law of the Old Testament religion, since this not only prohibited all worship of Jehovah under images and symbols (Ex. xx. 4), but had not even left the choice of the place of worship to the people themselves (Deut. xii. 5 sqq.). “ And the people went before the one to Dan.” The expression “ to Dan ” can only be suitably explained by connecting it with הָעָם : the people even to Dan, *i.e.* the people throughout the whole kingdom even to Dan. The southern boundary as the *terminus a quo* is not mentioned ; not because it was for a long time in dispute, but because it was already given in the allusion to Bethel. הָאֵלֹהִים is neither the golden calf at Dan nor (as I formerly thought) that at Bethel, but is to be interpreted according to the preceding וְאֵת-הָאֵלֹהִים : one of the two, or actually both the one and the other (Thenius). The sin of which Jeroboam was guilty consisted in the fact that he no longer allowed the people to go to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, but induced or compelled them to worship Jehovah before one or the other of the calves which he had set up, or (as it is expressed in ver. 31) made a house of high places, בָּיִת בָּמֹת (see at ch. iii. 2), instead of the

house of God, which the Lord had sanctified as the place of worship by filling it with His gracious presence. The singular **בֵּית יְהוָה** may be accounted for from the antithesis to **בֵּית בַּ**, upon which it rests. There was no necessity to say expressly that there was a house of high places at Bethel and Dan, *i.e.* in two places, because it followed as a matter of course that the golden calves could not stand in the open air, but were placed in a temple, by which the sacrificial altar stood. These places of worship were houses of *high places*, *Bamoth*, because the ark of the covenant was wanting, and therewith the gracious presence of God, the *Shechinah*, for which no symbol invented by men could be a substitute. Moreover Jeroboam made "priests from the mass of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi." **מִקְצוֹת הָעָם**, *i.e.* not of the poorest of the people (Luther and others), but from the last of the people onwards, that is to say, from the whole of the people any one without distinction even to the very last, instead of the priests chosen by God out of the tribe of Levi. For this meaning of **מִקְצוֹת** see Gen. xix. 4 and Ezek. xxxiii. 2, also Lud. de Dieu on this passage. This innovation on the part of Jeroboam appears very surprising, if we consider how the Ephraimite Micah (Judg. xvii. 10 sqq.) rejoiced that he had obtained a Levite to act as priest for his image-worship, and can only be explained from the fact that the Levites did not consent to act as priests in the worship before the golden calves, but set their faces against it, and therefore, as is stated in 2 Chron. xi. 13, 14, were obliged to leave their district towns and possessions and emigrate into the kingdom of Judah.—Ver. 32. Jeroboam also transferred to the eighth month the feast which ought to have been kept in the seventh month (the feast of tabernacles, Lev. xxiii. 34 sqq.). The pretext for this arbitrary alteration of the law, which repeatedly describes the seventh month as the month appointed by the Lord (Lev. xxiii. 34, 39, and 41), he may have found in the fact that in the northern portion of the kingdom the corn ripened a month later than in the more southern Judah (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 118, Anm. 3, and § 119, Anm. 2), since this feast of the ingathering of the produce of the threshing-floor and wine-press (Ex. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 39; Deut. xvi. 13) was a feast of thanksgiving for the gathering in of all the fruits of the ground. But the true reason was to be found in his intention to make the separation in a religious point of view as complete as pos-



sible, although Jeroboam retained the day of the month, the fifteenth, for the sake of the weak who took offence at his innovations. For we may see very clearly that many beside the Levites were very discontented with these illegal institutions, from the notice in 2 Chron. xi. 16, that out of all the tribes those who were devoted to the Lord from the heart went to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the God of the fathers there. "And he sacrificed upon the altar." This clause is connected with the preceding one, in the sense of: he instituted the feast and offered sacrifices thereat. In ver. 32b (from בֵּן עֵשָׂה onwards) and ver. 33, what has already been related concerning Jeroboam's religious institutions is brought to a close by a comprehensive repetition of the leading points. "Thus did he in Bethel, (namely) to offer sacrifice to the calves; and there he appointed the priests of the high places which he had made, and offered sacrifice upon the altar which he had made at Bethel, on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, which he himself had devised, and so made a feast for the children of Israel and sacrificed upon the altar to burn." מִלְּבָד signifies *seorsum*, by himself alone, *i.e.* in this connection, *i.q.* "from his own heart." The *Keri* מִלְּבָדוֹ is therefore a correct explanation as to the fact; but it is a needless correction from Neh. vi. 8. The last clause, וַיַּעַל . . . לְהִקְטִיר, leads on to what follows, and it would be more correct to take it in connection with ch. xiii. 1 and render it thus: and when he was offering sacrifice upon the altar to burn, behold there came a man of God, etc. Thenius has rendered וַיַּעַל incorrectly, and he stood at the altar. This thought would have been expressed by וַיַּעֲמֹד עַל הַמ', as in ch. xiii. 1. By הִקְטִיר we are not to understand the burning or offering of incense, but the burning of the sacrificial portions of the flesh upon the altar, as in Lev. i. 9, 13, 17, etc.

CHAP. XIII. TESTIMONY OF GOD AGAINST THE CALF-WORSHIP OF  
JEROBOAM.

A prophet out of Judah announces to Jeroboam the eventual overthrow of the idolatrous worship, and attests his divine mission by miraculous signs upon the altar at Bethel and the hardened king (vers. 1-10); but on the way back he allows himself to be enticed by an old prophet out of Bethel to go into his house, contrary to the express command of the Lord, and while

sitting at table with him has to hear from his mouth the divine threat, that on account of his transgression of the command of God he will not come into the sepulchre of his fathers. This threat was fulfilled on his way home ; and the marvellous fulfilment made so deep an impression upon the old prophet, that he confirmed the testimony which he had given concerning the worship at the high places (vers. 11–32). These marvellous occurrences not only teach how Jeroboam brought about the overthrow of his dynasty by his thorough hardening against the word of God (vers. 33, 34), but they also show how false prophecy rose up from the very beginning in the kingdom of Israel and set itself against the true prophets of the Lord, and how it gained a victory, which merely displayed its own impotence, however, and foreshadowed its eventual and certain overthrow.

Vers. 1–10. *Prophecy against the idolatrous worship at Bethel.*  
 —Vers. 1, 2. Whilst Jeroboam was still occupied in sacrificing by the altar at Bethel, there came a prophet (אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים) out of Judah “in the word of Jehovah” to Bethel, and pronounced upon the altar its eventual destruction. בְּדִבַּר יְהוָה does not mean “at the word of Jehovah” here, as it frequently does, but “in the word of Jehovah,” as vers. 9 and 17 more especially show ; so that the word of Jehovah is regarded as a power which comes upon the prophet and drives him to utter the divine revelation which he has received. It is the same in ch. xx. 35. לְהַקְטִיר is to be taken as in ch. xii. 33.—“Behold a son will be born to the house of David, named Josiah ; he will offer upon thee (O altar) the priests of the high places, who burn incense (*i.e.* kindle sacrifices) upon thee, and men’s bones will they burn upon thee.” According to 2 Kings xxiii. 15–20, this prophecy was literally fulfilled. The older theologians found in this an evident proof of the divine inspiration of the prophets ; modern theology, on the other hand, which denies the supernatural inspiration of prophecy in accordance with its rationalistic or naturalistic principles, supposes that this prophecy was not more precisely defined till after the event, and adduces in support of this the apparently just argument, that the prediction of particular historical events is without analogy, and generally that the introduction either of particular persons by name or of definite numbers is opposed to the very essence of prophecy, and turns prediction into soothsaying. The dis-



inction between soothsaying and prediction, however, is not that the latter merely utters general ideas concerning the future, whilst the former announces special occurrences beforehand: but soothsaying is the foretelling of all kinds of accidental things; prophecy, on the contrary, the foretelling of the progressive development of the kingdom of God, not merely in general, but in its several details, according to the circumstances and necessities of each particular age, and that in such a manner that the several concrete details of the prophecy rest upon the general idea of the revelation of salvation, and are thereby entirely removed from the sphere of the accidental. It is true that perfectly concrete predictions of particular events, with the introduction of names and statement of times, are much more rare than the predictions of the progressive development of the kingdom of God according to its general features; but they are not altogether wanting, and we meet with them in every case where it was of importance to set before an ungodly generation in the most impressive manner the truth of the divine threatenings or promises. The allusion to *Coresh* in Isa. xlv. 28, xlv. 1, is analogous to the announcement before us. But in both cases the names are closely connected with the destination of the persons in the prophecy, and are simply a concrete description of what God will accomplish through these men. Hence the name **יִשְׁתָּיְהוּ** occurs primarily according to its appellative meaning alone, viz. "he whom Jehovah supports," from **אָשָׁה**, to support, and expresses this thought: there will be born a son to the house of David, whom Jehovah will support or establish, so that he shall execute judgment upon the priests of the high places at Bethel. This prophecy was then afterwards so fulfilled by the special arrangement of God, that the king who executed this judgment bore the name of *Joshiyahu* as his proper name. And so also **כּוֹרֵשׁ** was originally an appellative in the sense of sun. The judgment which the prophet pronounced upon the altar was founded upon the *jus talionis*. On the very same altar on which the priests offer sacrifice to the **עֲגֻלִּים** shall they themselves be offered, and the altar shall be defiled for ever by the burning of men's bones upon it. **עֲצָמוֹת אָדָם**, "men's bones," does not stand for "their (the priests') bones," but is simply an epithet used to designate human corpses, which defile the place where they lie (2 Kings xxiii. 16).—Ver. 3. In confirmation of his word the prophet added a miracle (**מוֹפֵת**, *τέρας*,

*portentum*, see at Ex. iv. 21): “this is the sign that the Lord hath spoken (through me): behold the altar will be rent in pieces, and the ashes upon it will be poured out.” רֵשֶׁן is the ashes of the fat of the sacrificial animals. The pouring out of the sacrificial ashes in consequence of the breaking up of the altar was a penal sign, which indicated, along with the destruction of the altar, the desecration of the sacrificial service performed upon it.—Ver. 4. The king, enraged at this announcement, stretched out his hand against the prophet with the words, “seize him”—and his hand dried up, so that he was not able to draw it back again. יָבֵשׁ, to dry up, *i.e.* to become rigid in consequence of a miraculous withdrawal of the vital energy. Thus Jeroboam experienced in the limbs of his own body the severity of the threatened judgment of God.—Vers. 5, 6. The penal miracle announced in the word of Jehovah, *i.e.* in the strength of the Lord, also took effect immediately upon the altar; and the defiant king was now obliged to entreat the man of God, saying, “Soften, I pray, the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may return to me,” *i.e.* that I may be able to draw it back again, to move it once more. And this also took place at once at the intercession of the prophet. “הִלֵּךְ אֶת-פָּנַי”, lit. to stroke the face of God, *i.e.* to render it soft by intercession (see at Ex. xxxii. 11).—Ver. 7. As Jeroboam could do nothing by force against the prophet, he endeavoured to gain him over to his side by friendliness, that at least he might render his threat harmless in the eyes of the people. For this purpose, and not to do him honour or to make him some acknowledgment for the restoration of his hand, he invited him to his house, to strengthen himself with food (סָעַר as in Gen. xviii. 5, Judg. ix. 5; for the form סָעָרָה, see Ewald, § 41, c) and receive from him a present.—Vers. 8 sqq. But this design was also frustrated, and the rejection of his worship on the part of God was still more strongly declared. “If thou gavest me,” the man of God replied, “the half of thy house, I shall not go in with thee, nor eat bread and drink water in this place; for thus hath Jehovah commanded me,” etc. The subject, *Jehovah*, is easily supplied to צִוָּה from the context (*vid.* Ewald, § 294, b). God had forbidden the prophet to eat and drink “to manifest His detestation of idolatry, and to show by that fact that the Bethelites were so detestable, and as it were excommunicated by God, that He wished none of the faithful to



join with them in eating and drinking" (C. a Lap.). He was not to return by the way by which he came, that no one might look out for him, and force him to a delay which was irreconcilable with his commission, or "lest by chance being brought back by Jeroboam, he should do anything to please him which was unworthy of a prophet, or from which it might be inferred that idolaters might hope for some favour from the Deity" (Budd.).

Vers. 11-32. *Seduction of the man of God by an old prophet, and his consequent punishment.*—Vers. 11-19. The man of God had resisted the invitations of Jeroboam, and set out by a different road to return to Judah. An old prophet at Bethel heard from his sons what had taken place (the singular **יְבֹאֵ בְנֹו** as compared with the plural **יִסְפְּרוּם** may be explained on the supposition that first of all one son related the matter to his father, and that then the other sons supported the account given by the first); had his ass saddled; hurried after him, and found him sitting under *the* terebinth (the tree well known from that event); invited him to come into his house and eat with him; and when the latter appealed to the divine prohibition, said to him (ver. 18), "I am a prophet also as thou art, and an angel has said to me in the word of the Lord: Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat and drink," and lied to him (**כִּהְיִשׁ לוֹ** without a *copula*, because it is inserted as it were parenthetically, simply as an explanation)—then he went back with him, and ate and drank in his house.—Vers. 20-22. As they were sitting at table the word of the Lord came to the old prophet, so that he cried out to the man of God from Judah: "Because thou hast been rebellious against the command of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment, . . . thou wilt not come to the grave of thy fathers," *i.e.* thou wilt meet with a violent death by the way. This utterance was soon fulfilled.—Vers. 23 sqq. After he had eaten he saddled the ass for him, *i.e.* for the prophet whom he had fetched back, and the latter (the prophet from Judah) departed upon it. On the road a lion met him and slew him; "and his corpse was cast in the road, but the ass stood by it, and the lion stood by the corpse." The lion, contrary to its nature, had neither consumed the prophet whom it had slain, nor torn in pieces and devoured the ass upon which he rode, but had remained standing by the corpse and by the ass, that the slaying of the prophet might not be regarded as a misfortune that had

befallen him by accident, but that the hand of the Lord might be manifest therein, so that passers-by saw this marvel and related it in Bethel.—Ver. 26. When the old prophet at Bethel heard of this, he said, “It is the man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the Lord; the Lord hath delivered him to the lion, so that it hath torn him (שָׁרַף, *frangere, confringere*, used of a lion which tears its prey in pieces) and slain him according to the word of the Lord, which He spake to him.”—Vers. 27–32. He thereupon had his ass saddled, and went and found the corpse and the ass standing by it, without the lion having eaten the corpse or torn the ass in pieces; and he lifted the corpse upon his ass, and brought it into his own city, and laid the corpse in his grave with the customary lamentation: הֵי אָחִי, alas, my brother! (cf. Jer. xxii. 18), and then gave this command to his sons: “When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried, let my bones rest beside his bones; for the word which he proclaimed in the word of Jehovah upon the altar at Bethel and upon all the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria will take place” (*i.e.* will be fulfilled). The expression “cities of Samaria” belongs to the author of these books, and is used proleptically of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which did not receive this name till after the building of the city of Samaria as the capital of the kingdom and the residence of the kings of Israel (ch. xvi. 24). There is a prophetic element in the words “upon all the houses of the high places,” etc., inasmuch as the only other erection at that time beside the one at Bethel was a temple of the high places at Dan. But after such a beginning the multiplication of them might be foreseen with certainty, even without any higher illumination.

The conduct of the old prophet at Bethel appears so strange, that Josephus and the Chald., and most of the Rabbins and of the earlier commentators both Catholic and Protestant, have regarded him as a false prophet, who tried to lay a trap for the prophet from Judah, in order to counteract the effect of his prophecy upon the king and the people. But this assumption cannot be reconciled with either the divine revelation which came to him at the table, announcing to the Judæan prophet the punishment of his transgression of the commandment of God, and was so speedily fulfilled (vers. 20–24); or with the honour which he paid to the dead man after this punishment had fallen upon him, by burying him in his own grave; and still less with his con-



firmation of his declaration concerning the altar at Bethel (vers. 29-32). We must therefore follow Ephr. Syr., Theodor., Hengstenberg, and others, and regard the old prophet as a true prophet, who with good intentions, and not "under the influence of human envy" (Thenius), but impelled by the desire to enter into a closer relation to the man of God from Judah and to strengthen himself through his prophetic gifts, urged him to enter his house. The fact that he made use of sinful means in order to make more sure of securing the end desired, namely, of the false pretence that he had been directed by an angel to do this, may be explained, as Hengstenberg suggests (*Dissert.* vol. ii. p. 149), on the ground that when Jeroboam introduced his innovations, he had sinned by keeping silence, and that the appearance of the Judæan prophet had brought him to a consciousness of this sin, so that he had been seized with shame on account of his fall, and was anxious to restore himself to honour in his own eyes and those of others by intercourse with this witness to the truth. But however little the lie itself can be excused or justified, we must not attribute to him alone the consequences by which the lie was followed in the case of the Judæan prophet. For whilst he chose reprehensible means of accomplishing what appeared to be a good end, namely, to raise himself again by intercourse with a true prophet, and had no wish to injure the other in any way, the Judæan prophet allowed himself to be seduced to a transgression of the clear and definite prohibition of God simply by the sensual desire for bodily invigoration by meat and drink, and had failed to consider that the divine revelation which he had received could not be repealed by a pretended revelation from an angel, because the word of God does not contradict itself. He was therefore obliged to listen to a true revelation from God from the mouth of the man whose pretended revelation from an angel he had too carelessly believed, namely, to the announcement of punishment for his disobedience towards the commandment of God, which punishment he immediately afterwards endured, "for the destruction of the flesh, but for the preservation of the spirit: 1 Cor. xv. 5" (*Berleb. Bible*). That the punishment fell upon him alone and not upon the old prophet of Bethel also, and that for apparently a smaller crime, may be accounted for "not so much from the fact that the old prophet had lied with a good intention (this might hold good of the other also), as from the fact that it was needful to deal strictly with

the man who had just received a great and holy commission from the Lord" (O. v. Gerlach). It is true that no bodily punishment fell upon the old prophet, but this punishment he received instead, that with his lie he was put to shame, and that his conscience must have accused him of having occasioned the death of the man of God from Judah. He was thereby to be cured of his weakness, that he might give honour to the truth of the testimony of God. "Thus did the wondrous providence of God know how to direct all things most gloriously, so that the bodily destruction of the one contributed to the spiritual and eternal preservation of the soul of the other" (*Berleb. Bible*).—Concerning the design of these marvellous events, H. Witsius has the following remarks in his *Miscell. ss. i. p. 118* (ed. nov. 1736): "So many wondrous events all concurring in one result caused the prophecy against the altar at Bethel to be preserved in the mouths and memories of all, and the mission of this prophet to become far more illustrious. Thus, although the falsehood of the old man of Bethel brought disgrace upon himself, it injured no one but the man of God whose credulity was too great; and, under the overruling providence of God, it contributed in the most signal manner to the confirmation and publication of the truth."<sup>1</sup> The heaping up of the marvellous corresponded to the great object of the mission of the man of God out of Judah, through which the Lord would enter an energetic protest against the idolatrous worship of Jeroboam at its first introduction, to guard those who feared God in Israel, of whom there were not a few (2 Chron. xi. 16; 2 Kings xviii. 3, xix. 18), from falling away from Him by joining in the worship of the calves, and to take away every excuse from the ungodly who participated therein.

Vers. 33 and 34. But this did not lead Jeroboam to conversion. He turned not from his evil way, but continued to make high priests from the mass of the people. וַיִּשָּׁב וַיַּעַשׂ, "he re-

<sup>1</sup> Compare with this the remark of Theodoret in his *quæst. 43 in 3 libr. Reg.*: "In my opinion this punishment served to confirm the declaration concerning the altar. For it was not possible for the statement of such a man to be concealed: and this was sufficient to fill with terror those who heard it; for if partaking of food contrary to the command of God, and that not of his own accord, but under a deception, brought such retribution upon a righteous man, to what punishments would they be exposed who had forsaken the God who made them, and worshipped the likenesses of irrational creatures?"



turned and made," *i.e.* he made again or continued to make. For the fact itself compare ch. xii. 31. "Whoever had pleasure (הִחֲפִיץ, cf. Ges. § 109), he filled his hand, that he might become a priest of the high places." מָלֵא אֶת־יָדוֹ, to fill the hand, is the technical expression for investing with the priesthood, according to the rite prescribed for the consecration of the priests, namely, to place sacrificial gifts in the hands of the persons to be consecrated (see at Lev. vii. 37 and viii. 25 sqq.). The plural כֹּהֲנֵי בָמוֹת is used with indefinite generality: that he might be ranked among the priests of high places.—Ver. 34. "And it became in (with) this thing the sin of the house of Jeroboam, and the destroying and cutting off from the earth;" that is to say, this obstinate persistence in ungodly conduct was the guilt which had as its natural consequence the destroying of his house from the face of the earth. בִּדְבַר הַזֶּה is not a mistake for הַדְּבַר הַזֶּה, but בִּ is used, as in 1 Chron. ix. 33, vii. 23, to express the idea of being and persisting in a thing (for this use of בִּ compare Ewald, § 295, *f*).

#### CHAP. XIV. REIGN AND DEATH OF JEROBOAM AND REHOBOAM.

Vers. 1-20. REIGN OF JEROBOAM.—Vers. 1-18. *Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam and the kingdom of Israel.*—As Jeroboam did not desist from his idolatry notwithstanding the threatened punishment, the Lord visited him with the illness of his son, and directed the prophet Ahijah, to whom his wife had gone to ask counsel concerning the result of the illness, to predict to him not only the cutting off of his house and the death of his sick son, but also the thrusting away of Israel out of the land of its fathers beyond the Euphrates, and in confirmation of this threat caused the sick son to die when the returning mother crossed the threshold of her house again.—Vers. 1-3. When his son fell sick, Jeroboam said to his wife: Disguise thyself, that thou mayest not be known as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh to the prophet Ahijah, who told me that I should be king over this people; he will tell thee how it will fare with the boy. הִשְׁתַּתְּנָה, from שָׁנָה, to alter one's self, *i.e.* to disguise one's self. She was to go to Shiloh disguised, so as not to be recognised, to deceive the old prophet, because otherwise Jeroboam did not promise himself any favourable answer, as he had contemptuously neglected Ahijah's admonition (ch. xi. 38, 39). But he turned

to this prophet because he had spoken concerning him **לְמֶלֶךְ**, to be king, *i.e.* that he would become king, over this people. **לְמֶלֶךְ** stands for **לְהִיּוֹת מֶלֶךְ**, with which the infinitive *esse* can be omitted (*vid.* Ewald, § 336, *b*). As this prophecy, which was so favourable to Jeroboam, had come to pass (ch. xi. 29, 30), he hoped that he might also obtain from Ahijah a divine revelation concerning the result of his son's illness, provided that he did not know who it was who came to seek counsel concerning her sick son. To complete the deception, she was to take with her as a present for the prophet (cf. 1 Sam. ix. 8) "ten loaves and crumbs" and a jar with honey, *i.e.* a trifling gift such as a simple citizen's wife might take. According to the early versions and the context, a kind of plain cake, *κολλυρίδα* (LXX.), *crustulam* (Vulg.). It is different in Josh. ix. 5.—Vers. 4, 5. Ahijah could no longer see, because his eyes were blinded with age. **קָמוּ עֵינָיו** as in 1 Sam. iv. 15, an expression applied to the black cataract, *amaurosis*. It was therefore all the less possible for him to recognise in a natural manner the woman who was coming to him. But before her arrival the Lord had not only revealed to him her coming and her object, but had also told him what he was to say to her if she should disguise herself when she came. **בָּוֶה וְבוֹה**; see at Judg. xviii. 4. **וַיְהִי כִּבְאֶה וְגו'**, "let it be if she comes and disguises herself;" *i.e.* if when she comes she should disguise herself.—Ver. 6. When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet entering the door (the participle **בָּאָה**, according to the number and gender, refers to the **אִשָּׁה** implied in **הַנְּלִיָּה**, *vid.* Ewald, § 317, *c*), he addressed her by her name, charged her with her disguise of herself, and told her that he was entrusted with a hard saying to her. **קִשָּׁה** (cf. ch. xii. 13) is equivalent to **הָזוּת קִשָּׁה**; for the construction, compare Ewald, § 284, *c*.—Vers. 7 sqq. The saying was as follows: "Therefore, because thou hast exalted thyself from the people, and I have made thee prince over my people Israel (cf. ch. xi. 31), . . . but thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments . . . (cf. ch. xi. 34), and hast done worse than all who were before thee (*judices nimirum et duces Israelis*—Cler.), and hast gone and hast made thyself other gods (contrary to the express command in Ex. xx. 2, 3), . . . and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore I bring misfortune upon the house of Jeroboam," etc. The expression, to cast God behind the back, which only occurs here and in Ezek. xxiii. 35, denotes the most



scornful contempt of God, the strict opposite of "keeping God before the eyes and in the heart." מִיָּתֵיץ בְּקִיר, every male person; see at 1 Sam. xxv. 22. A synonymous expression is עֶצֶר וְעוֹב, the fettered (*i.e.* probably the married) and the free (or single); see at Deut. xxxii. 36. "In Israel," *i.e.* in the kingdom of the ten tribes. The threat is strengthened by the clause in ver. 10, "and I will sweep out after the house of Jeroboam, as one sweepeth out dung, even to the end," which expresses shameful and utter extermination; and this threat is still further strengthened in ver. 11 by the threat added from Deut. xxviii. 26, that of those cut off not one is to come to the grave, but their bodies are to be devoured by the dogs and birds of prey,—the worst disgrace that could befall the dead. Instead of wild beasts (Deut. xxviii. 26) the dogs are mentioned here, because in the East they wander out in the streets without owners, and are so wild and ravenous that they even devour corpses (*vid.* Harnack, *Beobachtungen*, i. p. 198). לִירֵבָעַם with ל of relationship, equivalent to of those related to Jeroboam. It is the same in ver. 13.—Vers. 12, 13. After this announcement of the judgment upon the house of Jeroboam, Ahijah gave the wife information concerning her sick son. He would die as soon as she entered the city, and of all the male members of the house of Jeroboam he only would receive the honour of a proper burial, because in him there was some good thing towards Jehovah found. Ewald (§ 247, *b*) regards the form בְּבִאָה as standing for בְּבִאָה, and refers the suffix to the following word הָעִיר (*vid.* Ewald, § 309, *c*). But as this use of the suffix would be very harsh, the question arises whether בִּאָה is not to be regarded as a feminine form of the infinitive, after the analogy of יָעָה in Ex. ii. 4 and לָרָה in 2 Kings xix. 3, etc. From the fulfilment of this declaration in vers. 17 and 18 Jeroboam was to learn that the threatened destruction of his royal house would also be just as certainly fulfilled. The sick son appears to have been the heir-presumptive to the throne. This may be inferred partly from the lamentation of all Israel at his death (ver. 18), and partly from what follows here in the next verse. אֶל-יְהוָה means in his relation to Jehovah.—Ver. 14. "Jehovah will raise Himself up a king over Israel, who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day; but what (*sc.* do I say)? even now," *sc.* has He raised him up. This appears to be the simplest explanation of the last words of the verse, of which

very various interpretations have been given. יהוה is placed before היום, to give it the stronger emphasis, as in Ex. xxxii. 1 (compare Josh. ix. 12, 13, and Ewald, § 293, *b*; and for עָתָה compare Delitzsch on *Job*, i. p. 290, transl.).—Vers. 15, 16. But in order that not only Jeroboam, but also the people who had joined in his idolatry, might perceive the severity of the divine judgment, Ahijah also announced to the nation its banishment into exile beyond the Euphrates. “Jehovah will smite Israel, as the reed shakes in the water,” is an abbreviated phrase for: Jehovah will smite Israel in such a manner that it will sway to and fro like a reed in the water moved by a strong wind, which has not a sufficiently firm hold to resist the violence of the storm. “And will thrust them out of the good land,” etc., as Moses threatened the transgressors of the law (Deut. xxix. 27), “and scatter them beyond the river (Euphrates),” *i.e.* banish them among the heathen, from whom God brought out and chose their forefather (Josh. xxiv. 3), “because they have made themselves Ashera-idols, to provoke Jehovah.” אֲשֵׁרִים is used for idols generally, among which the golden calves are reckoned. יְהוֹה, that He may deliver up Israel, on account of the idolatrous forms of worship introduced by Jeroboam. For the fulfilment see 2 Kings xv. 29, xvii. 23, and xviii. 11.—In vers. 17 and 18 the exact fulfilment of Ahijah’s announcement concerning the death of Jeroboam’s sick son is described. According to ver. 17, Jeroboam was then residing at *Thirza*, whereas he had at first resided at Shechem (ch. xii. 25). *Thirza* is probably the present *Talluza*, on the north of Shechem (see at Josh. xii. 24).—Vers. 19 and 20. *End of Jeroboam’s reign.* Of the wars, which were described in the annals of the kings (see p. 12), the war with Abijam of Judah is the only one of which we have any account (2 Chron. xiii. 2 sqq.). See also the Comm. on ver. 30. He was followed on the throne by his son Nadab.

Vers. 21–31. REIGN OF REHOBAM IN JUDAH (compare 2 Chron. xi. 5–xii. 16).—Ver. 21. Rehoboam, who ascended the throne at the age of forty-one, was born a year before the accession of Solomon (see at ch. ii. 24). In the description of Jerusalem as the city chosen by the Lord (cf. ch. xi. 36) there is implied not so much an indirect condemnation of the falling away of the ten tribes, as the striking contrast to the idolatry



of Rehoboam referred to in vers. 23 sqq. The name of his mother is mentioned (here and in ver. 31), not because she seduced the king to idolatry (Ephr. Syr.), but generally on account of the great influence which the queen-mother appears to have had both upon the king personally and upon his government, as we may infer from the fact that the mother's name is given in the case of every king of Judah (*vid.* ch. xv. 2, 13, xxii. 42, etc.).—Vers. 22-24. The general characteristics of Rehoboam's reign are supplied and more minutely defined in the account in the Chronicles. According to 2 Chron. xi. 5-xii. 1, he appears to have been brought to reflection by the announcement of the prophet, that the falling away of the ten tribes had come from the Lord as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry (ch. xii. 23, 24; 2 Chron. xi. 2-4); and in the first years of his reign to have followed the law of God with earnestness, and to have been occupied in the establishment of his government partly by the fortification of different cities (2 Chron. xi. 5-12), and partly by setting in order his domestic affairs, placing his numerous sons, who were born of his many wives and concubines, in the fortified cities of the land, and thus providing for them, and naming Abijam as his successor (2 Chron. xi. 18-22); while his kingdom was still further strengthened by the priests, Levites, and pious Israelites who emigrated to Judah and Jerusalem from the ten tribes (2 Chron. xi. 13-17). But this good beginning only lasted three years (2 Chron. xi. 17). When he thought that he had sufficiently fortified his kingdom, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel (*i.e.* all the covenant nation) with him (2 Chron. xii. 1). "Judah did that which was displeasing in the sight of the Lord; they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers (*sc.* under the Judges) had done with their sins." קִנָּא, to provoke to jealousy (Num. v. 14), is to be explained, when it refers to God, from the fact that the relation in which God stood to His people was regarded under the figure of a marriage, in which Jehovah appears as the husband of the nation, who is angry at the unfaithfulness of his wife, *i.e.* at the idolatry of the nation. Compare the remarks on אֵל קָנָא in the Comm. on Ex. xx. 5.—Ver. 23. They also (the Judæans as well as the Israelites) built themselves *bamoth*, altars of high places (see at ch. iii. 3), monuments and Ashera-idols. מַצֵּבוֹת are not actual images of gods, but stones set up as

memorials (Gen. xxxi. 13, xxxv. 20; Ex. xxiv. 4), more especially stone monuments set up in commemoration of a divine revelation (Gen. xxviii. 18, 22, xxxv. 14). Like the *bamoth*, in connection with which they generally occur, they were originally dedicated to Jehovah; but even under the law they were forbidden, partly as places of divine worship of human invention which easily degenerated into idolatry, but chiefly because the Canaanites had erected such monuments to Baal by the side of his altars (Ex. xxiii. 24, xxxiv. 13; Deut. vii. 5, etc.), whereby the worship of Jehovah was unconsciously identified with the worship of Baal, even when the *mazzebot* were not at first erected to the Canaanitish Baal. As the *מַצְבּוֹת* of the Canaanites were dedicated to Baal, so were the *אֲשֵׁרִים* to Astarte, the female nature-deity of those tribes. *אֲשֵׁרָה*, however, does not mean a *grove* (see the Comm. on Deut. xvi. 21), but an idol of the Canaanitish nature-goddess, generally most likely a lofty wooden pillar, though sometimes perhaps a straight trunk of a tree, the branches and crown of which were lopped off, and which was planted upon heights and in other places by the side of the altars of Baal. The name *אֲשֵׁרָה* was transferred from the idol to the goddess of nature (ch. xv. 13, xviii. 19; 2 Kings xxi. 7, etc.), and was used of the image or column of the Phœnician Astarte (ch. xvi. 33; 2 Kings xiii. 6, xvii. 16, etc.), just as *אֲשֵׁרוֹת* in Judg. iii. 7 alternates with *עֲשֻׁתָּרוֹת* in Judg. ii. 13. These idols the Israelites (? Judæans—Tr.) appear to have also associated with the worship of Jehovah; for the external worship of Jehovah was still maintained in the temple, and was performed by Rehoboam himself with princely pomp (ver. 28). “On every high hill,” etc.; see at Deut. xii. 2. —Ver. 24. “There were also prostitutes in the land.” *קִרְשִׁים* is used collectively as a generic name, including both male and female hierodylæ, and is exchanged for the plural in ch. xv. 12. The male *קִרְשִׁים* had emasculated themselves in religious frenzy in honour of the Canaanitish goddess of nature, and were called Galli by the Romans. They were Canaanites, who had found their way into the land of Judah when idolatry gained the upper hand (as indicated by *וַיֵּינֵם*). “They appear here as strangers among the Israelites, and are those notorious Cinædi more especially of the imperial age of Rome who travelled about in all directions, begging for the Syrian goddess, and even in the time of Augustine went about asking for alms in the streets of Car-



thage as a remnant of the Phœnician worship (*de civ. Dei*, vii. 26).”—Movers, p. 679. On the female קִישׁוֹת see the Comm. on Gen. xxxviii. 21 and Deut. xxiii. 18.

This sinking into heathen abominations was soon followed by the punishment, that Judah was given up to the power of the heathen.—Vers. 25-28. King *Shishak* of Egypt invaded the land with a powerful army, conquered all the fortified cities, penetrated to Jerusalem, and would probably have put an end to the kingdom of Judah, if God had not had compassion upon him, and saved him from destruction, in consequence of the humiliation of the king and of the chiefs of the nation, caused by the admonition of the prophet Shemaiah, so that after the conquest of Jerusalem Shishak contented himself with withdrawing, taking with him the treasures of the temple and of the royal palace. Compare the fuller account of this expedition in 2 Chron. xii. 2-9. *Shishak* (שִׁשַׁק) was the first king of the twenty-second (or Bubastitic) dynasty, called *Sesonchis* in Jul. Afric., *Sesonchosis* in Eusebius, and upon the monuments on which Champollion first deciphered his name, *Sheshonk* or *Sheshenk*. Shishak has celebrated his expedition against Judah by a bas-relief on the outer wall of the pillar-hall erected by him in the first palace at Karnak, in which more than 130 figures are led in cords by *Ammon* and the goddess *Muth* with their hands bound upon their backs. The lower portion of the figures of this long row of prisoners is covered by escutcheons, the border of which being provided with battlements, shows that the prisoners are symbols of conquered cities. About a hundred of these escutcheons are still legible, and in the names upon them a large number of the names of cities in the kingdom of Judah have been deciphered with tolerable certainty.<sup>1</sup> Shishak was probably bent chiefly upon the conquest and

<sup>1</sup> Compare Max Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, Bd. i. p. 909, ed. 3, and for the different copies of this bas-relief in the more recent works upon Egypt, Ruetschi in Herzog's *Cycl.* (art. *Rehoboam*). The latest attempts at deciphering are those by Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschriften in den ägypt. Denkmälern*, ii. p. 56 sqq., and O. Blau, *Sisaks Zug gegen Juda aus dem Denkmale bei Karnak erläutert*, in the *Deutsch. morgenl. Ztschr.* xv. p. 233 sqq. Champollion's interpretation of one of these escutcheons, in his *Précis du système hierogl.* p. 204, viz. *Juda hammalek*, "the king of Judah," has been rejected by Lepsius and Brugsch as philologically inadmissible. Brugsch writes the name thus: *Judh malk* or *Joud-hamalok*, and identifies *Judh* with *Jehudijeh*, which Robinson (*Pal.* iii. p. 45) supposes to be the ancient *Jehud* (Josh. xix. 45).

plundering of the cities. But from Jerusalem, beside other treasures of the temple and palace, he also carried off the golden shields that had been made by Solomon (ch. x. 16), in the place of which Rehoboam had copper ones made for his body-guard. The guard, רָעִים, runners, are still further described as הַשְּׁמָרִים פֶּתַח בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ, "who kept the door of the king's house," i.e. supplied the sentinels for the gate of the royal palace.—Ver. 28. Whenever the king went into the house of Jehovah, the runners carried these shields; from which we may see that the king was accustomed to go to the temple with solemn pomp. These shields were not kept in the state-house of the forest of Lebanon (ch. x. 17) as the golden shields were, but in the guard-chamber (חֲמִשָּׁה; see at Ezek. xl. 7) of the runners.—Vers. 29–31. Further particulars are given in 2 Chron. xi. and xii. concerning the rest of the acts of Rehoboam. "There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam the whole time (of their reign)." As nothing is said about any open war between them, and the prophet Shemaiah prohibited the attack which Rehoboam was about to make upon the tribes who had fallen away (ch. xi. 23 sqq.), מִלְחָמָה can only denote the hostile feelings and attitude of the two rulers towards one another.—Ver. 31. *Death and burial of Rehoboam*: as in the case of Solomon (ch. xi. 43). The name of the queen-mother has already been given in ver. 21, and the repetition of it here may be explained on the supposition that in the original sources employed by the author of our books it stood in this position. The son and successor of Rehoboam upon the throne is called *Abijam* (אֲבִיָּם) in the account before us; whereas in the Chronicles he is always called *Abijah* (אֲבִיָּה, 2 Chron. xii. 16, xiii. 1, etc., or אֲבִיָּהוּ, 2 Chron. xiii. 21). אֲבִיָּם, i.e. father of the sea, is unquestionably the older form of the name, which was reduced to אֲבִיָּה,

This *Jehud* in the tribe of Dan, Blau (p. 238) therefore also finds in the name; and it will not mislead any one that this city is reckoned as belonging to the tribe of Dan, since in the very same chapter (Josh. xix. 42) Ajalon is assigned to Dan, though it was nevertheless a fortress of Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 10). But Blau has not given any explanation of the addition *malk* or *malok*, whereas Gust. Roesch takes it to be מֶלֶךְ, and supposes it to mean "Jehud of the king, namely, of Rehoboam or of Judah, on account of its being situated in Dan, which belonged to the northern kingdom." But this is certainly incorrect. For where could the Egyptians have obtained this exact knowledge of the relation in which the tribes of the nation of Israel stood to one another?



and then identified with the formation from אָבִי and יְהוֹ = יְהוֹה (from יְהוֹה).

CHAP. XV. 1-24. REIGNS OF THE TWO KINGS ABIJAM AND ASA  
OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1-8. REIGN OF ABIJAM (cf. 2 Chron. xiii.).—*Abijam* reigned three years, and his mother's name was *Maacah*, daughter (*i.e.* grand-daughter) of Absalom. We have the same in 2 Chron. xi. 20, 21; but in 2 Chron. xiii. 2 she is called *Michajahu*, daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. If אַבִּי־שָׁלוֹם was without doubt Absalom, the well-known son of David, as we may infer from the fact that this name does not occur again in the Old Testament in connection with any other person, since Absalom had only one daughter, viz. *Thamar* (2 Sam. xiv. 27), who was fifty years old when Solomon died, Maacah must have been a daughter of this Thamar, who had married Uriel of Gibeah, and therefore a grand-daughter of Absalom. This is sustained by Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 10, 1). The form of the name מִיכָיָהוּ is probably an error in copying for מַעְכָּה, as the name is also written in 2 Chron. xi. 20 and 21, and not a different name, which Maacah assumed as queen, as Caspari supposes (*Micha*, p. 3, note 4).—Vers. 3, 4. Abijam walked as king in the footsteps of his father. Although he made presents to the temple (ver. 15), his heart was not שָׁלֵם, wholly or undividedly given to the Lord, like the heart of David (cf. ch. xi. 4); but (בִּי, after a previous negative) for David's sake Jehovah had left him a light in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him and to let Jerusalem stand, because (אֲשֶׁר) David had done right in the eyes of God, etc., *i.e.* so that it was only for David's sake that Jehovah did not reject him, and allowed the throne to pass to his son. For the fact itself compare ch. xi. 13 and 36; and for the words, "except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite," see 2 Sam. xi. and xii.—Ver. 6. "And there was war between *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam* all his life;" *i.e.* the state of hostility which had already existed between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continued "all the days of his life," or so long as Abijam lived and reigned. If we take בְּלִיַּיִם תִּיּוּ in this manner (not בְּלִיַּיִם, ver. 16), the statement loses the strangeness which it has at first sight, and harmonizes very well with that in ver. 7, that there was also war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

Under Abijam it assumed the form of a serious war, in which Jeroboam sustained a great defeat (see 2 Chron. xiii. 3-20).—The other notices concerning Abijam in vers. 7 and 8 are the same as in the case of Rehoboam in ch. xiv. 29 and 31.

Vers. 9-24. REIGN OF ASA (cf. 2 Chron. xiv.-xvi.).—As Asa ascended the throne in the twentieth year of the reign of Jeroboam, his father Abijam, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam (ver. 1), can only have reigned two years and a few months, and not three full years.—Ver. 10. Asa reigned forty-one years. “The name of his mother was Maacah, the daughter of Absalom.” This notice, which agrees verbatim with ver. 2, cannot mean that Abijam had his own mother for a wife; though Thenius finds this meaning in the passage, and then proceeds to build up conjectures concerning emendations of the text. We must rather explain it, as Ephr. Syr., the Rabbins, and others have done, as signifying that Maacah, the mother of Abijam, continued during Asa’s reign to retain the post of queen-mother or הַנְּבִיָּרָה, *i.e.* sultana valide, till Asa deposed her on account of her idolatry (ver. 13), probably because Asa’s own mother had died at an early age.—Vers. 11 sqq. As ruler Asa walked in the ways of his pious ancestor David: he banished the male prostitutes out of the land, abolished all the abominations of idolatry, which his fathers (Abijam and Rehoboam) had introduced, deposed his grandmother Maacah from the rank of a queen, because she had made herself an idol for the Ashera, and had the idol hewn in pieces and burned in the valley of the Kidron. גִּלְלִים is a contemptuous epithet applied to idols (Lev. xxvi. 30); it does not mean *stercorei*, however, as the Rabbins affirm, but logs, from גָּלַל, to roll, or masses of stone, after the Chaldee גִּלְלָא (Ezra v. 8, vi. 4), generally connected with שִׁקָּצִים. It is so in Deut. xxix. 16. מִפְּלֶצֶת, *formido*, from פָּלַץ, *terrere, timere*, hence an idol as an object of fear, and not *pudendum*, a shameful image, as Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 571), who follows the Rabbins, explains it, understanding thereby a Phallus as a symbol of the generative and fructifying power of nature. With regard to the character of this idol, nothing further can be determined than that it was of wood, and possibly a wooden column like the אֲשֵׁרִים (see at ch. xiv. 23). “But the high places departed not,” *i.e.* were not abolished. By the בָּמוֹת we are not to understand, according to ver. 12,



altars of high places dedicated to idols, but unlawful altars to Jehovah. It is so in the other passages in which this formula recurs (ch. xxii. 24; 2 Kings xii. 4, xiv. 4, xv. 4; and the parallel passages 2 Chron. xv. 17, xx. 33). The apparent discrepancy between the last-mentioned passages and 2 Chron. xiv. 2, 4, and xvii. 6, may be solved very simply on the supposition that the kings (Asa and Jehoshaphat) did indeed abolish the altars on the high places, but did not carry their reforms in the nation thoroughly out; and not by distinguishing between the *bamoth* dedicated to Jehovah and those dedicated to idols, as Thenius, Bertheau, and Caspari, with many of the earlier commentators, suppose. For although 2 Chron. xiv. 2 is very favourable to this solution, since both *בָּמוֹת* and *מִזְבְּחוֹת הַנֶּכֶר* are mentioned there, it does not accord with 2 Chron. xvii. 6, where *הַבָּמוֹת* cannot be merely idolatrous altars dedicated to the Canaanitish Baal, but unquestionably refer to the unlawful altars of Jehovah, or at any rate include them. Moreover, the next clause in the passage before us, "nevertheless Asa's heart was wholly given to the Lord," shows that the expression *לֹא סָרָה* does not mean that the king allowed the unlawful Jehovah-*bamoth* to remain, but simply that, notwithstanding his fidelity to Jehovah, the *bamoth* did not depart, so that he was unable to carry the abolition of them thoroughly out.—Ver. 15. He brought the sacred offerings of his father and his own sacred offerings into the house of Jehovah; probably the booty, in silver, gold, and vessels, which his father Abijam had gathered in the war with Jeroboam (2 Chron. xiii. 16, 17), and he himself on the conquest of the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv. 12, 13). The *Keri* *וְקִרְשֵׁי* is a bad emendation of the correct reading in the *Chethib* *קִרְשֵׁי*, i.e. *קִרְשָׁיו* (*קִרְשָׁיו*); for *בֵּית יְהוָה* is an accusative, and is to be connected with *וַיָּבֵא*.—Vers. 16, 17. The state of hostility between Judah and Israel continued during the reign of Asa; and Baasha the king of Israel advanced, etc. These statements are completed and elucidated by the Chronicles. After the great victory obtained by Abijam over Jeroboam, the kingdom of Judah enjoyed rest for ten years (2 Chron. xiii. 23). Asa employed this time in exterminating idolatry, fortifying different cities, and equipping his army (2 Chron. xiv. 1-7). Then the Cushite *Zerah* invaded the land of Judah with an innumerable army (in the eleventh year of Asa), but was totally defeated by the help of the Lord

(2 Chron. xiv. 8-14); whereupon Asa, encouraged by the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, proceeded with fresh zeal to the extermination of such traces of idolatry as still remained in the kingdom, then renewed the altar of burnt-offering in front of the temple-hall, and in the fifteenth year of his reign held, with the whole nation, a great festival of thanksgiving and rejoicing to the Lord at Jerusalem (2 Chron. xv. 1-15). The next year, the sixteenth of his reign and the thirty-sixth from the division of the kingdom (2 Chron. xvi. 1), Baasha commenced hostilities, by advancing against Judah, taking possession of *Ramah*, the present *er Râm* (see at Josh. xviii. 25), which was only two hours and a quarter from Jerusalem, and fortifying it. The occupation of Ramah is not expressly mentioned indeed, but it is implied in *וַיַּעַל עַל יְהוּדָה*, which affirms the hostile invasion of Judah. For Ramah, from its very situation in the heart of the tribe of Benjamin and the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, can neither have been a border city nor have belonged to the kingdom of Israel. The intention of Baasha, therefore, in fortifying Ramah cannot have been merely to restrain his own subjects from passing over into the kingdom of Judah, but was evidently to cut off from the kingdom of Judah all free communication with the north. *לְבַלְתִּי* 'לֹא יִתֵּן גִּוִּי', "that they might not give one going out or one coming in to Asa;" i.e. to cut off from the others all connection with Asa, and at the same time to cut off from those with Asa all connection with this side. The main road from Jerusalem to the north passed by Ramah, so that by shutting up this road the line of communication of the kingdom of Judah was of necessity greatly disturbed. Moreover, the fortification of Ramah by Baasha presupposes the reconquest of the cities which Abijam had taken from the kingdom of Israel (2 Chron. xiii. 19), and which, according to 2 Chron. xiii. 19, were still in the possession of Asa.—Vers. 18, 19. In order to avert the danger with which his kingdom was threatened, Asa endeavoured to induce the Syrian king, Benhadad of Damascus, to break the treaty which he had concluded with Baasha and to become his ally, by sending him such treasures as were left in the temple and palace.<sup>1</sup> *הַנִּזְתָּרִים* may be explained from the

<sup>1</sup> Asa had sought help from the Lord and obtained it, when the powerful army of the Cushites invaded the land; but when an invasion of the Israelites took place, he sought help from the Syrians. This alteration in his con-



fact that the temple and palace treasures had been plundered by Shishak in the reign of Rehoboam (ch. xiv. 26); and therefore what Asa had replaced in the temple treasury (ver. 15), and had collected together for his palace, was only a remnant in comparison with the former state of these treasures. The name **בְּנֵי־הַדָּד**, *i.e.* son of *Hadad*, the sun-god (according to Macrobius, i. 23; cf. Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 196), was borne by three kings of Damascus: the one here named, his son in the time of Ahab (ch. xx. 1, 34), and the son of Hazael (2 Kings xiii. 24). The first was a son of *Tabrimmon* and grandson of *Hezyon*. According to ver. 19, his father *Tabrimmon* (good is *Rimmon*; see at 2 Kings v. 18) had also been king, and was the contemporary of Abijam. But that his grandfather *Hezyon* was also king, and the same person as the *Rezon* mentioned in ch. xi. 23, cannot be shown to be even probable, since there is no ground for the assumption that *Hezyon* also bore the name *Rezon*, and is called by the latter name here and by the former in ch. xi. 23.—Ver. 20. Benhadad consented to Asa's request, and directed his captains to advance into the kingdom of Israel: they took several cities in the north of the land, whereby Baasha was compelled to give up fortifying Ramah and withdraw to Thirza. *Ijon* (יֵזֶן) is to be sought for in all probability in Tell *Dibbin*, on the eastern border of *Merj Ayun*; and in *Ajun*, although *Ajun* is written with *Aleph*, the name *Ijon* is probably preserved, since the situation of this Tell seems thoroughly adapted for a fortress on the northern border of Israel (*vid.* Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 375, and Van de Velde, *Mem.* p. 322). *Dan* is the present *Tell el Kadi*; see at Josh. xix. 47. *Abel-Beth-Maachah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, to the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 2 Sam. xx. 14). "All *Chinnereth*" is the district of *Chinnereth*, the tract of land on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth (see at Josh. xix. 35). **עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ נַ**, together with all the land of Naphtali (for this meaning of **עַל** compare the Comm. on Gen. xxxii. 12). The cities named were duct may probably be explained in part from the fact, that notwithstanding the victory, his army had been considerably weakened by the battle which he fought with the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv. 9), although this by no means justified his want of confidence in the power of the Lord, and still less his harsh and unjust treatment of the prophet Hanani, whom he caused to be put in the house of the stocks on account of his condemnation of the confidence which he placed in the Syrians instead of Jehovah (2 Chron. xvi. 7-10).

the principal fortresses of the land of Naphtali, with which the whole of the country round was also smitten, *i.e.* laid waste.—Ver. 21. וַיָּשָׁב, and remained at Thirza, his place of residence (see at ch. xiv. 17).—Ver. 22. Asa thereupon summoned all Judah וְיִשְׂרָאֵל, *namine immuni, i.e. excepto*, no one being free (cf. Ewald, § 286, α), and had the stones and the wood carried away from Ramah, and *Geba* and *Mizpah* in Benjamin built, *i.e.* fortified, with them. *Geba* must not be confounded with *Gibeah* of Benjamin or Saul, but is the present *Jeba*, three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of Ramah (see at Josh. xviii. 24). *Mizpah*, the present *Nebi Samwil*, about three-quarters of a geographical mile to the south-west of Ramah (see at Josh. xviii. 26).—Vers. 23, 24. Of the other acts of Asa, the building of cities refers to the building of fortifications mentioned in 2 Chron. xiv. 5, 6. The disease in his feet in the time of his old age commenced, according to 2 Chron. xvi. 12, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign; and he sought help from the physicians, but not from the Lord; from which we may see, that the longer he lived the more he turned his heart away from the Lord (compare 2 Chron. xvi. 10).

CHAP. XV. 25—XVI. 28. REIGNS OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL, NADAB, BAASHA, ELAH, ZIMRI, AND OMRI.

Vers. 25–32. THE REIGN OF NADAB lasted not quite two years, as he ascended the throne in the second year of Asa, and was slain in his third year.—Ver. 6. He walked in the ways of his father (Jeroboam) and in his sin, *i.e.* in the calf-worship introduced by Jeroboam (ch. xii. 28). When Nadab in the second year of his reign besieged Gibbethon, which the Philistines had occupied, Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house, *i.e.* the family or tribe, of Issachar, conspired against him and slew him, and after he became king exterminated the whole house of Jeroboam, without leaving a single soul, whereby the prediction of the prophet Ahijah (ch. xiv. 10 sqq.) was fulfilled. *Gibbethon*, which was allotted to the Danites (Josh. xix. 44), has not yet been discovered. It probably stood close to the Philistian border, and was taken by the Philistines, from whom the Israelites attempted to wrest it by siege under both Nadab and Baasha (ch. xvi. 16), though apparently without success. לֹא הִשְׁאִיר כָּל-נִשְׁמָה as in Josh. xi. 14 (see the Comm. on Deut. xx.



16).—Ver. 32 is simply a repetition of ver. 16 ; and the remark concerning Baasha's attitude towards Asa of Judah immediately after his entrance upon the government precedes the account of his reign, for the purpose of indicating at the very outset, that the overthrow of the dynasty of Jeroboam and the rise of a new dynasty did not alter the hostile relation between the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah.

Ver. 33—ch. xvi. 7. THE REIGN OF BAASHA is described very briefly according to its duration (two years) and its spirit, namely, the attitude of Baasha towards the Lord (ver. 34) ; there then follow in ch. xvi. 1–4 the words of the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani (2 Chron. xvi. 7), concerning the extermination of the family of Baasha ; and lastly, in vers. 5–7, his death is related with the standing allusion to the annals of the kings. The words of Jehu concerning Baasha (ch. xvi. 1–4) coincide exactly *mutatis mutandis* with the words of Ahijah concerning Jeroboam.<sup>1</sup> The expression “exalted thee out of the dust,” instead of “from among the people” (ch. xiv. 7), leads to the conjecture that Baasha had risen to be king from a very low position. **בְּיָדוֹ** (his might) in ver. 5 refers, as in the case of Asa (ch. xv. 23), less to brave warlike deeds, than generally to the manifestation of strength and energy in his government.—Ver. 7 adds a supplementary remark concerning the words of Jehu (vers. 2 sqq.), not to preclude an excuse that might be made, in which case **יָנִים** would have to be taken in the sense of nevertheless, or notwithstanding (Ewald, § 354, a), but to guard against a misinterpretation by adding a new feature, or rather to preclude an erroneous inference that might be drawn from the words, “I (Jehovah) have made thee prince”

<sup>1</sup> “There was something very strange in the perversity and stolidity of the kings of Israel, that when they saw that the families of preceding kings were evidently overthrown by the command of God on account of the worship of the calves, and they themselves had overturned them, they nevertheless worshipped the same calves, and placed them before the people for them to worship, that they might not return to the temple and to Asa, king of Jerusalem ; though prophets denounced it and threatened their destruction. Truly the devil and the ambition of reigning blinded them and deprived them of their senses. Hence it came to pass, through the just judgment of God, that they all were executioners of one another in turn : Baasha was the executioner of the sons of Jeroboam ; Zambri was the executioner of the sons of Baasha ; and the executioner of Zambri was Omri.”—C. A LAPIDE.

(ver. 2), as though Baasha had exterminated Nadab and his house by divine command (Thenius). **וְגַם** simply means “and also,” and is not to be connected specially with **בִּיד יְהוָה**, but to be taken as belonging to the whole sentence: “also the word of Jehovah had come to Baasha through Jehu, . . . not only because of the evil, etc., but also (**וְעַל . . . וְעַל**) because he had slain him (Jeroboam).” With regard to this last reason, we must call to mind the remark made at ch. xi. 39, viz. that the prediction of the prophet to Baasha gave him no right to put himself forward arbitrarily as the fulfiller of the prophecy. The very fact that Baasha continued Jeroboam’s sin and caused the illegal worship to be perpetuated, showed clearly enough that in exterminating the family of Jeroboam he did not act under divine direction, but simply pursued his own selfish ends.

Vers. 8–14. THE REIGN OF ELAH.—As Baasha reigned from the third to the twenty-sixth year of Asa, *i.e.* not quite twenty-four years, but only twenty-three years and a few months, so his son Elah reigned from the twenty-sixth to the twenty-seventh year of Asa, *i.e.* not quite two years.—Vers. 9, 10. *Zimri*, the commander of the half of his war-chariots, conspired against him, and not only slew him, when he was intoxicated (**יִשְׁתָּה שָׁכֹר**) at a drinking bout in the house of *Arza*, the prefect of his palace, but after ascending the throne exterminated the whole family of Baasha to the very last man. The prefect of the palace was no doubt a party to the conspiracy, and had probably arranged the drinking bout in his house for the purpose of carrying it out. “He did not leave him **מִשְׁתֵּי בָקִיר** (see at ch. xiv. 10), either his avengers (**וְאֵלֵי**, blood-relations, who might have avenged his death) or his friends.” These words simply serve to explain **מִשְׁתֵּי בָקִיר**, and show that this phrase is to be understood as relating to males only.—Vers. 12, 13. “According to the word of the Lord;” see at vers. 1 sqq. **אֶל כָּל-הַטֹּאוֹת**, with regard to all, *i.e.* on account of all the sins (compare ver. 7, where **עַל** is used). **בְּהִבְלֵיהֶם**, through their nothingnesses, *i.e.* their idols, by which the golden calves are meant.

Vers. 15–22. THE REIGN OF ZIMRI lasted only seven days. As soon as the people of war (**הַעָם**), who were besieging Gibbethon (see at ch. xv. 27), heard of his conspiracy, his usurpation of the throne, and his murderous deeds, they proclaimed



*Omri* king in the camp of the military commanders, and he at once, with all Israel, *i.e.* all the army, raised the siege of Gibbethon, to lay siege to Thirza. Now when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the castle of the royal palace and burned the king's house over his own head, as Sardanapalus did, according to Justin (*Hist.* i. 3). *אַרְמֶת* does not mean harem (Ewald), but the high castle (from *אַרַם*, to be high); here and in 2 Kings xv. 25, the citadel of the royal palace, which consisted of several buildings.—Ver. 19 is connected with *וַיָּמָת* in ver. 18: “and so died for his sins,” *i.e.* as a punishment for them.—Vers. 21, 22. But Omri did not come into possession of an undisputed sovereignty immediately upon the death of Zimri. The nation divided itself into two halves; one half was behind *Tibni*, the son of Ginath (*i.e.* declared in favour of Tibni), to make him king, the other adhered to *Omri*. Nevertheless Omri's gained the upper hand over the party of Tibni, and the latter died, whereupon Omri became king after four years, as we may see from a comparison of vers. 15, 16 with ver. 23. The “people of Israel” (ver. 21) are probably the fighting people, so that the succession to the throne was decided by the military. *וַיִּהְיֶה אֲחֵרֵי* as in 2 Sam. ii. 10. *וַיִּזְק*, with an accusative instead of with *עַל*, in the sense of to overpower, as in Jer. xx. 7. According to Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 12, 5), Tibni was slain by his opponent; but this is not contained in the words; on the contrary, all that is implied in the connection of *וַיָּמָת* with *וַיִּזְק וְנָתַן* is that he met with his death in the decisive engagement in which the opposing party triumphed.

Vers. 23-28. THE REIGN OF OMRI.—Ver. 23. Omri reigned twelve years, *i.e.*, if we compare vers. 15 and 23 with ver. 29, reckoning from his rebellion against Zimri; so that he only possessed the sole government for eight years (or, more exactly, seven years and a few months), viz. from the 31st to the 38th years of Asa, and the conflict with Tibni for the possession of the throne lasted about four years. “At Thirza he reigned six years,” *i.e.* during the four years of the conflict with Tibni, and after his death two years more.—Ver. 24. As soon as he had obtained undisputed possession of the throne, he purchased the hill *Shomron* (Samaria) from *Shemer* (*Semer*) for two talents of silver, about 5200 thalers (£780—TR.), built houses upon it, and named the town which he built after the former owner of

the hill שְׁמֶרֶן, rendered by the LXX. Σεμνηρόν here, but everywhere else Σαμάρεα (Samaria), after the Chaldee form שְׁמֶרֶן (Ezra iv. 10, 17). This city he made his seat (*Residenz*, place of residence, or capital), in which he resided for the last six years of his reign, and where he was buried after his death (ver. 28). *Samaria* continued to be the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes from that time forward, and the residence of all succeeding kings of Israel until the destruction of this kingdom after its conquest by Salmanasar (2 Kings xviii. 9, 10). The city was two hours and a half to the north-west of Sichem, upon a mountain or hill in a mountain-hollow (*Bergkessel*, lit. mountain-caldron) or basin of about two hours in diameter, surrounded on all sides by still higher mountains. "The mountains and valleys round about are still for the most part arable, and are alive with numerous villages and diligent cultivation." The mountain itself upon which Samaria stood is still cultivated to the very top, and about the middle of the slope is surrounded by a narrow terrace of level ground resembling a girdle. And even higher up there are marks of smaller terraces, where streets of the ancient city may possibly have run. After the captivity Samaria was retaken and demolished by John Hyrcanus, and lay in ruins till Gabinius the Roman governor rebuilt it (Joseph. *Ant.* xiii. 19, 2, 3, and xiv. 5, 3). Herod the Great afterwards decorated it in a marvellous manner, built a temple there to the emperor Augustus, and named the city after him Σεβαστή, i.e. *Augusta*, from which arose the present name *Sebaste* or *Sebastieh*, borne by a village which is still standing on the ancient site: "a pitiable hamlet consisting of a few squalid houses, inhabited by a band of plunderers, notorious as thieves even among their lawless fellow-countrymen" (V. de Velde, i. p. 378).—But by the side of this there are magnificent ruins of an ancient Johannite church, with the reputed grave of John the Baptist and remains of limestone columns at the foot of the mountain (cf. Robinson, *Pal.* iii. p. 136 sqq.; Van de Velde, *Syria and Pal.* i. p. 374 sqq.; and C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 159, 160).—Vers. 25, 26. Omri also walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and acted worse than his predecessors upon the throne.—For vers. 26 and 27, compare vers. 13 and 14.



## 2. FROM AHAB'S ASCENT OF THE THRONE TO THE DEATH OF JORAM OF ISRAEL AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.

CHAP. XVI. 29-2 KINGS x. 27.

In this epoch, which embraces only thirty-four years, the history of the kings of Judah falls so far into the background behind the history of the kingdom of Israel, that it seems to form merely an appendix to it; and the history of the monarchy is so controlled by the description of the labours of the prophets, that it seems to be entirely absorbed in them. These phenomena have their foundation in the development of the two kingdoms during this period. Through the alliance and affinity of Jehoshaphat with the idolatrous Ahab, the kingdom of Judah not only lost the greatest part of the blessing which the long and righteous reign of this pious king had brought, but it became so entangled in the political and religious confusion of the kingdom of Israel in consequence of the participation of Jehoshaphat in the wars between Israel and the Syrians, and other foes, and the inclination of Joram and Ahaziah to the worship of Baal, that its further development during this period was almost entirely dependent upon the history of Israel. In the latter kingdom the prophets maintained a fierce conflict with the idolatry introduced by Ahab and Jezebel, in which the worship of Baal did indeed eventually succumb, but the pure lawful worship of Jehovah did not attain to full supremacy, so that this great spiritual conflict was no more followed by a permanent blessing to the kingdom as such, than the single victories of Ahab and Joram over the Syrians by outward peace and rest from its oppressors. To guard against the spreading apostasy of the people from the living God through the exaltation of the worship of Baal into the ruling national religion in Israel, the Lord raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, Elijah the Tishbite, with his fiery zeal, who worked so mightily upon the formation of the spiritual life of the covenant nation and the fate of the kingdom, not only in his own person in the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah (ch. xvii.—2 Kings ii.), but indirectly in the person of his successor Elisha under Joram (2 Kings iii.—ix.), and also under the succeeding kings of Israel, that the labours of these prophets and their disciples form the central and culminating point of the Old Testament kingdom of God during the period in question.

## CHAP. XVI. 29–34. THE REIGN OF AHAB OF ISRAEL.

The ascent of the throne of Israel by Ahab (ver. 29) formed a turning-point for the worse, though, as a comparison of ver. 30 with ver. 25 clearly shows, the way had already been prepared by his father Omri.—Vers. 30, 31. Whereas the former kings of Israel had only perpetuated the sin of Jeroboam, *i.e.* the calf-worship, or worship of Jehovah under the image of an ox, which he had introduced, Ahab was not satisfied with this. וַיְהִי הַנֶּקֶל לְכַתּוֹ, “it came to pass, was it too little?” *i.e.* because it was too little (cf. Ewald, § 362, *a*) to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, that he took as his wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal the king of the Sidonians, and served Baal, and worshipped him. וַיֵּעַבֵד before וַיֵּלֶךְ, “he went and served,” is a pictorial description of what took place, to give greater prominence to the new turn of affairs. אֲתַבְעַל (*i.e.* with Baal) is the *Eiθώβαλος* (אֲתַבּוּ or *Iθόβαλος*: Jos. *Ant.* viii. 13, 1) mentioned by Menander in Josephus, *c. Ap.* i. 18, who was king of Tyre and Sidon, and priest of Astarte, and who usurped the throne after the murder of his brother, king Pheles, and reigned thirty-two years. Jezebel (אִיזֶבֶל, *i.e.* probably without cohabitation, cf. Gen. xxx. 20, = untouched, chaste; not a contraction of אֲבִיזֶבֶל, as Ewald, § 273, *b*, supposes) was therefore, as tyrant and murderess of the prophets, a worthy daughter of her father, the idolatrous priest and regicide. *Baal* (always הַבַּעַל with the article, *the Baal*, *i.e.* Lord κατ’ ἐξοχήν) was the principal male deity of the Phœnicians and Canaanites, and generally of the western Asiatics, called by the Babylonians בַּל = בַּעַל (Isa. xlv. 1), *Bḡλος*, and as the sun-god was worshipped as the supporter and first principle of psychical life and of the generative and reproductive power of nature (see at Judg. ii. 13). Ahab erected an altar to this deity בֵּית הַבַּעַל, in the house (temple) of Baal, which he had built at Samaria. The worship of Baal had its principal seat in Tyre, where Hiram, the contemporary of David and Solomon, had built for it a splendid temple and placed a golden pillar (χρυσοῦν κίονα) therein, according to Dios and Menander, in Joseph. *Ant.* viii. 5, 3, and *c. Ap.* i. 18. Ahab also erected a similar pillar (מַצֵּבָה) to Baal in his temple at Samaria (*vid.* 2 Kings iii. 2, x. 27). For statues or images of Baal are not met with in the earlier times; and the בַּעַלִּים are not statues of Baal, but different modifications of that deity. It was only in the later temple of Baal or Hercules at Tyre that there was, as



Cicero observes (*Verr. iv. 43*), *ex ære simulacrum ipsius Herculis, quo non facile quidquam dixerim me vidisse pulcrius*.—Ver. 33. “And Ahab made אֲשֶׁרָה, *i.e.* the Asherah belonging to the temple of Baal” (see at Judg. vi. 25 and Ex. xxxiv. 13), an idol of Astarte (see at ch. xiv. 23).—Ver. 34. In his time *Hiël* the Bethelite (בֵּית הַאֵלִי; compare Ges. § 111, 1 with § 86, 2. 5) built Jericho: “he laid the foundation of it with Abiram his first-born, and set up its gates with Segub his youngest, according to the word of Jehovah,” etc. (for the explanation see the Comm. on Josh. vi. 26). The restoration of this city as a fortification, upon which Joshua had pronounced the curse, is mentioned as a proof how far ungodliness had progressed in Israel; whilst the fulfilment of the curse upon the builder shows how the Lord will not allow the word of His servants to be transgressed with impunity. *Jericho*, on the border of the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 7), which was allotted to the Benjaminites (Josh. xviii. 21), had come into the possession of the kingdom of Israel on the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal house of David, and formed a border city of that kingdom, through the fortification of which Ahab hoped to secure to himself the passage across the Jordan.

### *The prophets Elijah and Elisha.*

When Ahab, who was not satisfied with the sin of Jeroboam, had introduced the worship of Baal as the national religion in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and had not only built a temple to Baal in his capital and place of residence, but had also appointed a very numerous priesthood to maintain the worship (see ch. xviii. 19); and when his godless wife Jezebel was persecuting the prophets of Jehovah, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of the true God: the Lord God raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, namely Elijah the Tishbite, who by his deeds attested his name אֱלֹהֵי or אֱלִיָּה, *i.e.* whose God is Jehovah. For however many prophets of Jehovah arose in the kingdom of the ten tribes from its very commencement and bore witness against the sin of Jeroboam in the power of the Spirit of God, and threatened the kings with the extermination of their house on account of this sin, no other prophet, either before or afterwards, strove and worked in the idolatrous kingdom for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth with anything like the same mighty power of God as the prophet Elijah. And there was no other prophet whom the Lord so gloriously acknow-

ledged by signs and wonders as Elijah, although He fulfilled the words of all His servants by executing the judgments with which they had threatened the rebellious, and whenever it was necessary accredited them as His messengers by miraculous signs. —Although, in accordance with the plan of our books, which was to depict the leading features in the historical development of the kingdom, all that is related in detail of the life and labours of Elijah is the miracles which he performed in his conflict with the worshippers of Baal, and the miraculous display of the omnipotence and grace of God which he experienced therein; yet we may see very clearly that these formed but one side of his prophetic labours from the passing notices of the schools of the prophets, which he visited once more before his departure from the earth (2 Kings ii.); from which it is obvious that this other side of his ministry, which was more hidden from the world, was not less important than his public ministry before the kings and magnates of the land. For these societies of “sons of the prophets,” which we meet with at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho (2 Kings ii. 3, 5, iv. 38), had no doubt been called into existence by Elijah, by associating together those whose souls were fitted to receive the Spirit of God for mutual improvement in the knowledge and fear of Jehovah, in order to raise up witnesses to the truth and combatants for the cause of the Lord, and through these societies to provide the godly, who would not bow the knee before Baal, with some compensation for the loss of the Levitical priesthood and the want of the temple-worship. Compare the remarks on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. xix. 24.—The more mightily idolatry raised its head in the kingdom of Israel, the more powerfully did the Lord show to His people that He, Jehovah, and not Baal, was God and Lord in Israel. In the prophet Elijah there were combined in a marvellous manner a life of solitude spent in secret and contemplative intercourse with God, and an extraordinary power for action, which would suddenly burst forth, and by which he acted as a personal representative of God (see at ch. xvii. 1). In his person the spirit of Moses revived; he was the restorer of the kingdom of God in Israel, of which Moses was the founder. His life recalls that of Moses in many of its features: namely, his flight into the desert, the appearance of the Lord to him at Horeb, and the marvellous termination of his life. Moses and Elijah are the Coryphæi of the Old Testament, in whose life and labours the nature and glory



of this covenant are reflected. As the thunder and lightning and the blast of trumpets and the smoking mountain bare witness to the devouring fire of the holiness of the God who had come down upon Sinai to give effect to the promises He had made to the fathers, and to make the children of Israel the people of His possession; so does the fiery zeal of the law come out so powerfully in Moses and Elijah, that their words strike the ungodly like lightning and flames of fire, to avenge the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth and maintain His covenant of grace in Israel. Moses as lawgiver, and Elijah as prophet, are, as Ziegler has well said (p. 206), the two historical anticipations of those two future witnesses, which are "the two olive-trees and two torches standing before the God of the earth. And if any one will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must therefore be slain. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all kinds of plagues, as often as they will" (Rev. xi. 4 sqq.). Elijah was called to this office of witness to turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and of the sons to their fathers (Mal. iii. 24), so that in his ministry the prophecy of the future of the kingdom of God falls quite into the background. Nevertheless he was not only a forerunner but also a type of the Prophet promised by Moses, who was to fulfil both law and prophets (Matt. v. 17); and therefore he appeared as the representative of prophecy, along with Moses the representative of the law, upon the mount of the Transfiguration, to talk with Christ of the decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 31; Matt. xvii. 3).—To continue his work, Elijah, by command of God, called *Elisha* the son of Shaphat, of Abel-Meholah, who during the whole of his prophetic course carried on with power the restoration of the law in the kingdom of Israel, which his master had begun, by conducting schools of the prophets and acting as the counsellor of kings, and proved himself by many signs and wonders to be the heir of a double portion of the gifts of Elijah.

Modern theology, which has its roots in naturalism, has taken offence at the many miracles occurring in the history of these two prophets, but it has overlooked the fact that these miracles were regulated by the extraordinary circumstances under which Elijah and Elisha worked. At a time when the

sovereignty of the living God in Israel was not only called in question, but was to be destroyed by the worship of Baal, it was necessary that Jehovah as the covenant God should interpose in a supernatural manner, and declare His eternal Godhead in extraordinary miracles. In the kingdom of the ten tribes there were no priestly or Levitical duties performed, nor was there the regular worship of God in a temple sanctified by Jehovah Himself; whilst the whole order of life prescribed in the law was undermined by unrighteousness and ungodliness. But with all this, the kingdom was not yet ripe for the judgment of rejection, because there were still seven thousand in the land who had not bowed their knee before Baal. For the sake of these righteous men, the Lord had still patience with the sinful kingdom, and sent it prophets to call the rebellious to repentance. If, then, under the circumstances mentioned, the prophets were to fulfil the purpose of their mission and carry on the conflict against the priests of Baal with success, they needed a much greater support on the part of God, through the medium of miracles, than the prophets in the kingdom of Judah, who had powerful and venerable supports in the Levitical priesthood and the lawful worship.<sup>1</sup> It is only when we overlook the object of these miracles, therefore, that they can possibly appear strange. "If," as Kurtz has said,<sup>2</sup> "we take the history of our prophet as one living organic link in the whole of the grand chain of the marvellous works of God, which stretches from Sinai to Golgotha and the Mount of Olives, and bear in mind the peculiarity of the position and circumstances of Elijah, the occurrence of a miracle in itself, and even the accumulation of them and their supposed externality, will

<sup>1</sup> "Where the temple was wanting, and image-worship took its place, and the priesthood was an unlawful caste, it was only by extraordinary methods that the spreading evil could be met. The illegitimacy, which was represented here by the monarchy and priesthood, was opposed by the prophetic order as the representative of the law, and therefore also as a peculiarly constituted and strong body divided up into societies of considerable scope, and having a firm organization. And this prophetic order, as the only accredited representative of the law, also took the place of the law, and was therefore endowed with the power and majesty of the law which had been manifested in wonders and signs. Not only was the spirit of Moses inherited by Elijah and others, but his miraculous power also."—HAEVERNICK, *Einl. in d. A. Test.* ii. 1, pp. 166, 167. Compare Hengstenberg, *Dissertation*, vol. i. p. 186 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Herzog's *Cyclopædia*, Art. *Elijah*.



appear to us in a very different light.—Without miracle, without very striking, *i.e.* external miracles, their ministry would have been without basis, without a starting-point, and without hold.”—The miracles are still more numerous in the history of Elisha, and to some extent bear such a resemblance to those of Elijah, that the attempt has been made to set them down as merely legendary imitations of the latter; but considered as a whole, they are more of a helpful and healing nature, whereas those of Elijah are for the most part manifestations of judicial and punitive wrath. The agreement and the difference may both be explained from Elisha’s position in relation to Elijah and his time. By the performance of similar and equal miracles (such as the division of the Jordan, 2 Kings ii. 8 and 14; the increase of the oil, 2 Kings iv. 3 sqq. compared with 1 Kings xvii. 14 sqq.; the raising of the dead, 2 Kings iv. 34 sqq. compared with 1 Kings xvii. 19 sqq.) Elisha proved himself to be the divinely-appointed successor of Elijah, who was carrying forward his master’s work (just as Joshua by the drying up of the Jordan proved himself to be the continuer of the work of Moses), and as such performed more miracles, so far as number is concerned, than even his master had done, though he was far inferior to him in spiritual power. But the difference does not prevail throughout. For whilst the helpful and healing side of Elijah’s miraculous power is displayed in his relation to the widow at Zarephath; the judicial and punitive side of that of Elisha comes out in the case of the mocking boys at Bethel, of Gehazi, and of Joram’s knight. But the predominance of strict judicial sternness in the case of Elijah, and of sparing and helpful mildness in that of Elisha, is to be accounted for not so much from any difference in the personality of the two, as from the altered circumstances. Elijah, with his fiery zeal, had broken the power of the Baal-worship, and had so far secured an acknowledgment of the authority of Jehovah over His people that Joram and the succeeding kings gave heed to the words of the prophets of the Lord; so that Elisha had for the most part only to cherish and further the conversion of the people to their God, for which Elijah had prepared the way.

#### CHAP. XVII. FIRST APPEARANCE OF ELIJAH.

The prophet Elijah predicts to Ahab, as a punishment for his idolatry, the coming of a drought and famine. During their con-

tinuance he is miraculously preserved by God, first of all at the brook Cherith, and then at the house of a widow at Zarephath (vers. 1-16), whose deceased son he calls to life again (vers. 17-24).

Ver. 1. Elijah the Tishbite is introduced without the formula "The word of the Lord came to . . .," with which the appearance of the prophets is generally announced, proclaiming to king Ahab in the name of the Lord the punitive miracle of a drought that will last for years. This abrupt appearance of Elijah cannot be satisfactorily explained from the fact that we have not the real commencement of his history here ; it is rather a part of the character of this mightiest of all the prophets, and indicates that in him the divine power of the Spirit appeared as it were personified, and his life and acts were the direct effluence of the higher power by which he was impelled. His origin is also uncertain. The epithet **הַתִּשְׁבִּי** is generally derived from a place called *Tishbeh*, since, according to Tobit i. 2, there existed in Upper Galilee a **Θίσβη ἐκ δεξιῶν Κυδίως**, "on the right, *i.e.* to the south of *Kydios*," probably *Kedesh* in the tribe of Naphtali, from which the elder Tobias was carried away captive, although this description of the place is omitted in the Hebrew version of the book of Tobit issued by Fagius and Münster, and in the Vulgate. And to this we must adhere, and as no other *Thisbe* occurs, must accept this Galilean town as the birthplace of Elijah ; in which case the expression "of the settlers of Gilead" indicates that Elijah did not live in his birthplace, but dwelt as a foreigner in Gilead. For **תִּשְׁבִּי** in itself by no means denotes a non-Israelite, but, like **נָזִיר**, simply one who lived away from his home and tribe relations in the territory of a different tribe, without having been enrolled as a member of it, as is clearly shown by Lev. xxv. 40, and still more clearly by Judg. xvii. 7, where a Levite who was born in Bethlehem is described as **נָזִיר** in the tribe of Ephraim.<sup>1</sup> The expression "as truly as Jehovah

<sup>1</sup> The supposition of Seb. Schmidt, with which I formerly agreed, namely, that Elijah was a foreigner, a Gentile by birth, after further examination I can no longer uphold, though not from the *à priori* objection raised against it by Kurtz (in Herzog's *Cycl.*), namely, that it would show a complete misapprehension of the significance of Israel in relation to sacred history and the history of the world, and that neither at this nor any other time in the Old Testament history could a prophet for Israel be called from among the Gentiles,—an assertion of which it would be difficult to find any proof,—but because we are not forced to this conclusion by either **הַתִּשְׁבִּי** or **מִתְשַׁבִּי גִלְעָד**. For



the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand (*i.e.* whom I serve; see at ch. i. 2), there shall not fall dew and rain these years, except at my word," was a special application of the threats of the law in Deut. xi. 16, 17, xxviii. 23, 24, and Lev. xxvi. 19, to the idolatrous kingdom. הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלֶּה, "these (ensuing) years," does not fix any definite terminus. In לִפְיִי דְבָרִי there is involved an emphatic antithesis to others, and more especially to the prophets of Baal. "When I shall say this by divine authority and might, let others prate and lie as they may please" (*Berleb. Bibel*). Elijah thereby describes himself as one into whose power the God of Israel has given up the idolatrous king and his people. In Jas. v. 17, 18, this act of Elijah is

even if the Thisbeh in Tob. i. 2 should not be Elijah's birthplace, it would not follow that there was no other place named Thisbeh in existence. How many places in Canaan are there that are never mentioned in the Old Testament! And such cases as that described in Judg. vii. 7, where the Levite is said to have left his birthplace and to have lived in another tribe as a foreigner or settler, may not have been of rare occurrence, since the Mosaic law itself refers to it in Lev. xxv. 41.—Again, the LXX. were unable to explain מְתוֹשֶׁבֵי גִלְעָד, and have paraphrased these words in an arbitrary manner by ὁ ἐκ Θεσσαλονίκης Γαλααδῶν, from which Thenius and Ewald conjecture that there was a Thisbeh in Gilead, and that it was probably the *Tisieh* (طيسية) mentioned by Robinson (*Pal.* iii. 153) to the south of *Busra* = *Bostra*. The five arguments by which Kurtz has attempted to establish the probability of this conjecture are very weak. For (1) the defective writing מְתוֹשֶׁבֵי by no means proves that the word which is written *plene* (תּוֹשֶׁב) in every other case must necessarily have been so written in the *stat. constr. plur.*; and this is the only passage in the whole of the Old Testament in which it occurs in the *stat. constr. plur.*;—(2) the precise description of the place given in Tobit i. 2 does not at all lead "to the assumption that the Galilean Thisbeh was not the only place of that name," but may be fully explained from the fact that Thisbeh was a small and insignificant place, the situation of which is defined by a reference to a larger town and one better known;—(3) there is no doubt that "Gilead very frequently denotes the whole of the country to the east of the Jordan," but this does not in the least degree prove that there was a Thisbeh in the country to the east of the Jordan;—(4) "that the distinction and difference between a birthplace and a place of abode are improbable in themselves, and not to be expected in this connection," is a perfectly unfounded assumption, and has first of all to be proved;—(5) the *Tisieh* mentioned by Robinson cannot be taken into consideration, for the simple reason that the assumption of a copyist's error, the confusion of א with א (Tisieh instead of Thisbeh), founders on the long *i* of the first syllable in *Tisieh*; moreover the Arabic ب corresponds to the Hebrew מ and not to ת.

ascribed to the power of his prayers, since Elijah "was also a man such as we are," inasmuch as the prophets received their power to work solely through faith and intercourse with God in prayer, and faith gives power to remove mountains.

Vers. 2-9. After the announcement of this judgment, Elijah had to hide himself, by the command of God, until the period of punishment came to an end, not so much that he might be safe from the wrath and pursuit of Ahab and Jezebel, as to preclude all earnest entreaties to remove the punishment. "For inasmuch as the prophet had said that the rain would come at his word, how would they have urged him to order it to come!" (Seb. Schm.) He was to turn קִדְמָה, eastward, *i.e.* from Samaria, where he had no doubt proclaimed the divine judgment to Ahab, to the Jordan, and to hide himself at the brook *Cherith*, which is in front of the Jordan. The brook *Cherith* was in any case a brook emptying itself into the Jordan; but whether upon the eastern or the western side of that river, the ambiguity of עַל-פָּנָי, which means both "to the east of" (Gen. xxv. 18) and also "in the face of," *i.e.* before or towards (Gen. xvi. 12, xviii. 16), it is impossible to determine with certainty. That it must signify "to the east of the Jordan" here, does not follow from קִדְמָה with anything like the certainty that Thenius supposes. An ancient tradition places the *Cherith* on this side of the Jordan, and identifies it with the spring *Phasaelis*, which takes its rise in the slope of the mountains into the Jordan valley above the city of *Phasaelis*, and empties itself into the Jordan (cf. Ges. *thes.* p. 719, and V. de Velde, *Reise*, ii. pp. 273-4); whereas Eusebius, in the *Onom. s.v. Chorath (Χορρά)*, places it on the other side of the Jordan, and Thenius thinks of the apparently deep *Wady Rajib* or *Ajlun*. All that can be affirmed with certainty is, that neither the brook *Kanah* (Josh. xvi. 8, xvii. 9), which flows into the Mediterranean, nor the *Wady Kelt* near Jericho, which Robinson (*Pal.* ii. p. 288) suggests, can possibly come into consideration: the latter for the simple reason, that the locality in the neighbourhood of Jericho was unsuitable for a hiding-place. Elijah was to drink of this brook, and the ravens by divine command were to provide him with bread and meat, which they brought him, according to ver. 6, both morning and evening. It is now generally admitted that הָעֲרָבִים does not mean either Arabs or Orebites (the inhabitants of an imaginary city named Oreb), but *ravens*. Through this miracle, which unbelievers reject, because they do not acknowledge a living God, by



whom, as the Creator and Lord of all creatures, even the voracious ravens are made subservient to His plans of salvation, Elijah was not only cut off from intercourse with men, who might have betrayed his place of abode to the king, but was mightily strengthened himself, through the confidence inspired in the almighty assistance of his God, for his approaching contests with the worshippers of idols, and for the privations and sufferings which awaited him in the fulfilment of his vocation.—Vers. 7-9. After some time this brook dried up for want of rain. Then the Lord directed His servant to go to the Sidonian *Zarephath*, and to live with a widow whom He had commanded to provide for him. מִמָּחָז יָמִים does not mean *post annum*, for יָמִים merely derives this meaning in certain passages from the context (cf. Lev. xxv. 29; 1 Sam. xxvii. 7; Judg. xvii. 10); whereas in this instance the context does not point to the space of a year, but to a longer period of indefinite duration, all that we know being that, according to ch. xviii. 1, the sojourn of Elijah at Cherith and Zarephath lasted at least two years. Zarephath (Σαρέπτα, LXX.) was situated on the Mediterranean Sea between Tyre and Sidon, where a miserable Mohammedan village with ruins and a promontory, *Sura-fend*, still preserve the name of the former town (Rob. iii. p. 413 sqq., and V. de Velde, *Syria and Palestine*, i. pp. 101-3, transl.).

Vers. 10-16. When Elijah arrived at the city gate, he met a widow engaged in gathering wood. To discover whether it was to her that the Lord had sent him, he asked her for something to drink and for a morsel of bread to eat; whereupon she assured him, with an oath by Jehovah, that she had nothing baked (מַעֲוָה = עֵגֶה, *ἐγκρυφίας*, a cake baked in hot ashes), but only a handful of meal in the כַּי (a pail or small vessel in which meal was kept) and a little oil in the pitcher, and that she was just gathering wood to dress this remnant for herself and her son, that they might eat it, and then die. From this statement of the widow it is evident, on the one hand, that the drought and famine had spread across the Phœnician frontier, as indeed Menander of Ephesus attests;<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, the widow showed by the oath, “as Jehovah thy God liveth,” that she was a worshipper of the true God, who spoke of *Jehovah* as his God,

<sup>1</sup> Josephus gives this statement from his Phœnician history: ἀβροχία τε ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ (sc. Ἰθοβάλου) ἐγένετο ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὑπερβερεταίου μηνὸς ἕως τοῦ ἐρχομένου ἔτους Ὑπερβερεταίου (*Ant.* viii. 13, 2). *Hyperberetæus* answers to *Tishri* of the Hebrews; cf. Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 18.

because she recognised the prophet as an Israelite.—Vers. 13 sqq. In order, however, to determine with indisputable certainty whether this believing Gentile was the protectress assigned him by the Lord, Elijah comforted her, and at the same time desired her first of all to bake him a little cake *מִשֶּׁם*, i.e. of the last of the meal in the *Kad* and of the oil in the pitcher, and then to bake for herself and her son, adding this promise: Jehovah the God of Israel will not let the meal in the *Kad* and the oil in the pitcher fail, till He sends rain upon the earth again. And the widow did according to his word. She gave up the certain for the uncertain, because she trusted the word of the Lord, and received the reward of her believing confidence in the fact that during the whole time of the drought she suffered from no want of either meal or oil. This act of the pious Gentile woman, who had welcomed with a simple heart the knowledge of the true God that had reached her from Israel, must have been the source of strong consolation to Elijah in the hour of conflict, when his faith was trembling because of the multitude of idolaters in Israel. If the Lord Himself had raised up true worshippers of His name among the Gentiles, his work in Israel could not be put to shame. The believing widow, however, received from the prophet not only a material blessing, but a spiritual blessing also. For, as Christ tells His unbelieving contemporaries to their shame (Luke iv. 25, 26), Elijah was not sent to this widow in order that he might be safely hidden at her house, although this object was better attained thereby than by his remaining longer in Israel; but because of her faith, namely, to strengthen and to increase it, he was sent to her, and not to one of the many widows in Israel, many of whom would also have received the prophet if they had been rescued by him from the pressure of the famine. And the miraculous increase of the meal and oil did not merely subserve the purpose of keeping the prophet and the widow alive; but the relief of her bodily need was also meant to be a preparatory means of quieting her spiritual need as well. On the *Chethîb* *חֵתִיב*, see at ch. vi. 19. In ver. 15 the *Keri* *הָיָא וְהָיָא* is an unnecessary emendation of the *Chethîb* *הָיָא וְהָיָא*; the feminine form *וְהָיָא* is occasioned primarily by the preceding verbs, and may be taken as an indefinite neuter: “and there ate he and she.” The offence which Thenius has taken at *יָמִים* (days) has no foundation, if we do not understand the sentence as referring merely to their eating once of the bread just



baked, but take it generally as signifying that in consequence of their acting according to the word of Jehovah, they (Elijah, the widow, and her family) ate for days, *i.e.* until God sent rain again (ver. 14).

Vers. 17-24. *The widow's deceased son raised to life again.*  
 —Ver. 17. After these events, when Elijah had taken up his abode in the upper room of her house, her son fell sick, so that he breathed out his life. עַד אֲשֶׁר יָמוּת, literally till no breath remained in him. That these words do not signify merely a death-like torpor, but an actual decease, is evident from what follows, where Elijah himself treats the boy as dead, and the Lord, in answer to his prayer, restores him to life again.—Ver. 18. The pious woman discerned in this death a punishment from God for her sin, and supposed that it had been drawn towards her by the presence of the man of God, so that she said to Elijah, “What have we to do with one another (מִה־לִּי וְלָךְ; cf. Judg. xi. 12; 2 Sam. xvi. 10), thou man of God? Hast thou come to me to bring my sin to remembrance (with God), and to kill my son?” In this half-heathenish belief there spoke at the same time a mind susceptible to divine truth and conscious of its sin, to which the Lord could not refuse His aid. Like the blindness in the case of the man born blind mentioned in John ix., the death of this widow's son was not sent as a punishment for particular sins, but was intended as a medium for the manifestation of the works of God in her (John ix. 3), in order that she might learn that the Lord was not merely the God of the Jews, but the God of the Gentiles also (Rom. iii. 29).  
 —Vers. 19, 20. Elijah told her to carry the dead child up to the chamber in which he lived and lay it upon his bed, and then cried to the Lord, “Jehovah, my God! hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, to slay her son?” These words, in which the word *also* refers to the other calamities occasioned by the drought, contain no reproach of God, but are expressive of the heartiest compassion for the suffering of his benefactress and the deepest lamentation, which, springing from living faith, pours out the whole heart before God in the hour of distress, that it may appeal to Him the more powerfully for His aid. The meaning is, “Thou, O Lord my God, according to Thy grace and righteousness, canst not possibly leave the son of this widow in death.” Such confident belief carries within itself the certainty of being heard. The

prophet therefore proceeds at once to action, to restore the boy to life.—Ver. 21. He stretched himself (יִתְמַרֵּד) three times upon him, not to ascertain whether there was still any life left in him, as Paul did in Acts xx. 10, nor to warm the body of the child and set its blood in circulation, as Elisha did with a dead child (2 Kings iv. 34),—for the action of Elisha is described in a different manner, and the youth mentioned in Acts xx. 10 was only apparently dead,—but to bring down the vivifying power of God upon the dead body, and thereby support his own word and prayer.<sup>1</sup> He then cried to the Lord, “Jehovah, my God, I pray Thee let the soul of this boy return within it.” עַל-קִרְבּוֹ, inasmuch as the soul as the vital principle springs from above.—Vers. 22, 23. The Lord heard this prayer: the boy came to life again; whereupon Elijah gave him back to his mother.—Ver. 24. Through this miracle, in which Elijah showed himself as the forerunner of Him who raiseth all the dead to life, the pious Gentile woman was mightily strengthened in her faith in the God of Israel. She now not only recognised Elijah as a man of God, as in ver. 18, but perceived that the word of Jehovah in his mouth was truth, by which she confessed *implicite* her faith in the God of Israel as the true God.

#### CHAP. XVIII. ELIJAH'S MEETING WITH AHAB, AND VICTORY OVER THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

As the judgment of drought and famine did not bring king Ahab to his senses and lead him to turn from his ungodly ways, but only filled him with exasperation towards the prophet who had announced to him the coming judgment; there was no other course left than to lay before the people with mighty and convincing force the proof that Jehovah was the only true God, and to execute judgment upon the priests of Baal as the seducers of the nation.

Vers. 1–19. *Elijah's meeting with Ahab.*—Vers. 1 and 2a. In the third year of his sojourn at Zarephath the word of the Lord came to Elijah to show himself to Ahab; since God was about to send rain upon the land again. The time given, “the third year,” is not to be reckoned, as the Rabbins, Clericus,

<sup>1</sup> “This was done, that the prophet's body might be the instrument of the miracle, just as in other cases of miracle there was an imposition of the hand.”  
—SEB. SCHMIDT.



Thenius, and others assume, from the commencement of the drought, but from the event last mentioned, namely, the sojourn of Elijah at Zarephath. This view merits the preference as the simplest and most natural one, and is shown to be the oldest by Luke iv. 25 and Jas. v. 17, where Christ and James both say, that in the time of Ahab it did not rain for three years and six months. And this length of time can only be obtained by allowing more than two years for Elijah's stay at Zarephath.—From ver. 2*b* to ver. 6 we have parenthetical remarks introduced, to explain the circumstances which led to Elijah's meeting with Ahab. The verbs וַיֵּאמֶר, וַיְהִי, וַיִּקְרָא, and וַיַּחֲלֶקְוּ (vers. 3, 4, 5, 6) carry on the circumstantial clauses: "and the famine was . . ." (ver. 2*b*), and "Obadiah feared . . ." (ver. 3*b*), and are therefore to be expressed by the pluperfect. When the famine had become very severe in Samaria (the capital), Ahab, with Obadiah the governor of his castle (אֲשֶׁר עַל הַבֵּית, see at ch. iv. 6), who was a God-fearing man, and on the persecution of the prophets of Jehovah by Jezebel had hidden a hundred prophets in caves and supplied them with food, had arranged for an expedition through the whole land to seek for hay for his horses and mules. And for this purpose they had divided the land between them, so that the one explored one district and the other another. We see from ver. 4 that Jezebel had resolved upon exterminating the worship of Jehovah, and sought to carry out this intention by destroying the prophets of the true God. The hundred prophets whom Obadiah concealed were probably for the most part pupils ("sons") of the prophets. חֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ must signify, according to the context and also according to ver. 13, "fifty each," so that חֲמִשִּׁים must have fallen out through a copyist's error. וְלֹא נִבְרִית מִן, that we may not be obliged to kill (a portion) of the cattle (מִן partitive). The *Keri* מִן בְּהֵמָה is no doubt actually correct, but it is not absolutely necessary, as the *Chethûb* מִן בְּהֵמָה may be taken as an indefinite phrase: "any head of cattle."—Vers. 7, 8. Elijah met Obadiah on this expedition, and told him to announce his coming to the king.—Vers. 9 sqq. Obadiah was afraid that the execution of this command might cost him his life, inasmuch as Ahab had sent in search of Elijah "to every kingdom and every nation,"—a hyperbole suggested by inward excitement and fear. וְאִמְרוּ אֵין is to be connected with what follows in spite of the accents: "and if they said he is not

here, he took an oath," etc.—Vers. 12, 13. "And if it comes to pass (that) I go away from thee, and the Spirit of Jehovah carries thee away whither I know not, and I come to tell Ahab (*sc.* that thou art here) and he findeth thee not, he will slay me, and thy servant feareth the Lord from his youth," etc.; *i.e.* since I as a God-fearing man and a protector of the prophets cannot boast of any special favour from Ahab. מִנְעָרִי, from *my* youth up: "thy servant" being equivalent to "I myself." From the fear expressed by Obadiah that the Spirit of Jehovah might suddenly carry the prophet to some unknown place, Seb. Schmidt and others have inferred that in the earlier history of Elijah there had occurred some cases of this kind of sudden transportation, though they have not been handed down; but the anxiety expressed by Obadiah might very well have sprung from the fact, that after Elijah had announced the coming drought to Ahab, he disappeared, and, notwithstanding all the inquiries instituted by the king, was nowhere to be found. And since he was not carried off miraculously then (compare the לָךְ and וּלְךָ, "get thee hence" and "he went," in ch. xvii. 3, 5), there is all the less ground for imagining cases of this kind in the intermediate time, when he was hidden from his enemies. The subsequent translation of Elijah to heaven (2 Kings ii. 11, 12), and the miraculous carrying away of Philip from the chamberlain of Mauritania (Acts viii. 39), do not warrant any such assumption; and still less the passage which Clericus quotes from Ezekiel (iii. 12, 14), because the carrying of Ezekiel through the air, which is mentioned here, only happened in vision and not in external reality. If Obadiah had known of any actual occurrence of this kind, he would certainly have stated it more clearly as a more striking vindication of his fear.—Vers. 15–19. But when Elijah assured him with an oath (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, see at 1 Sam. i. 3) that he would show himself to Ahab that day, Obadiah went to announce it to the king; whereupon Ahab went to meet the prophet, and sought to overawe him with the imperious words, "Art thou here, thou troubler of Israel?" (עֲבִיר, see at Gen. xxxiv. 30). But Elijah threw back this charge: "It is not I who have brought Israel into trouble, but thou and thy family, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou goest after Baalim." He then called upon the king to gather together all Israel to him upon Carmel, together with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of



Asherah, who ate of Jezebel's table, *i.e.* who were maintained by the queen.

CARMEL, a mountain ridge "with many peaks, intersected by hundreds of larger and smaller ravines," which stands out as a promontory running in a north-westerly direction into the Mediterranean (see at Josh. xix. 26), and some of the loftiest peaks of which rise to the height of 1800 feet above the level of the sea, when seen from the northern or outer side shows only "bald, monotonous rocky ridges, scantily covered with short and thorny bushes;" but in the interior it still preserves its ancient glory, which has procured for it the name of "fruit-field," the valleys being covered with the most beautiful flowers of every description, and the heights adorned with myrtles, laurels, oaks, and firs (cf. V. de Velde, *R. i.* p. 292 sqq.). At the north-western extremity of the mountain there is a celebrated Carmelite monastery, dedicated to Elijah, whom tradition represents as having lived in a grotto under the monastery; but we are certainly not to look there for the scene of the contest with the priests of Baal described in the verses which follow. The scene of Elijah's sacrifice is rather to be sought for on one of the south-eastern heights of Carmel; and Van de Velde (*i.* p. 320 sqq.) has pointed it out with great probability in the ruins of *el Mohraka*, *i.e.* "the burned place," "a rocky level space of no great circumference, and covered with old gnarled trees with a dense entangled undergrowth of bushes." For "one can scarcely imagine a spot better adapted for the thousands of Israel to have stood drawn up on than the gentle slopes. The rock shoots up in an almost perpendicular wall of more than 200 feet in height on the side of the vale of Esdraelon. On this side, therefore, there was no room for the gazing multitude; but, on the other hand, this wall made it visible over the whole plain, and from all the surrounding heights, so that even those left behind, who had not ascended Carmel, would still have been able to witness at no great distance the fire from heaven that descended upon the altar."—"There is not a more conspicuous spot on all Carmel than the abrupt rocky height of *el Mohraka*, shooting up so suddenly on the east." Moreover, the soil was thoroughly adapted for the erection of the altar described in vers. 31 and 32: "it showed a rocky surface, with a sufficiency of large fragments of rock lying all around, and, besides, well fitted for the rapid digging of a trench."

There is also water in the neighbourhood, as is assumed in ver. 34. "Nowhere does the Kishon run so close to Mount Carmel as just beneath el Mohraka," which is "1635 feet above the sea, and perhaps 1000 feet above the Kishon. This height can be gone up and down in the short time allowed by the Scripture (vers. 40-44)." But it was possible to find water even nearer than this, to pour upon the burnt-offering in the manner described in vers. 34, 35. Close by the steep rocky wall of the height, just where you can descend to the Kishon through a steep ravine, you find, "250 feet it might be beneath the altar plateau, a vaulted and very abundant fountain built in the form of a tank, with a few steps leading down into it, just as one finds elsewhere in the old wells or springs of the Jewish times."—"From such a fountain alone could Elijah have procured so much water at that time. And as for the distance between this spring and the supposed site of the altar, it was every way possible for men to go thrice thither and back again to obtain the necessary supply." Lastly, el Mohraka is so situated, that the circumstances mentioned in vers. 42-44 also perfectly coincide (Van de Velde, pp. 322-325).

Vers. 20-46. *Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal.*—Ahab sent through all Israel and gathered the prophets (of Baal) together upon Mount Carmel. According to vers. 21, 22, and 39, a number of the people ("all the people") had also come with them. On the other hand, not only is there no further reference in what follows to the 400 prophets of Asherah (cf. vers. 25 and 40), but in ver. 22 it is very obvious that the presence of the 450 prophets of Baal alone is supposed. We must therefore assume that the Asherah prophets, foreboding nothing good, had found a way of evading the command of Ahab and securing the protection of Jezebel.<sup>1</sup> King Ahab also appeared upon Carmel (cf. ver. 41), as he had no idea of

<sup>1</sup> It is true that in ver. 22 the LXX. have this clause, *καὶ οἱ προφῆται τοῦ ἄσρου* (i.e. *הַאֲשֵׁרָה*) *τετρακίσιοι*, which Thenius regards as an original portion of the text, though without observing the character of the LXX. If the Asherah prophets had also been present, Elijah would not only have commanded the prophets of Baal to be seized and slain (ver. 40), but the Asherah prophets also. From the principle *a potiori fit*, etc., it may be possible to explain the omission of the Asherah prophets in ver. 25, but not in ver. 40.



Elijah's intention, which was by no means "to prove to the king that he (Ahab) and not Elijah had brought Israel into trouble" (Vat., Seb. Schm.), but to put before the eyes of the whole nation a convincing practical proof of the sole deity of Jehovah and of the nothingness of the Baals, that were regarded as gods, and by slaying the priests of Baal to give a death-blow to idolatry in Israel.—Ver. 21. Elijah addressed the assembled people as follows: "How long do ye limp upon both sides? Is Jehovah God, then go after Him; but if Baal be God, then go after him"—and the people answered him not a word. They wanted to combine the worship of Jehovah and Baal, and not to assume a hostile attitude towards Jehovah by the worship of Baal; and were therefore obliged to keep silence under this charge of infatuated halving, since they knew very well from the law itself that Jehovah demanded worship with a whole and undivided heart (Deut. vi. 4, 5). This dividing of the heart between Jehovah and Baal Elijah called limping על שתי הפעמים, "upon the two parties (of Jehovah and Baal)." For סעפים the meaning "divided opinions, parties," is well established by the use of סעפים in Ps. cxix. 113; and the rendering of the LXX. ἰγνύαι, the hollow of the knee, is only a paraphrase of the sense and not an interpretation of the word.—Vers. 22-25. As the people adhered to their undecided double-mindedness, Elijah proposed to let the Deity Himself decide who was the true God, Jehovah or Baal. The prophets of Baal were to offer a sacrifice to Baal, and he (Elijah) would offer one to Jehovah. And the true God should make Himself known by kindling the burnt-offering presented to Him with fire from heaven, and in this way answering the invocation of His name. This proposal was based upon the account in Lev. ix. As Jehovah had there manifested Himself as the God of Israel by causing fire to fall from heaven upon the first sacrifice presented in front of the tabernacle and to consume it, Elijah hoped that in like manner Jehovah would even now reveal Himself as the living God. And the form of decision thus proposed would necessarily appear all the fairer, because Elijah, the prophet of Jehovah, stood alone in opposition to a whole crowd of Baal's prophets, numbering no less than 450 men. And for that very reason the latter could not draw back, without publicly renouncing their pretensions, whether they believed that Baal would really do what was desired, or hoped

that they might be able to escape, through some accident or stratagem, from the difficult situation that had been prepared for them, or fancied that the God of Elijah would no more furnish the proof of His deity that was desired of Him than Baal would. In order, however, to cut off every subterfuge in the event of their attempt proving a failure, Elijah not only yielded the precedence to them on the occasion of this sacrifice, but gave them the choice of the two oxen brought to be offered; which made the fairness of his proposal so much the more conspicuous to every one, that the people willingly gave their consent.

Vers. 26-29. The prophets of Baal then proceeded to the performance of the duty required. They prepared (יַעֲשׂוּ) the sacrifice, and called solemnly upon Baal from morning to noon: "O Baal, hear us," limping round the altar; "but there was no voice, and no one to hear (to answer), and no attention." בַּפֶּסֶח is a contemptuous epithet applied to the pantomimic sacrificial dance performed by these priests round about the altar,<sup>1</sup> אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ("which one had made").—Ver. 27. As no answer had been received before noon, Elijah cried out to them in derision: "Call to him with a loud voice, for he is God (*sc.* according to your opinion), for he is meditating, or has gone aside (שִׁי, *secessio*), or is on the journey (בַּדֶּרֶךְ, on the way); perhaps he is sleeping, that he may wake up." The ridicule lies more especially in the כִּי אֱלֹהִים הוּא (for he is a god), when contrasted with the enumeration of the different possibilities which may have occasioned their obtaining no answer, and is heightened by the earnest and threefold repetition of the כִּי. With regard to these possibilities we may quote the words of Clericus: "Although these things when spoken of God are the most absurd things possible, yet idolaters could believe such things, as we may see from Homer." The priests of Baal did actually begin therefore to cry louder than before, and scratched themselves with swords and lances, till the blood poured out, "according to their custom" (כַּמִּשְׁפָּט). Movers describes this as follows (*Phönizier*, i. pp. 682, 683), from statements made by ancient authors concerning the processions of the strolling

<sup>1</sup> The following is the description which Herodian (*hist.* v. 3), among others, gives of Heliogabalus when dancing as chief priest of the Emesinian sun-god: 'Ιερουργοῦντα δὴ τοῦτον, περί τε τοῖς βωμοῖς χορεύοντα νόμῳ Βαβυλῶν, ὑπὸ τε αὐλοῖς καὶ σύριγγι παντοδαπῶν τε ὀργάνων ἤχῳ.



bands of the Syrian goddess: "A discordant howling opens the scene. They then rush wildly about in perfect confusion, with their heads bowed down to the ground, but always revolving in circles, so that the loosened hair drags through the mire; they then begin to bite their arms, and end with cutting themselves with the two-edged swords which they are in the habit of carrying. A new scene then opens. One of them, who surpasses all the rest in frenzy, begins to prophesy with sighs and groans; he openly accuses himself of the sins which he has committed, and which he is now about to punish by chastising the flesh, takes the knotted scourge, which the *Galli* generally carry, lashes his back, and then cuts himself with swords till the blood trickles down from his mangled body." The climax of the Bacchantic dance in the case of the priests of Baal also was the prophesying (הִתְנַבֵּא), and it was for this reason, probably, that they were called prophets (נְבִיאִים). This did not begin till noon, and lasted till about the time of the evening sacrifice (עֶרְ לַעֲלֹת, not עֶרְ עֲלֹת, ver. 29). עֲלֹת הַמִּנְחָה, "the laying on (offering) of the meat-offering," refers to the daily evening sacrifice, which consisted of a burnt-offering and a meat-offering (Ex. xxix. 38 sqq.; Num. xxviii. 3-8), and was then offered, according to the Rabbinical observance (see at Ex. xii. 6), in the closing hours of the afternoon, as is evident from the circumstances which are described in vers. 40 sqq. as having taken place on the same day and subsequently to Elijah's offering, which was presented at the time of the evening sacrifice (ver. 36).

Vers. 30-39. *Elijah's sacrifice*.—As no answer came from Baal, Elijah began to prepare for his own sacrifice. Ver. 30. He made the people come nearer, that he might have both eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses present at his sacrifice, and restored the altar of Jehovah which was broken down. Consequently there was already an altar of Jehovah upon Carmel, which either dated from the times anterior to the building of the temple, when altars of Jehovah were erected in different places throughout the land (see at ch. iii. 2), or, what is more probable, had been built by pious worshippers belonging to the ten tribes since the division of the kingdom (Hengstenberg, *Dissertations on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. p. 183, transl.), and judging from ch. xix. 10, had been destroyed during the reign of Ahab, when the worship of Baal gained the upper hand.—Vers. 31, 32.

Elijah took twelve stones, "according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come (Gen. xxxii. 29, xxxv. 10), Israel shall be thy name," and built these stones into an altar. The twelve stones were a practical declaration on the part of the prophet that the division of the nation into two kingdoms was at variance with the divine calling of Israel, inasmuch as according to the will of God the twelve tribes were to form *one* people of Jehovah, and to have a common sacrificial altar; whilst the allusion to the fact that Jehovah had given to the forefather of the nation the name of Israel, directs attention to the wrong which the seceding ten tribes had done in claiming the name of Israel for themselves, whereas it really belonged to the whole nation. בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה (in the name of Jehovah) belongs to יִבְנֶה (built), and signifies by the authority and for the glory of Jehovah. "And made a trench as the space of two seahs of seed (*i.e.* so large that you could sow two seahs<sup>1</sup> of seed upon the ground which it covered) round about the altar." The trench must therefore have been of considerable breadth and depth, although it is impossible to determine the exact dimensions, as the kind of seed-corn is not defined. He then arranged the sacrifice upon the altar, and had four *Kad* (pails) of water poured three times in succession upon the burnt-offering which was laid upon the pieces of wood, so that the water flowed round about the altar, and then had the trench filled with water.<sup>2</sup> Elijah adopted this course for the purpose of precluding all suspicion of even the possibility of fraud in connection with the miraculous burning of the sacrifice. For idolaters had carried their deceptions to such a length, that they would set fire to the wood of the sacrifices from

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* about two Dresden pecks (*Metzen*).—THENIUS.

<sup>2</sup> Thenius throws suspicion upon the historical character of this account, on the ground that "the author evidently forgot the terrible drought, by which the numerous sources of the Carmel and the Nachal Kishon *must* have been dried up;" but Van de Velde has already answered this objection, which has been raised by others also, and has completely overthrown it by pointing out the covered well of *el Mohraka*, in relation to which he makes the following remark: "In such springs the water remains always cool, under the shade of a vaulted roof, and with no hot atmosphere to evaporate it. While all other fountains were dried up, I can well understand that there might have been found here that superabundance of water which Elijah poured so profusely over the altar" (vol. i. p. 325, transl.). But the drying up of the Kishon is a mere conjecture, which cannot be historically proved.



hollow spaces concealed beneath the altars, in order to make the credulous people believe that the sacrifice had been miraculously set on fire by the deity. Ephraem Syrus and Joh. Chrysostom both affirm this; the latter in his *Oratio in Petrum Apost. et Eliam proph.* t. ii. p. 737, ed. Montf., the genuineness of which, however, is sometimes called in question.—Vers. 36, 37. After these preparations at the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah drew near and prayed: “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (this name is used with deliberate purpose instead of Jacob: see at ver. 31), let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and I am Thy servant, and do all these things through Thy word. Hear me, Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that Thou Jehovah art God, and turnest back their hearts!” (*i.e.* back from idols to Thyself.) This clearly expresses not only the object of the miracle which follows, but that of miracles universally. The perfects עָשִׂיתִי and הִסְבַּת are used to denote not only what has already occurred, but what will still take place and is as certain as if it had taken place already. עָשִׂיתִי refers not merely to the predicted drought and to what Elijah has just been doing (Thenius), but to the miracle which was immediately about to be performed; and הִסְבַּת to the conversion of the people to the Lord their God, for which Elijah’s coming had already prepared the way, and which was still further advanced by the following miracle.—Ver. 38. Then fire of Jehovah fell and consumed the burnt-offering and the pieces of wood, etc. אֵשׁ יְהוָה, the fire proceeding from Jehovah, was not a natural flash of lightning, which could not produce any such effect, but miraculous fire falling from heaven, as in 1 Chron. xxi. 26, 2 Chron. vii. 1 (see at Lev. ix. 24), the supernatural origin of which was manifested in the fact, that it not only consumed the sacrifice with the pile of wood upon the altar, but also burned up (*in calcem redegit*—Cler.) the stones of the altar and the earth that was thrown up to form the trench, and licked up the water in the trench. Through this miracle Jehovah not only accredited Elijah as His servant and prophet, but proved Himself to be the living God, whom Israel was to serve; so that all the people who were present fell down upon their faces in worship, as they had done once before, viz. at the consecration of the altar in Lev. ix. 24, and confessed “Jehovah is God:” הָאֱלֹהִים, the true or real God.

Vers. 40-46. Elijah availed himself of this enthusiasm of

<sup>1</sup> It was necessary that idolatry and temptation to the worship of idols should be punished with death, as a practical denial of Jehovah the true God and Lord of His chosen people, if the object of the divine institutions was to be secured. By putting the priests of Baal to death, therefore, Elijah only did what the law required ; and inasmuch as the ordinary administrators of justice did not fulfil their obligations, he did this as an extraordinary messenger of God, whom the Lord had accredited as His prophet before all the people by the miraculous answer given to his prayer.—To infer from this act of Elijah the right to institute a bloody persecution of heretics, would not only indicate a complete oversight of the difference between heathen idolaters and Christian heretics, but the same reprehensible confounding of the evangelical standpoint of the New Testament with the legal standpoint of the Old, which Christ condemned in His own disciples in Luke ix. 55, 56.



about the size of a man's hand.<sup>1</sup> The peculiar attitude assumed by Elijah when praying (Jas. v. 18), viz. bowing down even to the earth (יָהָר) and putting his face between his knees, probably the attitude of deep absorption in God, was witnessed by Shaw and Chardin in the case of certain dervishes (*vid.* Harmar, *Beobachtungen*, iii. pp. 373-4).—Ver. 44. As soon as the small cloud ascended from the sea, Elijah sent his servant to tell the king to set off home, that he might not be stopped by the rain. יָרַד, go down, *sc.* from Carmel to his chariot, which was standing at the foot of the mountain.<sup>2</sup>—Ver. 45. Before any provision had been made for it (עֵרֶכְבָּה וְעֵרֶכְבָּה: hither and thither, *i.e.* while the hand is being moved to and fro, “very speedily;” cf. Ewald, § 105, *b*) the heaven turned black with clouds and wind, *i.e.* with storm-clouds (Thenius), and there came a great fall of rain, while Ahab drove along the road to Jezreel. It was quite possible for the king to reach Jezreel the same evening from that point, namely, from the foot of Carmel below *el Mohraka*: but only thence, for every half-hour farther west would have taken him too far from his capital for it to be possible to accomplish the distance before the rain overtook him (V. de Velde, i. p. 326). *Jezreel*, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18), was probably the summer residence of Ahab (see at Josh. xxi. 1). The distance from *el Mohraka* thither is hardly  $2\frac{3}{4}$  German geographical miles (? 14 Engl. miles—Tr.) in a straight line.—Ver. 46. When Ahab drove off, the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah, so that he ran before Ahab as far as Jezreel,—not so much for the purpose of bringing the king to his residence unhurt (Seb. Schm.), as to give him a proof of his humility, and thus deepen the impression already made upon his heart, and fortify him all the more against the strong temptations of his wife, who abused his weakness to support the cause of ungodliness. This act of Elijah, whom Ahab had hitherto only

<sup>1</sup> V. de Velde has shown how admirably these circumstances (vers. 43 and 44) also apply to the situation of *el Mohraka*: “on its west and north-west side the view of the sea is quite intercepted by an adjacent height. That height may be ascended, however, in a few minutes, and a full view of the sea obtained from the top” (i. p. 326).

<sup>2</sup> “After three years’ drought all herbage must have disappeared from the plain of Jezreel, and the loose clay composing its soil must have been changed into a deep layer of dust. Had time been allowed for the rain to convert that dust into a bed of mud, the chariot-wheels might have stuck fast in it.”—V. DE VELDE, i. pp. 326-7.

known as a stern, imperious, and powerful prophet, by which he now showed himself to be his faithful subject and servant, was admirably adapted to touch the heart of the king, and produce the conviction that it was not from any personal dislike to him, but only in the service of the Lord, that the prophet was angry at his idolatry, and that he was not trying to effect his ruin, but rather his conversion and the salvation of his soul. יְד־יְהוָה, the hand (*i.e.* the power) of the Lord, denotes the supernatural strength with which the Lord endowed him, to accomplish superhuman feats. This formula is generally applied to the divine inspiration by which the prophets were prepared for their prophesying (cf. 2 Kings iii. 15 ; Ezek. i. 3, iii. 15, etc.).

CHAP. XIX. ELIJAH'S FLIGHT INTO THE DESERT, THE REVELATION OF GOD AT HOREB, AND ELISHA'S CALL TO BE A PROPHET.

The hope of completing his victory over the idolaters and overthrowing the worship of Baal, even in the capital of the kingdom, with which Elijah may have hastened to Jezreel, was frustrated by the malice of the queen, who was so far from discerning any revelation of the almighty God in the account given her by Ahab of what had occurred on Carmel, and bending before His mighty hand, that, on the contrary, she was so full of wrath at the slaying of the prophets of Baal as to send to the prophet Elijah to threaten him with death. This apparent failure of his ministry was the occasion of a severe inward conflict, in which Elijah was brought to a state of despondency and fled from the land. The Lord allowed His servant to pass through this conflict, that he might not exalt himself, but, being mindful of his own impotence, might rest content with the grace of his God, whose strength is mighty in the weak (2 Cor. xii. 8, 9), and who would refine and strengthen him for the further fulfilment of his calling.

Vers. 1-8. *Elijah's flight into the desert and guidance to Horeb.*—Vers. 1, 2. When "Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and all, how he had slain all the prophets (of Baal)," she sent a messenger to Elijah in her impotent wrath, with a threat, which she confirmed by an oath (see at ch. ii. 23), that in the morning she would have him slain like the prophets whom he had put to death. The early commentators detected in this threat the *impotentia muliebris iracundiæ*, and saw that all that



Jezebel wanted was to get rid of the man who was so distressing and dangerous to her, because she felt herself unable to put him to death, partly on account of the people, who were enthusiastic in his favour, and partly on account of the king himself, upon whom the affair at Carmel had not remained without its salutary effect.—Vers. 3, 4. But when Elijah saw (וַיֵּרָא), *sc.* how things stood, or the audacity of Jezebel, from which the failure of his work was evident, he rose up and went to Beersheba in Judah, *i.e.* Bir-seba on the southern frontier of Canaan (see at Gen. xxi. 31). The expression אֲשֶׁר לַיהוּדָה, “which to Judah,” *i.e.* which belonged to the kingdom of Judah, for Beersheba was really allotted to the tribe of Simeon (Josh. xix. 2), is appended not merely as a geographical indication that Elijah went outside the land, but to show that he meant to leave the kingdom of Israel, the scene of his previous labours, just as Jeremiah in a similar internal conflict gave utterance to the wish that he could leave his people, if he had but a lodging-place in the wilderness (Jer. ix. 2). וַיֵּרָא is not to be altered into וַיִּירָא, *et timuit*, after the LXX. and Vulg., notwithstanding the fact that some Codd. have this reading, which only rests upon an erroneous conjecture. For it is obvious that Elijah did not flee from any fear of the vain threat of Jezebel, from the fact that he did not merely withdraw into the kingdom of Judah, where he would have been safe under Jehoshaphat from all the persecutions of Jezebel, but went to Beersheba, and thence onwards into the desert, there to pour out before the Lord God his weariness of life (ver. 4). וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-נַפְשׁוֹ, he went upon his soul, or his life, *i.e.* not to save his life (as I once thought, with many other commentators), for his wish to die (ver. 4) is opposed to this; but to care for his soul in the manner indicated in ver. 4, *i.e.* to commit his soul or his life to the Lord his God in the solitude of the desert, and see what He would determine concerning him.<sup>1</sup>—He left his servant in Beersheba, while he himself went a day’s journey farther into the desert (Paran), not merely because he was so filled with weariness

<sup>1</sup> G. Menken (*christl. Homil. üb. den Proph. Elias*, p. 231) has given the following admirable explanation of אֶל נַפְשׁוֹ so far as the sense is concerned: “For conscience sake, from conviction, out of obligation, not from fear. After all his former experience, and from the entire relation in which Elijah stood to God, it was impossible that he should be afraid, and not be firmly convinced that the God who had shut up heaven at his word, who had supplied him with bread and flesh for a whole year in the desert through the medium of ravens, who had supported him miraculously for years in a foreign land through the

ness of life in his dark oppression, that he thought he should have no further need of his servant, and therefore left him behind in Beersheba, but that he might pour out his heart before God alone in the desert and yield himself up to His guidance. For however unquestionably his lamentation in ver. 4, for example, expresses a weariness of life, this merely indicates the feeling which had taken possession of his soul after a day's journey in the barren desert. And even there he lays his wish to die before God in prayer; so that this feeling is merely to be regarded as one result of the spiritual conflict, which his bodily exhaustion had now raised to a height that it cannot have reached when he was in Beersheba. If, therefore, he did not start with the intention of making a pilgrimage to Horeb, he had certainly gone into the desert for the purpose of seeing whether the Lord would manifest His mercy to him, as He had formerly done to His people under Moses, or whether He would withdraw His hand entirely from him. After a day's journey he sat down under a רִהָם (construed here as a feminine, in ver. 5 as a masculine), a species of broom (*genista Retem* in Forskâl), which is the finest and most striking shrub of the Arabian desert, growing constantly in the beds of streams and in the valleys, where places of encampment are frequently selected for the sake of the shelter which they afford by night from the wind and by day from the sun (Rob. *Pal.* i. 299). וַיִּשְׁאַל . . . לָמוּת: and wished that his soul might die (a kind of accusative with infinitive; see Ewald, § 336, *b*), and said, רַב עָתָה, "Enough now; take, Lord, my soul, for I am not better than my fathers;" *i.e.* I have worked and endured enough, and deserve no longer life than my fathers. From this it appears that Elijah was already of a great age.—Vers. 5 sqq. In this disturbed state of mind he lay down and slept under a broom-tree. Then the Lord came with His power to the help of the despairing man. "An angel touched him (wakened him out of his sleep), and said to him: Arise, eat." And behold he saw at his head עֵצַת רִצְפִּים, a bread cake baked over red-hot stones, a savoury article of food which is still a great favourite with the Bedouins (see at Gen. xviii. 6, xix. 3), and a pitcher of water,

medium of a poor widow, who had concealed and rescued him for three years and a half from the search of the king, who had accredited and honoured him in the sight of all the people as His servant, who had given an immediate answer to his prayer for rain, could also defend him in this extremity, and rescue him from this danger, if such should be His will."



and ate and drank, and lay down again.—Ver. 7. But the angel wakened him a second time, and called upon him to eat with these words: “for the way is too far for thee” (רַב מִמֶּךָ הַדֶּרֶךְ, *iter est majus quam pro viribus tuis*—Vat.).—Ver. 8. “Then he arose, ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to the mount of God at Horeb.” As the angel did not tell him whither he was to go, and Elijah wandered to Horeb in consequence of this strengthening, it appears to have been his intention from the very beginning to go into the desert, and see whether the Lord would still further acknowledge him and his work; so that in the support and strength imparted by the angel he saw an indication that he was to follow the footsteps of the divine grace still farther into the desert, and make a pilgrimage to Horeb, with the hope that there perhaps the Lord would reveal to him His counsel concerning the further guidance of the people of His covenant, as He had formerly done to His servant Moses, and give him the necessary instruction for the continuance of his prophetic service. *Horeb* is called the mount of God here, as it was proleptically in Ex. iii. 1, as the place where the Lord confirmed the covenant, already made with the patriarchs, to their descendants, and adopted the tribes of Israel as His people and made them into a kingdom of God. The distance from Beersheba to Horeb is about 200 miles. Consequently Elijah would not have required forty days to travel there, if the intention of God had been nothing more than to cause him to reach the mountain, or “to help him on his way” (Thenius). But in the strength of the food provided by the angel Elijah was not only to perform the journey to Horeb, but to wander in the desert for forty days and forty nights, *i.e.* forty whole days, as Moses had formerly wandered with all Israel for forty years; that he might know that the Lord was still the same God who had nourished and sustained His whole nation in the desert with manna from heaven for forty years. And just as the forty years’ sojourn in the desert had been to Moses a time for the trial of faith and for exercise in humility and meekness (Num. xii. 3), so was the strength of Elijah’s faith to be tried by the forty days’ wandering in the same desert, and to be purified from all carnal zeal for the further fulfilment of His calling, in accordance with the divine will. What follows shows very clearly that this was the object of the divine guidance of Elijah (cf. Hengstenberg, *Diss. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. 171, 172).

Vers. 9-18. *Appearance of God at Horeb*.—Ver. 9. When Elijah arrived at Horeb, he went into *the* cave (the definite article in הַמְעָרָה, with the obvious connection between the appearance of God, which follows here, and that described in Ex. xxxiii. 12 sqq., points back to the cleft in the rock, נִקְרָת הַצֵּדֶר) in which Moses had stood while the glory of Jehovah passed by (see at Ex. xxxiii. 22), and there he passed the night. And behold the word of the Lord came to him (in the night): "What doest thou here, Elijah?" This question did not involve a reproof, as though Elijah had nothing to do there, but was simply intended to lead him to give utterance to the thoughts and feelings of his heart.—Ver. 10. Elijah answered: "I have striven zealously for Jehovah the God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, destroyed Thine altars, and killed Thy prophets with the sword; and I only am left, and they seek my life." In these words there was not only the greatest despair expressed as to the existing condition of things, but also a carnal zeal which would gladly have called down the immediate vengeance of the Almighty upon all idolaters. The complaint contained, on the one hand, the tacit reproof that God had looked on quietly for so long a time at the conduct of the ungodly, and had suffered things to come to such an extremity, that he, His prophet, was the only one left of all the true worshippers of God, and, on the other hand, the indirect appeal that He would interpose at last with His penal judgments. Because Elijah had not seen the expected salutary fruits of his zeal for the Lord, he thought that all was lost, and in his gloomy state of mind overlooked what he had seen a short time before with his own eyes, that even in the neighbourhood of the king himself there lived a pious and faithful worshipper of Jehovah, viz. Obadiah, who had concealed a hundred prophets from the revenge of Jezebel, and that the whole of the people assembled upon Carmel had given glory to the Lord, and at his command had seized the prophets of Baal and put them to death, and therefore that the true worshippers of the Lord could not all have vanished out of Israel. קָנָא קִנְיָתִי לַיהוָה recalls to mind the zeal of Phinehas (Num. xxv. 11 sqq.), which put an end to the whoredom of the sons of Israel with the daughters of Moab. But whereas Phinehas received the promise of an everlasting priesthood for his zeal, Elijah had seen so little fruit from his zeal against the worshippers of Baal, that they actually sought



his life. מִזְבְּחֹתָי are altars, which pious Israelites in the kingdom of the ten tribes had built in different places for the worship of Jehovah (see at ch. xviii. 30).—Vers. 11 sqq. The Lord replied to the prophet's complaint first of all by the manifestation of His control of the phenomena of nature (vers. 11-13), and then by a verbal explanation of His design (vers. 15-18).

In this divine revelation men have recognised from the very earliest times a repetition of the appearance of God which was granted to Moses upon Sinai. As God, in token of His grace, granted the prayer of Moses that he might see His glory, after he had striven zealously for the honour of the Lord when the people rebelled by worshipping the golden calf; so did He also display His glory upon Horeb to Elijah as a second Moses for the purpose of strengthening his faith, with this simple difference, that He made all His goodness pass by Moses, and declared His name in the words, "Jehovah, a gracious and merciful God," etc. (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7), whereas He caused Elijah first of all to behold the operation of His grace in certain phenomena of nature, and then afterwards made known to him His will with regard to Israel and to the work of His prophets. This difference in the form of the revelation, while the substance and design were essentially the same, may be explained from the difference not only in the historical circumstances, but also in the state of mind of the two servants to whom He manifested His glory. In the case of Moses it was burning love for the welfare of his people which impelled him to offer the prayer that the Lord would let him see His glory, as a sign that He would not forsake His people; and this prayer was granted him, so far as a man is ever able to see the glory of God, to strengthen him for the further discharge of the duties of his office. Hidden in the cleft of the rock and shielded by the hand of God, he saw the Lord pass by him, and heard Him utter in words His inmost being. Elijah, on the other hand, in his zeal for the honour of God, which was not quite free from human passion, had been led by the want of any visible fruit from his own labour to overlook the work of the Lord in the midst of His people; so that he had fled into the desert and wished to be released from this world by death, and had not been brought out of his despair by the strengthening with meat and drink which he had received from the angel, and which enabled him to travel for forty days to the mount of

God without suffering from want, a fact which was intended to remind him of the ancient God of the fathers, to whose omnipotence and goodness there is no end; so that it was in a most gloomy state of mind that he reached Horeb at last. And now the Lord designed not only to manifest His glory as the love in which grace and righteousness are united, but also to show him that his zeal for the honour of the Lord was not in harmony with the love and grace and long-suffering of God. "The design of the vision was to show to the fiery zeal of the prophet, who wanted to reform everything by means of the tempest, the gentle way which God pursues, and to proclaim the long-suffering and mildness of His nature, as the voice had already done to Moses on that very spot; hence the beautiful change in the divine appearance" (Herder, *Geist der hebr. Poesie*, 1788, ii. p. 52).—Vers. 11, 12. After God had commanded him to come out of the cave and stand upon the mountain (that part of the mountain which was in front of the cave) before Him, "behold Jehovah went by (the participle עָבַר is used to give a more vivid representation of the scene); and a great and strong tempest, rending mountains and breaking rocks in pieces, before Jehovah—it was not in the tempest that Jehovah was; and after the tempest an earthquake—it was not in the earthquake that Jehovah was; and after the earthquake fire—it was not in the fire that Jehovah was; and after the fire a still, gentle rustling." קוֹל דְּמָמָה רָפָה, literally the tone of a gentle blowing. On the change of gender in רוּחַ יְהוָה וְהֶחָזֵק, see Ewald, § 174, c.—Tempest, earthquake, and fire, which are even more terrible in the awful solitude of the Horeb mountains than in an inhabited land, are signs of the coming of the Lord to judgment (cf. Ps. xviii. 8 sqq.). It was in the midst of such terrible phenomena that the Lord had once come down upon Sinai, to inspire the people who were assembled at the foot of the mountain with a salutary dread of His terrible majesty, of the fiery zeal of His wrath and love, which consumes whatever opposes it (see at Ex. xix. 16 sqq.). But now the Lord was not in these terrible phenomena; to signify to the prophet that He did not work in His earthly kingdom with the destroying zeal of wrath, or with the pitiless severity of judgment. It was in a soft, gentle rustling that He revealed Himself to him.—Vers. 13, 14. When Elijah heard this, he covered up his face in his cloak (אָדָרַת; see at 2 Kings i. 8) and went out to the entrance



to the cave. And behold he heard the question a second time, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and answered with a repetition of his complaint (see vers. 9 and 10).—While the appearance of God, not in the tempest, the earthquake, and the fire, but in a gentle rustling, revealed the Lord to him as a merciful and gracious God, long-suffering, and of great goodness and truth (Ex. xxxiv. 6), the answer to his complaint showed him that He did not leave guilt unpunished (Ex. xxxiv. 7), since the Lord gave him the following command, vers. 15 sqq.: "Go back in thy way to the desert of Damascus, and anoint Hazael king over Aram (see 2 Kings viii. 12, 13), and Jehu the son of Nimshi king over Israel (see 2 Kings ix. 2), and Elisha the son of Shaphat prophet in thy stead" (see ver. 19); and then added this promise, which must have quieted his zeal, that was praiseworthy in the feelings from which it sprang, although it had assumed too passionate a form, and have given him courage to continue his prophetic work: "And it will come to pass, that whoever escapeth the sword of Hazael, him will Jehu slay, and whoever escapeth the sword of Jehu, him will Elisha slay."—Ver. 18. But in order that he might learn, to his shame, that the cause of the Lord in Israel appeared much more desperate to his eye, which was clouded by his own dissatisfaction, than it really was in the eye of the God who knows His own by number and by name, the Lord added: "I have seven thousand left in Israel, all knees that have not bent before Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him." מְדַבְּרֵה דְּמִשְׁק, into the desert of Damascus (with the *He loc.* with the construct state as in Deut. iv. 41, Josh. xii. 1, etc.; cf. Ewald, § 216, *b*), *i.e.* the desert lying to the south and east of the city of Damascus, which is situated on the river *Barady*; not *per desertum in Damascus* (Vulg., Luth., etc.); for although Elijah would necessarily pass through the Arabian desert to go from Horeb to Damascus, it was superfluous to tell him that he was to go that way, as there was no other road. The words "return by thy way . . . and anoint Hazael," etc., are not to be understood as signifying that Elijah was to go at once to Damascus and anoint Hazael there, but simply that he was to do this at a time which the Spirit would more precisely indicate. According to what follows, all that Elijah accomplished immediately was to call Elisha to be his successor; whereas the other two commissions were fulfilled by Elisha after Elijah's ascension to heaven

(2 Kings viii. and ix.). The opinion that Elijah also anointed Hazael and Jehu immediately, but that this anointing was kept secret, and was repeated by Elisha when the time for their public appearance arrived, has not only very little probability in itself, but is directly precluded by the account of the anointing of Jehu in 2 Kings ix. The anointing of Hazael and Jehu is mentioned first, because God had chosen these two kings to be the chief instruments of His judgments upon the royal family and people for their idolatry. It was only in the case of Jehu that a real anointing took place (2 Kings ix. 6); Hazael was merely told by Elisha that he would be king (2 Kings viii. 13), and Elisha was simply called by Elijah to the prophetic office by having the cloak of the latter thrown upon him. Moreover, the Messianic passage, Isa. lxi. 1, is the only one in which there is any allusion to the anointing of a prophet. Consequently נִשְׁמָן must be taken figuratively here, as in Judg. ix. 8, as denoting divine consecration to the regal and prophetic offices. And so, again, the statement that Elisha would slay those who escaped the sword of Jehu is not to be understood literally. Elisha slew by the word of the Lord, which brought judgments upon the ungodly, as we see from 2 Kings ii. 24 (cf. Jer. i. 10, xviii. 7). The "seven thousand," who had not bowed the knee before Baal, are a round number for the *ἐκλογή* of the godly, whom the Lord had preserved for Himself in the sinful kingdom, which was really very large in itself, however small it might be in comparison with the whole nation. The number *seven* is the stamp of the works of God, so that seven thousand is the number of the "remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. xi. 5), which had then been preserved by God. *Kissing* Baal was the most usual form in which this idol was worshipped, and consisted not merely in throwing kisses with the hand (cf. Job xxxi. 27, and Plin. *h. n.* 28, 8), but also in kissing the images of Baal, probably on the feet (cf. Cicero in *Verr.* 4, 43).

Vers. 19–21. *Call of Elisha to be a prophet.*—Ver. 19. As he went thence (viz. away from Horeb), Elijah found *Elisha* the son of Shaphat at Abel-Meholah, in the Jordan valley (see at Judg. vii. 22), occupied in ploughing; "twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he himself with the twelfth" (a very wealthy man therefore), and threw his cloak to him as he passed by. The prophet's cloak was a sign of the prophet's vocation, so that throwing it to him was a symbol of the call to the prophetic



office.—Ver. 20. Elisha understanding the sign, left the oxen standing, ran after Elijah, and said to him, “Let me kiss my father and my mother,” *i.e.* take leave of my parents, and then I will follow thee. For the form אֲשָׁקָה see Ewald, § 228, *b*. As he has ploughed his earthly field with his twelve pair of oxen, he was now to plough the spiritual field of the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke ix. 62). Elijah answered, “Go, return, for what have I done to thee?” לֵךְ שׁוּב belong together, as in ver. 15; so that Elijah thereby gave him permission to return to his father and mother. כִּי signifies *for*, not *yet* (Thenius); for there is no antithesis here, according to which כִּי might serve for a more emphatic assurance (Ewald, § 330, *b*). The words “what have I done to thee?” can only mean, I have not wanted to put any constraint upon thee, but leave it to thy free will to decide in favour of the prophetic calling.—Ver. 21. Then Elisha returned, took the pair of oxen with which he had been ploughing, sacrificed, *i.e.* slaughtered them (זָבַח used figuratively), boiled the flesh with the plough, gave a farewell meal to the people (of his place of abode), *i.e.* his friends and acquaintance, and then followed Elijah as his servant, *i.e.* his assistant. The suffix in בְּשָׁלֹם refers to צֶמֶד הַבָּקָר, and is more precisely defined by the apposition הַבָּשָׂר, “namely, the flesh of the oxen.”

#### CHAP. XX. AHAB'S DOUBLE VICTORY OVER BENHADAD OF SYRIA.

Even if the impression which the miracle upon Carmel had made upon Ahab, who was weak rather than malevolent, remained without any lasting fruit, the Lord did very quickly manifest His mercy towards him, by sending a prophet with a promise of victory when the Syrians invaded his kingdom, and by giving the Syrians into his power. This victory was a fruit of the seven thousand who had not bent their knee before Baal. Elijah was also to learn from this that the Lord of Sabaoth had not yet departed from the rebellious kingdom.

Vers. 1-22. THE FIRST VICTORY.—Ver. 1. Benhadad, the son of that Benhadad who had conquered several cities of Galilee in the reign of Baasha (ch. xv. 20), came up with a great army—there were thirty-two kings with him, with horses and chariots—and besieged Samaria. The thirty-two kings with him (אֲחֵיו) were vassals of Benhadad, rulers of different cities and the terri-

tory belonging to them, just as in Joshua's time almost every city of Canaan had its king; they were therefore bound to follow the army of Benhadad with their troops.—Vers. 2 sqq. During the siege Benhadad sent messengers into the city to Ahab with this demand: "Thy silver and thy gold are mine, and the best of thy wives and thy sons are mine;" and Ahab answered with pusillanimity: "According to thy word, my lord king, I and all that is mine are thine." Benhadad was made still more audacious by this submissiveness, and sent messengers the second time with the following notice (ver. 6): "Yea, if I send my servants to thee to-morrow at this time, and they search thy house and thy servants' houses, all that is the pleasure of thine eyes they will put into their hands and take." **אם כִּי** does not mean "only = certainly" here (Ewald, § 356, b), for there is neither a negative clause nor an oath, but **אם** signifies *if* and **כִּי** introduces the statement, as in ver. 5; so that it is only in the repetition of the **כִּי** that the emphasis lies, which can be expressed by *yea*. The words of Ahab in ver. 9 show unquestionably that Benhadad demanded more the second time than the first. The words of the first demand, "Thy silver and thy gold," etc., were ambiguous. According to ver. 5, Benhadad meant that Ahab should give him all this; and Ahab had probably understood him as meaning that he was to give him what he required, in order to purchase peace; but Benhadad had, no doubt, from the very first required an unconditional surrender at discretion. He expresses this very clearly in the second demand, since he announces to Ahab the plunder of his palace and also of the palaces of his nobles. **כָּל-מִחְמֶר עֵינֶיךָ**, all thy costly treasures. It was from this second demand that Ahab first perceived what Benhadad's intention had been; he therefore laid the matter before the elders of the land, *i.e.* the king's counsellors, ver. 7: "Mark and see that this man seeketh evil," *i.e.* that he is aiming at our ruin, since he is not contented with the first demand, which I did not refuse him.—Ver. 8. The elders and all the people, *i.e.* the citizens of Samaria, advised that his demand should not be granted. **אֶל-תִּשְׁמַע וְלֹא תִאָּחַז**, "hearken not (to him), and thou wilt not be willing" (**לֹא** is stronger than **אֶל**; yet compare Ewald, § 350, a); whereupon Ahab sent the messengers away with this answer, that he would submit to the first demand, but that the second he could not grant.—Ver. 10. Benhadad then attempted to overawe the weak-minded Ahab by strong threats, sending fresh messengers to threaten him



with the destruction of the city, and confirming it by a solemn oath: "The gods do so to me—if the dust of Samaria should suffice for the hollow hands of all the people that are in my train." The meaning of this threat was probably that he would reduce the city to ashes, so that scarcely a handful of dust should be left; for his army was so powerful and numerous, that the rubbish of the city would not suffice for every one to fill his hand.—Ver. 11. Ahab answered this loud boasting with the proverb: "Let not him that girdeth himself boast as he that looseth the girdle," equivalent to the Latin, *ne triumphum canas ante victoriam*.—Ver. 12. After this reply of Ahab, Benhadad gave command to attack the city, while he was drinking with his kings in the booths. סִבּוֹת are booths made of branches, twigs, and shrubs, such as are still erected in the East for kings and generals in the place of tents (*vid.* Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. pp. 198-9). שִׁמּוּ: take your places against the city, *sc.* to storm it (for שִׁים in the sense of arranging the army for battle, see 1 Sam. xi. 11 and Job i. 17); not οἰκοδομήσατε χάρακα (LXX.), or place the siege train.—Vers. 13, 14. While the Syrians were preparing for the attack, a prophet came to Ahab and told him that Jehovah would deliver this great multitude (of the enemy) into his hand that day, "that thou mayest know that I am Jehovah," and that through the retainers of the governors of the provinces (שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת, who had fled to Samaria), *i.e.* by a small and weak host. In the appearance of the prophet in Samaria mentioned here and in vers. 28 and 35 sqq. there is no such irreconcilable contradiction to ch. xviii. 4, 22, and xix. 10, as Thenius maintains; it simply shows that the persecution of the prophets by Jezebel had somewhat abated, and therefore Elijah's labour had not remained without fruit. מִי יֵאָסֵר הָמָּה, who shall open the battle? אָסַר answers to the German *anfűdeln* (to string, unite; Eng. *join* battle—Tr.); cf. 2 Chron. xiii. 3.—Vers. 15, 16. Ahab then mustered his fighting men: there were 232 servants of the provincial governors; and the rest of the people, all the children of Israel, *i.e.* the whole of the Israelitish fighting men that were in Samaria (הָחָל, ver. 19), amounted to 7000 men. And at noon, when Benhadad and his thirty-two auxiliary kings were intoxicated at a carousal in the booths (שִׁתָּה נִשְׁכּוֹר as in ch. xvi. 9), he ordered his men to advance, with the servants of the provincial governors taking the lead. The 7000 men are not to be regarded as the 7000 mentioned in ch. xix. 18, who had

not bowed their knee before Baal, as Rashi supposes, although the sameness in the numbers is apparently not accidental; but in both cases the number of the covenant people existing in Israel is indicated. though in ch. xix. 18 the 7000 constitute the *ἐκλογή* of the true Israel, whereas in the verse before us they are merely the fighting men whom the Lord had left to Ahab for the defence of his kingdom.—Vers. 17, 18. When Benhadad was informed of the advance of these fighting men, in his drunken arrogance he ordered them to be taken alive, whether they came with peaceable or hostile intent.—Vers. 19, 20. But they—the servants of the governors at the head, and the rest of the army behind—smote every one his man, so that the Aramæans fled, and Benhadad, pursued by the Israelites, escaped on a horse with some of the cavalry. *וּפָרָשִׁים* is in apposition to *בְּנֵי־הָרִד*, “he escaped, and horsemen,” *sc.* escaped with him, *i.e.* some of the horsemen of his retinue, whilst the king of Israel, going out of the city, smote horses and chariots of the enemy, who were not prepared for this sally of the besieged, and completely defeated them.—Ver. 22. After this victory the prophet came to Ahab again, warning him to be upon his guard, for at the turn of the year, *i.e.* the next spring (see at 2 Sam. xi. 1), the Syrian king would make war upon him once more.

Vers. 23–34. THE SECOND VICTORY.—Vers. 23, 24. The servants (ministers) of Benhadad persuaded their lord to enter upon a fresh campaign, attributing the defeat they had sustained to two causes, which could be set aside, *viz.* to the supposed nature of the gods of Israel, and to the position occupied by the vassal-kings in the army. The gods of Israel were mountain gods: when fighting with them upon the mountains, the Syrians had had to fight against and succumb to the power of these gods, whereas on the plain they would conquer, because the power of these gods did not reach so far. This notion concerning the God of Israel the Syrians drew, according to their ethnical religious ideas, from the fact that the sacred places of this God—not only the temple at Jerusalem upon Moriah, but also the altars of the high places—were erected upon mountains; since heathenism really had its mountain deities, *i.e.* believed in gods who lived upon mountains and protected and conducted all that took place upon them (cf. Dougtæi *Analect.* ss. i. 178, 179; Deyling, *Observv.* ss. iii. pp. 97 sqq.; Winer,



*bibl. R. W.* i. p. 154), and in Syrophœnicia even mountains themselves had divine honours paid to them (*vid.* Movers, *Phœniz.* i. p. 667 sqq.). The servants of Benhadad were at any rate so far right, that they attributed their defeat to the assistance which God had given to His people Israel; and were only wrong in regarding the God of Israel as a local deity, whose power did not extend beyond the mountains. They also advised their lord (ver. 24) to remove the kings in his army from their position, and appoint governors in their stead (נִחֲמִים, see ch. x. 15). The vassal-kings had most likely not shown the desired self-sacrifice for the cause of their superior in the war. And, lastly (ver. 25), they advised the king to raise his army to its former strength, and then carry on the war in the plain. "Number thyself an army, like the army which has fallen from thee." מֵאִתְּךָ, "from with thee," rendered correctly *de tuis* in the Vulgate, at least so far as the sense is concerned (for the form see Ewald, § 264, *b*). But these prudently-devised measures were to be of no avail to the Syrians; for they were to learn that the God of Israel was not a limited mountain-god.—Ver. 26. With the new year (see ver. 22) Benhadad advanced to Aphek again to fight against Israel. *Aphek* is neither the city of that name in the tribe of Asher (Josh. xix. 30 and xiii. 4), nor that on the mountains of Judah (Josh. xv. 53), but the city in the plain of Jezreel not far from Endor (1 Sam. xxix. 1 compared with xxviii. 4); since Benhadad had resolved that this time he would fight against Israel in the plain.—Ver. 27. The Israelites, mustered and provided for (פְּלִלִי: supplied with ammunition and provisions), marched to meet them, and encamped before them "like two little separate flocks of goats" (*i.e.* severed from the great herd of cattle). They had probably encamped upon slopes of the mountains by the plain of Jezreel, where they looked like two miserable flocks of goats in contrast with the Syrians who filled the land.—Ver. 28. Then the man of God (the prophet mentioned in vers. 13 and 22) came again to Ahab with the word of God: "Because the Syrians have said Jehovah is a mountain-God and not a God of the valleys, I will give this great multitude into thy hand, that ye may know that I am Jehovah."—Vers. 29, 30. After seven days the battle was fought. The Israelites smote the Syrians, a hundred thousand men in one day; and when the rest fled to Aphek, into the city, the wall fell upon twenty-seven

thousand men, ἵνα δὲ κακεῖνοι καὶ οὗτοι μάθωσιν, ὥς θεήλατος ἡ πληγή (Theodoret). The flying Syrians had probably some of them climbed the wall of the city to offer resistance to the Israelites in pursuit, and some of them sought to defend themselves by taking shelter behind it. And during the conflict, through the special interposition of God, the wall fell and buried the Syrians who were there. The cause of the fall is not given. Thenius assumes that it was undermined, in order to remove all idea of any miraculous working of the omnipotence of God. Benhadad himself fled into the city "room to room," *i.e.* from one room to another (cf. ch. xxii. 25, 2 Chron. xviii. 24).—Vers. 31, 32. In this extremity his servants made the proposal to him, that trusting in the generosity of the kings of Israel, they should go and entreat Ahab to show favour to him. They clothed themselves in mourning apparel, and put ropes on their necks, as a sign of absolute surrender, and went to Ahab, praying for the life of their king. And Ahab felt so flattered by the fact that his powerful opponent was obliged to come and entreat his favour in this humble manner, that he gave him his life, without considering how a similar act on the part of Saul had been blamed by the Lord (1 Sam. xv. 9 sqq.). "Is he still alive? He is my brother!" was his answer to Benhadad's servants.—Ver. 33. And they laid hold of these words of Ahab as a good omen (יִנְחָשׁ), and hastened and bade him explain (*i.e.* bade him quickly explain); הִמְפִּינִי, whether (it had been uttered) from himself, *i.e.* whether he had said it with all his heart (Maurer), and said, "Benhadad is thy brother." The ἀπ. λεγ. טָלַה, related to טָלַה, *exuere*, signifies *abstrahere*, *nudare*, then figuratively, *aliquid facere nude*, *i.e.* *sine prætectu*, or *aliquid nude*, *i.e.* *sine fuco atque ambagibus testari*, *confirmare* (cf. Fürst, *Concord.* p. 398); then in the Talmud, to give an explanation (*vid.* *Ges. thes.* p. 476). This is perfectly applicable here, so that there is no necessity to alter the text, even if we thereby obtained a better meaning than Thenius with his explanation, "they tore it out of him," which he takes to be equivalent to "they laid hold of him by his word" (!!). Ahab thereupon ordered Benhadad to come and get up into his chariot.—Ver. 34. Benhadad, in order to keep Ahab in this favourable mood, promised to give him back at once the cities which his father had taken away from Ahab's father, and said, "Thou mayest make thyself roads in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." There is no account



of any war between Omri and Benhadad I.; it is simply stated in ch. xv. 20 that Benhadad I. had taken away several cities in Galilee from the Israelites during the reign of Baasha. This cannot be the war intended here, however, not indeed because of the expression **וַיַּאֲזֶם אֲבִיר**, since **אֲזַם** might certainly be taken in a broader sense as referring to Baasha as an ancestor of Ahab, but chiefly on account of the statement that Benhadad had made himself roads in Samaria. This points to a war between Omri and Benhadad, after the building of Samaria into the capital of the kingdom, of which no account has been preserved. **וַיַּאֲזֶם אֲבִיר**, "to make himself roads," cannot be understood as referring either to fortifications and military posts, or to roads for cattle and free pasturage in the Syrian kingdom, since Samaria and Damascus were cities; nor can it signify the establishment of custom-houses, but only the clearing of portions of the city for the purpose of trade and free intercourse (Cler., Ges., etc.), or for the establishment of bazaars, which would occupy a whole street (Böttcher, Thenius; see also Movers, *Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 135).—"And I," said Ahab, "will let thee go upon a covenant" (a treaty on oath), and then made a covenant with him, giving him both life and liberty. Before **וַיַּאֲזֶם** we must supply in thought **וַיִּאֲמַר אֲחָזִי**. This thoroughly impolitic proceeding on the part of Ahab arose not merely from a natural and inconsiderate generosity and credulity of mind (G. L. Bauer, Thenius), but from an unprincipled weakness, vanity, and blindness. To let a cruel and faithless foe go unpunished, was not only the greatest harshness to his own subjects, but open opposition to God, who had announced to him the victory, and delivered the enemy of His people into his hand.<sup>1</sup> Even if Ahab had no express command from God to put Benhadad to death, as Saul had in 1 Sam. xv. 3, it was his duty to punish this bitter foe of Israel with death, if only to secure quiet for his own subjects; as it was certainly to be foreseen that Ben-

<sup>1</sup> Clericus is correct in the explanation which he has given: "Although, therefore, this act of Ahab had all the appearance of clemency, it was not an act of true clemency, which ought not to be shown towards violent aggressors, who if released will do much more injury than before, as Benhadad really did. God had given the victory to Ahab, and delivered the guilty king into his hands, that he might inflict punishment upon him, not that he might treat him kindly. And Ahab, who had allowed so many prophets to be slain by his wife Jezebel, had no great clemency at other times."

hadad would not keep the treaty which had been wrung from him by force, as was indeed very speedily proved (see ch. xxii. 1).

Vers. 35–43. *The verdict of God upon Ahab's conduct towards Benhadad.*—Vers. 35, 36. A disciple of the prophets received instructions from God, to announce to the king that God would punish him for letting Benhadad go, and to do this, as Nathan had formerly done in the case of David (2 Sam. xii. 1 sqq.), by means of a symbolical action, whereby the king was led to pronounce sentence upon himself. The disciple of the prophets said to his companion, “in the word of Jehovah,” *i.e.* by virtue of a revelation from God (see at ch. xiii. 2), “Smite me;” and when the friend refused to smite him, he announced to him that because of this disobedience to the voice of the Lord, after his departure from him a lion would meet him and smite him, *i.e.* would kill him; a threat which was immediately fulfilled. This occurrence shows with how severe a punishment all opposition to the commandments of God to the prophets was followed, as a warning for others; just as in the similar occurrence in ch. xiii. 24.—Ver. 27. The disciple of the prophets then asked another to smite him, and he smote him, “smiting and wounding,” *i.e.* so that he not only smote, but also wounded him (*vid.* Ewald, § 280, *a*). He wished to be smitten and wounded, not to disguise himself, or that he might be able to appeal loudly to the king for help to obtain his rights, as though he had suffered some wrong (Ewald), nor merely to assume the deceptive appearance of a warrior returning from the battle (Thenius), but to show to Ahab symbolically what he had to expect from Benhadad whom he had released (C. a Lap., Calm., etc.).—Ver. 38. With these wounds he placed himself in the king's path, and disguised himself (יְהַפְּשֵׁת as in 1 Sam. xxviii. 8) by a bandage over his eyes. אֵפֶר does not mean ashes (Syr., Vulg., Luth., etc.), but corresponds to the Chaldee מַעְפָּרָא, head-band, τελαμών (LXX.).—Vers. 39, 40. When the king passed by, he cried out to him and related the following fictitious tale: He had gone to the war, and a man had come aside to him (סוֹר as in Ex. iii. 3, Judg. xiv. 8, etc.), and had given a man (a prisoner) into his care with this command, that he was to watch him, and if he should be missing he was to answer for his life with his own life, or to pay a talent of silver (as a punishment). The rest may be easily imagined, namely the request



to be saved from this punishment. Ahab answered (ver. 40), כִּן מִשְׁפֹּטְךָ, "thus thy sentence, thou hast decided," *i.e.* thou hast pronounced thine own sentence, and must endure the punishment stated.—Vers. 41, 42. Then the disciple of the prophets drew the bandage quickly from his eyes, so that the king recognised him as a prophet, and announced to him the word of the Lord: "Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man of my ban (*i.e.* Benhadad, who has fallen under my ban), thy life shall stand for his life, and thy people for his people," *i.e.* the destruction to which Benhadad was devoted will fall upon thee and thy people. The expression אִישׁ־חֶרְמִי (man of my ban) showed Ahab clearly enough what ought to have been done with Benhadad. A person on whom the ban was pronounced was to be put to death (Lev. xxvii. 29).—Ver 43. The king therefore went home, and returned sullen (סָר, from סָרַר) and morose to Samaria.

#### CHAP. XXI. THE MURDER AND ROBBERY OF NABOTH.

After these events Ahab was seized with such a desire for a vineyard which was situated near his palace at Jezreel, that when Naboth, the owner of the vineyard, refused to part with his paternal inheritance, he became thoroughly dejected, until his wife Jezebel paved the way for the forcible seizure of the desired possession by the shameful execution of Naboth (vers. 1-15). But when Ahab was preparing to take possession of the vineyard, Elijah came to meet him with the announcement, that both he and his wife would be visited by the Lord with a bloody death for this murder and robbery, and that his idolatry would be punished with the extermination of all his house (vers. 16-26). Ahab was so affected by this, that he humbled himself before God; whereupon the Lord told Elijah, that the threatened judgment should not burst upon his house till after Ahab's death (vers. 27-29).

Vers. 1-15.—Ahab wanted to obtain possession of the vineyard of Naboth, which was in Jezreel (אֶשְׂרֵי refers to כְּרִם), near the palace of the king, either in exchange for another vineyard or for money, that he might make a vegetable garden of it. From the fact that Ahab is called the king of Samaria we may infer that Jezreel, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. xix. 18), was only a summer residence of the king.—Ver. 3. Naboth refused

to part with the vineyard, because it was the inheritance of his fathers, that is to say, on religious grounds (הִלֵּלָהּ לִי מִיְהוָה), because the sale of a paternal inheritance was forbidden in the law (Lev. xxv. 23–28; Num. xxxvi. 7 sqq.). He was therefore not merely at liberty as a personal right to refuse the king's proposal, but bound by the commandment of God.—Ver. 4. Instead of respecting this tender feeling of shrinking from the transgression of the law and desisting from his coveting, Ahab went home, *i.e.* to Samaria (cf. ver. 8), sullen and morose (סָר וְזָעַף as in ch. xx. 43), lay down upon his bed, turned his face (*viz.* to the wall; cf. 2 Kings xx. 2)—“after the manner of sorrowful persons, who shrink from and refuse all conversation, and even the sight of others” (Seb. Schmidt)—and did not eat. This childish mode of giving expression to his displeasure at Naboth's refusal to comply with his wish, shows very clearly that Ahab was a man sold under sin (ver. 20), who only wanted the requisite energy to display the wickedness of his heart in vigorous action.—Vers. 5–7. When Jezebel learned the cause of Ahab's ill-humour, she said to him, “Thou, dost thou now exercise royal authority over Israel?” אָתָּה is placed first for the sake of emphasis, and the sentence is to be taken as an ironical question, as it has been by the LXX. “I (if thou hast not courage enough to act) will procure thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”—Vers. 8, 9. The shameless woman then wrote a letter in the name of Ahab, sealed it below with the royal seal, which probably bore the king's signature and was stamped upon the writing instead of signing the name, as is done at the present day among Arabs, Turks, and Persians (*vid.* Paulsen, *Reg. der Morgenl.* p. 295 sqq.), to give it the character of a royal command (cf. Esther viii. 13, Dan. vi. 17), and sent this letter (the *Chethîb* הִסְפָּרִים is correct, and the *Keri* has arisen from a misunderstanding) to the elders and nobles of his town (*i.e.* the members of the magistracy, Deut. xvi. 18), who lived near Naboth, and therefore had an opportunity to watch his mode of life, and appeared to be the most suitable persons to institute the charge that was to be brought against him. The letter ran thus: “Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people, and set two worthless men opposite to him, that they may give evidence against him: Thou hast blasphemed God and king; and lead him out and stone him, that he may die.” Jezebel ordered the fasting for a sign, as though some public



crime or heavy load of guilt rested upon the city, for which it was necessary that it should humble itself before God (1 Sam. vii. 6). The intention was, that at the very outset the appearance of justice should be given to the legal process about to be instituted in the eyes of all the citizens, and the stamp of veracity impressed upon the crime of which Naboth was to be accused. הוֹשִׁיבוּ . . . בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם, “*seat him at the head of the people,*” *i.e.* bring him to the court of justice as a defendant before all the people. The expression may be explained from the fact, that a sitting of the elders was appointed for judicial business, in which Naboth and the witnesses who were to accuse him of blasphemy took part *seated*. To preserve the appearance of justice, two witnesses were appointed, according to the law in Deut. xvii. 6, 7, xix. 15, Num. xxxv. 30; but worthless men, as at the trial of Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 60). בִּרְךָ אֱלֹהִים, to bless God, *i.e.* to bid Him farewell, to dismiss Him, as in Job ii. 9, equivalent to blaspheming God. God and king are mentioned together, like God and prince in Ex. xxii. 27, to make it possible to accuse Naboth of transgressing this law, and to put him to death as a blasphemer of God, according to Deut. xiii. 11 and xvii. 5, where the punishment of stoning is awarded to idolatry as a practical denial of God. Blaspheming the king is not to be taken as a second crime to be added to the blasphemy of God; but blaspheming the king, as the visible representative of God, was *eo ipso* also blaspheming God.—Vers. 11-13. The elders of Jezreel executed this command without delay; a striking proof both of deep moral corruption and of slavish fear of the tyranny of the ruthless queen.—Vers. 14, 15. When the report of Naboth’s execution was brought to her, she called upon Ahab to take possession of his vineyard (רָשׁ = רִשׁ, Deut. ii. 24). As Naboth’s sons were put to death at the same time, according to 2 Kings ix. 26, the king was able to confiscate his property; not, indeed, on any rule laid down in the Mosaic law, but according to a principle involved in the very idea of high treason. Since, for example, in the case of blasphemy the property of the criminal was forfeited to the Lord as *cherem* (Deut. xiii. 16), the property of traitors was regarded as forfeited to the king.

Vers. 16-26. But when Ahab went down to Jezreel to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, Elijah came to meet him by the command of God, with the word of the Lord,

“Hast thou murdered and also taken possession?” The question served to sharpen his conscience, since Ahab was obliged to admit the fact. **אִשָּׁר בְּשֶׁמֶרֶן** means “who lives at Samaria,” for when Elijah came to meet him, Ahab was in Jezreel. Elijah then said to him still further: “Thus saith the Lord: In the place where the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, will they also lick thine, yea, thy blood.” **נָם אֶתָּה** serves as an emphatic repetition of the suffix (cf. Ges. § 121, 3). This threat was only so far fulfilled upon Ahab, from the compassion of God, and in consequence of his humbling himself under the divine judgment (vers. 27–29), that dogs licked his blood at Samaria when the carriage was washed in which he had died (ch. xxii. 38); but it was literally fulfilled in the case of his son Joram, whose corpse was cast into Naboth’s piece of ground (2 Kings ix. 25, 26).—Ver. 20. Ahab answered, “Hast thou found me (met with me), O mine enemy?” (not, hast thou ever found me thine enemy?—Vulg., Luth.) *i.e.* dost thou come to meet me again, mine enemy? He calls Elijah his enemy, to take the sting from the prophet’s threat as an utterance caused by personal enmity. But Elijah fearlessly replied, “I have found (thee), because thou sellest thyself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord.” He then announced to him, in vers. 21, 22, the extermination of his house, and to Jezebel, as the principal sinner, the most ignominious end (ver. 23). **הִתְמַכֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרָע**, to sell one’s self to do evil, *i.e.* to give one’s self to evil so as to have no will of one’s own, to make one’s self the slave of evil (cf. ver. 25, 2 Kings xvii. 17). The consequence of this is **πεπραῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας** (Rom. vii. 14), sin exercising unlimited power over the man who gives himself up to it as a slave. For vers. 21, 22, see ch. xiv. 10, 11, xv. 29, 30, xvi. 3, 12, 13. The threat concerning Jezebel (ver. 23) was literally fulfilled, according to 2 Kings ix. 30 sqq. **חַל**, written defectively for **חַיִל**, as in 2 Sam. xx. 15, is properly the open space by the town-wall, *pomœrium*. Instead of **בְּחַיִל** we have **בְּחַלֶּק** in the repetition of this threat in 2 Kings ix. 10, 36, 37, and consequently Thenius and others propose to alter the **חַל** here. But there is no necessity for this, as **בְּחַלֶּק**, on the portion, *i.e.* the town-land, of Jezreel (not, in the field at Jezreel), is only a more general epithet denoting the locality, and **חַל** is proved to be the original word by the LXX.—Vers. 25 and 26 contain a reflection on the part of the historian concerning Ahab’s ungodly



conduct, whereby he brought such an ignominious end upon himself and his house. רַק לֹא הָיָה וְנֹו, "only there has not been (one) like Ahab," *i.e.* there was no one else like Ahab, "who sold himself," etc. הַסִּיתָה for הִסְתָּה, from סוּת, to entice, to seduce or lead astray (cf. Ewald, § 114, *a*, and Ges. § 72, Anm. 6). וַיַּחֲעֵב, and he acted abominably. *Amorites*: for Canaanites, as in Gen. xv. 16, etc.

Vers. 27-29. This terrible threat made such an impression upon Ahab, that he felt deep remorse, and for a time at least was sincerely penitent. Rending the clothes, putting on the mourning garment of hair (שֵׁק), and fasting, are frequently mentioned as external signs of humiliation before God or of deep mourning on account of sin. יִהְלֶךְ אֵט, he walked about lightly (slowly), like one in deep trouble. This repentance was neither hypocritical, nor purely external; but it was sincere even if it was not lasting and produced no real conversion. For the Lord Himself acknowledged it to be humiliation before Him (ver. 29), and said to Elijah, that because of it He would not bring the threatened calamity upon Ahab's house in his own lifetime, but only in the days of his son. אָבִי for אֲבִי, as in ver. 21.

CHAP. XXII. WAR OF AHAB AND JEHOSHAPHAT AGAINST THE SYRIANS,  
AND DEATH OF AHAB. REIGNS OF JEHOSHAPHAT OF JUDAH AND  
AHAZIAH OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1-40. ALLIED CAMPAIGN OF AHAB AND JEHOSHAPHAT AGAINST THE SYRIANS AT RAMOTH, AND DEATH OF AHAB (compare 2 Chron. xviii. 2-34).—Ver. 1. "And they rested three years; there was no war between Aram and Israel." יָשַׁב here is to keep quiet, to undertake nothing, as in Judg. v. 17, etc. The subject to וַיֵּשְׁבוּ is Aram and Israel mentioned in the second clause. The length of time given here points back to the end of the war described in ch. xx.—Vers. 2-4. In the third year (not necessarily "towards the end of it," as Thenius supposes, for Jehoshaphat's visit preceded the renewal of the war) Jehoshaphat visited the king of Israel, with whom he had already formed a marriage alliance by marrying his son to Ahab's daughter (2 Chron. xviii. 1; 2 Kings viii. 18). Ahab then said to his servants that the king of Syria had kept the city of *Ramoth* in Gilead (probably situated on the site of the present *Szalt*: see at

Deut. iv. 43), which he ought to have given up, according to the conditions of the peace in ch. xx. 34, and asked Jehoshaphat whether he would go with him to the war against Ramoth, which the latter promised to do. "I as thou, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses;" *i.e.* I am at thy service with the whole of my military power. In the place of the last words we have therefore in the Chronicles *וְעָמַד בְּמִלְחָמָה*, "I am with thee in the war," *i.e.* I will assist thee in the war.—Vers. 5, 6. But as Jehoshaphat wished also to inquire the word of the Lord concerning the war, Ahab gathered together about 400 prophets, who all predicted as out of one mouth a prosperous result to the campaign. These 400 prophets are neither the 400 prophets of Asherah who had not appeared upon Carmel when Elijah was there (ch. xviii. 19, 20), nor prophets of Baal, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, since Ahab could not inquire of them *אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה*. On the other hand, they were not "true prophets of Jehovah and disciples of the prophets" (Cler., Then.), but prophets of the Jehovah worshipped under the image of an ox, who practised prophesying as a trade without any call from God, and even if they were not in the pay of the idolatrous kings of Israel, were at any rate in their service. For Jehoshaphat did not recognise them as genuine prophets of Jehovah, but inquired whether there was not such a prophet still in existence (ver. 7), that they might inquire the will of the Lord of him (*מֵאוֹתוֹ*).—Ver. 8. Ahab then named to him one, but one whom he hated, because he never prophesied good concerning him, but only evil,<sup>1</sup> namely, *Micah* the son of Jimlah. Josephus and the Rabbins suppose him to have been the prophet, whose name is not given, who had condemned Ahab in the previous war for setting Benhadad at liberty (ch. xx. 35 sqq.). But there is no foundation for this, and it is mere conjecture. At any rate, Ahab had already come to know Micah as a prophet of evil, and, as is evident from ver. 26, had had him imprisoned on account of an unwelcome prophecy. Ahab's dislike to this prophet had its root in the belief, which was connected with heathen notions of prophecy and conjuring, that the prophets stood in such a relation to the Deity that the latter necessarily fulfilled their will; a belief which had arisen from the fact that the predictions of true prophets always came to pass (see at Num. xxii. 6 and 17).

<sup>1</sup> Just as Agamemnon says to Calchas in *Il.* iv. 106: *πάντι κακῶν, οὐ πάποτε μοι τὸ κρήγυρον εἶπας, κ.τ.λ.*



—Ver. 9. By Jehoshaphat's desire, Ahab nevertheless sent a chamberlain (סָרִיס; see at 1 Sam. viii. 15 and Gen. xxxvii. 36) to fetch Micah (מִיכָה, bring quickly).—Vers. 10-12. In the meantime the prophets of the calves continued to prophesy success before the two kings, who sat upon thrones "clothed in robes," *i.e.* in royal attire, upon a floor in front of the gate of Samaria. גֶּזֶן, a threshing-floor, *i.e.* a levelled place in the open air. In order to give greater effect to their announcement, one of them, named *Zedekiyah* the son of Cnaanah, made himself iron horns, probably iron spikes held upon the head (Thenius), and said, "With these wilt thou thrust down Aram even to destruction." This symbolical action was an embodiment of the figure used by Moses in the blessing of Joseph (Deut. xxxiii. 17): "Buffalo horns are his (Joseph's) horns, with them he thrusts down nations" (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Beitr.* ii. p. 131), and was intended to transfer to Ahab in the case before them that splendid promise which applied to the tribe of Ephraim. But the pseudo-prophet overlooked the fact that the fulfilment of the whole of the blessing of Moses was dependent upon fidelity to the Lord. All the rest of the prophets adopted the same tone, saying, "Go to Ramoth, and prosper," *i.e.* and thou wilt prosper. (On this use of two imperatives see Ges. § 130, 2).—Vers. 13, 14. The messenger who fetched Micah tried on the way to persuade him to prophesy success to the king as the other prophets had done; but Micah replied with a solemn oath, that he would only speak what Jehovah said to him.

Vers. 15-28. *Micah's prophecy concerning the war, and his testimony against the lying prophets.*—Vers. 15, 16. When Micah had come into the presence of the king, he replied to his question, "Shall we go against Ramoth?" etc., in just the same words as the pseudo-prophets, to show the king how he would speak if he were merely guided by personal considerations, as the others were. From the verbal agreement in his reply, and probably also from the tone in which he spoke, Ahab perceived that his words were ironical, and adjured him to speak only truth in the name of Jehovah. Micah then told him what he had seen in the spirit (ver. 17): "I saw all Israel scatter itself upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd;" and then added the word of the Lord: "These have no master; let them return every one to his house in peace." That is to say, Ahab would fall in the war against Ramoth in Gilead, and his army scatter itself with-

out a leader upon the mountains of Gilead, and then every one would return home, without being pursued and slain by the enemy. Whilst Zedekiyah attempted to give greater emphasis to his prophecy by symbolically transferring to Ahab's enterprise the success predicted by Moses, Micah, on the other hand, showed to the king out of the law what would really take place in the intended war, namely, that very state of things which Moses before his departure sought to avert from Israel, by the prayer that the Lord would set a man over the congregation to lead them out and in, that the congregation might not become as sheep that have no shepherd (Num. xxvii. 16, 17).—Ver. 18. But although Ahab had asked for a true word of the Lord, yet he endeavoured to attribute the unfavourable prophecy to Micah's personal enmity, saying to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell thee that he prophesies nothing good concerning me, but only evil (misfortune)?"—Vers. 19 sqq. Micah was not led astray, however, by this, but disclosed to him by a further revelation the hidden ground of the false prophecy of his 400 prophets. לָכֵן שָׁמַע וְגו' "therefore, *sc.* because thou thinkest so, hear the word of Jehovah: I saw the Lord sit upon His throne, and all the army of heaven stand around Him (עִמֵּד עָלָיו as in Gen. xviii. 8, etc.) on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who will persuade Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead? and one spake so, the other so; and the spirit came forth (from the ranks of the rest), stood before Jehovah, and said, I will persuade him. . . I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He (Jehovah) said, Persuade, and thou wilt also be able; go forth and do so. And now Jehovah has put a lying spirit into the mouth of all his prophets; but Jehovah (Himself) has spoken evil (through me) concerning thee." The vision described by Micah was not merely a subjective drapery introduced by the prophet, but a simple communication of the real inward vision by which the fact had been revealed to him, that the prophecy of those 400 prophets was inspired by a lying spirit. The spirit (הַרִיחַ) which inspired these prophets as a lying spirit is neither Satan, nor any evil spirit whatever, but, as the definite article and the whole of the context show, the personified spirit of prophecy, which is only so far a πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον τῆς πλάνης (Zech. xiii. 2; 1 John iv. 6) and under the influence of Satan as it works as רִיחַ שָׁקֶר in accordance with the will of God. For even the predictions of the false prophets, as we may see from the passage before us,



and also from Zech. xiii. 2 and the scriptural teaching in other passages concerning the spiritual principle of evil, were not mere inventions of human reason and fancy; but the false prophets as well as the true were governed by a supernatural spiritual principle, and, according to divine appointment, were under the influence of the evil spirit in the service of falsehood, just as the true prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit in the service of the Lord. The manner in which the supernatural influence of the lying spirit upon the false prophets is brought out in Micah's vision is, that the spirit of prophecy (רוח הנבואה) offers itself to deceive Ahab as רוח שקר in the false prophets. Jehovah sends this spirit, inasmuch as the deception of Ahab has been inflicted upon him as a judgment of God for his unbelief. But there is no statement here to the effect that this lying spirit proceeded from Satan, because the object of the prophet was simply to bring out the working of God in the deception practised upon Ahab by his prophets.—The words of Jehovah, "Persuade Ahab, thou wilt be able," and "Jehovah has put a lying spirit," etc., are not to be understood as merely expressing the permission of God, as the fathers and the earlier theologians suppose. According to the Scriptures, God does work evil, but without therefore willing it and bringing forth sin. The prophet's view is founded upon this thought: Jehovah has ordained that Ahab, being led astray by a prediction of his prophets inspired by the spirit of lies, shall enter upon the war, that he may find therein the punishment of his ungodliness. As he would not listen to the word of the Lord in the mouth of His true servants, God had given him up (παρέδωκεν, Rom. i. 24, 26, 28) in his unbelief to the working of the spirits of lying. But that this did not destroy the freedom of the human will is evident from the expression הִפַּתֶּה, "thou canst persuade him," and still more clearly from נָם תִּיכֹל, "thou wilt also be able," since they both presuppose the possibility of resistance to temptation on the part of man.

Zedekiah was so enraged at this unveiling of the spirit of lying by which the pseudo-prophets were impelled, that he smote Micah upon the cheek, and said (ver. 24): "Where did the Spirit of Jehovah depart from me, to speak to thee?" To אֵיזָה the Chronicles add as an explanation, הִדְרָה: "by what way had he gone from me?" (cf. 2 Kings iii. 8, and Ewald, § 326, a.) Zedekiah was conscious that he had not invented his prophecy himself, and therefore it was that he rose up with such audacity

against Micah ; but he only proved that it was not the Spirit of God which inspired him. If he had been inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, he would not have thought it necessary to try and give effect to his words by rude force, but he would have left the defence of his cause quietly to the Lord, as Micah did, who calmly replied to the zealot thus (ver. 25): "Thou wilt see it (that the Spirit of Jehovah had departed from thee) on the day when thou shalt go from chamber to chamber to hide thyself" (הַחֲבִיָּה for הַחֲבִיָּה, see Ges. § 75, Anm. 21). This was probably fulfilled at the close of the war, when Jezebel or the friends of Ahab made the pseudo-prophets suffer for the calamitous result ; although there is nothing said about this in our history, which confines itself to the main facts.—Vers. 26, 27. But Ahab had Micah taken back to Amon the commander of the city, and to Joash the king's son, with the command to put him in prison and to feed him with bread and water of affliction, till he came safe back (בְּשָׁלוֹם) from the war. From the expression הַשִּׁיבֵהוּ, "lead him back," it evidently follows that Micah had been fetched from the commander of the city, who had no doubt kept him in custody, as the city-prison was probably in his house. The opposite cannot be inferred from the words "put him into the prison;" for this command, when taken in connection with what follows, simply enjoins a more severe imprisonment.—Ver. 28. In his consciousness of the divine truth of his announcement, Micah left the king with these words: "If thou come back safe, Jehovah has not spoken by me. Hear it, all ye nations." עַמִּים does not mean people, for it is only in the antique language of the Pentateuch that the word has this meaning, but nations ; and Micah thereby invokes not only the persons present as witnesses of the truth of his words, but the nations generally, Israel and the surrounding nations, who were to discern the truth of his word from the events which would follow (see at Mic. i. 2).

Vers. 29–40. *The issue of the war, and death of Ahab.*—Ver. 29. Ahab, disregarding Micah's prophecy, went on with the expedition, and was even joined by Jehoshaphat, of whom we should have thought that, after what had occurred, he at any rate would have drawn back. He was probably deterred by false shame, however, from retracting the unconditional promise of help which he had given to Ahab, merely in consequence of a prophetic utterance, which Ahab had brought against his



own person from Micah's subjective dislike. But Jehoshaphat narrowly escaped paying the penalty for it with his life (ver. 32), and on his fortunate return to Jerusalem had to listen to a severe reproof from the prophet Jehu in consequence (2 Chron. xix. 2).—Vers. 30, 31. And even Ahab could not throw off a certain fear of the fulfilment of Micah's prophecy. He therefore resolved to go to the battle in disguise, that he might not be recognised by the enemy. **הִתְחַפֵּשׂ וָבָא** ("disguise myself and go into the battle," *i.e.* I will go into the battle in disguise): an *infin. absol.*,—a broken but strong form of expression, which is frequently used for the imperative, but very rarely for the first person of the voluntative (cf. Ewald, § 328, c), and which is probably employed here to express the anxiety that impelled Ahab to take so much trouble to ensure his own safety. (Luther has missed the meaning in his version; in the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is correctly given.) **וַאֲתָה לְבִשׁ**, "but do thou put on thy clothes." These words are not to be taken as a command, but simply in this sense: "thou mayest (canst) put on thy (royal) dress, since there is no necessity for thee to take any such precautions as I have to take." There is no ground for detecting any cunning, *vafrities*, on the part of Ahab in these words, as some of the older commentators have done, as though he wished thereby to divert the predicted evil from himself to Jehoshaphat. But we may see very clearly that Ahab had good reason to be anxious about his life, from the command of the Syrian king to the captains of his war-chariots (ver. 31) to fight chiefly against the king of Israel. We cannot infer from this, however, that Ahab was aware of the command. The measure adopted by him may be sufficiently accounted for from his fear of the fulfilment of Micah's evil prophecy, to which there may possibly have been added some personal offence that had been given on his part to the Syrian king in connection with the negotiations concerning the surrender of Ramoth, which had no doubt preceded the war. The thirty-two commanders of the war-chariots and cavalry are, no doubt, the commanders who had taken the place of the thirty-two kings (ch. xxi. 24). "Fight not against small and great, but against the king of Israel only," *i.e.* endeavour above all others to fight against the king of Israel and to slay him.—Vers. 32, 33. And when the leaders of the war-chariots saw Jehoshaphat in the battle in his royal clothes, they took him

for the king of Israel (Ahab), and pressed upon him. Then Jehoshaphat cried out; and from this they perceived that he was not the king of Israel, and turned away from him. **וַיִּהְיוּ** 'אָמְרוּ אָדָּם וְנָו', "and they thought, it is only (*i.e.* no other than) the king of Israel." **וַיִּסְרוּ עָלָיו**, "they bent upon him." Instead of this we have in the Chronicles **וַיִּסְבּוּ עָלָיו**, "they surrounded him," and Thenius proposes to alter our text to this; but there is no necessity for doing so, as **סָוַר** also occurs in a similar sense and connection in ch. xx. 39. How far Jehoshaphat was saved by his crying out, is not precisely stated. He probably cried out to his followers to come to his aid, from which the Syrians discovered that he was not the king of Israel, whom they were in search of. The chronicler adds (ch. ii. 18, 31): "and the Lord helped him and turned them off from him;" thus believingly tracing the rescue of the king to its higher causality, though without our having any right to infer from this that Jehoshaphat cried aloud to God for help, which is not implied in the words of the Chronicles.—Ver. 34. But notwithstanding the precaution he had taken, Ahab did not escape the judgment of God. "A man drew his bow in his simplicity" (**לְתִמּוֹ** as in 2 Sam. xv. 11), *i.e.* without trying to hit any particular man, "and shot the king of Israel between the skirts and the coat of mail." **רִבְבָּקִים** are "joints by which the iron thorax was attached to the hanging skirt, which covered the abdomen" (Cler.). The true coat of mail covered only the breast, to somewhere about the last rib; and below this it had an appendage (skirts) consisting of moveable joints. Between this appendage and the true coat of mail there was a groove through which the arrow passed, and, entering the abdomen, inflicted upon the king a mortal wound; so that he said to his charioteer: **הִפֹּךְ יָדַי**, *verte manus tuas*, *i.e.* turn round (cf. 2 Kings ix. 23). The *Chethîb* **יָדַי** (plural) is the only correct reading, since the driver held the reins in both his hands. **כִּי הִחַלֵּיתִי**: for I am wounded. — Ver. 35. "And the conflict ascended," *i.e.* became more violent. The use of the verb **עָלָה** in this sense may be accounted for on the supposition that it is founded upon the figure of a rising stream, which becomes more and more impetuous the higher it rises (*vid.* Isa. viii. 7). "And the king was stationed (*i.e.* remained or kept himself in an upright posture) upon the chariot before the Syrians," that he might not dishearten his soldiers, "and died in the evening, and poured the



blood of the wounds in the middle hollow (חֵיק) of the chariot.” —Ver. 36. Towards sunset the cry went through the army (הַמַּחֲנֶה, the army drawn up in battle array), “Every one into his city and into his land!”—In ver. 37 the historian shows how the word of the Lord was fulfilled in the case of Ahab. “Thus the king died and came to Samaria:” equivalent to, thus the king reached Samaria dead; and he was buried there. —Ver. 38. When they washed the chariot at the pool of Samaria, the dogs licked his blood, while the harlots were bathing (in the pool). וְהַזְנוּתָּ רְחֵצִי is a circumstantial clause, and רְחֵץ means to bathe, as in Ex. ii. 5. This explanation, which is sustained by the grammar and is the only tenable one, disposes of the several arbitrary interpretations of these words, together with the emendations of the text of which Thenius is so fond. In this way was the word of the Lord through Elijah (ch. xxi. 19) and the unknown prophet (ch. xx. 42) fulfilled; also the prediction of Micah (ver. 17). Ahab had paid the penalty with his own life for sparing the life of Benhadad (ch. xx. 42), and his blood was licked up by the dogs (ch. xxi. 19). The fact that the dogs licked up the blood and the harlots were bathing in the pool, when the chariot that was stained with the blood of Ahab was being washed, is mentioned as a sign of the ignominious contempt which was heaped upon him at his death. —Vers. 39, 40. Close of Ahab’s history. We have no further account of his buildings. “The ivory palace,” *i.e.* the palace inlaid with ivory, he had probably built in his capital Samaria (cf. Amos iii. 15).

Vers. 41-50. REIGN OF JEHOSEPHAT OF JUDAH. — The account of this in the books before us is a very condensed one. Beside the two campaigns in which he joined with Ahab and Joram of Israel against the Syrians and Moabites, and which are described in the history of the kingdom of Israel (ch. xxii. 1-35 and 2 Kings iii.), we have simply a short notice of his attempt to restore the trade with Ophir, and a general statement of the spirit of his reign; whereas we learn from the extract preserved in the Chronicles from the annals of the kings, that he also carried on a victorious war against the Edomites and Ammonites (2 Chron. xx.), and did a great deal to promote the spread of the knowledge of the law among his people, and to carry out the restoration of a better administration of justice, and to

improve the condition of the army (2 Chron. xvii. and xix.).—Vers. 41–44, which give the age of Jehoshaphat when he ascended the throne, and the duration and character of his reign, are also found with slight deviations in 2 Chron. xx. 31–33, in the closing summary of the history of his reign.—Ver. 43. “He walked entirely in the way of his father Asa and departed not from it, to do what was well-pleasing to the Lord,” whereas Asa’s heart had become more estranged from the Lord in the last years of his reign (see ch. xv. 18 sqq.).—On the worship of the high places (ver. 43), see at ch. xv. 14.—Ver. 44. He maintained peace with the king of Israel, *i.e.* with every one of the Israelitish kings who were contemporaneous with him, viz. Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram, whereas hitherto the two kingdoms had assumed an attitude of hostility towards each other. Even if this friendly bearing towards Israel was laudable in itself, Jehoshaphat went beyond the bounds of what was allowable, since he formed a marriage alliance with the house of Ahab, by letting his son Joram marry a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (2 Chron. xviii. 1).—Ver. 45. The brave deeds (הַנְּבוֹנָה) which he performed include both his efforts to strengthen his kingdom, partly by raising fortifications and organizing the military force, and partly by instructing the people in the law and improving the administration of justice (2 Chron. xvii. 7–19 and xix. 4–11), and also the wars which he waged, viz. the expeditions already mentioned.—For ver. 46 see ch. xv. 12.—Ver. 47. “There was (then) no (real) king in Edom; a vicegerent was king,” *i.e.* governed the country. This remark is introduced here merely on account of what follows, namely, to show how it was that Jehoshaphat was able to attempt to restore the maritime trade with Ophir. If we observe this connection between the verse before us and what follows, we cannot infer from it, as Ewald does (*Gesch.* iii. pp. 464 and 474 sqq.), that the Edomites with Egyptian help had forced from Rehoboam both their liberty and also their right to have a king of their own blood, and had remained in this situation till Jehoshaphat completely subjugated them again. (See the remarks on ch. xi. 21, 22.) All that can be gathered from 2 Chron. xx. is, that the Edomites, in league with the Ammonites and other desert tribes, made an incursion into Judah, and therefore tried to throw off the supremacy of Judah, but did not succeed in their attempt.—Vers. 48, 49. The brief notice concerning Jehoshaphat’s attempt to



build Tarshish ships (for the word, see p. 150) for the voyage to Ophir is expanded in 2 Chron. xx. 36, 37, where we learn that Jehoshaphat had allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel for this purpose, and that the prophet Eliezer predicted the destruction of his ships on account of this alliance. When the ships had been broken in pieces in Eziongeber, no doubt by a storm, Ahaziah made this fresh proposal to him: "Let my people sail with thy people;" but Jehoshaphat would not. Ahaziah evidently wanted to persuade Jehoshaphat to make another attempt, after the destruction of the ships which were first built; but Jehoshaphat did not agree to it any more, because it was impossible for him, after the fulfilment of Eliezer's prediction, to expect a more favourable result. Thus the two accounts can be harmonized in a very simple manner, with the exception of the words "to go to Tarshish," which we find in the Chronicles in the place of "to go to Ophir," the reading in our text, and which sprang from an erroneous interpretation of the expression "ships of Tarshish" (see above, p. 150). The *Chethîb* עֶשֶׂר is an error of the pen for עֶשֶׂה (*Keri*); but נִשְׁבְּרָה (*Chethîb*) is not to be altered into נִשְׁבְּרוּ, since the construction of a singular verb with the subject following in the plural is by no means rare (*vid.* Ewald, § 317, *a*). On Eziongeber and Ophir, see at ch. ix. 26 and 28.

Vers. 51-53. REIGN OF AHAZIAH OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 51. For the *datum* "in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat," see at 2 Kings i. 17.—Vers. 52, 53. Ahaziah walked in the way of his father and his mother, who had introduced the worship of Baal into the kingdom, and in the way of Jeroboam, who had set up the calves (*cf.* ch. xvi. 30-33).—In ver. 53 it is again expressly added, that he adored and worshipped Baal, as in ch. xvi. 31.—With this general description of his character not only is the chapter brought to a close, but the first book of Kings also,—very unsuitably, however, since the further account of Ahaziah's reign and of his death is given in ch. i. of the following book. It would have been incomparably more suitable to commence a fresh chapter with ver. 52, and indeed to commence the second book there also.

## SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS

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### CHAP. I. AHAZIAH'S ILLNESS. HIS DEATH ANNOUNCED BY ELIJAH.



AFTER the Moabites had rebelled against Israel, Ahaziah became sick in consequence of a fall through a grating in his upper room, and sent messengers to Ekron to consult the idol Baalzebub concerning the result of his illness. By the command of God, however, Elijah met the messengers on the road, and told them that the king would die (vers. 1-8). When Ahaziah sent soldiers to fetch Elijah, the messengers were miraculously slain on two successive occasions, and it was only his humiliation before the prophet which saved the third captain and his host from sharing a similar fate; whereupon Elijah went with him to the king, and repeated the threat already announced on account of his idolatry, which was very soon fulfilled (vers. 9-18).

Vers. 1-8. After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel (ver. 1). The Moabites, who had been subjugated by David (2 Sam. viii. 2), had remained tributary to the kingdom of the ten tribes after the division of the kingdom. But when Israel was defeated by the Syrians at Ramoth in the time of Ahab, they took advantage of this defeat and the weakening of the Israelitish power in the country to the east of the Jordan to shake off the yoke of the Israelites, and very soon afterwards attempted an invasion of the kingdom of Judah, in alliance with the Edomites and other tribes of the desert, which terminated, however, in a great defeat, though it contributed to the maintenance of their independence. For further remarks, see at ch. iii. 4 sqq.—Ver. 2. Ahaziah could not do anything to subjugate the Moabites any further, since he was very soon afterwards taken grievously ill. He fell through the grating in his upper room at Samaria. **הַשִּׁבְכָה**, the grating, is either a window



furnished with a shutter of lattice-work, or a door of lattice-work in the upper room of the palace, but hardly a grating in the floor of the *Aliyah* for the purpose of letting light into the lower rooms, as the Rabbins supposed. On account of this misfortune, Ahaziah resorted to the Ekronitish *Baalzebub* to obtain an oracle concerning the result of his illness. *בַּעַל-זְבוֹב*, *i.e.* Fly-Baal, was not merely the “averted of swarms of insects,” like the *Ζεὺς ἀπομυῖος, μυίαργρος* of Elis (Ges., Winer, Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 175), since “the Fly-God cannot have received his name as the enemy of flies, like *lucis a non lucendo*,” but was *Μυῖα θεός* (LXX., Joseph.), *i.e.* God represented as a fly, as a fly-idol, to which the name *Myiodes*, gnat-like, in Plin. *h. n.* xxix. 6, clearly points, and as a god of the sun and of summer must have stood in a similar relation to the flies to that of the oracle-god Apollo, who both sent diseases and took them away (*vid.* J. G. Müller, *Art. Beelzebub* in Herzog’s *Cycl.* i. p. 768, and Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 260, 261). The latter observes that “these (the flies), which are governed in their coming and going by all the conditions of the weather, are apparently endowed with prophetic power themselves.” This explains the fact that a special power of prophecy was attributed to this god.<sup>1</sup> *Ekron*, now *Akir*, the most northerly of the five Philistian capitals (see at Josh. xiii. 3).—Vers. 3, 4. But the angel of the Lord, the mediator of the revelations made by the invisible God to the covenant nation (see *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. pp. 185–191, transl.), had spoken to Elijah to go and meet the king’s messengers, who were going to inquire of Baalzebub, and to ask them whether it was from the want of a God in Israel (*מִבְּלִי אֵין*) as in Ex. xiv. 11; see Ewald, § 323, α) that they turned to Baalzebub, and to announce to them the word of Jehovah, that Ahaziah would not rise up from his bed again, but would die. “And Elijah went,” *sc.* to carry out the divine commission.—Vers. 5–8. The messengers did not recognise Elijah, but yet they turned back and reported the occurrence to the king, who knew at once, from the description they gave of the

<sup>1</sup> The later Jews altered the name *Beelzebub* into *Βεελζεβούλ*, *i.e.* probably lord of the (heavenly) dwelling, as a name given to the *ἀρχὸν τῶν δαιμονίων* (Matt. x. 25, etc.); and the later Rabbins finally, by changing *בַּעַל-זְבוֹב* into *בַּעַל-זְבַּל*, made a fly-god into a dung-god, to express in the most intense form their abomination of idolatry (see Lightfoot, *Horæ hebr. et talm. in Matt.* xii. 24, and my *bibl. Archäol.* i. pp. 440, 441).

*habitus* of the man in reply to his question, that it was Elijah the *Tishbite*. מָה מִשְׁפַּט הָאִישׁ: "what was the manner of the man?" מִשְׁפַּט is used here to denote the peculiarity of a person, that which in a certain sense constitutes the vital law and right of the individual personality; *figura et habitus* (Vulg.). The servants described the prophet according to his outward appearance, which in a man of character is a reflection of his inner man, as אִישׁ בְּעַל שֵׁעַר, *vir pilosus, hirsutus*. This does not mean a man with a luxuriant growth of hair, but refers to the hairy dress, *i.e.* the garment made of sheep-skin or goat-skin or coarse camel-hair, which was wrapped round his body; the אֲדָרְתַּי (ch. ii. 8; 1 Kings xix. 13), or אֲדָרְתַּי שֵׁעַר (Zech. xiii. 4, cf. Matt. iii. 4, Heb. xi. 37), which was worn by the prophets, not as mere ascetics, but as preachers of repentance, the rough garment denoting the severity of the divine judgments upon the effeminate nation, which revelled in luxuriance and worldly lust. And this was also in keeping with "the leather girdle," אֲזוּר עוֹר, ζώνη δερματίνη (Matt. iii. 4), whereas the ordinary girdle was of cotton or linen, and often very costly.

Vers. 9-16. After having executed the divine command, Elijah returned to the summit of the mountain, on which he dwelt. Most of the commentators suppose it to have been one of the peaks of Carmel, from ch. ii. 25 and 1 Kings xviii. 42, which is no doubt very probable, though it cannot be raised into certainty. Elijah's place of abode was known to the king; he therefore sent a captain with fifty men to fetch the prophet. To the demand of the captain, "Man of God, the king has said, Come down," Elijah replied, "And if I am a man of God, let fire fall from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty." (The expression וְאִם, *and if*, shows that Elijah's words followed immediately upon those of the captain.) This judicial miracle was immediately fulfilled.—Vers. 11, 12. The same fate befell a second captain, whom the king sent after the death of the first. He was more insolent than the first, "both because he was not brought to his senses by hearing of his punishment, and because he increased his impudence by adding *make haste* (מְהֵרָה)." —C. a Lap. For וַיֵּצֵא וַיְדַבֵּר the LXX. (*Cod. Alex.*) have καὶ ἀνέβη καὶ ἐλάλησε, so that they read וַיַּעַל. The correctness of this reading, according to which וַיֵּצֵא would be an error of the pen, is favoured not only by וַיַּעַל in vers. 9 and 13, but also by וַיְדַבֵּר which follows; for, as a general rule, וַיֵּצֵא would be followed by



וַיֹּאמֶר. The repetition of this judicial miracle was meant to show in the most striking manner not only the authority which rightfully belonged to the prophet, but also the help and protection which the Lord gave to His servants. At the same time, the question as to the "morality of the miracle," about which some have had grave doubts, is not set at rest by the remark of Thenius, that "the soldiers who were sent come into consideration here purely as instruments of a will acting in opposition to Jehovah." The third captain also carried out the ungodly command of the king, and he was not slain (vers. 13 sqq.). The first two must therefore have been guilty of some crime, which they and their people had to expiate with their death. This crime did not consist merely in their addressing him as "man of God," for the third addressed Elijah in the same way (ver. 13), but in their saying "Man of God, come down." This summons to the prophet, to allow himself to be led as a prisoner before the king, involved a contempt not only of the prophetic office in the person of Elijah, but also of the Lord, who had accredited him by miracles as His servant. The two captains who were first sent not only did what they were bound to do as servants of the king, but participated in the ungodly disposition of their lord (*συμβαίνοντες τῷ σκοπῷ τοῦ πεπομφότος*—Theodoret); they attacked the Lord with reckless daring in the person of the prophet, and the second captain, with his "Come down quickly," did it even more strongly than the first. This sin was punished, and that not by the prophet, but by the Lord Himself, who fulfilled the word of His servant.<sup>1</sup> What Elijah here did was an act of holy zeal for the honour of the Lord, in the spirit of the old covenant, under which God destroyed the insolent despisers of His name with fire and sword, to manifest the energy of His holy majesty by the side of the dead idols of the heathen. But this act cannot be transferred to the times of the new covenant, as is clearly shown in Luke ix. 54, 55, where Christ does not blame Elijah for what he did, but admonishes His disciples, who overlooked the difference between the economy of the law and that of the gospel, and in their carnal zeal wanted to imitate what Elijah had done in divine zeal for the honour of the Lord, which had been injured in his own person.—Vers. 13, 14. The king, disregarding the

<sup>1</sup> Οἱ τοῦ προφήτου κατηγοροῦντες κατὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ προφήτου κινεῖσαι τὰς γλώττας, as Theodoret very aptly observes.

punishing hand of the Lord, which, even if it might possibly have been overlooked in the calamity that befell the captain who was first sent and his company, could not be misunderstood when a similar fate befell the second captain with his fifty men, sent a third company, in his defiant obduracy, to fetch the prophet. (שְׁלִישִׁים after הַמֵּשִׁים is apparently an error of the pen for שְׁלִישִׁי, as the following word הַשְּׁלִישִׁי shows.) But the third captain was better than his king, and wiser than his two predecessors. He obeyed the command of the king so far as to go to the prophet; but instead of haughtily summoning him to follow him, he bent his knee before the man of God, and prayed that his own life and the lives of his soldiers might be spared.—Vers. 15, 16. Then Elijah followed him to the king (מִפְּנֵי, before him, i.e. before the king, not before the captain; and אֵתוֹ for אִתּוֹ, see Ewald, § 264, b), having been directed to do so by the angel of the Lord, and repeated to him the word of the Lord, which he had also conveyed to him through his messengers (see vers. 4 and 6).

Vers. 17 and 18. When Ahaziah died, according to the word of the Lord through Elijah, as he had no son, he was followed upon the throne by his brother Joram, “in the second year of Joram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.” This statement is at variance both with that in ch. iii. 1, to the effect that Joram began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, and with that in 1 Kings xxii. 52, viz. that Ahaziah ascended the throne in the seventeenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat, which lasted twenty-five years, and also with the statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram of Judah became king over Judah in the fifth year of Joram of Israel. If, for example, Ahaziah of Israel died after a reign of not quite two years, at the most a year and a half, in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat; as Jehoshaphat himself reigned twenty-five years, he cannot have died till the seventh year of Joram of Israel, and his son Joram followed him upon the throne. The last of these discrepancies may be solved very simply, from the fact that, according to ch. viii. 16, Jehoshaphat was still king when his son Joram began to reign, so that Jehoshaphat abdicated in favour of his son about two years before his death. And the first discrepancy (that between ch. i. 17 and ch. iii. 1) is removed by Usher (*Annales M. ad a.m.* 3106 and 3112), Lightfoot, and others, after the example of the *Seder Olam*, by the assumption of a co-regency. According to this, when Jehoshaphat went with Ahab to Ramoth in Gilead to war against the Syrians, in



the eighteenth year of his reign, which runs parallel to the twenty-second year of the reign of Ahab, he appointed his son Joram to the co-regency, and transferred to him the administration of the kingdom. It is from this co-regency that the statement in ch. i. 17 is dated, to the effect that Joram of Israel became king in the second year of Joram of Judah. This second year of the co-regency of Joram corresponds to the eighteenth year of the reign of Jehoshaphat (ch. iii. 1). And in the fifth year of his co-regency Jehoshaphat gave up the reins of government entirely to him. It is from this point of time, *i.e.* from the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, that we are to reckon the eight years of the reign of Joram (of Judah), so that he only reigned six years more after his father's death.<sup>1</sup> We have no information as to the reason which induced Jehoshaphat to abdicate in favour of his son two years before his death; for there is very little probability in the conjecture of Lightfoot (*Opp.* i. p. 85), that Jehoshaphat did this when he commenced the war with the Moabites in alliance with Joram of Israel, for the simple reason that the Moabites revolted after the death of Ahab, and Joram made preparations for attacking them immediately after their rebellion (ch. iii. 5-7), so that he must have commenced this expedition before the fifth year of his reign.

<sup>1</sup> Wolff indeed boldly declares that "the co-regency of Joram is a pure fiction, and the biblical historians do not furnish the slightest warrant for any such supposition" (see p. 628 of the treatise mentioned at p. 187); but he cannot think of any other way of reconciling the differences than by making several alterations in the text, and inventing a co-regency in the case of the Israelitish king Ahaziah. The synchronism of the reigns of the Israelitish kings necessarily requires the solution adopted in the text. For if Joram of Israel, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat and reigned twelve years (ch. iii. 1), was slain at the same time as Ahaziah of Judah (ch. ix. 24-27), and Ahaziah of Judah reigned about one year and his predecessor Joram about eight years, so that the two together certainly reigned fully eight years; Joram of Judah must have ascended the throne four years after Joram of Israel, *i.e.* in the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, which runs parallel to the fifth year of Joram of Israel. Consequently the twenty-five years of Jehoshaphat are to be reduced to twenty-three in reckoning the sum-total of the years embraced by the period of the kings. It is true that there is no analogy for this combination of the years of the reigns of two kings, since the other reductions of which different chronologists are fond are perfectly arbitrary, and the case before us stands quite alone; but this exception to the rule is indicated clearly enough in the statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram began to reign while Jehoshaphat was (still) king. When, however, Thenius objects to this mode of reconciling the differences, which even Winer adopts

CHAP. II. ELIJAH'S ASCENSION TO HEAVEN. ELISHA'S FIRST  
MIRACLES.

Vers. 1-13. ELIJAH'S ASCENSION TO HEAVEN.—Vers. 1-10. *Journey from Gilgal to the other side of the Jordan.*—Vers. 1, 2. When the time arrived that Jehovah was about to take up His servant Elijah in a tempest to heaven, Elijah went with his attendant Elisha from Gilgal down to Bethel. בַּפֶּעֶרָה, in the tempest or storm, *i.e.* in a tempestuous storm, which was frequently the herald of the divine self-revelations in the terrestrial world (*vid.* Job xxxviii. 1, xl. 6; Ezek. i. 4; Zech. ix. 14). הַשָּׁמַיִם is the accusative of direction. *Gilgal* and *Bethel* (*Beitin*, see at 1 Kings xii. 29) were seats of schools of the prophets, which Elijah had founded in the kingdom of the ten tribes. It is now generally admitted that *Gilgal*, from which they went down to Bethel, cannot be the place of that name which was situated in the Jordan valley to the east of Jericho, but must be the Gilgal upon the mountains, the elevated *Jiljilia* to the south-west of Silo (Seilun, see at Josh. viii. 35). On the way Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, I pray, for the Lord has sent me to Bethel;" but Elisha declared with a solemn oath that he would not leave him. The Lord had revealed to both that the seal of divine attestation was to be impressed upon the work of Elijah by his being miraculously taken up into heaven, to

in the third edition of his *bibl. Real-Wörterbuch*, i. p. 539, on the ground that the reign of Joram is dated most precisely in 1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Chron. xxi. 1, 5, 20, from the death of Jehoshaphat, and that an actual co-regency, viz. that of Jotham, is expressly mentioned in ch. xv. 5, which does not render it at all necessary to carry the years of his reign into those of his father's, this appeal to the case of Jotham cannot prove anything, for the simple reason that the biblical text knows nothing of any co-regency of Jotham and Uzziah, but simply states that when Uzziah was smitten with leprosy, his son Jotham judged the people of the land, but that he did not become king till after his father's death (ch. xv. 5, 7; 2 Chron. xxvi. 21, 23). It is indeed stated in 1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 5, 20, that Jehoshaphat died and his son Joram became king, which may be understood as meaning that he did not become king till after the death of Jehoshaphat; but there is no necessity to understand it so, and therefore it can be very easily reconciled with the more precise statement in ch. viii. 16, that Joram ascended the throne during the reign of Jehoshaphat, whereas the assertion of Thenius, that the circumstantial clause מֶלֶךְ יְהוֹרָם in ch. viii. 16 is a gloss, is not critically established by the absence of these words from the LXX., Syr., and Arabic, and to expunge them from the text is nothing but an act of critical violence.



strengthen the faith not of Elisha only, but also of the disciples of the prophets and of all the godly in Israel ; but the revelation had been made to them separately, so that Elijah had no suspicion that Elisha had also been informed as to his being taken away. He wanted, therefore, to get rid of his servant, not "to test his love and attachment" (Vatabl.), but from humility (C. a Lap. and others), because he did not wish to have any one present to witness his glorification without being well assured that it was in accordance with the will of God.—Ver. 3. In Bethel the disciples of the prophets came to meet Elisha, and said to him, "Knowest thou that Jehovah will take thy master from over thy head to-day?" לָקַח מֵעַל רִאשׁוֹ expresses in a pictorial manner the taking away of Elijah from his side by raising him to heaven, like *ἐπαίρειν* and *ὑπολαμβάνειν* in Acts i. 9, 10. Elisha replied, "I know it, be silent," because he knew Elijah's feeling. The Lord had therefore revealed to the disciples of the prophets the taking away of Elijah, to strengthen their faith.—Vers. 4-7. In Bethel, and again in Jericho, to which they both proceeded from Bethel, Elijah repeated the appeal to Elisha to stay there, but always in vain. The taking away of Elijah had also been revealed to the disciples of the prophets at Jericho. Thus they both came to the Jordan, whilst fifty disciples of the prophets from Jericho followed them at a distance, to be eye-witnesses of the miraculous translation of their master. The course which Elijah took before his departure from this earth, viz. from Gilgal past Bethel and Jericho, was not merely occasioned by the fact that he was obliged to touch at these places on the way to the Jordan, but had evidently also the same higher purpose, for which his ascension to heaven had been revealed both to Elisha and to the disciples of the prophets at Bethel and Jericho. Elijah himself said that the Lord had sent him to Bethel, to Jericho, to the Jordan (vers. 2, 4, 6). He therefore took this way from an impulse received from the Spirit of God, that he might visit the schools of the prophets, which he had founded, once more before his departure, and strengthen and fortify the disciples of the prophets in the consecration of their lives to the service of the Lord, though without in the least surmising that they had been informed by the Spirit of the Lord of his approaching departure from this life. But as his ascension to heaven took place not so much for his own sake, as because of

those associates in his office who were left behind, God had revealed it to so many, that they might be even more firmly established in their calling by the miraculous glorification of their master than by his words, his teaching, and his admonitions, so that they might carry it on without fear or trembling, even if their great master should no longer stand by their side with the might of his spiritual power to instruct, advise, or defend. But above all, Elisha, whom the Lord had appointed as his successor (1 Kings xix. 16), was to be prepared for carrying on his work by the last journey of his master. He did not leave his side therefore, and resolved, certainly also from an inward impulse of the Spirit of God, to be an eye-witness of his glorification, that he might receive the spiritual inheritance of the first-born from his departing spiritual father.—Ver. 8. When they reached the Jordan, Elijah took his prophet's cloak, rolled it up (עָלָה, ἀπ. λεγ. *convolvit*), and smote the water with it; whereupon the water divided hither and thither, so that they both passed through on dry ground. The cloak, that outward sign of the prophet's office, became the vehicle of the Spirit's power which works unseen, and with which the prophet was inspired. The miracle itself is analogous to the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea by the stretching out of Moses' rod (Ex. xiv. 16, 21); but at the same time it is very peculiar, and quite in accordance with the prophetic character of Elijah. Moses, the leader of the people, performed his miracles with his shepherd's crook, Elijah the prophet divided the river with his prophet's mantle.—Vers. 9, 10. After crossing the Jordan, Elijah allowed his servant and companion to make one more request before he was taken away, in the full confidence that the Lord would fulfil it in answer to his prayer; and Elisha asked, “Let פִּי-שְׁנַיִם בְּרוּחֶךָ, διπλᾶ ἐν πνεύματί σου, i.e. a double portion in (of) thy spirit be granted to me.” This request has been misunderstood by many translators, from Ephraem Syrus down to Köster and F. W. Krummacher, who have supposed that Elisha wished to have a double measure of Elijah's spirit (“that thy spirit may be twofold in me:” Luther after the Vulgate, “*ut fiat in me duplex spiritus tuus*”); and some have taken it as referring to the fact that Elisha performed many more miracles and much greater ones than Elijah (Cler., Pfeiffer, *dub. vex.* p. 442), others to the gift of prophecy and miracles (Köster, *die Proph.* p. 82), whilst others, like Krummacher, have understood by it



that the spirit of Elisha, as an evangelical spirit, was twice as great as the legal spirit of Elijah. But there is no such meaning implied in the words, nor can it be inferred from the answer of Elijah; whilst it is impossible to show that there was any such measure of the Spirit in the life and works of Elisha in comparison with the spirit of Elijah, although his request was fulfilled. The request of Elisha is evidently based upon Deut. xxi. 17, where *בְּיָסְנִים* denotes the double portion which the first-born received in (of) the father's inheritance, as R. Levi b. Gers., Seb. Münst., Vatabl., Grot., and others have perceived, and as Hengstenberg (*Beitr.* ii. p. 133 f.) in our days has once more proved. Elisha, resting his foot upon this law, requested of Elijah as a first-born son the double portion of his spirit for his inheritance. Elisha looked upon himself as the first-born son of Elijah in relation to the other "sons of the prophets," inasmuch as Elijah by the command of God had called him to be his successor and to carry on his work. The answer of Elijah agrees with this: "Thou hast asked a hard thing," he said, because the granting of this request was not in *his* power, but in the power of God. He therefore made its fulfilment dependent upon a condition, which did not rest with himself, but was under the control of God: "if thou shalt see me taken from thee (*נִקָּח*, *partic. Pual* with the *n* dropped, see Ges. § 52, Anm. *b*; Ewald, § 169, *d*), let it be so to thee; but if not, it will not be so." From his own personal inclination Elijah did not wish to have Elisha, who was so closely related to him, as an eye-witness of his translation from the earth; but from his persistent refusal to leave him he could already see that he would not be able to send him away. He therefore left the matter to the Lord, and made the guidance of God the sign for Elisha whether the Lord would fulfil his request or not. Moreover, the request itself even on the part of the petitioner presupposes a certain dependence, and for this reason Elisha could not possibly desire that the double measure of Elijah's spirit should be bestowed upon him. A dying man cannot leave to his heir more than he has himself. And, lastly, even the ministry of Elisha, when compared with that of Elijah, has all the appearance of being subordinate to it. He lives and labours merely as the continuer of the work already begun by Elijah, both outwardly in relation to the worshippers of idols, and inwardly in relation to the disciples of the prophets. Elisha performs the anointing of Jehu and Hazael,

with which Elijah was charged, and thereby prepares the way for the realization of that destruction of Ahab's house which Elijah predicted to the king; and he merely receives and fosters those schools of the prophets which Elijah had already founded. And again, it is not Elisha but Elijah who appears as the Coryphæus of prophecy along with Moses, the representative of the law, upon the mount of transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 3).—It is only a thoroughly external mode of observation that can discover in the fact that Elisha performed a greater number of miracles than Elijah, a proof that the spirit of Elijah rested doubly upon him.

Vers. 11–13. *Elijah's ascension*.—Ver. 11. While they were walking on and talking to each other, “behold (there suddenly appeared) a fiery chariot and fiery horses, and separated the two (by driving between them), and Elijah went up in the tempest to heaven.” As God had formerly taken Enoch away, so that he did not taste of death (see at Gen. v. 24), so did He also suddenly take Elijah away from Elisha, and carry him to heaven without dying. It was בַּסְעָרָה, “in the tempest,” that he was taken away. The storm was accompanied by a fiery phenomenon, which appeared to the eyes of Elisha as a chariot of fire with horses of fire, in which Elijah rode to heaven. The tempest was an earthly substratum for the theophany, the fiery chariots and fiery horses the symbolical form in which the translation of his master to heaven presented itself to the eye of Elisha, who was left behind.<sup>1</sup>—The ascension of Elijah has been compared to the death of Moses. “As God Himself buried Moses, and his grave has not been found to this day, so did He fetch Elias to heaven in a still more glorious manner in a fiery chariot with fiery horses, so that fifty men, who searched for him, did not find him on the earth” (Ziegler). This parallel has a real foundation in the appearance of Moses and Elijah with Christ on the mountain of transfiguration, only we must not overlook the difference in the departure from this life of these two witnesses of God. For Moses died and was to die in the wilderness because of his sin (Deut. xxxii.

<sup>1</sup> All further questions, *e.g.* concerning the nature of the fiery chariot, the place to which Elijah was carried, the day of his ascension, which C. a Lap., according to the Romish martyrology, assigns to the 20th of July in the 19th year of Jehoshaphat, and others of the same kind, which have been discussed by the earlier commentators, are to be set down as useless trifles, which go beyond the bounds of our thought and comprehension.



49 sqq.), and was only buried by the hand of the Lord, so that no one has seen his grave, not so much for the purpose of concealing it from men as to withdraw his body from corruption, and preserve and glorify it for the eternal life (see the Comm. on Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6). Elijah did not die, but was received into heaven by being "changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52; 1 Thess. iv. 15 sqq.). This difference is in perfect harmony with the character and position of these two men in the earthly kingdom of God. Moses the lawgiver departed from the earthly life by the way of the law, which worketh death as the wages of sin (Rom. vi. 23, vii. 13); Elijah the prophet, who was appointed to admonish for future times (*ὁ καταγραφείς ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς εἰς καιρούς*), to pacify the wrath before the judgment, to turn the heart of the father to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob (Ecclus. xlviii. 10), was taken to heaven as the forerunner of Christ (Mal. iii. 23, 24; Matt. xi. 10, 11) without tasting of death, to predict the ascension of our Lord, and to set it forth in Old Testament mode; for as a servant, as the servant of the law, who with his fiery zeal preached both by word and deed the fire of the wrath of divine justice to the rebellious generation of his own time, Elijah was carried by the Lord to heaven in a fiery storm, the symbol of the judicial righteousness of God. "As he was an unparalleled champion for the honour of the Lord, a fiery war-chariot was the symbol of his triumphal procession into heaven" (O. v. Gerlach). But Christ, as the Son, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, after having taken away from death its sting and from hell its victory, by His resurrection from the grave (1 Cor. xv. 55), returned to the Father in the power of His eternal deity, and ascended to heaven in His glorified body before the eyes of His disciples as the victor over death and hell, until a cloud received Him and concealed His figure from their sight (Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 12. When Elisha saw his

<sup>1</sup> The actual truth of this miraculous departure of the prophet is strongly confirmed by the appearance of Elijah, as recorded in Matt. xvii. 3, 4 and Luke ix. 30, upon which the seal of attestation is impressed by the ascension of our Lord. His ascension was in harmony with the great mission with which he, the mightiest of all the prophets, was entrusted in that development of the divine plan of salvation which continued through the centuries in the interval between Moses and Christ.—Whoever is unable to do justice to the spirit and nature of the divine revelation of mercy, will be unable to comprehend this miracle also. This was the case with Josephus, and even with Ephraem the Syrian father. Josephus, for example (*Ant.* ix. 2, 2), says nothing about the

master carried thus miraculously away, he exclaimed, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!" and as he saw him no more, he took hold of his clothes and rent them in two pieces, *i.e.* from the top to the bottom, as a proof of the greatness of his sorrow at his being taken away. He called Elijah אֲבִי, "my father," as his spiritual father, who had begotten him as his son through the word of God. "Chariot (war-chariot) and horsemen of Israel," on which the Israelitish kings based the might and security of their kingdom, are a symbolical representa-

miracle, and simply states that Ἡλίας ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἠφανίσθη καὶ οὐδείς ἔγνω μέχρις τῆς σήμερον αὐτοῦ τὴν τελευτήν, and adds that it is written of Elijah and Enoch in the sacred books, ὅτι γεγόνασιν ἀφανεῖς. θάνατον δὲ αὐτῶν οὐδείς οἶδεν. Ephraem, the Christian father, passes over the last clause of ver. 11, "so Elijah went up in the whirlwind to heaven," in his exposition of our chapter, and paraphrases the rest of the words thus: "There came suddenly from on high a fire-storm, and in the midst of the flame the form of a chariot and of horses, and separated them from one another; one of the two it left on the earth, the other, namely Elijah, it carried up on high (עָלָה אֶלְיָהוּ);

but whither the wind (or Spirit? רוּחַ) took him, or in what place it left him, the Scriptures have *not* told us. They say, however, that some years afterwards an alarming letter from him, full of threats, was delivered to king Joram of Judah." Following the lead of such predecessors as these, J. D. Michaelis, who boasts so much of his orthodoxy, informed the "unlearned" (in the *Anmerkungen* to his *Bibel-übersetzung*) that Elijah did not go to heaven, but was simply carried away from Palestine, and lived at least twelve years more, that he might be able to write a letter to king Joram (2 Chron. xxi. 12), for "men do not receive letters from people in heaven." This incident has been frequently adduced since then as a disproof of the ascension of Elijah. But there is not a word in the Chronicles about any letter (ספר, ספרים, or אגרת, which would be the Hebrew for a letter); all that is said is that a *writing* (מכתב) from the prophet Elijah was brought to Joram, in which he was threatened with severe punishments on account of his apostasy. Now such a writing as this might very well have been written by Elijah before his ascension, and handed to Elisha to be sent by him to king Joram at the proper time. Even Bertheau admits that, according to the chronological data of the Old Testament, Elijah might have been still living in the reign of Joram of Judah; and it is *a priori* probable that he both spoke of Joram's sin and threatened him with punishment. It is impossible to fix the year of Elijah's ascension. Neither the fact that it is mentioned after the death of Ahaziah of Israel, which he himself had personally foretold to that ungodly king, nor the circumstance that in the war which Jehoshaphat and Joram of Israel waged with the Moabites the prophet Elisha was consulted (ch. iii.), warrants the conclusion that Elijah was taken from the earth in the interval between these two events. It is very obvious from ch. iii. 11, that the two kings applied to Elisha simply because he was in the neighbourhood, and not because Elijah was no longer alive.



tion of the strong defence which Elijah had been through his ministry to the kingdom of Israel (cf. ch. xiii. 14).—Ver. 13. He then took up Elijah's prophet's mantle, which had fallen from him when he was snatched away, and returned to the Jordan. The prophet's mantle of the master fell to Elisha the disciple, as a pledge to himself that his request was fulfilled, and as a visible sign to others that he was his divinely appointed successor, and that the spirit of Elijah rested upon him (ver. 15).

Vers. 14-25. RETURN OF ELISHA TO JERICHO AND BETHEL, AND HIS FIRST MIRACLES.—Vers. 14, 15. Having returned to the banks of the Jordan, Elisha smote the water with Elijah's mantle, saying, "Where is Jehovah the God of Elijah, yea He?" and the water divided hither and thither, so that he was able to go through. וַיִּסֶּם, which the LXX. did not understand, and have simply reproduced in Greek characters, *ἀφφώ*, is an emphatic apposition, "yea He," such as we find after suffixes, *e.g.* Prov. xxii. 19; and וַיִּסֶּם is only a strengthened וַיִּסֶּם, which is more usual when emphatic prominence is given to the suffix (*vid.* Ges. § 121, 3). The Masoretic accentuation, which separates it from the preceding words, rests upon a false interpretation. There is no need either for the alteration proposed by Ewald, § 362, *a*, of וַיִּסֶּם into וַיִּסֶּם, "he had scarcely smitten the water," especially as not a single analogous example can be adduced of the use of וַיִּסֶּם followed by a *Vav consec.*; or for the conjecture that the original reading in the text was וַיִּסֶּם (Houb., Böttch., Then.), "where is now the God of Elijah?" which derives no critical support from the *ἀφφώ* of the LXX., and is quite at variance with Hebrew usage, since וַיִּסֶּם generally stands immediately after וַיִּסֶּם, when it serves to strengthen the interrogation (*vid.* Judg. ix. 38, Job xvii. 15, Isa. xix. 12, Hos. xiii. 10). This miracle was intended partly to confirm Elisha's conviction that his petition had been fulfilled, and partly to accredit him in the eyes of the disciples of the prophets and the people generally as the divinely appointed successor of Elijah. All the disciples of the prophets from Jericho saw also from this that the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha, and came to meet him to do homage to him as being now their spiritual father and lord.—Vers. 16-18. But the disciples of the prophets at Jericho were so unable to realize the fact of Elijah's translation, although it had been previously revealed to them, that

they begged permission of Elisha to send out fifty brave men to seek for Elijah. **פֶּן־נִשָּׂאוּ**: whether the Spirit of the Lord has not taken him and cast him upon one of the mountains, or into one of the valleys. **פֶּן** with the perfect is used "where there is fear of a fact, which as is conjectured almost with certainty has already happened," like  $\mu\eta$  in the sense of "*whether not*" (*vid.* Ewald, § 337, *b*). **רוּחַ יְהוָה** is not a wind sent by Jehovah (*Ges.*), but the Spirit of Jehovah, as in 1 Kings xviii. 12. The *Chethîb* **נִיאוּת** is the regular formation from **נִיא** or **נִי** (*Zech.* xiv. 4); the *Keri* with the transposition of **א** and **י**, the later form: **נִיאִיוּת**, Ezek. vii. 16, xxxi. 12, etc. The belief expressed by the disciples of the prophets, that Elijah might have been miraculously carried away, was a popular belief, according to 1 Kings xviii. 12, which the disciples of the prophets were probably led to share, more especially in the present case, by the fact that they could not imagine a translation to heaven as a possible thing, and with the indefiniteness of the expression **לָקַח מֵעַל רֹאשֵׁךָ** could only understand the divine revelation which they had received as referring to removal by death. So that even if Elisha told them how miraculously Elijah had been taken from him, which he no doubt did, they might still believe that by the appearance in the storm the Lord had taken away His servant from this life, that is to say, had received his soul into heaven, and had left his earthly tabernacle somewhere on the earth, for which they would like to go in search, that they might pay the last honours to their departed master. Elisha yielded to their continued urgency and granted their request; whereupon fifty men sought for three days for Elijah's body, and after three days' vain search returned to Jericho. **עַרְבֵשׁ**, to being ashamed, *i.e.* till he was ashamed to refuse their request any longer (see at Judg. iii. 25).

The two following miracles of Elisha (vers. 19–25) were also intended to accredit him in the eyes of the people as a man endowed with the Spirit and power of God, as Elijah had been. Vers. 19–22. *Elisha makes the water at Jericho wholesome.*—During his stay at Jericho (ver. 18) the people of the city complained, that whilst the situation of the place was good in other respects, the water was bad and the land produced miscarriages. **הָאָרֶץ**, the land, *i.e.* the soil, on account of the badness of the water; not "the inhabitants, both man and beast" (*Thenius*). Elisha then told them to bring a new dish with



salt, and poured the salt into the spring with these words: "Thus saith the Lord, I have made this water sound; there will no more be death and miscarriage thence" (מִשְׁלָכָהּ מָשָׁם). מִשְׁלָכָהּ is a substantive here (*vid.* Ewald, 160, e). מוֹצָא הַמַּיִם is no doubt the present spring *Ain es Sultân*, the only spring near to Jericho, the waters of which spread over the plain of Jericho, thirty-five minutes' distance from the present village and castle, taking its rise in a group of elevations not far from the foot of the mount *Quarantana* (Kuruntul); a large and beautiful spring, the water of which is neither cold nor warm, and has an agreeable and sweet (according to Steph. Schultz, "somewhat salt") taste. It was formerly enclosed by a kind of reservoir or semicircular wall of hewn stones, from which the water was conducted in different directions to the plain (*vid.* Rob. Pal. ii. p. 283 sqq.). With regard to the miracle, a spring which supplied the whole of the city and district with water could not be so greatly improved by pouring in a dish of salt, that the water lost its injurious qualities for ever, even if salt does possess the power of depriving bad water of its unpleasant taste and injurious effects. The use of these natural means does not remove the miracle. Salt, according to its power of preserving from corruption and decomposition, is a symbol of incorruptibility and of the power of life which destroys death (see Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 325, 326). As such it formed the earthly substratum for the spiritual power of the divine word, through which the spring was made for ever sound. A new dish was taken for the purpose, not *ob munditiem* (Seb. Schm.), but as a symbol of the renewing power of the word of God.—But if this miracle was adapted to show to the people the beneficent character of the prophet's ministry, the following occurrence was intended to prove to the despisers of God that the Lord does not allow His servants to be ridiculed with impunity.—Vers. 23-25. *The judgment of God upon the loose fellows at Bethel.* Elisha proceeded from Jericho to Bethel, the chief seat of the idolatrous calf-worship, where there was also a school of the prophets (ver. 3). On the way thither there came small boys out of the city to meet him, who ridiculed him by calling out, "Come up, bald-head, come," etc. קָרְחַ, bald-head (with a bald place at the back of the head), was used as a term of scorn (cf. Isa. iii. 17, 24); but hardly from a suspicion of leprosy (Winer, Thenius). It was rather as a natural defect, for Elisha, who

lived for fifty years after this (ch. xiii. 14), could not have been bald from age at that time.—Ver. 24. The prophet then turned round and cursed the scoffers in the name of the Lord, and there came two bears out of the wood, and tore forty-two boys of them in pieces. The supposed “immorality of cursing,” which Thenius still adduces as a disproof of the historical truth of this miracle, even if it were established, would not affect Elisha only, but would fall back upon the Lord God, who executed the curse of His servant in such a manner upon these worthless boys. And there is no need, in order to justify the judicial miracle, to assume that there was a preconcerted plan which had been devised by the chief rulers of the city out of enmity to the prophet of the Lord, so that the children had merely been put forward (O. v. Gerlach). All that is necessary is to admit that the worthless spirit which prevailed in Bethel was openly manifested in the ridicule of the children, and that these boys knew Elisha, and in his person insulted the prophet of the Lord. If this was the case, then Elisha cursed the boys for the purpose of avenging the honour of the Lord, which had been injured in his person; and the Lord caused this curse to be fulfilled, to punish in the children the sins of the parents, and to inspire the whole city with a salutary dread of His holy majesty.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 25. Elisha went from Bethel to Carmel (see at 1 Kings xviii. 19), probably to strengthen himself in solitude for the continuation of his master’s work. He returned thence to Samaria, where, according to ch. vi. 32, he possessed a house.

CHAP. III. JORAM OF ISRAEL, AND THE EXPEDITION AGAINST MOAB  
WHICH HE UNDERTOOK IN COMPANY WITH JEHOSEPHAT.

Vers. 1–3. REIGN OF JORAM OF ISRAEL.—For the chronological statement in ver. 1, see at ch. i. 17. *Joram* or *Jehoram* was

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, or the author of the *Sermo* 204 *de Tempore* (or *Sermo* 41 *de Eliseo* in t. v. of the *Opp. August.*, ed. J. P. Migne, p. 1826), which is attributed to him, gives a similar explanation. “The insolent boys,” he says, “are to be supposed to have done this at the instigation of their parents; for they would not have called out if it had displeased their parents.” And with regard to the object of the judicial punishment, he says it was inflicted “that the elders might receive a lesson through the smiting of the little ones, and the death of the sons might be a lesson to the parents; and that they might learn to fear the prophet, whom they would not love, notwithstanding the wonders which he performed.”



not so ungodly as his father Ahab and his mother Jezebel. He had the statue or pillar of Baal, which his father had erected in Samaria, removed; and it was only to the sin of Jeroboam, *i.e.* the calf-worship, that he adhered. Joram therefore wished to abolish the worship of Baal and elevate the worship of Jehovah, under the image of the calf (ox), into the religion of his kingdom once more. For the singular suffix **מִמֶּנָּה** see Ewald, § 317, *a*. He did not succeed, however, in exterminating the worship of Baal. It not only continued in Samaria, but appears to have been carried on again in the most shameless manner (*cf.* ch. x. 18 sqq.); at which we cannot be surprised, since his mother Jezebel, that fanatical worshipper of Baal, was living throughout the whole of his reign (ch. ix. 30).

Vers. 4-27. WAR OF JORAM, IN ALLIANCE WITH JEHOSEPHAT, AGAINST THE MOABITES.—Vers. 4, 5. The occasion of this war was the rebellion of the Moabites, *i.e.* the refusal to pay tribute to Israel since the death of Ahab. Mesha the (vassal-) king of Moab was a possessor of flocks, and paid to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams; not merely at the commencement of each new reign (*Cler.*), but as a yearly tribute (**הַשִּׁיב**, to bring again = to bring repeatedly, as in Num. xviii. 9, etc.). This yearly tribute could not be exorbitant for the land of the Moabites, which abounded in good pasture, and was specially adapted for the rearing of flocks. The payment of tribute in natural objects and in the produce of the land was very customary in ancient times, and is still usual among the tribes of Asia.<sup>1</sup> **נֹקֵד** signifies both a shepherd (Amos i. 1) and also a possessor of flocks. In Arabic it is properly the possessor of a superior kind of sheep and goats (*vid.* Boch. *Hieroz.* i. p. 483 sq. ed. Ros.). **צֶמֶר** may either be taken as a second object to **הַשִּׁיב**, or be connected with **אֵילִים** as an accusative of looser government (Ewald, § 287, *h*). In the first case the tribute would consist of the wool (the fleeces) of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams; in the second, of 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. In support of the latter we may quote Isa. xvi. 1, where lambs are mentioned as tribute.—Vers. 5 sqq. The statement

<sup>1</sup> *Pecunia ipsa a pecore appellabatur. Etiam nunc in tabulis Censoriis pascua dicuntur omnia, ex quibus populus reditus habet, quia diu hoc solum rectius fuit. Mulctatio quoque non nisi ovium boumque impendio dicebatur.*—PLINII *h. nat.* xviii. 3.

concerning the rebellion of the Moabites, which has already been mentioned in ch. i. 1, is repeated here, because it furnished the occasion for the expedition about to be described. Ahaziah had been unable to do anything during his short reign to renew the subjugation of Moab; Joram was therefore anxious to overtake what had been neglected immediately after his ascent of the throne. He went to Samaria בְּיֹם הָהוּא, at that time, namely, when he renewed his demand for the tribute and it was refused (Thenius), and mustered all Israel, *i.e.* raised an army out of the whole kingdom, and asked Jehoshaphat to join in the war, which he willingly promised to do (as in 1 Kings xxii. 4), notwithstanding the fact that he had been blamed by prophets for his alliance with Ahab and Ahaziah (2 Chron. xix. 2 and xx. 37). He probably wished to chastise the Moabites still further on this occasion for their invasion of Judah (2 Chron. xx.), and to do his part by bringing them once more under the yoke of Israel, to put it out of their power to make fresh incursions into Judah.—Ver. 8. In reply to Joram's question, "By which way shall we advance (against Moab)?" Jehoshaphat decided in favour of "the way through the desert of Edom." There were two ways by which it was possible to enter the land of the Moabites; namely, either by going above the Dead Sea, and crossing the Jordan and the boundary river Arnon, and so entering it from the north, or by going round the southern point of the Dead Sea, and advancing through the northern portion of the mountains of Edom, and thus entering it from the south. The latter way was the longer of the two, and the one attended with the greatest difficulties and dangers, because the army would have to cross mountains which were very difficult to ascend. Nevertheless Jehoshaphat decided in its favour, partly because, if they took the northern route, they would have the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead to fear, partly also because the Moabites, from their very confidence in the inaccessibility of their southern boundary, would hardly expect any attack from that side, and might therefore, if assailed at that point, be taken off their guard and easily defeated, and probably also from a regard to the king of Edom, whom they could induce to join them with his troops if they took that route, not so much perhaps for the purpose of strengthening their own army as to make sure of his forces, namely, that he would not make a fresh attempt at rebellion by a second invasion of the kingdom of Judah while



Jehoshaphat was taking the field against the Moabites.—Ver. 9. But however cleverly this plan may have been contrived, when the united army had been marching round for seven days and was passing through the deep rocky valley of the *Ahsy*,<sup>1</sup> which divided the territories of Edom and Moab, it was in the greatest danger of perishing from want of water for men and cattle, as the river which flows through this valley, and in which they probably hoped to find a sufficient supply of water, since according to Robinson (*Pal.* ii. pp. 476 and 488) it is a stream which never fails, was at that time perfectly dry.

In this distress the hearts of the two kings were manifested.—Vers. 10-12. Joram cried out in his despair: "Woe, that Jehovah has called these three kings, to give them into the hand of Moab!" ('<sup>2</sup>, *that*, serves to give emphasis to the assurance; see Ewald, § 330, b.) Jehoshaphat, on the other hand, had confidence in the Lord, and inquired whether there was no prophet there, through whom they could seek counsel of the Lord (as in 1 Kings xxii. 7); whereupon one of the servants of the Israelitish king answered that Elisha was there, who had poured water upon the hands of Elijah, *i.e.* had been with him daily as his servant, and therefore could probably obtain and give a revelation from God. Elisha may perhaps have come to the neighbourhood of the army at the instigation of the Spirit of God, because the distress of the kings was to be one means in the hand of the Lord, not only of dis-

<sup>1</sup> The usual route from southern Judæa to the land of the Moabites, which even the Crusaders and more recent travellers took, runs round the Dead Sea up to the mouth of the Wady *ed Deraah* or *Kerak*, and then up this wady to Kerak (*vid.* Rob. ii. p. 231). The allied kings did not take this route however, but went through the Wady *el Kurahy* or *es-Safieh*, which opens into the southern end of the Dead Sea, and which is called the Wady *el Ahsy* farther up in the mountains, by Seetzen (*R.* ii. pp. 355, 356) erroneously the Wady *el Hössa* (Rob. ii. p. 488), a ravine through which Burckhardt passed with the greatest difficulty (*Syrien*, ii. p. 673). That they advanced by this route is a necessary inference from the fact, that when they first suffered from want of water they were on the border of the Moabitish territory, of which this very wady forms the boundary (ver. 21; see Burckh. p. 674, and Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 555), and the water came flowing from Edom (ver. 20). Neither of these circumstances is applicable to the Wady *el Kerak*.—Still less can we assume, with O. v. Gerlach, that they chose the route through the Arabah that they might approach Moab from the south, as the Israelites under Moses had done. For it would have been impossible for them to reach the border of Moab by this circuitous route. And why should they go so far round, with the way through Edom open to them?

tinguishing the prophet in the eyes of Joram, but also of pointing Joram to the Lord as the only true God. The three kings, humbled by the calamity, went in person to Elisha, instead of sending for him.—Vers. 13, 14. In order still further to humble the king of Israel, who was already bowed down by the trouble, and to produce some salutary fruit of repentance in his heart, Elisha addressed him in these words: “What have I to do with thee? Go to the (Baal-) prophets of thy father and thy mother! Let them help thee.” When Joram replied to this in a supplicatory tone: לֹא, no, pray (as in Ruth i. 13), *i.e.* speak not in this refusing way, for the Lord has brought these three kings—not me alone, but Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom also—into this trouble; Elisha said to him with a solemn oath (cf. 1 Kings xvii. 1): “If I did not regard Jehoshaphat, I should not look at thee and have respect to thee,” *i.e.* I should not deign to look at thee, much less to help thee.—Vers. 15–17. He then sent for a minstrel, to collect his mind from the impressions of the outer world by the soft tones of the instrument, and by subduing the self-life and life in the external world to become absorbed in the intuition of divine things. On this influence of music upon the state of the mind, see the remark on 1 Sam. xvi. 16, and Passavant’s *Untersuchungen über den Lebens-magnetismus*, p. 207 (ed. 2).—As the minstrel was playing, the hand of the Lord came upon him (יְהוָה! according to the later usage for יְהוָה, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 48, etc.; compare Ewald, § 345, *b*, and יְהוָה יֵד as in 1 Kings xviii. 46), so that he said in the name of the Lord: “Make this valley full of trenches (עֲשֵׂה, *inf. abs.* for the imperative; for גְּבִים גְּבִים see Ges. § 108, 4); for thus saith the Lord, ye will see neither wind nor rain, and this valley will be filled with water, that ye may be able to drink, and your flocks and your cattle.” גְּבִים are trenches for collecting water (*vid.* Jer. xiv. 3), which would suddenly flow down through the brook-valley. This large quantity of water came on the (following) morning “by the way of Edom” (ver. 20), a heavy fall of rain or violent storm having taken place, as is evident from the context, in the eastern mountains of Edom, at a great distance from the Israelitish camp, the water of which filled the brook-valley, *i.e.* the Wady *el Kurahy* and *el Ahsy* (see at ver. 9) at once, without the Israelites observing anything either of the wind, which always precedes rain in the East (Harmar, *Beobb.* i. pp. 51, 52), or of the rain itself. מִקְנֵיכֶם



are the flocks intended for slaughtering, בְּהֵמָתְכֶם the beasts of burden.—Vers. 18, 19. Elisha continued: “and this is too little for Jehovah (the comparative force of נָקַל is implied in the context, especially in the alternating combination of the two clauses, which is indicated by וְ . . . וְ, see Ewald, § 360, c): He will also give Moab into your hand, and ye will smite all the fortified and choice cities, fell all the good trees (fruit-trees), stop up all the springs of water, and spoil all the good fields with stones.” מְבַצֵּר and מְבַחוֹר are intended to produce a play upon words, through the resemblance in their sound and meaning (Ewald, § 160, c). In the announcement of the devastation of the land there is an allusion to Deut. xx. 19, 20, according to which the Israelites were ordered to spare the fruit-trees when Canaan was taken. These instructions were not to apply to Moab, because the Moabites themselves as the arch-foes of Israel would not act in any other way with the land of Israel if they should gain the victory. הֵבֵא, to add pain, is a poetical expression for spoiling a field or rendering it infertile through the heaping up of stones.—Ver. 20. The water came in the morning at the time of the morning sacrifice (see 1 Kings xviii. 36), to indicate that the Lord was once more restoring His favour to the people on account of the sacrifice presented to Him in His temple.

The help of God, which preserved the Israelitish army from destruction, also prepared destruction for the Moabites. Vers. 21-23. On hearing the report of the march of the allied kings, Moab had raised all the men that were capable of bearing arms, and stationed them on the frontier. In the morning, when the sun had risen above the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite to them like blood, and said: “That is blood: the (allied) kings have destroyed themselves and smitten one another; and now to the spoil, Moab!” Coming with this expectation to the Israelitish camp, they were received by the allies, who were ready for battle, and put to flight. The divine help consisted, therefore, not in a miracle which surpassed the laws of nature, but simply in the fact that the Lord God, as He had predicted through His prophet, caused the forces of nature ordained by Him to work in the predetermined manner. As the sudden supply of an abundance of water was caused in a natural way by a heavy fall of rain, so the illusion, which was so fatal to the Moabites, is also to be explained in the natural manner indicated in the text. From the reddish earth of the freshly dug trenches the

water collected in them had acquired a reddish colour, which was considerably intensified by the rays of the rising sun, so that when seen from a distance it resembled blood. The Moabites, however, were the less likely to entertain the thought of an optical delusion, from the fact that with their accurate acquaintance with the country they knew very well that there was no water in the wady at that time, and they had neither seen nor heard anything of the rain which had fallen at a great distance off in the Edomitish mountains. The thought was therefore a natural one, that the water was blood, and that the cause of the blood could only have been that their enemies had massacred one another, more especially as the jealousy between Israel and Judah was not unknown to them, and they could have no doubt that Edom had only come with them as a forced ally after the unsuccessful attempt at rebellion which it had made a short time before; and, lastly, they cannot quite have forgotten their own last expedition against Judah in alliance with the Edomites and Ammonites, which had completely failed, because the men composing their own army had destroyed one another. But if they came into collision with the allied army of the Israelites under such a delusion as this, the battle could only end in defeat and in a general flight so far as they were concerned.—Vers. 24, 25. The Israelites followed the fugitives into their own land and laid it waste, as Elisha had prophesied (ver. 25 compared with ver. 19). The *Chethâb* יִבּוֹ בָּהּ is to be read יִבּוֹ בָּהּ (for יִבּוֹא, as in 1 Kings xii. 12): and (Israel) came into the land and smote Moab. The *Keri* יִכִּי is a bad emendation. הִכּוֹת is either the infinitive construct used instead of the infin. absolute (Ewald, § 351, c), or an unusual form of the inf. absol. (Ewald, § 240, b). עַד-הַשָּׂאִיר, till one (= so that one only) left its stones in *Kir-chareseth*. On the infinitive form הַשָּׂאִיר see at Josh. viii. 22. The suffix in אֲבִנֶיהָ probably points forward to the following noun (Ewald, § 309, c). The city called קִיר הַרְשֵׁת here and Isa. xvi. 7, and קִיר הַרֶשׁ in Isa. xvi. 11 and Jer. xlvi. 31, 36, i.e. probably city of potsherds, is called elsewhere קִיר מוֹאָב, the citadel of Moab (Isa. xv. 1), as the principal fortress of the land (in the Chaldee Vers. כִּרְכָּא דְּמוֹאָב), and still exists under the name of *Kerak*, with a strong castle built by the Crusaders, upon a lofty and steep chalk rock, surrounded by a deep and narrow valley, which runs westward under the name of Wady Kerak and falls into the Dead Sea (*vid.* Burckhardt, *Syr.* pp. 643



sqq., C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 271, 272). This fortress the allied kings besieged. "The slingers surrounded and smote it," *i.e.* bombarded it.—Ver. 26. When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too strong for him, he attempted to fight a way through the beseigers with 700 men with drawn swords (לְהַבְקִיעַ, lit. to split them) to the king of Edom, *i.e.* on the side which was held by this king, from whom he probably hoped that he should meet with the weakest resistance.—Ver. 27. But when this attempt failed, in his desperation he took his first-born son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him as a sacrifice upon the wall, *i.e.* in the sight of the besiegers, not to the God of Israel (Joseph., Ephr. Syr., etc.), but to his own god Camos (see at 1 Kings xi. 7), to procure help from him by appeasing his wrath; just as the heathen constantly sought to appease the wrath of their gods by human sacrifices on the occasion of great calamities (*vid.* Euseb. *præpar. ev.* iv. 16, and E. v. Lasaulx, *die Sühnopfer der Griechen und Römer*, pp. 8 sqq.).—"And there was (came) great wrath upon Israel, and they departed from him (the king of Moab) and returned into their land." As הָיָה קֶצֶף עַל is used of the divine wrath or judgment, which a man brings upon himself by sinning, in every other case in which the phrase occurs, we cannot understand it here as signifying the "human indignation," or ill-will, which broke out among the besieged (Budd., Schulz, and others). The meaning is: this act of abomination, to which the king of the Moabites had been impelled by the extremity of his distress, brought a severe judgment from God upon Israel. The besiegers, that is to say, felt the wrath of God, which they had brought upon themselves by occasioning human sacrifice, which is strictly forbidden in the law (Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 3), either inwardly in their conscience or in some outwardly visible signs, so that they gave up the further prosecution of the siege and the conquest of the city, without having attained the object of the expedition, namely, to renew the subjugation of Moab under the power of Israel.

#### CHAP. IV. ELISHA WORKS SEVERAL MIRACLES.

From ch. iv.—ch. viii. 6 there follows a series of miracles on the part of Elisha, which both proved this prophet to be the continuer of the work which Elijah had begun, of converting Israel from the service of Baal to the service of the living God, and also

manifested the beneficent fruits of the zeal of Elijah for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth in the midst of the idolatrous generation of his time, partly in the view which we obtain from several of these accounts of the continuance and prosperity of the schools of the prophets, and partly in the attitude of Elisha towards the godly in the land as well as towards Joram the king, the son of the idolatrous Ahab, and in the extension of his fame beyond the limits of Israel. (See the remarks on the labours of both prophets at pp. 229 sqq, and those on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. xix. 24.)—All the miracles described in this section belong to the reign of Joram king of Israel. They are not all related, however, in chronological order, but the chronology is frequently disregarded for the purpose of grouping together events which are homogeneous in their nature. This is evident, not only from the fact that (*a*) several of these accounts are attached quite loosely to one another without any particle to indicate sequence (*vid.* ch. iv. 1, 38, 42, v. 1, vi. 8, and viii. 1), and (*b*) we have first of all those miracles which were performed for the good of the scholars of the prophets and of particular private persons (ch. iv.–vi. 7), and then such works of the prophet as bore more upon the political circumstances of the nation, and of the king as the leader of the nation (ch. vi. 8–vii. 20), but also from the circumstance that in the case of some of these facts you cannot fail to perceive that their position is regulated by their substantial relation to what precedes or what follows, without any regard to the time at which they occurred. Thus, for example, the occurrence described in ch. viii. 1–6, which should undoubtedly stand before ch. v. so far as the chronology is concerned, is placed at the end of the miracles which Elisha wrought for king Joram, simply because it exhibits in the clearest manner the salutary fruit of what he had done. And so, again, the account of Naaman the leper is placed in ch. v., although its proper position would be after ch. vi. 7, because it closes the series of miracles performed for and upon private persons, and the miracle was wrought upon a foreigner, so that the fame of the prophet had already penetrated into a foreign country; whereas in order of time it should either stand between vers. 23 and 24 of the sixth chapter (because the incursions of the flying parties of Syrians, to which ch. vi. 8–23 refers, had already taken place), or not till after the close of ch. vii. On the other hand, the partial separation of the miracles performed for the schools of



the prophets (ch. iv. 1-7, 38-41, 42-44, and ch. vi. 1-7) can only be explained on chronological grounds; and this is favoured by the circumstance that the events inserted between are attached by a *Vav consec.*, which does indicate the order of sequence (ch. v. 8 sqq. and vi. 1 sqq.). Regarded as a whole, however, the section ch. iv. 1-viii. 6, which was no doubt taken from a prophetic monograph and inserted into the annals of the kings, is in its true chronological place, since the account in ch. iii. belongs to the earlier period of the history, and the events narrated from ch. viii. 7 onwards to the later period.

Vers. 1-7. THE WIDOW'S CRUSE OF OIL.—A poor widow of the scholars of the prophets complained to Elisha of her distress, namely, that a creditor was about to take her two sons as servants (slaves). The Mosaic law gave a creditor the right to claim the person and children of a debtor who was unable to pay, and they were obliged to serve him as slaves till the year of jubilee, when they were once more set free (Lev. xxv. 39, 40). When the prophet learned, on inquiry, that she had nothing in her house but a small flask of oil (אֵסֶף, from סָפַף, means an anointing flask, a small vessel for the oil necessary for anointing the body), he told her to beg of all her neighbours empty vessels, not a few (אֶל-תַּמְעִיטִי, make not few, *sc.* to beg), and then to shut herself in with her sons, and to pour from her flask of oil into all these vessels till they were full, and then to sell this oil and pay her debt with the money, and use the rest for the maintenance of herself and her children. She was to close the house-door, that she might not be disturbed in her occupation by other people, and also generally to avoid all needless observation while the miracle was being performed. הַמֶּלֶא תִסְעִי, let that which is filled be put on one side, namely by the sons, who handed her the vessels, according to vers. 5 and 6, so that she was able to pour without intermission. The form מִצֶּקֶת is a participle *Piel*, and is quite appropriate as an emphatic form; the *Keri* מוֹצֶקֶת (*Hiphil*) is an unnecessary alteration, especially as the *Hiphil* of יָצַק is הִצִּיק. וַיַּעֲמֹד הַשֶּׁמֶן, then the oil stood, *i.e.* it ceased to flow. The *asyndeton* וְאֵת בְּנֵיהִי is very harsh, and the *Vav copul.* has probably dropped out. With the alteration proposed by L. de Dieu, viz. of וְאֵת into וְאֵתָּה, "live with thy sons," the verb תִּהְיִי would necessarily stand first (Thenius).

Vers. 8-37. THE SHUNAMMITE AND HER SON.—Ver. 8. When Elisha was going one day (lit. *the day*, *i.e.* at that time, then) to *Shunem* (*Solam*, at the south-western foot of the Lesser Hermon; see at 1 Kings i. 3), a wealthy woman (נְרוּלָה as in 1 Sam. xxv. 2, etc.) constrained him to eat at her house; whereupon, as often as he passed by that place in his subsequent journeys from Carmel to Jezreel and back, he was accustomed to call upon her (סוּר as in Gen. xix. 2).—Vers. 9, 10. The woman then asked her husband to build a small upper chamber for this holy man of God, and to furnish it with the necessary articles of furniture (*viz.* bed, table, seat, and lamp), that he might always turn in at their house. עֲלִית־קִיר is either a walled upper chamber, *i.e.* one built with brick and not with wooden walls (Cler., Then.), or an upper chamber built upon the wall of the house (Ges.).—Vers. 11-13. After some time, when Elisha had spent the night in the chamber provided for him, he wanted to make some acknowledgment to his hostess for the love which she had shown him, and told his servant Gehazi to call her, and say to her: “Thou hast taken all this care for us, what shall I do to thee? Hast thou (anything) to say to the king or the chief captain?” *i.e.* hast thou any wish that I could convey to them, and intercede for thee? There is something striking here in the fact that Elisha did not address the woman himself, as she was standing before him, but told his servant to announce to her his willingness to make some return for what she had done. This was, probably, simply from a regard to the great awe which she had of the “holy man of God” (ver. 9), and to inspire her with courage to give expression to the wishes of her heart.<sup>1</sup> She answered: “I dwell among my people,” *i.e.* not, I merely belong to the people (Thenius), but, I live quietly and peaceably among my countrymen, so that I have no need for any intercession with the king and great men of the kingdom. Ἀπραγμοσύνη χαίρω, καὶ εἰρηνικῶς διάγω καὶ πρὸς τινὰ ἀμφισβήτησιν οὐκ ἀνέχομαι (Theodoret).—Vers. 14-16. When Elisha conversed with Gehazi still further on the matter, the latter said: “But she has no son, and her husband is old.” Elisha

<sup>1</sup> The conjecture that Elisha would not speak to her directly for the sake of maintaining his dignity, or that the historian looked upon such conversation with women as unbecoming in a teacher of the law (Thenius), is already proved to be untenable by vers. 15, 16, where Elisha does speak to her directly.



then had her called again, and told her when she had entered the door: "At this time a year hence (פַּעַם חִיָּה, lit. at the time when it revives again; see at Gen. xviii. 10) thou wilt embrace a son." The same favour was to be granted to the Shunammite as that which Sarah had received in her old age, that she might learn that the God of Abraham still ruled in and for Israel. She replied: "No, my lord, thou man of God," אֵל-תִּבְנֶיב, *i.e.* do not excite in thy servant any deceptive hopes.—Ver. 17. But however incredible this promise might appear to her, as it had formerly done to Sarah (Gen. xviii. 12, 13), it was fulfilled at the appointed time (cf. Gen. xxi. 2).—Vers. 18-20. But even the faith of the pious woman was soon to be put to the test, and to be confirmed by a still more glorious revelation of the omnipotence of the Lord, who works through the medium of His prophets. When the child presented to her by God had grown up into a lad, he complained one day to the reapers in the field of a violent headache, saying to his father, "My head, my head!" He was then taken home to his mother, and died at noon upon her knees, no doubt from inflammation of the brain produced by a sunstroke.—Vers. 21-23. The mother took the dead child at once up to the chamber built for Elisha, laid it upon the bed of the man of God, and shut the door behind her; she then asked her husband, without telling him of the death of the boy, to send a young man with a she-ass, that she might ride as quickly as possible to the man of God; and when her husband asked her, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day, since it is neither new moon nor Sabbath?"<sup>1</sup> she replied, *shalom*; *i.e.* either "it is all well," or "never mind." For this word, which is used in reply to a question after one's health (see ver. 26), is apparently also used, as Clericus has correctly observed, when the object is to avoid giving a definite answer to any one, and yet at the same time to satisfy him.—Vers. 24, 25. She then rode without stopping, upon the animal

<sup>1</sup> From these words, Theod., Kimchi, C. a Lap., Vatabl., and others have drawn the correct conclusion, that the pious in Israel were accustomed to meet together at the prophets' houses for worship and edification, on those days which were appointed in the law (Lev. xxiii. 3; Num. xxviii. 11 sqq.) for the worship of God; and from this Hertz and Hengstenberg have still further inferred, that in the kingdom of the ten tribes not only were the Sabbath and new moons kept, as is evident from Amos viii. 5 also, but the prophets supplied the pious in that kingdom with a substitute for the missing Levitical priesthood.

driven by the young man, to Elisha at mount Carmel. אֶל־תַּעֲצֹר־לִי לִרְכֹּב, literally, do not hinder me from riding.—Vers. 25-27. When the prophet saw her מִנֶּגֶד (from the opposite), that is to say, saw her coming in the distance, and recognised her as the Shunammite, he sent Gehazi to meet her, to ask her about her own health and that of her husband and child. She answered, *shalom*, i.e. well, that she might not be detained by any further discussion, and came to the prophet and embraced his feet, to pray for the help of the “holy man of God.” Gehazi wanted to thrust her away, “because it seemed to him an immodest importunity to wish to urge the prophet in such a way as this, and as it were to compel him” (Seb. Schm.); but the prophet said, “Let her alone, for her soul is troubled, and Jehovah has hidden it from me and has not told me.”<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 28. The pious woman then uttered this complaint to the prophet: “Did I ask a son of the Lord? Did I not say, Do not deceive me?” What had happened to her she did not say,—a fact which may easily be explained on psychological grounds from her deep sorrow,—but Elisha could not fail to discover it from what she said.—Ver. 29. He therefore directed his servant Gehazi: “Gird thy loins and take thy staff in thy hand and go: if thou meet any one, thou wilt not salute him; and if any one salute thee, thou wilt not answer him; and lay my staff upon the face of the boy.” The object of this command neither to salute nor to return salutations by the way, was not merely to ensure the greatest haste (Thenius and many others), inasmuch as the people of the East lose a great deal of time in prolonged salutations (Niebuhr, *Beschr. v. Arab.* p. 48),<sup>2</sup> but the prophet wished thereby to preclude at the very outset the possibility of attributing the failure of Gehazi’s attempt to awaken the child to any external or accidental circumstance of this kind. For since it is inconceivable that the prophet should have adopted a wrong method, that is to say, should have sent Gehazi with the hope

<sup>1</sup> All that we can infer from these last words with regard to the nature of prophecy, is that the *donum propheticum* did not involve a supernatural revelation of every event.

<sup>2</sup> Or, as C. a Lap. supposes: “that Gehazi might avoid all distraction of either eyes or ears, and prepare himself entirely by prayers for the accomplishment of so great a miracle.” Theodoret explains it in a similar manner: “He knew that he was vainglorious and fond of praise, and that he would be sure to tell the reason of his journey to those who should meet him by the way. And vainglory is a hindrance to thaumaturgy.”



that he would restore the dead boy to life, his only intention in sending the servant must have been to give to the Shunammite and her family, and possibly also to Gehazi himself, a practical proof that the power to work miracles was not connected in any magical way with his person or his staff, but that miracles as works of divine omnipotence could only be wrought through faith and prayer; not indeed with the secondary intention of showing that he alone could work miracles, and so of increasing his own importance (Köster), but to purify the faith of the godly from erroneous ideas, and elevate them from superstitious reliance upon his own human person to true reliance upon the Lord God.

—Ver. 30. The mother of the boy does not appear, indeed, to have anticipated any result from the measures adopted by Elisha; for she swears most solemnly that she will not leave him. But the question arises, whether this urging of the prophet to come himself and help arose from doubt as to the result of Gehazi's mission, or whether it was not rather an involuntary utterance of her excessive grief, and of the warmest wish of her maternal heart to see her beloved child recalled to life. We may probably infer the latter from the fulfilment of her request by Elisha.—Ver. 31. Gehazi did as he was commanded, but the dead child did not come to life again; the prophet's staff worked no miracle. "There was no sound and no attention," *i.e.* the dead one gave no sign of life. This is the meaning of **אין קול** **ואין קשב** both here and 1 Kings xviii. 29, where it is used of dead idols. The attempt of Gehazi to awaken the child was unsuccessful, not *propter fidem ipsi a muliere non adhibitam* (Seb. Schm.), nor because of the vainglory of Gehazi himself, but simply to promote in the godly of Israel true faith in the Lord.

—Vers. 32-35. Elisha then entered the house, where the boy was lying dead upon his bed, and shut the door behind them both (*i.e.* himself and the dead child), and prayed to the Lord. He then lay down upon the boy, so that his mouth, his eyes, and his hands lay upon the mouth, eyes, and hands of the child, bowing down over him (**נָהַר**; see at 1 Kings xviii. 42); and the flesh (the body) of the child became warm. He then turned round, *i.e.* turned away from the boy, went once up and down in the room, and bowed himself over him again; whereupon the boy sneezed seven times, and then opened his eyes. This raising of the dead boy to life does indeed resemble the raising of the dead by Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 20 sqq.); but it

differs so obviously in the manner in which it was effected, that we may see at once from this that Elisha did not possess the double measure of the spirit of Elijah. It is true that Elijah stretched himself three times upon the dead child, but at his prayer the dead returned immediately to life, whereas in the case of Elisha the restoration to life was a gradual thing.<sup>1</sup> And they both differ essentially from the raising of the dead by Christ, who recalled the dead to life by one word of His omnipotence (Mark v. 39–42 ; Luke vii. 13–15 ; John xi. 43, 44), a sign that He was the only-begotten Son of God, to whom the Father gave to have life in Himself, even as the Father has life in Himself (John v. 25 sqq.), in whose name the Apostle Peter also was able through prayer to recall the dead Tabitha to life, whereas Elisha and Elijah had only to prophesy by word and deed of the future revelation of the glory of God.—Vers. 36, 37. After the restoration of the boy to life, Elisha had his mother called and gave her back her son, for which she fell at his feet with thanksgiving.

Vers. 38–41. ELISHA MAKES UNEATABLE FOOD WHOLESOME.—Ver. 38. When Elisha had returned to Gilgal, the seat of a school of the prophets (see at ch. ii. 1), *i.e.* had come thither once more on his yearly circuit, during the famine which prevailed in the land (see at ch. viii. 1), and the prophets' scholars sat before him (the teacher and master), he directed his servant (*i.e.* probably not Gehazi, but the pupil who waited upon him) to put the large pot to the fire and boil a dish for the pupils of the prophets. שָׁפַת answers to the German *beisetzen*, which is used for placing a vessel *upon* the fire (cf. Ezek. xxiv. 3).—Ver. 39. One (of these pupils) then went to the field to gather vegetables (אֲרֵז, *olera* : for the different explanations of this word see Celsii *Hierobot.* i. 459 sqq., and Ges. *Thes.* p. 56), and found נֶפֶן שָׂרֵה, *i.e.* not wild vines, but wild creepers (Luther), field-creepers

<sup>1</sup> The raising of the dead by Elijah and Elisha, especially by the latter, has been explained by many persons as being merely a revivification by magnetic manipulations or by the force of animal magnetism (even Passavant and Ennemoser adopt this view). But no dead person was ever raised to life by animal magnetism ; and the assumption that the two boys were only apparently dead is at variance with the distinct words of the text, in addition to which, both Elisha and Elijah accomplished the miracle through their prayer, as is stated as clearly as possible both here (ver. 33) and also at 1 Kings xvii. 21, 22.



resembling vines ; and having gathered his lap full of wild cucumbers, took them home and cut them into the vegetable pot, because they did not know them. תענף is rendered in the ancient versions *colocynths* (LXX. *πολυπὴ ἀγρία*, i.e., according to Suid., *colocynthis*), whereas Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 1122), Winer, and others, following Celsius (*l.c.* i. 393 sqq.), have decided in favour of wild cucumbers, a fruit resembling an acorn, or, according to Oken, a green fleshy fruit of almost a finger's length and an inch thick, which crack with a loud noise, when quite ripe, on very gentle pressure, spirting out both juice and seeds, and have a very bitter taste. The reason for this decision is, that the peculiarity mentioned answers to the etymon ענף, to split, in Syr. and Chald. to crack. Nevertheless the rendering given by the old translators is apparently the more correct of the two ; for the colocynths also belong to the genus of the cucumbers, creep upon the ground, and are a round yellow fruit of the size of a large orange, and moreover are extremely bitter, producing colic, and affecting the nerves. The form of this fruit is far more suitable for oval architectural ornaments (ענף, 1 Kings vi. 18, vii. 24) than that of the wild cucumber.—Ver. 40. The extremely bitter flavour of the fruit so alarmed the pupils of the prophets when they began to eat of the dish, that they cried out, “Death in the pot,” and therefore thought the fruit was poison. If eaten in any large quantity, colocynths might really produce death: *vid.* Dioscorid. iv. 175 (178).—Ver. 41. Elisha then had some meal brought and poured it into the pot, after which the people were able to eat of the dish, and there was no longer anything injurious in the pot. וְקַח, then take, וְ denoting sequence in thought (*vid.* Ewald, § 348, *a*). The meal might somewhat modify the bitterness and injurious qualities of the vegetable, but could not take them entirely away; the author of the *Exegetical Handbook* therefore endeavours to get rid of the miracle, by observing that Elisha may have added something else. The meal, the most wholesome food of man, was only the earthly substratum for the working of the Spirit, which proceeded from Elisha, and made the noxious food perfectly wholesome.

Vers. 42-44. FEEDING OF A HUNDRED PUPILS OF THE PROPHETS WITH TWENTY BARLEY LOAVES.—A man of *Baal-Shalisha* (a place in the land of *Shalisha*, the country to the west of Gilgal, Jiljilia ; see at 1 Sam. ix. 4) brought the prophet as first-

fruits twenty barley loaves and נֶרֶשׁ בֶּרֶמֶל = בֶּרֶמֶל, *i.e.* roasted ears of corn (see the Comm. on Lev. ii. 14), in his sack (צִקְלוֹ, ἀπ. λεγ., sack or pocket). Elisha ordered this present to be given to the people, *i.e.* to the pupils of the prophets who dwelt in one common home, for them to eat; and when his servant made this objection: "How shall I set this (this little) before a hundred men?" he repeated his command, "Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus hath the Lord spoken: They will eat and leave" (אָכּוּל וְהוּתַר, *infin. absol.*; see Ewald, § 328, *a*); which actually was the case. That twenty barley loaves and a portion of roasted grains of corn were not a sufficient quantity to satisfy a hundred men, is evident from the fact that one man was able to carry the whole of this gift in a sack, and still more so from the remark of the servant, which shows that there was no proportion between the whole of this quantity and the food required by a hundred persons. In this respect the food, which was so blessed by the word of the Lord that a hundred men were satisfied by so small a quantity and left some over, forms a type of the miraculous feeding of the people by Christ (Matt. xiv. 16 sqq., xv. 36, 37; John vi. 11, 12); though there was this distinction between them, that the prophet Elisha did not produce the miraculous increase of the food, but merely predicted it. The object, therefore, in communicating this account is not to relate another miracle of Elisha, but to show how the Lord cared for His servants, and assigned to them that which had been appropriated in the law to the Levitical priests, who were to receive, according to Deut. xviii. 4, 5, and Num. xviii. 13, the first-fruits of corn, new wine, and oil. This account therefore furnishes fresh evidence that the godly men in Israel did not regard the worship introduced by Jeroboam (his state-church) as legitimate worship, but sought and found in the schools of the prophets a substitute for the lawful worship of God (*vid.* Hengstenberg, *Beitrr.* ii. S. 136 f.).

CHAP. V. CURING OF THE LEPROSY OF NAAMAN THE SYRIAN, AND  
PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.

Vers. 1–19. CURING OF NAAMAN FROM LEPROSY.—Ver. 1. *Naaman*, the commander-in-chief of the Syrian king, who was a very great man before his lord, *i.e.* who held a high place in the service of his king and was greatly distinguished (נִשְׂאָ פָנִים, cf. Isa. iii. 3, ix. 14), because God had given the Syrians salvation (*vic-*



tory) through him, was as a warrior afflicted with leprosy. The ו has not dropped out before מְצַרֵּעַ, nor has the copula been omitted for the purpose of sharpening the antithesis (Thenius), for the appeal to Ewald, § 354, *a*, proves nothing, since the passages quoted there are of a totally different kind; but גִּבּוֹר הָיָל is a second predicate: the man was as a brave warrior leprous. There is an allusion here to the difference between the Syrians and the Israelites in their views of leprosy. Whereas in Israel lepers were excluded from human society (see at Lev. xiii. and xiv.), in Syria a man afflicted with leprosy could hold a very high state-office in the closest association with the king.—Vers. 2, 3. And in Naaman's house before his wife, *i.e.* in her service, there was an Israelitish maiden, whom the Syrians had carried off in a marauding expedition (יָצְאוּ גִדּוּדִים: they had gone out in (as) marauding bands). She said to her mistress: "O that my lord were before the prophet at Samaria! (where Elisha had a house, ch. vi. 32,) he would free him from his leprosy." אָסַף מְצַרֵּעַ, to receive (again) from leprosy, in the sense of "to heal," may be explained from Num. xii. 14, 15, where אָסַף is applied to the reception of Miriam into the camp again, from which she had been excluded on account of her leprosy.—Vers. 4, 5. When Naaman related this to his lord (the king), he told him to go to Samaria furnished with a letter to the king of Israel; and he took with him rich presents as compensation for the cure he was to receive, *viz.* ten talents of silver, about 25,000 thalers (£3750—Tr.); 6000 shekels (= two talents) of gold, about 50,000 thalers (£7500); and ten changes of clothes, a present still highly valued in the East (see the Comm. on Gen. xlv. 22). This very large present was quite in keeping with Naaman's position, and was not too great for the object in view, namely, his deliverance from a malady which would be certainly, even if slowly, fatal.—Vers. 6, 7. When the king of Israel (Joram) received the letter of the Syrian king on Naaman's arrival, and read therein that he was to cure Naaman of his leprosy (וַעֲתָה, and now,—showing in the letter the transition to the main point, which is the only thing communicated here; cf. Ewald, § 353, *b*), he rent his clothes in alarm, and exclaimed, "Am I God, to be able to kill and make alive?" *i.e.* am I omnipotent like God? (cf. Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6;) "for he sends to me to cure a man of his leprosy." The words of the letter וַאֲסַפְתִּי, "so cure him," were certainly not so insolent in their meaning as Joram supposed,

but simply meant: have him cured, as thou hast a wonder-working prophet; the Syrian king imagining, according to his heathen notions of priests and *goëtes*, that Joram could do what he liked with his prophets and their miraculous powers. There was no ground, therefore, for the suspicion which Joram expressed: "for only observe and see, that he seeks occasion against me." **הִתְאַנָּה**, to seek occasion, *sc.* for a quarrel (cf. Judg. xiv. 4).—Ver. 8. When Elisha heard of this, he reproved the king for his unbelieving alarm, and told him to send the man to him, "that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel."—Vers. 9, 10. When Naaman stopped with his horses and chariot before the house of Elisha, the prophet sent a messenger out to him to say, "Go and wash thyself seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh will return to thee, *i.e.* become sound, and thou wilt be clean." **יָשָׁב**, return, inasmuch as the flesh had been changed through the leprosy into festering matter and putrefaction. The reason why Elisha did not go out to Naaman himself, is not to be sought for in the legal prohibition of intercourse with lepers, as Ephraem Syrus and many others suppose, nor in his fear of the leper, as Thenius thinks, nor even in the wish to magnify the miracle in the eyes of Naaman, as C. a Lapide imagines, but simply in Naaman's state of mind. This is evident from his exclamation concerning the way in which he was treated. Enraged at his treatment, he said to his servant (vers. 11, 12): "I thought, he will come out to me and stand and call upon the name of Jehovah his God, and go with his hand over the place (*i.e.* move his hand to and fro over the diseased places), and take away the leprosy." **הַמִּצּוֹרֵעַ**, the leprous = the disease of leprosy, the scabs and ulcers of leprosy. "Are not *Abana* and *Pharpar*, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? (for the combination of **טוֹב** with **נְהִירוֹת**, see Ewald, § 174, *f.*) Should I not bathe in them, and become clean?" With these words he turned back, going away in a rage. Naaman had been greatly strengthened in the pride, which is innate in every natural man, by the exalted position which he held in the state, and in which every one bowed before him, and served him in the most reverential manner, with the exception of his lord the king; and he was therefore to receive a salutary lesson of humiliation, and at the same time was also to learn that he owed his cure not to any magic touch from the prophet, but solely to the power of God working through him.—Of the two rivers of Damascus, *Abana*



or *Amana* (the reading of the *Keri* with the interchange of the labials א and מ, see Song of Sol. iv. 8) is no doubt the present *Barada* or *Barady* (بردى, *i.e.* the cold river), the *Chrysorrhoas* (Strabo, xvi. p. 755; Plin. *h. n.* 18 or 16), which rises in the table-land to the south of Zebedany, and flows through this city itself, and then dividing into two arms, enters two small lakes about  $4\frac{3}{4}$  hours to the east of the city. The *Pharpar* is probably the only other independent river of any importance in the district of Damascus, namely, the *Avaj*, which arises from the union of several brooks around *Sa'sa'*, and flows through the plain to the south of Damascus into the lake Heijâny (see Rob. *Bibl. Researches*, p. 444). The water of the Barada is beautiful, clear and transparent (Rob.), whereas the water of the Jordan is turbid, "of a clayey colour" (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 256); and therefore Naaman might very naturally think that his own native rivers were better than the Jordan.—Ver. 13. His servants then addressed him in a friendly manner, and said, "My father, if the prophet had said to thee a great thing (*i.e.* a thing difficult to carry out), shouldst thou not have done it? how much more then, since he has said to thee, Wash, and thou wilt be clean?" אָבִי, my father, is a confidential expression arising from childlike piety, as in ch. vi. 21 and 1 Sam. xxiv. 12; and the etymological jugglery which traces אָבִי from לָבִי = לָי = לוֹ (Ewald, *Gr.* § 358, Anm.), or from אָם (Thenius), is quite superfluous (see Delitzsch on *Job*, vol. ii. p. 265, transl.).—וְכִּי־יִרְבֶּה־נִדְוָל . . . is a conditional clause without אָם (see Ewald, § 357, *b*), and the object is placed first for the sake of emphasis (according to Ewald, § 309, *a*). אַחֲרֵי־כֵן, how much more (see Ewald, § 354, *c*), *sc.* shouldst thou do what is required, since he has ordered thee so small and easy a thing.—Ver. 14. Naaman then went down (from Samaria to the Jordan) and dipped in Jordan seven times, and his flesh became sound (יָשָׁב, as in ver. 10) like the flesh of a little boy. *Seven times*, to show that the healing was a work of God, for seven is the stamp of the works of God.—Vers. 15, 16. After the cure had been effected, he returned with all his train to the man of God with this acknowledgment: "Behold, I have found that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel," and with the request that he would accept a blessing (a present, בְּרִכָּה, as in Gen. xxxiii. 11, 1 Sam. xxv. 27, etc.) from him, which the prophet, however, stedfastly refused, notwithstanding

all his urging, that he might avoid all appearance of selfishness, by which the false prophets were actuated.—Vers. 17, 18. Then Naaman said: וְלֹא, “and not” = and if not, καὶ εἰ μὴ (LXX. ; not “and O,” according to Ewald, § 358, *b*, Anm.), “let there be given to thy servant (=to me) two mules’ burden of earth (on the construction see Ewald, § 287, *h*), for thy servant will no more make (offer) burnt-offerings and slain-offerings to any other gods than Jehovah. May Jehovah forgive thy servant in this thing, when my lord (the king of Syria) goeth into the house of Rimmon, to fall down (worship) there, and he supports himself upon my hand, that I fall down (with him) in the house of Rimmon; if I (thus) fall down in the house of Rimmon, may,” etc. It is very evident from Naaman’s explanation, “for thy servant,” etc., that he wanted to take a load of earth with him out of the land of Israel, that he might be able to offer sacrifice upon it to the God of Israel, because he was still a slave to the polytheistic superstition, that no god could be worshipped in a proper and acceptable manner except in his own land, or upon an altar built of the earth of his own land. And because Naaman’s knowledge of God was still adulterated with superstition, he was not yet prepared to make an unreserved confession before men of his faith in Jehovah as the only true God, but hoped that Jehovah would forgive him if he still continued to join outwardly in the worship of idols, so far as his official duty required. *Rimmon* (*i.e.* the pomegranate) is here, and probably also in the local name *Hadad-rimmon* (Zech. xii. 11), the name of the supreme deity of the Damascene Syrians, and probably only a contracted form of *Hadad-rimmon*, since *Hadad* was the supreme deity or sun-god of the Syrians (see at 2 Sam. viii. 3), signifying the sun-god with the modification expressed by *Rimmon*, which has been differently interpreted according to the supposed derivation of the word. Some derive the name from רִמְסִים = רִים, as the supreme god of heaven, like the Ἐλιοῦν of *Sanchun.* (Cler., Seld., Ges. *thes.* p. 1292); others from רִמֹן, a pomegranate, as a personification of the power of generation, as *numen naturæ omnia fecundantis*, since the pomegranate with its abundance of seeds is used in the symbolism of both Oriental and Greek mythology along with the Phallus as a symbol of the generative power (*vid.* Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 122, 123), and is also found upon Assyrian monuments (*vid.* Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, p. 343); others again, with less probability, from רָמָה, *jaculari*,



as the sun-god who vivifies and fertilizes the earth with his rays, like the *ἐκηβόλος Ἀπόλλων*; and others from  $\text{רָמַם} = \text{רָמַם}$ , *compuit*, as the dying winter sun (according to Movers and Hitzig; see Leyrer in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*).—The words “and he supports himself upon my hand” are not to be understood literally, but are a general expression denoting the service which Naaman had to render as the aide-de-camp to his king (cf. ch. vii. 2, 17). For the Chaldaic form  $\text{הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי}$ , see Ewald, § 156, a.—In the repetition of the words “if I fall down in the temple of Rimmon,” etc., he expresses the urgency of his wish.—Ver. 19. Elisha answered, “Go in peace,” wishing the departing Syrian the peace of God upon the road, without thereby either approving or disapproving the religious conviction which he had expressed. For as Naaman had not asked permission to go with his king into the temple of Rimmon, but had simply said, might Jehovah forgive him or be indulgent with him in this matter, Elisha could do nothing more, without a special command from God, than commend the heathen, who had been brought to belief in the God of Israel as the true God by the miraculous cure of his leprosy, to the further guidance of the Lord and of His grace.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 20-27. PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.—Vers. 20-22. When Naaman had gone a stretch of the way ( $\text{בְּבֵרַת אֶרֶץ}$ , ver 19; see at Gen. xxxv. 16), there arose in Gehazi, the servant of Elisha,

<sup>1</sup> Most of the earlier theologians found in Elisha's words a direct approval of the religious conviction expressed by Naaman and his attitude towards idolatry; and since they could not admit that a prophet would have permitted a heathen alone to participate in idolatrous ceremonies, endeavoured to get rid of the consequence resulting from it, viz. *licitam ergo esse Christianis συμφώνησιν πιστοῦ μετὰ ἀπιστοῦ*, seu *symbolizationem et communicationem cum ceremonia idololatrica*, either by appealing to the use of  $\text{הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתִי}$  and to the distinction between *incurvatio regis voluntaria et religiosa* (real worship) and *incurvatio servilis et coacta Naamani, quæ erat politica et civilis* (mere prostration from civil connivance), or by the ungrammatical explanation that Naaman merely spoke of what he had already done, not of what he would do in future (*vid. Pfeiffer, Dub. vex. p. 445 sqq., and J. Meyer, ad Seder Olam, p. 904 sqq., Budd., and others*).—Both are unsatisfactory. The dreaded consequence falls of itself if we only distinguish between the times of the old covenant and those of the new. Under the old covenant the time had not yet come in which the heathen, who came to the knowledge of the true deity of the God of Israel, could be required to break off from all their heathen ways, unless they would formally enter into fellowship with the covenant nation.

the desire for a portion of the presents of the Syrian which his master had refused (הִי י' כִּי אִם, as truly as Jehovah liveth, assuredly I run after him; כִּי אִם as in 1 Sam. xxv. 34). He therefore hastened after him; and as Naaman no sooner saw Gehazi running after him than he sprang quickly down from his chariot in reverential gratitude to the prophet (פֶּלַח as in Gen. xxiv. 64), he asked in the name of Elisha for a talent of silver and two changes of raiment, professedly for two poor pupils of the prophets, who had come to the prophet from Mount Ephraim.—Ver. 23. But Naaman forced him to accept two talents (הוּאֵל קַח, be pleased to take; and כִּפְּרִים, with the dual ending, *ne pereat indicium numeri*—Winer) in two purses, and two changes of raiment, and out of politeness had these presents carried by two of his servants before Gehazi.—Ver. 24. When Gehazi came to the hill (הַעֲפֹלָה, the well-known hill before the city) he took the presents from the bearers, and dismissing the men, laid them up in the house. פָּקַד בְּ, to bring into safe custody.—Vers. 25, 26. But when he entered his master's presence again, he asked him, "Whence (comest thou), Gehazi?" and on his returning the lying answer that he had not been anywhere, charged him with all that he had done. לֹא לְבִי הָלַךְ, "had not my heart gone, when the man turned from his chariot to meet thee?" This is the simplest and the only correct interpretation of these difficult words, which have been explained in very different ways. Theodoret (οὐχὶ ἡ καρδία μου ἦν μετὰ σοῦ) and the Vulgate (*nonne cor meum in praesenti erat, quando, etc.*) have already given the same explanation, and so far as the sense is concerned it agrees with that adopted by Thenius: was I not (in spirit) away (from here) and present (there)? לֹא הָלַךְ stands in a distinct relation to the הָלַךְ of Gehazi.—הָיָה זֶה: "is it time to take silver, and clothes, and olive-trees, and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and servants and maidens?" *i.e.* is this the time, when so many hypocrites pretend to be prophets from selfishness and avarice, and bring the prophetic office into contempt with unbelievers, for a servant of the true God to take money and goods from a non-Israelite for that which God has done through him, that he may acquire property and luxury for himself?—Ver. 27. "And let the leprosy of Naaman cleave to thee and to thy seed for ever." This punishment took effect immediately. Gehazi went out from Elisha covered with leprosy as if with snow (cf. Ex. iv. 6, Num. xii. 10). It was not too harsh a punishment that the



leprosy taken from Naaman on account of his faith in the living God, should pass to Gehazi on account of his departure from the true God. For it was not his avarice only that was to be punished, but the abuse of the prophet's name for the purpose of carrying out his selfish purpose, and his misrepresentation of the prophet.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. VI. 1-23. THE FLOATING IRON. THE SYRIANS SMITTEN  
WITH BLINDNESS.

Vers. 1-7. ELISHA CAUSES AN IRON AXE TO FLOAT.—The following account gives us an insight into the straitened life of the pupils of the prophets. Vers. 1-4. As the common dwelling-place had become too small for them, they resolved, with Elisha's consent, to build a new house, and went, accompanied by the prophet, to the woody bank of the Jordan to fell the wood that was required for the building. The place where the common abode had become too small is not given, but most of the commentators suppose it to have been Gilgal, chiefly from the erroneous assumption that the Gilgal mentioned in ch. ii. 1 was in the Jordan valley to the east of Jericho. Thenius only cites in support of this the reference in יֹשְׁבֵימָה לְפָנָיו (dwell with thee) to ch. iv. 38; but this decides nothing, as the pupils of the prophets sat before Elisha, or gathered together around their master in a common home, not merely in Gilgal, but also in Bethel and Jericho. We might rather think of Jericho, since Bethel and Gilgal (Jiljilia) were so far distant from the Jordan, that there is very little probability that a removal of the meeting-place to the Jordan, such as is indicated by נָעִישָׁה-לָנוּ שָׁם מָקוֹם, would ever have been thought of from either of these localities. —Ver. 5. In the felling of the beams, the iron, *i.e.* the axe, of one of the pupils of the prophets fell into the water, at which he exclaimed with lamentation: "Alas, my lord (*i.e.* Elisha), and it was begged!" The sorrowful exclamation implied a petition for help. וְאֵת-הַבַּרְזֶל: "and as for the iron, it fell into the water;" so that even here אֵת does not stand before the nominative, but

<sup>1</sup> "This was not the punishment of his immoderate δωροδοκίας (receiving of gifts) merely, but most of all of his lying. For he who seeks to deceive the prophet in relation to the things which belong to his office, is said to lie to the Holy Ghost, whose instruments the prophets are" (*vid.* Acts v. 3).—GROTIUS.

serves to place the noun in subjection to the clause (cf. Ewald, § 277, *a*). **שָׁאֵל** does not mean borrowed, but begged. The meaning to borrow is attributed to **שָׁאֵל** from a misinterpretation of particular passages (see the Comm. on Ex. iii. 22). The prophets' pupil had begged the axe, because from his poverty he was unable to buy one, and hence the loss was so painful to him.—Vers. 6, 7. When he showed Elisha, in answer to his inquiry, the place where it had fallen, the latter cut off a stick and threw it thither (into the water) and made the iron flow, *i.e.* float (**יָצַף** from **צָוַף**, to flow, as in Deut. xi. 4); whereupon the prophets' pupil picked the axe out of the water with his hand. The object of the miracle was similar to that of the stater in the fish's mouth (Matt. xvii. 27), or of the miraculous feeding, namely, to show how the Lord could relieve earthly want through the medium of His prophet. The natural interpretation of the miracle, which is repeated by Thenius, namely, that “Elisha struck the eye of the axe with the long stick which he thrust into the river, so that the iron was lifted by the wood,” needs no refutation, since the raising of an iron axe by a long stick, so as to make it float in the water, is impossible according to the laws of gravitation.

Vers. 8–23. ELISHA'S ACTION IN THE WAR WITH THE SYRIANS.—Vers. 8–10. In a war which the Syrians carried on against the Israelitish king Joram (not Jehoahaz, as Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 557, erroneously supposes), by sending flying parties into the land of Israel (cf. ver. 23), Elisha repeatedly informed king Joram of the place where the Syrians had determined to encamp, and thereby frustrated the plans of the enemy. **אֶל־מָקוֹם . . . תַּחֲנוּתִי**: “at the place of so and so shall my camp be.” **פָּלַנִי אֶלְמָנִי** as in 1 Sam. xxi. 3 (see at Ruth iv. 1). **תַּחֲנוּת**, the encamping or the place of encampment (cf. Ewald, § 161, *a*), is quite appropriate, so that there is no need either for the alteration into **תַּחֲבֹאוּ**, “ye shall hide yourselves” (Then.), or into **תַּנְחִיתוּ**, with the meaning which is arbitrarily postulated, “ye shall place an ambush” (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 558), or for the much simpler alteration into **לִי תַחֲנֵה**, “pitch the camp for me” (Böttcher). The singular suffix in **תַּחֲנוּתִי** refers to the king as leader of the war: “my camp” = the camp of my army. “Beware of passing over (**עָבַר**) this place,” *i.e.* of leaving it unoccupied, “for there have the Syrians determined to make their invasion.” **נִהְתִּים**, from **נָהַת**, going down,



with *dagesh euphon.*, whereas Ewald (§ 187, *b*) is of opinion that נִחָתִים, instead of being an intrans. part. *Kal*, might rather be a part. *Niph.* of נָחַת, which would not yield, however, any suitable meaning. Thenius renders מַעְבֵּר, “to pass by this place,” which would be grammatically admissible, but is connected with his conjecture concerning תַּחֲנִיתִי, and irreconcilable with ver. 10. When the king of Israel, according to ver. 10, sent to the place indicated on account of Elisha’s information, he can only have sent troops to occupy it; so that when the Syrians arrived they found Israelitish troops there, and were unable to attack the place. There is nothing in the text about the Syrians bursting forth from their ambush. הִזְהִיר means to enlighten, instruct, but not to warn. נִשְׁמַר־שָׁם, “he took care there,” *i.e.* he occupied the place with troops, to defend it against the Syrians, so that they were unable to do anything, “not once and not twice,” *i.e.* several times.—Ver. 11. The king of the Syrians was enraged at this, and said to his servants, “Do ye not show me who of our men (leans) to the king of Israel?” *i.e.* takes his part. מֵאַשֵּׁר לָנוּ = מִשְׁלָנוּ, probably according to an Aramaean dialect: see Ewald, 181, *b*, though he pronounces the reading incorrect, and would read מִבְּלָנוּ, but without any ground and quite unsuitably, as the king would thereby reckon himself among the traitors.—Vers. 12 sqq. Then one of the servants answered, “No, my lord king,” *i.e.* it is not we who disclose thy plans to the king of Israel, “but Elisha the prophet tells him what thou sayest in thy bed-chamber;” whereupon the king of Syria inquired where the prophet lived, and sent a powerful army to Dothan, with horses and chariots, to take him prisoner there. *Dothan* (see Gen. xxxvii. 17), which according to the *Onom.* was twelve Roman miles to the north of Samaria, has been preserved under its old name in a *Tell* covered with ruins to the south-west of Jenin, on the caravan-road from Gilead to Egypt (see Rob. *Bibl. Res.* p. 158, and V. de Velde, *Journey*, i. pp. 273, 274).—Vers. 15-17. When Elisha’s servant went out the next morning and saw the army, which had surrounded the town in the night, he said to the prophet, “Alas, my lord, how shall we do?” But Elisha quieted him, saying, “Fear not, for those with us are more than those with them.” He then prayed that the Lord might open his servant’s eyes, whereupon he saw the mountain upon which Dothan stood full of fiery horses and chariots round about Elisha. Opening

the eyes was translation into the ecstatic state of clairvoyance, in which an insight into the invisible spirit-world was granted him. The fiery horses and chariots were symbols of the protecting powers of Heaven, which surrounded the prophet. The fiery form indicated the super-terrestrial origin of this host. Fire, as the most ethereal of all earthly elements, was the most appropriate substratum for making the spirit-world visible. The sight was based upon Jacob's vision (Gen. xxxii. 2), in which he saw a double army of angels encamped around him, at the time when he was threatened with danger from Esau.—Vers. 18–20. When the enemy came down to Elisha, he prayed to the Lord that He would smite them with blindness; and when this took place according to his word, he said to them, This is not the way and this is not the city; follow me, and I will lead you to the man whom ye are seeking; and led them to Samaria, which was about four hours' distance from Dothan, where their eyes were opened at Elisha's prayer, so that they saw where they had been led. וַיִּרְדּוּ אֵלָיו cannot be understood as referring to Elisha and his servant, who went down to the Syrian army, as J. H. Mich., Budd., F. v. Meyer, and Thenius, who wants to alter אֵלָיו into אֵלֵיהֶם, suppose, but must refer to the Syrians, who went down to the prophet, as is evident from what follows. For the assumption that the Syrians had stationed themselves below and round the mountain on which Dothan stood, and therefore would have had to come up to Elisha, need not occasion an unnatural interpretation of the words. It is true that Dothan stands upon an isolated hill in the midst of the plain; but on the eastern side it is enclosed by a range of hills, which project into the plain (see V. de Velde, *R. i.* p. 273). The Syrians who had been sent against Elisha had posted themselves on this range of hills, and thence they came *down* towards the town of Dothan, which stood on the hill, whilst Elisha went out of the town to meet them. It is true that Elisha's going out is not expressly mentioned, but in ver. 19 it is clearly presupposed. סְנַיִרִים is mental blindness here, as in the similar case mentioned in Gen. xix. 11, that is to say, a state of blindness in which, though a man has eyes that can see, he does not see correctly. Elisha's untruthful statement, "this is not the way," etc., is to be judged in the same manner as every other *ruse de guerre*, by which the enemy is deceived.—Vers. 21–23. Elisha forbade king Joram to slay



the enemy that he had brought to him, because he had not taken them prisoners in war, and recommended him to treat them hospitably and then let them return to their lord. The object of the miracle would have been frustrated if the Syrians had been slain. For the intention was to show the Syrians that they had to do with a prophet of the true God, against whom no human power could be of any avail, that they might learn to fear the almighty God. Even when regarded from a political point of view, the prophet's advice was more likely to ensure peace than the king's proposal, as the result in ver. 23 clearly shows. The Syrians did not venture any more to invade the land of Israel with flying parties, from fear of the obvious protection of Israel by its God; though this did not preclude a regular war, like that related in the following account. For **הָאִשֶּׁר שָׁבִיתָ וְגו'** : "art thou accustomed to slay that which thou hast taken captive with sword and bow?" *i.e.* since thou dost not even slay those whom thou hast made prisoners in open battle, how wouldst thou venture to put these to death? **יָכְרָה לָהֶם כֶּרֶה**, he prepared them a meal. **כֶּרֶה** is a *denom.* from **כָּרָה**, a meal, so called from the union of several persons, like *cœna* from *κοινη* (*vid.* Dietr. on Ges. *Lex.* s. v. **כָּרָה**).

CHAP. VI. 24-VII. 20. ELISHA'S ACTION DURING A FAMINE IN SAMARIA.

Vers. 24-33. After this there arose so fearful a famine in Samaria on the occasion of a siege by Benhadad, that one mother complained to the king of another, because she would not keep her agreement to give up her son to be eaten, as she herself had already done.—Ver. 25. The famine became great—till an ass's head was worth eighty shekels of silver, and a quarter of a cab of dove's dung was worth five shekels. **הָיָה ב'**, to become for = to be worth. The ass was an unclean animal, so that it was not lawful to eat its flesh. Moreover the head of an ass is the most inedible part of the animal. Eighty shekels were about seventy thalers (£10, 10s.—Tr.), or if the Mosaic bekas were called shekels in ordinary life, thirty-five thalers (£5, 5s.; see Bertheau, *Zur Gesch. der Isr.* p. 49). According to Thenius, a quarter of a cab is a sixth of a small Dresden measure (*Mässchen*), not quite ten Parisian cubic inches. Five

shekels: more than four thalers (twelve shillings), or more than two thalers (six shillings). The *Chethîb* חֲרִיבִים is to be read קְרִי יוֹנִים, *excrementa columbarum*, for which the *Keri* substitutes the euphemistic קְרִיב יוֹנִים, *fluxus, profluvium columbarum*. The expression may be taken literally, since dung has been known to be collected for eating in times of terrible famine (*vid.* Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 13, 7); but it may also be figuratively employed to signify a very miserable kind of food, as the Arabs call the *herba Alcali* اشنان, *i.e.* sparrow's dung, and the Germans call *Asa foetida* Teufelsdreck. But there is no ground for thinking of wasted chick-pease, as Bochart (*Hieroz.* ii. p. 582, ed. Ros.) supposes (see, on the other hand, Celsii *Hierobot.* ii. p. 30 sqq.).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 26. As the king was passing by upon the wall to conduct the defence, a woman cried to him for help; whereupon he replied: "אֵל-יִשְׂרָאֵל, "should Jehovah not help thee, whence shall I help thee? from the threshing-floor or from the wine-press?" It is difficult to explain the אֵל, which Ewald (§ 355, *b*) supposes to stand for אֵם לֹא. Thenius gives a simpler explanation, namely, that it is a subjective negation and the sentence hypothetical, so that the condition would be only expressed by the close connection of the two clauses (according to Ewald, § 357). "From the threshing-floor or from the wine-press?" *i.e.* I can neither help thee with corn nor with wine, cannot procure thee either food or drink. He then asked her what her trouble was; upon which she related to him the horrible account of the slaying of her own child to appease her hunger, etc.—Ver. 30. The king, shuddering at this horrible account, in which the curses of the law in Lev. xxvi. 29 and Deut. xxviii. 53, 57 had been literally fulfilled, rent his clothes; and the people then saw that he wore upon his body the hairy garment of penitence and mourning, מִפְּתִית, within, *i.e.* beneath the upper garment, as a sign of humiliation before God, though it was indeed more an *opus operatum* than a true bending of the heart before God and His judgment. This is proved by his conduct in ver. 31. When, for example, the complaint of the

<sup>1</sup> Clericus gives as a substantial parallel the following passage from Plutarch (*Artax.* c. 24): "he only killed the beasts of burden, so that the head of an ass was hardly to be bought for sixty drachmæ;" and Grotius quotes the statement in Plin. *h. n.* viii. 57, that when *Casalinum* was besieged by Hannibal a mouse was sold for 200 *denaria*.



woman brought the heart-breaking distress of the city before him, he exclaimed, "God do so to me . . . if the head of Elisha remain upon him to-day." Elisha had probably advised that on no condition should the city be given up, and promised that God would deliver it, if they humbled themselves before Him in sincere humility and prayed for His assistance. The king thought that he had done his part by putting on the hairy garment; and as the anticipated help had nevertheless failed to come, he flew into a rage, for which the prophet was to pay the penalty. It is true that this rage only proceeded from a momentary ebullition of passion, and quickly gave place to a better movement of his conscience. The king hastened after the messenger whom he had sent to behead Elisha, for the purpose of preventing the execution of the murderous command which he had given in the hurry of his boiling wrath (ver. 32); but it proves, nevertheless, that the king was still wanting in that true repentance, which would have sprung from the recognition of the distress as a judgment inflicted by the Lord. The desperate deed, to which his violent wrath had impelled him, would have been accomplished, if the Lord had not protected His prophet and revealed to him the king's design, that he might adopt defensive measures.—Ver. 32. The elders of the city were assembled together in Elisha's house, probably to seek for counsel and consolation; and the king sent a man before him (namely, to behead the prophet); but before the messenger arrived, the prophet told the elders of the king's intention: "See ye that this son of a murderer (Joram, by descent and disposition a genuine son of Ahab, the murderer of Naboth and the prophets) is sending to cut off my head?" and commanded them to shut the door against the messenger and to force him back at the door, because he already heard the sound of his master's feet behind him. These measures of Elisha, therefore, were not dictated by any desire to resist the lawful authorities, but were acts of prudence by which he delayed the execution of an unrighteous and murderous command which had been issued in haste, and thereby rendered a service to the king himself.—In ver. 33 we have to supply from the context that the king followed close upon the messenger, who came down to Elisha while he was talking with the elders; and he (the king) would of course be admitted at once. For the subject to וַיֵּאמֶר is not the messenger, but the king, as is evident from ch. vii. 2

and 17. The king said: "Behold the calamity from the Lord, why shall I wait still further for the Lord?"—the words of a despairing man, in whose soul, however, there was a spark of faith still glimmering. The very utterance of his feelings to the prophet shows that he had still a weak glimmer of hope in the Lord, and wished to be strengthened and sustained by the prophet; and this strengthening he received.

Ch. vii. 1, 2. Elisha announced to him the word of the Lord: "At the (this) time to-morrow a seah of wheaten flour (סֵלָה, see at 1 Kings v. 2) will be worth a shekel, and two seahs of barley a shekel in the gate, *i.e.* in the market, at Samaria." A seah, or a third of an ephah = a Dresden peck (*Metze*), for a shekel was still a high price; but in comparison with the prices given in ch. vi. 25 as those obtained for the most worthless kinds of food, it was incredibly cheap. The king's aide-de-camp (שָׁלִישׁ: see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8; אִשָּׁר לְמֶלֶךְ נִשְׁעַן, an error in writing for אִשָּׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ נִשְׁ, cf. ver. 17, and for the explanation ch. v. 18) therefore replied with mockery at this prophecy: "Behold (*i.e.* granted that) the Lord made windows in heaven, will this indeed be?" *i.e.* such cheapness take place. (For the construction, see Ewald, § 357, *b.*) The ridicule lay more especially in the "windows in heaven," in which there is an allusion to Gen. vii. 11, *sc.* to rain down a flood of flour and corn. Elisha answered seriously: "Behold, thou wilt see it with thine eyes, but not eat thereof" (see vers. 17 sqq.). The fulfilment of these words of Elisha was brought about by the event narrated in vers. 3 sqq.—Vers. 3–7. "Four men were before the gate as lepers," or at the gateway, separated from human society, according to the law in Lev. xiii. 46, Num. v. 3, probably in a building erected for the purpose (cf. ch. xv. 5), just as at the present day the lepers at Jerusalem have their huts by the side of the Zion gate (*vid.* Strauss, *Sinai u. Golgatha*, p. 205, and Tobler, *Denkblätter aus Jerus.* p. 411 sqq.). These men being on the point of starvation, resolved to invade the camp of the Syrians, and carried out this resolution בַּנֶּשֶׁף, in the evening twilight, not the morning twilight (Seb. Schm., Cler., etc.), on account of ver. 12, where the king is said to have received the news of the flight of the Syrians during the night. Coming to "the end of the Syrian camp," *i.e.* to the outskirts of it on the city side, they found no one there. For (vers. 6, 7) "the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and horses,



a noise of a great army," so that, believing the king of Israel to have hired the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians to fall upon them, they fled from the camp in the twilight אֶל-נֶפֶשָׁם, with regard to their life, *i.e.* to save their life only, leaving behind them their tents, horses, and asses, and the camp as it was.—The miracle, by which God delivered Samaria from the famine or from surrendering to the foe, consisted in an oral delusion, namely, in the fact that the besiegers thought they heard the march of hostile armies from the north and south, and were seized with such panic terror that they fled in the greatest haste, leaving behind them their baggage, and their beasts of draught and burden. It is impossible to decide whether the noise which they heard had any objective reality, say a miraculous buzzing in the air, or whether it was merely a deception of the senses produced in their ears by God; and this is a matter of no importance, since in either case it was produced miraculously by God. The kings of the Hittites are kings of northern Canaan, upon Lebanon and towards Phœnicia; מְלָכֵי in the broader sense for Canaanites, as in 1 Kings x. 29. The plural, "kings of the Egyptians," is probably only occasioned by the parallel expression "kings of the Hittites," and is not to be pressed.—Vers. 8-11. When these lepers (*these*, pointing back to vers. 3 sqq.) came into the camp which the Syrians had left, they first of all satisfied their own hunger with the provisions which they found in the tents, and then took different valuables and concealed them. But their consciences were soon aroused, so that they said: We are not doing right; this day is a day of joyful tidings: if we are silent and wait till the morning light, guilt will overtake us; "for it is the duty of citizens to make known things relating to public safety" (Grotius). They then resolved to announce the joyful event in the king's palace, and reported it to the watchman at the city gate. שֹׁמֵר הָעִיר stands as a generic term in a collective sense for the persons who watched at the gate; hence the following plural לָהֶם, and in ver. 11 הַשֹּׁמְרִים. "And the gate-keepers cried out (what they had heard) and reported it in the king's palace."—Vers. 12 sqq. The king imagined that the unexpected departure of the Syrians was only a *ruse*, namely, that they had left the camp and hidden themselves in the field, to entice the besieged out of the fortress, and then fall upon them and press into the city. בְּהִשָּׁרָה according to later usage for בִּשְׁרָה (*vid.* Ewald, § 244, *a*). In order to

make sure of the correctness or incorrectness of this conjecture, one of the king's servants (counsellors) gave this advice: "Let them take (the *Vav* before יָקָח as in ch. iv. 41) five of the horses left in the city, that we may send and see how the matter stands." The words, "Behold they (the five horses) are as the whole multitude of Israel that are left in it (the city); behold they are as the whole multitude of Israel that are gone," have this meaning: The five horsemen (for horses stand for horsemen, as it is self-evident that it was men on horseback and not the horses themselves that were to be sent out as spies) can but share the fate of the rest of the people of Samaria, whether they return unhurt to meet death by starvation with the people that still remain, or fall into the hands of the enemy and are put to death, in which case they will only suffer the lot of those who have already perished. *Five* horses is an approximate small number, and is therefore not at variance with the following statement, that two pair of horses were sent out with chariots and men. The *Chethîb* הַחֵמֶן is not to be altered, since there are other instances in which the first noun is written with the article, though in the construct state (*vid.* Ewald, § 290, *e*); and the *Keri* is only conformed to the following כָּל־הַחֵמֶן.—Vers. 14*b* and 15. They then sent out two chariots with horses, who pursued the flying enemy to the Jordan, and found the whole of the road full of traces of the hurried flight, consisting of clothes and vessels that had been thrown away. The *Chethîb* בְּהֶחָפִזִּים is the only correct reading, since it is only in the *Niphal* that חָפַז has the meaning to fly in great haste (cf. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26, Ps. xlviii. 6, civ. 7).—Vers. 16, 17. When the returning messengers reported this, the people went out and plundered the camp of the Syrians, and this was followed by the consequent cheapness of provisions predicted by Elisha. As the people streamed out, the unbelieving aide-de-camp, whom the king had ordered to take the oversight at the gate (הַפִּקֵּד, to deliver the oversight) for the purpose of preserving order in the crowding of the starving multitude, was trodden down by the people, so that he died, whereby this prediction of Elisha was fulfilled. The exact fulfilment of this prediction appeared so memorable to the historian, that he repeats this prophecy in vers. 18–20 along with the event which occasioned it, and refers again to its fulfilment.



CHAP. VIII. ELISHA HELPS THE SHUNAMMITE TO HER PROPERTY THROUGH THE HONOUR IN WHICH HE WAS HELD ; AND PREDICTS TO HAZAEL HIS POSSESSION OF THE THRONE. REIGNS OF JORAM AND AHAZIAH, KINGS OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1-6. ELISHA'S INFLUENCE HELPS THE SHUNAMMITE TO THE POSSESSION OF HER HOUSE AND FIELD.—Vers. 1 and 2. By the advice of Elisha, the woman whose son the prophet had restored to life (ch. iv. 33) had gone with her family into the land of the Philistines during a seven years' famine, and had remained there seven years. The two verses are rendered by most commentators in the pluperfect, and that with perfect correctness, for they are circumstantial clauses, and וַתֵּקֶם is merely a continuation of וַתֵּבֶר, the two together preparing the way for, and introducing the following event. The object is not to relate a prophecy of Elisha of the seven years' famine, but what afterwards occurred, namely, how king Joram was induced by the account of Elisha's miraculous works to have the property of the Shunammite restored to her upon her application. The seven years' famine occurred in the middle of Joram's reign, and the event related here took place before the curing of Naaman the Syrian (ch. v.), as is evident from the fact that Gehazi talked with the king (ver. 4), and therefore had not yet been punished with leprosy. But it cannot have originally stood between ch. iv. 37 and iv. 38, as Thenius supposes, because the incidents related in ch. iv. 38-44 belong to the time of this famine (cf. ch. iv. 38), and therefore precede the occurrence mentioned here. By the words, "the Lord called the famine, and it came seven years" (*sc.* lasting that time), the famine is described as a divine judgment for the idolatry of the nation.—Ver. 3. When the woman returned to her home at the end of the seven years, she went to the king to cry, *i.e.* to invoke his help, with regard to her house and her field, of which, as is evident from the context, another had taken possession during her absence.—Ver. 4. And just at that time the king was asking Gehazi to relate to him the great things that Elisha had done ; and among these he was giving an account of the restoration of the Shunammite's son to life.—Vers. 5, 6. While he was relating this, the woman herself came in to invoke the help of the king to recover her property, and was pointed out

to the king by Gehazi as the very woman of whom he was speaking, which caused the king to be so interested in her favour, that after hearing her complaint he sent a chamberlain with her (*saris* as in 1 Kings xxii. 9), with instructions to procure for her not only the whole of her property, but the produce of the land during her absence.—For עֲזֹבָה without *mappiq*, see Ewald, § 247, *d*.

Vers. 7–15. ELISHA PREDICTS TO HAZAEL AT DAMASCUS THE POSSESSION OF THE THRONE.—Vers. 7 sqq. Elisha then came to Damascus at the instigation of the Spirit of God, to carry out the commission which Elijah had received at Horeb with regard to Hazael (1 Kings xix. 15). Benhadad king of Syria was sick at that time, and when Elisha's arrival was announced to him, sent Hazael with a considerable present to the man of God, to inquire of Jehovah through him concerning his illness. The form of the name הַזְּהָאֵל (here and ver. 15) is etymologically correct; but afterwards it is always written without ה. 'וְכָל-טוֹב דַּמָּ' ("and that all kinds of good of Damascus") follows with a more precise description of the *minchah*—"a burden of forty camels." The present consisted of produce or wares of the rich commercial city of Damascus, and was no doubt very considerable; at the same time, it was not so large that forty camels were required to carry it. The affair must be judged according to the Oriental custom, of making a grand display with the sending of presents, and employing as many men or beasts of burden as possible to carry them, every one carrying only a single article (cf. Harmar, *Beobb.* ii. p. 29, iii. p. 43, and Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. p. 17).—Ver. 10. According to the *Chethîb* הִיא לֹא, Elisha's answer was, "Thou wilt not live, and (for) Jehovah has shown me that he will die;" according to the *Keri* לוֹ הִיא, "tell him: Thou wilt live, but Jehovah," etc. Most of the commentators follow the ancient versions, and the Masoretes, who reckon our לֹא among the fifteen passages of the O. T. in which it stands for the pronoun לוֹ (*vid.* Hilleri *Arcan. Keri*, p. 62 seq.), and some of the codices, and decide in favour of the *Keri*. (1) because the conjecture that לוֹ was altered into לֹא in order that Elisha might not be made to utter an untruth, is a very natural one; and (2) on account of the extreme rarity with which a negative stands before the inf. abs. with the finite verb following. But there is not much force in either argument.



The rarity of the position of לֹא before the inf. abs. followed by a finite verb, in connection with the omission of the pronoun לוֹ after אָמַר, might be the very reason why לֹא was taken as a pronoun; and the confirmation of this opinion might be found in the fact that Hazael brought back this answer to the king: "Thou wilt live" (ver. 14). The reading in the text לֹא (*non*) is favoured by the circumstance that it is the more difficult of the two, partly because of the unusual position of the negative, and partly because of the contradiction to ver. 14. But the לֹא is found in the same position in other passages (Gen. iii. 4, Ps. xlix. 8, and Amos ix. 8), where the emphasis lies upon the negation; and the contradiction to ver. 14 may be explained very simply, from the fact that Hazael did not tell his king the truth, because he wanted to put him to death and usurp the throne. We therefore prefer the reading in the text, since it is not in harmony with the character of the prophets to utter an untruth; and the explanation, "thou wilt not die of thine illness, but come to a violent death," puts into the words a meaning which they do not possess. For even if Benhadad did not die of his illness, he did not recover from it.—Ver. 11. Elisha then fixed Hazael for a long time with his eye, and wept. וַיַּעֲמֵד וַיֵּבֶקֶט, literally, he made his face stand fast, and directed it (upon Hazael) to shaming. עַרְבִי as in Judg. iii. 25; not in a shameless manner (Thenius), but till Hazael was embarrassed by it.—Ver. 12. When Hazael asked him the cause of his weeping, Elisha replied: "I know the evil which thou wilt do to the sons of Israel: their fortresses wilt thou set on fire (שָׁלַח בָּאֵשׁ, see at Judg. i. 8), their youths wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children to pieces, and cut asunder their women with child" (בָּקַעַ, split, cut open the womb). This cruel conduct towards Israel which is here predicted of Hazael, was only a special elaboration of the brief statement made by the Lord to Elijah concerning Hazael (1 Kings xix. 17). The fulfilment of this prediction is indicated generally in ch. x. 32, 33, and xiii. 3 sqq.; and we may infer with certainty from Hos. x. 14 and xiv. 1, that Hazael really practised the cruelties mentioned.—Vers. 13 sqq. But when Hazael replied in feigned humility, What is thy servant, the dog (*i.e.* so base a fellow: for כָּלֵב see at 1 Sam. xxiv. 15), that he should do such great things? Elisha said to him, "Jehovah has shown thee to me as king over Aram;" whereupon Hazael returned to his lord, brought him the

pretended answer of Elisha that he would live (recover), and the next day suffocated him with a cloth dipped in water. מִכְבֵּר, from כָּבַר, to plait or twist, literally, anything twisted; not, however, a net for gnats or flies (Joseph., J. D. Mich., etc.), but a twisted thick cloth, which when dipped in water became so thick, that when it was spread over the face of the sick man it was sufficient to suffocate him.

Vers. 16–24. REIGN OF JORAM OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxi. 2–20).—Joram became king in the fifth year of Joram of Israel, while Jehoshaphat his father was (still) king, the latter handing over the government to him two years before his death (see at ch. i. 17), and reigned eight years, namely, two years to the death of Jehoshaphat and six years afterwards.<sup>1</sup> The *Chethîb* שָׁמֹנֶה עָשָׂר is not to be altered, since the rule that the numbers two to ten take the noun in the plural is not without exception (cf. Ewald, § 287, i).—Vers. 18, 19. Joram had married a daughter of Ahab, namely Athaliah (ver. 26), and walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, transplanting the worship of Baal into his kingdom. Immediately after the death of Jehoshaphat he murdered his brothers, apparently with no other object than to obtain possession of the treasures which his father had left them (2 Chron. xxi. 2–4). This wickedness of Joram would have been followed by the destruction of Judah, had not the Lord preserved a shoot to the royal house for David's sake. For לְבָנָי לֹא נִיר see 1 Kings xi. 36. The following word לְבָנָי serves as an explanation of לֹא נִיר, “a light with regard to his sons,” i.e. by the fact that he kept sons (descendants) upon the throne.—Vers. 20–22. Nevertheless the divine chastisement was not omitted. The ungodliness of Joram was punished partly by the revolt of the Edomites and of the city of Libnah from his rule, and partly by a horrible sickness of which he died (2 Chron. xxi. 12–15). Edom, which had hitherto had only a

<sup>1</sup> The words וַיְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה have been improperly omitted by the Arabic and Syriac, and by Luther, Dathe, and De Wette from their translations; whilst Schulz, Maurer, Thenius, and others pronounce it a gloss. The genuineness of the words is attested by the LXX. (the Edit. Complut. being alone in omitting them) and by the Chaldee: and the rejection of them is just as arbitrary as the interpolation of מָת, which is proposed by Kimchi and Ewald (“when Jehoshaphat was dead”). Compare J. Meyer, *annotatt. ad Seder Olam*, p. 916 sq.



vicegerent with the title of king (see ch. iii. 9 and 1 Kings xxii. 48), threw off the authority of Judah, and appointed its own king, under whom it acquired independence, as the attempt of Joram to bring it back again under his control completely failed. The account of this attempt in ver. 21 and 2 Chron. xxi. 9 is very obscure. "Joram went over to *Zair*, and all his chariots of war with him; and it came to pass that he rose up by night and smote the Edomites round about, and indeed the captains of the war-chariots, and the people fled (*i.e.* the Judæan men of war, not the Edomites) to their tents." It is evident from this, that Joram had advanced to *Zair* in Idumæa; but there he appears to have been surrounded and shut in, so that in the night he fought his way through, and had reason to be glad that he had escaped utter destruction, since his army fled to their homes. *צַעִירָה* is an unknown place in Idumæa, which Movers, Hitzig, and Ewald take to be Zoar, but without considering that Zoar was in the land of Moab, not in Edom. The Chronicles have instead *עִם שָׂרָיו*, "with his captains," from a mere conjecture; whilst Thenius regards *צַעִירָה* as altered by mistake from *שֵׁעִירָה* ("to Seir"), which is very improbable in the case of so well-known a name as *שֵׁעִיר*. *הַפְּבִיב* is a later mode of writing for *הַפּוֹבֵב*, probably occasioned by the frequently occurring word *פְּבִיב*. "To this day," *i.e.* to the time when the original sources of our books were composed. For the Edomites were subjugated again by Amaziah and Uzziah (ch. xiv. 7 and 22), though under Ahaz they made incursions into Judah again (2 Chron. xxviii. 17).—At that time *Libnah* also revolted. This was a royal city of the early Canaanites, and at a later period it was still a considerable fortress (ch. xix. 8). It is probably to be sought for in the ruins of *Arak el Menshiyeh*, two hours to the west of *Beit-Jibrin* (see the Comm. on Josh. x. 29). This city probably revolted from Judah on the occurrence of an invasion of the land by the Philistines, when the sons of Joram were carried off, with the exception of the youngest, Jehoahaz (Ahaziah: 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17).—Vers. 23, 24. According to 2 Chron. xxi. 18 sqq., Joram died of a terrible disease, in which his bowels fell out, and was buried in the city of David, though not in the family sepulchre of the kings.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The building of Carthage, Dido, her husband Sichæus, her brother Pygmalion king of Tyre (*scelere ante alios immanior omnes*), all coincide with the reign of Joram. This synchronism of the history of Tyre is not without

Vers. 25–29. REIGN OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 1–6).—Ahaziah, the youngest son of Joram, ascended the throne in the twenty-second year of his age. The statement in 2 Chron. xxii. 2, that he was forty-two years old when he became king, rests upon a copyist's error, namely, a confusion of כ twenty with כ forty. Now, since his father became king at the age of thirty-two, and reigned eight years, Ahaziah must have been born in the nineteenth year of his age. Consequently it may appear strange that Ahaziah had brothers still older than himself (2 Chron. xxi. 17); but as early marriages are common in the East, and the royal princes had generally concubines along with their wife of the first rank, as is expressly stated of Joram in 2 Chron. xxi. 17, he might have had some sons in his nineteenth year. His mother was called Athaliah, and was a daughter of the idolatrous Jezebel. In ver. 26 and 2 Chron. xxii. 2 she is called the daughter, *i.e.* grand-daughter, of Omri; for, according to ver. 18, she was a daughter of Ahab. Omri, the grandfather, is mentioned in ver. 26 as the founder of the dynasty which brought so much trouble upon Israel and Judah through its idolatry.—Ver. 27. Ahaziah, like his father, reigned in the spirit of Ahab, because he allowed his mother to act as his adviser (2 Chron. xxii. 3, 4).—Vers. 28, 29. Ahaziah went with Joram of Israel, his mother's brother, to the war with the Syrians at Ramoth. The contest for this city, which had already cost Ahab his life (1 Kings xxii.), was to furnish the occasion, according to the overruling providence of God, for the extermination of the whole of Omri's family. Being wounded in the battle with the Syrians, Joram king of Israel returned to Jezreel to be healed of his wounds. His nephew Ahaziah visited him there, and there he met with his death at the same time as Joram at the hands of Jehu, who had conspired against Joram (see ch. ix. 14 sqq. and 2 Chron. xxii. 7–9). Whether the war with Hazael at Ramoth was for the recapture of this city, which had been taken by the Syrians, or simply for holding it against the Syrians, it is impossible to determine. All

significance here. The Tyrian, Israelitish, and Judæan histories are closely connected at this time. Jezebel, a Tyrian princess, was Ahab's wife, and again her daughter Athaliah was the wife of Joram, and after his death the murderess of the heirs of the kingdom, and sole occupant of the throne. Tyre, through these marriages, introduced its own spirit and great calamity into both the Israelitish kingdoms."—J. D. MICHAELIS on ver. 24.



that we can gather from ch. ix. 14 is, that at that time Ramoth was in the possession of the Israelites, whether it had come into their possession again after the disgraceful rout of the Syrians before Samaria (ch. vii.), or whether, perhaps, it was not recovered till this war. For אֲרָמִים without the article see Ewald, § 277, c. —Ver. 29. בָּרָמָה = בָּרָמָה נִלְעָר, ver. 28; see at 1 Kings xxii. 4.

CHAP. IX. JEHU ANOINTED KING. HIS CONSPIRACY AGAINST JORAM.  
JORAM, AHAZIAH, AND JEZEBEL SLAIN.

Vers. 1-10. ANOINTING OF JEHU BY COMMAND OF ELISHA.—While the Israelitish army was at Ramoth, Elisha executed the last of the commissions which Elijah had received at Horeb (1 Kings xix. 16), by sending a pupil of the prophets into the camp to anoint *Jehu* the commander-in-chief of the army as king, and to announce to him, in the name of Jehovah, that he would be king over Israel; and to charge him to exterminate the house of Ahab.—Vers. 1-3 contain the instructions which Elisha gave to the pupil of the prophets. פֶּדֶּה הַשָּׂמֶן as in 1 Sam. x. 1. רְאֵה שָׁם יְהוּ, look round there for Jehu. הִקְמֹתוֹ וְגו' (bid him) rise up from the midst of his brethren, *i.e.* of his comrades in arms. הָדָר בְּחָדָר: the true meaning is, “into the innermost chamber” (see at 1 Kings xx. 30). Ver. 3 contains only the leading points of the commission to Jehu, the full particulars are communicated in the account of the fulfilment in vers. 6 sqq. “And flee, and thou shalt not wait.” Elisha gave him this command, not to protect him from danger on the part of the secret adherents of Ahab (Theodoret, Cler.), but to prevent all further discussions, or “that he might not mix himself up with other affairs” (Seb. Schmidt).—Ver. 4. “And the young man, the servant of the prophet, went.” The second יָעַר has the article in the construct state, contrary to the rule (*vid.* Ges. § 110, 2, b).—Vers. 5 sqq. After the communication of the fact that he had a word to Jehu, the latter rose up and went with him into the house, *i.e.* into the interior of the house, in the court of which the captains were sitting together. There the pupil of the prophets poured oil upon Jehu’s head, and announced to him that Jehovah had anointed him king for Israel, and that he was to smite, *i.e.* exterminate, the house of Ahab, to avenge upon it the blood of the prophets (*vid.* 1 Kings xviii. 4, xix. 10).—Vers. 8-10 are simply a repetition of the

threat in 1 Kings xxi. 21-23. For בְּחֶלֶק י' see at 1 Kings xxi. 23.

Vers. 11-15. JEHU'S CONSPIRACY AGAINST JORAM. — Ver. 11. When Jehu came out again to his comrades in arms, after the departure of the pupil of the prophets, they inquired הַשְׁלוֹם, *i.e.* "is it all well? why did this madman come to thee?" not because they were afraid that he might have done him some injury (Ewald), or that he might have brought some evil tidings (Thenius), but simply because they conjectured that he had brought some important news. They called the prophet מְשֻׁנָּע, a madman, in derision, with reference to the ecstatic utterances of the prophets when in a state of holy inspiration. Jehu answered evasively, "Ye know the man and his muttering," *i.e.* ye know that he is mad and says nothing rational. שִׁי includes both meditating and speaking.—Ver. 12. They were not contented with this answer, however, but said שֶׁקֶר, *i.e.* thou dost not speak truth. Jehu thereupon informed them that he had anointed him king over Israel in the name of Jehovah.—Ver. 13. After hearing this, they took quickly every man his garment, laid it under him upon the steps, blew the trumpet, and proclaimed him king. The clothes, which consisted simply of a large piece of cloth for wrapping round the body (see at 1 Kings xi. 29), they spread out in the place of carpets upon the steps, which served as a throne, to do homage to Jehu. For these signs of homage compare Matt. xxi. 7 and Wetstein, *N. Test. ad h. l.* The difficult words אֶל-נֶגְרָם הַמַּעֲלוֹת, as to the meaning of which the early translators have done nothing but guess, can hardly be rendered in any other way than that proposed by Kimchi (*lib. rad.*), *super ipsosmet gradus*, upon the steps themselves = upon the bare steps; נֶגְרָם being taken according to Chaldee usage like the Hebrew עֵצִים in the sense of *substantia rei*, whereas the rendering given by Lud. de Dieu, after the Arabic جَرَمٌ, *sectio—super aliquem e gradibus*, is without analogy in Hebrew usage (*vid.* L. de Dieu *ad h. l.*, and Ges. *Thes.* p. 303).<sup>1</sup> The meaning is, that without looking for a suitable

<sup>1</sup> The objection raised by Thenius, that it is only in combination with personal pronouns that the Chaldaic נֶגְרָם signifies *self* either in the Chaldee or Samaritan versions, is proved to be unfounded by לְנֶגְרָם in Job i. 3 (Targ.). Still less can the actual circumstances be adduced as an objection, since



place on which to erect a throne, they laid their clothes upon the bare steps, or the staircase of the house in which they were assembled, and set him thereon to proclaim him king.—Vers. 14, 15. Thus Jehu conspired against Joram, who (as is related again in the circumstantial clause which follows from יֹרָם הָיָה to מִלְּךְ אֲרָם ; cf. ch. viii. 28, 29) had been keeping guard at Ramoth in Gilead, *i.e.* had defended this city against the attacks of Hazael, and had returned to Jezreel to be healed of the wounds which he had received ; and said, “ If it is your wish (נַפְשְׁכֶם), let no fugitive go from the city, to announce it in Jezreel (*viz.* what had taken place, the conspiracy or the proclamation of Jehu as king).” It is evident from this, that the Israelites were in possession of the city of Ramoth, and were defending it against the attacks of the Syrians, so that שָׁמַר in ver. 14 cannot be understood as relating to the siege of Ramoth. The *Chethîb* לְיֵזְרְעֵל for לְהַגִּיד is not to be altered according to the *Keri*, as there are many examples to be found of syncope in cases of this kind (*vid.* Olshausen, *Lehrb. d. Hebr. Spr.* p. 140).

Vers. 16-29. SLAYING OF THE TWO KINGS, JORAM OF ISRAEL AND AHAZIAH OF JUDAH.—Ver. 16. Jehu drove without delay to Jezreel, where Joram was lying sick, and Ahaziah had come upon a visit to him.—Vers. 17-21. As the horsemen, who were sent to meet him on the announcement of the watchman upon the tower at Jezreel that a troop was approaching, joined the followers of Jehu, and eventually the watchman, looking down from the tower, thought that he could discover the driving of Jehu in the approaching troop, Joram and Ahaziah mounted their chariots to drive and meet him, and came upon him by the portion of ground of Naboth the Jezreelite. The second שָׁפַעַת in ver. 17 is a rarer form of the absolute state (see Ges. § 80, 2, Anm. 2, and Ewald, § 173, *d*).—מַה־לָּךְ וְלִשְׁלוֹם: “ what hast thou to do with peace ? ” *i.e.* to trouble thyself about it. סֵב אַל־אַחֲרַי: “ turn behind me,” *sc.* to follow me. הַמְּנִהֵג כִּמּוֹ: “ the driving is like the driving of Jehu ; for he drives like a madman.” בְּשִׁנְעוֹן, *in insania*, *i.e.* in actual fact *in præcipitatione* (Vatabl.). “ The there is no evidence to support the assertion that there was no staircase in front of the house. The perfectly un-Hebraic conjecture אֶל־צֵלָם הַמַּעֲלֹת, “ as a figure (or representation) of the necessary ascent ” (Thenius), has not the smallest support in the Vulgate rendering, *ad similitudinem tribunalis*.

portion of Naboth" is the vineyard of Naboth mentioned in 1 Kings xxi., which formed only one portion of the gardens of the king's palace.—Ver. 22. To Joram's inquiry, "Is it peace, Jehu?" the latter replied, "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her many witchcrafts continue?" The notion of continuance is implied in עַר (see Ewald, § 217, *e*); זְנוּנִים is spiritual whoredom, *i.e.* idolatry. כְּשָׁפִים, *incantationes magicæ*, then witchcrafts generally, which were usually associated with idolatry (cf. Deut. xviii. 10 sqq.).—Ver. 23. Joram detecting the conspiracy from this reply, turned round (יָהֲפֹךְ יָרִי as in 1 Kings xxii. 34) and fled, calling out to Ahaziah מְרִמָּה, "deceit," *i.e.* we are deceived, in actual fact betrayed.—Ver. 24. But Jehu seized the bow (מָלֵא יָדוֹ בַּקֶּשֶׁת, lit. filled his hand with the bow), and shot Joram "between his arms," *i.e.* in his back between the shoulders in an oblique direction, so that the arrow came out at his heart, and Joram sank down in his chariot.—Ver. 25. Jehu then commanded his aide-de-camp (שְׁלִישׁ, see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8) Bidkar to cast the slain man into the field of Naboth the Jezreelite, and said, "For remember how we, I and thou, both rode (or drove) behind his father Ahab, and Jehovah pronounced this threat upon him." אֲנִי וְאַתָּה are accusatives, written with a looser connection for אֲתִי וְאַתָּה, as the apposition רֹכְבִים shows: literally, think of me and thee, the riders. The olden translators were misled by אֲנִי, and therefore transposed זָכַר into the first person, and Thenius naturally follows them. רֹכְבִים צִמְדִים, riding in pairs. This is the rendering adopted by most of the commentators, although it might be taken, as it is by Kimchi and Bochart, as signifying the two persons who are carried in the same chariot. מִשָּׂא, a burden, then a prophetic utterance of a threatening nature (see the Comm. on Nah. i. 1). For the connection of the clauses וַיְהִי וְגו', see Ewald, § 338, *a*. In ver. 26 Jehu quotes the word of God concerning Ahab in 1 Kings xxi. 19 so far as the substance is concerned, to show that he is merely the agent employed in executing it. "Truly (אִם-לֹא, a particle used in an oath) the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons have I seen yesterday, saith the Lord, and upon this field will I requite him." The slaying of the sons of Naboth is not expressly mentioned in 1 Kings xxi. 13, "because it was so usual a thing, that the historian might leave it out as a matter of course" (J. D. Mich., Ewald). It necessarily followed, however, from the fact that Naboth's field was confiscated (see



at 1 Kings xxi. 14).—Vers. 27, 28. When Ahaziah saw this, he fled by the way to the garden-house, but was smitten, *i.e.* mortally wounded, by Jehu at the height of Gur near Jibleam, so that as he was flying still farther to Megiddo he died, and was carried as a corpse by his servants to Jerusalem, and buried there. After הִכּוּהוּ, “and him also, smite him,” we must supply וַיִּכּוּהוּ, “and they smote him,” which has probably only dropped out through a copyist’s error. The way by which Ahaziah fled, and the place where he was mortally wounded, cannot be exactly determined, as the situation of the localities named has not yet been ascertained. The “garden-house” (בֵּית הַגֶּן) cannot have formed a portion of the royal gardens, but must have stood at some distance from the city of Jezreel, as Ahaziah went away by the road thither, and was not wounded till he reached the height of Gur near Jibleam. מַעְלֵה-גֹּר, the ascent or eminence of Gur, is defined by Jibleam. Now, as Ahaziah fled from Jezreel to Megiddo past Jibleam, Thenius thinks that Jibleam must have been situated between Jezreel and Megiddo. But between Jezreel and Megiddo there is only the plain of Jezreel or Esdrelom, in which we cannot suppose that there was any such eminence as that of Gur. Moreover Jibleam or Bileam (1 Chron. vi. 55, see at Josh. xvii. 11) was probably to the south of Jenin, where the old name בִּלְעָם has been preserved in the well of بلعم, Belameh, near Beled Sheik Manssûr, which is half an hour’s journey off. And it is quite possible to bring this situation of Jibleam into harmony with the account before us. For instance, it is *a priori* probable that Ahaziah would take the road to Samaria when he fled from Jezreel, not only because his father’s brothers were there (ch. x. 13), but also because it was the most direct road to Jerusalem; and he might easily be pursued by Jehu and his company to the height of Gur near Jibleam before they overtook him, since the distance from Jezreel (Zerîn) to Jenin is only two hours and a half (Rob. Pal. iii. p. 828), and the height of Gur might very well be an eminence which he would pass on the road to Jibleam. But the wounded king may afterwards have altered the direction of his flight for the purpose of escaping to Megiddo, probably because he thought that he should be in greater safety there than he would be in Samaria.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 2 Chron. xxii. 8, 9, the account of the slaying of Ahaziah and his brethren (ch. x. 12 sqq.) is condensed into one brief statement, and then

—In ver. 29 we are told once more in which year of Joram's reign Ahaziah became king. The discrepancy between "the *eleventh* year" here and "the *twelfth* year" in ch. viii. 25 may be most simply explained, on the supposition that there was a difference in the way of reckoning the commencement of the years of Joram's reign.

Vers. 30–37. DEATH OF JEZEBEL.—Ver. 30. When Jehu came to Jezreel and Jezebel heard of it, "she put her eyes into lead polish (*i.e.* painted them with it), and beautified her head and placed herself at the window." פוֹדֶה is a very favourite eye-paint with Oriental women even to the present day. It is prepared from antimony ore (كحل, *Cohol* or *Stibium* of the Arabs), which when pounded yields a black powder with a metallic brilliancy, which was laid upon the eyebrows and eyelashes either in a dry state as a black powder, or moistened generally with oil and made into an ointment, which is applied with a fine smooth eye-pencil of the thickness of an ordinary goose-quill, made either of wood, metal, or ivory. The way to use it was to hold the central portion of the pencil horizontally between the eyelids, and then draw it out between them, twisting it round all the while, so that the edges of the eyelids were blackened all round; and the object was to heighten the splendour of the dark southern eye, and give it, so to speak, a more deeply glowing fire, and to impart a youthful appearance to the whole of the eyelashes even in extreme old age. Rosellini found jars with eye-paint of this kind in the early Egyptian graves (*vid.* Hille, *über den Gebrauch u. die*

afterwards it is stated with regard to Ahaziah, that "Jehu sought him, and they seized him when he was hiding in Samaria, and brought him to Jehu and slew him," from which it appears that Ahaziah escaped to Samaria. From the brevity of these accounts it is impossible to reconcile the discrepancy with perfect certainty. On the one hand, our account, which is only limited to the main fact, does not preclude the possibility that Ahaziah really escaped to Samaria, and was there overtaken by Jehu's followers, and then brought back to Jehu, and wounded upon the height of Gur near Jibleam, whence he fled to Megiddo, where he breathed out his life. On the other hand, in the perfectly summary account in the Chronicles, וְהוּא מִתְחַבֵּא בְּשֶׁמֶרֶן may be understood as referring to the attempt to escape to Samaria and hide himself there, and may be reconciled with the assumption that he was seized upon the way to Samaria, and when overtaken by Jehu was mortally wounded.



*Zusammensetzung der oriental. Augenschminke: Deutsch. morg. Ztsch.* v. p. 236 sqq.).—Jezebel did this that she might present an imposing appearance to Jehu and die as a queen; not to allure him by her charms (Ewald, after Ephr. Syr.). For (ver. 31) when Jehu entered the palace gate, she cried out to him, “Is it peace, thou Zimri, murderer of his lord?” She addressed Jehu as Zimri the murderer of the king, to point to the fate which Jehu would bring upon himself by the murder of the king, as Zimri had already done (*vid.* 1 Kings xvi. 10-18).—Vers. 32, 33. But Jehu did not deign to answer the worthless woman; he simply looked up to the window and inquired: “Who is (holds) with me? who?” Then two, three chamberlains looked out (of the side windows), and by Jehu’s command threw the proud queen out of the window, so that some of her blood spirted upon the wall and the horses (of Jehu), and Jehu trampled her down, driving over her with his horses and chariot.—Ver. 34. Jehu thereupon entered the palace, ate and drank, and then said to his men: “Look for this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king’s daughter.” הַאִרְיָה, the woman smitten by the curse of God.—Vers. 35, 36. But when they went to bury her, they found nothing but her skull, the two feet, and the two hollow hands. The rest had been eaten by the dogs and dragged away. When this was reported to Jehu, he said: “This is the word of the Lord, which He spake by His servant Elijah,” etc. (1 Kings xxi. 23), *i.e.* this has been done in fulfilment of the word of the Lord. Ver. 37 is also to be regarded as a continuation of the prophecy of Elijah quoted by Jehu (and not as a closing remark of the historian, as Luther supposes), although what Jehu says here does not occur verbatim in 1 Kings xxi. 23, but Jehu has simply expanded rather freely the meaning of that prophecy. חֶתִּיב (Chethîb) is the older form of the 3d pers. fem. Kal, which is only retained here and there (*vid.* Ewald, § 194, a). וְאִשֶּׁר is a conjunction (see Ewald, § 337, a): “that men may not be able to say, This is Jezebel,” *i.e.* that they may no more be able to recognise Jezebel.

CHAP. X. 1-27. EXTERMINATION OF THE OTHER SONS OF AHAB, OF THE BRETHREN OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH, AND OF THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

Vers. 1-11. EXTERMINATION OF THE SEVENTY SONS OF AHAB IN SAMARIA.—Vers. 1-3. As Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria (בָּנִים in the wider sense, viz. sons, including grandsons [see at ver. 13], as is evident from the fact that אֲמֻנִים, foster-fathers, are mentioned, whereas Ahab had been dead fourteen years, and therefore his youngest sons could not have had foster-fathers any longer), Jehu sent a letter to the elders of the city and to the foster-fathers of the princes, to the effect that they were to place one of the sons of their lord upon the throne. There is something very strange in the words אֶל-שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֵאל הַזְּקֵנִים, “to the princes of Jezreel, the old men,” partly on account of the name *Jezreel*, and partly on account of the combination of הַזְּקֵנִים with שָׂרֵי. If we compare ver. 5, it is evident that הַזְּקֵנִים cannot be the adjective to שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֵאל, but denotes the elders of the city, so that the preposition אֶל has dropped out before הַזְּקֵנִים. שָׂרֵי יִזְרְעֵאל, the princes or principal men of Jezreel, might certainly be the chief court-officials of the royal house of Ahab, since Ahab frequently resided in Jezreel. But against this supposition there is not only the circumstance that we cannot discover any reason why the court-officials living in *Samaria* should be called princes of Jezreel, but also ver. 5, where, instead of the princes of Jezreel, the governor of the city and the governor of the castle are mentioned. Consequently there is an error of the text in יִזְרְעֵאל, which ought to read הָעִיר אֶל, though it is older than the ancient versions, since the Chaldee has the reading יִזְרְעֵאל, and no doubt the Alexandrian translator read the same, as the Septuagint has sometimes τῆς πόλεως, like the Vulgate, and sometimes Σαμαρείας, both unquestionably from mere conjecture. The “princes of the city” are, according to ver 5, the prefect of the palace and the captain of the city; the זְקֵנִים, “elders,” the magistrates of Samaria; and אֲמֻנִים אֲהָאָב, the foster-fathers and tutors appointed by Ahab for his sons and grandsons. אֲהָאָב is governed freely by הָאֲמֻנִים. In ver. 2 the words from וְאַתְּכֶם to הַנֶּשֶׁק form an explanatory circumstantial clause: “since the sons of your lord are with you, and with you the war-chariots and horses, and a fortified city and arms,” i.e. since you have everything in your hands,—the royal



princes and also the power to make one of them king. It is perfectly evident from the words, "the sons of your lord," *i.e.* of king Joram, that the seventy sons of Ahab included grandsons also. This challenge of Jehu was only a *ruse*, by which he hoped to discover the feelings of the leading men of the capital of the kingdom, because he could not venture, without being well assured of them, to proceed to Samaria to exterminate the remaining members of the royal family of Ahab who were living there. **נִלָּחֵם עָלָיו**, to fight concerning, *i.e.* for a person, as in Judg. ix. 17.—Vers. 4, 5. This *ruse* had the desired result. The recipients of the letter were in great fear, and said, Two kings could not stand before him, how shall we? and sent messengers to announce their submission, and to say that they were willing to carry out his commands, and had no desire to appoint a king.—Vers. 6, 7. Jehu then wrote them a second letter, to say that if they would hearken to his voice, they were to send to him on the morrow at this time, to Jezreel, the heads of the sons of their lord; which they willingly did, slaying the seventy men, and sending him their heads in baskets. **רָאשֵׁי אֲנָשֵׁי בְנֵי אָדָם**, "the heads of the men of the sons of your lord," *i.e.* of the male descendants of Ahab, in which **אֲנָשֵׁי** may be explained from the fact that **בְּנֵי-אֲדָמִיכֶם** has the meaning "royal princes" (see the similar case in Judg. xix. 22). In order to bring out still more clearly the magnitude of Jehu's demand, the number of the victims required is repeated in the circumstantial clause, "and there were seventy men of the king's sons with (**אִתָּם**) the great men of the city, who had brought them up."—Vers. 8, 9. When the heads were brought, Jehu had them piled up in two heaps before the city-gate, and spoke the next morning to the assembled people in front of them: "Ye are righteous. Behold I have conspired against my lord, and have slain him, but who has slain all these?" Jehu did not tell the people that the king's sons had been slain by his command, but spake as if this had been done without his interfering by a higher decree, that he might thereby justify his conspiracy in the eyes of the people, and make them believe what he says still further in ver. 10: "See then that of the word of the Lord nothing falls to the ground (*i.e.* remains unfulfilled) which Jehovah has spoken concerning the house of Ahab; and Jehovah has done what He spake through His servant Elijah."—Ver. 11. The effect of these words was, that the people looked quietly

on when he proceeded to slay all the rest of the house of Ahab, *i.e.* all the more distant relatives in Jezreel, and “all his great men,” *i.e.* the superior officers of the fallen dynasty, and “all his acquaintances,” *i.e.* friends and adherents, and “all his priests,” probably court priests, such as the heathen kings had; not secular counsellors or nearest servants (Thenius), a meaning which בְּהִנִּים never has, not even in 2 Sam. viii. 18 and 1 Kings iv. 5.

Vers. 12-17. EXTERMINATION OF THE BROTHERS OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH AND OF THE OTHER MEMBERS OF AHAB'S DYNASTY.—Vers. 12 sqq. Jehu then set out to Samaria; and on the way, at the binding-house of the shepherds, he met with the brethren of Ahaziah, who were about to visit their royal relations, and when he learned who they were, had them all seized, viz. forty-two men, and put to death at the cistern of the binding-house. וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּלֶךְ, “he came and went,” appears pleonastic; the words are not to be transposed, however, as Böttcher and Thenius propose after the Syriac, but וַיֵּלֶךְ is added, because Jehu did not go at once to Samaria, but did what follows on the way. By transposing the words, the slaying of the relations of Ahaziah would be transferred to Samaria, in contradiction to vers. 15 sqq.—The words from הוּא בֵּית וְגו' onwards, and from וַיְהִיָּא to מִלְכָּה יְהוֹרָה, are two circumstantial clauses, in which the subject הוּא is added in the second clause for the sake of greater clearness: “when he was at the binding-house of the shepherds on the road, and Jehu (there) met with the brethren of Ahaziah, he said . . .” בֵּית-עֶקֶר הָרְעִים (*Baithakáθ*, LXX.) is explained by Rashi, after the Chaldee בֵּית כְּנִישַׁת רְעֵיָא, as signifying *locus conventus pastorum*, the meeting-place of the shepherds; and Gesenius adopts the same view. But the rest of the earlier translators for the most part adopt the rendering, *locus ligationis pastorum*, from עֶקֶר, to bind, and think of a house *ubi pastores ligabant oves quando eas tondebant*. In any case it was a house, or perhaps more correctly a place, where the shepherds were in the habit of meeting, and that on the road from Jezreel to Samaria; according to Eusebius in the *Onom.* s.v. *Baithakáθ*, a place fifteen Roman miles from *Legio* (*Lejun*, *Megiddo*), in the great plain of Jezreel: a statement which may be correct with the exception of the small number of miles, but which does not apply to the present village of *Beit Kad* to the east of *Jenin* (*Rob. Pal.* iii. p. 157), with which, according



to Thenius, it exactly coincides. אֲחִי אֶחָיָהּ, for which we have בְּנֵי אֶחָי אֶחָה, Ahaziah's brothers' sons, in 2 Chron. xxii. 8, were not the actual brothers of Ahaziah, since they had been carried off by the Arabians and put to death before he ascended the throne (2 Chron. xxi. 17), but partly step-brothers, *i.e.* sons of Joram by his concubines, and partly Ahaziah's nephews and cousins. לְשָׁלוֹם, *ad salutandum*, *i.e.* to inquire how they were, or to visit the sons of the king (Joram) and of the queen-mother, *i.e.* Jezebel, therefore Joram's brothers. In ver. 1 they are both included among the "sons" of Ahab.—Vers. 15 sqq. As Jehu proceeded on his way, he met with *Jehonadab* the son of Rechab, and having saluted him, inquired, "Is thy heart true as my heart towards thy heart?" and on his replying שֵׁן, "it is (honourable or true)," he bade him come up into the chariot, saying וְיָ, "if it is (so), give me thy hand;" whereupon he said still further, "Come with me and see my zeal for Jehovah," and then drove with him to Samaria, and there exterminated all that remained of Ahab's family. *Jehonadab* the son of *Rechab* was the tribe-father of the Rechabites (Jer. xxxv. 6). The rule which the latter laid down for his sons and descendants for all time, was to lead a simple nomad life, namely, to dwell in tents, follow no agricultural pursuits, and abstain from wine; which rule they observed so sacredly, that the prophet Jeremiah held them up as models before his own contemporaries, who broke the law of God in the most shameless manner, and was able to announce to the Rechabites that they would be exempted from the Chaldæan judgment for their faithful observance of their father's precept (Jer. xxxv.). *Rechab*, from whom the descendants of Jehonadab derived their tribe-name, was the son of Hammath, and belonged to the tribe of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55), to which Hobab the father-in-law of Moses also belonged (Num. x. 29); so that the Rechabites were probably descendants of Hobab, since the Kenites the sons of Hobab had gone with the Israelites from the Arabian desert to Canaan, and had there carried on their nomad life (Judg. i. 16, iv. 11; 1 Sam. xv. 6; see Witsii *Miscell.* ss. ii. p. 223 sqq.). This Jehonadab was therefore a man distinguished for the strictness of his life, and Jehu appears to have received him in this friendly manner on account of the great distinction in which he was held, not only in his own tribe, but also in Israel generally, that he might exalt himself in the eyes of the people through his

friendship.<sup>1</sup>—In *הָיָשׁ אֶת־לִבְבִּי*, “is with regard to thy heart honourable or upright?” *אֶת* is used to subordinate the noun to the clause, in the sense of *quoad* (see Ewald, § 277, *a*). *כָּל־הַנִּשְׁאָרִים לְאַחָב*, “all that remained to Ahab,” *i.e.* all the remaining members of Ahab’s house.

Vers. 18–27. EXTERMINATION OF THE PROPHETS AND PRIESTS OF BAAL AND OF THE BAAL-WORSHIP.—Vers. 18 sqq. Under the pretence of wishing to serve Baal even more than Ahab had done, Jehu appointed a great sacrificial festival for this idol, and had all the worshippers of Baal throughout all the land summoned to attend it; he then placed eighty of his guards around the temple of Baal in which they were assembled, and after the sacrifice was offered, had the priests and worshippers of Baal cut down by them with the sword. Objectively considered, the slaying of the worshippers of Baal was in accordance with the law, and, according to the theocratical principle, was perfectly right; but the subjective motives which impelled Jehu, apart from the artifice, were thoroughly selfish, as Seb. Schmidt has correctly observed. For since the priests and prophets of Baal throughout the Israelitish kingdom were bound up with the dynasty of Ahab, with all their interests and with their whole existence, they might be very dangerous to Jehu, if on any political grounds he should happen not to promote their objects, whereas by their extermination he might hope to draw to his side the whole of the very numerous supporters of the Jehovah-worship, which had formerly been legally established in Israel, and thereby establish his throne more firmly. The very fact that Jehu allowed the calf-worship to continue, is a proof that he simply used religion as the means of securing his own ends (ver. 29). *קִדְּשׁוּ עֵצָרָה* (ver. 20), “sanctify a festal assembly,” *i.e.* proclaim in the land a festal assembly for Baal (compare Isa. i. 13; and for *עֵצָרָה* = *עֵצֶרֶת*, see at Lev. xxiii. 36). *וַיִּקְרְאוּ*, and they proclaimed, *sc.* the festal meeting.—Ver. 21. The temple of Baal was filled *לְפָה*,

<sup>1</sup> According to C. a Lapide, Jehu took him up into his chariot “that he might establish his authority with the Samaritans, and secure a name for integrity by having Jehonadab as his ally, a man whom all held to be both an upright and holy man, that in this way he might the more easily carry out the slaughter of the Baalites, which he was planning, without any one daring to resist him.”



“from one edge (end) to the other.” פֶּה in this sense is not to be derived from פֶּתַח, a corner (Cler., Ges.), but signifies mouth, or the upper rim of a vessel. *Metaphora sumta a vasis humore aliquo plenis*: Vatabl.—Ver. 22. אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמִּלְתָּהּ is the keeper of the wardrobe (Arab. *præfectus vestium*), for the ἀπ. λεγ. מִלְתָּהּ signifies *vestiarium* (Ges. *Thes.* p. 764). The reference is not to the wardrobe of the king’s palace, out of which Jehu had every one who took part in the feast supplied with a festal dress or new caftan (Deres., Then., etc.), but the wardrobe of the temple of Baal, since the priests of Baal had their own sacred dresses like the priests of almost all religions (as Silius has expressly shown in his *Ital.* iii. 24-27, of the priests of the Gadetan Hercules). These dresses were only worn at the time of worship, and were kept in a wardrobe in the temple.—Vers. 23, 24. Jehu then came with Jehonadab to the temple, and commanded the worshippers of Baal to be carefully examined, that there might not be one of the worshippers of Jehovah with (among) them. When the priests of Baal were preparing to offer sacrifice, Jehu had eighty men of his guards stationed before the temple, and laid this injunction upon them: “Whoever lets one of the men escape whom I bring into your hands (we must read מִלֵּט instead of יִמְלֵט), his life shall answer for his (the escaped man’s) life. נַפְשׁוֹ תַּחַת נַפְשׁוֹ, as in 1 Kings xx. 39.—Ver. 25. כִּבְלָתוֹ: when he (the sacrificing priest, not Jehu) had finished the burnt-offering (the singular suffix י may also be taken as indefinite, when one had finished, *vid.* Ewald, § 294, b), Jehu commanded the runners and aides-de-camp: Come and smite them (the worshippers of Baal), without one coming out (escaping); whereupon they smote them with the edge of the sword, *i.e.* slew them unsparingly. וַיִּשְׁלִיכוּ: and the runners and aides-de-camp threw (those who had been slain) away, and went into the citadel of the temple of Baal. עִיר בֵּית־הַבַּעַל cannot be the city of the temple of Baal, *i.e.* that part of the city in which the temple of Baal stood, for the runners were already in the court of the temple of Baal; but it is no doubt the temple-citadel, the true temple-house (עִיר from עָר, *locus circumseptus*)—*templum Baalis magnifice exstructum instar arcis alicujus* (Seb. Schm.).—Ver. 26. They then fetched the columns (מַצֵּבֹת) out of the temple and burned them (the suffix in יִשְׂרְפוּהָ refers to the plural מַצֵּבֹת taken as an abstract noun, as in ch. iii. 3; cf. Ewald, § 317, a). They then broke

in pieces the *מַצֵּבַת הַבַּעַל*, column of Baal, *i.e.* the real image of Baal, probably a conical stone dedicated to Baal, whereas the *מַצֵּבֹת*, which were burned, were wooden columns as *πάρεδροι* or *σύμβωμοι* of Baal (see Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 674).—Ver. 27. Lastly, they destroyed the temple itself and made it *לְמַחֲרָאוֹת*, privies, for which the Masoretes have substituted the euphemistic *מוֹצָאוֹת*, sinks, as a mark of the greatest insult, many examples of which are to be met with among Oriental tribes (*vid.* Ezra vi. 11, Dan. ii. 5, and Hævernick *in loc.*).—Thus Jehu exterminated Baal from Israel. This remark in ver. 28 forms the introduction to the history of Jehu's reign, with which the last epoch in the history of the ten tribes begins.

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3. FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REIGNS OF JEHU IN ISRAEL, AND ATHALIAH IN JUDAH, TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

CHAP. X. 28-XVII.

In the 161 years which this epoch embraces, from B.C. 883 to 722, the fate of the kingdom of Israel was accomplished. The first hundred years, which comprised the reigns of Jehu and his descendants, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam II., were the last day of grace for the rebellious ten tribes, at the expiration of which the judgment began to burst upon them. As the anointing of Jehu by Elisha was performed by the command of God, so also was the religious reform, which Jehu vigorously commenced with the extermination of the Baal-worship, a fruit of the labours of the prophets Elijah and Elisha within the sinful kingdom; but this reform stood still half-way, since Jehu merely restored the idolatrous Jehovah-worship introduced by Jeroboam, and neither he himself nor his successors desisted from that sin. In order, therefore, if possible, to complete the work begun by His prophets of converting Israel to its God, the Lord now began to visit the rebellious tribes with severe chastisements, giving them up into the power of the Syrians, who under Hazael not only conquered the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan, but almost annihilated the military force of the Israelites (ch. x. 32, 33, xiii. 3, 7). This chastisement did not remain without fruit. Jehoahaz prayed to the Lord, and the Lord had compassion upon the oppressed for the sake of His



covenant with the patriarchs, and sent them deliverers in Joash, who recovered the conquered land from the Syrians after the death of Hazael, and in Jeroboam, who even restored the ancient boundaries of the kingdom (ch. xiii. 4, 5, and 23 sqq., xiv. 25, 26). But with this renewal of external strength, luxuriance and debauchery, partiality in judgment and oppression of the poor began to prevail, as we may see from the prophecies of Hosea and Amos (Amos v. 10 sqq., vi. 1–6; Hos. vi. 7 sqq.); and in addition to the Jehovah-worship, which was performed in an idolatrous manner (Hos. viii. 13, ix. 4, 5), the worship of Baal was carried on most vigorously (Hos. ii. 13, 15, x. 1, 2), so that the people made pilgrimages to Bethel, Gilgal, and even to Beersheba in the south of the kingdom of Judah (Hos. iv. 15; Amos iv. 4, v. 5, viii. 14), and on account of the worship thus zealously performed, relied in carnal security upon the protection of God, and scoffed at the judgments of the Lord which were threatened by the prophets (Amos v. 14, 18). This internal corruption increased with the death of Jeroboam, till all civil order was dissolved. Anarchy, conflicts for the possession of the throne, and repeated regicides, broke up the kingdom and made it ripe for the judgment of destruction, which was gradually accomplished by the Assyrians, whom one party in the reign of Menahem had called to their help, under Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmanasar.—The kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, was purified from the destructive consequences of the alliance with the dynasty of Ahab through the overthrow by the high priest Jehoiada of the godless Athaliah, who had murdered the royal children after the death of Ahaziah and seized upon the government, and, with the renewal of the covenant and the extermination of the worship of Baal under the young king whom Jehoiada had trained, was brought back to the theocratic path; and notwithstanding the fact that in the closing years of Joash and Amaziah idolatry found admission again, was preserved in that path, in which it increased in strength and stability, so that not only were the wounds quickly healed which the war with Israel, occasioned by Amaziah's pride, had inflicted upon it through the conquest and plunder of Jerusalem (ch. xiv. 8 sqq.), but during the sixty-eight years comprised in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, the people rose to a state of great prosperity and wealth through the pursuit of agriculture and trade, and a thoughtful development of the resources of the land, and the

kingdom acquired great external power through the humiliation of the Philistines and the subjugation of the Edomites once more (2 Chron. xxvi.). At the same time, neither of these kings was able entirely to suppress the illegal worship of the high places, although the temple-worship was regularly sustained according to the law; and with the increase of wealth and power, not only did luxuriance and pride set in, but also idolatry and an inclination to heathen ways (Isa. ii. 5-8 and 16 sqq., v. 18 sqq.); so that even in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham Isaiah predicted the day of the Lord's judgment, which was to fall upon everything lofty and proud (Isa. ii.-iv.). This prophecy began to be fulfilled, so far as its first beginnings were concerned, even in the time of Ahaz. Under this weak and idolatrous ruler idolatry gained the upper hand, and the worship of Jehovah was suppressed; and this open apostasy from the Lord was followed by immediate punishment. The allied kings of Israel and Syria forced their way victoriously into Judah, and even stood before the gates of Jerusalem, with the intention of destroying the kingdom of Judah, when Ahaz, despising the help of the Lord, which was offered him by the prophet Isaiah, purchased the assistance of Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria with silver and gold, and was thereby delivered from his foes. But this made him dependent upon the Assyrians, who would have conquered the kingdom of Judah and destroyed it, as they had already destroyed the kingdom of Israel, had not the Lord hearkened to the prayer of the pious king and miraculously routed the powerful army of Sennacherib before the walls of Jerusalem.

#### CHAP. X. 28-36. REIGN OF JEHU OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 28, 29. Jehu exterminated the worship of Baal from Israel; but the sins of Jeroboam, the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, that is to say, the idolatrous worship of Jehovah, he allowed to remain. "The golden calves, etc.:" this is a supplementary and explanatory apposition to "the sins of Jeroboam." —Vers. 30, 31. Jehu is promised the possession of the throne to the fourth generation of his sons for having exterminated the godless royal house of Ahab (*vid.* ch. xv. 12). The divine sentence, "because thou hast acted well to do right in mine eyes, (because thou) hast done as it was in my heart to the house of Ahab," refers to the deed as such, and not to the subjective



motives by which Jehu had been actuated. For it is obvious that it had not sprung from pure zeal for the honour of the Lord, from the limitation added in ver. 31: "but Jehu did not take heed to walk in the law of Jehovah with all his heart, and did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam."—Vers. 32, 33. Therefore (this link of connection follows from the actual fact, though it is not distinctly mentioned in the text) Hazael had now to inflict chastisement upon faithless Israel. In Jehu's days Jehovah began "to cut off in Israel," *i.e.* to rend away certain portions from the kingdom. "Hazael smote them (the Israelites) on the whole of the border of Israel," *i.e.* of the kingdom, "from Jordan to the sun-rising (*i.e.* on the eastern side of the Jordan), the whole of the land of Gilead (אֶת כָּל-אֶרֶץ גִּלְעָד is dependent upon יָפָה, which must be supplied from יָבֵם), namely, the territory of the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Half-Manasseh, from Aroer on the brook Arnon (now *Araayr*, a ruin on the northern border of the Mojob (Arnon) valley; see at Num. xxxii. 34), the southern border of the Israelitish land to the east of the Jordan (Deut. ii. 36, iii. 12), both Gilead and Bashan," the two countries into which Gilead in the broader sense was divided (see at Deut. iii. 8-17).—These conquests took place during the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu, since Hazael began to reign before Jehu, viz. while Joram was king, and had already fought successfully against the Israelites at Ramoth in Joram's reign (ch. viii. 28, 29), but not in the later part of Jehu's reign, as Thenius supposes.—Vers. 34-36. Conclusion of the history of Jehu's reign. The length of his reign is not given till the end in this instance (ver. 36), contrary to the usual custom in our books, because his ascent of the throne is not expressly mentioned in what precedes; but the general character of his reign is given in immediate connection with the account of his anointing and of the extermination of Ahab's dynasty.

CHAP. XI. TYRANNY AND OVERTHROW OF ATHALIAH, AND  
CORONATION OF JOASH.

Vers. 1-3. THE GOVERNMENT OF ATHALIAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxii. 10-12). After the death of Ahaziah of Judah, his mother Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (see at ch. viii. 18 and 26), seized upon the government, by putting to death all the king's descendants with the exception of Joash, a son of Ahaziah of only a year old, who had been secretly carried off

from the midst of the royal children, who were put to death, by Jehosheba, his father's sister, the wife of the high priest Jehoiada, and was first of all hidden with his nurse in the bed-chamber, and afterwards kept concealed from Athaliah for six years in the high priest's house. The ו before רָאָתָה is no doubt original, the subject, Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah, being placed at the head absolutely, and a circumstantial clause introduced with וַרָאָתָה: "Athaliah, when she saw that, etc., rose up." כָּל-זֶרַע הַמִּמְלָכָה, all the royal seed, *i.e.* all the sons and relations of Ahaziah, who could put in any claim to succeed to the throne. At the same time there were hardly any other direct descendants of the royal family in existence beside the sons of Ahaziah, since the elder brothers of Ahaziah had been carried away by the Arabs and put to death, and the rest of the closer blood-relations of the male sex had been slain by Jehu (see at ch. x. 13).—*Jehosheba* (יְהוֹשֻׁבָעַת, in the Chronicles יְהוֹשֻׁבָעַת), the wife of the high priest Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxii. 11), was a daughter of king Joram and a sister of Ahaziah, but she was most likely not a daughter of Athaliah, as this worshipper of Baal would hardly have allowed her own daughter to marry the high priest, but had been born to Joram by a wife of the second rank. מְמוּתִים (*Chethib*), generally a substantive, *mortes* (Jer. xvi. 4; Ezek. xxviii. 8), here an adjective: slain or set apart for death. The *Keri* מוֹמְתִים is the participle *Hophal*, as in 2 Chron. xxii. 11. בַּחֲרֵץ הַמִּ': is to be taken in connection with תִּגְנוֹב: she stole him (took him away secretly) from the rest of the king's sons, who were about to be put to death, into the chamber of the beds, *i.e.* not the children's bed-room, but a room in the palace where the beds (mattresses and counterpanes) were kept, for which in the East there is a special room that is not used as a dwelling-room (see Chardin in Harm. *Beobb.* iii. p. 357). This was the place in which at first it was easiest to conceal the child and its nurse. וַיִּסְתְּרוּ, "they (Jehosheba and the nurse) concealed him," is not to be altered into וַתִּסְתְּרֵהוּ after the Chronicles, as Thenius maintains. The masculine is used in the place of the feminine, as is frequently the case. Afterwards he was concealed with her (with Jehosheba) in the house of Jehovah, *i.e.* in the home of the high-priest in one of the buildings of the court of the temple.



OF JOASH (compare the account in 2 Chron. xxiii., which is more elaborate in several points).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 4. In the seventh year of Athaliah's reign, Jehoiada sent for the captains of the king's body-guard to come to him into the temple, and concluded a covenant with them, making them swear and showing them the king's son, namely, to dethrone the tyrant Athaliah and set the king's son upon the throne. שָׂרֵי הַפָּאִיּוֹת, *centuriones*, military commanders of the executioners and runners, *i.e.* of the royal body-guard. The *Chethîb* מֵאֵיּוֹת may be explained from the fact that מֵאָה is abridged from מֵאֵיָה (*vid.* Ewald, § 267, *d*). On כָּרִי וְרָצִים = הַכְּרִיתִי וְהַרְצִיתִי (1 Kings i. 38) see the Comm. on 2 Sam. viii. 18; and on לְ as a periphrasis of the genitive, see Ewald, § 292, *a*. In 2 Chron. xxiii. 1-3 the chronicler not only gives the names of these captains, but relates still more minutely that they went about in the land and summoned the Levites and heads of families in Israel to Jerusalem, probably under the pretext of a festal celebration; whereupon Jehoiada concluded a covenant with the persons assembled, to ensure their assistance in the execution of his plan.—Vers. 5-8. Jehoiada then communicated to those initiated into the plan the necessary instructions for carrying it out, assigning them the places which they were to occupy. "The third part of you that come on the Sabbath (*i.e.* mount guard) shall keep the guard of the king's house (וְשֹׁמְרֵי is a corruption of וְשֹׁמְרֵי), and the third part shall be at the gate Sur, and the third part at the gate behind the runners, and (ye) shall keep guard over the house for defence; and the two parts of you, (namely) all who depart on the Sabbath, shall keep the guard of the house of Jehovah for the king; and ye shall surround the king round about, every one with his weapons in his hand; and whoever presses into the ranks shall be slain, and shall be with the king when

<sup>1</sup> In both accounts we have only short extracts preserved from a common and more complete original, the extracts having been made quite independently of one another and upon different plans. Hence the apparent discrepancies, which have arisen partly from the incompleteness of the two abridged accounts, and partly from the different points of view from which the extracts were made, but which contain no irreconcilable contradictions. The assertion of De Wette, which has been repeated by Thenius and Bertheau, that the chronicler distorted the true state of the case to favour the Levites, rests upon a misinterpretation of our account, based upon arbitrary assumptions, as I have already shown in my *apologetischer Versuch über die Chronik* (p. 361 sqq.).

he goes out and in," *i.e.* in all his steps. The words **בָּאֵי הַשַּׁבָּת** and **יֹצְאֵי הַשַּׁבָּת**, "those coming and those going out on the Sabbath," denote the divisions of the watch, those who performed duty on the Sabbath and those who were relieved on the Sabbath; not the military guard at the palace however, but the temple-guard, which consisted of Levites. For David had divided the priests and Levites into classes, every one of which had to perform service for a week and was relieved on the Sabbath: compare 1 Chron. xxiii.-xxvi. with Josephus (*Ant.* vii. 14, 7), who expressly says that every one of the twenty-four classes of priests had to attend to the worship of God "for eight days, from Sabbath to Sabbath," also with Luke i. 5. On the other hand, we do not know that there was any similar division and obligation to serve in connection with the royal body-guard or with the army. The current opinion, that by those who come on the Sabbath and those who go out on the Sabbath we are to understand the king's halberdiers or the guard of the palace, is therefore proved to be unfounded and untenable. And if there could be any doubt on the matter, it would be removed by vers. 7 and 10. According to ver. 7, two parts of those who went away (were relieved) on the Sabbath were to undertake the guarding of the house of Jehovah about the king, *i.e.* to keep guard over that room in the temple where the king then was. Could Jehoiada have used the royal body-guard, that was being relieved from guarding the palace, for such a purpose as this? Who can imagine that this is a credible thing? According to ver. 10, Jehoiada gave to the captains over a hundred the weapons of king David, which were in the house of Jehovah. Did the palace-guard then return without weapons? In 2 Chron. xxiii. 4, "those coming on the Sabbath" are correctly described as the priests and Levites coming on the Sabbath, *i.e.* the priests and Levites who entered upon their week's duty at the temple on the Sabbath. According to this explanation of the words, which is the only one that can be grammatically sustained, the facts were as follows: "When Jehoiada had initiated the captains of the royal halberdiers, and with their help the heads of families of the people generally, into his plan of raising the youthful Joash to the throne and dethroning Athaliah, he determined to carry out the affair chiefly with the help of the priests and Levites who entered upon their duty in the temple on the Sabbath, and



of those who left or were relieved at the same time, and entrusted the command over these men to the captains of the royal halberdiers, that they might occupy the approaches to the temple with the priests and Levites under their command, so as to prevent the approach of any military from the king's palace and protect the youthful king. These captains had come to the temple without weapons, to avoid attracting attention. Jehoiada therefore gave them the weapons of king David that were kept in the temple.

With regard to the distribution of the different posts, the fact that two-thirds are spoken of first of all in vers. 5, 6, and then two parts in ver. 7, occasions no difficulty. For the two-thirds mentioned in vers. 5, 6 were those who came on the Sabbath, whereas the "two divisions" (שְׁתֵּי הַיָּדוֹת) referred to in ver. 7 were all who went away on the Sabbath. Consequently the priests and Levites, who came on the Sabbath and entered upon the week's service, were divided into three sections; and those who should have been relieved, but were detained, into two. Probably the number of those who came this time to perform service at the temple was much larger than usual, as the priests were initiated into Jehoiada's secret; so that it was possible to make three divisions of those who arrived, whereas those who were about to depart could only be formed into two. The three divisions of those who were entering upon duty are also distinctly mentioned in the Chronicles; whereas, instead of the two divisions of those who were relieved, "all the people" are spoken of. The description of the different posts which were assigned to these several companies causes some difficulty. In general, so much is clearly indicated in vers. 7 and 8, that the two divisions of those who were relieved on the Sabbath were to keep guard over the young king in the house of Jehovah, and therefore to remain in the inner spaces of the temple-court for his protection; whereas the three divisions of those who were entering upon duty were charged with the occupation of the external approaches to the temple. One-third was to "keep watch over the king's house," i.e. to observe whatever had to be observed in relation to the king's palace; not to occupy the king's palace, or to keep guard in the citadel at the palace gate (Thenius), but to keep watch towards the royal palace, i.e. to post themselves so that no one could force a way into the temple, with which the indefinite בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ in the

Chronicles harmonizes, if we only translate it "against (at) the king's house." The idea that the palace was guarded is precluded not only by ver. 13, according to which Athaliah came out of the palace to the people to the house of Jehovah, which she would not have been able to do if the palace had been guarded, but also by the circumstance that, according to ver. 19, the chief men were in the temple with the whole of the (assembled) people, and did not go out of the house of Jehovah into the king's house till after the anointing of Joash and the death of Athaliah. The other third was to station itself at the gate *Sur* (סור), or, according to the Chronicles, *Yesod* (יסוד), foundation-gate. There is no doubt as to the identity of the gate *Sur* and the gate *Yesod*; only we cannot decide whether one of these names has simply sprung from a copyist's error, or whether the gate had two different names. The name שַׁעַר יְסוֹד, foundation-gate, suggests a gate in the outer court of the temple, at the hollow of either the Tyropœon or the Kedron; for the context precludes our thinking of a palace gate. The third division was to be posted "at the gate behind the runners;" or, as it is stated in ver. 19, "at the gate of the runners." It is very evident from ver. 19 that this gate led from the temple-court to the royal palace upon Zion, and was therefore on the western side of the court of the temple. This also follows from ver. 4 of the Chronicles, according to which this division was to act as "doorkeepers of the thresholds" (לְשַׁעְרֵי הַפְּתִיחִים), i.e. to keep guard at the gate of the thresholds. For we may safely infer, from a comparison with 1 Chron. ix. 19, that הַפְּתִיחִים were the thresholds of the ascent to the temple. The last clause, "and shall keep guard over the house for defence," refers to all three divisions, and serves to define with greater precision the object for which they were stationed there. כִּפֶּחַ is not a proper name (LXX., Luther, and others), but an appellative in the sense of defence or resistance, from נָסַח, *depellere*. The meaning is, that they were to guard the house, to keep off the people, and not to let any of the party of Athaliah force a way into the temple.—In ver 7, כָּל יִצְאֵי הַשָּׁבָת is an explanatory apposition to וְשְׁתֵּי הַיָּדוֹת בְּכֶם, "and the two parts in (of) you," namely, all who go out on the Sabbath, i.e. are relieved from duty. Their task, to observe the watch of the house of Jehovah with regard to the king, is more precisely defined in ver. 8 as signifying, that they were to surround the king with weapons



in their hands, and slay every one who attempted to force a way into their ranks. בַּצָּאתוֹ וּבְכָל, *i.e.* in all his undertakings, or in all his steps; וְכָל צֵאת יָדָיו being applied to the actions and pursuits of a man, as in Deut. xxviii. 6, xxxi. 2, etc. (see the Comm. on Num. xxvii. 17). Thenius has explained this incorrectly: "in his going out of the temple and entering into the palace."—Vers. 9-11. The execution of these plans. The high priest gave the captains "the spears and shields (שָׁלָטִים): see at 2 Sam. viii. 7) which (belonged) to king David, that were in the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the weapons which David had presented to the sanctuary as dedicatory offerings. יְהוָה הָחִייתָ Instead of יְהוָה הָחִייתָ we ought probably to read יְהוָה הָחִייתָ (cf. Mic. iv. 3, Isa. ii. 4), after the יְהוָה הָחִייתָ of the Chronicles, since the collective force of יְהוָה is very improbable in prose, and a ה might easily drop out through a copyist's error. Jehoiada gave the captains weapons from the temple, because, as has been already observed, they had come unarmed, and not, as Thenius imagines, to provide them with old and sacred weapons instead of **their** ordinary ones. In ver. 11 the position of all the divisions is given in a comprehensive manner, for the purpose of appending the further course of the affair, namely, the coronation of the king. "Thus the halberdiers stood, every one with his weapons in his hand, from the right wing of the house to the left wing, towards the altar (of burnt-offering) and the (temple-) house, round about the king," *i.e.* to cover the king on all sides. For it is evident that we are not to understand עַל-הַמֶּלֶךְ כָּבִיב as signifying the encircling of the king, from the statement in ver. 12, according to which Jehoiada did not bring out the king's son till after the men had taken up their positions. The use of הָרָצִים, to signify the captains with the armed priests and Levites put under their command for this purpose, is an uncommon one, but it may be explained from the fact that רָצִים had retained the general meaning of royal halberdiers; and the priests and Levites under the command of the captains of the royal body-guard by this very act discharged the duty of the royal body-guard itself. The chronicler has used the indefinite expression כָּל-הָעָם, the whole of the people assembled in the temple-court.—Ver. 12. After the approaches to the temple had all been occupied in this manner, Jehoiada brought out the king's son from his home in the temple; or, he brought him forth, set the crown upon him, and handed him the testimony, *i.e.* the book of the

law, as the rule of his life and action as king, according to the precept in Deut. xvii. 18, 19. **וְאֶת־הַעֲדוֹת** is connected with **יָתַן** **עָלָיו אֶת־הַמִּנֶּכֶר**, because **יָתַן עָלָיו** has the general meaning "delivered to him, handed him," and does not specially affirm the putting on of the crown. **וַיַּמְלִיכוּ**, they made him king. The subject is the persons present, though, as a matter of course, the anointing was performed by Jehoiada and the priests, as the Chronicles expressly affirm. Clapping the hands was a sign of joyful acclamation, like the cry, "Long live the king" (cf. 1 Kings i. 39).

Vers. 13-16. *Death of Athaliah*.—Vers. 13, 14. As soon as Athaliah heard the loud rejoicing of the people, she came to the people into the temple, and when she saw the youthful king in his standing-place surrounded by the princes, the trumpeters, and the whole of the people, rejoicing and blowing the trumpets, she rent her clothes with horror, and cried out, Conspiracy, conspiracy! **הָרָצִין הָעָם** does not mean the people running together, but the original reading in the text was probably **וְהָרָצִין וְהָעָם**, the people and the halberdiers, and the *Vav* dropped out through an oversight of the copyist. By **הָרָצִין** we are to understand the captains of the halberdiers with the armed Levites, as in ver. 11; and **הָעָם** is the people who had assembled besides (cf. ver. 19). In the Chronicles **וְהָרָצִים וְהַמְּהַלְלִים הַמְּלִיכָה** is in apposition to **הָעָם**: the noise of the people, the halberdiers, and those who praised the king. The **עֲמֹד**, upon which the king stood, was not a pillar, but an elevated standing-place (*suggestus*) for the king at the eastern gate of the inner court (**בְּמִבְנֵי**, 2 Chron. xxiii. 13 compared with Ezek. xlvi. 2), when he visited the temple on festive occasions (cf. ch. xxiii. 3), and it was most probably identical with the brazen scaffold (**בֵּינִיר**) mentioned in 2 Chron. vi. 13, which would serve to explain **בְּמִשְׁפָּט**, "according to the right" (Angl. V. "as the manner was"). **הַשָּׂרִים** are not merely the captains mentioned in vers. 4, 9, and 10, but these together with the rest of the assembled heads of the nation (**רֹאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת**, 2 Chron. xiii. 2). **הַחֲצֹצְרוֹת**, the trumpets, is an abbreviated expression for those blowing the trumpets, the trumpeters. The reference is to the Levitical musicians mentioned in 1 Chron. xiii. 8, xv. 24, etc.; for they are distinguished from **כָּל־הָעָם וְגו'**, "all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing the trumpets," i.e. not all the military men of the land who were present in Jerusalem (Thenius), but the mass of the people present in the temple (Bertheau).—Ver. 15. Jehoiada then commanded the captains



פְּקָדֵי הַחֵיל, those placed over the army, *i.e.* the armed men of the Levites, to lead out Athaliah between the ranks, and to slay every one who followed her, *i.e.* who took her part (הָמִית, *inf. abs.* instead of imperative); for, as is added supplementarily in explanation of this command, the priest had (previously) said: "Let her not be slain in the house of Jehovah." The temple was not to be defiled with the blood of the usurper and murderess.—Ver. 16. Thus they made way for her on both sides, or, according to the correct explanation given by the Chaldee, יְשִׁימוּ לָהּ יָדַיִם, they formed lines (*Spalier*, fences) and escorted her back, and she came by the way of the horses' entrance into the palace, and was there put to death. מְבוֹא הַסּוּסִים is explained in the Chronicles by מְבוֹא שַׁעַר הַסּוּסִים, entrance of the horse-gate. The entrance for the horses, *i.e.* the way which led to the royal mews, is not to be identified with the horse-gate mentioned in Neh. iii. 28; for this was a gate in the city wall, whereas the road from the temple to the royal mews, which were no doubt near the palace, was inside the wall.

Vers. 17-20. *Renewal of the covenant, extermination of the worship of Baal, and entrance of the king into the palace.*—Ver. 17. After Jehoash was crowned and Athaliah put to death, Jehoiada concluded the covenant (1) between Jehovah on the one hand and the king and people on the other, and (2) between the king and the people. The former was simply a renewal of the covenant which the Lord had made with Israel through Moses (Ex. xxiv.), whereby the king and the people bound themselves לַיהוָה לָעַם לְהִיּוֹת, *i.e.* to live as the people of the Lord, or to keep His law (cf. Deut. iv. 20, xxvii. 9, 10), and was based upon the "testimony" handed to the king. This covenant naturally led to the covenant between the king and the people, whereby the king bound himself to rule his people according to the law of the Lord, and the people vowed that they would be obedient and subject to the king as the ruler appointed by the Lord (cf. 2 Sam. v. 3). The renewal of the covenant with the Lord was necessary, because under the former kings the people had fallen away from the Lord and served Baal. The immediate consequence of the renewal of the covenant, therefore, was the extermination of the worship of Baal, which is mentioned at once in ver. 18, although its proper place in order of time is after ver. 18. All the people (כָּל-עַם הָאָרֶץ), as in ver. 14) went to the temple of Baal, threw down his altars, broke his images (the columns of

Baal and Astarte) rightly, *i.e.* completely (הַיֵּטֵב as in Deut. ix. 21), and slew the priest Mattan, probably the chief priest of Baal, before his altars. That the temple of Baal stood within the limits of the sanctuary, *i.e.* of the temple of Jehovah (Thenius), cannot be shown to be probable either from 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 or from the last clause of this verse. (For 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 see the fuller remarks on ch. xii. 5.) The words "and the priest set overseers over the house of Jehovah" do not affirm that Jehoiada created the office of overseer over the temple for the purpose of guarding against a fresh desecration of the temple by idolatry (Thenius), but simply that he appointed overseers over the temple, namely, priests and Levites entrusted with the duty of watching over the performance of worship according to the precepts of the law, as is more minutely described in vers. 18 and 19.—Ver. 19. And he took the captains, and they brought the king down out of the house of Jehovah, etc. The word יָקָה is not to be pressed, but simply affirms that Jehoiada entrusted the persons named with the duty of conducting the king into his palace. Beside the captains over a hundred (see at ver. 4) there are mentioned הַכָּרִי וְהַרְצִים, *i.e.* the royal halberdiers (the body-guard), who had passed over to the new king immediately after the fall of Athaliah and now followed their captains, and כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ, all the rest of the people assembled. Instead of the halberdiers there are mentioned in the Chronicles הָאֲדִירִים הַמִּוֹשְׁלִים, the nobles and lords in the nation,—a completion implied in the facts themselves, since Jehoiada had drawn the heads of the nation into his plan, and on the other hand the express allusion to the body-guard might be omitted as of inferior importance. We cannot infer from יִירִי that the bridge between Moriah and Zion was not yet in existence, as Thenius supposes, but simply that the bridge was lower than the temple-courts. Instead of שַׁעַר הַרְצִים, the gate of the runners (*i.e.* of the halberdiers), we find in the Chronicles שַׁעַר הָעֲלִיּוֹן, the upper gate, which appears to have been a gate of the temple, according to ch. xv. 35 and 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. The statement that they came by the way of the runners' gate into the house of the king is not at variance with this, for it may be understood as meaning that it was by the halberdiers' gate of the temple that the entry into the palace was carried out.—In ver. 20 this account is concluded with the general remark that all the people rejoiced, *sc.* at the coronation of Joash, and the city was quiet, when they slew Athaliah with



the sword. This is the way, so far as the sense is concerned, in which the last two clauses are to be connected.

CHAP. XII. REIGN OF KING JOASH OF JUDAH, AND REPAIRING OF THE TEMPLE.

All that is recorded of the forty years' reign of Joash, in addition to the general characteristics of the reign (vers. 1-4), is the repairing of the temple which was effected by him (vers. 5-17), and the purchased retreat of the Syrians from their invasion of Judah (vers. 18 and 19), and finally his violent death in consequence of a conspiracy formed against him, of which we have only a brief notice in vers. 20-22. The parallel account in 2 Chron. xxiv. supplies several additions to this: viz. concerning the wives of Joash, the distribution of the Levites at the repairing of the temple, the death of Jehoiada, and the seduction of Joash to idolatry by the chief men of Judah, and the stoning of the prophet Zechariah, who condemned this rebellion,—all of which can easily be fitted into our account.

Vers. 1-4 (1-5). *Reign of Joash*.—Ver. 1 (1, 2). His age on ascending the throne, viz. seven years (cf. ch. xi. 4).—Commencement and length of his reign. His mother's name was *Zibiah* of Beersheba.—Ver. 2 (3). Joash did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord בְּלִימֵי אֲשֶׁר וְנֹ, "all his days that," etc., i.e. during the whole period of his life that Jehoiada instructed him (for אֲשֶׁר after substantives indicating time, place, and mode, see Ewald, § 331, c, 3; and for the use of the suffix attached to the noun defined by וְנֹ, compare ch. xiii. 14); not "all his life long, because Jehoiada had instructed him," although the *Athnach* under לִימֵי favours this view. For Jehoiada had not instructed him before he began to reign, but he instructed him after he had been raised to the throne at the age of seven years, that is to say, so long as Jehoiada himself lived. The בְּלִימֵי הַיּוֹדֵעַ of the Chronicles is therefore a correct explanation. But after Jehoiada's death, Joash yielded to the petitions of the princes of Judah that he would assent to their worshipping idols, and at length went so far as to stone the son of his benefactor, the prophet Zechariah, on account of his candid reproof of this apostasy (2 Chron. xxiv. 17-22).—Ver. 3 (4). But the worship on the high places was not entirely suppressed, notwithstanding the fact that Jehoiada instructed him (on this standing formula see the Comm. on 1 Kings xv. 14).

Vers. 4-16 (5-17). *Repairing of the temple* (cf. 2 Chron. xxiv. 5-14).—Vers. 4, 5. That the temple, which had fallen into ruins, might be restored, Joash ordered the priests to collect all the money of the consecrated gifts, that was generally brought into the house of the Lord, and to effect therewith all the repairs that were needed in the temple. The general expression **בְּסֵף הַקִּדְשִׁים**, money of the holy gifts, *i.e.* money derived from holy gifts, is more specifically defined by **בְּסֵף עֹבֵר וְגו'**, according to which it consisted of three kinds of payments to the temple: viz. (1) **בְּסֵף עֹבֵר**, *i.e.* money of persons mustered (or numbered in the census); **עֹבֵר** is an abbreviated expression for **הָעֹבֵר הַפָּקִידִים**, “he who passes over to those who are numbered” (Ex. xxx. 13), as it has been correctly interpreted by the Chald., Rashi, Abarb., and others; whereas the explanation “money that passes” (Luther), or current coin, which Thenius still defends, yields no suitable sense, since it is impossible to see why only current coin should be accepted, and not silver in bars or vessels, inasmuch as Moses had accepted gold, silver, copper, and other objects of value *in natura*, for the building of the tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 2, 3, xxxv. 5, xxxvi. 5, 6). The brevity of the expression may be explained from the fact, that **בְּסֵף עֹבֵר** had become a technical term on the ground of the passage in the law already cited. The objection raised by Thenius, that the explanation adopted would be without any parallel, would, if it could be sustained, also apply to his own explanation “current money,” in which **עֹבֵר** is also taken as an abbreviation of **עֹבֵר לְפָנָיו** in Gen. xxiii. 16. There is still less ground for the other objection, that if **בְּסֵף עֹבֵר** denoted one kind of temple-revenue, **כָּל** or **אִישׁ** would necessarily have been used. (2) **אִישׁ . . . עֲרֹבוֹ**, “every kind of souls’ valuation money;” **אִישׁ** is more precisely defined by **עֲרֹבוֹ**, and the position in which it stands before **בְּסֵף** resembles the **בְּחֵרוֹ** in Gen. xv. 10—literally, soul money of each one’s valuation. Thenius is wrong in his interpretation, “every kind of money of the souls according to their valuation,” to which he appends the erroneous remark, that **אִישׁ** is also used in Zech. x. 1 and Joel ii. 7 in connection with inanimate objects as equivalent to **כָּל**. **אִישׁ . . . עֲרֹבוֹ**, every kind of valuation, because both in the redemption of the male first-born (Num. xviii. 15, 16) and also in the case of persons under a vow a payment had to be made according to the valuation of the priest. (3) “All the money that cometh



into any one's mind to bring into the house of the Lord," *i.e.* all the money which was offered as a free-will offering to the sanctuary. This money the priests were to take to themselves, every one from his acquaintance, and therewith repair all the dilapidations that were to be found in the temple. In the Chronicles the different kinds of money to be collected for this purpose are not specified; but the whole is embraced under the general expression "the taxes of Moses the servant of God, and of the congregation of Israel, to the tent of the testimony," which included not only the contribution of half a shekel for the building of the temple, which is prescribed in Ex. xxx. 12 sqq., but also the other two taxes mentioned in this account.<sup>1</sup> Again, according to ver. 7 of the Chronicles, Joash gave the following reason for his command: "For Athaliah, the wicked woman, and her sons have demolished the house of God, and all the dedicated gifts of the house of Jehovah have they used for the Baals." We are not told in what the violent treatment or demolition (פָּרַץ) of the temple by Athaliah and her sons consisted. The circumstance that considerable repairs even of the stonework of the temple were required in the time of Joash, about 130 or 140 years after it was built, is quite conceivable without any intentional demolition. And in no case can we infer from these words, as Thenius has done, that Athaliah or her sons had erected a temple of Baal within the limits of the sanctuary. The application of all the dedicatory offerings of the house of Jehovah to the Baals, involves nothing more than that the gifts which were absolutely necessary for the preservation of the temple and temple-service were withdrawn from the sanctuary of Jehovah and applied to the worship of Baal, and therefore that the decay of the sanctuary would necessarily follow upon the neglect of the worship.—Vers. 6 sqq. But

<sup>1</sup> There is no ground either in the words or in the facts for restricting the perfectly general expression "taxes of Moses and of the congregation of Israel" to the payment mentioned in Ex. xxx. 12, as Thenius and Bertheau have done, except perhaps the wish to find a discrepancy between the two accounts, for the purpose of being able to accuse the chronicler, if not of intentional falsification, as De Wette does, at any rate of perverting the true state of the case. The assertion of Thenius, that the yearly payment of half a shekel, which was appointed in the law and regarded as atonement-money, appears to be directly excluded in our text, is simply founded upon the interpretation given to כֶּסֶף עֹבֵר as current money, which we have already proved to be false.

when the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash arrived, and the dilapidations had not been repaired, the king laid the matter before the high priest Jehoiada and the priests, and directed them not to take the money any more from their acquaintance, but to give it for the dilapidations of the temple; "and the priests consented to take no money, and not to repair the dilapidations of the house," *i.e.* not to take charge of the repairs. We may see from this consent how the command of the king is to be understood. Hitherto the priests had collected the money to pay for the repairing of the temple; but inasmuch as they had not executed the repairs, the king took away from them both the collection of the money and the obligation to repair the temple. The reason for the failure of the first measure is not mentioned in our text, and can only be inferred from the new arrangement made by the king (ver. 9): "Jehoiada took a chest,—of course by the command of the king, as is expressly mentioned in 2 Chron. xxiv. 8,—bored a hole in the door (the lid) thereof, and placed it by the side of the altar (of burnt-offering) on the right by the entrance of every one into the house of Jehovah., that the priests keeping the threshold might put thither (*i.e.* into the chest) all the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah."—Ver. 10. "And when they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's writer and the high priest came, and bound up and reckoned the money that was found in the house of Jehovah." צָבַר, to bind up the money in bags (cf. ch. v. 23). The binding is mentioned before the reckoning, because the pieces of money were not counted singly, but packed at once into bags, which were then weighed for the purpose of estimating the amount received.—Vers. 11, 12. "They gave the money weighed into the hands of those who did the work, who were placed over the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the appointed overlookers of the work; "and they paid it (as it was required) to the carpenters and builders, who worked at the house, and to the masons and the hewers of stone, and for the purchase of wood and hewn stones, to repair the dilapidations of the house, and for all that might be spent (שָׂא, *i.e.* be given out) for the house for repairing it." It is quite clear from this, that the assertion of J. D. Michaelis, De Wette, and others, that the priests had embezzled the money collected, is perfectly imaginary. For if the king had cherished any such suspicion against the priests, he would not have asked for their



consent to an alteration of the first arrangement or to the new measure; and still less would he have commanded that the priests who kept the door should put the money into the chest, for this would have been no safeguard against embezzlement. For if the door-keepers wished to embezzle, all that they would need to do would be to put only a part of the money into the chest. The simple reason and occasion for giving up the first arrangement and introducing the new arrangement with the chest, was that the first measure had proved to be insufficient for the accomplishment of the purpose expected by the king. For inasmuch as the king had not assigned any definite amount for the repairing of the temple, but had left it to the priests to pay for the cost of the repairs out of the money that was to be collected, one portion of which at least came to themselves, according to the law, for their own maintenance and to provide for the expenses of worship, it might easily happen, without the least embezzlement on the part of the priests, that the money collected was paid out again for the immediate necessities of worship and their own maintenance, and that nothing remained to pay for the building expenses. For this reason the king himself now undertook the execution of the requisite repairs. The reason why the chest was provided for the money to be collected was, first of all, that the money to be collected for the building might be separated from the rest of the money that came in and was intended for the priests; and secondly, that the contributions to be gathered for the building might be increased, since it might be expected that the people would give more if the collections were made for the express purpose of restoring the temple, than if only the legal and free-will offerings were simply given to the priests, without any one knowing how much would be applied to the building.—And because the king had taken the building into his own hand, as often as the chest was full he sent his secretary to reckon the money along with the high priest, and hand it over to the superintendents of the building.

If we compare with this the account in the Chronicles, it helps to confirm the view which we have obtained from an unprejudiced examination of the text as to the affair in question. According to ver. 5 of the Chronicles, Joash had commanded the priests and Levites to accelerate the repairs; “but the Levites did not hurry.” This may be understood as signifying that they were dilatory both in the collection of the money and

in the devotion of a portion of their revenues to the repairing of the temple. But that the king took the matter in hand himself, not so much because of the dilatoriness or negligence of the priests as because his first measure, regarded as an expedient, did not answer the purpose, is evident from the fact that, according to the Chronicles, he did not content himself with placing the chest at the entrance, but had a proclamation made at the same time in Judah and Jerusalem, to offer the tax of Moses for the repair of the temple (ver. 9)—evidently with no other intention than to procure more liberal contributions. For, according to ver. 10, all the chief men and all the people rejoiced thereat, and cast their gifts into the chest, *i.e.* they offered their gifts with joy for the purpose that had been proclaimed.—The other points of difference between the Chronicles and our text are unimportant. For instance, that they placed the chest “at the gate of the house of Jehovah on the outside.” The בְּיָמִין בְּבֹאֲאִישׁ בֵּית merely defines the expression in our text, בְּיָמִין, “to the right at the entrance into the temple,” more minutely, by showing that the ark was not placed on the inner side of the entrance into the court of the priests, but against the outer wall of it. This is not at variance with אֶצֶל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ in ver. 10; for even apart from the account in the Chronicles, and according to our own text, this cannot be understood as signifying that the ark had been placed in the middle of the court, as Thenius explains in opposition to בְּבֹאֲאִישׁ וְנוֹ, but can only mean at the entrance which was on the right side of the altar, *i.e.* at the southern entrance into the inner court. Again, the further variation, that according to the Chronicles (ver. 11), when the chest was full, an officer of the high priest came with the scribe (not the high priest himself), furnishes simply a more exact definition of our account, in which the high priest is named; just as, according to ver. 10, the high priest took the chest and bored a hole in the lid, which no intelligent commentator would understand as signifying that the high priest did it with his own hand. But there is a real difference between vers. 14 and 15 of our text and ver. 14 of the Chronicles, though the solution of this suggests itself at once on a closer inspection of the words. According to our account, there were no golden or silver vessels, basons, knives, bowls, etc., made with the money that was brought in, but it was given for the repairing of the house. In the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is



stated that "when they had finished the repairs, they brought the remnant of the money to the king and Jehoiada, and he (the king) used it for vessels for the house of the Lord, for vessels of the service," etc. But if we take proper notice of כְּכִלּוֹתָם here, there is no ground for saying that there is any contradiction, since the words of our text affirm nothing more than that none of the money that came in was applied to the making of vessels of worship so long as the repairing of the building went on. What took place afterwards is not stated in our account, which is limited to the main fact; this we learn from the Chronicles.—Ver. 15. No return was required of the inspectors as to the money handed over to them, because they were convinced of their honesty.—Ver. 16. The money obtained from trespass-offerings and sin-offerings was not brought into the house of Jehovah, *i.e.* was not applied to the repairing of the temple, but was left for the priests. In the case of the trespass-offering compensation had to be made for the earthly debt according to the valuation of the priest, with the addition of a fifth in money; and this was assigned to the priests not only in the case of a מַעֲלָא committed against Jehovah, but also when a neighbour had been injured in his property, if he had died in the meantime (see at Lev. v. 16 and Num. v. 9). On the other hand, in the case of the sin-offerings the priests received no money according to the law. Most of the commentators therefore assume, that those who lived at a distance had sent money to the priests, that they might offer sin-offerings with it, and what money was over they had retained for themselves. But there is not the slightest trace of any such custom, which is quite at variance with the idea of the sin-offering. It may probably have become a customary thing in the course of time, for those who presented these offerings to compensate the officiating priest for his trouble by a free-will gift.

Vers. 17 and 18. The brief account of *Hazael's campaign against Jerusalem* is completed by 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, 24. Hazael had gone down along the coast after defeating Israel (see ch. xiii. 3), for the purpose of making war upon Judah also, and had taken Gath, which Rehoboam had fortified (2 Chron. xi. 8). He then set his face, *i.e.* determined, to advance to Jerusalem; and Joash took the temple treasures, etc. According to the Chronicles, he sent an army against Judah and Jerusalem, which destroyed all the princes of the

nation and sent much booty to the king to Damascus, as the small army of the Syrians had smitten the very large army of Judah. To protect Jerusalem, after this defeat, from being taken by the Syrians, Joash sent all the treasures of the temple and palace to Hazael, and so purchased the withdrawal of the Syrians. In this way the two brief accounts of the war may be both reconciled and explained; whereas the opinion, still repeated by Thenius, that the two passages treat of different wars, has no tenable ground to rest upon. The Philistian city of *Gath* (see the Comm. on Josh. xiii. 3) appears to have belonged at that time to the kingdom of Judah, so that the Gathites were not among the Philistines who made an incursion into Judah in the reign of Joram along with the Arabian tribes of the south (2 Chron. xxi. 16). And it is impossible to determine when Gath was wrested from the Syrians again; probably in the time of Joash the son of Jehoahaz of Israel, as he recovered from the Syrians all the cities which they had taken from the Israelites under Jehoahaz (ch. xiii. 25), and even smote Amaziah the king of Judæa at Bethshemesh and took him prisoner (ch. xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxv. 21 sqq.). "All the consecrated things, which Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah had consecrated, and his own consecrated things," *i.e.* what he (Joash) himself had consecrated. The existence of such temple treasures is not at variance either with the previous account of the repairing of the temple, for Joash would not use the consecrated offerings for the restoration of the temple, as the current revenue of the temple was sufficient for the purpose, or with 2 Chron. xxiv. 7, where it is stated that Athaliah and her sons had applied all the קִרְשֵׁי בֵּית יְהוָה to the Baals (see at ch. xii. 5, p. 367); for even if we are to understand by the sons of Athaliah not bastard sons (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 582), but the brethren of Joram whom the Philistines and Arabians had carried off, Ahaziah and Joram, although they both of them served Baal, may, from political considerations, have now and then made consecrated gifts to the temple, if only in a passing fit of religious fear.

Vers. 19–21. *Conspiracy against Joash*.—Not long after the departure of the Syrians, who had left Joash, according to 2 Chron. xxiv. 25, with many wounds, his servants formed a conspiracy against him and slew him upon his bed in the house Millo, which goeth down to Silla. This description of the locality is perfectly obscure for us. The conjecture that בֵּית-מִלֹּא



was the house in the castle of *Millo* which is so frequently mentioned (see at 1 Kings ix. 15 and 2 Sam. v. 9), is precluded by the fact that this castle is always called מִלּוֹ (with the article). סָלָא is regarded by many as an abbreviation of מִסְלָה, "which goes down by the road;" and Thenius supposes that the reference is to the road which ran diagonally through the city from the Joppa gate to the Haram-area, corresponding to the present David's road. Others regard סָלָא as the proper name of a place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. It is impossible to get any certain meaning out of it, unless we alter the text according to arbitrary assumptions, as Thenius has done. The conspirators were *Jozachar* the son of *Shimeath*, and *Jehozabad* the son of *Shomer*, according to ver. 21; but according to the Chronicles (ver. 26), they were *Zabad* the son of *Shimeath* the Ammonitess, and *Jehozabad* the son of *Shimrith* the Moabite. The identity of the first names is perfectly obvious. יֶזְכָּר is a copyist's error for יֶזְכָּר, and this is the contracted form of יִזְכָּר. The difference in the second: son of *Shomer* according to our text, and son of the *Shimrith* according to the Chronicles, has probably also arisen from a slip of the pen, since שֹׁמֵר might easily be occasioned by the dropping out of the ת from the defectively written שֹׁמֵרֶת, although it is also possible that *Shomer* may be the name of the grandfather. Joash was buried with his fathers in the city of David; but according to ver. 25 of the Chronicles he was not buried in the graves of the kings. The two statements are not irreconcilable; and there may be good historical ground for the account in the Chronicles, as Bertheau acknowledges with perfect justice, in spite of the suspicion which has been cast upon it by Thenius.

CHAP. XIII. REIGNS OF JEHOAHAZ AND JOASH, KINGS OF ISRAEL.  
DEATH OF ELISHA.

Vers. 1-9. REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ. — Jehu was followed by Jehoahaz his son, "in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah." This synchronistic statement is not only at variance with ver. 10, but cannot be very well reconciled with ch. xii. 1. If Jehoahaz began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash king of Judah, and reigned seventeen years, his son cannot have followed him after his death in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, as is stated in ver. 10, for there are only fourteen years and possibly a few months between the twenty-third and thirty-

seventh years of Joash; and even if he ascended the throne at the commencement of the twenty-third year of the reign of Joash and died at the end of the thirty-seventh, they could only be reckoned as fifteen and not as seventeen years. Moreover, according to ch. xii. 1, Joash of Judah began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu, and therefore Athaliah, who ascended the throne at the same time as Jehu, reigned fully six years. If, therefore, the first year of Joash of Judah coincides with the seventh year of Jehu, the twenty-eighth year of Jehu must correspond to the twenty-second year of Joash of Judah; and in this year of Joash not only did Jehu die, but his son Jehoahaz ascended the throne. Consequently we must substitute the twenty-second year of Joash, or perhaps, still more correctly, the twenty-first year (Josephus), for the twenty-third.<sup>1</sup> If Jehu died in the earliest months of the twenty-eighth year of his reign, so that he only reigned twenty-seven years and one or two months, his death and his son's ascent of the throne might

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Thenius, who follows des Vignoles and Winer, not only defends the correctness of the account "in the twenty-third year of Joash," because it agrees with the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu (ch. x. 36), but also holds fast the seventeen years' duration of the reign of Jehoahaz on account of its agreement with ch. xiv. 1; for 6 years (Athaliah) + 40 years (Joash) = 46 years, and 28 years (Jehu) + 17 years (Jehoahaz) = 45 years; so that, as is there affirmed, Amaziah the son of Joash ascended the throne in the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz. But to arrive at this result he assumes that there is an error in ver. 10, namely, that instead of the thirty-seventh year we ought to read the thirty-ninth year there, according to the edit. Aldina of the LXX. But apart from the fact that, as we have shown above in the text, the datum "in the twenty-third year of Joash" does not harmonize with the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu, this solution of the difference is overthrown by the circumstance that, in order to obtain this agreement between ver. 1 and ver. 14, Thenius reckons the years of the reigns not only of Athaliah and Joash, but also of Jehu and Jehoahaz, as full years (the former 16 + 40, the latter 28 + 17); whereas, in order to bring the datum in ver. 1 (in the twenty-third year of Joash) into harmony with the emendation proposed in ver. 10 (in the thirty-ninth year of Joash), he reckons the length of the reign of Jehoahaz as only sixteen years (instead of seventeen). For example, if Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years, supposing that he ascended the throne in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah, he died in the fortieth year of Joash (not the thirty-ninth), and his son began to reign the same year. In that case Amaziah would have begun to reign in the first year of Jehoash of Israel, and not in the second, as is stated in ch. xiv. 1.—The reading of the LXX. (ed. Ald. ver. 10), "in the thirty-ninth year," is therefore nothing but a mistaken emendation resorted to for the purpose of removing a discrepancy, but of no critical value.



fall even in the closing months of the twenty-first year of the reign of Joash of Judah. And from the twenty-first to the thirty-seventh year of Joash, Jehoahaz may have reigned sixteen years and a few months, and his reign be described as lasting seventeen years.—Vers. 2, 3. As Jehoahaz trod in the footsteps of his forefathers and continued the sin of Jeroboam (the worship of the calves), the Lord punished Israel during his reign even more than in that of his predecessor. The longer and the more obstinately the sin was continued, the more severe did the punishment become. He gave them (the Israelites) into the power of the Syrian king Hazael and his son Benhadad בְּלִי-הַיָּמִים, “the whole time,” *sc.* of the reign of Jehoahaz (*vid.* ver. 22); not of the reigns of Hazael and Benhadad, as Thenius supposes in direct opposition to vers. 24 and 25. According to ver. 7, the Syrians so far destroyed the Israelitish army, that only fifty horsemen, ten war-chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers were left.—Vers. 4 sqq. In this oppression Jehoahaz prayed to the Lord (יְיָ הִלָּה פָנָי as in 1 Kings xiii. 6); and the Lord heard this prayer, because He saw their oppression at the hands of the Syrians, and gave Israel a saviour, so that they came out from the power of the Syrians and dwelt in their booths again, as before, *i.e.* were able to live peaceably again in their houses, without being driven off and led away by the foe. The saviour, מוֹשִׁיעַ, was neither an angel, nor the prophet Elisha, nor *quidam e ducibus Joasi*, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, nor a victory obtained by Jehoahaz over the Syrians, nor merely Jeroboam (Thenius); but the Lord gave them the saviour in the two successors of Jehoahaz, in the kings Jehoash and Jeroboam, the former of whom wrested from the Syrians all the cities that had been conquered by them under his father (ver. 25), while the latter restored the ancient boundaries of Israel (ch. xiv. 25). According to vers. 22-25, the oppression by the Syrians lasted as long as Jehoahaz lived; but after his death the Lord had compassion upon Israel, and after the death of Hazael, when his son Benhadad had become king, Jehoash recovered from Benhadad all the Israelitish cities that had been taken by the Syrians. It is obvious from this, that the oppression which Benhadad the son of Hazael inflicted upon Israel, according to ver. 3, falls within the period of his father's reign, so that it was not as king, but as commander-in-chief under his father, that he oppressed Israel, and therefore he is not even

called king in ver. 3.—Ver. 6. “Only they departed not,” etc., is inserted as a parenthesis and must be expressed thus: “although they departed not from the sin of Jeroboam.”—Ver. 7. “For (כִּי) he had not left,” etc., furnishes the ground for ver. 5: God gave them a saviour, . . . although they did not desist from the sin of Jeroboam, . . . for Israel had been brought to the last extremity; He (Jehovah) had left to Jehoahaz people (עַם, people of war), only fifty horsemen, etc. For הַחֲטִי instead of הַחֲטִיָּה (ver. 6), see at 1 Kings xxi. 21. The suffix בָּה in ver. 6 refers to חֲטִיָּה, just as that in מִמֶּנָּה in ver. 2 (see at ch. iii. 3). “And even the Asherah was (still) standing at Samaria,” probably from the time of Ahab downwards (1 Kings xvi. 33), since Jehu is not said to have destroyed it (ch. x. 26 sqq.). וַיִּשְׁמֵם וְגו', “and had made them like dust for trampling upon,”—an expression denoting utter destruction.—Vers. 8 and 9. Close of the reign of Jehoahaz. Jehoahaz had probably shown his might in the war with the Syrians, although he had been overcome.

Vers. 10–13. REIGN OF JEHOASH OR JOASH OF ISRAEL.—On the commencement of his reign see at ver. 1. He also walked in the sins of Jeroboam (compare ver. 11 with vers. 2 and 6). The war with Amaziah referred to in ver. 12 is related in the history of this king in ch. xiv. 8–14; and the close of the reign of Joash is also recorded there (vers. 15 and 16) with the standing formula. And even here it ought not to be introduced till the end of the chapter, instead of in vers. 12 and 13, inasmuch as the verses which follow relate several things belonging to the reign of Joash. But as they are connected with the termination of Elisha's life, it was quite admissible to wind up the reign of Joash with ver. 13.

Vers. 14–21. ILLNESS AND DEATH OF THE PROPHET ELISHA.—Ver. 14. When Elisha was taken ill with the sickness of which he was to die, king Joash visited him and wept over his face, *i.e.* bending over the sick man as he lay, and exclaimed, “My father, my father! the chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!” just as Elisha had mourned over the departure of Elijah (ch. ii. 12). This lamentation of the king at the approaching death of the prophet shows that Joash knew how to value his labours. And on account of this faith which was manifested in his recognition of the prophet's worth, the Lord gave the king another gracious assurance through the dying Elisha, which was confirmed



by means of a symbolical action.—Vers. 15 sqq. “Take—said Elisha to Joash—bow and arrows, . . . and let thy hand pass over the bow” (הִרְכֵּב), *i.e.* stretch the bow. He then placed his hands upon the king’s hands, as a sign that the power which was to be given to the bow-shot came from the Lord through the mediation of the prophet. He then directed him to open the window towards the east and shoot, adding as he shot off the arrow: “An arrow of salvation from the Lord, and an arrow of salvation against the Syrians; and thou wilt smite the Syrians at Aphek (see at 1 Kings xx. 26) to destruction.” The arrow that was shot off was to be a symbol of the help of the Lord against the Syrians to their destruction. This promise the king was then to appropriate to himself through an act of his own. Elisha therefore directed him (ver. 18) to “take the arrows;” and when he had taken them, said: הִךְ אֶרֶץ, “strike to the earth,” *i.e.* shoot the arrows to the ground, not “smite the earth with the bundle of arrows” (Thenius), which neither agrees with the shooting of the first arrow, nor admits of a grammatical vindication; for הִכָּה, when used of an arrow, signifies to shoot and to strike with the arrow shot off, *i.e.* to wound or to kill (cf. ch. ix. 24, 1 Kings xxii. 34). The shooting of the arrows to the earth was intended to symbolize the overthrow of the Syrians. “And the king shot three times, and then stood (still),” *i.e.* left off shooting.—Ver. 19. Elisha was angry at this, and said: “Thou shouldst shoot five or six times, thou wouldst then have smitten the Syrians to destruction; but now thou wilt smite them three times.” לָהֶבֶת: it was to shoot, *i.e.* thou shouldst shoot; compare Ewald, § 237, *c*; and for אִי הִכִּיתָ, then hadst thou smitten, *vid.* Ewald, § 358, *a*. As the king was told that the arrow shot off signified a victory over the Syrians, he ought to have shot off all the arrows, to secure a complete victory over them. When, therefore, he left off after shooting only three times, this was a sign that he was wanting in the proper zeal for obtaining the divine promise, *i.e.* in true faith in the omnipotence of God to fulfil His promise.<sup>1</sup> Elisha was angry at this weakness of the king’s faith, and told him that by leaving off so soon he had deprived himself of a perfect victory over the Syrians.—Vers. 20,

<sup>1</sup> “When the king reflected upon the power of the kings of Syria, since he had not implicit faith in Elisha, he thought that it was enough if he struck the earth three times, fearing that the prophecy might not be fulfilled if he should strike more blows upon the ground.”—CLERICUS.

21. Elisha then died at a great age. As he had been called by Elijah to be a prophet in the reign of Ahab and did not die till that of Joash, and forty-one years elapsed between the year that Ahab died and the commencement of the reign of Joash, he must have held his prophetic office for at least fifty years, and have attained the age of eighty. "And they buried him just as marauding bands of Moabites entered the land. And it came to pass, that at the burial of a man they saw the marauding bands coming, and placed the dead man in the greatest haste in the grave of Elisha," for the purpose of escaping from the enemy. But when the (dead) man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life again, and rose up upon his feet. וַיָּדֹרֵי מוֹאָב וְנֹ is a circumstantial clause. The difficult expression בָּא שָׁנָה, "a year had come," can only have the meaning given by the LXX. and Chald.: "when a year had come," and evidently indicates that the burial of Elisha occurred at the time when the yearly returning bands of Moabitish marauders invaded the land. Ewald (*Krit. Gramm.* p. 528) would therefore read בּוֹא, a coming of the year, in which case the words would be grammatically subordinate to the main clause. Luther renders it "the same year," *in ipso anno*, after the Vulgate and Syriac, as if the reading had been בָּהּ שָׁנָה. הֵם, they, the people who had just buried a man. יִשְׁלִיכוּ, not threw, but placed hastily. וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּנֵּעַ: and the man went and touched. וַיֵּלֶךְ serves as a pictorial delineation of the thought, that as soon as the dead man touched the bones of Elisha he came to life. וַיֵּלֶךְ is not only applied to the motion of inanimate objects, but also to the gradual progress of any transaction. The conjecture of Thenius and Hitzig, וַיֵּלְכוּ, "and they went away," is quite unsuitable. The earlier Israelites did not bury their dead in coffins, but wrapped them in linen cloths and laid them in tombs hewn out of the rock. The tomb was then covered with a stone, which could easily be removed. The dead man, who was placed thus hurriedly in the tomb which had been opened, might therefore easily come into contact with the bones of Elisha. The design of this miracle of the restoration of the dead man to life was not to show how even in the grave Elisha surpassed his master Elijah in miraculous power (Ephr. Syr. and others), but to impress the seal of divine attestation upon the prophecy of the dying prophet concerning the victory of Joash over the Syrians (Wisd. xlviii. 13, 14), since the Lord thereby bore witness that He was not the God of the dead, but of the



living, and that His spirit was raised above death and corruptibility.—The opinion that the dead man was restored to life again in a natural manner, through the violent shaking occasioned by the fall, or through the coolness of the tomb, needs no refutation.

Vers. 22-25. The prophecy which Elisha uttered before his death is here followed immediately by the account of its fulfilment, and to this end the oppression of the Israelites by Hazael is mentioned once more, together with that turn of affairs which took place through the compassion of God after the death of Hazael and in the reign of his son Benhadad. לָחֵץ is a plu-perfect: "Hazael *had* oppressed" (for the fact itself compare vers. 4 and 7). For the sake of the covenant made with the patriarchs the Lord turned again to the Israelites, and would not destroy them, and did not cast them away from His face עַד עַתָּה ("till now"), as was the case afterwards, but delivered them from the threatening destruction through the death of Hazael. For in the reign of his son and successor Benhadad, Joash the son of Jehoahaz took from him again (וַיִּשָּׁב) is to be connected with (וַיִּקַּח) the cities which he (Hazael) had taken from Jehoahaz in the war. These cities which Hazael had wrested from Jehoahaz were on this side of the Jordan, for Hazael had conquered all Gilead in the time of Jehu (ch. x. 32, 33). Joash recovered the former from Benhadad, whilst his son Jeroboam reconquered Gilead also (see at ch. xiv. 25).

#### CHAP. XIV. REIGNS OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH, AND JEROBOAM II. OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1-22. REIGN OF AMAZIAH OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxv.).—Vers. 1-7. *Length and spirit of his reign, and his victory over the Edomites.*—Ver. 1. Amaziah began to reign in the second year of Joash of Israel. Now as Joash of Israel ascended the throne, according to ch. xiii. 10, in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, the latter cannot have reigned thirty-nine full years, which might be reckoned as forty (ch. xii. 1), according to the principle mentioned at p. 186 sq. of reckoning the current years as complete years, if the commencement of his reign took place a month or two before Nisan, and his death occurred a month or two after, without its being necessary to assume a regency.—Vers. 2, 3. Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years in the same theocratical spirit as his father Joash, only not like his ancestor David, *i.e.*, according to the correct explanation in 2 Chron. xxv. 2, not

with לִבְּבָ שָׁלֹם (see at 1 Kings xi. 4), since Amaziah, like his father Joash (see at ch. xii. 3), fell into idolatry in the closing years of his reign (cf. 2 Chron. xxv. 14 sqq.).—Only the high places were not taken away, etc.—Vers. 5, 6. After establishing his own government, he punished the murderers of his father with death; but, according to the law in Deut. xxiv. 16, he did not slay their children also, as was commonly the custom in the East in ancient times, and may very frequently have been done in Israel as well. The *Chethib* יָמוֹת is correct, and the *Keri* יָמֹת is an unnecessary alteration made after Deuteronomy.—Ver. 7. The brief account of the defeat of the Edomites in the Salt Valley and of the taking of the city of *Sela* is completed by 2 Chron. xxv. 6–16. According to the latter, Amaziah sought to strengthen his own considerable army by the addition of 100,000 Israelitish mercenaries; but at the exhortation of a prophet he sent the hired Israelites away again, at which they were so enraged, that on their way home they plundered several of the cities of Judah and put many men to death. The Edomites had revolted from Judah in the reign of Joram (ch. viii. 20 sqq.); Amaziah now sought to re-establish his rule over them, in which he was so far successful, that he completely defeated them, slaying 10,000 in the battle and then taking their capital, so that his successor Uzziah was also able to incorporate the Edomitish port of Elath in his own kingdom once more (ver. 22). On the Salt Valley (יַיִס־הַמֶּלַח for יַיִס־הַמֶּלַח in the Chronicles), a marshy salt plain in the south of the Dead Sea, see at 2 Sam. viii. 13. According to ver. 12 of the Chronicles, in addition to the 10,000 who were slain in battle, 10,000 Edomites were taken prisoners and cast headlong alive from the top of a rock. הַפֶּלֶע (the rock) with the article, because the epithet is founded upon the peculiar nature of the city, was probably the capital of the Edomites, called by the Greeks ἡ Πέτρα, and bore this name from its situation and the mode in which it was built, since it was erected in a valley surrounded by rocks, and that in such a manner that the houses were partly hewn in the natural rock. Of this commercial city, which was still flourishing in the first centuries of the Christian era, splendid ruins have been preserved in a valley on the eastern side of the ghor which runs down to the Elanitic Gulf, about two days' journey from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, on the east of Mount *Hor*, to which the Crusaders gave the name of *vallis*



*Moysi*, and which the Arabs still call *Wady Musa* (see Robinson, *Pal.* ii. pp. 512 sqq., and for the history of this city, pp. 574 sqq., and Ritter's *Erdkunde*, xiv. pp. 1103 sqq.).

Vers. 8-14. *War with Joash of Israel*.—Ver. 8. Amaziah then sent a challenge to the Israelitish king Joash to go to war with him. The outward reason for this was no doubt the hostile acts that had been performed by the Israelitish troops, which had been hired for the war with Edom and then sent back again (2 Chron. xxv. 13). But the inward ground was the pride which had crept upon Amaziah in consequence of his victory over the Edomites, and had so far carried him away, that he not only forgot the Lord his God, to whom he was indebted for this victory, and brought to Jerusalem the gods of the Edomites which he had taken in the war and worshipped them, and silenced with threats the prophet who condemned this idolatry (2 Chron. xxv. 14 sqq.), but in his proud reliance upon his own power challenged the Israelitish king to war.—Vers. 9, 10. Jehoash (Joash) answered his insolent challenge, “Come, we will see one another face to face,” *i.e.* measure swords with one another in war, with a similar fable to that with which Jotham had once instructed his fellow-citizens (Judg. ix. 8 sqq.). “The thorn-bush on Lebanon asked the cedar on Lebanon for its daughter as a wife for his son, and beasts of the field went by and trampled down the thorn-bush.” This fable is, of course, not to be interpreted literally, as though Amaziah were the thorn-bush, and Jehoash the cedar, and the wild beasts the warriors; but the thorn-bush putting itself upon an equality with the cedar is a figurative representation of a proud man overrating his strength, and the desire expressed to the cedar of a wish surpassing the bounds of one's condition; so that Thenius is not warranted in inferring from this that Amaziah had in his mind the subjugation of Israel to Judah again. The trampling down of the thorn-bush by a wild beast is only meant to set forth the sudden overthrow and destruction which may come unexpectedly upon the proud man in the midst of his daring plans. Ver. 10 contains the application of the parable. The victory over Edom has made thee high-minded. נִשְׂאָה לְבָר: thy heart has lifted thee up, equivalent to, thou hast become high-minded. הִכְבֵּד, “be honoured,” *i.e.* be content with the fame thou hast acquired at Edom, “and stay at home.” Wherefore shouldst thou meddle with misfortune? הִתְנַהֵּב, to engage in

conflict or war. Misfortune is thought of as an enemy, with whom he wanted to fight.—Vers. 11, 12. But Amaziah paid no attention to this warning. A battle was fought at *Beth-shemesh* (Ain-Shems, on the border of Judah and Dan, see at Josh. xv. 10); Judah was smitten by Israel, so that every one fled to his home.—Ver. 13. Jehoash took king Amaziah prisoner, and then came to Jerusalem, and had four hundred cubits of the wall broken down at the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, and then returned to Samaria with the treasures of the palace and temple, and with hostages. The *Chethîb* יִבְאִי is to be pointed יִבְאִי, the vowel *i* being placed after *א*, as in several other cases (see Ewald, § 18, *b*). There is no ground for altering יִבְאִי after the Chronicles (Thenius), although the reading in the Chronicles elucidates the thought. For if Jehoash took Amaziah prisoner at Beth-shemesh and then came to Jerusalem, he no doubt brought his prisoner with him, for Amaziah remained king and reigned for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash (ver. 17). The *Ephraim gate*, which is generally supposed to be the same as the gate of Benjamin (Jer. xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 7; Zech. xiv. 10; compare Neh. viii. 16, xii. 39), stood in the middle of the north wall of Jerusalem, through which the road to Benjamin and Ephraim ran; and the *corner gate* was at the north-western corner of the same wall, as we may see from Jer. xxxi. 38 and Zech. xiv. 10. If, then, Jehoash had four hundred cubits of the wall thrown down at the gate Ephraim to the corner gate, the distance between the two gates was not more than four hundred cubits, which applies to the northern wall of Zion, but not to the second wall, which defended the lower city towards the north, and must have been longer, and which, according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 5, was probably built for the first time by Hezekiah (*vid.* Krafft, *Topographie v. Jerus.* pp. 117 sqq.). Jehoash destroyed this portion of the Zion wall, that the city might be left defenceless, as Jerusalem could be most easily taken on the level northern side.<sup>1</sup>—The treasures of the temple and palace, which Jehoash took away, cannot, according to ch. xii. 19, have

<sup>1</sup> Thenius takes a different view. According to the description which Josephus gives of this event (*Ant.* ix. 9, 3), he assumes that Jehoash had the four hundred cubits of the city wall thrown down, that he might get a magnificent gate (?) for himself and the invading army; and he endeavours to support this assumption by stating that the space between the Ephraim gate and the corner gate was much more than four hundred cubits. But this



been very considerable. **בְּנֵי הַתְּעִרְבוֹת**, sons of the citizenships, *i.e.* hostages (*obsides*, Vulg.). He took hostages in return for the release of Amaziah, as pledges that he would keep the peace.

Vers. 15-17. The repetition of the notice concerning the end of the reign of Joash, together with the formula from ch. xiii. 12 and 13, may probably be explained from the fact, that in the annals of the kings of Israel it stood after the account of the war between Jehoash and Amaziah. This may be inferred from the circumstance that the name of Joash is spelt invariably **יְהוֹאָשׁ** here, whereas in the closing notices in ch. xiii. 12 and 13 we have the later form **יֹאָשׁ**, the one which was no doubt adopted by the author of our books. But he might be induced to give these notices once more as he found them in his original sources, from the statement in ver. 17, that Amaziah outlived Jehoash fifteen years, seeing therein a manifestation of the grace of God, who would not destroy Amaziah notwithstanding his pride, but delivered him, through the death of his victor, from further injuries at his hands. As Amaziah ascended the throne in the second year of the sixteen years' reign of Jehoash, and before his war with Israel made war upon the Edomites and overcame them, the war with Israel can only fall in the closing years of Jehoash, and this king cannot very long have survived his triumph over the king of Judah.

Vers. 18-22. *Conspiracy against Amaziah.*—Ver. 19. Amaziah, like his father Joash, did not die a natural death. They made a conspiracy against him at Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish, whither murderers were sent after him, who slew him there. The earlier commentators sought for the cause of this conspiracy in the unfortunate result of the war with Jehoash; but this conjecture is at variance with the circumstance that the conspiracy did not break out till fifteen years or more after that event. It is true that in 2 Chron. xxv. 27 we read "from the time that Amaziah departed from the Lord, they formed a conspiracy against him;" but even this statement cannot be understood in any other way than that Amaziah's apostasy gave occasion for discontent, which eventually led to a conspiracy.

assertion is based upon an assumption which cannot be sustained, namely, that the second wall built by Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 5) was already in existence in the time of Amaziah, and that the gates mentioned were in this wall. The subjective view of the matter in Josephus has no more worth than that of a simple conjecture.

For his apostasy began with the introduction of Edomitish deities into Jerusalem after the defeat of the Edomites, and therefore before the war with Jehoash, in the first part of his reign, whereas the conspiracy cannot possibly have lasted fifteen years or more before it came to a head. *Lachish*, in the lowlands of Judah, has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Um Lakis* (see at Josh x. 3).—Ver. 20. "They lifted him upon the horses," *i.e.* upon the hearse to which the king's horses had been harnessed, and brought him to Jerusalem, where he was buried with his fathers, *i.e.* in the royal tomb.—Ver. 21. All the people of Judah, *i.e.* the whole nation, not the whole of the men of war (Thenius), thereupon made his son *Azariah* (*Uzziah*) king, who was only sixteen years old. *עֲזַרְיָה* or *עֲזִירְיָה* is the name given to this king here and ch. xv. 1, 6, 8, 17, 23, and 27, and 1 Chron. iii. 12; whereas in ch. xv. 13, 30, 32, 34, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 3, 11, etc., and also Isa. i. 1, vi. 1, Hos. i. 1, Amos i. 1, and Zech. xiv. 5, he is called *עֲזִיָּה* or *עֲזִירְיָה* (*Uzziah*). This variation in the name is too constant to be attributable to a copyist's error. Even the conjecture that *Azariah* adopted the name *Uzziah* as king, or that it was given to him by the soldiers after a successful campaign (Thenius), does not explain the use of the two names in our historical books. We must rather assume that the two names, which are related in meaning, were used promiscuously. *עֲזַרְיָה* signifies "in Jehovah is help;" *עֲזִיָּה*, "whose strength is Jehovah." This is favoured by the circumstance adduced by Bertheau, that among the descendants of Kohath we also find an *Uzziah* who bears the name *Azariah* (1 Chron. vi. 9 and 21), and similarly among the descendants of Heman an *Uzziel* with the name *Azarel* (1 Chron. xxv. 4 and 18).—Ver. 22. Immediately after his ascent of the throne, *Uzziah* built, *i.e.* fortified, *Elath*, the Idumæan port (see at 1 Kings ix. 26), and restored it to Judah again. It is evident from this that *Uzziah* completed the renewed subjugation of Edom which his father had begun. The position in which this notice stands, immediately after his ascent of the throne and before the account of the duration and character of his reign, may be explained in all probability from the importance of the work itself, which not only distinguished the commencement of his reign, but also gave evidence of its power.

Vers. 23–29. REIGN OF JEROBOAM II. OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 23.



The statement that Jeroboam the son of Joash (Jehoash) ascended the throne in the fifteenth year of Amaziah, agrees with ver. 17, according to which Amaziah outlived Jehoash fifteen years, since Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years. On the other hand, the forty-one years' duration of his reign does not agree with the statement in ch. xv. 8, that his son Zachariah did not become king till the thirty-eighth year of Azariah (Uzziah); and therefore Thenius proposes to alter the number 41 into 51, Ewald into 53. For further remarks, see ch. xv. 8. Jeroboam also adhered firmly to the image-worship of his ancestors, but he raised his kingdom again to great power.—Ver. 25. He brought back (הָשִׁיב), *i.e.* restored, the boundary of Israel from towards Hamath in the north, to the point to which the kingdom extended in the time of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 65), to the sea of the Arabah (the present Ghor), *i.e.* to the Dead Sea (compare Deut. iii. 17, and iv. 49, from which this designation of the southern border of the kingdom of the ten tribes arose), “according to the word of the Lord, which He had spoken through the prophet Jonah,” who had probably used this designation of the southern boundary, which was borrowed from the Pentateuch, in the announcement which he made. The extent of the kingdom of Israel in the reign of Jeroboam is defined in the same manner in Amos vi. 14, but instead of יַם הָעֲרָבָה the נַחַל הָעֲרָבָה is mentioned, *i.e.* in all probability the Wady *el Ahsy*, which formed the boundary between Moab and Edom; from which we may see that Jeroboam had also subjugated the Moabites to his kingdom, which is not only rendered probable by ch. iii. 6 sqq., but is also implied in the words that he restored the former boundary of the kingdom of Israel.—On the prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai, see the Comm. on Jon. i. 1. *Gath-Hepher*, in the tribe of Zebulun, is the present village of *Meshed*, to the north of Nazareth (see at Josh. xix. 13).—Vers. 26, 27. The higher ground for this strengthening of Israel in the time of Jeroboam was to be found in the compassion of God. The Lord saw the great oppression and helpless condition of Israel, and had not yet pronounced the decree of rejection. He therefore sent help through Jeroboam. מֶרָה מָאֵד without the article, and governed by אֲנִי יְשׁ (see Ewald, § 293, *a*), signifies very bitter, מֶרָה having taken the meaning of מֵרָה. This is the explanation adopted in all the ancient versions, and also by Dietrich in Ges. *Lex.* וְאִפְסָ עָנִיר וְנִי, verbatim from Deut.

xxxii. 36, to show that the kingdom of Israel had been brought to the utmost extremity of distress predicted there by Moses, and it was necessary that the Lord should interpose with His help, if His people were not utterly to perish. **לֹא רָפָר**: He had not yet spoken, *i.e.* had not yet uttered the decree of rejection through the mouth of a prophet. To blot out the name under the heavens is an abbreviated expression for: among the nations who dwelt under the heavens.—Vers. 28, 29. Of the rest of the history of Jeroboam we have nothing more than an intimation that he brought back Damascus and Hamath of Judah to Israel, *i.e.* subjugated it again to the kingdom of Israel. **לְיְהוּדָה** is a periphrastic form for the genitive, as proper names do not admit of any form of the construct state, and in this case the simple genitive would not have answered so well to the fact. For the meaning is: “whatever in the two kingdoms of Damascus and Hamath had formerly belonged to Judah in the times of David and Solomon.” By Damascus and Hamath we are not to understand the cities, but the kingdoms; for not only did the city of Hamath never belong to the kingdom of Israel, but it was situated outside the boundaries laid down by Moses for Israel (see at Num. xxxiv. 8). It cannot, therefore, have been re-conquered (**הִשָּׁב**) by Jeroboam. It was different with the city of Damascus, which David had conquered and even Solomon had not permanently lost (see at 1 Kings xi. 24). Consequently in the case of Damascus the capital is included in the kingdom.—Ver. 29. As Jeroboam reigned forty-one years, his death occurred in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah. If, then, his son did not begin to reign till the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, as is stated in ch. xv. 8, he cannot have come to the throne immediately after his father’s death (see at ch. xv. 8).

CHAP. XV. REIGNS OF AZARIAH OF JUDAH, ZACHARIAH, SHALLUM, MENAHEM, PEKAHIAH, AND PEKAH OF ISRAEL, AND JOTHAM OF JUDAH.

Vers. 1–7. REIGN OF AZARIAH (UZZIAH) OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxvi.).—The statement that “in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam Azariah began to reign” is at variance with ch. xiv. 2, 16, 17, and 23. If, for example, Azariah ascended the throne in the fifteenth year of Joash of Israel, and with his twenty-nine years’ reign outlived Joash fifteen years (ch. xiv. 2, 17); if, moreover, Jeroboam followed his father Joash in the



fifteenth year of Amaziah (ch. xiv. 23), and Amaziah died in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam; Azariah (Uzziah) must have become king in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam, since, according to ch. xiv. 21, the people made him king after the murder of his father, which precludes the supposition of an interregnum. Consequently the *datum* "in the twenty-seventh year" can only have crept into the text through the confounding of the numerals כ"ה (15) with כ"ז (27), and we must therefore read "in the fifteenth year."—Vers. 2 sqq. Beside the general characteristics of Uzziah's fifty-two years' reign, which are given in the standing formula, not a single special act is mentioned, although, according to 2 Chron. xxvi., he raised his kingdom to great earthly power and prosperity; probably for no other reason than because his enterprises had exerted no permanent influence upon the development of the kingdom of Judah, but all the useful fruits of his reign were destroyed again by the ungodly Ahaz. Uzziah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father Amaziah had done. For as the latter was unfaithful to the Lord in the closing years of his reign, so did Uzziah seek God only so long as Zechariah, who was experienced in divine visions, remained alive, and God gave success to his enterprises, so that during this time he carried on successful wars against the Philistines and Arabians, fortified the walls of Jerusalem with strong towers, built watch-towers in the desert, and constructed cisterns for the protection and supply of his numerous flocks, promoted agriculture and vine-growing, and organized a numerous and well-furnished army (2 Chron. xxvi. 5-15). But the great power to which he thereby attained produced such haughtiness, that he wanted to make himself high priest in his kingdom after the manner of the heathen kings, and usurping the sacred functions, which belonged according to the law to the Levitical priests alone, to offer incense in the temple, for which he was punished with leprosy upon the spot (ver. 5 compared with 2 Chron. xxvi. 16 sqq.). The king's leprosy is described in our account also as a punishment from God. **וַיִּנָּע**: Jehovah smote him, and he became leprous. This presupposes an act of guilt, and confirms the fuller account of this guilt given in the Chronicles, which Thenius, following the example of De Wette and Winer, could only call in question on the erroneous assumption "that the powerful king wanted to restore the regal high-priesthood exercised by David and Solomon." Oehler (*Herzog's Cycl.*)

has already shown that such an opinion is perfectly "groundless," since it is nowhere stated that David and Solomon performed with their own hands the functions assigned in the law to the priests in connection with the offering of sacrifice, as the co-operation of the priests is not precluded in connection with the sacrifices presented by these kings (2 Sam. vi. 17, and 1 Kings iii. 4, etc.).—Uzziah being afflicted with leprosy, was obliged to live in a separate house, and appoint his son Jotham as president of the royal house to judge the people, *i.e.* to conduct the administration of the kingdom.—The time when this event occurred is not stated either in our account or in the Chronicles. But this punishment from God cannot have fallen upon him before the last ten years of his fifty-two years' reign, because his son, who was only twenty-five years old when his father died (ver. 33, and 2 Chron. xxvii. 1), undertook the administration of the affairs of the kingdom at once, and therefore must have been at least fifteen years old. **בֵּית הַחֲפָשִׁית** is taken by Winer, Gesenius, and others, after the example of Iken, to signify *nosocomium*, an infirmary or lazaret-house, in accordance with the verb **חָפַשׂ**, *fecit*, II. *debilis, imbecillis fuit*. But this meaning cannot be traced in Hebrew, where **חָפַשׂ** is used in no other sense than free, set at liberty, *manumissus*. Consequently the rendering adopted by Aquila is correct, *οἶκος ἐλευθερίας*; and the explanation given by Kimchi of this epithet is, that the persons who lived there were those who were sent away from human society, or perhaps more correctly, those who were released from the world and its privileges and duties, or cut off from intercourse with God and man.—Ver. 7. When Uzziah died, he was buried with his fathers in the city of David, but because he died of leprosy, not in the royal family tomb, but, as the Chronicles (ver. 23) add to complete the account, "in the burial-field of the kings;" so that he was probably buried in the earth according to our mode. His son Jotham did not become king till after Uzziah's death, as he had not been regent, but only the administrator of the affairs of the kingdom during his father's leprosy.

Vers. 8–12. REIGN OF ZACHARIAH OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 8. "In the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, Zachariah the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel six months." As Jeroboam died in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah, according to our remarks on ch.



xiv. 29, there is an interregnum of eleven years between his death and the ascent of the throne by his son, as almost all the chronologists since the time of Usher have assumed. It is true that this interregnum may be set aside by assuming that Jeroboam reigned fifty-one or fifty-three years instead of forty-one, without the synchronism being altered in consequence. But as it is not very probable that the numeral letters נב or ננ should be confounded with נב, and as the conflict for the possession of the throne, which we meet with after the very brief reign of Zachariah, when taken in connection with various allusions in the prophecies of Hosea, rather favours the idea that the anarchy broke out immediately after the death of Jeroboam, we regard the assumption of an interregnum as resting on a better foundation than the removal of the chronological discrepancy by an alteration of the text.—Vers. 9 sqq. Zachariah also persevered in the sin of his fathers in connection with the calf-worship; therefore the word of the Lord pronounced upon Jehu (ch. x. 30) was fulfilled in him.—*Shallum* the son of Jabesh formed a conspiracy and put him to death קָבַל-עַם, before people, *i.e.* openly before the eyes of all.<sup>1</sup> As Israel would not suffer itself to be brought to repentance and to return to the Lord, its God and King, by the manifestations of divine grace in the times of Joash and Jeroboam, any more than by the severe judgments that preceded them, and the earnest admonitions of the prophets Hosea and Amos; the judgment of rejection could not fail eventually to burst forth upon the nation, which so basely despised the grace, long-suffering, and covenant-faithfulness of God. We therefore see the kingdom hasten with rapid steps towards its destruction after the death of Jeroboam. In the sixty-two years between the death of Jeroboam and the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser anarchy prevailed twice, in all for the space of twenty years, and six kings followed one another, only one of whom, viz. Menahem, died a natural death, so as to be succeeded by his son upon the throne. The other five were dethroned and murdered by rebels, so that, as Witsius has truly said, with the murder of Zachariah not only was the declaration of Hosea (i. 4) fulfilled, "I visit the blood-guiltiness of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu," but also the parallel utterance, "and I destroy the kingdom of the house of Israel," since the

<sup>1</sup> Ewald in the most marvellous manner has made קָבַל-עַם into a king (*Gesch.* iii. p. 598).

monarchy in Israel really ceased with Zachariah. "For the successors of Zachariah were not so much kings as robbers and tyrants, unworthy of the august name of kings, who lost with ignominy the tyranny which they had wickedly acquired, and as wickedly exercised."—WITSIUS, *Δεκαφυλ.* p. 320.

Vers. 13–16. REIGN OF SHALLUM.—Shallum reigned only a full month (יָרַח יָמִים), as in Deut. xxi. 13; see at Gen. xxix. 14). *Menahem* the son of Gadi then made war upon him from Tirzah; and by him he was smitten and slain. Menahem must have been a general or the commander-in-chief, as Josephus affirms. As soon as he became king he smote *Tiphsach*,—i.e. Thapsacus on the Euphrates, which has long since entirely disappeared, probably to be sought for in the neighbourhood of the present *Rakka*, by the ford of *el Hamman*, the north-eastern border city of the Israelitish kingdom in the time of Solomon (1 Kings v. 4), which came into the possession of the kingdom of Israel again when the ancient boundaries were restored by Jeroboam II. (ch. xiv. 25 and 28), but which had probably revolted again during the anarchy which arose after the death of Jeroboam,—“and all that were therein, and the territory thereof, from Tirzah; because they opened not (to him), therefore he smote it, and had them that were with child ripped up.” כְּתִירָצָה does not mean that Menahem laid the land or district waste from Tirzah to Tiphsach, but is to be taken in connection with יָכָה in this sense: he smote Tiphsach proceeding from Tirzah, etc. The position of this notice, namely, immediately after the account of the usurpation of the throne by Menahem and before the history of his reign, is analogous to that concerning Elath in the case of Uzziah (ch. xiv. 22), and, like the latter, is to be accounted for from the fact that the expedition of Menahem against Tiphsach formed the commencement of his reign, and, as we may infer from ver. 19, became very eventful not only for his own reign, but also for the kingdom of Israel generally. The reason why he proceeded from Tirzah against Tiphsach, was no doubt that it was in Tirzah, the present Tallusa, which was only three hours to the east of Samaria (see at 1 Kings xiv. 17), that the army of which Menahem was commander was posted, so that he had probably gone to Samaria with only a small body of men to overthrow Shallum, the murderer of Zachariah and usurper of the throne, and to make himself king. It is possible



that the army commanded by Menahem had already been collected in Tirzah to march against the city of Tiph-sach, which had revolted from Israel when Shallum seized upon the throne by the murder of Zachariah; so that after Menahem had removed the usurper, he carried out at once the campaign already resolved upon, and having taken Tiph-sach, punished it most cruelly for its revolt. On the cruel custom of ripping up the women with child, *i.e.* of cutting open their wombs, see ch. viii. 12, Amos i. 13, and Hos. xiv. 1. *Tiph-sach*, *Thapsacus*, appears to have been a strong fortress; and from its situation on the western bank of the Euphrates, at the termination of the great trade-road from Egypt, Phœnicia, and Syria to Mesopotamia and the kingdoms of Inner Asia (Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 2, pp. 164, 165; and Ritter, *Erdkunde*, x. pp. 1114-15), the possession of it was of great importance to the kingdom of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 17-22. REIGN OF MENAHEM.—Menahem's reign lasted ten full years (see at ver. 23), and resembled that of his pre-

<sup>1</sup> There is no foundation for the view propounded by Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 599), Simson (*Hosea*, pp. 20, 21), Thenius, and many others, that *Tiph-sach* was a city between Tirzah and Samaria, which Menahem laid waste on his march from Tirzah to Samaria to dethrone Shallum; for it rests upon nothing more than the perfectly unwarrantable and ungrammatical combination of מְתָרְצָה with אֶת-גְּבוּלָהּ, "its boundaries toward Tirzah" (Sims.), and upon the two worthless objections: (1) that the great distance of מְתָרְצָה from יְכָה precludes the rendering "going out from Tirzah;" and (2) that Menahem was not the man to be able to conquer Thapsacus on the Euphrates. But there is no foundation for the latter assertion, as we have no standard by which to estimate the strength and bravery of the Israelitish army commanded by Menahem. And the first objection falls to the ground with the correct rendering of מְתָרְצָה, *viz.* "proceeding from Tirzah," which is preferred even by Ewald and Thenius. With this rendering, the words by no means affirm that Menahem smote Tiph-sach from Tirzah *on the way to Samaria*. This is merely an inference drawn from ver. 13, according to which Menahem went from Tirzah to Samaria to overthrow Shallum. But this inference is open to the following objections: (1) that it is very improbable that there was a strong fortress between Tirzah and Samaria, which Menahem was obliged to take on his march before he could overthrow the usurper in the capital of the kingdom; and (2) that the name Tiph-sach, *trojectus*, ford, is by no means a suitable one for a city situated on the mountains between Tirzah and Samaria, and therefore, in order to carry out the hypothesis in question, Thenius proposes to alter *Tiph-sach* into *Tappuach*, without any critical warrant for so doing.

decessors in its attitude towards God. In ver 18, the expression כָּל-יָמָיו (all his days) is a very strange one, inasmuch as no such definition of time occurs in connection with the usual formula, either in this chapter (cf. vers. 24 and 28) or elsewhere (cf. ch. iii. 3, x. 31, xiii. 2, 11, etc.). The LXX. have instead of this, ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ (in his days). If we compare ver. 29, בְּיָמֵי פֶקַח בָּא (in the days of Pekah came, etc.), בְּיָמָיו בָּא might possibly be regarded as the original reading, from which a copyist's error כָּל-יָמָיו בָּא arose, after which כָּל-יָמָיו was connected with the preceding clause.—Ver. 19. In the time of Menahem, *Pul* king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem gave him 1000 talents of silver—more than two and a half millions of thalers (£375,000)—“that his hands might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand.” These words are understood by the majority of commentators from the time of Ephraem Syrus, when taken in connection with Hos. v. 13, as signifying that Menahem invited Pul, that he might establish his government with his assistance. But the words of Hosea, “Ephraim goes to the Assyrian,” *sc.* to seek for help (ch. v. 13, cf. vii. 11 and viii. 9), are far too general to be taken as referring specially to Menahem; and the assumption that Menahem invited Pul into the land is opposed by the words in the verse before us, “Pul came over the land.” Even the further statement that Menahem gave to Pul 1000 talents of silver when he came into the land, that he might help him to establish his government, presupposes at the most that a party opposed to Menahem had invited the Assyrians, to overthrow the usurper. At any rate, we may imagine, in perfect harmony with the words of our account, that Pul marched against Israel of his own accord, possibly induced to do so by Menahem's expedition against Thapsacus, and that his coming was simply turned to account as a good opportunity for disputing Menahem's possession of the throne he had usurped, so that Menahem, by paying the tribute mentioned, persuaded the Assyrian to withdraw, that he might deprive the opposing party of the Assyrian support, and thereby establish his own rule.—Ver. 20. To collect the requisite amount, Menahem imposed upon all persons of property a tax of fifty shekels each. יָצָא with עַל, he caused to arise, *i.e.* made a collection. הֵצִיא in a causative sense, from יָצָא, to arise, to be paid (ch. xii. 13). גְּבוּרֵי הַיָּל: not warriors, but men of property, as in Ruth ii. 1, 1 Sam. ix. 1. לְאִישׁ אֶחָד, for the individual. *Pul* was the first



king of Assyria who invaded the kingdom of Israel and prepared the way for the conquest of this kingdom by his successors, and for the extension of the Assyrian power as far as Egypt. According to the thorough investigation made by Marc. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Assurs u. Babels*, pp. 128 sqq.), *Pul*, whose name has not yet been discovered upon the Assyrian monuments, was the last king of Nineveh of the family of the *Derketades*, who still ruled over Babylon according to Berosus, and the last king but one of this dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 23-26. REIGN OF PEKAHIAH.—Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign “in the fiftieth year of Uzziah.” As Menahem had begun to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah and reigned ten years, he must have died in the forty-ninth year of Uzziah; and therefore, if his son did not become king till the fiftieth year, some months must have elapsed between the death of Menahem and Pekahiah’s ascent of the throne, probably because, in the existing disorganization of the kingdom, the possession of the throne by the latter was opposed. Pekahiah reigned in the spirit of his predecessors, but only for two years, as his aide-de-camp (שְׁלִישׁ, see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 8) *Pekah* conspired against him and slew him in the citadel (אֶרְמוֹן, see at 1 Kings xvi. 8) of the king’s palace, with *Argob* and *Aryeh*. Argob and Aryeh were not fellow-conspirators of Pekah, who helped to slay the king, but *principes Pekachjæ*, as Seb. Schmidt expresses it, probably aides-de-camp of Pekahiah, who were slain by the conspirators when defending their king. We must take the words in this sense on account of what follows: וְעִמּוֹ הָמַשִּׁים וְנָוִי, “and with him (Pekah) were fifty men of the Gileadites” (i.e. they helped him). The Gileadites probably belonged

<sup>1</sup> It is true that some trace of his expedition has been found in the monuments, since an inscription has been deciphered with tolerable certainty, stating that king *Minikhimmi* of *Samirina* (Menahem of Shomron or Samaria) paid tribute to an Assyrian king. But the name of this Assyrian king is not determined with certainty, as Rawlinson and Oppert read it *Tiglat-palassar*, and suppose Tiglath-pileser to be intended; whereas M. v. Niebuhr (p. 132, note 1) imagines it to be the full name of *Pul*, since no Assyrian king ever had a name of one syllable like *Pul* as his official name, and even before that Hincks had detected in the name *Minikhimmi* the king Menahem who had to purchase the friendship of the Assyrian ruler *Pul* with 1000 talents of silver. (Comp. J. Brandis, *über d. histor. Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyr. Inschriften*, Berl. 1856, p. 50.)

to the king's body-guard, and were under the command of the aides-de-camp of Pekah.

Vers. 27–31. REIGN OF PEKAH.—Pekah the son of Remaliah reigned twenty years.<sup>1</sup> During his reign the Assyrian king *Tiglath-pileser* came, and after conquering the fortified cities round Lake Merom took possession of Gilead and Galilee, namely the whole land of Naphtali, and led the inhabitants captive to Assyria. Tiglath-pileser (תִּגְלַת פִּלְאֶסֶר or תִּגְלַת פִּלְאֶסֶר, ch. xvi. 7; פִּלְאֶסֶר or תִּגְלַת פִּלְאֶסֶר, 1 Chron. v. 26, and 2 Chron. xxviii. 20; Θεγλαθβαλασάρ or Θαλγαθβελλασάρ, LXX.; written *Tiglat-palatsira* or *Tiglat-palatsar* on the Assyrian monuments, and interpreted by Gesenius and others “ruler of the Tigris,” although the reading of the name upon the monuments is still uncertain, and the explanation given a very uncertain one, since Tiglat or Tilgat is hardly identical with *Diglat* = Tigris, but is probably a name of the goddess *Derketo*, *Atergatis*), was, according to M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 156, 157), the last king of the *Derketade* dynasty, who, when the Medes and Babylonians threw off the Assyrian supremacy after the death of Pul, attempted to restore and extend the ancient dominion.<sup>2</sup> His expedition against Israel

<sup>1</sup> As this is apparently at variance not only with ver. 30, according to which Pekah was slain in the twentieth year of Jotham, *i.e.* in the fourth year of Ahaz, but also with ch. xvii. 1, according to which Hosea the murderer of Pekah became king in the twelfth year of Ahaz and reigned nine years, Ewald has added וְחִשֵּׁעַ after עִשְׂרִים without any hesitation, and lengthened Pekah's reign to twenty-nine years, whereas Thenius proposes to alter twenty into thirty. But we do not thereby obtain an actual agreement either with ver. 30 or with ch. xvii. 1, so that in both these passages Thenius is obliged to make further alterations in the text. For instance, if Pekah had reigned for thirty years from the fifty-second or closing year of Uzziah's reign, Hosea would have ascended the throne in the fourteenth year of Ahaz, supposing that he really became king immediately after the murder of Pekah, and not in the twelfth, as is stated in ch. xvii. 1. It is only with a reign of twenty-eight years and a few months (one year of Uzziah, sixteen of Jotham, and eleven of Ahaz), which might be called twenty-nine years, that the commencement of Hosea's reign could fall in the twelfth year of Ahaz. But the discrepancy with ver. 30, that Hosea conspired against Pekah and slew him in the twentieth year of Jotham, is not removed thereby. For further remarks see at ver. 30 and ch. xvii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> M. Duncker (*Gesch. des Alterthums*, i. pp. 658, 659) also assumes that the dynasty changed with the overthrow of the Derketades, but he places it considerably earlier, about the year 900 or 950 B.C., because on the one hand Niebuhr's reasons for his view cannot be sustained, and on the



falls, according to ver. 29 and ch. xvi. 9, in the closing years of Pekah, when Ahaz had come to the throne in Judah. The enumeration of his conquests in the kingdom of Israel commences with the most important cities, probably the leading fortifications. Then follow the districts of which he took possession, and the inhabitants of which he led into captivity. The cities mentioned are *Ijon*, probably the present *Ayun* on the north-eastern edge of the Merj Ayun; *Abel-Beth-Maacah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, on the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 1 Kings xv. 20); *Janoach*, which must not be confounded with the *Janocha* mentioned in Josh. xvi. 6, 7, on the border of Ephraim and Manasseh, but is to be sought for in Galilee or the tribe-territory of Naphtali, and has not yet been discovered; *Kedesh*, on the mountains to the west of Lake Huleh, which has been preserved as an insignificant village under the ancient name (see at Josh. xii. 22); *Hazor*, in the same region, but not yet traced with certainty (see at Josh. xi. 1). *Gilead* is the whole of the land to the east of the Jordan, the territory of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh (1 Chron. v. 26), which had only been wrested from the Syrians again a short time before by Jeroboam II., and restored to Israel (ch. xiv. 25, compared with ch. x. 33). הַגִּלְיָה (the feminine form of הַגָּלִיל, see Ewald, § 173, *h*) is more precisely defined by the apposition "all the land of Naphtali" (see at 1 Kings ix. 11).—In the place of אַשּׁוּרָה, "to the land of Assyria," the different regions to which the captives were transported are given in 1 Chron. v. 26. For further remarks on this point see at ch. xvii. 6.—Ver. 30. Pekah met with his death in a conspiracy organized by *Hosea* the son of Elah, who made himself king "in the twentieth year of Jotham." There is something very strange in this chronological datum, as Jotham only reigned sixteen years (ver. 33), and Ahaz began to reign in the seventeenth year of

other hand there are distinct indications that the change in the reigning family must have taken place about this time: viz. 1. in the ruins of the southern city of Nineveh, at Kalah, where we find the remains of the palaces of two rulers, who sat upon the throne of Assyria between the years 900 and 830, whereas the castles of Ninos and his descendants must undoubtedly have stood in the northern city, in Nineveh; 2. in the circumstance that from the time mentioned the Assyrian kingdom advanced with fresh warlike strength and in a fresh direction, which would agree with the change in the dynasty.—Which of these two assumptions is the correct one, cannot yet be decided in the present state of the researches on this subject.

Pekah (ch. xvi. 1); so that Pekah's death would fall in the fourth year of Ahaz. The reason for this striking statement can only be found, as Usher has shown (*Chronol. sacr.* p. 80), in the fact that nothing has yet been said about Jotham's successor Ahaz, because the reign of Jotham himself is not mentioned till vers. 32 sqq.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 32–38. REIGN OF JOTHAM OF JUDAH (cf. 2 Chron. xxvii.). —Ver. 32. "In the second year of Pekah Jotham began to reign." This agrees with the statement in ver. 27, that Pekah became king in the last year of Uzziah, supposing that it occurred at the commencement of the year. Jotham's sixteen years therefore came to a close in the seventeenth year of Pekah's reign (ch. xvi. 1). His reign was like that of his father Uzziah (compare vers. 34, 35 with vers. 3, 4), except, as is added in Chron. ver. 2, that he did not force himself into the temple of the Lord, as Uzziah had done (2 Chron. xxvi. 16).

<sup>1</sup> Other attempts to solve this difficulty are either arbitrary and precarious, e.g. the conjectures of the earlier chronologists quoted by Winer (*R. W. s. v. Jotham*), or forced, like the notion of Vaihinger in Herzog's *Cycl.* (art. *Jotham*), that the words *בן-עזיה ליותם* are to be eliminated as an interpolation, in which case the datum "in the twentieth year" becomes perfectly enigmatical; and again the assertion of Hitzig (*Comm. z. Jesaj.* pp. 72, 73), that instead of in the twentieth year of Jotham, we should read "in the twentieth year of Ahaz the son of Jotham," which could only be consistently carried out by altering the text of not less than seven passages (viz. ver. 33, ch. xvi. 1, and 2, 17; 2 Chron. xxvii. 1 and 8, and xxviii. 1); and lastly, the assumption of Thenius, that the words from *בשנת עזיה* to *עזיה* have crept into the text through a double mistake of the copyist and an arbitrary alteration of what had been thus falsely written, which is much too complicated to appear at all credible, even if the reasons which are supposed to render it probable had been more forcible and correct than they really are. For the first reason, viz. that the statement in what year of the contemporaneous ruler a king came to the throne is *always* first given when the history of this king commences, is disproved by ch. i. 17; the second, that the name of the king by the year of whose reign the accession of another is defined is invariably introduced with the epithet king of Judah or king of Israel, is shown by ch. xii. 2 and xvi. 1 to be not in accordance with fact; and the third, that this very king is never described by the introduction of his father's name, as *he is* here, except where the intention is to prevent misunderstanding, as in ch. xiv. 1, 23, or in the case of usurpers without ancestors (ver. 32, xvi. 1 and 15), is also incorrect in its first portion, for in the case of Amaziah in ch. xiv. 23 there was no misunderstanding to prevent, and even in the case of Joash in ch. xiv. 1 the epithet king of Israel would have been quite sufficient to guard against any misunderstanding.



All that is mentioned of his enterprises in the account before us is that he built the upper gate of the house of Jehovah, that is to say, that he restored it, or perhaps added to its beauty. The upper gate, according to Ezek. ix. 2 compared with ch. viii. 3, 5, 14 and 16, is the gate at the north side of the inner or upper court, where all the sacrifices were slaughtered, according to Ezek. xl. 38-43. We also find from 2 Chron. xxvii. 3 sqq. that he built against the wall of *Ophel*, and several cities in the mountains of Judah, and castles and towers in the forests, and subdued the Ammonites, so that they paid him tribute for three years. Jotham carried on with great vigour, therefore, the work which his father had began, to increase the material prosperity of his subjects.—Ver. 37. In those days the Lord began to send against Judah *Rezin*, etc. It is evident from the position of this verse at the close of the account of Jotham, that the incursions of the allied Syrians and Israelites into Judah under the command of *Rezin* and *Pekah* commenced in the closing years of Jotham, so that these foes appeared before Jerusalem at the very beginning of the reign of Ahaz.—It is true that the Syrians had been subjugated by Jeroboam II. (ch. xiv. 28); but in the anarchical condition of the Israelitish kingdom after his death, they had no doubt recovered their independence. They must also have been overcome by the Assyrians under *Pul*, for he could never have marched against Israel without having first of all conquered Syria. But as the power of the Assyrians was greatly weakened for a time by the falling away of the Medes and Babylonians, the Syrians had taken advantage of this weakness to refuse the payment of tribute to Assyria, and had formed an alliance with *Pekah* of Israel to conquer Judah, and thereby to strengthen their power so as to be able to offer a successful resistance to any attack from the side of the Euphrates.—But as ch. xvi. 6 sqq. and ch. xvii. show, it was otherwise decreed in the counsels of the Lord.

#### CHAP. XVI. REIGN OF KING AHAZ OF JUDAH.

With the reign of Ahaz a most eventful change took place in the development of the kingdom of Judah. Under the vigorous reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, by whom the earthly prosperity of the kingdom had been studiously advanced, there had been, as we may see from the prophecies of Isaiah, chs. ii.-vi., which date from this time, a prevalence of luxury and self-security, of un-

righteousness and forgetfulness of God, among the upper classes, in consequence of the increase of their wealth. Under Ahaz these sins grew into open apostasy from the Lord; for this weak and unprincipled ruler trod in the steps of the kings of Israel, and introduced image-worship and idolatrous practices of every kind, and at length went so far in his ungodliness as to shut up the doors of the porch of the temple and suspend the temple-worship prescribed by the law altogether. The punishment followed this apostasy without delay. The allied Syrians and Israelites completely defeated the Judæans, slew more than a hundred thousand men and led away a much larger number of prisoners, and then advanced to Jerusalem to put an end to the kingdom of Judah by the conquest of the capital. In this distress, instead of seeking help from the Lord, who promised him deliverance through the prophet Isaiah, Ahaz sought help from Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria, who came and delivered him from the oppression of Rezin and Pekah by the conquest of Damascus, Galilee, and the Israelitish land to the east of the Jordan, but who then oppressed him himself, so that Ahaz was obliged to purchase the friendship of this conqueror by sending him all the treasures of the temple and palace.—In the chapter before us we have first of all the general characteristics of the idolatry of Ahaz (vers. 2-4), then a summary account of his oppression by Rezin and Pekah, and his seeking help from the king of Assyria (vers. 5-9), and lastly a description of the erection of a heathen altar in the court of the temple on the site of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, and of other acts of demolition performed upon the older sacred objects in the temple-court (vers. 10-18). The parallel account in 2 Chron. xxviii. supplies many additions to the facts recorded here.

Vers. 1-4. On the time mentioned, "in the seventeenth year of Pekah Ahaz became king," see at ch. xv. 32. The datum "twenty years old" is a striking one, even if we compare with it ch. xviii. 2. As Ahaz reigned only sixteen years, and at his death his son Hezekiah became king at the age of twenty-five years (ch. xviii. 2), Ahaz must have begotten him in the eleventh year of his age. It is true that in southern lands this is neither impossible nor unknown,<sup>1</sup> but in the case of the kings of Judah

<sup>1</sup> In the East they marry girls of nine or ten years of age to boys of twelve or thirteen (Volney, *Reise*, ii. p. 360). Among the Indians husbands of ten years of age and wives of eight are mentioned (Thevenot, *Reisen*, iii. pp. 100



it would be without analogy. The reading found in the LXX., Syr., and Arab. at 2 Chron. xxviii. 1, and also in certain codd., viz. five and twenty instead of twenty, may therefore be a preferable one. According to this, Hezekiah, like Ahaz, was born in his father's sixteenth year.—Ver. 3. "Ahaz walked in the way of the kings of Israel," to which there is added by way of explanation in 2 Chron. xxviii. 2, "and also made molten images to the Baals." This refers, primarily, simply to the worship of Jehovah under the image of a calf, which they had invented; for this was the way in which all the kings of Israel walked. At the same time, in ch. viii. 18 the same formula is so used of Joram king of Judah as to include the worship of Baal by the dynasty of Ahab. Consequently in the verse before us also the way of the kings of Israel includes the worship of Baal, which is especially mentioned in the Chronicles.—"He even made his son pass through the fire," *i.e.* offered him in sacrifice to Moloch in the valley of Benhinnom (see at ch. xxiii. 10), after the abominations of the nations, whom Jehovah had cast out before Israel. Instead of בְּנוֹ we have the plural בָּנָיו in 2 Chron. xxviii. 3, and in ver. 16 מַלְכֵי אַשּׁוּר, kings of Asshur, instead of מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, although only one, viz. Tiglath-pileser, is spoken of. This repeated use of the plural shows very plainly that it is to be understood rhetorically, as expressing the thought in the most general manner, since the number was of less importance than the fact.<sup>1</sup> So far as the fact is concerned, we have here the first instance of an actual Moloch-sacrifice among the Israelites, *i.e.* of one performed by slaying and burning. For although the phrase

and 165). In Abyssinia boys of twelve and even ten years old marry (Rüppell, *Abessynien*, ii. p. 59). Among the Jews in Tiberias, mothers of eleven years of age and fathers of thirteen are not uncommon (Burckh. *Syrien*, p. 570); and Lynch saw a wife there, who to all appearance was a mere child about ten years of age, who had been married two years already. In the *epist. ad N. Carbonelli*, from Hieronymi *epist. ad Vitalem*, 132, and in an ancient *glossa*, Bochart has also cited examples of one boy of ten years and another of nine, *qui nutricem suam gravidavit*, together with several other cases of a similar kind from later writers. Cf. Bocharti *Opp.* i. (*Geogr. sacr.*) p. 920, ed. Lugd. 1692.

<sup>1</sup> The Greeks and Romans also use the plural instead of the singular in their rhetorical style of writing, especially when a father, a mother, or a son is spoken of. Cf. Cic. *de prov. cons.* xiv. 35: *si ad jucundissimos liberos, si ad clarissimum generum redire properaret*, where Julia, the only daughter of Cæsar, and the wife of Pompey the Great, is referred to; and for other examples see Caspari, *der Syr. Ephraimit. Krieg*, p. 41.

הַעֲבִיר בְּאֵשׁ or לְמֹלֶךְ does not in itself denote the slaying and burning of the children as Moloch-sacrifices, but primarily affirms nothing more than the simple passing through fire, a kind of februation or baptism of fire (see at Lev. xviii. 21); such passages as Ezek. xvi. 21 and Jer. vii. 31, where sacrificing in the valley of Benhinnom is called slaying and burning the children, show most distinctly that in the verse before us הַעֲבִיר בְּאֵשׁ is to be taken as signifying actual sacrificing, *i.e.* the burning of the children slain in sacrifice to Moloch, and, as the emphatic וַיִּבְעֵר indicates, that this kind of idolatrous worship, which had never been heard of before in Judah and Israel, was introduced by Ahaz.<sup>1</sup> In the Chronicles, therefore, הַעֲבִיר is correctly explained by וַיִּבְעֵר, "he burned;" though we cannot infer from this that הַעֲבִיר is always a mere conjecture for הַבְעִיר, as Geiger does (*Urschrift u. Uebers. der Bibel*, p. 305). The offering of his son for Moloch took place, in all probability, during the severe oppression of Ahaz by the Syrians, and was intended to appease the wrath of the gods, as was done by the king of the Moabites in similar circumstances (ch. iii. 27).—In ver. 4 the idolatry

<sup>1</sup> "If this idolatry had occurred among the Israelites before the time of Ahaz, its abominations would certainly not have been passed over by the biblical writers, who so frequently mention other forms of idolatry." These are the correct words of Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 65), who only errs in the fact that on the one hand he supposes the origin of human sacrifices in the time of Ahaz to have been inwardly connected with the appearance of the Assyrians, and traces them to the acquaintance of the Israelites with the Assyrian fire-deities *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech* (ch. xvii. 31), and on the other hand gives this explanation of the phrase, "cause to pass through the fire for Moloch," which is used to denote the sacrificing of children: "the burning of children was regarded as a *passage*, whereby, after the separation of the impure and earthly dross of the body, the children attained to union with the deity" (p. 329). To this J. G. Müller has correctly replied (in Herzog's *Cyclop.*): "This mystic, pantheistic, moralizing view of human sacrifices is not the ancient and original view of genuine heathenism. It is no more the view of Hither Asia than the Mexican view (*i.e.* the one which lay at the foundation of the custom of the ancient Mexicans, of passing the new-born boy four times through the fire). The Phœnician myths, which Movers (p. 329) quotes in support of his view, refer to the offering of human sacrifices in worship, and the moral view is a later addition belonging to Hellenism. The sacrifices were rather given to the gods as food, as is evident from innumerable passages (compare the primitive religions of America), and they have no moral aim, but are intended to reward or bribe the gods with costly presents, either because of calamities that have already passed, or because of those that are anticipated with alarm; and, as Movers himself admits (p. 301), to make atonement for ceremonial sins, *i.e.* to follow smaller sacrifices by those of greater value."



is described in the standing formulæ as sacrificing upon high places and hills, etc., as in 1 Kings xiv. 23. The temple-worship prescribed by the law could easily be continued along with this idolatry, since polytheism did not exclude the worship of Jehovah. It was not till the closing years of his reign that Ahaz went so far as to close the temple-hall, and thereby suspend the temple-worship (2 Chron. xxviii. 24); in any case it was not till after the alterations described in vers. 11 sqq. as having been made in the temple.

Vers. 5-9. Of the war which the allied Syrians and Israelites waged upon Ahaz, only the principal fact is mentioned in ver. 5, namely, that the enemy marched to Jerusalem to war, but were not able to make war upon the city, *i.e.* to conquer it; and in ver. 6 we have a brief notice of the capture of the port of Elath by the Syrians. We find ver. 5 again, with very trifling alterations, in Isa. vii. 1 at the head of the prophecy, in which the prophet promises the king the help of God and predicts that the plans of his enemies will fail. According to this, the allied kings intended to take Judah, to dethrone Ahaz, and to instal a vassal king, viz. the son of Tabeel. We learn still more concerning this war, which had already begun, according to ch. xv. 37, in the closing years of Jotham, from 2 Chron. xxviii. 5-15; namely, that the two kings inflicted great defeats upon Ahaz, and carried off many prisoners and a large amount of booty, but that the Israelites set their prisoners at liberty again, by the direction of the prophet *Oded*, and after feeding and clothing them, sent them back to their brethren. It is now generally admitted that these statements are not at variance with our account (as Ges., Winer, and others maintain), but can be easily reconciled with it, and simply serve to complete it.<sup>1</sup> The only questions in dispute are, whether the two accounts refer to two different campaigns, or merely to two different events in the same campaign, and whether the battles to which the Chronicles allude are to be placed before or after the siege of Jerusalem mentioned in our text. The first question cannot be absolutely decided, since there are no decisive arguments to

<sup>1</sup> Compare C. P. Caspari's article on the Syro-Ephraimitish war in the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz (*Univers. Progr. von Christiania*, 1849), where the different views concerning the relation between the two accounts are fully discussed, and the objections to the credibility of the account given in the Chronicles most conclusively answered.

be found in favour of either the one supposition or the other ; and even "the *one* strong argument" which Caspari finds in Isa. vii. 6 against the idea of two campaigns is not conclusive. For if the design which the prophet there attributes to the allied kings, "we will make a breach in Judah," *i.e.* storm his fortresses and his passes and conquer them, does obviously presuppose, that at the time when the enemy spake or thought in this manner, Judah was still standing uninjured and unconquered, and therefore the battles mentioned in 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6 cannot yet have been fought ; it by no means follows from the connection between Isa. vii. 6 and ver. 1 (of the same chapter) that ver. 6 refers to plans which the enemy had only just formed at the time when Isaiah spoke (ch. vii. 4 sqq.). On the contrary, Isaiah is simply describing the plans which the enemy devised and pursued, and which they had no doubt formed from the very commencement of the war, and now that they were marching against Jerusalem, hoped to attain by the conquest of the capital. All that we can assume as certain is, that the war lasted longer than a year, since the invasion of Judah by these foes had already commenced before the death of Jotham, and that the greater battles (2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6) were not fought till the time of Ahaz, and it was not till his reign that the enemy advanced to the siege of Jerusalem.—With regard to the second question, it cannot be at all doubtful that the battles mentioned preceded the advance of the enemy to the front of Jerusalem, and therefore our account merely mentions the last and principal event of the war, and that the enemy was compelled to retreat from Jerusalem by the fact that the king of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser, whom Ahaz had called to his help, marched against Syria and compelled Rezin to hurry back to the defence of his kingdom.—It is more difficult to arrange the account of the capture of Elath by the Syrians (ver. 6) among the events of this war. The expression בָּעֵת הַהִיא merely assigns it in a perfectly general manner to the period of the war. The supposition of Thenius, that it did not take place till after the siege of Jerusalem had been relinquished, and that Rezin, after the failure of his attempt to take Jerusalem, that he might not have come altogether in vain, marched away from Jerusalem round the southern point of the Dead Sea and conquered Elath, is impossible, because he would never have left his own kingdom in such a defenceless state to



the advancing Assyrians. We must therefore place the taking of Elath by Rezin before his march against Jerusalem, though we still leave it undecided how Rezin conducted the war against Ahaz: whether by advancing along the country to the east of the Jordan, defeating the Judæans there (2 Chron. xxviii. 5), and then pressing forward to Elath and conquering that city, while Pekah made a simultaneous incursion into Judah from the north and smote Ahaz, so that it was not till after the conquest of Elath that Rezin entered the land from the south, and there joined Pekah for a common attack upon Jerusalem, as Caspari supposes; or whether by advancing into Judah along with Pekah at the very outset, and after he had defeated the army of Ahaz in a great battle, sending a detachment of his own army to Idumæa, to wrest that land from Judah and conquer Elath, while he marched with the rest of his forces in combination with Pekah against Jerusalem.—“Rezin brought Elath to Aram and drove the Jews out of Elath, and Aramæans came to Elath and dwelt therein to this day.” **הָשִׁיב** does not mean “to lead back” here, but literally to turn, to bring to a person; for Elath had never belonged to Aram before this, but was an Edomitish city, so that even if we were to read **אָרוֹם** for **אֶרֶם**, **הָשִׁיב** could not mean to bring back. But there is no ground whatever for altering **לְאֶרֶם** into **לְאָרוֹם** (Cler., Mich., Ew., Then., and others), whereas the form **אֶרֶם** is at variance with such an alteration through the assumption of an exchange of **ר** and **ד**, because **אָרוֹם** is never written *defective* **אֶרֶם** except in Ezek. xxv. 14. There are also no sufficient reasons for altering **וְאֶרֶמוֹם** into **וְאֶרוֹמִים** (*Keri*); **אֶרוֹמִים** is merely a Syriac form for **אֶרְמוֹם** with the dull Syriac *u*-sound, several examples of which form occur in this very chapter,—*e.g.* **הַקְּמוֹם** for **הַקְּמוֹם** ver. 7, **דְּמִשְׁקָא** for **דְּמִשְׁקָא** ver. 10, and **אֵילֹת** for **אֵילֹת** ver. 6,—whereas **אָרוֹם**, with additions, is only written *plene* twice in the ancient books, and that in the Chronicles, where the *scriptio plena* is generally preferred (2 Chron. xxv. 14 and xxviii. 17), but is always written *defective* (**אֶרֶמוֹם**). Moreover the statement that “**אֶרֶמוֹם** (*Edomites*, not *the* Edomites) came thither,” etc., would be very inappropriate, since Edomites certainly lived in this Idumæan city in perfect security, even while it was under Judæan government. And there would be no sense in the expression “the Edomites dwelt there *to this day*,” since the Edomites remained in their own land to the time of the captivity.

All this is applicable to *Aramæans* alone. As soon as Rezin had conquered this important seaport town, it was a very natural thing to establish an Aramæan colony there, which obtained possession of the trade of the town, and remained there till the time when the annals of the kings were composed (for it is to this that the expression עַרְיָהִים הָיָה refers), even after the kingdom of Rezin had long been destroyed by the Assyrians, since Elath and the Aramæans settled there were not affected by that blow.<sup>1</sup> As soon as the Edomites had been released by Rezin from the control of Judah, to which they had been brought back by Amaziah and Uzziah (ch. xiv. 7, 22), they began plundering Judah again (2 Chron. xxviii. 17); and even the Philistines took possession of several cities in the lowland, to avenge themselves for the humiliation they had sustained at the hand of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxviii. 18).—Ver. 7. In this distress Ahaz turned to Tiglath-pileser, without regarding either the word of Isaiah in ch. vii. 4 sqq., which promised salvation, or the prophet's warning against an alliance with Assyria, and by sending the gold and silver which were found in the treasures of the temple and palace, purchased his assistance against Rezin and Pekah. Whether this occurred immediately after the invasion of the land by the allied kings, or not till after they had defeated the Judæan army and advanced against Jerusalem, it is impossible to discover either from this verse or from 2 Chron. xxviii. 16; but probably it was after the first great victory gained by the foe, with which Isa. vii. and viii. agree.—On קָמִים for קִימִים see Ewald, § 151, *b*.—Ver. 9. Tiglath-pileser then marched against Damascus, took the city, slew Rezin, and led the inhabitants away to *Kir*, as Amos had prophesied (Amos i. 3–5). קִיר, *Kir*, from which, according to Amos ix. 7, the Aramæans had emigrated to Syria, is no doubt a district by the river *Kur* (*Kûpos*, *Kúrpos*), which taking its rise in Armenia, unites with the Araxes and flows into the Caspian Sea, although from the length of the river Kur it is impossible to define precisely the locality in which they were

<sup>1</sup> If we only observe that אַרְמִים has not the article, and therefore the words merely indicate the march of an Aramæan colony to Elath, it is evident that אַרְמִים would be unsuitable; for when the יְהוּדִים had been driven from the city which the Syrians had conquered, it was certainly not some Edomites but the Edomites who took possession again. Hence Winer, Caspari, and others are quite right in deciding that אַרְמִים is the only correct reading.



placed; and the statement of Josephus (*Ant.* ix. 13, 3), that the Damascenes were transported *εἰς τὴν ἄνω Μηδίαν*, is somewhat indefinite, and moreover has hardly been derived from early historical sources (see M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, p. 158). Nothing is said here concerning Tiglath-pileser's invasion of the kingdom of Israel, because this has already been mentioned at ch. xv. 29 in the history of Pekah.

Vers. 10-18. Ahaz paid Tiglath-pileser a visit in Damascus, "to present to him his thanks and congratulations, and possibly also to prevent a visit from Tiglath-pileser to himself, which would not have been very welcome" (Thenius). The form *דִּמְשֶׁק* is neither to be altered into *דְּמִשֶׁק* nor regarded as a copyist's error for *דְּרִמְשֶׁק*, as we have several words in this chapter that are formed with the dull Syriac *u*-sound. The visit of Ahaz to Damascus is simply mentioned on account of what follows, namely, that Ahaz saw an altar there, which pleased him so much that he sent a picture and model of it "according to all the workmanship thereof," *i.e.* its style of architecture, to Urijah the priest (see Isa. viii. 2), and had an altar made like it for the temple, upon which, on his return to Jerusalem, he ordered all the burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, and drink-offerings to be presented. The allusion here is to the offerings which he commanded to be presented for his prosperous return to Jerusalem.—Vers. 14 sqq. Soon after this Ahaz went still further, and had "the copper altar before Jehovah," *i.e.* the altar of burnt-offering in the midst of the court before the entrance into the Holy Place, removed "from the front of the (temple-) house, from (the spot) between the altar (the new one built by Urijah) and the house of Jehovah (*i.e.* the temple-house), and placed at the north side of the altar." *הִקְרִיב* does not mean *removit*, caused to be taken away, but *admovit*, and is properly to be connected with *עַל-יְרֵךְ הַמ'*, notwithstanding the fact that *וַיִּתֵּן אֹתוֹ* is inserted between for the sake of greater clearness, as Maurer has already pointed out.<sup>1</sup> On the use of the article with *הַפְּזִיבָה* in the construct state, see Ewald, § 290, *d.*—Ver.

<sup>1</sup> There is nothing in the text to support the view of Thenius, that Urijah had the brazen altar of burnt-offering erected by Solomon moved farther forwards, nearer to the temple-house, and the new one put in its place, whence it was afterwards shifted by Ahaz and the new one moved a little farther to the south, that is to say, that he placed the two altars close to one another, so that they now occupied the centre of the court.

15. He also commanded that the daily morning and evening sacrifice, and the special offerings of the king and the people, should be presented upon the new altar, and thereby put a stop to the use of the Solomonian altar, "about which he would consider." The *Chethîb* וַיִּצְוֵהוּ is not to be altered; the *pron. suff.* stands before the noun, as is frequently the case in the more diffuse popular speech. The new altar is called "the great altar," probably because it was somewhat larger than that of Solomon. הַקָּטֹר: used for the burning of the sacrifices. מִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב is not merely the meat-offering offered in the evening, but the whole of the evening sacrifice, consisting of a burnt-offering and a meat-offering, as in 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36. יְהִי־לִי לְבִקֹּר, the brazen altar "will be to me for deliberation," *i.e.* I will reflect upon it, and then make further arrangements. On בִּקֹּר in this sense see Prov. xx. 25. In the opinion of Ahaz, the altar which had been built after the model of that of Damascus was not to be an idolatrous altar, but an altar of Jehovah. The reason for this arbitrary removal of the altar of Solomon, which had been sanctified by the Lord Himself at the dedication of the temple by fire from heaven, was, in all probability, chiefly that the Damascene altar pleased Ahaz better; and the innovation was a sin against Jehovah, inasmuch as God Himself had prescribed the form for His sanctuary (cf. Ex. xxv. 40, xxvi. 30; 1 Chron. xxviii. 19), so that any altar planned by man and built according to a heathen model was practically the same as an idolatrous altar.—The account of this altar is omitted from the Chronicles; but in ver. 23 we have this statement instead: "Ahaz offered sacrifice to the gods of Damascus, who smote him, saying, The gods of the kings of Aram helped them; I will sacrifice to them that they may help me: and they were the ruin of him and of all Israel." Thenius and Bertheau find in this account an alteration of our account of the copying of the Damascene altar introduced by the chronicler as favouring his design, namely, to give as glaring a description as possible of the ungodliness of Ahaz. But they are mistaken. For even if the notice in the Chronicles had really sprung from this alone, the chronicler would have been able from the standpoint of the Mosaic law to designate the offering of sacrifice upon the altar built after the model of an idolatrous Syrian altar as sacrificing to these gods. But it is a question whether the chronicler had in his mind merely the sacrifices offered



upon that altar in the temple-court, and not rather sacrifices which Ahaz offered upon some *bamah* to the gods of Syria, when he was defeated and oppressed by the Syrians, for the purpose of procuring their assistance. As Ahaz offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch according to ver. 3, he might just as well have offered sacrifice to the gods of the Syrians.—Vers. 17, 18. Ahaz also laid his hand upon the other costly vessels of the court of the temple. He broke off the panels of the Solomonian stands, which were ornamented with artistic carving, and removed the basins from the stands, and took the brazen sea from the brazen oxen upon which they stood, and placed it upon a stone pavement. The אֶת־הַכִּיֹּר before ! can only have crept into the text through a copyist's error, and the singular must be taken distributively: he removed from them (the stands) every single basin. מִרְצֶפֶת אֲבָנִים (without the article) is not the stone pavement of the court of the temple, but a pedestal made of stones (*βάσις λιθίνη*, LXX.) for the brazen sea. The reason why, or the object with which Ahaz mutilated these sacred vessels, is not given. The opinion expressed by Ewald, Thenius, and others, that Ahaz made a present to Tiglath-pileser with the artistically wrought panels of the stands, the basins, and the oxen of the brazen sea, is not only improbable in itself, since you would naturally suppose that if Ahaz had wished to make a "valuable and very welcome present" to the Assyrian king, he would have chosen some perfect stands with their basins for this purpose, and not merely the panels and basins; but it has not the smallest support in the biblical text,—on the contrary, it has the context against it. For, in the first place, if the objects named had been sent to Tiglath-pileser, this would certainly have been mentioned, as well as the sending of the temple and palace treasures. And, again, the mutilation of these vessels is placed between the erection of the new altar which was constructed after the Damascene model, and other measures which Ahaz adopted as a protection against the king of Assyria (ver. 18). Now if Ahaz, on his return from visiting Tiglath-pileser at Damascus, had thought it necessary to send another valuable present to that king in order to secure his permanent friendship, he would hardly have adopted the measures described in the next verse.—Ver. 18. "The covered Sabbath-stand, which they had built in the house (temple), and the outer

entrance of the king he turned (*i.e.* removed) into the house of Jehovah before the king of Assyria.” מִסְכֵּה הַשֹּׁפָר (Keri מִסְכֵּה, from סָכַף, to cover) is no doubt a covered place, stand or hall in the court of the temple, to be used by the king whenever he visited the temple with his retinue on the Sabbath or on feast-days; and “the outer entrance of the king” is probably the special ascent into the temple for the king mentioned in 1 Kings x. 5. In what the removal of it consisted it is impossible to determine, from the want of information as to its original character. According to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 621) and Thenius, הִסַּב יְהוָה בֵּית יְהוָה means, “he altered (these places), *i.e.* he robbed them of their ornaments, in the house of Jehovah.” This is quite arbitrary. For even if בֵּית יְהוָה could mean “in the house of Jehovah” in this connection, הִסַּב does not mean to disfigure, and still less “to deprive of ornaments.” In ch. xxiii. 34 and xxiv. 17 it signifies to alter the name, not to disfigure it. Again, מִפְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, “for fear of the king of Assyria,” cannot mean, in this connection, “to make presents to the king of Assyria.” And with this explanation, which is grammatically impossible, the inference drawn from it, namely, that Ahaz sent the ornaments of the king’s stand and king’s ascent to the king of Assyria along with the vessels mentioned in ver. 17, also falls to the ground. If the alterations which Ahaz made in the stands and the brazen sea had any close connection with his relation to Tiglath-pileser, which cannot be proved, Ahaz must have been impelled by fear to make them, not that he might send them as presents to him, but that he might hide them from him if he came to Jerusalem, to which 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21 seems to refer. It is also perfectly conceivable, as Züllich (*Die Cherubimwagen*, p. 56) conjectures, that Ahaz merely broke off the panels from the stands and removed the oxen from the brazen sea, that he might use these artistic works to decorate some other place, possibly his palace.—Whether these artistic works were restored or not at the time of Hezekiah’s reformation or in that of Josiah, we have no accounts to show. All that can be gathered from ch. xxv. 13, 14, Jer. lii. 17, and xxvii. 19, is, that the stands and the brazen sea were still in existence in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and that on the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans they were broken in pieces and carried away to Babylonia as brass. The brazen oxen are also specially mentioned in Jer.



lii. 20, which is not the case in the parallel passage 2 Kings xxv. 13 ; though this does not warrant the conclusion that they were no longer in existence at that time.—Vers. 19, 20. Conclusion of the reign of Ahaz. According to 2 Chron. xxviii. 27, he was buried in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

CHAP. XVII. REIGN OF HOSHEA AND DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. THE PEOPLE CARRIED AWAY TO ASSYRIA AND MEDIA. TRANSPORTATION OF HEATHEN COLONISTS TO SAMARIA.

Vers. 1-6. REIGN OF HOSHEA KING OF ISRAEL.—Ver. 1. In the twelfth year of Ahaz began Hoshea to reign. As Hoshea conspired against Pekah, according to ch. xv. 30, in the fourth year of Ahaz, and after murdering him made himself king, whereas according to the verse before us it was not till the twelfth year of Ahaz that he really became king, his possession of the throne must have been contested for eight years. The earlier commentators and almost all the chronologists have therefore justly assumed that there was an eight years' anarchy between the death of Pekah and the commencement of Hoshea's reign. This assumption merits the preference above all the attempts made to remove the discrepancy by alterations of the text, since there is nothing at all surprising in the existence of anarchy at a time when the kingdom was in a state of the greatest inward disturbance and decay. Hoshea reigned nine years, and "did that which was evil in the eyes of Jehovah, though not like the kings of Israel before him" (ver. 2). We are not told in what Hoshea was better than his predecessors, nor can it be determined with any certainty, although the assumption that he allowed his subjects to visit the temple at Jerusalem is a very probable one, inasmuch as, according to 2 Chron. xxx. 10 sqq., Hezekiah invited to the feast of the Passover, held at Jerusalem, the Israelites from Ephraim and Manasseh as far as to Zebulun, and some individuals from these tribes accepted his invitation. But although Hoshea was better than his predecessors, the judgment of destruction burst upon the sinful kingdom and people in his reign, because he had not truly turned to the Lord ; a fact which has been frequently repeated in the history of the world, namely, that the last rulers of a decaying kingdom have not been so bad as their forefathers. "God is

accustomed to defer the punishment of the elders in the greatness of His long-suffering, to see whether their descendants will come to repentance ; but if this be not the case, although they may not be so bad, the anger of God proceeds at length to visit iniquity (cf. Ex. xx. 5)." Seb. Schmidt.—Ver. 3. "Against him came up *Salmanasar* king of Assyria, and Hoshea became subject to him and rendered him tribute" (מִנְחָה, as in 1 Kings v. 1). מֶלֶךְ שַׁלְמַנַּאסָר, Σαλαμανασσάρ (LXX.), *Salmanasar*, according to the more recent researches respecting Assyria, is not only the same person as the *Shalman* mentioned in Hos. x. 14, but the same as the *Sargon* of Isa. xx. 1, whose name is spelt *Sargina* upon the monuments, and who is described in the inscriptions on his palace at Khorsabad as ruler over many subjugated lands, among which *Samirina* (Samaria?) also occurs (*vid.* Brandis *üb. d. Gewinn*, pp. 48 sqq. and 53 ; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* pp. 129, 130 ; and M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterth.* i. pp. 687 sqq.). The occasion of this expedition of Salmanasar appears to have been simply the endeavour to continue the conquests of his predecessor Tiglath-pileser. There is no ground whatever for Maurer's assumption, that he had been asked to come to the help of a rival of Hoshea ; and the opinion that he came because Hoshea had refused the tribute which had been paid to Assyria from the time of Menahem downwards, is at variance with the fact that in ch. xv. 29 Tiglath-pileser is simply said to have taken a portion of the territory of Israel ; but there is no allusion to any payment of tribute or feudal obligation on the part of Pekah. Salmanasar was the first to make king Hoshea subject and tributary. This took place at the commencement of Hoshea's reign, as is evident from the fact that Hoshea paid the tribute for several years, and in the sixth year of his reign refused any further payment.—Ver. 4. The king of Assyria found a conspiracy in Hoshea ; for he had sent messengers to *So* the king of Egypt, and did not pay the tribute to the king of Assyria, as year by year. The Egyptian king סו, *So*, possibly to be pronounced סֶבֶךְ, *Seveh*, is no doubt one of the two *Shebeks* of the twenty-fifth dynasty, belonging to the Ethiopian tribe ; but whether he was the second king of this dynasty, *Sābātākā* (Brugsch, *hist. d'Egypte*, i. p. 244), the *Sevechus* of Manetho, who is said to have ascended the throne, according to Wilkinson, in the year 728, as Vitringa (*Isa.* ii. p. 318), Gesenius, Ewald, and others suppose, or the first king



of this Ethiopian dynasty, *Sabako* the father of Sevechus, which is the opinion of Usher and Marsham, whom M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* pp. 458 sqq. and 463) and M. Duncker (i. p. 693) have followed in recent times, cannot possibly be decided in the present state of Egyptological research.<sup>1</sup>—As soon as Salmanasar received intelligence of the conduct of Hoshea, which is called קִשָּׁר, conspiracy, as being rebellion against his acknowledged superior, he had him arrested and put into prison in chains, and then overran the whole land, advanced against Samaria and besieged that city for three years, and captured it in the ninth year of Hoshea. These words are not to be understood as signifying that Hoshea had been taken prisoner before the siege of Samaria and thrown into prison, because in that case it is impossible to see how Salmanasar could have obtained possession of his person.<sup>2</sup> We must rather assume, as many commentators have done, from R. Levi ben Gersom down to Maurer and Thenius, that it was not till the conquest of his capital Samaria that Hoshea fell into the hands of the Assyrians and was cast into a prison; so that the explanation to be given of the introduction of this circum-

<sup>1</sup> It is true that M. Duncker says, "Synchronism gives Sabakon, who reigned from 726 to 714;" but he observes in the note at pp. 713 sqq. that the Egyptian chronology has only been firmly established as far back as the commencement of the reign of Psammetichus at the beginning of the year 664 B.C., that the length of the preceding dodekarchy is differently given by Diodorus Sic. and Manetho, and that the date at which Tarakos (Tirhaka), who succeeded Sevechus, ascended the throne is so very differently defined, that it is impossible for the present to come to any certain conclusion on the matter. Compare with this what M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 458 sqq.) adduces in proof of the difficulty of determining the commencement and length of the reign of *Tirhaka*, and the manner in which he proposes to solve the difficulties that arise from this in relation to the synchronism between the Egyptian and the Biblical chronology.

<sup>2</sup> The supposition of the older commentators, that Hoshea fought a battle with Salmanasar before the siege of Samaria, and was taken prisoner in that battle, is not only very improbable, because this would hardly be passed over in our account, but has very little probability in itself. For "it is more probable that Hoshea betook himself to Samaria when threatened by the hostile army, and relied upon the help of the Egyptians, than that he went to meet Salmanasar and fought with him in the open field" (Maurer). There is still less probability in Ewald's view (*Gesch.* iii. p. 611), that "Salmanasar marched with unexpected rapidity against Hoshea, summoned him before him that he might hear his defence, and then, when he came, took him prisoner, and threw him into prison in chains, probably into a prison on the border of the

stance before the siege and conquest of Samaria must be, that the historian first of all related the eventual result of Hoshea's rebellion against Salmanasar so far as Hoshea himself was concerned, and then proceeded to describe in greater detail the course of the affair in relation to his kingdom and capital. This does not necessitate our giving to the word *וַיַּעֲזֹרֵהוּ* the meaning "he assigned him a limit" (Thenius); but we may adhere to the meaning which has been philologically established, namely, arrest or incarcerate (Jer. xxxiii. 1, xxxvi. 5, etc.). *וַיַּעַל* may be given thus: "he overran, that is to say, the entire land." The three years of the siege of Samaria were not full years, for, according to ch. xviii. 9, 10, it began in the seventh year of Hoshea, and the city was taken in the ninth year, although it is also given there as three years.—Ver. 6. The ninth year of Hoshea corresponds to the sixth year of Hezekiah and the year 722 or 721 B.C., in which the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed.

Ver. 6b. *The Israelites carried into exile.*—After the taking of Samaria, Salmanasar led Israel into captivity to Assyria, and assigned to those who were led away dwelling-places in *Chalach* and on the *Chabor*, or the river *Gozan*, and in cities of Media. According to these clear words of the text, the places to which the ten tribes were banished are not to be sought for in Mesopotamia, but in provinces of Assyria and Media. *חֲלָח* is neither the city of *חֲלָח* built by Nimrod (Gen. x. 11), nor the *Cholwan* of *Abulfeda* and the Syriac writers, a city five days' journey to the north of Bagdad, from which the district bordering on the Zagrus probably received the name of *Χαλωνίτις* or *Καλωνίτις*, but the province *Καλαχηνή* of Strabo (xi. 8, 4; 14, 12, and xvi. 1, 1), called *Καλακινή* by Ptolemæus (vi. 1), on the eastern side of the Tigris near Adiabene, to the north of Nineveh on the border of Armenia. *חֲבֹר* is not the *חֲבֹר* in Upper Mesopotamia (Ezek. i. 3, iii. 15, etc.), which flows into the

land;" to which he adds this explanatory remark: "there is no other way in which we can understand the brief words in ch. xvii. 4 as compared with ch. xviii. 9-11. . . . For if Hoshea had defended himself to the utmost, Salmanasar would not have had him arrested and incarcerated afterwards, but would have put him to death at once, as was the case with the king of Damascus." But Hoshea would certainly not have been so infatuated, after breaking away from Assyria and forming an alliance with *So* of Egypt, as to go at a simple summons from Salmanasar and present himself before him, since he could certainly have expected nothing but death or imprisonment as the result.



Euphrates near *Kirkesion* (*Carchemish*), and is called **חַב** (*Chebar*) or **חַבּוּר** (*Chabur*) by the Syriac writers, **خابور** (*Chabûr*) by Abulfeda and Edrisi, **Χαβώρας** by Ptolemæus, **Ἀβόρῆας** (*Aboras*) by Strabo and others, as Michaelis, Gesenius, Winer, and even Ritter assume; for the epithet “river of *Gozan*” is not decisive in favour of this, since *Gozan* is not necessarily to be identified with the district of *Gauzanitis*, now *Kaushan*, situated between the rivers of *Chaboras* and *Saokoras*, and mentioned in Ptol. v. 18, 4, inasmuch as Strabo (xvi. 1, 1, p. 736) also mentions a province called **Χαζηνή** above Nineveh towards Armenia, between *Calachene* and *Adiabene*. Here in northern Assyria we also find both a mountain called **Χαβώρας**, according to Ptol. vi. 1, on the boundary of Assyria and Media, and the river *Chabor*, called by Yakut in the *Moshtarik* **خابور الحسنيه** (*Khabur Chasanice*), to distinguish it from the Mesopotamian *Chaboras* or *Chebar*. According to Marasz. i. pp. 333 sq., and Yakut, *Mosht.* p. 150, this *Khabur* springs from the mountains of the land of *Zauzan*, **زوزان**, i.e. of the land between the mountains of Armenia, Adserbeidjan, Diarbekr, and Mosul (Marasz. i. p. 522), and is frequently mentioned in Assemani as a tributary of the Tigris. It still bears the ancient name *Khabûr*, taking its rise in the neighbourhood of the upper *Zab* near *Amadîjeh*, and emptying itself into the Tigris a few hours below *Jezirah* (cf. Wichelhaus, pp. 471, 472; Asah. Grant, *Die Nestorianer*, v. *Preiswerk*, pp. 110 sqq.; and Ritter, *Erdk.* ix. pp. 716 and 1030). This is the river that we are to understand by **חַבּוּר**. It is a question in dispute, whether the following words **נְהַר גּוֹזָן** are in apposition to **בְּחַבּוּר**: “by the Chabor the river of *Gozan*,” or are to be taken by themselves as indicating a peculiar district “by the river *Gozan*.” Now, however the absence of the prep. **בְּ**, and even of the copula **ו**, on the one hand, and the words of Yakut, “*Khabur*, a river of *Chasania*,” on the other, may seem to favour the former view, we must decide in favour of the latter, for the simple reason that in 1 Chron. v. 26 **נְהַר גּוֹזָן** is separated from **חַבּוּר** by **וְהָרָא**. The absence of the preposition **בְּ** or of the copula **ו** before **נְהַר גּוֹזָן** in the passage before us may be accounted for from the assumption that the first two names, in *Chalah* and on the *Khabur*, are more closely connected, and also the two which follow, “on the river *Gozan* and in the cities of *Media*.”

The river *Gozan* or of *Gozan* is therefore distinct from חָבּוּר (*Khabur*), and to be sought for in the district in which *Tav-ṣavía*, the city of Media mentioned by Ptol. (vi. 2), was situated. In all probability it is the river which is called *Kisil* (the red) *Ozan* at the present day, the *Mardos* of the Greeks, which takes its rise to the south-east of the Lake *Urumiah* and flows into the Caspian Sea, and which is supposed to have formed the northern boundary of Media.<sup>1</sup> The last locality mentioned agrees with this, viz. "and in the cities of Media," in which Thenius proposes to read הָרִי, mountains, after the LXX., instead of עָרֵי, cities, though without the least necessity.

Vers. 7-23. *The causes which occasioned this catastrophe.*—To the account of the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, and of the transportation of its inhabitants into exile in Assyria, the prophetic historian appends a review of the causes which led to this termination of the greater portion of the covenant-nation, and finds them in the obstinate apostasy of Israel from the Lord its God, and in its incorrigible adherence to idolatry. Ver. 7. וַיְהִי כֵּן, "and it came to pass when" (not because, or that): compare Gen. vi. 1, xxvi. 8, xxvii. 1, xlv. 24, Ex. i. 21, Judg. i. 28, vi. 7, etc. The apodosis does not follow till ver. 18, as vers. 7-17 simply contain a further explanation of Israel's sin. To show the magnitude of the sin, the writer recalls to mind the great benefit conferred in the redemption from Egypt, whereby the Lord had laid His people under strong obligation to adhere faithfully to Him. The words refer to the first commandment (Ex. xx. 2, 3; Deut. v. 6, 7). It

<sup>1</sup> The explanation given in the text of the geographical names, receives some confirmation from the Jewish tradition, which describes northern Assyria, and indeed the mountainous region or the district on the border of Assyria and Media towards Armenia, as the place to which the ten tribes were banished (*vid.* Wichelhaus *ut sup.* pp. 474 sqq.). Not only Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 612), but also M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 159), has decided in favour of this view; the latter with this remark: "According to the present state of the investigations, Chalah and Chabor are no doubt to be sought for on the slope of the Gordyæan mountains in the Kalachene of Strabo, the Kalakine of Ptolemæus, and on the tributary of the Tigris, which is still called Chabor, therefore quite close to Nineveh. The *Yudhi* mountains in this region possibly bear this name with some allusion to the colony." But with reference to the river *Gozan*, Niebuhr is doubtful whether we are to understand by this the *Kisil Ozan* or the waters in the district of Gauzanitis by the Khebar, and gives the preference to the latter as the simpler of the two, though it is difficult to see in what respect it is simpler than the other.



is from this that the "fearing of other gods" is taken, whereas *מִתַּחַת יַד פְּרַעֲה* recall Ex. xviii. 10.—Ver. 8. The apostasy of Israel manifested itself in two directions: 1. in their walking in the statutes of the nations who were cut off from before them, instead of in the statutes of Jehovah, as God had commanded (cf. Lev. xviii. 4, 5, and 26, xx. 22, 23, etc.; and for the formula *הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הוֹרִישׁ וְנֹו*, which occurs repeatedly in our books—*e.g.* ch. xvi. 3, xxi. 2, and 1 Kings xiv. 24 and xxi. 26—compare Deut. xi. 23 and xviii. 12); and 2. in their walking in the statutes which the kings of Israel had made, *i.e.* the worship of the calves. *אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ*: it is evident from the parallel passage, ver. 19*b*, that the subject here stands before the relative.—Ver. 9. *נִיחָפְאוּ דְבָרִים*: "they covered words which were not right concerning Jehovah their God," *i.e.* they sought to conceal the true nature of Jehovah by arbitrary perversions of the word of God. This is the explanation correctly given by Hengstenberg (*Dissert.* vol. i. p. 210, transl.); whereas the interpretation proposed by Thenius, "they trifled with things which were not right against Jehovah," is as much at variance with the usage of the language as that of Gesenius (*thes.* p. 505), *perfide egerunt res . . . in Jehovah*, since *הִפָּא* with *עַל* simply means to cover over a thing (cf. Isa. iv. 5). This covering of words over Jehovah showed itself in the fact that they built *בָּמוֹת* (altars on high places), and by worshipping God in ways of their own invention concealed the nature of the revealed God, and made Jehovah like the idols. "In all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city." *מִגֹּדֶל נֹצְרִים* is a tower built for the protection of the flocks in the steppes (2 Chron. xxvi. 10), and is mentioned here as the smallest and most solitary place of human abode in antithesis to the large and fortified city. Such *bamoth* were the houses of high places and altars built for the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, beside which no others are mentioned by name in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which restricts itself to the principal facts, although there certainly must have been others.—Ver. 10. They set up for themselves monuments and *asherim* on every high hill, etc.,—a practice condemned in 1 Kings xiv. 16, 23, as early as the time of Jeroboam. In this description of their idolatry, the historian, however, had in his mind not only the ten tribes, but also Judah, as is evident from ver. 13, "Jehovah testified against Israel *and Judah* through His

prophets," and also from ver. 19.—Ver. 11. "And burned incense there upon all the high places, like the nations which Jehovah drove out before them." הִגְלָה, lit. to lead into exile, is applied here to the expulsion and destruction of the Canaanites, with special reference to the banishment of the Israelites.—Ver. 12. They served the clods, *i.e.* worshipped clods or masses of stone as gods (גִּלְלִים, see at 1 Kings xv. 12), notwithstanding the command of God in Ex. xx. 3 sqq., xxiii. 13, Lev. xxvi. 1, etc.—Vers. 13 sqq. And the Lord was not satisfied with the prohibitions of the law, but bore witness against the idolatry and image-worship of Israel and Judah through all His prophets, who exhorted them to turn from their evil way and obey His commandments. But it was all in vain; they were stiff-necked like their fathers. Judah is mentioned as well as Israel, although the historian is simply describing the causes of Israel's rejection to indicate beforehand that Judah was already preparing the same fate for itself, as is still more plainly expressed in vers. 19, 20; not, as Thenius supposes, because he is speaking here of that which took place before the division of the kingdom. The *Chethîb* כָּל-נְבִיאָיו כָּל-חֹזֶה is not to be read כָּל-נְבִיאָיו וְכָל-חֹזֶה (Houbig., Then., Ew. § 156, *e*), but after the LXX. כָּל-נְבִיאָיו כָּל-חֹזֶה, "through all His prophets, every seer," so that כָּל-חֹזֶה is in apposition to כָּל-נְבִיאָיו, and serves to bring out the meaning with greater force, so as to express the idea, "prophets of every kind, that the Lord had sent." This reading is more rhetorical than the other, and is recommended by the fact that in what follows the copula ו is omitted before חֲקֹתֵי also on rhetorical grounds. וְאִשֶּׁר שָׁלַחְתִּי וְגו': "and according to what I demanded of you through my servants the prophets." To the law of Moses there was added the divine warning through the prophets. יִקְשִׁי אֶת-עֵרְפִם has sprung from Deut. x. 16. The stiff-necked fathers are the Israelites in the time of Moses.—Ver. 15. "They followed vanity and became vain:" *verbatim* as in Jer. ii. 5. A description of the worthlessness of their whole life and aim with regard to the most important thing, namely, their relation to God. Whatever man sets before him as the object of his life apart from God is הֶבֶל (cf. Deut. xxxii. 21) and idolatry, and leads to worthlessness, to spiritual and moral corruption (Rom. i. 21). "And (walked) after the nations who surrounded them," *i.e.* the heathen living near them. The concluding words of the verse have the ring of



Lev. xviii. 3.—Vers. 16 and 17. The climax of their apostasy : “They made themselves molten images, two (golden) calves” (1 Kings xii. 28), which are called *מִסֵּכָה* after Ex. xxxii. 4, 8, and Deut. ix. 12, 16, “and Asherah,” *i.e.* idols of Astarte (for the fact, see 1 Kings xvi. 33), “and worshipped all the host of heaven (sun, moon, and stars), and served Baal”—in the time of Ahab and his family (1 Kings xvi. 32). The worshipping of all the host of heaven is not specially mentioned in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, but occurs first of all in Judah in the time of Manasseh (ch. xxi. 3). The fact that the host of heaven is mentioned between Asherah and Baal shows that the historian refers to the Baal and Astarte worship, and has borrowed the expression from Deut. iv. 19 and xvii. 3, to show the character of this worship, since both Baal and Astarte were deities of a sidereal nature. The first half of ver. 17 rests upon Deut. xviii. 10, where the worship of Moloch is forbidden along with soothsaying and augury. There is no allusion to this worship in the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes, although it certainly existed in the time of Ahab. The second half of ver. 17 also refers to the conduct of Ahab (see at 1 Kings xxi. 20).—Vers. 18 sqq. This conduct excited the anger of God, so that He removed them from His face, and only left the tribe (*i.e.* the kingdom) of Judah (see above, p. 179), although Judah also did not keep the commandments of the Lord and walked in the statutes of Israel, and therefore had deserved rejection. Ver. 19 contains a parenthesis occasioned by *רַק שָׁבַט וְגו'* (ver. 18b). The statutes of Israel in which Judah walked are not merely the worship of Baal under the Ahab dynasty, so as to refer only to Joram, Ahaziah, and Ahaz (according to ch. viii. 18, 27, and xvi. 3), but also the worship on the high places and worship of idols, which were practised under many of the kings of Judah.—Ver. 20. *וַיִּמָּאס* is a continuation of *וַיִּתְּאֶנְף יְהוָה* in ver. 18, but so that what follows also refers to the parenthesis in ver. 19. “Then the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel,” not merely the ten tribes, but all the nation, and humbled them till He thrust them from His face. *מָאָס* differs from *הִשְׁלִיךְ מִפָּנָי*. The latter denotes driving into exile; the former, simply that kind of rejection which consisted in chastisement and deliverance into the hand of plunderers, that is to say, penal judgments by which the Lord sought to lead Israel and Judah to turn to Him and to His commandments, and to preserve

them from being driven among the heathen. נָתַן בְּיַד שָׁמִים as in Judg. ii. 14.—Ver. 21. בִּי קָרַע יוֹהִי: “for He (Jehovah) rent Israel from the house of David.” This view is apparently more correct than that Israel rent the kingdom from the house of David, not only because it presupposes too harsh an ellipsis to supply אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה, but also because we never meet with the thought that Israel rent the kingdom from the house of David, and in 1 Kings xi. 31 it is simply stated that Jehovah rent the kingdom from Solomon; and to this our verse refers, whilst the following words וַיִּמְלִיכוּ וְיוֹהִי recall 1 Kings xii. 20. The בִּי is explanatory: the Lord delivered up His people to the plunderers, for He rent Israel from the house of David as a punishment for the idolatry of Solomon, and the Israelites made Jeroboam king, who turned Israel away from Jehovah, etc. The *Chethîb* וַיִּדָּא is to be read וַיִּדָּא, the *Hiphil* of נָדָה = נָדָה, “he caused to depart away from the Lord.” The *Keri* וַיִּדָּח, *Hiphil* of נָדָה, he drove away, turned from the Lord (cf. Deut. xiii. 11), is not unusual, but it is an unnecessary gloss.—Vers. 22, 23. The sons of Israel (the ten tribes) walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, till the Lord removed them from His face, thrust them out of the land of the Lord, as He had threatened them through all His prophets, namely, from the time of Jeroboam onwards (compare 1 Kings xiv. 15, 16, and also Hos. i. 6, ix. 16, Amos iii. 11, 12, v. 27, Isa. xxviii. etc.). The banishment to Assyria (see ver. 6) lasted “unto this day,” *i.e.* till the time when our books were written.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As the Hebrew עַד, like the German *bis*, is not always used in an exclusive sense, but is frequently abstracted from what lies behind the *terminus ad quem* mentioned, it by no means follows from the words, “the Lord rejected Israel . . . to this day,” that the ten tribes returned to their own country after the time when our books were written, viz. about the middle of the sixth century B.C. And it is just as impossible to prove the opposite view, which is very widely spread, namely, that they are living as a body in banishment even at the present day. It is well known how often the long-lost ten tribes have been discovered, in the numerous Jewish communities of southern Arabia, in India, more especially in Malabar, in China, Turkistan, and Cashmir, or in Afghanistan (see Ritter's *Erdkunde*, x. p. 246), and even in America itself; and now Dr. Asahel Grant (*Die Nestorianer oder die zehn Stämme*) thinks that he has found them in the independent Nestorians and the Jews living among them; whereas others, such as Witsius (*Δεκαφυλ.* c. iv. sqq.), J. D. Michaelis (*de exsilio decem tribuum*, comm. iii.), and last of all Robinson in the work quoted by Ritter, *l. c.* p. 245 (*The Nestorians*, etc., New York, 1841), have endeavoured to prove that the ten tribes became partly mixed



Vers. 24-41. THE SAMARITANS AND THEIR WORSHIP.—After the transportation of the Israelites, the king of Assyria brought colonists from different provinces of his kingdom into the cities of Samaria. The king of Assyria is not Salmanasar, for it is evident from ver. 25 that a considerable period intervened between the carrying away of the Israelites and the sending of colonists into the depopulated land. It is true that Salmanasar only is mentioned in what precedes, but the section vers. 24-41 is not so closely connected with the first portion of the chapter, that the same king of Assyria must necessarily be spoken of in both. According to Ezra iv. 2, it was Esarhaddon who removed the heathen settlers to Samaria. It is true that the attempt has been made to reconcile this with the assumption that the king

up with the Judæans during the Babylonian captivity, and partly attached themselves to the exiles who were led back to Palestine by Zerubbabel and Ezra; that a portion again became broken up at a still later period by mixing with the rest of the Jews, who were scattered throughout all the world after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and a further portion a long time ago by conversion to Christianity, so that every attempt to discover the remnants of the ten tribes anywhere must be altogether futile. This view is in general the correct one, though its supporters have mixed up the sound arguments with many that are untenable. For example, the predictions quoted by Ritter (p. 250), probably after Robinson (viz. Jer. i. 4, 5, 17, 19, and Ezek. xxxvii. 11 sqq.), and also the prophetic declarations cited by Witsius (v. §§ 11-14: viz. Isa. xiv. 1, Mic. ii. 12, Jer. iii. 12, xxx. 3, 4, xxxiii. 7, 8), prove very little, because for the most part they refer to Messianic times and are to be understood spiritually. So much, however, may certainly be gathered from the books of Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, that the Judæans whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive were not all placed in the province of Babylonia, but were also dispersed in the different districts that constituted first the Assyrian, then the Chaldæan, and afterwards the Persian empire on the other side of the Euphrates, so that with the cessation of that division which had been so strictly maintained to suit the policy of the Israelitish kings, the ancient separation would also disappear, and their common mournful lot of dispersion among the heathen would of necessity bring about a closer union among all the descendants of Jacob; just as we find that the kings of Persia knew of no difference between Jews and Israelites, and in the time of Xerxes the grand vizier Haman wanted to exterminate all the Jews (not the Judæans merely, but all the Hebrews). Moreover, the edict of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1-4), "who among you of *all* his people," and that of Artaxerxes (Ezra vii. 13), "whoever in my kingdom is willing of the *people of Israel*," gave permission to all the Israelites of the twelve tribes to return to Palestine. And who could maintain with any show of reason, that no one belonging to the ten tribes availed himself of this permission? And though Grant argues, on the other side, that with regard to the 50,000 whom Cyrus sent away to their home it is expressly stated that they were of those "whom

of Assyria mentioned in our verse is Salmanasar, by the conjecture that one portion of these colonists was settled there by Salmanasar, another by Esarhaddon; and it has also been assumed that in this expedition Esarhaddon carried away the last remnant of the ten tribes, namely, all who had fled into the mountains and inaccessible corners of the land, and to some extent also in Judæa, during Salmanasar's invasion, and had then collected together in the land again after the Assyrians had withdrawn. But there is not the smallest intimation anywhere of a second transplantation of heathen colonists to Samaria, any more than of a second removal of the remnant of the Israelites who were left behind in the land after the time of Salmanasar. The prediction in Isa. vii. 8, that in sixty-five years more

Nebuchadnezzar had carried away into Babylon" (Ezra ii. 1), with which ch. i. 5 may also be compared, "then rose up the heads of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites, etc.;" these words apply to the majority of those who returned, and undoubtedly prove that the ten tribes as such did not return to Palestine, but they by no means prove that a considerable number of members of the remaining tribes may not have attached themselves to the large number of citizens of the kingdom of Judah who returned. And not only Lightfoot (*Hor. hebr. in Ep. 1 ad Cor. Addenda ad c. 14, Opp. ii. p. 929*) and Witsius (p. 346), but the Rabbins long before them in *Seder Olam rab. c. 29, p. 86*, have inferred from the fact that the number of persons and families given separately in Ezra ii. only amounts to 30,360, whereas in ver. 64 the total number of persons who returned is said to have been 42,360 heads, besides 7337 men-servants and maid-servants, that this excess above the families of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, who are mentioned by name, may have come from the ten tribes. Moreover, those who returned did regard themselves as the representatives of the twelve tribes; for at the dedication of the new temple (Ezra vi. 17) they offered "sin-offerings for all Israel, according to the number of the twelve tribes." And those who returned with Ezra did the same. As a thanksgiving for their safe return to their fatherland, they offered in sacrifice "twelve oxen for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven sheep, and twelve he-goats for a sin-offering, all as a burnt-offering for Jehovah" (Ezra viii. 35). There is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of those who returned with Zerubbabel and Ezra belonged to the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi; which may be explained very simply from the fact, that as they had been a much shorter time in exile, they had retained a much stronger longing for the home given by the Lord to their fathers than the tribes that were carried away 180 years before. But that they also followed in great numbers at a future time, after those who had returned before had risen to a state of greater ecclesiastical and civil prosperity in their own home, is an inference that must be drawn from the fact that in the time of Christ and His apostles, Galilee, and in part also Peræa, was very densely populated by Israelites; and this population cannot be traced back either to the Jews who returned to Jerusalem and Judæa



Ephraim was to be destroyed, so that it would be no longer a people, even if it referred to the transplantation of the heathen colonists to Samaria by Esarhaddon, as Usher, Hengstenberg, and others suppose, would by no means necessitate the carrying away of the last remnant of the Israelites by this king, but simply the occupation of the land by heathen settlers, with whom the last remains of the Ephraimites intermingled, so that Ephraim ceased to be a people. As long as the land of Israel was merely laid waste and deprived of the greater portion of its Israelitish population, there always remained the possibility that the exiles might one day return to their native land and once more form one people with those who were left behind, and so long might Israel be still regarded as a nation; just as the Judæans, when

under Zerubbabel and Ezra, or to the small number of Israelites who were left behind in the land when the Assyrian deportation took place. On the other hand, even the arguments adduced by Grant in support of his view, viz. (1) that we have not the slightest historical evidence that the ten tribes ever left Assyria again, (2) that on the return from the Babylonian captivity they did not come back with the rest, prove as *argumenta a silentio* but very little, and lose their force still more if the assumptions upon which they are based—namely, that the ten tribes who were transported to Assyria and Media had no intercourse whatever with the Jews who were led away to Babylon, but kept themselves unmixed and quite apart from the Judæans, and that as they did not return with Zerubbabel and Ezra, they did not return to their native land at any later period—are, as we have shown above, untenable. Consequently the further arguments of Grant, (3) that according to Josephus (*Ant.* xi. 5, 2) the ten tribes were still in the land of their captivity in the first century, and according to Jerome (*Comm. on the Prophets*) in the fifth; and (4) that in the present day they are still in the country of the ancient Assyrians, since the Nestorians, both according to their own statement and according to the testimony of the Jews there, are *Beni Yisrael*, and that of the ten tribes, and are also proved to be Israelites by many of the customs and usages which they have preserved (*Die Nestor.* pp. 113 sqq.); prove nothing more than that there may still be descendants of the Israelites who were banished thither among the Jews and Nestorians living in northern Assyria by the Uramiah-lake, and by no means that the Jews living there are the unmixed descendants of the ten tribes. The statements made by the Jews lose all their importance from the fact, that Jews of other lands maintain just the same concerning themselves. And the Mosaic manners and customs of the Nestorians prove nothing more than that they are of Jewish origin. In general, the Israelites and Jews who have come into heathen lands from the time of Salmanasar and Nebuchadnezzar onwards, and have settled there, have become so mixed up with the Jews who were scattered in all quarters of the globe from the time of Alexander the Great, and more especially since the destruction of the Jewish state by the Romans, that the last traces of the old division into tribes have entirely disappeared.

in exile in Babylon, did not cease to be a people, because they looked forward with certain hope to a return to their fatherland after a banishment of seventy years. But after heathen colonists had been transplanted into the land, with whom the remainder of the Israelites who were left in the land became fused, so that there arose a mixed Samaritan people of a predominantly heathen character, it was impossible to speak any longer of a people of Ephraim in the land of Israel. This transplantation of colonists out of Babel, Cutha, etc., into the cities of Samaria might therefore be regarded as the point of time at which the nation of Ephraim was entirely dissolved, without any removal of the last remnant of the Israelites having taken place. We must indeed assume this if the ten tribes were deported to the very last man, and the Samaritans were in their origin a purely heathen people without any admixture of Israelitish blood, as Hengstenberg assumes and has endeavoured to prove. But the very opposite of this is unmistakeably apparent from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9, according to which there were not a few Israelites left in the depopulated land in the time of Josiah. (Compare Kalkar, *Die Samaritaner ein Mischvolk*, in Pelt's *theol. Mitarbeiten*, iii. 3, pp. 24 sqq.).—We therefore regard Esarhaddon as the Assyrian king who brought the colonists to Samaria. The object to יִשְׂרָאֵל may be supplied from the context, more especially from יִשְׂרָאֵל, which follows. He brought inhabitants from *Babel*, i.e. from the country, not the city of Babylon, from *Cuthah*, etc. The situation of *Cuthah* or *Cuth* (ver. 30) cannot be determined with certainty. M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 166) follows Josephus, who speaks of the Cuthæans in *Ant.* ix. 14, 3, and x. 9, 7, as a people dwelling in Persia and Media, and identifies them with the *Kossæans*, *Kissians*, *Khushiya*, *Chuzi*, who lived to the north-east of Susa, in the north-eastern portion of the present Khusistan; whereas Gesenius (*thes.* p. 674), Rosenmüller (*bibl. Althk.* i. 2, p. 29), and J. D. Michaelis (*Supplem. ad Lex. hebr.* p. 1255) have decided in favour of the *Cutha* (كوثى or كوثا) in the Babylonian *Irak*, in the neighbourhood of the *Nahr Malca*, in support of which the fact may also be adduced, that, according to a communication from Spiegel (in the *Auslande*, 1864, No. 46, p. 1089), *Cutha*, a town not mentioned elsewhere, was situated by the wall in the north-east of Babylon, probably on the spot where the hill *Ohaimir* with its ruins stands. The greater



number of colonists appear to have come from *Cutha*, because the Samaritans are called כוּתִיִּים by the Rabbins. אַרְוָא, *Arva*, is almost always, and probably with correctness, regarded as being the same place as the עֲרֵי (Ivrah) mentioned in ch. xviii. 34 and xix. 13, as the conjecture naturally suggests itself to every one that the *Arvæans* removed to Samaria by Esarhaddon were inhabitants of the kingdom of *Arva* destroyed by the Assyrian king, and the form עֲרֵי is probably simply connected with the appellative explanation given to the word by the Masoretes. As *Ivváh* is placed by the side of *Henah* in ch. xviii. 34 and xix. 13, *Arva* can hardly be any other than the country of *Hebeh*, situated on the Euphrates between *Anah* and the *Chabur* (M. v. Niebuhr, p. 167). *Hamath* is *Epiphania* on the Orontes: see at 1 Kings viii. 65 and Num. xiii. 21. *Sepharvaim* is no doubt the *Sippara* (Σιπφάρα) of Ptolem. (v. 18, 7), the southernmost city of Mesopotamia on the Euphrates, above the Nahr Malca, the Ἡλιοῦπόλις ἐν Σιππάρουσι or Σιππαρηνῶν πόλις, which Berosus and Abydenus mention (in Euseb. *Præpar. evang.* ix. 12 and 41, and *Chronic. Armen.* i. pp. 33, 36, 49, 55) as belonging to the time of the flood.—שְׁמֶרֶן: this is the first time in which the name is evidently applied to the kingdom of Samaria.—Vers. 25-28. In the earliest period of their settlement in the cities of Samaria the new settlers were visited by lions, which may have multiplied greatly during the time that the land was lying waste. The settlers regarded this as a punishment from Jehovah, *i.e.* from the deity of the land, whom they did not worship, and therefore asked the king of Assyria for a priest to teach them the right, *i.e.* the proper, worship of the God of the land; whereupon the king sent them one of the priests who had been carried away, and he took up his abode in Bethel, and instructed the people in the worship of Jehovah. The author of our books also looked upon the lions as sent by Jehovah as a punishment, according to Lev. xxvi. 22, because the new settlers did not fear Him. הָאֲרִיֹּת: the lions which had taken up their abode there. וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם: that they (the priest with his companions) went away and dwelt there. There is no need therefore to alter the plural into the singular.

The priest sent by the Assyrian king was of course an Israelitish priest of the calves, for he was one of those who had been carried away and settled in Bethel, the chief seat of Jeroboam's image-worship, and he also taught the colonists to

fear or worship Jehovah after the manner of the land. This explains the state of divine worship in the land as described in vers. 29 sqq. "Every separate nation (גוי גוי : see Ewald, § 313, a) made itself its own gods, and set them up in the houses of the high places (בית הבמות : see at 1 Kings xii. 31, and for the singular בית, Ewald, § 270, c) which the Samaritans (השִׁמְרֹנִים, not the colonists sent thither by Esarhaddon, but the former inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel, who are so called from the capital Samaria) had made (built); every nation in the cities where they dwelt."—Ver. 30. The people of Babel made themselves סִבּוֹת בָּנוֹת, *daughters' booths*. Selden (*de Diis Syr.* ii. 7), Münter (*Relig. der Babyl.* pp. 74, 75), and others understand by these the temples consecrated to Mylitta or Astarte, the *καμάραι*, or covered little carriages, or tents for prostitution (Herod. i. 199); but Beyer (*Addit. ad Seld.* p. 297) has very properly objected to this, that according to the context the reference is to idols or objects of idolatrous worship, which were set up in the בָּתֵּי בָמוֹת. It is more natural to suppose that small tent-temples are meant, which were set up as idols in the houses of the high places along with the images which they contained, since according to ch. xxiii. 7 women wove בָּתֵּי־מִסְכָּה, little temples, for the Asherah, and Ezekiel speaks of patch-work *Bamoth*, i.e. of small temples made of cloth. It is possible, however, that there is more truth than is generally supposed in the view held by the Rabbins, that סִבּוֹת בָּנוֹת signifies an image of the "hen," or rather the constellation of "the clucking-hen" (*Gluckhenne*), the Pleiades,—*simulacrum gallinæ cælestis in signo Tauri nidulantis*, as a *symbolum Veneris cælestis*, as the other idols are all connected with animal symbolism. In any case the explanation given by Movers, *involucra seu secreta mulierum*, female lingams, which were handed by the hierodulæ to their paramours instead of the Mylitta-money (*Phöniz.* i. p. 596), is to be rejected, because it is at variance with the usage of speech and the context, and because the existence of female lingams has first of all to be proved. For the different views, see Ges. *thes.* p. 952, and Leyrer in Herzog's *Cycl.*—The Cuthæans made themselves as a god, נִרְגַּל, *Nergal*, i.e., according to Winer, Gesenius, Stuhr, and others, the planet *Mars*, which the Zabians call ܢܪܝܓ, *Nerig*, as the god of war (*Codex Nasar.* i. 212, 224), the Arabs مَرِيخ, *Mirrig*; whereas older commentators identified *Nergal* with the sun-god *Bel*,



deriving the name from  $\text{נֵר}$ , light, and  $\text{נַל}$ , a fountain = fountain of light (Selden, ii. 8, and Beyer, *Add.* pp. 301 sqq.). But these views are both of them very uncertain. According to the Rabbins (Rashi, R. Salomo, Kimchi), *Nergal* was represented as a cock. This statement, which is ridiculed by Gesenius, Winer, and Thenius, is proved to be correct by the Assyrian monuments, which contain a number of animal deities, and among them the cock standing upon an altar, and also upon a gem a priest praying in front of a cock (see Layard's *Nineveh*). The pugnacious cock is found generally in the ancient ethnical religions in frequent connection with the gods of war (cf. J. G. Müller in Herzog's *Cycl.*).  $\text{אַשִׁימָא}$ , *Ashima*, the god of the people of Hamath, was worshipped, according to rabbinical statements, under the figure of a bald he-goat (see Selden, ii. 9). The suggested combination of the name with the Phœnician deity *Esmun*, the Persian *Asuman*, and the Zendic *açmano*, i.e. heaven, is very uncertain.—Ver. 31. Of the idols of the *Avvæans*, according to rabbinical accounts in Selden, *l.c.*, *Nibchaz* had the form of a dog ( $\text{נִבְחָז}$ , *latrator*, from  $\text{נָבַח}$ ), and *Tartak* that of an ass. Gesenius regards *Tartak* as a demon of the lower regions, because in Pehlwi *tar*—*thakh* signifies deep darkness or hero of darkness, and *Nibchaz* as an evil demon, the  $\text{נִבְחָז}$  of the Zabians, whom Norberg in his *Onomast. cod. Nasar.* p. 100, describes as *horrendus rex infernalis: posito ipsius throno ad telluris, i.e. lucis et caliginis confinium, sed imo acherontis fundo pedibus substrato*, according to *Codex Adami*, ii. 50, lin. 12.—With regard to the gods of the Sepharvites, *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech*, it is evident from the offering of children in sacrifice to them that they were related to Moloch. The name  $\text{אַדְרַמְלֵךְ}$ , which occurs as a personal name in ch. xix. 37 and Isa. xxxvii. 38, has been explained either from the Semitic  $\text{אֲדָר}$  as meaning “glorious king,” or from the Persian  $\text{اَزر}$ ,  $\text{اَذر}$ , in which case it means “fire-king,” and is supposed to refer to the sun (see Ges. on *Isaiah*, ii. p. 347).  $\text{עֲנַפְלָה}$  is supposed by Hyde (*de relig. vet. Persarum*, p. 131) to be the group of stars called *Cepheus*, which goes by the name of “the shepherd and flock” and “the herd-stars” in the Oriental astrognosis, and in this case  $\text{עֵנָם}$  might answer to the Arabic  $\text{عَنَم} = \text{عَنَم}$ . Movers, on the other hand (*Phöniz.* i. pp. 410, 411), regards them as two names of the same deity, a

double-shaped Moloch, and reads the *Chethîb* אֱלֹהֵי סִבְרִים as the singular אֱלֹהֵי הַסְפָּרַיִם, the god of Sepharvaim. This double god, according to his explanation, was a sun-being, because Sepharvaim, of which he was *πολιοῦχος*, is designated by Berosus as a city of the sun. This may be correct; but there is something very precarious in the further assumption, that "*Adar-Melech* is to be regarded as the sun's fire, and indeed, since *Adar* is Mars, that he is so far to be thought of as a destructive being," and that *Anammelech* is a contraction of עֵין מֶלֶךְ, *oculus Molechi*, signifying the ever-watchful eye of Saturn; according to which *Adrammelech* is to be regarded as the solar Mars, *Anammelech* as the solar Saturn. The explanations given by Hitzig (*on Isa.* p. 437) and Benfey (*die Monatsnamen*, pp. 187, 188) are extremely doubtful.—Ver. 32. In addition to these idols, *Jehovah* also was worshipped in temples of the high places, according to the instructions of the Israelitish priest sent by the king of Assyria. וַיְהִי יִרְאִים: "and they were (also) worshipping Jehovah, and made themselves priests of the mass of the people" (מִקְצוֹתָם as in 1 Kings xii. 31). וַיְהִי עֲשִׂים לָהֶם: "and they (the priests) were preparing them (sacrifices) in the houses of the high places."—Ver. 33 sums up by way of conclusion the description of the various kinds of worship.

Vers. 34–41. This mixed *cultus*, composed of the worship of idols and the worship of Jehovah, they retained till the time when the books of the Kings were written. "Unto this day they do after the former customs." הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים can only be the religious usages and ordinances which were introduced at the settlement of the new inhabitants, and which are described in vers. 28–33. The prophetic historian observes still further, that "they fear not Jehovah, and do not according to their statutes and their rights, nor according to the law and commandment which the Lord had laid down for the sons of Jacob, to whom He gave the name of Israel" (see 1 Kings xviii. 31), i.e. according to the Mosaic law. הַחֻקִּים and הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים, "their statutes and their right," stands in antithesis to הַתּוֹרָה וְהַמִּצְוָה which *Jehovah* gave to the children of Israel. If, then, the clause, "they do not according to their statutes and their right," is not to contain a glaring contradiction to the previous assertion, "unto this day they do after their first (former) rights," we must understand by הַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים the statutes and the right of the ten tribes, i.e. the worship of Jehovah under



the symbols of the calves, and must explain the inexactness of the expression "*their* statutes and *their* right" from the fact that the historian was thinking of the Israelites who had been left behind in the land, or of the remnant of the Israelitish population that had become mixed up with the heathen settlers (ch. xxiii. 19, 20; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 9, 33). The meaning of the verse is therefore evidently the following: The inhabitants of Samaria retain to this day the *cultus* composed of the worship of idols and of Jehovah under the form of an image, and do not worship Jehovah either after the manner of the ten tribes or according to the precepts of the Mosaic law. Their worship is an amalgamation of the Jehovah image-worship and of heathen idolatry (cf. ver. 41).—To indicate the character of this worship still more clearly, and hold it up as a complete breach of the covenant and as utter apostasy from Jehovah, the historian describes still more fully, in vers. 35-39, how earnestly and emphatically the people of Israel had been prohibited from worshipping other gods, and urged to worship Jehovah alone, who had redeemed Israel out of Egypt and exalted it into His own nation. For ver. 35 compare Ex. xx. 5; for ver. 36, the exposition of ver. 7, also Ex. xxxii. 11, vi. 6, xx. 23; Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, etc. In ver. 37 the committal of the *thorah* to writing is presupposed. For ver. 39, see Deut. xiii. 5, xxiii. 15, etc.—Ver. 40. They did not hearken, however (the subject is, of course, the ten tribes), but they (the descendants of the Israelites who remained in the land) do after their former manner. מִשְׁפָּטֵם הָרָאשֶׁן is their manner of worshipping God, which was a mixture of idolatry and of the image-worship of Jehovah, as in ver. 34.—In ver. 41 this is repeated once more, and the whole of these reflections are brought to a close with the additional statement, that their children and grandchildren do the same to this day.—In the period following the Babylonian captivity the Samaritans relinquished actual idolatry, and by the adoption of the Mosaic book of the law were converted to monotheism. For the later history of the Samaritans, of whom a small handful have been preserved to the present day in the ancient Sichem, the present Nablus, see Theod. Guil. Joh. Juynboll, *commentarii in historiam gentis Samaritanæ*, Lugd. Bat. 1846, 4, and H. Petermann, *Samaria and the Samaritans*, in Herzog's *Cycl.*

III.—HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF THE TEN TRIBES TO THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

CHAPS. XVIII.—XXV.

At the time when the kingdom of the ten tribes was destroyed, Judah found itself in a state of dependence upon the imperial power of Assyria, into which it had been brought by the ungodly policy of Ahaz. But three years before the expedition of Salmanasar against Samaria, the pious Hezekiah had ascended the throne of his ancestor David in Jerusalem, and had set on foot with strength and zeal the healing of Judah's wounds, by exterminating idolatry and by restoring the legal worship of Jehovah. As Hezekiah was devoted to the Lord his God with undivided heart and trusted firmly in Him, the Lord also acknowledged him and his undertakings. When Sennacherib had overrun Judah with a powerful army after the revolt of Hezekiah, and had summoned the capital to surrender, the Lord heard the prayer of His faithful servant Hezekiah and saved Judah and Jerusalem from the threatening destruction by the miraculous destruction of the forces of the proud Sennacherib (ch. xviii. and xix.), whereby the power of Assyria was so weakened that Judah had no longer much more to fear from it, although it did chastise Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 sqq.). Nevertheless this deliverance, through and in the time of Hezekiah, was merely a postponement of the judgment with which Judah had been threatened by the prophets (Isaiah and Micah), of the destruction of the kingdom and the banishment of its inhabitants. Apostasy from the living God and moral corruption had struck such deep and firm roots in the nation, that the idolatry, outwardly suppressed by Hezekiah, broke out again openly immediately after his death; and that in a still stronger degree, since his son and successor Manasseh not only restored all the abominations of idolatry which his father had rooted out, but even built altars to idols in the courts of the temple of Jehovah, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood from one end to the other (ch. xxi.), and thereby filled up the measure of sins, so that the Lord had to announce through His prophets to the godless king and people His decree to destroy Jerusalem and cast out the remaining portion of the people of His inheritance



among the heathen, and to show the severity of His judgments in the fact that Manasseh was led away captive by the officers of the Assyrian king. And even though Manasseh himself renounced all gross idolatry and restored the legal worship in the temple after his release and return to Jerusalem, as the result of this chastisement, this alteration in the king's mind exerted no lasting influence upon the people generally, and was completely neutralized by his successor Amon, who did not walk in the way of Jehovah, but merely worshipped his father's idols. In this state of things even the God-fearing Josiah, with all the stringency with which he exterminated idolatry, more especially after the discovery of the book of the law, was unable to effect any true change of heart or sincere conversion of the people to their God, and could only wipe out the outward signs and traces of idolatry, and establish the external supremacy of the worship of Jehovah. The people, with their carnal security, imagined that they had done quite enough for God by restoring the outward and legal form of worship, and that they were now quite sure of the divine protection; and did not hearken to the voice of the prophets, who predicted the speedy coming of the judgments of God. Josiah had warded off the bursting forth of these judgments for thirty years, through his humiliation before God and the reforms which he introduced; but towards the end of his reign the Lord began to put away Judah from before His face for the sake of Manasseh's sins, and to reject the city which He had chosen that His name might dwell there (ch. xxii.—xxiii. 27). Necho king of Egypt advanced to extend his sway to the Euphrates and overthrow the Assyrian empire. Josiah marched to meet him, for the purpose of preventing the extension of his power into Syria. A battle was fought at Megiddo, the Judæan army was defeated, Josiah fell in the battle, and with him the last hope of the sinking state (ch. xxiii. 29, 30; 2 Chron. xxxv. 23, 24). In Jerusalem Jehoahaz was made king by the people; but after a reign of three months he was taken prisoner by Necho at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and led away to Egypt, where he died. Eliakim, the elder son of Josiah, was appointed by Necho as Egyptian vassal-king in Jerusalem, under the name of Jehoiakim. He was devoted to idolatry, and through his love of show (Jer. xxii. 13 sqq.) still further ruined the kingdom, which was already exhausted by the tribute to be paid to Egypt. In the fourth year of his

reign Pharaoh-Necho succumbed at Carchemish to the Chaldæan power, which was rising under Nebuchadnezzar upon the ruins of the Assyrian kingdom. At the same time Jeremiah proclaimed to the incorrigible nation that the Lord of Sabaoth would deliver Judah with all the surrounding nations into the hand of His servant Nebuchadnezzar, that the land of Judah would be laid waste and the people serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jer. xxv.). Nebuchadnezzar appeared in Judah immediately afterwards to follow up his victory over Necho, took Jerusalem, made Jehoiakim his subject, and carried away Daniel, with many of the leading young men, to Babylon (ch. xxiv. 1). But after some years Jehoiakim revolted; whereupon Nebuchadnezzar sent fresh troops against Jerusalem to besiege the city, and after defeating Jehoiachin, who had in the meantime followed his father upon the throne, led away into captivity to Babylon, along with the kernel of the nation, nobles, warriors, craftsmen, and smiths, and set upon the throne Mattaniah, the only remaining son of Josiah, under the name of Zedekiah (ch. xxiv. 2-17). But when he also formed an alliance with Pharaoh-Hophra in the ninth year of his reign, and revolted from the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar advanced immediately with all his forces, besieged Jerusalem, and having taken the city and destroyed it, put an end to the kingdom of Judah by slaying Zedekiah and his sons, and carrying away all the people that were left, with the exception of a very small remnant of cultivators of the soil (ch. xxiv. 18-xxv. 26), a hundred and thirty-four years after the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes.

CHAP. XVIII. REIGN OF KING HEZEKIAH. SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH AND THREATENS JERUSALEM.

Vers. 1-8. *Length and character of Hezekiah's reign.*<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 1, 2. In the third year of Hoshea of Israel, Hezekiah became

<sup>1</sup> On comparing the account of Hezekiah's reign given in our books (ch. xviii.-xx.) with that in 2 Chron. xxix.-xxxii., the different plans of these two historical works are at once apparent. The prophetic author of our books first of all describes quite briefly the character of the king's reign (ch. xviii. 1-8), and then gives an elaborate description of the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib and of his attempt to get Jerusalem into his power, together with the destruction of the proud Assyrian force and Sennacherib's



king over Judah, when he was twenty-five years old. According to vers. 9 and 10, the fourth and sixth years of Hezekiah corresponded to the seventh and ninth of Hoshea; consequently his first year apparently ran parallel to the fourth of Hoshea, so that Josephus (*Ant.* ix. 13, 1) represents him as having ascended the throne in the fourth year of Hoshea's reign. But there is no necessity for this alteration. If we assume that the commencement of his reign took place towards the close of the third year of Hoshea, the fourth and sixth years of his reign coincided for the most part with the sixth and ninth years of Hoshea's reign. The name הִזְקִיָּהוּ or הִזְקִיָּה (vers. 9, 13, etc.) is given in its complete form יְהִזְקִיָּהוּ, "whom Jehovah strengthens," in 2 Chron. xxix. sqq. and Isa. i. 1; and הִזְקִיָּה in Hos. i. 1 and Mic. i. 1. On his age when he ascended the throne, see the Comm. on ch. xvi. 2. The name of his mother, אֲבִי, is a strongly contracted form of אֲבִיָּה (2 Chron. xxix. 1).—Vers. 3 sqq. As ruler Hezekiah walked in the footsteps of his ancestor David. He removed the high places and the other objects of idolatrous worship, trusted in Jehovah, and adhered firmly to Him without wavering; therefore the Lord made all his undertakings prosper. הַמַּצֹּטֶה, הַמִּצְבֹּת, and הַבְּמֹת (see at 1 Kings xiv. 23) embrace all the objects of idolatrous worship, which had been introduced into Jerusalem and Judah in the reigns of the former kings,

hasty return to Nineveh and death (ch. xviii. 13-19, 37); and, finally, he also gives a circumstantial account of Hezekiah's illness and recovery, and also of the arrival of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem, and of Hezekiah's conduct on that occasion (ch. xx.). The chronicler, on the other hand, has fixed his chief attention upon the religious reformation carried out by Hezekiah, and therefore first of all describes most elaborately the purification of the temple from all idolatrous abominations, the restoration of the Jehovah-cultus and the feast of passover, to which Hezekiah invited all the people, not only the subjects of his own kingdom, but the remnant of the ten tribes also (2 Chron. xxix.-xxx.); and then simply gives in ch. xxxii. the most summary account of the attack made by Sennacherib upon Jerusalem and the destruction of his army, of the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, and of his great riches, the Babylonian embassy being touched upon in only the most casual manner. The historical character of the elaborate accounts given in the Chronicles of Hezekiah's reform of worship and his celebration of the passover, which Thenius follows De Wette and Gramberg in throwing doubt upon, has been most successfully defended by Bertheau as well as others.—On the disputed question, in what year of Hezekiah's reign the solemn passover instituted by him fell, see the thorough discussion of it by C. P. Caspari (*Beitr. z. Einleit. in d. B. Jesaja*, pp. 109 sqq.), and our Commentary on the Chronicles, which has yet to appear.

and more especially in that of Ahaz. The singular **הַאֲשֵׁרָה** is used in a collective sense = **הָאֲשֵׁרִים** (2 Chron. xxxi. 1). The only other idol that is specially mentioned is the brazen serpent which Moses made in the wilderness (Num. xxi. 8, 9), and which the people with their leaning to idolatry had turned in the course of time into an object of idolatrous worship. The words, "to this day were the children of Israel burning incense to it," do not mean that this took place without interruption from the time of Moses down to that of Hezekiah, but simply, that it occurred at intervals, and that the idolatry carried on with this idol lasted till the time of Hezekiah, namely, till this king broke in pieces the brazen serpent, because of the idolatry that was associated with it. For further remarks on the meaning of this symbol, see the Comm. on Num. xxi. 8, 9. The people called (**וַיִּקְרָא**, one called) this serpent **נְחָשֶׁתֶן**, *i.e.* a brazen thing. This epithet does not involve anything contemptuous, as the earlier commentators supposed, nor the idea of "Brass-god" (Ewald).—Ver. 5. The verdict, "after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah," refers to Hezekiah's confidence in God (**בְּטַח**), in which he had no equal, whereas in the case of Josiah his conscientious adherence to the Mosaic law is extolled in the same words (ch. xxiii. 25); so that there is no ground for saying that there is a contradiction between our verse and ch. xxiii. 25 (Thenius).—Ver. 6. **וַיִּדְבֶק בַּיְיָ**: he adhered faithfully to Jehovah (**דָּבַק** as in 1 Kings xi. 2), and departed not from Him, *i.e.* he never gave himself up to idolatry.—Ver. 7. The Lord therefore gave him success in all his undertakings (**הַשְׂכִּיל**, see at 1 Kings ii. 3), and even in his rebellion against the king of Assyria, whom he no longer served, *i.e.* to whom he paid no more tribute. It was through Ahaz that Judah had been brought into dependence upon Assyria; and Hezekiah released himself from this, by refusing to pay any more tribute, probably after the departure of Salmanasar from Palestine, and possibly not till after the death of that king. Sennacherib therefore made war upon Hezekiah to subjugate Judah to himself again (see vers. 13 sqq.).—Ver. 8. Hezekiah smote the Philistines to Gaza, and their territory from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city, *i.e.* all the towns from the least to the greatest (see at ch. xvii. 9). He thus chastised these enemies for their invasion of Judah in the time of Ahaz, wrested from them the cities which they had taken at that time (2 Chron.



xxviii. 18), and laid waste all their country to *Gaza*, i.e. *Ghuzzeh*, the most southerly of the chief cities of Philistia (see at Josh. xiii. 3). This probably took place after the defeat of Sennacherib (cf. 2 Chron. xxxii. 22, 23).

In vers. 9-12 the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes by Salmanasar, which has already been related according to the annals of the kingdom of Israel in ch. xvii. 3-6, is related once more according to the annals of the kingdom of Judah, in which this catastrophe is also introduced as an event that was memorable in relation to all the covenant-nation.

Vers. 13-37. *Sennacherib invades Judah and threatens Jerusalem*.<sup>1</sup>—Sennacherib, סַנְחֶרִיב (*Sanchēribh*), Σενναχηρίμ (LXX.), Σενναχήριβος (Joseph.), Σαναχάριβος (Herodot.), whose name has not yet been deciphered with certainty upon the Assyrian monuments or clearly explained (see J. Brandis *über den histor. Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyr. Inschriften*, pp. 103 sqq., and M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, p. 37), was the successor of Salmanasar (Sargina according to the monuments). He is called βασιλεὺς Ἀραβίων τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίων by Herodotus (ii. 141), and reigned, according to Berosus, eighteen years. He took all the fortified cities in Judah (יְהוּדָה, with the masculine suffix instead of the feminine: cf. Ewald, § 184, c). The כָּל, *all*, is not to be pressed; for, beside the strongly fortified capital Jerusalem, he had not yet taken the fortified cities of Lachish and Libnah (ver. 17 and ch. xix. 8) at the time, when, according to vers. 14 sqq., he sent a division of his army against Jerusalem, and summoned Hezekiah to surrender that city. According to Herodotus (*l.c.*), the real object of his campaign was Egypt, which is also apparent from ch. xix. 24, and is confirmed by Isa. x. 24; for which reason *Tirhaka* marched against him (ch. xix. 8; cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 171, 172).—Vers. 14 sqq. On the report of Sennacherib's approach, Hezekiah made provision at once for the safety of Jerusalem. He had the city fortified more strongly, and the fountain of the

<sup>1</sup> We have a parallel and elaborate account of this campaign of Sennacherib and his defeat (ch. xviii. 13-xix. 37), and also of Hezekiah's sickness and recovery and the arrival of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem (ch. xx. 1-19), in Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix., and a brief extract, with certain not unimportant supplements, in 2 Chron. xxxii. These three narratives, as is now generally admitted, are drawn independently of one another from a collection of the prophecies of Isaiah, which was received into the annals of the kingdom (2 Chron. xxxii. 32), and serve to confirm and complete one another.

upper Gihon and the brook near the city stopped up (see at ver. 17), to cut off the supply of water from the besiegers, as is stated in 2 Chron. xxxii. 2-8, and confirmed by Isa. xxii. 8-11. In the meantime Sennacherib had pressed forward to *Lachish*, i.e. *Um Lakis*, in the plain of Judah, on the south-west of Jerusalem, seven hours to the west of *Eleutheropolis* on the road to Egypt (see at Josh. x. 3); so that Hezekiah, having doubts as to the possibility of a successful resistance, sent ambassadors to negotiate with him, and promised to pay him as much tribute as he might demand if he would withdraw. The confession "I have sinned" is not to be pressed, inasmuch as it was forced from Hezekiah by the pressure of distress. Since Asshur had made Judah tributary by faithless conduct on the part of Tiglath-pileser towards Ahaz, there was nothing really wrong in the shaking off of this yoke by the refusal to pay any further tribute. But Hezekiah certainly did wrong, when, after taking the first step, he was alarmed at the disastrous consequences, and sought to purchase once more the peace which he himself had broken, by a fresh submission and renewal of the payment of tribute. This false step on the part of the pious king, which arose from a temporary weakness of faith, was nevertheless turned into a blessing through the pride of Sennacherib and the covenant-faithfulness of the Lord towards him and his kingdom. Sennacherib demanded the enormous sum of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold (more than two and a half million thalers, or £375,000); and Hezekiah not only gave him all the gold and silver found in the treasures of the temple and palace, but had the gold plates with which he had covered the doors and doorposts of the temple (2 Chron. xxix. 3) removed, to send them to the king of Assyria. הָאֲמֹנֹת, lit. the supports, i.e. the posts, of the doors.

These negotiations with Sennacherib on the part of Hezekiah are passed over both in the book of Isaiah and also in the Chronicles, because they had no further influence upon the future progress of the war.—Vers. 17 sqq. For though Sennacherib did indeed take the money, he did not depart, as he had no doubt promised, but, emboldened still further by this submissiveness, sent a detachment of his army against Jerusalem, and summoned Hezekiah to surrender the capital. "He sent Tartan, Rabсарis, and Rabshakeh." Rabshakeh only is mentioned in Isaiah, as the chief speaker in the negotiations



which follow, although in Isa. xxxvii. 6 and 24 allusion is evidently made to the other two. Tartan had no doubt the chief command, since he is not only mentioned first here, but conducted the siege of Ashdod, according to Isa. xx. 1. The three names are probably only official names, or titles of the offices held by the persons mentioned. For רַב־סָרִיס means *princeps eunuchorum*, and רִבְשָׁקָה chief cup-bearer. חֲרָתָן is explained by Hitzig on Isa. xx. 1 as derived from the Persian

تار تن, *Târ-tan*, "high person or vertex of the body," and in

Jer. xxxix. 3 as "body-guard;" but this is hardly correct, as the other two titles are Semitic. These generals took up their station with their army "at the conduit of the upper pool, which ran by the road of the fuller's field," *i.e.* the conduit which flowed from the upper pool—according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, the basin of the upper *Gihon* (*Birket el Mamilla*)—into the lower pool (*Birket es Sultân*: see at 1 Kings i. 33). According to Isa. vii. 3, this conduit was in existence as early as the time of Ahaz. The "end" of it is probably the locality in which the conduit began at the upper pool or *Gihon*, or where it first issued from it. This conduit which led from the upper *Gihon* into the lower, and which is called in 2 Chron. xxxii. 30 "the outflow of the upper *Gihon*," Hezekiah stopped up, and conducted the water downwards, *i.e.* underground, towards the west into the city of David; that is to say, he conducted the water of the upper *Gihon*, which had previously flowed along the western side of the city outside the wall into the lower *Gihon* and so away down the valley of Ben-hinnom, into the city itself by means of a subterranean channel,<sup>1</sup> that he might retain this water for the use of the city in the event of a siege of Jerusalem, and keep it from the besiegers. This water was probably collected in the cistern (הַבִּירְכָה) which Hezekiah made, *i.e.* ordered to be constructed (ch. xx. 20), or the reservoir "between the two walls for the waters of the old pool," mentioned in Isa. xxii. 11, *i.e.* most probably the reservoir still existing at some distance to the east of the Joppa gate on the western side of the road which leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the so-called "pool of Hezekiah," which the natives call *Birket el Hamman*,

<sup>1</sup> We may get some idea of the works connected with this aqueduct from the description of the "sealed fountain" of the Solomon's pool at *Ain Saleh* in Tobler, *Topogr. v. Jerus.* ii. pp. 857 sqq., *Dritte Wanderung*.

"Bathing-pool," because it supplies a bath in the neighbourhood, or *B. el Batrak*, "Patriarch's pool" (see Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 487, and *Fresh Researches into the Topography of Jerusalem*, pp. 111 sqq.), since this is still fed by a conduit from the *Mamilla* pool (see E. G. Schultz, *Jerusalem*, p. 31, and Tobler, *Denkschriften*, pp. 44 sqq.).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 18. Hezekiah considered it beneath his dignity to negotiate personally with the generals of Sennacherib. He sent three of his leading ministers out to the front of the city: *Eliakim* the son of Hilkiah, the captain of the castle, who had only received the appointment to this office a short time before in *Shebna's* place (*Isa.* xxii. 20, 21); *Shebna*, who was still secretary of state (סֵפֶר: see at 2 Sam. viii. 17); and *Joach* the son of Asaph, the chancellor (מִזְכִּיר: see at 2 Sam. viii. 16).

*Rabshakeh* made a speech to these three (vers. 19–25), in which he tried to show that Hezekiah's confidence that he would be able to resist the might of the king of Assyria was perfectly vain, since neither Egypt (ver. 21), nor his God (ver. 22), nor his forces (ver. 23), would be able to defend him.—Ver. 19. "The great king:" the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian kings all assumed this title (cf. *Ezek.* xxvi. 7; *Dan.* ii. 37), because

<sup>1</sup> The identity of the בִּרְכָה, which Hezekiah constructed as a reservoir for the overflow of the upper Gihon that was conducted into the city (*ch.* xx. 20), with the present "pool of Hezekiah" is indeed very probable, but not quite certain. For in very recent times, on digging the foundation for the Evangelical church built on the northern slope of Zion, they lighted upon a large well-preserved arched channel, which was partly cut in the rock, and, where this was not the case, built in level layers and coated within with a hard cement about an inch thick and covered with large stones (Robinson, *New Inquiries as to the Topography of Jerusalem*, p. 113, and *Bibl. Res.* p. 318), and which might possibly be connected with the channel made by Hezekiah to conduct the water of the upper Gihon into the city, although this channel does not open into the pool of Hezekiah, and the walls, some remains of which are still preserved, may belong to a later age. The arguments adduced by Thenius in support of the assumption that the "lower" or "old pool" mentioned in *Isa.* xxii. 9 and 11 is different from the lower Gihon-pool, and to be sought for in the Tyropœon, are inconclusive. It by no means follows from the expression, "which lies by the road of the fuller's field," i.e. by the road which runs past the fuller's field, that there was another upper pool in Jerusalem beside the upper pool (Gihon); but this additional clause simply serves to define more precisely the spot by the conduit mentioned where the Assyrian army took its stand; and it by no means follows from the words of *Isa.* xxii. 11, "a gathering of waters have ye made between the two walls for the waters of the old pool," that this gathering of waters was made in the Tyropœon, and that this "old



kings of conquered lands were subject to them as vassals (see at Isa. x. 8). "What is this confidence that thou cherishest?" *i.e.* how vain or worthless is this confidence!—Ver. 20. "Thou sayest . . . it is only a lip-word . . . : counsel and might for battle;" *i.e.* if thou speakest of counsel and might for battle, that is only **דְּבַר שִׁפְתַּיִם**, a word that merely comes from the lips, not from the heart, the seat of the understanding, *i.e.* a foolish and inconsiderate saying (cf. Prov. xiv. 23; Job xi. 2).—**אֶמְרָתִי** is to be preferred to the **אֶמְרָתִי** of Isaiah as the more original of the two. **עַתָּה**, now, *sc.* we will see on whom thou didst rely, when thou didst rebel against me.—Ver. 21. On Egypt? "that broken reed, which runs into the hand of any one who would lean upon it (thinking it whole), and pierces it through." This figure, which is repeated in Ezek. xxix. 6, 7, is so far suitably chosen, that the Nile, representing Egypt, is rich in reeds. What Rabshakeh says of Egypt here, Isaiah had already earnestly impressed upon his people (Isa. xxx. 3-5), to warn them against trusting in the support of Egypt, from which one party in the nation expected help against Assyria.—Ver. 22. Hezekiah (and Judah) had a stronger ground of confidence in Jehovah his God. Even this

pool," as distinguished from the lower pool (ver. 9), was an upper pool, which was above the king's pool mentioned in Neh. iii. 15. For even if **בֵּין הַחֲמַתִּים** occurs in ch. xxv. 4, Jer. xxxix. 4, lii. 7, in connection with a locality on the south-east side of the city, the Old Testament says nothing about two pools in the Tyropœon at the south-east corner of Jerusalem, but simply mentions a fountain gate, which probably derived its name from the present fountain of the Virgin, and the king's pool, also called *Shelach* in Neh. ii. 14, iii. 15, which was no doubt fed from that fountain like the present *Siloam*, and watered the royal gardens. (Compare Rob. *Pal.* i. pp. 565 sqq., and *Bibl. Res.* p. 189, and Tobler, *Die Siloah-quelle u. der Oelberg*, pp. 1 sqq.). The two walls, between which Hezekiah placed the reservoir, may very well be the northern wall of Zion and the one which surrounded the lower city (Acra) on the north-west, according to which the words in Isa. xxii. 11 would admirably suit the "pool of Hezekiah." Again, Hezekiah did not wait till the departure of Sennacherib before he built this conduit, which is also mentioned in Wisd. xlviii. 17, as Knobel supposes (on Isa. xxii. 11), but he made it when he first invaded Judah, before the appearance of the Assyrian troops in front of Jerusalem, when he made the defensive preparations noticed at ver. 14, as is evident from 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4, compared with ver. 30, since the stopping up of the fountain outside the city, to withdraw the water from the Assyrians, is expressly mentioned in vers. 3, 4 among the measures of defence; and in the concluding notices concerning Hezekiah in ch. xx. 20, and 2 Chron. xxxii. 30, there is also a brief allusion to this work, without any precise indication of the time when he had executed it.

Rabshakeh tried to shake, availing himself very skilfully, from his heathen point of view, of the reform which Hezekiah had made in the worship, and representing the abolition of the altars on the high places as an infringement upon the reverence that ought to be shown to God. "And if ye say, We trust in Jehovah our God, (I say :) is it not He whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar (in the temple) in Jerusalem?" Instead of **בִּי תֹאמַרְוּ**, according to which Rabshakeh turned to the deputies, we have in Isa. vii. **בִּי תֹאמַר** 7, according to which the words are addressed to Hezekiah, as in ver. 20. **תֹאמַרְוּ** is preferred by Thenius, Knobel, and others, because in what follows Hezekiah is addressed in the third person. But the very circumstance that **תֹאמַרְוּ** is apparently more suitable favours the originality of **תֹאמַר**, according to which the king is still addressed in the person of his ambassadors, and Rabshakeh only speaks directly to the ambassadors when this argument is answered. The attack upon the confidence which the Judæans placed in their God commences with **הֲלֹא הוּא**. The opinion of Thenius, that the second clause of the verse is a continuation of the words supposed to be spoken by the Judæans who trusted in God, and that the apodosis does not follow till ver. 23, is quite a mistake. The ambassadors of Hezekiah could not regard the high places and idolatrous altars that had been abolished as altars of Jehovah; and the apodosis could not commence with **וְעַתָּה**.—Vers. 23, 24. Still less could Hezekiah rely upon his military resources. **נָא הִתְעַרְבֵנָּה**: enter, I pray thee, (into contest) with my lord, and I will give thee 2000 horses, if thou canst set the horsemen upon them. The meaning, of course, is not that Hezekiah could not raise 2000 soldiers in all, but that he could not produce so many men who were able to fight as horsemen. "How then wilt thou turn back a single one of the smallest lieutenants of my lord?" **הֲשִׁיב אֶת-פָּנָי פֶּל'**, to repulse a person's face, means generally to turn away a person with his petition (1 Kings ii. 16, 17), here to repulse an assailant. **פָּחַת אֶחָד** is one pasha; although **אֶחָד**, which is grammatically subordinate to **פָּחַת**, is in the construct state, that the genitives which follow may be connected (for this subordination of **אֶחָד** see Ewald, § 286, a). **פָּחַת** (see at 1 Kings x. 15), lit. under-vicegerent, *i.e.* administrator of a province under a satrap, in military states also a subordinate officer. **וְהַבְטַח**: and so (with thy military force so small) thou



trustest in Egypt לִרְכֹב וְגו', so far as war-chariots and horsemen are concerned.—Ver. 25. After Rabshakeh had thus, as he imagined, taken away every ground of confidence from Hezekiah, he added still further, that the Assyrian king himself had also not come without Jehovah, but had been summoned by Him to effect the destruction of Judah. It is possible that some report may have reached his ears of the predictions of the prophets, who had represented the Assyrian invasion as a judgment from the Lord, and these he used for his own purposes. Instead of עַל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה, against this place, *i.e.* Jerusalem, we have עַל הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת in Isaiah,—a reading which owes its origin simply to the endeavour to bring the two clauses into exact conformity to one another.

Vers. 26-37. It was very conceivable that Rabshakeh's boasting might make an impression upon the people; the ambassadors of Hezekiah therefore interrupted him with the request that he would speak to them in Aramæan, as they understood that language, and not in Jewish, on account of the people who were standing upon the wall. אַרְמִית was the language spoken in Syria, Babylonia, and probably also in the province of Assyria, and may possibly have been Rabshakeh's mother-tongue, even if the court language of the Assyrian kings was an Aryan dialect. With the close affinity between the Aramæan and the Hebrew, the latter could not be unknown to Rabshakeh, so that he made use of it, just as the Aramæan language was intelligible to the ministers of Hezekiah, whereas the people in Jerusalem understood only יְהוּדִית, Jewish, *i.e.* the Hebrew language spoken in the kingdom of Judah. It is evident from the last clause of the verse that the negotiations were carried on in the neighbourhood of the city wall of Jerusalem.—Ver. 27. But Rabshakeh rejected this proposal with the scornful remark, that his commission was not to speak to Hezekiah and his ambassadors only, but rather to the people upon the wall. The variation of the preposition עַל and אֶל in עַל אֲדֹנָיִךְ, to thy lord (Hezekiah), and אֶלֶיךָ, to thee (Eliakim as chief speaker), is avoided in the text of Isaiah. עַל is frequently used for אֶל, in the later usage of the language, in the sense of *to* or *at*. In the words "who sit upon the wall to eat their dung and drink their urine," Rabshakeh points to the horrors which a siege of Jerusalem would entail upon the inhabitants. For חֲרָאֵיהֶם = חֲרָאֵיהֶם, *excrementa sua*, and שִׁינֵיהֶם, *urinas suas*, the Masoretes have substituted the euphemisms צוֹאָתָם, going forth,

and מִיַּמֵּי רַגְלֵיהֶם, water of their feet.—Vers. 28 sqq. וַיַּעֲמֹד: not, he stood up, raised himself (Ges.), or came forward (Then.), but he stationed himself, assumed an attitude calculated for effect, and spoke to the people with a loud voice in the Jewish language, telling them to listen to the king of Assyria and not to be led astray by Hezekiah, *i.e.* to be persuaded to defend the city any longer, since neither Hezekiah nor Jehovah could defend them from the might of Sennacherib. אַל-יִשְׁיֵא: let not Hezekiah deceive you, *sc.* by pretending to be able to defend or save Jerusalem. In מִיָּדוֹ, “out of his (the Assyrian’s) hand,” the speaker ceases to speak in the name of his king. On the construction of the passive הִנָּחַן with אֶת-הָעִיר, see Ewald, § 277, *d*, although in the instance before us he proposes to expunge the אֶת after Isa. xxxvi. 15.—Vers. 31 sqq. “Make peace with me and come out to me (*sc.* out of your walls, *i.e.* surrender to me), and ye shall eat every one his vine, . . . till I come and bring you into a land like your own land . . .” בְּרָכָה is used here to signify peace as the concentration of weal and blessing. The imperative וְאָכְלוּ expresses the consequence of what goes before (*vid.* Ewald, § 347, *b*). To eat his vine and fig-tree and to drink the water of his well is a figure denoting the quiet and undisturbed enjoyment of the fruits of his own possessions (*cf.* 1 Kings v. 5). Even in the event of their yielding, the Assyrian would transport the Jewish people into another land, according to the standing custom of Asiatic conquerors in ancient times (for proofs see Hengstenberg, *De rebus Tyriis*, pp. 51, 52). To make the people contented with this thought, the boaster promised that the king of Assyria would carry them into a land which was quite as fruitful and glorious as the land of Canaan. The description of it as a land with corn and new wine, etc., recalls the picture of the land of Canaan in Deut. viii. 8 and xxxiii. 28. יֵית יִצְהָר is the olive-tree which yields good oil, in distinction from the wild olive-tree. וְהָיִינוּ: and ye shall live and not die, *i.e.* no harm shall befall you from me (Thenius). This passage is abridged in Isa. xxxvi. 17.—Vers. 33 sqq. Even Jehovah could not deliver them any more than Hezekiah. As a proof of this, Rabshakeh enumerated a number of cities and lands which the king of Assyria had conquered, without their gods’ being able to offer any resistance to his power. “Where are the gods of Hamath, etc., that they might have delivered Samaria out of my hand?” Instead of כִּי הִצִּילֵנוּ we have וְכִי הִצִּי,



and that they might have, which loosens the connection somewhat more between this clause and the preceding one, and makes it more independent. "Where are they?" is equivalent to they are gone, have perished (cf. ch. xix. 18); and "that they might have delivered" is equivalent to they have not delivered. The subject to **כִּי הֶצִילֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי הַגּוֹיִם** is **אֱלֹהֵי הַגּוֹיִם**, which includes the God of Samaria. Sennacherib regards himself as being as it were one with his predecessors, as the representative of the might of Assyria, so that he attributes to himself the conquests of cities and lands which his ancestors had made. The cities and lands enumerated in ver. 34 have been mentioned already in ch. xvii. 24 as conquered territories, from which colonists had been transplanted to Samaria, with the exception of *Arpad* and *Hena*. **אַרְפָּד**, which is also mentioned in ch. xix. 13, Isa. x. 9, xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13, and Jer. xlix. 23, in connection with *Hamath*, was certainly situated in the neighbourhood of that city, and still exists, so far as the name is concerned, in the large village of **أَرْفَاد**, *Arfād* (mentioned by Maraszid, i. 47), in northern

Syria in the district of *Azáz*, which was seven hours to the north of Haleb, according to Abulf. *Tab. Syr. ed. Köhler*, p. 23, and Niebuhr, *Reise*, ii. p. 414 (see Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 112). **הֶנֶע**, *Hena*, which is also combined with 'Ivrah in

ch. xix. 13 and Isa. xxxvii. 13, is probably the city of **عانة**, *Ana*,

on the Euphrates, mentioned by Abulf., and **עֲנָה** is most likely the same as **עֲנָה** in ch. xvii. 24. The names **הֶנֶע וְעִירָה** are omitted from the text of Isaiah in consequence of the abridgment of Rabshakeh's address.—Ver. 35 contains the conclusion drawn from the facts already adduced: "which of all the gods of the lands are they who have delivered their land out of my hand, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" *i.e.* as not one of the gods of the lands named have been able to rescue his land from Assyria, Jehovah also will not be able to defend Jerusalem.—Vers. 36, 37. The people were quite silent at this address ("the people," **הָעָם**, to whom Rabshakeh had wished to address himself); for Hezekiah had forbidden them to make any answer, not only to prevent Rabshakeh from saying anything further, but that the ambassadors of Sennacherib might be left in complete uncertainty as to the impression made by their words. The deputies of Hezekiah returned to the

king with their clothes rent as a sign of grief at the words of the Assyrian, by which not only Hezekiah, but still more Jehovah, had been blasphemed, and reported what they had heard.

CHAP. XIX. JERUSALEM DELIVERED. DESTRUCTION OF THE ASSYRIAN ARMY AND DEATH OF SENNACHERIB. (Compare Isa. xxxvii.)

Vers. 1–4. When Hezekiah had heard from his counsellors the report of Rabshakeh's words, he rent his clothes with horror at his daring mockery of the living God (ver. 4), put on mourning clothes as a sign of the trouble of his soul and went into the temple, and at the same time sent Eliakim and Shebna with the oldest of the priests in mourning costume to the prophet Isaiah, to entreat him to intercede with the Lord in these desperate circumstances.<sup>1</sup> The order of the words: Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, is unusual (cf. ch. xiv. 25, xx. 1; 1 Kings xvi. 7, etc.), and is therefore altered in Isaiah into Isaiah the son of Amoz, the prophet.—Ver. 3. “A day of distress, and of chastisement, and of rejection is this day.” תּוֹכַחָה: the divine chastisement. נִאֲצָה: contemptuous treatment, or rejection of the people on the part of God (compare נִאֲץ, Deut. xxxii. 19, Jer. xiv. 21, Lam. ii. 6). “For children have come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.” A figure denoting extreme danger, the most desperate circumstances. If the woman in travail has not strength to bring forth the child which has come to the mouth of the womb, both the life of the child and that of the mother are exposed to the greatest danger; and this was the condition of the people here (see the similar figure in Hos. xiii. 13). For לָרָה instead of לָרָה, see Ges. § 69, 2 Anm.—Ver. 4. Perhaps Jehovah thy God will hear the blasphemies of the living God on the part of Rabshakeh. יִשְׁמַע: hear, equivalent to observe, take notice of, and in this case punish. אֱלֹהִים חַי: the living God, in contrast to the gods of the heathen, who are only lifeless idols (cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36). וְהוֹכִיחַ is not to be taken in connection with לְחַרְרָה, as if it stood for לְהוֹכִיחַ, “and to scold with words” (Luth.,

<sup>1</sup> “But the most wise king did not meet his blasphemies with weapons, but with prayer, and tears, and sackcloth, and entreated the prophet Isaiah to be his ambassador.”—THEODORET.



Ges., etc.), but is a *perf. rel.* or a progressive perfect (Ewald, § 234, *a*), and the continuation of *יִשְׁמַע*: “and will chastise (punish, *sc.* him) for the words which He has heard.” *וַיִּשְׁאֲתָה חַם*: “therefore lift up prayer (to heaven) for the (still) existing remnant, *sc.* of the people of God;” nearly all Judah having come into the power of Sennacherib since the carrying away of the ten tribes.

Vers. 5-7. Isaiah replied with this comforting promise: Hezekiah was not to be afraid of the blasphemous words of the Assyrian king; the Lord would frighten him with a report, so that he would return to his own land, and there would He cause him to fall by the sword. *נַעֲרֵי מַלְכָּהּ א'*, the servants or young men of the Assyrian king, is a derogatory epithet applied to the officials of Assyria. “Behold, I put a spirit into him, so that he shall hear a report and return into his own land.” *שְׁמוּעָה* does not refer to the report of the destruction of his army (ver. 35), as Thenius supposes, for Sennacherib did not hear of this through the medium of an army, but was with the army himself at the time when it was smitten by the angel of the Lord; it refers to the report mentioned in ver. 9. For even if he made one last attempt to secure the surrender of Jerusalem immediately upon hearing this report, yet after the failure of this attempt to shake the firmness of Hezekiah his courage must have failed him, and the thought of return must have suggested itself, so that this was only accelerated by the blow which fell upon the army. For, as O. v. Gerlach has correctly observed, “the destruction of the army would hardly have produced any decisive effect without the approach of Tirhakah, since the great power of the Assyrian king, especially in relation to the small kingdom of Judah, was not broken thereby. But at the prayer of the king the Lord added this miracle to the other, which His providence had already brought to pass.—For the fulfilment of the prophecy of Sennacherib’s death, see ver. 37.

Vers. 8-13. In the meantime Rabshakeh had returned to his king at *Libnah* (see at ch. viii. 22), to which he had gone from Lachish, probably after having taken that fortress.—Ver. 9. There Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah was advancing to make war against him. *Tirhakah*, *Θαπακά* (LXX.), king of Cush, is the *Ταπακός* of Manetho, the successor of Sevechus (Shebek II.), the third king of the twenty-fifth (Ethiopian) dynasty, described

by Strabo (xv. 687), who calls him *Τεάρκων*, as a great conqueror. His name is spelt *Tāhālqa* or *Tāhargō* upon the monuments, and on the Pylon of the great temple at Medinet-Abu he is represented in the form of a king, cutting down enemies of conquered lands (Egypt, Syria, and *Tepopā*, an unknown land) before the god Ammon (see Brugsch, *hist. d'Egypte*, i. pp. 244, 245).<sup>1</sup>—On hearing the report of the advance of Tirhakah, Sennacherib sent ambassadors again to Hezekiah with a letter (ver. 14), in which he summoned him once more to give up his confidence in his God, and his assurance that Jerusalem would not be delivered into the hands of the king of Assyria, since the gods of no other nation had been able to save their lands and cities from the kings of Assyria who had preceded him. The letter contained nothing more, therefore, than a repetition of the arguments already adduced by Rabshakeh (ch. xviii. 19 sqq.), though a larger number of the lands conquered by the Assyrians are given, for the purpose of strengthening the impression intended to be made upon Hezekiah of the irresistible character of the Assyrian arms.—To offer a successful resistance to Tirhakah and overcome him, Sennacherib wanted above all things a firm footing in Judah; and for this the possession of Jerusalem was of the greatest importance, since it would both cover his back and secure his retreat. Fortifications like Lachish and Libnah could be quickly taken by a violent assault. But

<sup>1</sup> According to Jul. Afric. (in Syncell. i. p. 139, ed. Dind.) he reigned eighteen years, according to Euseb. (in Syncell. p. 140) twenty years. Both statements are incorrect; for, according to an Apis-stele published by Mariette, the birth of an Apis who died in the twentieth year of Psammetichus fell in the twenty-sixth year of Tirhakah, so that the reign of Tirhakah may be supposed to have lasted twenty-eight years (see Brugsch, *l.c.* p. 247). But the chronological conclusions respecting the date of his reign are very uncertain. Whereas M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 72) fixes his expedition against Sennacherib in the thirty-seventh *ær. Nab.*, *i.e.* 710 B.C., and the commencement of his reign over Egypt in 45 *ær. Nab.*, *i.e.* 702 B.C., and assumes that he marched against Sennacherib before he was king of Egypt, which is apparently favoured by the epithet king of Cush, not of Egypt; Brugsch (*l.c.* p. 292) has given the year 693 B.C. as the commencement of his reign. It is obvious that this statement is irreconcilable with the O. T. chronology, since the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, in which Sennacherib invaded Judah, corresponds to the year 714 or 713 B.C. These diversities simply confirm our remark (p. 411), that the chronological data as to the kings of Egypt before Psammetichus cannot lay any claim to historical certainty. For an attempt to solve this discrepancy see M. v. Niebuhr, pp. 458 sqq.



it was very different with Jerusalem. Salmanasar had stood before Samaria for three years before he was able to conquer it; and Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for two years before the city was starved out and it was possible to take it (ch. xxv. 1 sqq.). But as Tirhakah was approaching, Sennacherib had no time now for so tedious a siege. He therefore endeavoured to induce Hezekiah to surrender the city quietly by a boastful description of his own power. Instead of וַיָּשָׁב וַיִּשְׁלַח (ver. 9), we have in Isaiah וַיִּשְׁמַע וַיִּשְׁלַח, "when he heard this he sent," which is probably the more original, and indicates that when Sennacherib received the intelligence he sent at once (Drechsler).—Ver. 10. אַל יִשְׁיָאֲךָ: "let not thy God deceive thee," i.e. do not allow yourself to be deceived by your confidence in your God. לֵאמֹר, to say, i.e. to think or believe, that Jerusalem will not be given, etc. To shatter this confidence, Sennacherib reminds him of the deeds of the Assyrian kings. לְהַחֲרִימָם, to ban them, i.e. by smiting them with the ban. The verb הִחָרִים is chosen with emphasis, to express the unsparing destruction. וְאַתָּה הֲנִצֵּל: and thou shouldst be saved?—a question implying a strong negative.—Ver. 12. "Have the gods of the nations delivered them?" אֲתָם is not a pronoun used in anticipation of the object, which follows in נִזֶּן וְנָוִי (Thenius), but refers to כָּל־הָאֱרָצוֹת in ver. 11, a specification of which is given in the following enumeration. *Gozan* may be the province of *Gauzanitis* in Mesopotamia, but it may just as well be the country of *Gauzania* on the other side of the Tigris (see at ch. xvii. 6). The combination with *Haran* does not force us to the first assumption, since the list is not a geographical but a historical one.—*Haran* (*Charan*), i.e. the *Carrae* of the Greeks and Romans, where Abraham's father Terah died, a place in northern Mesopotamia (see at Gen. xi. 31), is probably not merely the city here, but the country in which the city stood.—*Rezep* (רִצְפָּה), the Arabic رَصَافَة, a very widespread name, since Jakut gives nine cities of this name in his Geographical Lexicon, is probably the most celebrated of the cities of that name, the *Rusapha* of Syria, called 'Ρησάφα in Ptol. v. 15, in Palmyrene, on the road from Racca to Emesa, a day's journey from the Euphrates (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 1308).—"The sons of *Eden*, which (were) in *Telassar*," were evidently a tribe whose chief settlement was in Telassar. By עֵדֶן we might understand the בֵּית־עֵדֶן of Amos i. 5, a city in a pleasant

region of Syria, called Παράδεισος by Ptol. (v. 15), since there is still a village called *Ehden* in that locality (cf. Burckhardt, *Syr.* p. 66, and v. Schubert, *Reise*, iii. p. 366), if we could only discover *Telassar* in the neighbourhood, and if the village of *Ehden* could be identified with Παράδεισος and the *Eden* of the Bible, as is done even by Gesenius on Burckhardt, p. 492, and *Thes.* p. 195; but this *Ehden* is spelt اهدن in Arabic, and is not to be associated with עֵדֵן (see Rob. *Bibl. Res.* pp. 586, 587). Moreover the *Thelscæ* near Damascus (in the *Itin. Ant.* p. 196, ed. Wess.) is too unlike *Telassar* to come into consideration. There is more to be said in favour of the identification of our עֵדֵן with the Assyrian *Eden*, which is mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 23 along with *Haran* and *Calneh* as an important place for trade, although its position cannot be more certainly defined; and neither the comparison with the tract of land called مَدَن, *Maadon*, which Assemani (*Biblioth. or.* ii. p. 224) places in Mesopotamia, towards the Tigris, in the present province of Diarbekr (Ges., *Win.*), nor the conjecture of Knobel that the tribe-name *Eden* may very probably have been preserved in the large but very dilapidated village of *Adana* or *Adna*, some distance to the north of Bagdad (Ker Porter, *Journey*, ii. p. 355, and Ritter, *Erdk.* ix. p. 493), can be established as even a probability. תֵּלְאֶסָר, *Telassar*, is also quite unknown. The name applies very well to *Thelser* on the eastern side of the Tigris (*Tab. Peut.* xi. e), where even the later Targums on Gen. x. 12 have placed it, interpreting Nimrod's *Resen* by תֵּלְאֶסָר, תֵּלְאֶסָר, though Knobel opposes this on the ground that a place in Assyria proper is unsuitable in such a passage as this, where the Assyrian feats of war outside Assyria itself are enumerated. Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 3, p. 251) conjectures that the place referred to is *Thelassar* in *Terodon*, a leading emporium for Arabian wares on the Persian Gulf, and supposes that *Terodon* has sprung from *Teledon* with the Persian pronunciation of the תֵּל, which is very frequent in the names of Mesopotamian cities. This conjecture is at any rate a more natural one than that of Knobel on Isa. xxxvii. 12, that the place mentioned in Assemani (*Bib. or.* iii. 2, p. 870), تِل بصرى, *Tel* on the *Szarszar*, to the west of the present Bagdad, is intended.—With regard to the places named in ver. 13, see at ch. xviii. 34.



Vers. 14-19. *Hezekiah's prayer*.—Ver. 14. Hezekiah took the letter, read it, went into the temple and spread it out before Jehovah, to lay open its contents before God. The contents of the letter are given in vers. 10-13 in the form of the message which the ambassadors delivered to Hezekiah from their king, because the ambassadors communicated to Hezekiah by word of mouth the essential contents of the writing which they conveyed, and simply handed him the letter as a confirmation of their words. סִפְרִים, like *litteræ*, means a letter; hence the singular suffix attached to וַיִּפְרֹשֶׁהוּ, whereas in the case of וַיִּקְרָאם, which stands nearer, the suffix follows the number of the noun to which it refers. The spreading out of the letter before God was an embodiment of the wish, which sprang from a child-like and believing trust, that the Lord would notice and punish that defiance of the living God which it contained. What Hezekiah meant by this action he expressed in the following prayer.—Ver. 15. In opposition to the delusion of the Assyrians, he describes Jehovah, the God of Israel, as the only God of all the kingdoms of the earth, since He was the Creator of heaven and earth. יֹשֵׁב הַכְרֻבִּים (see at 1 Sam. iv. 4 and Ex. xxv. 22) indicates the covenant-relation into which Jehovah, the almighty Creator and Ruler of the whole world, had entered towards Israel. As the covenant God who was enthroned above the cherubim the Lord was bound to help His people, if they turned to Him with faith in the time of their distress and entreated His assistance; and as the only God of all the world He had the power to help. In Isaiah, עֲבָאוֹת, which is very rare in historical prose, but very common in prophetic addresses, is added to the name יְהוָה, and thus Jehovah at the very outset is addressed as the God of the universe. On the meaning of עֲבָאוֹת, see at 1 Sam. i. 3. On אַתָּה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים, see 2 Sam. vii. 28 and 1 Kings xviii. 39.—Ver. 16. The accumulation of the words, “bow down Thine ear, Jehovah, and hear; open, Jehovah, Thine eyes and see, and hear the words,” etc., indicates the earnestness and importunity of the prayer. The plural עֵינַיִךְ by the side of the singular אוְנָךְ is the correct reading, since the expression “to incline the ear” is constantly met with (Ps. xvii. 6, xxxi. 3, xlv. 11, etc.); and even in the plural, “incline ye your ear” (Ps. lxxviii. 1; Isa. lv. 3), and on the other hand “to open the eyes” (Job xxvii. 19; Prov. xx. 13; Zech. xii. 4; Dan. ix. 18), because a man always opens both eyes

to see anything, whereas he turns one ear to a person speaking. The עֵינֶךָ of Isaiah is also plural, though written defectively, as the Masora has already observed. The suffix in שְׁלָחוֹ, which is wanting in Isaiah, belongs to אֲשֶׁר, and refers with this to דְּבָרִי in the sense of speech: the speech which Sennacherib had made in his letter.—Vers. 17, 18. After the challenge, to observe the blasphemies of Sennacherib, Hezekiah mentions the fact that the Assyrians have really devastated all lands, and therefore that it is not without ground that they boast of their mighty power; but he finds the explanation of this in the impotence and nothingness of the gods of the heathen. אֱמֻנָם, truly, indeed—the kings of Asshur have devastated the nations and their land. Instead of this we find in Isaiah: “they have devastated all lands and their (own) land”—which is evidently the more difficult and also the more original reading, and has been altered in our account, because the thought that the Assyrians had devastated their own land by making war upon other lands, that is to say, had depopulated it and thereby laid it waste, was not easy to understand. “And have cast their gods into the fire, for they are not gods, but works of human hands, wood and stone, and have thus destroyed them.” Hezekiah does not mention this as a sign of the recklessness of the Assyrians (Knobel), but, because Sennacherib had boasted that the gods of no nation had been able to resist him (vers. 12, 13), to put this fact in the right light, and attach thereto the prayer that Jehovah, by granting deliverance, would make known to all the kingdoms of the earth that He alone was God. Instead of וַיִּתְּנִי we have in Isaiah וַיִּנְתֶּן, the inf. absol.; in this connection the more difficult and more genuine reading. This also applies to the omission of אֱלֹהִים (ver. 19b) in Isa. xxxvii. 20, since the use of *Jehovah* as a predicate, “that Thou alone art Jehovah,” is very rare, and has therefore been misunderstood even by Gesenius. By the introduction of *Elohim*, the thought “that Thou Jehovah art God alone” is simplified.

Vers. 20–34. *The divine promise.*—Vers. 20, 21. When Hezekiah had prayed, the prophet Isaiah received a divine revelation with regard to the hearing of this prayer, which he sent, *i.e.* caused to be handed over, to the king. שְׁמַעְתִּי (ver. 21) is omitted in Isaiah, so that אֲשֶׁר הִתְפַּלֵּלְתָּ וְגו' is to be taken in the sense of “with regard to that which thou hast prayed to me,” whilst שְׁמַעְתִּי (I have heard) elucidates the thought and



simplifies the construction. The word of the Lord announced to the king, (1) the shameful retreat of Sennacherib as a just retribution for his mockery of the living God (vers. 21-28; Isa. xxxvii. 22-29); (2) the confirmation of this assurance through the indication of a sign by which Hezekiah was to recognise the deliverance of Jerusalem (vers. 29-31; Isa. xxxvii. 30-32), and through the distinct promise, that the Assyrian would neither come into the city nor besiege it, because the Lord was sheltering it (vers. 32-34; Isa. xxxvii. 33-35). In the first part the words are addressed with poetic vivacity directly to Sennacherib, and scourge his haughty boastings by pointing to the ridicule and scorn which would follow him on his departure from the land.—Ver. 21. “The virgin daughter Zion despises thee, the daughter Jerusalem shakes the head behind thee.” By daughter Zion, daughter Jerusalem, we are not to understand the inhabitants of Zion, or of Jerusalem, as though בַּת stood for בָּנִים or בְּנֵי (Ges., Hitzig, and others); but the city itself with its inhabitants is pictorially personified as a daughter and virgin, and the construct state בַּת-צִיּוֹן is to be taken, like נִהַר פָּרָת, as in apposition: “daughter Zion,” not daughter of Zion (*vid.* Ges. § 116, 5; Ewald, § 287, *e*). Even in the case of בְּתוּלָה the construct state expresses simply the relation of apposition. Zion is called a “virgin” as being an inviolable city to the Assyrians, *i.e.* one which they cannot conquer. Shaking the head is a gesture denoting derision and pleasure at another’s misfortune (cf. Ps. xxii. 8, cix. 25, etc.). “Behind thee,” *i.e.* after thee as thou goest away, is placed first as a pictorial feature for the sake of emphasis.—Vers. 22, 23. This derision falls upon the Assyrian, for having blasphemed the Lord God by his foolish boasting about his irresistible power. “Whom hast thou despised and blasphemed, and against whom hast thou lifted up the voice? and thou liftest up thine eyes against the Holy One of Israel.” Lifting up the voice refers to the tone of threatening assumption, in which Rabshakeh and Sennacherib had spoken. Lifting up the eyes on high, *i.e.* to the heavens, signifies simply looking up to the sky (cf. Isa. xl. 26), not “directing proud looks against God” (Ges.). Still less is מָרוֹם to be taken adverbially in the sense of haughtily, as Thenius and Knobel suppose. The bad sense of proud arrogance lies in the words which follow, “against the Holy One of Israel,” or in the case of Isaiah, where לֵא stands for עַל, in the

context, viz. the parallelism of the members. God is called the Holy One of Israel as He who manifests His holiness in and upon Israel. This title of the Deity is one of the peculiarities of Isaiah's range of thought, although it originated with Asaph (Ps. lxxviii. 41; see at Isa. i. 4). This insult to the holy God consisted in the fact that Sennacherib had said through his servants (vers. 23, 24): "With my chariots upon chariots I have ascended the height of the mountains, the uttermost part of Lebanon, so that I felled the tallness of its cedars, the choice of its cypresses, and came to the shelter of its border, to the forest of its orchard. I have dug and drunk strange water, so that I dried up all the rivers of Egypt with the sole of my feet." The words put into the mouth of the Assyrian are expressive of the feeling which underlay all his blasphemies (Drechsler). The two verses are kept quite uniform, the second hemistich in both cases expressing the result of the first, that is to say, what the Assyrian intended still further to perform after having accomplished what is stated in the first hemistich. When he has ascended the heights of Lebanon, he devastates the glorious trees of the mountain. Consequently in ver. 24 the drying up of the Nile of Egypt is to be taken as the result of the digging of wells in the parched desert; in other words, it is to be interpreted as descriptive of the devastation of Egypt, whose whole fertility depended upon its being watered by the Nile and its canals. We cannot therefore take these verses exactly as Drechsler does; that is to say, we cannot assume that the Assyrian is speaking in the first hemistichs of both verses of what he (not necessarily Sennacherib himself, but one of his predecessors) has actually performed. For even if the ascent of the uttermost heights of Lebanon had been performed by one of the kings of Assyria, there is no historical evidence whatever that Sennacherib or one of his predecessors had already forced his way into Egypt. The words are therefore to be understood in a figurative sense, as an individualizing picture of the conquests which the Assyrians had already accomplished, and those which they were still intending to effect; and this assumption does not necessarily exhibit Sennacherib "as a mere braggart, who boastfully heaps up in ridiculous hyperbole an enumeration of the things which he means to perform" (Drechsler). For if the Assyrian had not ascended with the whole multitude of his war-chariots to the loftiest summits of



Lebanon, to fell its cedars and its cypresses, Lebanon had set no bounds to his plans of conquest, so that Sennacherib might very well represent his forcing his way into Canaan as an ascent of the lofty peaks of this mountain range. Lebanon is mentioned, partly as a range of mountains that was quite inaccessible to war-chariots, and partly as the northern defence of the land of Canaan, through the conquest of which one made himself lord of the land. And so far as Lebanon is used synecdochically for the land of which it formed the defence, the hewing down of its cedars and cypresses, those glorious witnesses of the creation of God, denotes the devastation of the whole land, with all its glorious works of nature and of human hands. The chief strength of the early Asiatic conquerors consisted in the multitude of their war-chariots: they are therefore brought into consideration simply as signs of vast military resources; the fact that they could only be used on level ground being therefore disregarded. The *Chethib* רֶכֶב רֶכֶבִי, "my chariots upon chariots," is used poetically for an innumerable multitude of chariots, as נֹב נֹבִי for an innumerable host of locusts (Nah. iii. 17), and is more original than the *Keri* רֶכֶב רֶכֶבִי, the multitude of my chariots, which simply follows Isaiah. The "height of the mountains" is more precisely defined by the emphatic יִרְכָתִי לְבָנוֹן, the uttermost sides, *i.e.* the loftiest heights, of Lebanon, just as יִרְכָתִי בֹר in Isa. xiv. 15 and Ezek. xxxii. 23 are the uttermost depths of Sheol. קֹמֶת אֲרָזָיו, his tallest cedars. מִבְּחֹר בְּרָשָׁיו, his most select or finest cypresses. מְלֹן קִצֵּה, for which Isaiah has the more usual מְרוֹם קִצֵּה, "the height of his end," is the loftiest point of Lebanon on which a man can rest, not a lodging built on the highest point of Lebanon (Cler., Vittr., Ros.). יַעַר בְּרִמְלוֹ, the forest of his orchard, *i.e.* the forest resembling an orchard. The reference is to the celebrated cedar-forest between the loftiest peaks of Lebanon at the village of *Bjerreh* (see at 1 Kings v. 20).—Ver. 24 refers to the intended conquest of Egypt. Just as Lebanon could not stop the expeditions of the Assyrians, or keep them back from the conquest of the land of Canaan, so the desert of *et Tih*, which separated Egypt from Asia, notwithstanding its want of water (cf. Herod. iii. 5; Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 262), was no hindrance to him, which could prevent his forcing his way through it and laying Egypt waste. The digging of water is, of course, not merely "a reopening of the wells that had

been choked with rubbish, and the cisterns that had been covered up before the approaching enemy" (Thenius), but the digging of wells in the waterless desert. מֵיִם זָרִים, strange water, is not merely water belonging to others, but water not belonging to this soil (Drechsler), *i.e.* water supplied by a region which had none at other times. By the perfects the thing is represented as already done, as exposed to no doubt whatever; we must bear in mind, however, that the desert of et Tih is not expressly named, but the expression is couched in such general terms, that we may also assume that it includes what the Assyrian had really effected in his expeditions through similar regions. The drying up of the rivers with the soles of the feet is a hyperbolical expression denoting the omnipotence with which the Assyrian rules over the earth. Just as he digs water in the desert where no water is to be had, so does he annihilate it where mighty rivers exist.<sup>1</sup> יְאֹרֵי are the arms and canals of the *Yeor*, *i.e.* of the Nile. מְצֹר, a rhetorical epithet for Egypt, used not only here, but also in Isa. xix. 6 and Mic. vii. 12.—Vers. 25 sqq. To this foolish boasting the prophet opposes the divine purpose which had been formed long ago, and according to which the Assyrian, without knowing it or being willing to acknowledge it, had acted simply as the instrument of the Lord, who had given him the power to destroy, but who would soon restrain his ranting against Him, the true God.—Ver. 25. "Hast thou not heard? Long ago have I done this, from the days of olden time have I formed it! Now have I brought it to pass, that fortified cities should be to be destroyed into waste heaps." Ver. 26. "And their inhabitants, short of hand, were dismayed and put to shame; they were herb of the field and green of the turf, grass of the roofs and blighted corn before the stalk." Ver. 27. "And thy sitting and thy going out and thy coming I know, and thy raging against me." Ver. 28. "Because of thy raging against me and thy safety, which rise up into my ears, I put my ring into thy

<sup>1</sup> Compare the similar boasting of Alarich, already quoted by earlier commentators, in Claudian, *de bello Geth.* v. 526 sqq.:

*cum cesserit omnis  
Obsequiis natura meis? subsidere nostris  
Sub pedibus montes, arescere vidimus amnes.*

v. 532. *Fregi Alpes, galeis Padum victricibus hausi.*



nose, and my bridle into thy lips, and bring thee back by the way by which thou hast come." The words are still addressed to the Assyrian, of whom the Lord inquires whether he does not know that the destructive deeds performed by him had been determined very long before. "Hast thou not heard?" namely, what follows, what the Lord had long ago made known through His prophets in Judah (cf. Isa. vii. 7-9, xvi. 17-20, viii. 1-4 and 7, etc.). לְמִרְחֹק, from distant time have I done it, etc., refers to the divine ordering and governing of the events of the universe, which God has purposed and established from the very beginning of time. The pronoun אֹתָהּ, and the suffixes attached to יִצְרֶתֶּיהָ and הִבִּיאֹתֶיהָ, do not refer with vague generality to the substance of vers. 23 and 24, *i.e.* to the boastings of the Assyrians quoted there (Drechsler), but to יִתְּחִי לְהַשֹּׁת, *i.e.* to the conquests and devastations which the Assyrian had really effected. The וְ before יִצְרֶתֶּיהָ introduces the apodosis, as is frequently the case after a preceding definition of time (cf. Ges. § 155, *a*). יִתְּחִי לְהַשֹּׁת, "that it may be to destroy" (לְהַשֹּׁת, a contraction of לְהַשְׁאוֹת, *Keri* and Isaiah, from שָׂאָה; see Ewald, § 73, *c*, and 245, *b*), *i.e.* that it shall be destroyed,—according to a turn which is very common in Isaiah, like הָיָה לְבָעֵר, it is to burn = it shall be burned (cf. Isa. v. 5, vi. 13, xlv. 15, and Ewald, § 237, *c*). The rendering given by Ges., Knob., Then., and others, "that thou mayest be for destruction," is at variance with this usage.—Ver. 26 is closely connected, so far as the sense is concerned, with the last clause of ver. 25, but in form it is only loosely attached: "and their inhabitants were," instead of "that their inhabitants might be." קִצְרֵי יָד, of short hand, *i.e.* without power to offer a successful resistance (cf. Num. xi. 23, and Isa. l. 2, lix. 1).—They were herbage of the field, etc., just as perishable as the herbage, grass, etc., which quickly fade away (cf. Ps. xxxvii. 2, xc. 5, 6; Isa. xl. 6). The grass of the roofs fades still more quickly, because it cannot strike deep roots (cf. Ps. cxxix. 6). Blighted corn before the stalk, *i.e.* corn which is blighted and withered up, before it shoots up into a stalk. In Isaiah we have שָׂרְפָה instead of שְׂרָפָה, with a change of the labials, probably for the purpose of preserving an assonance with קָמָה, which must not therefore be altered into שְׂרָמָה. The thought in the two verses is this: The Assyrian does not owe his victories and conquests to his irresistible might, but purely to the fact that God had long ago resolved to deliver the nations into his hands, so that

it was possible to overcome them without their being able to offer any resistance. This the Assyrian had not perceived, but in his daring pride had exalted himself above the living God. This conduct of his the Lord was well acquainted with, and He would humble him for it. Sitting and going out and coming denote all the actions of a man, like sitting down and rising up in Ps. cxxxix. 2. Instead of rising up, we generally find going out and coming in (cf. Deut. xxviii. 6 and Ps. cxxi. 8). הִתְרַנֵּן, thy raging, *commotio furibunda, quæ ex ira nascitur superbiæ mixta* (Vitr.). We must repeat יָנִי before שְׁאֲנִי; and עָלָה בְּאָזְנִי is to be taken in a relative sense: on account of thy self-security, which has come to my ears. שְׁאֲנִי is the security of the ungodly which springs from the feeling of great superiority in power. The figurative words, "I put my ring into thy nose," are taken from the custom of restraining wild animals, such as lions (Ezek. xix. 4) and other wild beasts (Ezek. xxix. 4 and Isa. xxx. 28), in this manner. For "the bridle in the lips" of ungovernable horses, see Ps. xxxii. 9. To lead a person back by the way by which he had come, *i.e.* to lead him back disappointed, without having reached the goal that he set before him.

To confirm what he had said, the prophet gave to Hezekiah a sign (vers. 29 sqq.): "Eat this year what groweth in the fallow, and in the second year what groweth wild, and in the third year sow and reap and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof." That the words are not addressed to the king of Assyria as in ver. 28, but to Hezekiah, is evident from their contents. This sudden change in the person addressed may be explained from the fact that from ver. 29 the words contain a perfectly fresh train of thought. For וְהָיָה לְךָ הָאוֹת see Ex. iii. 12, 1 Sam. ii. 34 and xiv. 10; also Jer. xlv. 29. In all these passages אוֹת, σημεῖον, is not a (supernatural) wonder, a מוֹפֵת as in 1 Kings xiii. 3, but consists simply in the prediction of natural events, which serve as credentials to a prediction, whereas in Isa. vii. 14 and xxxviii. 7 a miracle is given as an אוֹת. The inf. abs. אָכַל is not used for the pret. (Ges., Then., and others), but for the imperf. or fut.: "one will eat." הַשָּׁנָה, the (present) year. קִפְיָה signifies the corn which springs up and grows from the grains that have been shaken out the previous year (Lev. xxv. 5, 11). קִפְיָה (in Isa. שְׁחִים) is explained by Abulw. as signifying the corn which springs up again from the roots of what has



been sown. The etymology of the word is uncertain, so that it is impossible to decide which of the two forms is the original one. For the fact itself compare the evidence adduced in the Comm. on Lev. xxv. 7, that in Palestine and other lands two or three harvests can be reaped from one sowing.—The signs mentioned do not enable us to determine with certainty how long the Assyrians were in the land. All that can be clearly gathered from the words, “in this and the following year will they live upon that which has sprung up without any sowing,” is that for two years, *i.e.* in two successive autumns, the fields could not be cultivated because the enemy had occupied the land and laid it waste. But whether the occupation lasted two years, or only a year and a little over, depends upon the time of the year at which the Assyrians entered the land. If the invasion of Judah took place in autumn, shortly before the time for sowing, and the miraculous destruction of the Assyrian forces occurred a year after about the same time, the sowing of two successive years would be prevented, and the population of Judah would be compelled to live for two years upon what had sprung up without sowing. Consequently both the prophecy of Isaiah and the fulfilment recorded in vers. 35, 36 would fall in the autumn, when the Assyrians had ruled for a whole year in the land; so that the prophet was able to say: in this year and in the second (*i.e.* the next) will they eat after-growth and wild growth; inasmuch as when he said this, the first year had not quite expired. Even if the overthrow of the Assyrians took place immediately afterwards (cf. ver. 35), with the extent to which they had carried out the desolation of the land, many of the inhabitants having been slain or taken prisoners, and many others having been put to flight, it would be utterly impossible in the same year to cultivate the fields and sow them, and the people would be obliged to live in the second or following year upon what had grown wild, until the harvest of the second year, when the land could be properly cultivated, or rather till the third year, when it could be reaped again.<sup>1</sup>

The sign is followed in vers. 30, 31 by the distinct promise

<sup>1</sup> There is no necessity, therefore, to explain the sign here given, either by the assumption of a sabbatical year, with or without a year of jubilee following, or by supposing that the Assyrians did not depart immediately after the catastrophe described in ver. 35, but remained till after they had attempted an expedition into Egypt, or indeed by any other artificial hypothesis.

of the deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem, for which Isaiah uses the sign itself as a type. "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah will again strike roots downwards and bear fruit upwards; for from Jerusalem will go forth a remnant, and that which is escaped from Mount Zion; the zeal of Jehovah will do this." יִסַּף שָׁרֵשׁ, to add roots. *i.e.* to strike fresh roots. The meaning is, that Judah will not succumb to this judgment. The remnant of the nation that has escaped from destruction by the Assyrians will once more grow and flourish vigorously; for from Jerusalem will a rescued remnant go forth. פְּלִיטָה denotes those who have escaped destruction by the judgment (cf. Isa. iv. 2, x. 20, etc.). The deliverance was attached to Jerusalem or to Mount Zion, not so much because the power of the Assyrians was to be destroyed before the gates of Jerusalem, as because of the greater importance which Jerusalem and Mount Zion, as the centre of the kingdom of God, the seat of the God-King, possessed in relation to the covenant-nation, so that, according to Isa. ii. 3, it was thence that the Messianic salvation was also to proceed. This deliverance is traced to the zeal of the Lord on behalf of His people and against His foes (see at Ex. xx. 5), like the coming of the Messiah in Isa. ix. 6 to establish an everlasting kingdom of peace and righteousness. The deliverance of Judah out of the power of Asshur was a prelude and type of the deliverance of the people of God by the Messiah out of the power of all that was ungodly. The זְבֻחוֹת of Isaiah is omitted after יְהוָה, just as in ver. 15; though here it is supplied by the Masora as *Keri*. —In vers. 32–34 Isaiah concludes by announcing that Sennacherib will not come to Jerusalem, nor even shoot at the city and besiege it, but will return disappointed, because the Lord will defend and save the city for the sake of His promise. The result of the whole prophecy is introduced with לָכֵן: therefore, because this is how the matter stands, *viz.* as explained in what precedes. אֶל-מֶלֶךְ, with regard to the king, as in ver. 20. לֹא יִקְדְּמֶנָּה מִגֶּן, "he will not attack it with a shield," *i.e.* will not advance with shields to make an attack upon it. קָדַם with a double accusative, as in Ps. xxi. 4. It only occurs here in a hostile sense: to come against, as in Ps. xviii. 19, *i.e.* to advance against a city, to storm it. The four clauses of the verse stand in a graduated relation to one another: not to take, not even to shoot at and attack, yea, not even to besiege the city, will he



come. In ver. 33*a* we have ver. 28*b* taken up again, and ver. 32*a* is repeated in ver. 33*b* for the purpose of strengthening the promise. Instead of **יָבוֹא בָּהּ** we have in Isaiah **בָּהּ בָּא**: “by which he has come.” The perfect is actually more exact, and the imperfect may be explained from the fact that Sennacherib was at that very time advancing against Jerusalem. In ver. 34 we have **לְאֵל** instead of the **לְאֵל** of Isaiah; **לְאֵל** is more correct than **אֵל**. “For my sake,” as Hezekiah had prayed in ver. 19; and “for my servant David’s sake,” because Jehovah, as the unchangeably true One, must fulfil the promise which He gave to David (see at 1 Kings xi. 13).

Vers. 35-37. *The fulfilment of the divine promise.*—Ver. 35. “It came to pass in that night, that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the army of the Assyrian 185,000 men; and when they (those that were left, including the king) rose up in the morning, behold there were they all (*i.e.* all who had perished) dead corpses,” *i.e.* they had died in their sleep. **מֵתִים** is added to strengthen **פְּנֵי־מָוֶת**: lifeless corpses. **בַּלַּיְלָהָ הַהוּא** is in all probability the night following the day on which Isaiah had foretold to Hezekiah the deliverance of Jerusalem. Where the Assyrian army was posted at the time when this terrible stroke fell upon it is not stated, since the account is restricted to the principal fact. One portion of it was probably still before Jerusalem; the remainder were either in front of Libnah (ver. 8), or marching against Jerusalem. From the fact that Sennacherib’s second embassy (vers. 9 sqq.) was not accompanied by a body of troops, it by no means follows that the large army which had come with the first embassy (ch. xviii. 17) had withdrawn again, or had even removed to Libnah on the return of Rabshakeh to his king (ch. xix. 8). The very opposite may be inferred with much greater justice from ch. xix. 32. And the smiting of 185,000 men by an angel of the Lord by no means presupposes that the whole of Sennacherib’s army was concentrated at one spot. The blow could certainly fall upon the Assyrians wherever they were standing or were encamped. The “angel of the Lord” is the same angel that smote as **הַמִּשְׁחִית** the first-born of Egypt (Ex. xii. 23, compared with vers. 12 and 13), and inflicted the pestilence upon Israel after the numbering of the people by David (2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16). The last passage renders the conjecture a very probable one, that the slaying of the Assyrians was also effected by a terrible pestilence. But

the number of the persons slain—185,000 in a single night—so immensely surpasses the effects even of the most terrible plagues, that this fact cannot be interpreted naturally; and the deniers of miracle have therefore felt obliged to do violence to the text, and to pronounce either the statement that it was “the same night” or the number of the slain a mythical exaggeration.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 36. This divine judgment compelled Sennacherib to retreat without delay, and to return to Nineveh, as Isaiah, 28 and 32, had predicted. The heaping up of the verbs: “he decamped, departed, and returned,” expresses the hurry of the march home. וַיָּשָׁב בְּנִינְיָה, “he sate, *i.e.* remained, in Nineveh,” implies not merely that Sennacherib lived for some time after his return, but also that he did not undertake any fresh expedition against Judah. On *Nineveh* see at Gen. x. 11.—Ver. 37 contains an account of Sennacherib’s death. When he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer slew him, and fled into the land of Ararat, and his son Esarhaddon became king in his stead. With regard to נִסְרוֹךְ, *Nisroch*, all that seems to be firmly established is that he was an eagle-deity, and represented by the eagle- or vulture-headed human figure with wings, which is frequently depicted upon the Assyrian monuments, “not only in colossal proportions upon the walls and watching the portals of the rooms, but also constantly in the groups upon the embroidered robes. When it

<sup>1</sup> The assertion of Thenius, that vers. 35–37 are borrowed from a different source from ch. xviii. 13–19, 34 and xx. 1–19, rests upon purely arbitrary suppositions and groundless assumptions, and is only made in the interest of the mythical interpretation of the miracle. And his conclusion, that “since the catastrophe was evidently (?) occasioned by the sudden breaking out of a pestilence, the scene of it was no doubt the pestilential Egypt,” is just as unfounded,—as if Egypt were the only land in which a pestilence could suddenly have broken out.—The account given by Herodotus (ii. 141), that on the prayer of king *Sethon*, a priest of Vulcan, the deity promised him victory over the great advancing army of Sennacherib, and that during the night mice spread among the enemy (*i.e.* in the Assyrian camp at Pelusium), and ate up the quivers and bows, and the leather straps of the shields, so that the next morning they were obliged to flee without their weapons, and many were cut down, is simply a legendary imitation of our account, *i.e.* an Egyptian variation of the defeat of Sennacherib in Judah. The eating up of the Assyrian weapons by mice is merely the explanation given to Herodotus by the Egyptian priests of the hieroglyphical legend on the standing figure of *Sethos* at Memphis, from which we cannot even gather the historical fact that Sennacherib really advanced as far as Pelusium.



is introduced in this way, we see it constantly fighting with other mythical animals, such as human-headed oxen or lions; and in these conflicts it always appears to be victorious," from which we may infer that it was a type of the supreme deity (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*). The eagle was worshipped as a god by the Arabs (Pococke, *Specim.* pp. 94, 199), was regarded as sacred to *Melkarth* by the Phœnicians (*Nonnus*, *Dionys.* xl. 495, 528), and, according to a statement of Philo, *Bybl.* (in Euseb. *Præpar. evang.* i. 10), that Zoroaster taught that the supreme deity was represented with an eagle's head, it was also a symbol of Ormuzd among the Persians; consequently Movers (*Phöniz.* i. pp. 68, 506, 507) regards *Nisroch* as the supreme deity of the Assyrians. It is not improbable that it was also connected with the constellation of the eagle (see Ideler, *Ursprung der Sternnamen*, p. 416). On the other hand, the current interpretation of the name from נִשְׂרָ (נִשְׂרָ, Chald.; نسر, Arab.), eagle, vulture, with the Persian adjective termination

*ok* or *ach*, is very doubtful, not merely on account of the ם in נִשְׂרָךְ, but chiefly because this name does not occur in Assyrian, but simply *Asar*, *Assar*, and *Asarak* as the name of a deity which is met with in many Assyrian proper names. The last is also adopted by the LXX., who (*ed. Aldin. Compl.*) have rendered נִשְׂרָךְ by Ἀσαράχ in Isaiah, and Ἐσοπάχ (*cod. Vatic.*) in 2 Kings, by the side of which the various readings Μεσεπάχ in our text (*cod. Vat.*) and Νασαπάχ in Isaiah are evidently secondary readings emended from the Hebrew, since Josephus (*Ant.* x. 1, 5) has the form Ἀρασκῆς, which is merely somewhat "Græcized." The meaning of these names is still in obscurity, even if there should be some foundation for the assumption that *Assar* belongs to the same root as the name of the people and land, *Asshur*. The connection between the form *Nisroch* and *Asarak* is also still obscure. Compare the collection which J. G. Müller has made of the different conjectures concerning this deity in the Art. *Nisroch* in Herzog's *Cycl.*—*Adrammelech*, according to ch. xvii. 31, was the name of a deity of Sepharvaim, which was here borne by the king's son. שָׂרָאצֶר, *Sharezer*, is said to mean "prince of fire," and was probably also borrowed from a deity. בְּנִי (Isa.) is wanting in our text, but is supplied by the Masora in the *Keri*. The "land of *Ararat*" was a portion of the high land of Armenia; according to Moses v. Chorene, the central portion of it with

the mountains of the same name (see at Gen. viii. 4). The slaying of Sennacherib is also confirmed by Alex. Polyhistor, or rather Berosus (in Euseb. *Chron. Armen.* i. p. 43), who simply names, however, a son *Ardumusanus* as having committed the murder, and merely mentions a second *Asordanius* as viceroy of Babylon.<sup>1</sup> The identity of the latter with *Esarhaddon* is beyond all doubt. The name אֶסַר-חֲדָן, *Esar-cha-don*, consisting of two parts with the guttural inserted, the usual termination in Assyrian and Babylonian, *Assar-ach*, is spelt Ἀσορδάν in the LXX., Σαχερδονός in Tobit—probably formed from Ἀσερ-χ-δονοσορ by a transposition of the letters,—by Josephus Ἀσσαραχόδδας, by Berosus (in the *armen. Euseb.*) *Asordanes*, by Abyden. *ibid.* *Axerdis*, in the *Canon Ptol.* Ἀσαράδιος, and lastly in Ezra iv. 10 mutilated into אֶסְנַפֶּר, *Osnappar* (Chald.), and in the LXX. Ἀσσεναφάρ; upon the Assyrian monuments, according to Oppert, *Assur-akh-iddin* (cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* p. 38). The length of his reign is uncertain. The statements of Berosus, that he was first of all viceroy of Babylon, and then for eight years king of Assyria, and that of the *Canon Ptol.*, that he reigned for thirteen years in Babylon, are decidedly incorrect. Brandis (*Rerum Assy. tempora emend.* p. 41) conjectures that he reigned twenty-eight years, but in his work *Ueber den histor. Gewinn*, pp. 73, 74, he suggests seventeen years. M. v. Niebuhr (*ut sup.* p. 77), on the other hand, reckons his reign at twenty-four years.

CHAP. XX. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY. MERODACH  
BALADAN'S EMBASSY. DEATH OF HEZEKIAH.

Vers. 1–11. HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY.—Compare the parallel account in Isa. xxxviii. with Hezekiah's psalm of thanksgiving for his recovery (vers. 9–20 of Isaiah).—Ver. 1. "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death." By the expression "in those days" the illness of Hezekiah is merely assigned in a general manner to the same time as the events previously described. That it did not occur after the departure

<sup>1</sup> With regard to the statement of Abydenus in Euseb. *l. c.* p. 53, that Sennacherib was followed by *Nergilus*, who was slain by his son *Adrameles*, who again was murdered by his brother *Axerdis*, and its connection with Berosus and the biblical account, see M. v. Niebuhr, *Geschichte Assurs*, pp. 361 sqq. *Nergilus* is probably the same person as *Sharezer*, and *Axerdis* as *Esarhaddon*.



of the Assyrians, but at the commencement of the invasion of Sennacherib, *i.e.* in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, is evident from ver. 6, namely, both from the fact that in answer to his prayer fifteen years more of life were promised him, and that he nevertheless reigned only twenty-nine years (ch. xviii. 2), and also from the fact that God promised to deliver him out of the hand of the Assyrians and to defend Jerusalem. The widespread notion that his sickness was an attack of plague, and was connected with the pestilence which had broken out in the Assyrian camp, is thereby deprived of its chief support, apart from the fact that the epithet שָׁחַז (ver. 7), which is applied to the sickness, does not indicate pestilence. Isaiah then called upon him to set his house in order. צוּ לְבֵיתְךָ: set thy house in order, lit. command or order with regard to thy house, not declare thy (last) will to thy family (Ges., Knob.), for צִוָּה is construed with the *accus. pers.* in the sense of commanding anything, whereas here לְ is synonymous with אֵל (2 Sam. xvii. 23). "For thou wilt die and not live;" *i.e.* thy sickness is to death, namely, without the miraculous help of God. Sickness to death in the very prime of life (Hezekiah was then in the fortieth year of his age) appeared to the godly men of the Old Testament a sign of divine displeasure. Hezekiah was therefore greatly agitated by this announcement, and sought for consolation and help in prayer. He turned his face to the wall, *sc.* of the room, not of the temple (Chald.). *i.e.* away from those who were standing round, to be able to pray more collectedly.—Ver. 3. In his prayer he appealed to his walking before the Lord in truth and with a thoroughly devoted heart, and to his acting in a manner that was well-pleasing to God, in perfect accordance with the legal standpoint of the Old Testament, which demanded of the godly righteousness of life according to the law. This did not imply by any means a self-righteous trust in his own virtue; for walking before God with a thoroughly devoted heart was impossible without faith. "And Hezekiah wept violently," not merely at the fact that he was to die without having an heir to the throne, since Manasseh was not born till three years afterwards (Joseph., Ephr. Syr., etc.), but also because he was to die in the very midst of his life, since God had promised long life to the righteous.—Vers. 4 sqq. This prayer of the godly king was answered immediately. Isaiah had not gone out of the midst of the city, when the word of

the Lord came to him to return to the king, and tell him that the Lord would cure him in three days and add fifteen years to his life, and that He would also deliver him from the power of the Assyrians and defend Jerusalem. הָעִיר הַתְּיִכָּה, the middle city, *i.e.* the central portion of the city, namely, the Zion city, in which the royal citadel stood. The *Keri* הָצֵר הַתְּיִכָּה, the central court, not of the temple, but of the royal citadel, which is adopted in all the ancient versions, is nothing more than an interpretation of the עִיר as denoting the royal castle, after the analogy of ch. x. 25. The distinct assurance added to the promise "I will heal thee," viz. "on the third day thou wilt go into the house of the Lord," was intended as a pledge to the king of the promised cure. The announcement that God would add fifteen years to his life is not put into the prophet's mouth *ex eventu* (Knobel and others); for the opinion that distinct statements as to time are at variance with the nature of prophecy is merely based upon an *a priori* denial of the supernatural character of prophecy. The words, "and I will deliver thee out of the hand of the Assyrians," imply most distinctly that the Assyrian had only occupied the land and threatened Jerusalem, and had not yet withdrawn. The explanation given by Vitringa and others, that the words contain simply a promise of deliverance out of the hand of the oppressor for the next fifteen years, puts a meaning into them which they do not contain, as is clearly shown by Isa. xxxvii. 20, where this thought is expressed in a totally different manner. וְנִגְנֹתִי עַל־הָעִיר וְגו': as in ch. xix. 34, where the prophet repeated this divine promise in consequence of the attempt of Sennacherib to get Jerusalem into his power.—Ver. 7. Isaiah ordered a lump of figs to be laid upon the boil, and Hezekiah recovered (וַיֵּחַי: he revived again). It is of course assumed as self-evident, that Isaiah returned to the king in consequence of a divine revelation, and communicated to him the word of the Lord which he had received.<sup>1</sup> דְּבַלֶּת תְּאֵנִים is a mass consisting of compressed figs,

<sup>1</sup> The account is still more abridged in the text of Isaiah. In ver. 4 the precise time of the prayer is omitted; in ver. 5 the words, "behold, I will cure thee, on the third day thou shalt go into the house of the Lord;" and in ver. 6 the words, "for mine own sake and my servant David's sake." The four verses 8–11, which treat of the miraculous signs, are also very much contracted in Isaiah (vers. 7 and 8); and vers. 7 and 8 of our text are only given at the close of Hezekiah's psalm of praise in that of Isaiah (vers. 21 and 22).



which the ancients were in the habit of applying, according to many testimonies (see Celsii *Hierob.* ii. p. 373), in the case of plague-boils and abscesses of other kinds, because the fig *διαφορεῖ σκληρίας* (Dioscor.) and *ulcera aperit* (Plin.), and which is still used for softening ulcers. *שֶׁחִי*, an abscess, is never used in connection with plague or plague-boils, but only to denote the abscesses caused by leprosy (Job ii. 7, 8), and other abscesses of an inflammatory kind (Ex. ix. 9 sqq.). In the case of Hezekiah it is probably a carbuncle that is intended.

After the allusion to the cure and recovery of Hezekiah, we have an account in vers. 8 sqq. of the sign by which Isaiah confirmed the promise given to the king of the prolongation of his life. In the order of time the contents of ver. 7 follow ver. 11, since the prophet in all probability first of all disclosed the divine promise to the king, and then gave him the sign, and after that appointed the remedy and had it applied. At the same time, it is also quite possible that he first of all directed the lump of figs to be laid upon the boil, and then made known to him the divine promise, and guaranteed it by the sign. In this case *וַיֵּה* merely anticipates the order of events. The sign which Isaiah gave to the king, at his request, consisted in the miraculous movement of the shadow backward upon the sundial of Ahaz.—Ver. 9. *הָלַךְ הַצֵּל*: “the shadow is gone ten degrees, if it should go back ten degrees?” The rendering, *visne umbram solaris decem gradibus progredi an . . . regredi*, which Maurer still gives after the Vulgate, *vis an ut ascendat . . . an ut revertatur*, cannot be grammatically reconciled with the perfect *הָלַךְ*, and is merely a conjecture founded upon the answer of Hezekiah.<sup>1</sup> According to this answer, “it is easy for the shadow to decline (*i.e.* to go farther down) ten degrees; no (*sc.* that shall not be a sign to me), but if the shadow turn ten degrees backward,” Isaiah seems to have given the king a choice as to the sign, namely, whether the shadow should go ten degrees forward or backward. But this does not necessarily follow from the words quoted. Hezekiah may have understood the prophet’s words *הָלַךְ הַצֵּל וְגוֹ* hypothetically: “has the shadow gone (advanced) ten degrees, whether it should,” etc.; and may have

<sup>1</sup> Hitzig and Knobel would therefore read *הָלַךְ*, though without furnishing any proofs that the inf. abs. is used for the future in the first clause of a double question, especially if the *ה* interrog. is wanting, and there is no special emphasis upon the verbal idea.

replied, the advance of the shadow would not be a sure sign to him, but only its going back.—Ver. 11. Isaiah then prayed to the Lord, and the Lord “turned back the shadow (caused it to go back) upon the sun-dial, where it had gone down, on the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.” מַעְלֹות אָחָז cannot be understood, as it has been by the LXX., Joseph., Syr., as referring to a flight of steps at the palace of Ahaz, which was so arranged that the shadow of an object standing near indicated the hours, but is no doubt a gnomon, a sun-dial which Ahaz may have received from Babylonia, where sun-dials were discovered (Herod. ii. 109). Nothing further can be inferred from the words with regard to its construction, since the ancients had different kinds of sun-dials (cf. Martini *Abhandlung von den Sonnenuhren der Alten*, Lpz. 1777). The word מַעְלֹות, steps in the literal sense, is transferred to the *scala*, which the shadow had to traverse both up and down upon the disk of the sun-dial, and is used both to denote the separate degrees of this *scala*, and also for the sum-total of these *scala*, i.e. for the sun-dial itself, without there being any necessity to assume that it was an obelisk-like pillar erected upon an elevated place with steps running round it (Knobel), or a long portable scale of twice ten steps with a gnomon (Gumpach, *Alttestl. Studien*, pp. 181 sqq.). All that follows from the descent of the shadow is that the dial of the gnomon was placed in a vertical direction; and the fact that the shadow went ten degrees down or backward, simply presupposes that the gnomon had at least twenty degrees, and therefore that the degrees indicated smaller portions of time than hours. If, then, it is stated in ver. 8b of Isaiah that the sun went back ten degrees, whereas the going back of the shadow had been previously mentioned in agreement with our text, it is self-evident that the sun stands for the shining of the sun which was visible upon the dial-plate, and which made the shadow recede. We are not, of course, to suppose that the sun in the sky and the shadow on the sun-dial went back at the same time, as Knobel assumes. So far as the miracle is concerned, the words of the text do not require that we should assume that the sun receded, or the rotation of the earth was reversed, as Eph. Syr. and others supposed, but simply affirm that there was a miraculous movement backward of the shadow upon the dial, which might be accounted for from a miraculous refraction of the rays of the sun, effected by God at the



prophet's prayer, of which slight analoga are met with in the ordinary course of nature.<sup>1</sup> This miraculous sign was selected as a significant one in itself, to confirm the promise of a fresh extension of life which had been given to Hezekiah by the grace of God in opposition to the natural course of things. The retrograde movement of the shadow upon the sun-dial indicated that Hezekiah's life, which had already arrived at its close by natural means, was to be put back by a miracle of divine omnipotence, so that it might continue for another series of years.

Vers. 12-19. *The Babylonian embassy, and Hezekiah's imprudence* (cf. Isa. xxxix.).—Ver. 12. "At that time Berodach Baladan, king of Babel, sent a letter and a present to Hezekiah, because he had heard that Hezekiah was sick." By בָּעָתָה הַהִיא the arrival of these ambassadors is merely assigned in the most general manner to the period following Hezekiah's recovery. But from the object of their mission, it is evident that they did not arrive in Jerusalem till after the overthrow and departure of Sennacherib, and therefore at least half a year after Hezekiah's recovery. The ostensible reason given is, that Berodach Baladan had heard of Hezekiah's illness, and therefore sent to congratulate him on his recovery; but in 2 Chron. xxxii. 31 the further reason is mentioned, that he wished to inquire concerning the miracle upon the sun-dial. But, as Josephus has shown, the true object, no doubt, was to make sure of Hezekiah's friendship in anticipation of his intended revolt from the Assyrian rule. *Berodach Baladan*, for *Merodach Baladan* (Isa.), with the labial changed, is the same person as the *Marodach Baladan* who reigned in Babylon for six months, according to Alex. Polyhistor, or rather Berosus (Euseb. *Chron. armen.* i. pp. 42, 43), and was slain by *Elibus*, and also the same as the *Mardokempad* who reigned, according to the *Can. Ptol.*, from 26 to 38 ær. *Nab.*, i.e. from 721 to 709 B.C. The first part of the name, מֶרְדַּךְ, occurs in Jer. l. 2 in connection with *Bel* as the name of a Babylonian idol; and the whole name is found on a cylinder

<sup>1</sup> As, for example, the phenomenon quoted by several commentators, which was observed at Metz in Lothringen in the year 1703 by the prior of the convent there, P. Romuald, and other persons, viz. that the shadow of a sun-dial went back an hour and a half.—The natural explanation of the miracle which is given by Thenius, who attributes it to an eclipse of the sun, needs no refutation.—For the different opinions of the earlier theologians, see Carpzov, *Apparat. crit.* p. 351 sqq.

(in the British Museum) which contains the first expeditions of Sennacherib against Babylon and Media, and upon the inscriptions at Khorsabad spelt either *Merodak-pal-dsana* (according to Brandis, *Ueber der Gewinn*, pp. 44 and 53) or *Marduk bal iddin* (according to Oppert).<sup>1</sup> Instead of **בִּי שָׁמַע** we have **וַיִּשְׁמַע** in Isaiah, which is not so clear, though it is probably more original; whereas the clause in Isaiah, **בִּי חָלָה וַיִּחַזַּק**, “that he had been sick and had become strengthened, *i.e.* well again,” is simply an elucidation of the **בִּי חָלָה הִזְקִיחַו** of our text, in which the recovery is implied in the pluperfect “had been sick.”—In ver. 13 **וַיִּשְׁמַע** is apparently a copyist’s error for **וַיִּשְׁמַח** of Isaiah, which many of the codd. and ancient versions have even in our text. At the same time, the construction of **שָׁמַע** with **עַל** is also found in ch. xxii. 13.—**עֲלֵיהֶם**, concerning them, *i.e.* the ambassadors who had brought the letter and the present. In his delight at the honour paid to him by this embassy, Hezekiah showed the ambassadors all his treasure-house, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the costly oil, and all his arsenal, etc. The literal meaning of **בֵּית נֶכֶחַ** is probably spice-house (Aquila, Symm., Vulg.), **נֶכֶחַ** being a contraction of **נִכְאֹחַ** in Gen. xxxvii. 25, whereas the derivation suggested from the Arabic

**كَيْت**, *farsit, implevit locum*, is much more wide of the mark. The house received its name from the spices for the storing of which it was really intended, although it was also used for the storing of silver and gold. **שֶׁמֶן הַטֹּב** is not fine olive oil, but, according to the Rabbins and Movers (*Phöniz.* iii. p. 227), the valuable balsam oil which was obtained in the royal gardens; for olive oil, which was obtained in all Judæa, was not stored in the treasure-chambers along with gold, silver, and perfumes, but in special storehouses (1 Chron. xxvii. 28). **בְּכָל־מְשָׁלָתוֹ**, in all his dominion, *i.e.* in all the district which he was able to govern or control.—The existence of such treasures, of which, according to ver. 17, the ancestors of Hezekiah had collected a very large store, at so short a period after the departure of the Assyrians, is not at variance with ch. xviii. 15, 16, according

<sup>1</sup> Compare M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Ass.* p. 40; and with regard to the chronological differences, on account of which many have called in question the identity of Merodach Baladan either with the *Marudach-Baladan* of Berosus or with the *Mardokempad* of the *Can. Ptol.*, see the discussion of this point at pp. 75 sqq.



to which Hezekiah had sent to Sennacherib all the silver in his treasuries, and even the gold plate upon the temple doors. For, in the first place, it is not stated that there was much silver and gold in the treasure-house, but the silver and gold are simply mentioned along with the spices ; and, secondly, Hezekiah may have kept back from Sennacherib many a valuable piece of silver or gold, and have taken off the gold plate from the temple doors, to show the ambassadors of Sennacherib, who came to receive the money demanded as compensation, that he was not in a condition to give anything more. Moreover a great deal may have flowed into the treasuries since the payment of that tribute, partly from the presents which Hezekiah received from many quarters after the overthrow of Sennacherib (2 Chron. xxxii. 23), and partly from the booty that had been collected in the camp of the Assyrians after their hurried departure. And again, the treasures which the ancestors of Hezekiah had collected (ver. 17) may not have consisted of gold and silver exactly, but of different jewels and objects of art, which could not be applied to the payment of the tribute demanded by Sennacherib. And, lastly, “ we must not overlook the fact, that it answered the purpose of the reporter to crowd together as much as possible, in order to show how anxious Hezekiah was to bring out and exhibit everything whatever that could contribute to the folly” (Drechsler). Hezekiah evidently wanted to show all his glory, because the arrival of the Babylonian ambassadors had flattered his vanity. — Vers. 14 sqq. Isaiah therefore announced to him the word of the Lord, that all his treasures would one day be carried to Babel, and some even of his sons would serve as chamberlains in the palace of the king of Babel. The sin of vanity was to be punished by the carrying away of that of which his heart was proud. Isaiah did not go to Hezekiah by his own impulse, but by the direction of God. His inquiries : “ What have these men said, and whence do they come to thee ?” were simply intended to lead the king to give expression to the thoughts of his heart. In the answer, “ From a distant land have they come, from Babel,” his vanity at the great honour that had been paid him comes clearly to light.—Ver. 18. The words, “ of thy sons, which shall proceed from thee, which thou shalt beget,” do not necessarily refer to actual *sons*, but only to *lineal* descendants. The *Chethîb* חֶתִּיב, “ will one take,” is to be preferred to the חֶתֶּיב of Isaiah and the

*Keri*, as being the more difficult reading. סְרִיסִים, chamberlains, courtiers, not necessarily eunuchs, as in 1 Sam. viii. 15, etc.—For the fulfilment of this threat see Dan. i. 2. sqq.—Ver. 19. The first part of Hezekiah's reply, "Good is the word of Jehovah, which thou hast spoken," is an expression of submission to the will of the Lord, like Eli's answer in 1 Sam. iii. 18 (cf. 1 Kings ii. 38, 42);<sup>1</sup> the second part, which the repetition of וַיֹּאמֶר shows to have been spoken after a pause, and which was not addressed directly to Isaiah, "Is it not so (*i.e.* is it not purely goodness), if there are to be peace and truth in my days (during my life)?" is a candid acknowledgment of the grace and truth of the Lord.<sup>2</sup> הָלוֹא is used, as is frequently the case, in the sense of a lively affirmation. Instead of הָלוֹא אֵם we have in Isaiah בִּי הָלוֹא אֵם, "for there will be peace and truth," by which this clause is attached more clearly to the first declaration as a reason for it: the word of the Lord is good, for the Lord proves His goodness and truth in the fact, that He will not inflict the merited punishment in my lifetime. "Peace and truth" are connected as in Jer. xxxiii. 6. אֱמֶת does not mean continuance (Ges.), security (Knobel), but *fides*, faithfulness,—not human faithfulness, however, which preserves peace, and observes a tacit treaty (Hitzig), but the faithfulness of God, which preserves the promised grace to the humble.

Vers. 20 and 21. Close of Hezekiah's reign.—On the basin (בְּרֶכֶת) and the aqueduct constructed by him, see at ch. xviii. 17.

#### CHAP. XXI. REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON.

Vers. 1–18. REIGN OF MANASSEH (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1–20).—Ver. 1. Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, so that he was not born till after Hezekiah's dangerous illness (ch. xx. 1 sqq.).—Vers. 2 sqq. Having begun to reign at this early age, he did not choose his father's ways, but set up the idolatry of his father Ahab again, since the godless party in the

<sup>1</sup> "He calls that *good* in which it is right to acquiesce, as having proceeded from Him who does nothing but what is not only most just, but tempered with the greatest goodness, even when He inflicts punishment."—CLERICUS.

<sup>2</sup> "He praises the moderation of the divine decree, because when God, in accordance with His justice, might have brought this calamity upon him in his own person, for His mercy's sake He was willing to spare him and to put off the evil to a future day."—VITRINGA.



nation, at whose head chiefs, priests, and (false) prophets stood, and who would not hearken to the law of the Lord, and in the time of Hezekiah had sought help against Assyria not from Jehovah, but from the Egyptians (Isa. xxviii. 7, 14 sqq., xxx. 9 sqq.), had obtained control of the young and inexperienced king, and had persuaded him to introduce idolatry again. On ver. 2 cf. ch. viii. 18 and xvi. 3.—Ver. 3. וַיִּשָּׁב וַיִּבֶן, “he built again” the high places, which Hezekiah had destroyed (ch. xviii. 4), erected altars for Baal and an Asherah, like Ahab of Israel (1 Kings xvi. 32, 33). הַאֲשֵׁרָה is the image of Asherah mentioned in ver. 7, whereas in the Chronicles the thought is generalized by the plurals לַבָּעֲלִים and הָאֲשֵׁרוֹת. To these two kinds of idolatry, the idolatrous *bamoth* and the (true) Baal- and Asherah-worship, Manasseh added as a third kind the worship of all the host of heaven, which had not occurred among the Israelites before the Assyrian era, and was probably of Assyrian or Chaldæan origin. This worship differed from the Syrophœnician star-worship, in which sun and moon were worshipped under the names of Baal and Astarte as the bearers of the male and female powers of nature, and was pure star-worship, based upon the idea of the unchangeableness of the stars in contradistinction to the perishableness of everything earthly, according to which the stars were worshipped not merely as the originators of all rise and decay in nature, but also as the leaders and regulators of sublunary things (see Movers, *Phöniz.* i. pp. 65 and 161). This star-worship was a later development of the primary star-worship of Ssabism, in which the stars were worshipped without any image, in the open air or upon the housetops, by simple contemplation, the oldest and comparatively the purest form of the deification of nature, to which the earlier Arabians and the worshippers of the sun among the Ssabians (Zabians) were addicted (cf. Delitzsch on Job xxxi. 26, 27), and which is mentioned and forbidden in Deut. iv. 19 and xvii. 3. In this later form the sun had sacred chariots and horses as among the Persians (ch. xxiii. 11), and incense was offered to the stars, with the face turned towards the east, upon altars which were built either upon housetops, as in the case of the Nabatæans (Strabo, xvi. 784), or within the limits of the temple in the two courts (cf. Ezek. viii. 16, also ch. xxi. 5, xxiii. 12, and 2 Chron. xxxiii. 5, Jer. xix. 13, Zeph. i. 5). This burning of incense took place not merely to the sun and moon, but also to the signs of the zodiac and to all the

host of heaven, *i.e.* to all the stars (ch. xxiii. 5); by which we are no doubt to understand that the sun, moon, planets and other stars, were worshipped in conjunction with the zodiac, and with this were connected astrology, augury, and the casting of nativities, as in the case of the later so-called Chaldæans.<sup>1</sup> This star-worship is more minutely described in vers. 4 and 5. The two verses are closely connected. The *וַיִּבְנֶה מִזְבֵּחַת* of ver. 4 is resumed in *וַיִּבֶן מִזְבֵּחַ* in ver. 5, and the *בְּבֵית י'* of ver. 4 is more minutely defined in the *בְּשַׁתֵּי חֲצֵרוֹת בֵּית י'* of ver. 5. "In the two courts:" not merely in the outer court, but even in the court of the priests, which was set apart for the worship of Jehovah.—Ver. 6. He also offered his son in sacrifice to Moloch, like Ahaz (ch. xvi. 3), in the valley of Benhinom (Chron. cf. ch. xxiii. 10), and practised soothsaying and witchcraft of every kind. On *עֹנֵן וְנִחֵשׁ* see Deut. xviii. 10 and Lev. xix. 26. *וַעֲשָׂה אֹזֶב*, he made, *i.e.* appointed, put into office, a "necromancer and wise people" (cf. Lev. xix. 31 and Deut. xviii. 11).—Ver. 7. Yea, he even placed the image of Asherah in the temple, *i.e.* in the Holy Place. In the description of his idolatry, which advances *gradatim*, this is introduced as the very worst crime. According to the express declaration of the Lord to David (2 Sam. vii. 13) and Solomon (1 Kings ix. 3 compared with ch. viii. 16), the temple was to serve as the dwelling-place of His name.—Ver. 8. The word of the Lord, "I will no more make the foot of Israel to move out of the land which I gave to their fathers," refers to the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 10: "I will appoint my people a place, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and be stirred up no more," which had been fulfilled by the building of the temple as the seat of the name of the Lord, in the manner indicated in pp. 85 sqq. The lasting fulfilment of this promise, however, was made to rest upon the condition of Israel's faithful adherence to the commandments of God (cf. 1 Kings ix. 6 sqq.).—Ver. 9. This condition was not observed

<sup>1</sup> Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 65) correctly observes, that "in all the books of the Old Testament which are written before the Assyrian period there is no trace of any (?) *star-worship*; not that the Phœnician (Canaanitish) gods had not also a sidereal significance, but because this element was only a subordinate one, and the expressions, sun, moon, and stars, and all the host of heaven, which are not met with before, become for the first time common now,"—although his proofs of the difference between the Assyrian star-worship and the Phœnician and Babylonian image-worship stand greatly in need of critical sifting.



by the Israelites; Manasseh seduced them, so that they did more evil than the Canaanites, whom Jehovah had destroyed before them.—Vers. 10-15. The Lord therefore announced through the prophets, to the rebellious and idolatrous nation, the destruction of Jerusalem and the deliverance of Judah into the hands of its enemies; but, as is added in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10, they paid no heed to them. The prophets who foretold this terrible judgment are not named. According to 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, their utterances were entered in the annals of the kings. Habakkuk was probably one of them, since he (Hab. i. 5) predicted the Chaldean judgment as a fact which excited astonishment and appeared incredible. The *Amorites* are mentioned in ver. 11 *instar omnium* as the supporters of the Canaanitish ungodliness, as in 1 Kings xxi. 26, etc.—The phrase, “that whosoever heareth it, both his ears may tingle,” denotes such a judgment as has never been heard of before, and excites alarm and horror (cf. 1 Sam. iii. 11 and Jer. xix. 3). The *Keri* שְׁמָעָה is a correction, to bring the *pronom. suff.* into conformity with the noun רָעָה so far as the gender is concerned, whereas in the *Chethib* שְׁמָעִי the masculine suffix is used in the place of the feminine, as is frequently the case.—Ver. 13. “I stretch over Jerusalem the measure of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab.” The measure (מֶזֶל) and the plummet (מִשְׁקָלֶת, lit. a level) were applied to what was being built (Zech. i. 16), and also to what was being made level with the ground, *i.e.* completely thrown down (Amos vii. 7). From this sprang the figurative expressions, measure of desolation and plummet of devastation (Isa. xxxiv. 11).—The measure of Samaria therefore denotes the measure which was applied to the destruction of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab denotes the extermination of the royal house of Ahab. The meaning is: I shall destroy Jerusalem as I have destroyed Samaria, and exterminate its inhabitants like the house of Ahab. In the second hemistich the same thing is expressed, if possible, still more strongly: “I wipe away Jerusalem as one wipes the dish, and (having) wiped (it), turns it upon its upper side (פָּנֶיהָ).” The wiping of a dish that has been used, and the turning over of the dish wiped, so as not to leave a single drop in it, are a figurative representation of the complete destruction of Jerusalem and the utter extermination of its inhabitants.—Ver. 14. With the destruction of Jerusalem the Lord forsakes the people of His possession, and gives it up to its enemies for a prey and spoil.

שְׁאֵרֵי נַחֲלָתִי: Judah is called the remnant of the people of God's inheritance with a reference to the rejection and leading away of the ten tribes, which have already taken place. On בְּזוֹ וּמִשְׁפָּחָה see Isa. xlii. 22, Jer. xxx. 16.

To this announcement of the judgment there is appended in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 sqq. the statement, that Jehovah caused Manasseh the king to be taken prisoner by the generals of the king of Assyria and led away to Babylon in chains; and that when he humbled himself before God there, and made supplication to Him, He brought him back to Jerusalem and placed him upon his throne again; whereupon Manasseh fortified the walls of Jerusalem still further, placed garrisons in the fortified cities, removed the idol from the temple, abolished from the city the idolatrous altars erected in Jerusalem and upon the temple-mountain, restored the altar of Jehovah, and commanded the people to offer sacrifice upon it.—This incident is omitted in our book, because the conversion of Manasseh was not followed by any lasting results so far as the kingdom was concerned; the abolition of outward idolatry in Jerusalem did not lead to the conversion of the people, and after the death of Manasseh even the idolatrous abominations that had been abolished were restored by Amon.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 16. Manasseh also sinned grievously by shedding innocent blood till Jerusalem was quite filled with it. לִפְּהָ, from one edge to the other, see at ch. x. 21. This statement has been paraphrased by Josephus thus (*Ant.* x. 3, 1): Manasseh slew πάντας ὁμῶς τοὺς δικαίους τοὺς ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις, and did not spare even the prophets, with the additional clause, which exaggerates the thing: καὶ τούτων δέ τινες καθ' ἡμέραν ἀπέσφαξε, ὥστε αἵματι ρεῖσθαι τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα.<sup>2</sup>—Vers. 17, 18. Manasseh was buried “in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza.” “His house” cannot be the royal palace built by Solomon, because the garden is also called the garden of Uzza,

<sup>1</sup> The historical truth of these accounts, which Rosenmüller, Winer, and Hitzig called in question after the example of Gramberg, has been defended by Ewald, Bertheau, and even by Thenius; and the latest attack which has been made upon it by Graf in the *theol. Studien u. Krit.* 1859, iii., has been met by E. Gerlach in the same magazine of 1861. For further remarks see the Commentary on the Chronicles.

<sup>2</sup> The widespread Jewish and Christian legend, that Manasseh put to death the prophet Isaiah, and indeed had him sawn in sunder, to which there is an allusion in Heb. xi. 37, also belongs here. (See Delitzsch, *Comm. on Isaiah*, p. 5.)



evidently from the name of its former possessor. "His house" must therefore have been a summer palace belonging to Manasseh, the situation of which, however, it is impossible to determine more precisely. The arguments adduced by Thenius in support of the view that it was situated upon Ophel, opposite to Zion, are perfectly untenable. Robinson (*Pal.* i. p. 394) conjectures that the garden of Uzza was upon Zion. The name עֲזָא (עֲזָה) occurs again in 2 Sam. vi. 8, 1 Chron. viii. 7, Ezra ii. 49, and Neh. vii. 51.

Vers. 19-26. REIGN OF AMON (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21-25).—Amon reigned only two years, and that in the spirit of his father, that is to say, worshipping all his idols. The city of Jotbah, from which his mother sprang, was, according to Jerome (in the *Onom.* s. v. Jethaba), *urbs antiqua Judææ*; but it is not further known.—Vers. 23, 24. His servants conspired against him and slew him in his palace; whereupon the people of the land, *i.e.* the population of Judah (עַם הָאָרֶץ = עַם יְהוּדָה, 2 Chron. xxvi. 1), put the conspirators to death and made Josiah the son of Amon king, when he was only eight years old.—Ver. 26. Amon was buried "in his grave in the garden of Uzza," *i.e.* in the grave which he had had made in the garden of Uzza by the side of his father's grave. He had probably resided in this palace of his father. יָקִיב, one buried him.

#### CHAP. XXII. 1-XXIII. 30. REIGN OF KING JOSIAH.

After a brief account of the length and spirit of the reign of the pious Josiah (vers. 1 and 2), we have a closely connected narrative, in ver. 3-xxiii. 24, of what he did for the restoration of the true worship of Jehovah and the extermination of idolatry; and the whole of the reform effected by him is placed in the eighteenth year of his reign, because it was in this year that the book of the law was discovered, through which the reformation of worship was carried to completion. It is evident that it was the historian's intention to combine together everything that Josiah did to this end, so as to form one grand picture, from the circumstance that he has not merely placed the chronological datum, "it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah," at the beginning, but has repeated it at the close (ch. xxiii. 23). If we run over the

several facts which are brought before us in this section,—the repairing of the temple (ch. xxii. 3–7); the discovery of the book of the law; the reading of the book to the king; the inquiry made of the prophetess Huldah, and her prophecy (vers. 8–20); the reading of the law to the assembled people in the temple, with the renewal of the covenant (ch. xxiii. 1–3); the eradication of idolatry not only from Jerusalem and Judah, but from Bethel also, and all the cities of Samaria (vers. 4–20); and, lastly, the passover (vers. 21–23),—there is hardly any need to remark, that all this cannot have taken place in the one eighteenth year of his reign, even if, with Usher (*Annales ad a.m.* 3381), we were to place the solemn passover at the close of the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, which is hardly suitable, and by no means follows from the circumstance that the chronological datum, "in the eighteenth year," stands at the commencement of the complete account of the reform of worship introduced by that king. For we may clearly infer that the several details of this account are not arranged chronologically, but according to the subject-matter, and that the historian has embraced the efforts of Josiah to restore the legal worship of Jehovah, which spread over several years, under the one point of view of a discovery of the law, and therefore within the eighteenth year of his reign, from the fact that he introduces the account of the repairing of the temple (ch. xxii. 3–7) in a period by itself, and makes it subordinate to the account of the discovery of the book of the law, and indeed only mentions it in a general manner, because it led to the finding of the book of the law. It is true that the other facts are attached to one another in the narrative by *Vav consec.*; but, on a closer inspection of the several details, there cannot be any doubt whatever that the intention is not to arrange them in their chronological order. The repairing of the temple must have commenced before the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, inasmuch as in that year, in which the incident occurred which led to the discovery of the book of the law (ch. xxii. 3–7), not only were the builders occupied with the repairs of the temple, but money had been brought by all the people to the house of God to carry on this work, and had been collected by the Levites who kept the door. Moreover, from the very nature of the case, we cannot conceive of the restoration of the temple, that had fallen to decay, without the removal of the idolatrous



abominations found in the temple. And the assumption is an equally inconceivable one, that all the people entered into covenant with the Lord (ch. xxiii. 3), before any commencement had been made towards the abolition of the prevailing idolatry, or that the pious king had the book of the law read in the temple and entered into covenant with the Lord, so long as the Ashera was standing in the temple and the idolatrous altars erected by Manasseh in the courts, together with the horses and chariots dedicated to the sun. If the conclusion of a covenant in consequence of the public reading of the book of the law was to be an act in accordance with the law, the public memorials of idolatry must be destroyed at all events in the neighbourhood of the temple. And is it likely that the king, who had been so deeply moved by the curses of the law, would have undertaken so solemn a transaction in sight of the idolatrous altars and other abominations of idolatry in the house of Jehovah, and not rather have seen that this would be only a daring insult to Jehovah? These reasons are quite sufficient to prove that the extermination of idolatry had commenced before the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, and had simply been carried out with greater zeal throughout the whole kingdom after the discovery of the book of the law.

This view of our account is simply confirmed by a comparison with the parallel history in 2 Chron. xxxiv. and xxxv. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3 sqq., Josiah began to seek the God of his father David in the eighth year of his reign, when he was still a youth, that is to say, not more than sixteen years old, and in the twelfth year of his reign began to purify Judah and Jerusalem from idolatry; and, according to vers. 8 sqq., in the eighteenth year of his reign, at the purification of the land and temple, and the renovation of the temple, the book of the law was found by the high priest, and handed over to the king and read before him (vers. 8-28), after which the renewal of the covenant took place, and all the abominations of idolatry that still remained in the land were swept away (vers. 29-33), and, lastly, a solemn passover was celebrated, of which we have an elaborate account in ch. xxxv. 1-19. Consequently the account given in the Chronicles is, on the whole, arranged with greater chronological precision, although even there, after the commencement of the extermination of idolatry has been mentioned, we have a brief and comprehensive statement of all

that Josiah did to accomplish that result ; so that after the renewal of the covenant (ch. xxxiv. 33) we have nothing more than a passing allusion, by way of summary, to the complete abolition of the abominations of idolatry throughout the whole land.

Vers. 1 and 2. *Length and spirit of Josiah's reign.*—Josiah (for the name, see at 1 Kings xiii. 2), like Hezekiah, trode once more in the footsteps of his pious forefather David, adhering with the greatest constancy to the law of the Lord. He reigned thirty-one years. As a child he had probably received a pious training from his mother ; and when he had ascended the throne, after the early death of his godless father, he was under the guidance of pious men who were faithfully devoted to the law of the Lord, and who turned his heart to the God of their fathers, as was the case with Joash in ch. xii. 3, although there is no allusion to guardianship. His mother *Jedidah*, the daughter of Adaiah, was of *Boscath*, a city in the plain of Judah, of which nothing further is known (see at Josh. xv. 39). The description of his character, “ he turned not aside to the right hand and to the left,” *sc.* from that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, is based upon Deut. v. 29, xvii. 11, 20, and xxviii. 14, and expresses an unwavering adherence to the law of the Lord.

Vers. 3–8. *Repairing of the temple, and discovery of the book of the law* (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8–18).—When Josiah sent Shaphan the secretary of state (סֹפֵר, see at 2 Sam. viii. 17) into the temple, in the eighteenth year of his reign, with instructions to Hilkiah the high priest to pay to the builders the money which had been collected from the people for repairing the temple by the Levites who kept the door, Hilkiah said to Shaphan, “ I have found the book of the law.” Vers. 3–8 form a long period. The apodosis to וַיְהִי וְגו', “ it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah—the king had sent Shaphan,” etc., does not follow till ver. 8 : “ that Hilkiah said,” etc. The principal fact which the historian wished to relate, was the discovery of the book of the law ; and the repairing of the temple is simply mentioned because it was when Shaphan was sent to Hilkiah about the payment of the money to the builders that the high priest informed the king's secretary of state of the discovery of the book of the law in the temple, and handed it over to him to take to the king. שָׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ, in ver. 3, forms the commencement



to the minor clauses inserted within the principal clause, and subordinate to it: "the king had sent Shaphan," etc. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8, the king had deputed not only Shaphan the state-secretary, but also Maaseiah the governor of the city and Joach the chancellor, because the repairing of the temple was not a private affair of the king and the high priest, but concerned the city generally, and indeed the whole kingdom. In vers. 4, 5 there follows the charge given by the king to Shaphan: "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may make up the money, . . . and hand it over to the workmen appointed over the house of Jehovah," etc. **יָתַם**, from **תָּמַם**, *Hiphil*, signifies to finish or set right, *i.e.* not pay out (Ges., Dietr.), but make it up for the purpose of paying out, namely, collect it from the door-keepers, count it, and bind it up in bags (see ch. xii. 11). **יָתַם** is therefore quite appropriate here, and there is no alteration of the text required. The door-keepers had probably put the money in a chest placed at the entrance, as was the case at the repairing of the temple in the time of Joash (ch. xii. 10). In ver. 5 the *Keri* **יִתְּנֵהוּ** is a bad alteration of the *Chethib* **יִתְּנָה**, "and give (it) into the hand," which is perfectly correct. **עֲשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה** might denote both the masters and the workmen (builders), and is therefore defined more precisely first of all by **הַמְּפַקְדִּים בְּבֵית י'**, "who had the oversight at the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* the masters or inspectors of the building, and secondly by **אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית י'**, who were (occupied) at the house of Jehovah, whilst in the Chronicles it is explained by **אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂים ב' י'**. The *Keri* **בֵּית י'** is an alteration after ver. 9, whereas the combination **מְפַקְדִּים בְּבֵית** is justified by the construction of **הַמְּפַקֵּר** *c. acc. pers.* and **ב** *rei* in Jer. xl. 5. The masters are the subject to **וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ**; they were to pay the money as it was wanted, either to the workmen, or for the purchase of materials for repairing the dilapidations, as is more precisely defined in ver. 6. Compare ch. xii. 12, 13; and for ver. 7 compare ch. xii. 16. The names of the masters or inspectors are given in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.—The execution of the king's command is not specially mentioned, that the parenthesis may not be spun out any further.—Ver. 8. Hilkiah the high priest (cf. 1 Chron. v. 39) said, "I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah." **סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה**, *the book of the law* (not *a* law-book or a roll of laws), cannot mean anything else, either grammatically or historically, than the Mosaic book of the law (the Pentateuch), which is so designated, as is generally admitted,

in the Chronicles, and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.<sup>1</sup> The finding of the book of the law in the temple presupposes that the copy deposited there had come to light. But it by no means follows from this, that before its discovery there were no copies in the hands of the priests and prophets. The book of the law that was found was simply the temple copy,<sup>2</sup> deposited, according to Deut. xxxi. 26, by the side of the ark of the covenant, which had been lost under the idolatrous kings Manasseh and Amon, and came to light again now that the temple was being repaired. We cannot learn, either from the account before us, or from the words of the Chronicles (ch. xxxiv. 14), "when they were taking out the money brought into the house of Jehovah, Hilkiah found the book of the law of the Lord," in what part of the temple it had hitherto lain; and this is of no importance so far as the principal object of the history is concerned. Even the words of the Chronicles simply point out the occasion on which the book was discovered, and do not affirm that it had

<sup>1</sup> Thenius has correctly observed, that "the expression shows very clearly, that the allusion is to something already known, not to anything that had come to light for the first time;" but he is greatly mistaken when, notwithstanding this, he supposes that what we are to understand by this is merely a collection of the commandments and ordinances of Moses, which had been worked up in the Pentateuch, and more especially in Deuteronomy. For there is not the smallest proof whatever that any such collection of commandments and ordinances of Moses, or, as Bertheau supposes, the collection of Mosaic law contained in the three middle books of the Pentateuch, or Deuteronomy ch. i.-xxviii. (according to Vaihinger, Reuss, and others), was ever called ספר התורה, or that any such portions had had an independent existence, and had been deposited in the temple. These hypotheses are simply bound up with the attacks made upon the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and ought to be given up, since De Wette, the great leader of the attack upon the genuineness of the Pentateuch, in § 162a of the later editions of his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, admits that the account before us contains the first certain trace of the existence of our present Pentateuch. The only loophole left to modern criticism, therefore, is that Hilkiah forged the book of the law discovered by him under the name of Moses,—a conclusion which can only be arrived at by distorting the words of the text in the most arbitrary manner, turning "find" into "forge," but which is obliged either to ignore or forcibly to set aside all the historical evidence of the previous existence of the whole of the Pentateuch, including Deuteronomy.

<sup>2</sup> Whether the original written by Moses' own hand, as Grotius inferred from the ביר משה of the Chronicles, or a later copy of this, is a very superfluous question; for, as Hävernick says, "even in the latter case it was to be regarded just in the same light as the autograph, having just the same claims, since the temple repaired by Josiah was the temple of Solomon still."



been lying in one of the treasure-chambers of the temple, as Josephus says. The expression וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ does not imply that Shaphan read the whole book through immediately.

Vers. 9-14. *The reading of the book of the law to the king, and the inquiry made of the prophetess Huldah concerning it.*—

Vers. 9, 10. When Shaphan informed the king of the execution of his command, he also told him that Hilkipah had given him a book, and read it to the king. הָשִׁיב דָּבָר, to bring an answer, to give a report as to a commission that has been received. הֵתִיכוּ, they poured out the money, i.e. out of the chest in which it was collected, into bags. וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ, “he read it to the king,” is simplified in the Chronicles (ver. 18) by וַיִּקְרָא בוֹ, “he read therein.” That יִקְרָאֵהוּ does not signify that the whole was read, is evident from a comparison of ch. xxiii. 2, where the reading of the whole is expressed by כָּל-דְּבָרֵי סֵ'. Which passages or sections Shaphan read by himself (ver. 8), and which he read to the king, it is impossible to determine exactly. To the king he most likely read, among other things, the threats and curses of the law against those who transgressed it (Deut. xxviii.), and possibly also Lev. xxvi., because the reading made such an impression upon him, that in his anguish of soul he rent his clothes. Nor is it possible to decide anything with certainty, as to whether the king had hitherto been altogether unacquainted with the book of the law, and had merely a traditional knowledge of the law itself, or whether he had already had a copy of the law, but had not yet read it through, or had not read it with proper attention, which accounted for the passages that were read to him now making so deep and alarming an impression upon him. It is a well-known experience, that even books which have been read may, under peculiar circumstances, produce an impression such as has not been made before. But in all probability Josiah had not had in his possession any copy of the law, or even read it till now; although the thorough acquaintance with the law, which all the prophets display, places the existence of the Pentateuch in prophetic circles beyond the reach of doubt.—Ver. 11. In his alarm at the words of the book of the law that had been read to him, Josiah rent his clothes, and sent a deputation to the prophetess Huldah, to make inquiry of Jehovah through her concerning the things which he had heard from the law. The deputation consisted of the high priest Hilkipah, Ahikam the supporter of Jeremiah (Jer. xxvi. 24) and the father of

Gedaliah the governor (ch. xxv. 22 ; Jer. xxxix. 14, etc.), Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the state-secretary (ver. 3), and Asahiah the servant (*i.e.* an officer) of the king.—Ver. 13. From the commission, “Inquire ye of Jehovah for me and for the people and for all Judah (*i.e.* the whole kingdom) concerning the words of this book of the law that has been found, for great is the wrath of the Lord which has been kindled against us, because our fathers have not heard . . .,” we may infer that the curses of the law upon the despisers of the commandments of God in Lev. xxvi., Deut. xxviii., and other passages, had been read to the king. *דָּרַשׁ אֶת־יְיָ* means to inquire the will of the Lord, what He has determined concerning the king, his people, and the kingdom. *שָׁמַעַל* signifies here to hearken to anything, to observe it, for which *אָל* is used elsewhere. *כָּתַבַּעַל*, to prescribe for performance. *עָלֵינוּ*, “prescribed for *us*,” is quite appropriate, since the law was not only given to the fathers to obey, but also to the existing generation,—a fact which Thenius has overlooked with his conjecture *עָלָיו*. To render the king’s alarm and his fear of severe judgments from God intelligible, there is no need for the far-fetched and extremely precarious hypothesis, that just at that time the Scythians had invaded and devastated the land.—Ver. 14. Nothing further is known of the prophetess *Huldah* than what is mentioned here. All that we can infer from the fact that the king sent to her is, that she was highly distinguished on account of her prophetical gifts, and that none of the prophets of renown, such as Jeremiah and Zephaniah, were at that time in Jerusalem. Her father *Shallum* was *keeper of the clothes*, *i.e.* superintendent over either the priests’ dresses that were kept in the temple (according to the Rabbins and Wits. *de proph.* in his *Miscell. ss.* i. p. 356, ed. 3), or the king’s wardrobe. The names of his ancestors *חֲרָחָם* and *חֲקִיָּה* are written *חֲקִיָּה* and *חֲרָחָם* in the Chronicles. *Huldah* lived at Jerusalem *בְּמִשְׁנֶה*, “in the second part” or district of the city, *i.e.* in the lower city, upon the hill *Ἀκρα* (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 391), which is called *הַמִּשְׁנֶה* in Zeph. i. 10, and *הָעִיר מִשְׁנֶה* in Neh. xi. 9, and *ἄλλη πόλις* in Joseph. *Ant.* xv. 11, 5.

Vers. 15–20. *The reply of Huldah the prophetess.*—*Huldah* confirmed the fear expressed by Josiah, that the wrath of the Lord was kindled against Jerusalem and its inhabitants on account of their idolatry, and proclaimed first of all (vers. 16, 17), that the Lord would bring upon Jerusalem and its inhabitants



all the punishments with which the rebellious and idolaters are threatened in the book of the law; and secondly (vers. 18-20), to the king himself, that on account of his sincere repentance and humiliation in the sight of God, he would not live to see the predicted calamities, but would be gathered to his fathers in peace. The first part of her announcement applies "to the man who has sent you to me" (ver. 15), the second "to the king of Judah, who has sent to inquire of the Lord" (ver. 18). "The man" who had sent to her was indeed also the king; but Huldah intentionally made use of the general expression "the man," etc., to indicate that the word announced to him applied not merely to the king, but to every one who would hearken to the word, whereas the second portion of her reply had reference to the king alone. הַמְּקוֹם הַזֶּה, in vers. 16, 19, and 20, is Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom. In ver. 16, כָּל-דְּבָרֵי רָעָה is an explanatory apposition to רָעָה. Ver. 17. "With all the work of their hands," *i.e.* with the idols which they have made for themselves (cf. 1 Kings xvi. 7). The last clause in ver. 18, "the words which thou hast heard," is not to be connected with the preceding one, "thus saith the Lord," and עַל or לְ to be supplied; but it belongs to the following sentence, and is placed at the head absolutely: as for the words, which thou hast heard—because thy heart has become soft, *i.e.* in despair at the punishment with which the sinners are threatened (cf. Deut. xx. 3; Isa. vii. 4), and thou hast humbled thyself, when thou didst hear, etc.; therefore, behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, etc. לְהִיֹּת לְשָׁמָּה, "that they (the city and inhabitants) may become a desolation and curse." These words, which are often used by the prophets, but which are not found connected like this except in Jer. xliv. 22, rest upon Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii., and show that these passages had been read to the king out of the book of the law.—Ver. 20. To gather to his fathers means merely to let him die, and is generally applied to a peaceful death upon a sick-bed, like the synonymous phrase, to lie with one's fathers; but it is also applied to a violent death by being slain in battle (1 Kings xxii. 40 and 34), so that there is no difficulty in reconciling this comforting assurance with the slaying of Josiah in battle (ch. xxiii. 29). בְּשָׁלוֹם, in peace, *i.e.* without living to witness the devastation of Jerusalem, as is evident from the words, "thine eyes will not see," etc.

Ch. xxiii. 1-30. Instead of resting content with the fact that he was promised deliverance from the approaching judgment, Josiah did everything that was in his power to lead the whole nation to true conversion to the Lord, and thereby avert as far as possible the threatened curse of rejection, since the Lord in His word had promised forgiveness and mercy to the penitent. He therefore gathered together the elders of the nation, and went with them, with the priests and prophets and the assembled people, into the temple, and there had the book of the law read to those who were assembled, and concluded a covenant with the Lord, into which the people also entered. After this he had all the remnants of idolatry eradicated, not only in Jerusalem and Judah, but also in Bethel and the other cities of Samaria, and directed the people to strengthen themselves in their covenant fidelity towards the Lord by the celebration of a solemn passover.—Vers. 1-3. *Reading of the law in the temple, and renewal of the covenant* (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29-32). Beside the priests, Josiah also gathered together the prophets, including perhaps Jeremiah and Zedekiah, that he might carry out the solemn conclusion of the covenant with their co-operation, and, as is evident from Jer. i.-xi., that they might then undertake the task, by their impressive preaching in Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, of making the people conscious of the earnestness of the covenant duties which they had so recently undertaken (see Oehler in Herzog's *Cycl.*). Instead of the prophets, the Levites are mentioned in the Chronicles, probably only because the Levites are mentioned along with the priests in other cases of a similar kind. וִיקְרָא, he read, *i.e.* had it read; for the duty of reading the law in the temple devolved upon the priests as the keepers of the law (Deut. xxxi. 9 sqq.).—Ver. 3. The king stood עַל הָעֲמֹד, as in ch. xi. 14. For וַיִּבְרָת וְנֹה' see ch. xi. 17. לָלֶכֶת, *i.e.* he bound himself solemnly to walk after the Lord, that is to say, in his walk to follow the Lord and keep His commandments (see at 1 Kings ii. 3).—וַיַּעֲמֹד . . . בְּבְרִית, all the people entered into the covenant (Luther and others); not *perstitit*, stood firm, continued in the covenant (Maurer, Ges.), which would be at variance with Jer. xi. 9, 10, xxv. 3 sqq., and other utterances of the prophets.

Vers. 4-20. *The eradication of idolatry.*—According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3-7, this had already begun, and was simply continued and carried to completion after the renewal of the



covenant. — Vers. 4-14. *In Jerusalem and Judah.* Ver. 4. The king commanded the high priest and the other priests, and the Levites who kept the door, to remove from the temple everything that had been made for Baal and Asherah, and to burn it in the valley of Kidron. כֹּהֲנֵי הַמִּשְׁנָה, *sacerdotes secundi ordinis* (Vulg., Luth., etc.), are the common priests as distinguished from הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל, the high priest. The Rabbins are wrong in their explanation *vicarii summi sacerdotis*, according to which Thenius would alter the text and read כֹּהֵן for כֹּהֲנֵי. שְׁמָרֵי הַסֶּף, the keepers of the threshold, are the Levites whose duty it was to watch the temple, as in ch. xxii. 4 (cf. 1 Chron. xxiii. 5). כָּל־הַבָּלִים (*alles Zeug*, Luth.), *i.e.* all the apparatus, consisting of altars, idols, and other things, that had been provided for the worship of Baal and Astarte. Josiah had these things burned, according to the law in Deut. vii. 25, and that outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron valley. The שְׂדֵמוֹת קִדְרוֹן (fields of Kidron) are probably to be sought for to the north-east of Jerusalem, where the Kidron valley is broader than between the city and the Mount of Olives, and spreads out into a basin of considerable size, which is now cultivated and contains plantations of olive and other fruit-trees (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 405). “And he had their dust carried to Bethel,” *i.e.* the ashes of the wooden objects which were burned, and the dust of those of stone and metal which were ground to powder, to defile the idolatrous place of worship at Bethel as the chief seat of idolatry and false worship.—Ver. 5. “He abolished the high priests.” כֹּמָרִים are also mentioned in Hos. x. 5 and Zeph. i. 4: they were not idolatrous priests or prophets of Baal, but priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to offer incense upon the altars of the high places; for they are distinguished from the idolatrous priests, or those who burnt incense to Baal, the sun, etc. In Hos. x. 5 the priests appointed in connection with the golden calf at Bethel are called כֹּמָרִים; and in Zeph. i. 4 the כֹּמָרִים are not exclusively idolatrous priests, but such as did service sometimes for Jehovah, who had been degraded into a Baal, and sometimes to actual idols. Now as כֹּהֲנִים who burnt incense upon high places are also mentioned in ver. 8, we must understand by the כֹּמָרִים non-Levitical priests, and by the כֹּהֲנִים in ver. 8 Levitical priests who were devoted to the worship on the high places. The primary signification of כֹּמָר is disputed. In Syriac the word signifies the priest, in Hebrew spurious priests, probably from

כָּמַר in the sense of to bring together, or complete, as the performers of sacrifice, like ἑρδων, the sacrificer (Dietr.); whereas the connection suggested by Hitzig (on Zeph.) with כִּפֵּר, to be unbelieving, in the opposite sense of the religious, is very far-fetched, and does not answer either to the Hebrew or the Syriac use of the word.<sup>1</sup> The singular וַיִּקְטֹר is striking, inasmuch as if the imperf. c. *Vav* rel. were a continuation of נִתְּנִי, we should expect the plural, “and who had burnt incense,” as it is given in the Chaldee. The LXX., Vulg., and Syr. have rendered לִקְטֹר, from which וַיִּקְטֹר has probably arisen by a mistake in copying. In the following clause, “and those who had burnt incense to Baal, to the sun and to the moon,” etc., *Baal* is mentioned as the deity worshipped in the sun, the moon, and the stars (see at ch. xxi. 3). מְזֻלוֹת, synonymous with מְזֻרוֹת in Job xxxviii. 32, does not mean the twenty-eight *naxatra*, or Indian stations of the moon,<sup>2</sup> but the twelve signs or constellations of the zodiac, which were regarded by the Arabs as *menâzil*, i.e. station-houses, in which the sun took up its abode in succession when describing the circuit of the year (cf. Ges. *Thes.* p. 869, and Delitzsch on Job xxxviii. 32).—Ver. 6. The image of Asherah (הָאֲשֵׁרָה = פֶּסֶל הָאֲשֵׁרָה, ch. xxi. 3, 7), which Manasseh placed in the temple and then removed after his return from Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 15), but which Amon had replaced, Josiah ordered to be burned and ground to powder in the valley of Kidron, and the dust to be thrown upon the graves of the common people. וַיִּדָּק, from דָּקָה, to make fine, to crush, refers to the metal covering of the image (see at Ex. xxxii. 10). Asa had already had an idol burned in the Kidron valley (1 Kings xv. 13), and Hezekiah had ordered the idolatrous abominations to be taken out of the city and carried thither (2 Chron. xxix. 16); so that the valley had already been defiled. There was a burial-place there for בְּנֵי הָעָם, i.e. the common people (cf. Jer. xxvi. 23), who had no graves of their own, just as at the present day the burial-ground

<sup>1</sup> In any case the derivation from כָּמַר, to be black (Ges. *Thes.* p. 693), and the explanation given by Fürst from *vi occultandi magicasque, h. e. arcanas et reconditas artes exercendi*, and others given in Iken's *Dissertatt. theol. philol.* i. diss. 12, are quite untenable.

<sup>2</sup> According to A. Weber, *Die vedischen Nachrichten von den naxatra*, in the *Abhandlungen der Berl. Acad. d. Wiss.* 1860 and 1861. Compare, on the other hand, Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibliographie*, 1861, No. 22, pp. 93, 94, his article in the *Deutsch. morgld. Zeitschrift*, 1864, p. 118 sqq.



of the Jews there lies to the north of *Kefr Silwân*. Josiah ordered the ashes to be cast upon these graves, probably in order to defile them as the graves of idolaters.—Ver. 7. **בְּתֵי הַקְּרָשִׁים**, the houses (places of abode) of the paramours (for **הַקְּרָשִׁים** see at 1 Kings xiv. 24), were probably only tents or huts, which were erected in the court of the temple for the paramours to dwell in, and in which there were also women who wove tent-temples (**בְּתֵים**) for Asherah (see at ch. xvii. 30).<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 8. All the (Levitical) priests he sent for from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, and defiled the altars of the high places, upon which they had offered incense, from Geba to Beersheba, *i.e.* throughout the whole kingdom. *Geba*, the present *Jeba*, about three hours to the north of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 24), was the northern frontier of the kingdom of Judah, and *Beersheba* (*Bir-seba*: see the Comm. on Gen. xxi. 31) the southern frontier of Canaan. It is evident from ver. 9 that **כֹּהֲנִים** are Levitical priests. He ordered them to come to Jerusalem, that they might not carry on illegal worship any longer in the cities of Judah. He then commanded that the unlawful high places should be defiled throughout the whole land, for the purpose of suppressing this worship altogether. He also destroyed “the altars of the high places at the gates, (both that) which was at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, (and also that) which was at the left of every one (entering) by the city gate.” The two clauses beginning with **אֲשֶׁר** contain a more precise description of **בְּמוֹת הַשְּׁעָרִים**. The gate of Joshua the governor of the city is not mentioned anywhere else, but it was probably near to his home, *i.e.* near the citadel of the city; but whether it was the future gate of *Gennath*, as Thenius supposes, or some other, it is impossible to determine. This also applies to the opinion that **שַׁעַר הָעִיר** is the valley gate or Joppa gate (Thenius) as being the gate of greatest traffic; for the traffic through the northern or Ephraim gate was certainly not less. **עַל-שְׂמֹאלוֹ**, at the left of every one, *sc.* going into the city.—Ver. 9.

<sup>1</sup> On this worship Movers has the following among other remarks (*Phön.* i. p. 686): “The mutilated Gallus (**קֶרֶשׁ**) fancies that he is a woman: *negant se viros esse . . . mulieres se volunt credi* (Firmic.). He lives in close intimacy with the women, and they again are drawn towards the Galli by peculiar affection.” He also expresses a conjecture “that the women of Jerusalem gave themselves up in honour of the goddess in the tents of the Galli which were pitched in the temple circle, on which account the **מַחִיר בָּלָב** went to the temple treasury.”

"Only the priests of the high places did not sacrifice, . . . but ate unleavened bread in the midst of their brethren." The וְהַכֹּהֲנִים is connected with ver. 8: Josiah did not allow the priests, whom he had brought out of the cities of Judah to Jerusalem, to offer sacrifice upon the altar of Jehovah in the temple, *i.e.* to perform the sacrificial service of the law, though he did allow them "to eat that which was unleavened," *i.e.* to eat of the sacred altar-gifts intended for the priests (Lev. vi. 9, 10 and 22); only they were not allowed to consume this at a holy place, but simply in the midst of their brethren, *i.e.* at home in the family. They were thus placed on a par with priests who were rendered incapable of service on account of a bodily defect (Lev. xxi. 17-22).—Ver. 10. He also defiled the place of sacrifice in the valley of Benhinnom, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of Moloch. Moloch's place of sacrifice is called הַתְּפֹת, as an object of abhorrence, or one to be spat at (תִּפֹּת: Job xvii. 6), from תָּפַח, to spit, or spit out (cf. Roediger in *Ges. thes.* p. 1497, where the other explanations are exploded).<sup>1</sup> On the valley *Bne* or *Ben-Hinnom*, at the south side of Mount Zion, see at Josh. xv. 8.—Ver. 11. He cleared away the horses dedicated to the sun, and burned up the chariots of the sun. As the horses were only cleared away (וַיִּשְׂבֹּת), whereas the chariots were burned, we have not to think of images of horses (Selden, *de Diis Syr.* ii. 8), but of living horses, which were given to the sun, *i.e.* kept for the worship of the sun. Horses were regarded as sacred to the sun by many nations, viz. the Armenians, Persians, Massagetæ, Ethiopians, and Greeks, and were sacrificed to it (for proofs see Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. lib. ii. c. 10); and there is no doubt that the Israelites received this worship first of all from Upper Asia, along with the actual sun-worship, possibly through the Assyrians. "The kings of Judah" are Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon. These horses were hardly kept to be offered to the sun in sacrifice (Bochart and others), but, as we must infer from the "chariots of the sun," were used for processions in connection with the worship of the sun, probably, according to the unanimous opinion of the Rabbins, to

<sup>1</sup> Jerome (on Jer. vii. 31) says: *THOPHET, quæ est in valle filiorum Enom, illum locum significat, qui Siloë fontibus irrigatur et est amœnus atque nemorosus, hodieque hortorum præbet delicias.* From the name *Gehinnom* the Rabbins formed the name *Γέεννα*, *Gehenna* (Matt. v. 22, 29, etc.), with special reference to the children burnt here to Moloch, to signify hell and hell-fire.



drive and meet the rising sun. The definition 'מִבֵּית יי' "from the coming into the house of Jehovah," *i.e.* near the entrance into the temple, is dependent upon נָתַנוּ, "they had given (placed) the horses of the sun near the temple entrance," אֶל-לְשַׁבֵּת, "in the cell of Nethanmelech." אֶל does not mean *at* the cell, *i.e.* in the stable by the cell (Thenius), because the ellipsis is too harsh, and the cells built in the court of the temple were intended not merely as dwelling-places for the priests and persons engaged in the service, but also as a depôt for the provisions and vessels belonging to the temple (Neh. x. 38 sqq. ; 1 Chron. ix. 26). One of these depôts was arranged and used as a stable for the sacred horses. This cell, which derived its name from Nethanmelech, a chamberlain (סָרִיס), of whom nothing further is known, possibly the builder or founder of it, was בַּפְּרוֹרִים, in the *Pharvars*. פְּרוֹרִים, the plural of פְּרוֹר, is no doubt identical with פְּרָבֶר in 1 Chron. xxvi. 18. This was the name given to a building at the western or hinder side of the outer temple-court by the gate *Shalleket* at the ascending road, *i.e.* the road which led up from the city standing in the west into the court of the temple (1 Chron. xxvi. 16 and 18). The meaning of the word פְּרוֹר is uncertain. Gesenius (*thes.* p. 1123) explains it by *porticus*, after the Persian *فروار*, summer-house, an open kiosk. Böttcher (*Proben*, p. 347), on the other hand, supposes it to be "a separate spot resembling a suburb," because in the Talmud פְּרוֹרִין signifies *suburbia, loca urbi vicina*.—Ver. 12. The altars built upon the roof of the *aliyah* of Ahaz were dedicated to the host of heaven (Zeph. i. 5 ; Jer. xix. 13, xxxii. 29), and certainly built by Ahaz ; and inasmuch as Hezekiah had undoubtedly removed them when he reformed the worship, they had been restored by Manasseh and Amon, so that by "the kings of Judah" we are to understand these three kings as in ver. 11. We are unable to determine where the עֲלִיָּה, the upper chamber, of Ahaz really was. But since the things spoken of both before and afterwards are the objects of idolatry found in the temple, this *aliyah* was probably also an upper room of one of the buildings in the court of the temple (Thenius), possibly at the gate, which Ahaz had built when he removed the outer entrance of the king into the temple (ch. xvi. 18), since, according to Jer. xxxv. 4, the buildings at the gate had upper stories. The altars built by Manasseh in the two courts of the temple (see ch. xxi. 5) Josiah destroyed,

וַיִּרְצֵן מֵשָׁם, "and crushed them to powder from thence," and cast their dust into the Kidron valley. יִרְצֵן, not from רָץ, to run, but from רָצַץ, to pound or crush to pieces. The alteration proposed by Thenius into וַיִּרְצֵן, he caused to run and threw = he had them removed with all speed, is not only arbitrary, but unsuitable, because it is impossible to see why Josiah should merely have hurried the clearing away of the dust of these altars, whereas רָצַץ, to pound or grind to powder, was not superfluous after נָחַץ, to destroy, but really necessary, if the dust was to be thrown into the Kidron. וַיִּרְצֵן is substantially equivalent to וַיִּדְק in ver. 6.—Vers. 13, 14. The places of sacrifice built by Solomon upon the southern height of the Mount of Olives (see at 1 Kings xi. 7) Josiah defiled, reducing to ruins the monuments, cutting down the Asherah idols, and filling their places with human bones, which polluted a place, according to Num. xix. 16. Ver. 14 gives a more precise definition of מִמָּוֶה in ver. 13 in the form of a simple addition (with *Var cop.*). הַרְהַמְשָׁחִית, mountain of destruction (not *unctionis* = הַמִּשְׁחָה, Rashi and Cler.), is the southern peak of the Mount of Olives, called in the tradition of the Church *mons offensionis* or *scandali* (see at 1 Kings xi. 7). For מִצֵּבוֹת and אֲשֵׁרִים see at 1 Kings xiv. 23. מְקוֹמָם are the places where the *Mazzeboth* and *Asherim* stood by the altars that were dedicated to Baal and Astarte, so that by defiling them the altar-places were also defiled.

Vers. 15–20. *Extermination of idolatry in Bethel and the cities of Samaria.*—In order to suppress idolatry as far as possible, Josiah did not rest satisfied with the extermination of it in his own kingdom Judah, but also destroyed the temples of the high places and altars and idols in the land of the former kingdom of the ten tribes, slew all the priests of the high places that were there, and burned their bones upon the high places destroyed, in order to defile the ground. The warrant for this is not to be found, as Hess supposes, in the fact that Josiah, as vassal of the king of Assyria, had a certain limited power over these districts, and may have looked upon them as being in a certain sense his own territory, a power which the Assyrians may have allowed him the more readily, because they were sure of his fidelity in relation to Egypt. For we cannot infer that Josiah was a vassal of the Assyrians from the imprisonment and release of Manasseh by the king of Assyria, nor is there any historical evidence whatever to prove it. The only reason that



can have induced Josiah to do this, must have been that after the dissolution of the kingdom of the ten tribes he regarded himself as the king of the whole of the covenant-nation, and availed himself of the approaching or existing dissolution of the Assyrian empire to secure the friendship of the Israelites who were left behind in the kingdom of the ten tribes, to reconcile them to his government, and to win them over to his attempt to reform; and there is no necessity whatever to assume, as Thenius does, that he asked permission to do so of the newly arisen ruler Nabopolassar. For against this assumption may be adduced not only the improbability that Nabopolassar would give him any such permission, but still more the circumstance that at a still earlier period, even before Nabopolassar became king of Babylon, Josiah had had taxes collected of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel for the repairing of the temple (2 Chron. xxxiv. 9), from which we may see that the Israelites who were left behind in the land were favourably disposed towards his reforms, and were inclined to attach themselves in religious matters to Judah (just as, indeed, even the Samaritans were willing after the captivity to take part in the building of the temple, Ezra iv. 2 sqq.), which the Assyrians at that time were no longer in a condition to prevent.—Ver. 15. “Also the altar at Bethel, the high place which Jeroboam had made—this altar also and the high place he destroyed.” It is grammatically impossible to take הַבִּמָּה as an accusative of place (Thenius); it is in apposition to הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, serving to define it more precisely: the altar at Bethel, namely the high place; for which we have afterwards the altar and the high place. By the appositional הַבִּמָּה the altar at Bethel is described as an illegal place of worship. “He burned the בִּמָּה,” *i.e.* the buildings of this sanctuary, ground to powder everything that was made of stone or metal, *i.e.* both the altar and the idol there. This is implied in what follows: “and burned Asherah,” *i.e.* a wooden idol of Astarte found there, according to which there would no doubt be also an idol of Baal, a מִצְבֶּה of stone. The golden calf, which had formerly been set up at Bethel, may, as Hos. x. 5, 6 seems to imply, have been removed by the Assyrians, and, after the settlement of heathen colonists in the land, have been supplanted by idols of Baal and Astarte (cf. ch. xvii. 29).—Vers. 16 sqq. In order to desecrate this idolatrous site for all time, Josiah had human bones taken out of the graves that were to be found upon

the mountain, and burned upon the altar, whereby the prophecy uttered in the reign of Jeroboam by the prophet who came out of Judah concerning this idolatrous place of worship was fulfilled; but he spared the tomb of that prophet himself (cf. 1 Kings xiii. 26–32). The mountain upon which Josiah saw the graves was a mountain at Bethel, which was visible from the *bamah* destroyed. צִיָּן, a sepulchral monument, probably a stone erected upon the grave. וַיִּמָּלְטוּ: “so they rescued (from burning) his bones (the bones of the prophet who had come from Judah), together with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria,” *i.e.* of the old prophet who sprang from the kingdom of the ten tribes and had come to Bethel (1 Kings xiii. 11). בָּא מִשְׁמֶרֶן in antithesis to בָּא מִיְהוּדָה denotes simply descent from the land of Samaria.<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 19, 20. All the houses of the high places that were in the (other) cities of Samaria Josiah also destroyed in the same way as that at Bethel, and offered up the priests of the high places upon the altars, *i.e.* slew them upon the altars on which they had offered sacrifice, and burned men’s bones upon them (the altars) to defile them. The severity of the procedure towards these priests of the high places, as contrasted with the manner in which the priests of the high places in Judah were treated (vers. 8 and 9), may be explained partly from the fact that the Israelitish priests of the high places were not Levitical priests, but chiefly from the fact that they were really idolatrous priests.

Vers. 21–23. *The passover* is very briefly noticed in our account, and is described as such an one as had not taken place since the days of the judges. Ver. 21 simply mentions the appointment of this festival on the part of the king, and the execution of the king’s command has to be supplied. Ver. 22 contains a remark concerning the character of the passover. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 1–19 we have a very elaborate description of it. What distinguished this passover above every other was, (1) that “all the nation,” not merely Judah and Benjamin, but

<sup>1</sup> Vers. 16–18 are neither an interpolation of the editor, *i.e.* of the author of our books of Kings (Staehelin), nor an interpolation from a supplement to the account in 1 Kings xiii. 1–32 (Thenius). The correspondence between the וָגֶם in ver. 15 and the וָגֶם in ver. 18 does not require this assumption; and the pretended discrepancy, that after Josiah had already reduced the altar to ruins (ver. 15) he could not possibly defile it by burning human bones upon it (ver. 16), is removed by the very natural solution, that הַמִּזְבֵּחַ in ver. 16 does not mean the altar itself, but the site of the altar that had been destroyed.



also the remnant of the ten tribes, took part in it, or, as it is expressed in 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, "all Judah and Israel;" (2) that it was kept in strict accordance with the precepts of the Mosaic book of the law, whereas in the passover instituted by Hezekiah there were necessarily many points of deviation from the precepts of the law, more especially in the fact that the feast had to be transferred from the first month, which was the legal time, to the second month, because the priests had not yet purified themselves in sufficient numbers and the people had not yet gathered together at Jerusalem, and also that even then a number of the people had inevitably been allowed to eat the passover without the previous purification required by the law (2 Chron. xxx. 2, 3, 17-20). This is implied in the words, "for there was not holden such a passover since the days of the judges and all the kings of Israel and Judah." That this remark does not preclude the holding of earlier passovers, as Thenius follows De Wette in supposing, without taking any notice of the refutations of this opinion, was correctly maintained by the earlier commentators. Thus Clericus observes: "I should have supposed that what the sacred writer meant to say was, that during the times of the kings no passover had ever been kept *so strictly by every one, according to all the Mosaic laws*. Before this, even under the pious kings, they seem to have followed custom rather than the very words of the law; and since this was the case, many things were necessarily changed and neglected." Instead of "since the days of the judges who judged Israel," we find in 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, "since the days of Samuel the prophet," who is well known to have closed the period of the judges.

Vers. 24-30. *Conclusion of Josiah's reign.*—Ver. 24. As Josiah had the passover kept in perfect accordance with the precepts of the law, so did he also exterminate the necromancers, the teraphim and all the abominations of idolatry, throughout all Judah and Jerusalem, to set up the words of the law in the book of the law that had been found, *i.e.* to carry them out and bring them into force. For הַאֲבוֹת and הַיִּדְעָנִים see at ch. xxi. 6. הַרְפִּים, *penates*, domestic gods, which were worshipped as the authors of earthly prosperity and as oracular deities (see at Gen. xxxi. 19). נִלְלִים and שִׁקְצִים, connected together, as in Deut. xxix. 16, as a contemptuous description of idols in general.—In ver. 25 the account of the efforts made by Josiah to restore the true worship of Jehovah closes with a general verdict concerning his

true piety. See the remarks on this point at ch. xviii. 5. He turned to Jehovah with all his heart, etc.: there is an evident allusion here to Deut. vi. 5. Compare with this the sentence of the prophet Jeremiah concerning his reign (Jer. xxii. 15, 16).—Ver. 26. Nevertheless the Lord turned not from the great fierceness of His wrath, wherewith He had burned against Judah on account of all the provocations “with which Manasseh had provoked Him.” With this sentence, in which **אֶת־יְהוָה** forms an unmistakeable word-play upon **אֶת־יְהוָה**, the historian introduces the account not merely of the end of Josiah’s reign, but also of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah. Manasseh is mentioned here and at ch. xxiv. 3 and Jer. xv. 4 as the person who, by his idolatry and his unrighteousness, with which he provoked God to anger, had brought upon Judah and Jerusalem the unavoidable judgment of rejection. It is true that Josiah had exterminated outward and gross idolatry throughout the land by his sincere conversion to the Lord, and by his zeal for the restoration of the lawful worship of Jehovah, and had persuaded the people to enter into covenant with its God once more; but a thorough conversion of the people to the Lord he had not been able to effect. For, as Clericus has correctly observed, “although the king was most religious, and the people obeyed him through fear, yet for all that the mind of the people was not changed, as is evident enough from the reproaches of Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and other prophets, who prophesied about that time and a little after.” With regard to this point compare especially the first ten chapters of Jeremiah, which contain a *resumé* of his labours in the reign of Josiah, and bear witness to the deep inward apostasy of the people from the Lord, not only before and during Josiah’s reform of worship, but also afterwards. As the Holy One of Israel, therefore, God could not forgive any more, but was obliged to bring upon the people and kingdom, after the death of Josiah, the judgment already foretold to Manasseh himself (ch. xxi. 12 sqq.).—Ver. 27. The Lord said: I will also put away Judah (in the same manner as Israel: cf. ch. xvii. 20, 23) from my face, etc. **וַיִּאָמֶר** expresses the divine decree, which was announced to the people by the prophets, especially Jeremiah and Zephaniah.—Vers. 29 and 30: compare 2 Chron. xxxv. 20–24. The predicted catastrophe was brought to pass by the expedition of Necho the king of Egypt against Assyria. “In his days (*i.e.* towards the end



of Josiah's reign) Pharaoh *Necho* the king of Egypt went up against the king of Asshur to the river Euphrates." *Necho* (נֶכְחַ or נֶכְי, 2 Chron. xxxv. 20, Jer. xlvi. 2; called *Nεχαώ* by Josephus, Manetho in Jul. Afric., and Euseb., after the LXX.; and *Νεκώς* by Herod. ii. 158, 159, iv. 42, and Diod. Sic. i. 33; according to Brugsch, *hist. d'Eg.* i. p. 252, *Nekâou*) was, according to Man., the sixth king of the twenty-sixth (Saitic) dynasty, the second Pharaoh of that name, the son of Psammetichus I. and grandson of Necho I.; and, according to Herodotus, he was celebrated for a canal which he proposed to have cut in order to connect the Nile with the Red Sea, as well as for the circumnavigation of Africa (compare Brugsch, *l.c.*, according to whom he reigned from 611 to 595 B.C.). Whether "the king of Asshur" against whom Necho marched was the last ruler of the Assyrian empire, *Asardanpal* (*Sardanapal*), *Saracus* according to the monuments (see Brandis, *Ueber den Gewinn*, p. 55; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 110 sqq. and 192), or the existing ruler of the Assyrian empire which had already fallen, Nabopolassar the king of Babylon, who put an end to the Assyrian monarchy in alliance with the Medes by the conquest and destruction of Nineveh, and founded the Chaldæan or Babylonian empire, it is impossible to determine, because the year in which Nineveh was taken cannot be exactly decided, and all that is certain is that Nineveh had fallen before the battle of Carchemish in the year 606 B.C. Compare M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 109 sqq. and 203, 204.—King Josiah went against the Egyptian, and "he (Necho) slew him at Megiddo when he saw him," *i.e.* caught sight of him. This extremely brief notice of the death of Josiah is explained thus in the Chronicles: that Necho sent ambassadors to Josiah, when he was taking the field against him, with an appeal that he would not fight against him, because his only intention was to make war upon Asshur, but that Josiah did not allow himself to be diverted from his purpose, and fought a battle with Necho in the valley of Megiddo, in which he was mortally wounded by the archers. What induced Josiah to oppose with force of arms the advance of the Egyptian to the Euphrates, notwithstanding the assurance of Necho that he had no wish to fight against Judah, is neither to be sought for in the fact that Josiah was dependent upon Babylon, which is at variance with history, nor in the fact that the kingdom of Judah had taken possession of all the territory of

the ancient inheritance of Israel, and Josiah was endeavouring to restore all the ancient glory of the house of David over the surrounding nations (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 707), but solely in Josiah's conviction that Judah could not remain neutral in the war which had broken out between Egypt and Babylon, and in the hope that by attacking Necho, and frustrating his expedition to the Euphrates, he might be able to avert great distress from his own land and kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

This battle is also mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 159); but he calls the place where it was fought *Μάγδολον*, i.e. neither *Migdol*, which was twelve Roman miles to the south of Pelusium (Forbiger, *Hdb. d. alten Geogr.* ii. p. 695), nor the perfectly apocryphal *Magdala* or *Migdal Zebaiah* mentioned by the Talmudists (Reland, *Pal.* p. 898, 899), as Movers supposes. We might rather think with Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 708) of the present *Mejdel*, to the south-east of Acca, at a northern source of the Kishon, and regard this as the place where the Egyptian camp was pitched, whereas Israel stood to the east of it, at the place still called *Rummane*, at *Hadad-Rimmon* in the valley of Megiddo, as Ewald assumes (*Gesch.* iii. p. 708). But even this combination is overthrown by the fact that *Rummane*, which lies to the east of *el Mejdel* at the distance of a mile and three-quarters (geogr.), on the southern edge of the plain of Buttauf, cannot possibly be the *Hadad-Rimmon* mentioned in Zech. xii. 11, where king Josiah died after he had been wounded in the battle. For since *Megiddo* is identical with the Roman *Legio*, the present *Lejun*, as Robinson has proved (see at Josh. xii. 21), and as is generally admitted even by C. v. Raumer (*Pal.* p. 447, note, ed. 4), *Hadad-Rimmon* must be the same as the village of *Rümmuni* (*Rummane*), which is three-quarters of an hour to the

<sup>1</sup> M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Ass.* p. 364) also calls Josiah's enterprise "a perfectly correct policy. Nineveh was falling (if not already fallen), and the Syrian princes, both those who had remained independent, like Josiah, and also the vassals of Asshur, might hope that, after the fall of Nineveh, they would succeed in releasing Syria from every foreign yoke. How well-founded this hope was, is evident from the strenuous exertions which Nabukdrussur was afterwards obliged to make, in order to effect the complete subjugation of Syria. It was therefore necessary to hinder at any price the settlement of the Egyptians now. Even though Necho assured Josiah that he was not marching against him (2 Chron. xxxv. 21), Josiah knew that if once the Egyptians were lords of Cœle-Syria, his independence would be gone."



south of Lejun, where the Scottish missionaries in the year 1839 found many ancient wells and other traces of Israelitish times (V. de Velde, *R.* i. p. 267; *Memoir*, pp. 333, 334). But this Rumane is four geographical miles distant from *el Mejdel*, and Megiddo three and a half, so that the battle fought at Megiddo cannot take its name from *el Mejdel*, which is more than three miles off. The *Magdolon* of Herodotus can only arise from some confusion between it and *Megiddo*, which was a very easy thing with the Greek pronunciation *Μαγεδδῶ*, without there being any necessity to assume that Herodotus was thinking of the Egyptian *Migdol*, which is called *Magdolo* in the *Itin. Ant.* p. 171 (cf. Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschriften altägypt. Denkmäler*, i. pp. 261, 262). If, then, Josiah went to Megiddo in the plain of Esdrelom to meet the king of Egypt, and fell in with him there, there can be no doubt that Necho came by sea to Palestine and landed at Acco, as des Vignoles (*Chronol.* ii. p. 427) assumed.<sup>1</sup> For if the Egyptian army had marched by land through the plain of Philistia, Josiah would certainly have gone thither to meet it, and not have allowed it to advance into the plain of Megiddo without fighting a battle.—Ver. 30. The brief statement, “his servants carried him dead from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem,” is given with more minuteness in the Chronicles: his servants took him, the severely wounded king, by his own

<sup>1</sup> This is favoured by the account in Herodotus (ii. 159), that Necho built ships: *τριήρεις αἱ μὲν ἐπὶ τῇ βορρῇ θάλασσῃ . . . αἱ δὲ ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίῃ κόλπῳ* (*triremes in septentrionale et australe mare mittendas.* Bähr)—*καὶ ταυτησί τε ἐχρᾶτο ἐν τῷ δέοντι· καὶ Σύριοι περὶ ὃ Νεκῶς συμβαλὼν ἐν Μαγδόλῳ ἐνίκησε*; from which we may infer that Necho carried his troops by sea to Palestine, and then fought the battle on the land. M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 365) also finds it very improbable that Necho used his fleet in this war; but he does not think it very credible “that he embarked his whole army, instead of marching them by the land route so often taken by the Egyptian army, the key of which, viz. the land of the Philistines, was at least partially subject to him,” because the *ὑλκαδες* (ships of burden) required for the transport of a large army were hardly to be obtained in sufficient numbers in Egypt. But this difficulty, which rests upon mere conjecture, is neutralized by the fact, which M. Duncker (*Gesch.* i. p. 618) also adduces in support of the voyage by sea, namely, that the decisive battle with the Jews was fought to the north-west of Jerusalem, and when the Jews were defeated, the way to Jerusalem stood open for their retreat. Movers (*Phöniz.* ii. 1, p. 420), who also imagines that Necho advanced with a large land-army towards the frontier of Palestine, has therefore transferred the battle to Magdolo on the Egyptian frontier; but he does this by means of the most arbitrary interpretation of the account given by Herodotus.

command, from his chariot to his second chariot, and drove him to Jerusalem, and he died and was buried, etc. Where he died the Chronicles do not affirm; the occurrence of *וַיָּמָת* after the words "they brought him to Jerusalem," does not prove that he did not die till he reached Jerusalem. If we compare Zech. xii. 11, where the prophet draws a parallel between the lamentation at the death of the Messiah and the lamentation of Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo, as the deepest lamentation of the people in the olden time, with the account given in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 of the lamentation of the whole nation at the death of Josiah, there can hardly be any doubt that Josiah died on the way to Jerusalem at Hadad-Rimmon, the present Rummane, to the south of Lejun (see above), and was taken to Jerusalem dead.—He was followed on the throne by his younger son Jehoahaz, whom the people (*עַם הָאָרֶץ*, as in ch. xxi. 24) anointed king, passing over the elder, Eliakim, probably because they regarded him as the more able man.

CHAP. XXIII. 31—XXIV. 17. REIGNS OF THE KINGS JEHOAHAZ,  
JEHOIAKIM, AND JEHOIACHIN.

Vers. 31–35. REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1–4). —*Jehoahaz*, called significantly by Jeremiah (xxii. 11) *Shallum*, i.e. "to whom it is requited," reigned only three months, and did evil in the eyes of the Lord as all his fathers had done. The people (or the popular party), who had preferred him to his elder brother, had apparently set great hopes upon him, as we may judge from Jer. xxii. 10–12, and seem to have expected that his strength and energy would serve to avert the danger which threatened the kingdom on the part of Necho. Ezekiel (ch. xix. 3) compares him to a young lion which learned to catch the prey and devoured men, but, as soon as the nations heard of him, was taken in their pit and led by nose-rings to Egypt, and thus attributes to him the character of a tyrant disposed to acts of violence; and Josephus accordingly (*Ant.* x. 5, 2) describes him as *ἀσεβὴς καὶ μιὰρὸς τὸν τρόπον*.—Ver. 33. "Pharaoh Necho put him in fetters (*וַיִּאֶסְרֵהוּ*) at Riblah in the land of Hamath, when he had become king at Jerusalem." In 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3 we have, instead of this, "the king of Egypt deposed him (*וַיִּסְרֵהוּ*) at Jerusalem." The Masoretes have substituted as *Keri* *מִסְלָה*, "away from being king," or "that he might be no



longer king," in the place of  $\text{בִּמְלִיכָה}$ , and Thenius and Bertheau prefer the former, because the LXX. have  $\text{τοῦ μὴ βασιλεύειν}$  not in our text only, but in the Chronicles also; but they ought not to have appealed to the Chronicles, inasmuch as the LXX. have not rendered the Hebrew text there, but have simply repeated the words from the text of the book of Kings. The *Keri* is nothing more than an emendation explaining the sense, which the LXX. have also followed. The two texts are not contradictory, but simply complete each other: for, as Clericus has correctly observed, "Jehoahaz would of course be removed from Jerusalem before he was cast into chains; and there was nothing to prevent his being dethroned at Jerusalem before he was taken to Riblah." We are not told in what way Necho succeeded in getting Jehoahaz into his power, so as to put him in chains at Riblah. The assumption of J. D. Michaelis and others, that his elder brother Eliakim, being dissatisfied with the choice of Jehoahaz as king, had recourse to Necho at Riblah, in the hope of getting possession of his father's kingdom through his instrumentality, is precluded by the fact that Jehoahaz would certainly not have been so foolish as to appear before the enemy of his country at a mere summons from Pharaoh, who was at Riblah, and allow him to depose him, when he was perfectly safe in Jerusalem, where the will of the people had raised him to the throne. If Necho wanted to interfere with the internal affairs of the kingdom of Judah, it would never have done for him to proceed beyond Palestine to Syria after the victory at Megiddo, without having first deposed Jehoahaz, who had been raised to the throne at Jerusalem without any regard to his will. The course of events was therefore probably the following: After the victory at Megiddo, Necho intended to continue his march to the Euphrates; but on hearing that Jehoahaz had ascended the throne, and possibly also in consequence of complaints which Eliakim had made to him on that account, he ordered a division of his army to march against Jerusalem, and while the main army was marching slowly to Riblah, he had Jerusalem taken, king Jehoahaz dethroned, the land laid under tribute, Eliakim appointed king as his vassal, and the deposed Jehoahaz brought to his headquarters at Riblah, then put into chains and transported to Egypt; so that the statement in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3, "he deposed him at Jerusalem," is to be taken quite literally, even if Necho did not come to Jerusalem *in propria personâ*, but simply effected

this through the medium of one of his generals.<sup>1</sup> *Riblah* has been preserved in the miserable village of *Rible*, from ten to twelve hours to the S.S.W. of Hums (Emesa) by the river el Ahsy (Orontes), in a large fruitful plain of the northern portion of the Bekaa, which was very well adapted to serve as the camping ground of Necho's army as well as of that of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. xxv. 6, 20, 21), not only because it furnished the most abundant supply of food and fodder, but also on account of its situation on the great caravan-road from Palestine by Damascus, Emesa, and Hamath to Thapsacus and Carchemish on the Euphrates (cf. *Rob. Bibl. Res.* pp. 542–546 and 641).—In the payment imposed upon the land by Necho, one talent of gold (c. 25,000 thalers: £3750) does not seem to bear any correct proportion to 100 talents of silver (c. 250,000 thalers, or £37,500), and consequently the LXX. have 100 talents of gold, the Syr. and Arab. 10 talents; and Thenius supposes this to have been the original reading, and explains the reading in the text from the dropping out of a ' (= 10), though without reflecting that as a rule the number 10 would require the plural כֶּכָּרִים.—Ver. 34. From the words “Necho made Eliakim the son

<sup>1</sup> Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 720) also observes, that “Necho himself may have been in Jerusalem at the time for the purpose of installing his vassal:” this, he says, “is indicated by the brief words in 2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34, and nothing can be found to say against it in other historical sources;” though he assumes that Jehoahaz had allowed himself to be enticed by Necho to go to Riblah into the Egyptian camp, where he was craftily put into chains, and soon carried off as a prisoner to Egypt.—We should have a confirmation of the taking of Jerusalem by Necho in the account given by Herodotus (ii. 159): μετὰ δὲ τὴν μάχην (i.e. after the battle at Megiddo) Κάδουτιν πόλιν τῆς Συρίας ἐοῦσαν μεγάλην εἶλε, if any evidence could be brought to establish the opinion that by Κάδουτις we are to understand Jerusalem. But although what Herodotus says (iii. 5) concerning Κάδουτις does not apply to any other city of Palestine so well as to Jerusalem, the use of the name Κάδουτις for Jerusalem has not yet been sufficiently explained, since it cannot come from הַקִּדְדִּי, the holy city, because the ψ of this word does not pass into η in any Semitic dialect, and the explanation recently attempted by Böttcher (*N. ex. Krit. Aehrenlese*, ii. pp. 119 sqq.) from the Aramæan נְדִינָה, the renewed city (new-town), is based upon many very questionable conjectures. At the same time so much is certain, that the view which Hitzig has revived (*de Cadyti urbe Herod.* Gott. 1829, p. 11, and *Urgeschichte der Philister*, pp. 96 sqq.), and which is now the prevalent one, viz. that Κάδουτις is Gaza, is exposed to some well-founded objections, even after what Stark (*Gaza*, pp. 218 sqq.) has adduced in its favour. The description which Herodotus gives (iii. 5) of the land-road to Egypt: ἀπὸ Φοινίκης μέχρι οὖρων τῶν Καδύτιος πόλιος, ἥ ἐστὶ Σύρων τῶν Παλαιστινῶν καλεομένων



of Josiah king *in the place of his father Josiah*," it follows that the king of Egypt did not acknowledge the reign of Jehoahaz, because he had been installed by the people without his consent. "And changed his name into Jehoiakim." The alteration of the name was a sign of dependence. In ancient times princes were accustomed to give new names to the persons whom they took into their service, and masters to give new names to their slaves (cf. Gen. xli. 45, Ezra v. 14, Dan. i. 7, and Hävernicks on the last passage).—But while these names were generally borrowed from heathen deities, Eliakim, and at a later period Mattaniah (xxiv. 17), received genuine Israelitish names, *Jehoiakim*, i.e. "Jehovah will set up," and *Zidkiyahu*, i.e. "righteousness of Jehovah;" from which we may infer that Necho and Nebuchadnezzar did not treat the vassal kings installed by them exactly as their slaves, but allowed them to choose the new names for themselves, and simply confirmed them as a sign of their supremacy. *Eliakim* altered his name into *Jehoiakim*, i.e. *El* (God) into *Jehovah*, to set the allusion to the establishment of the kingdom, which is implied in the name, in a still more definite relation to Jehovah the covenant God, who had promised to establish the seed of David (2 Sam. vii. 14), possibly with an

ἀπὸ δὲ Καδύτιος, εἰούσης πόλιος (ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκέει) Σαρδίων οὐ πολλῷ ἐλάσσονος, ἀπὸ ταύτης τὰ ἐμπόρια τὰ ἐπὶ θαλάσσης μέχρι Ἰηνύσου πόλιός ἐστι τοῦ Ἀραβίου does not apply to Gaza, because there were no commercial towns on the sea-coast between the district of Gaza and the town of *Yenysus* (the present *Khan Yūnas*); but between the district of Jerusalem and the town of *Yenysus* there were the Philistian cities Ashkelon and Gaza, which Herodotus might call τὰ ἐμπόρια τοῦ Ἀραβίου, whereas the comparison made between the size of Kadytis and that of Sardes points rather to Jerusalem than to Gaza. Still less can the *datum* in Jer. xlvii. 1, "before Pharaoh smote Gaza," be adduced in support of Gaza. If we bear in mind that Jeremiah's prophecy (ch. xlvii.) was not uttered before the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, and therefore that Pharaoh had not smitten Gaza at that time, supposing that this Pharaoh was really Necho, it cannot have been till after his defeat at Carchemish that Necho took Gaza on his return home. Ewald, Hitzig, and Graf assume that this was the case; but, as M. v. Niebuhr has correctly observed, it has "every military probability" against it, and even the incredibility that "a routed Oriental army in its retreat, which it evidently accomplished in one continuous march, notwithstanding the fact that on its line of march there were the strongest positions, on the Orontes, Lebanon, etc., at which it might have halted, should have taken the city upon its flight." And, lastly, the name *Κάδντις* does not answer to the name *Gaza*, even though the latter was spelt *Gazatu* in early Egyptian (Brugsch, *Geograph. Inschr.* ii. p. 32), since the *v* (*y*) of the second syllable still remains unexplained.

intentional opposition to the humiliation with which the royal house of David was threatened by Jeremiah and other prophets. —“ But Jehoahaz he had taken (לָקַח, like יָקַח in ch. xxiv. 12), and he came to Egypt and died there ”—when, we are not told. —In ver. 35, even before the account of Jehoiakim’s reign, we have fuller particulars respecting the payment of the tribute which Necho imposed upon the land (ver. 33), because it was the condition on which he was appointed king.—“ The gold and silver Jehoiakim gave to Pharaoh; yet (אֲךָ = but in order to raise it) he valued (הֶעֱרִיף) as in Lev. xxvii. 8) the land, to give the money according to Pharaoh’s command; of every one according to his valuation, he exacted the silver and gold of the population of the land, to give it to Pharaoh Necho.” נָגַשׁ, to exact tribute, is construed with a double accusative, and אִישׁ בְּעֶרְבוֹ placed first for the sake of emphasis, as an explanatory apposition to אֶת־עַם הָאָרֶץ.

Ver. 36—ch. xxiv. 7. REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5–8).—Jehoiakim reigned eleven years in the spirit of his ungodly forefathers (compare ver. 37 with ver. 32). Jeremiah represents him (ch. xxii. 13 sqq.) as a bad prince, who enriched himself by the unjust oppression of his people, “ whose eyes and heart were directed upon nothing but upon gain, and upon innocent blood to shed it, and upon oppression and violence to do them ” (compare ch. xxiv. 4 and Jer. xxvi. 22, 23). Josephus therefore describes him as τῇ φύσει ἄδικος καὶ κακουργός, καὶ μήτε πρὸς Θεὸν ὄσιος, μήτε πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἐπιεικής (*Ant.* x. 5, 2). The town of *Rumah*, from which his mother sprang, is not mentioned anywhere else, but it has been supposed to be identical with *Aruma* in the neighbourhood of Shechem (*Judg.* ix. 41).

Ch. xxiv. ver. 1. “ In his days Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, came up; and Jehoiakim became subject to him three years, then he revolted from him again.” נְבֻכַדְנֶאצַּר, *Nebuchadnezzar*, or נְבוּכַדְרֶאצַּר, *Nebuchadrezzar* (*Jer.* xxi. 2, 7, xxii. 25, etc.), *Ναβουχοδονόσορ* (LXX.), *Ναβουχοδονόσορος* (Beros. in *Jos. c. Ap.* i. 20, 21), *Ναβοκοδρόσορος* (Strabo, xv. 1, 6), upon the Persian arrow-headed inscriptions at Bisutun *Nabhukudracara* (according to Oppert, composed of the name of God, *Nabhu* (Nebo), the Arabic *kadr*, power, and *zar* or *sar*, prince), and in still other forms (for the different forms of the name see *M.* v.



Niebuhr's *Gesch.* pp. 41, 42). He was the son of Nabopolassar, the founder of the Chaldæan monarchy, and reigned, according to Berossus (*Jos. l.c.*), Alex. Polyh. (*Eusebii Chron. arm.* i. pp. 44, 45), and the *Canon* of Ptol., forty-three years, from 605 to 562 B.C. With regard to his first campaign against Jerusalem, it is stated in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, that "against him (Jehoiakim) came up Nebuchadnezzar, and bound him with brass chains, to carry him (לְהוֹלִיכֹו) to Babylon;" and in Dan. i. 1, 2, that "in the year three of the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and besieged it; and the Lord gave Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, into his hand, and a portion of the holy vessels, and he brought them (the vessels) into the land of Shinar, into the house of his god," etc. Bertheau (*on Chr.*) admits that all three passages relate to Nebuchadnezzar's first expedition against Jehoiakim and the first taking of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon, and rejects the alteration of לְהוֹלִיכֹו, "to lead him to Babylon" (*Chr.*), into ἀπήγαγεν αὐτόν (LXX.), for which Thenius decides in his prejudice in favour of the LXX. He has also correctly observed, that the chronicler intentionally selected the infinitive with ל, because he did not intend to speak of the actual transportation of Jehoiakim to Babylon. The words of our text, "Jehoiakim became servant (עֶבֶד) to him," *i.e.* subject to him, simply affirm that he became tributary, not that he was led away. And in the book of Daniel also there is nothing about the leading away of Jehoiakim to Babylon. Whilst, therefore, the three accounts agree in the main with one another, and supply one another's deficiencies, so that we learn that Jehoiakim was taken prisoner at the capture of Jerusalem and put in chains to be led away, but that, inasmuch as he submitted to Nebuchadnezzar and vowed fidelity, he was not taken away, but left upon the throne as vassal of the king of Babylon; the statement in the book of Daniel concerning the time when this event occurred, which is neither contained in our account nor in the Chronicles, presents a difficulty when compared with Jer. xxv. and xlvi. 2, and different attempts, some of them very constrained, have been made to remove it. According to Jer. xlvi. 2, Nebuchadnezzar smote Necho the king of Egypt at Carchemish, on the Euphrates, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. This year is not only called the first year of Nebuchadnezzar in Jer. xxv. 1, but is represented by the prophet as the turning-point of the kingdom of Judah by the announce-

ment that the Lord would bring His servant Nebuchadnezzar upon Judah and its inhabitants, and also upon all the nations dwelling round about, that he would devastate Judah, and that these nations would serve the king of Babylon seventy years (Jer. xxv. 9-11). Consequently not only the defeat of Necho at Carchemish, but also the coming of Nebuchadnezzar to Judah, fell in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and not in the third. To remove this discrepancy, some have proposed that the time mentioned, "in the fourth year of Jehoiakim" (Jer. xlvi. 2), should be understood as relating, not to the year of the battle at Carchemish, but to the time of the prophecy of Jeremiah against Egypt contained in ch. xlvi., and that Jer. xxv. should also be explained as follows, that in this chapter the prophet is not announcing the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, but is proclaiming a year after this the destruction of Jerusalem and the devastation of the whole land, or a total judgment upon Jerusalem and the rest of the nations mentioned there (M. v. Nieb. *Gesch.* pp. 86, 87, 371). But this explanation is founded upon the erroneous assumption, that Jer. xlvi. 3-12 does not contain a prediction of the catastrophe awaiting Egypt, but a picture of what has already taken place there; and it is only in a very forced manner that it can be brought into harmony with the contents of Jer. xxv.<sup>1</sup> We must rather take "the year three of the reign of Jehoiakim" (Dan. i. 1) as the extreme *terminus a quo* of Nebuchadnezzar's coming, *i.e.* must understand the statement thus: that in the year referred to Nebuchadnezzar commenced the expedition against Judah, and smote Necho at Carchemish at the commencement of the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xlvi. 2), and then, following up this victory, took Jerusalem in the same year, and made Jehoiakim tributary, and at the same time carried off to Babylon a portion of the sacred vessels, and some young men of royal blood as hostages, one of whom was Daniel (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2 sqq.). The fast mentioned in Jer. xxxvi. 9, which took place in the fifth year

<sup>1</sup> Still less tenable is the view of Hofmann, renewed by Zündel (*Krit. Unterss. üb. d. Abfassungszeit des B. Daniel*, p. 25), that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim, and that it was not till the following, or fourth year, that he defeated the Egyptian army at Carchemish, because so long as Pharaoh Necho stood with his army by or in Carchemish, on the Euphrates, Nebuchadnezzar could not possibly attempt to pass it so as to effect a march upon Jerusalem.



of Jehoiakim, cannot be adduced in disproof of this; for extraordinary fast-days were not only appointed for the purpose of averting great threatening dangers, but also after severe calamities which had fallen upon the land or people, to expiate His wrath by humiliation before God, and to invoke the divine compassion to remove the judgment that had fallen upon them. The objection, that the godless king would hardly have thought of renewing the remembrance of a divine judgment by a day of repentance and prayer, but would rather have desired to avoid everything that could make the people despair, falls to the ground, with the erroneous assumption upon which it is founded, that by the fast-day Jehoiakim simply intended to renew the remembrance of the judgment which had burst upon Jerusalem, whereas he rather desired by outward humiliation before God to secure the help of God to enable him to throw off the Chaldæan yoke, and arouse in the people a religious enthusiasm for war against their oppressors.—Further information concerning this first expedition of Nebuchadnezzar is supplied by the account of Berosus, which Josephus (*Ant.* x. 11, and *c. Ap.* i. 19) has preserved from the third book of his Chaldæan history, namely, that when Nabopolassar received intelligence of the revolt of the satrap whom he had placed over Egypt, Cœle-Syria, and Phœnicia, because he was no longer able on account of age to bear the hardships of war, he placed a portion of his army in the hands of his youthful son Nebuchadnezzar and sent him against the satrap. Nebuchadnezzar defeated him in battle, and established his power over that country again. In the meantime Nabopolassar fell sick and died in Babylon; and as soon as the tidings reached Nebuchadnezzar, he hastened through the desert to Babylon with a small number of attendants, and directed his army to follow slowly after regulating the affairs of Egypt and the rest of the country, and to bring with it the prisoners *from the Jews*, Syrians, Phœnicians, and Egyptian tribes, and with the heavily-armed troops. So much, at any rate, is evident from this account, after deducting the motive assigned for the war, which is given from a Chaldæan point of view, and may be taken as a historical fact, that even before his father's death Nebuchadnezzar had not only smitten the Egyptians, but had also conquered Judah and penetrated to the borders of Egypt. And there is no discrepancy between the statement of Berosus, that Nebuchadnezzar was not yet king, and the fact

that in the biblical books he is called king proleptically, because he marched against Judah with kingly authority.

Vers. 2-7. To punish Jehoiakim's rebellion, Jehovah sent hosts of Chaldæans, Aramæans, Moabites, and Ammonites against him and against Judah to destroy it (לְהַאֲבִידוֹ). Nebuchadnezzar was probably too much occupied with other matters relating to his kingdom, during the earliest years of his reign after his father's death, to be able to proceed at once against Jehoiakim and punish him for his revolt.<sup>1</sup> He may also have thought it a matter of too little importance for him to go himself, as there was not much reason to be afraid of Egypt since its first defeat (cf. M. v. Niebuhr, p. 375). He therefore merely sent such troops against him as were in the neighbourhood of Judah at the time. The tribes mentioned along with the Chaldæans were probably all subject to Nebuchadnezzar, so that they attacked Judah at his command in combination with the Chaldæan tribes left upon the frontier. How much they effected is not distinctly stated; but it is evident that they were not able to take Jerusalem, from the fact that after the death of Jehoiakim his son was able to ascend the throne (ver. 6).—The sending of these troops is ascribed to Jehovah, who, as the supreme controller of the fate of the covenant-nation, punished Jehoiakim for his rebellion. For, after the Lord had given Judah into the hands of the Chaldæans as a punishment for its apostasy from Him, all revolt from them was rebellion against the Lord. "According to the word of Jehovah, which He spake by His servants the prophets," viz. Isaiah, Micah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and others.—Vers. 3, 4. "אֶתְּ עַל־פִּי : "only according to the mouth (command) of Jehovah did this take place against Judah," i.e. for no other reason than because the Lord had determined to put away Judah from before His face because of Manasseh's sins (cf. ch. xxi. 12-16, and xxiii. 27). "And Jehovah would not

<sup>1</sup> Compare the remarks of M. v. Niebuhr on this point (*Gesch.* pp. 208, 209) and his summary at p. 209: "Nebuchadnezzar had enough to do in Babylon and the eastern half of his kingdom, to complete the organization of the new kingdom, to make the military roads to the western half of the kingdom along the narrow valley of the Euphrates and through the desert, and also to fortify them and provide them with watering stations and every other requisite, to repair the damages of the Scythian hordes and the long contest with Nineveh, to restore the shattered authority, and to bring Arabs and mountain-tribes to order. All this was more important than a somewhat more rapid termination of the Egyptian war and the pacification of Syria."



forgive," even if the greatest intercessors, Moses and Samuel, had come before Him (Jer. xv. 1 sqq.), because the measure of the sins was full, so that God was obliged to punish according to His holy righteousness. We must repeat נָקַם from the preceding words before יָמֵי הַנֶּקֶם.—Ver. 6. "Jehoiakim lay down to (fell asleep with) his fathers, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his stead." That this statement is not in contradiction to the prophecies of Jer. xxii. 19: "Jehoiakim shall be buried like an ass, carried away and cast out far away from the gates of Jerusalem," and xxxvi. 30: "no son of his shall sit upon the throne of David, and his body shall lie exposed to the heat by day and to the cold by night," is now generally admitted, as it has already been by J. D. Michaelis and Winer. But the solution proposed by Michaelis, Winer, and M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch.* p. 376) is not sufficient, namely, that at the conquest of Jerusalem, which took place three months after the death of Jehoiakim, his bones were taken out of the grave, either by the victors out of revenge for his rebellion, or by the fury of the people, and cast out before the city gate; for Jeremiah expressly predicts that he shall have no funeral and no burial whatever. We must therefore assume that he was slain in a battle fought with the troops sent against him, and was not buried at all; an assumption which is not at variance with the words, "he laid himself down to his fathers," since this formula does not necessarily indicate a peaceful death by sickness, but is also applied to king Ahab, who was slain in battle (1 Kings xxii. 40, cf. 2 Kings xxii. 20).<sup>1</sup>—And even though his son Jehoiachin ascended the throne after his father's death and maintained his position for three months against the Chaldæans, until at length he fell into their hands and was carried away alive to Babylon, the prophet might very truly describe this short reign as not sitting upon the throne of David (cf. Graf on Jer. xxii. 19).—To the death of Jehoiakim there is appended the notice in ver. 7, that the king of Egypt did not go out of his own land any more, because the king of Babylon had taken away everything that had belonged to the king of Egypt,

<sup>1</sup> The supposition of Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 733), that Jehoiakim was enticed out of the capital by a stratagem of the enemy, and taken prisoner, and because he made a furious resistance was hurried off in a scuffle and mercilessly slaughtered, is at variance with the fact that, according to ver. 10, it was not till after his death that the army of the enemy advanced to the front of Jerusalem and commenced the siege.

from the brook of Egypt to the river Euphrates. The purpose of this notice is to indicate, on the one hand, what attitude Necho, whose march to the Euphrates was previously mentioned, had assumed on the conquest of Judah by the Chaldæans, and on the other hand, that under these circumstances a successful resistance to the Chaldæans on the part of Judah was not for a moment to be thought of.

Vers. 8-17 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9 and 10). Jehoiachin, **יְהוֹיָכִן** or **יְיָכִין** (Ezek. i. 2), *i.e.* he whom Jehovah fortifies, called **יְכִנְיָהוּ** in 1 Chron. iii. 16, 17, and Jer. xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, etc., and **כְּנִיָּהוּ** in Jer. xxii. 24, 28, xxxvii. 1, probably according to the popular twisting and contraction of the name Jehoiachin, was eighteen years old when he ascended the throne (the eight years of the Chronicles are a slip of the pen), and reigned three months, or, according to the more precise statement of the Chronicles, three months and ten days, in the spirit of his father. Ezekiel (xix. 5-7) describes him not only as a young lion, who learned to prey and devoured men, like Jehoahaz, but also affirms of him that he knew their (the deceased men's) widows, *i.e.* ravished them, and destroyed their cities,—that is to say, he did not confine his deeds of violence to individuals, but extended them to all that was left behind by those whom he had murdered, *viz.* to their families and possessions; and nothing is affirmed in Jer. xxii. 24 and 28 respecting his character at variance with this. His mother *Nehushta* was a daughter of Elnathan, a ruler of the people, or prince, from Jerusalem (Jer. xxvi. 22, xxxvi. 12, 25).—Ver. 10. "At that time," *i.e.* when Jehoiachin had come to the throne, or, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, "at the turn of the year," *i.e.* in the spring (see at 1 Kings xx. 22), the servants (generals) of Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. The *Keri* **עָלִי** is substantially correct, but is an unnecessary alteration of the *Chethib* **עָלָה**, since the verb when it precedes the subject is not unfrequently used in the singular, though before a plural subject (cf. Ewald, § 316, α). The **עֲבָרֵי נָבִי** are different from the **נְדָרִים** of ver. 2. As the troops sent against Jehoiakim had not been able to conquer Judah, especially Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar sent his generals with an army against Jerusalem, to besiege the city and take it.—Ver. 11. During the siege he came himself to punish Jehoiakim's revolt in the person of his successor.—Ver. 12. Then Jehoiachin went out to the king of Babylon to yield himself up



to him, because he perceived the impossibility of holding the city any longer against the besiegers, and probably hoped to secure the favour of Nebuchadnezzar, and perhaps to retain the throne as his vassal by a voluntary submission. Nebuchadnezzar, however, did not show favour any more, as he had done to Jehoiakim at the first taking of Jerusalem, but treated Jehoiachin as a rebel, made him prisoner, and led him away to Babylon, along with his mother, his wives (ver. 15), his princes and his chamberlains, as Jeremiah had prophesied (ch. xxii. 24 sqq.), in the eighth year of his (Nebuchadnezzar's) reign. The reference to the king's mother in vers. 12 and 15 is not to be explained on the ground that she still acted as guardian over the king, who was not yet of age (J. D. Mich.), but from the influential position which she occupied in the kingdom as הַנְּבִיָּה (Jer. xxix. 2: see at 1 Kings xiv. 21). The eighth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar is reckoned from the time when his father had transferred to him the chief command over the army to make war upon Necho, according to which his *first* year coincides with the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xxv. 1). As Nebuchadnezzar acted as king, so far as the Jews were concerned, from that time forward, although he conducted the war by command of his father, this is always reckoned as the point of time at which his reign commenced, both in our books and also in Jeremiah (cf. ch. xxv. 8; Jer. xxxii. 1). According to this calculation, his reign lasted forty-four years, viz. the eight years of Jehoiakim and the thirty-six years of Jehoiachin's imprisonment, as is evident from ch. xxv. 27.—Ver. 13. Nebuchadnezzar thereupon, that is to say, when he had forced his way into the city, plundered the treasures of the temple and palace, and broke the gold off the vessels which Solomon had made in the temple of Jehovah. קָצַץ, to cut off, break off, as in ch. xvi. 17, i.e. to bear off the gold plates. Nebuchadnezzar had already taken a portion of the golden vessels of the temple away with him at the first taking of Jerusalem in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and had placed them in the temple of his god at Babylon (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2). They were no doubt the smaller vessels of solid gold,—basins, scoops, goblets, knives, tongs, etc.,—which Cyrus delivered up again to the Jews on their return to their native land (Ezra i. 7 sqq.). This time he took the gold off the larger vessels, which were simply plated with that metal, such as the altar of burnt-offering, the table of shew-bread

and ark of the covenant, and carried it away as booty, so that on the third conquest of Jerusalem, in the time of Zedekiah, beside a few gold and silver basins and scoops (ch. xxv. 15) there were only the large brazen vessels of the court remaining (ch. xxv. 13-17; Jer. xxvii. 18 sqq.). The words, "as Jehovah had spoken," refer to ch. xx. 17 and Isa. xxxix. 6, and to the sayings of other prophets, such as Jer. xv. 13, xvii. 3, etc.—Vers. 14-16. Beside these treasures, he carried away captive to Babylon the cream of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, not only the most affluent, but, as is evident from Jer. xxiv., the best portion in a moral respect. In ver. 14 the number of those who were carried off is simply given in a general form, according to its sum-total, as 10,000; and then in vers. 15 and 16 the details are more minutely specified. "All Jerusalem" is the whole of the population of Jerusalem, which is first of all divided into two leading classes, and then more precisely defined by the clause, "nothing was left except the common people," and reduced to the cream of the citizens. The king, queen-mother, and king's wives being passed over and mentioned for the first time in the special list in ver. 15, there are noticed here **כָּל-הַשָּׂרִים** and **כָּל נְבוֹרֵי הַחַיִּל**, who form the first of the leading classes. By the **שָׂרִים** are meant, according to ver. 15, the **סָרִיסִים**, chamberlains, *i.e.* the officials of the king's court in general, and by **אֲוִלֵי הָאָרֶץ** ("the mighty of the land") all the heads of the tribes and families of the nation that were found in Jerusalem; and under the last the priests and prophets, who were also carried away, according to Jer. xxix. 1, with Ezekiel among them (Ezek. i. 1), are included as the spiritual heads of the people. The **נְבוֹרֵי הַחַיִּל** are called **אֲנָשֵׁי הַחַיִּל** in ver. 16; their number was 7000. The persons intended are not warriors, but men of property, as in ch. xv. 20. The second class of those who were carried away consisted of **כָּל-הַחֹרֶשׁ**, all the workers in stone, metal, and wood, that is to say, masons, smiths, and carpenters; and **הַמְּסָגֵר**, the locksmiths, including probably not actual locksmiths only, but makers of weapons also. There is no need for any serious refutation of the marvellous explanation given of **מְסָגֵר** by Hitzig (on Jer. xxiv. 1), who derives it from **מָס** and **גָּר**, and supposes it to be an epithet applied to the remnant of the Canaanites, who had been made into tributary labourers, although it has been adopted by Thenius and Graf, who make them into artisans of the foreign socagers. **דָּלַת-הָאָרֶץ = דָּלַת עַם-הָאָרֶץ** (ch. xxv. 12), the poor people



of the land, *i.e.* the lower portion of the population of Jerusalem, from whom Nebuchadnezzar did not fear any rebellion, because they possessed nothing (Jer. xxxix. 10), *i.e.* neither property (money nor other possessions), nor strength and ability to organize a revolt. The antithesis to these is formed by the *גְּבוּרִים עֲשֵׂי מִלְחָמָה*, the strong or powerful men, who were in a condition to originate and carry on a war; for this category includes all who were carried away, not merely the thousand workmen, but also the seven thousand *אֲנָשֵׁי הַחֵיל*, and the king's officers and the chiefs of the nation, whose number amounted to two thousand, since the total number of the exiles was ten thousand. There is no special allusion to warriors or military, because in the struggle for the rescue of the capital and the kingdom from destruction every man who could bear arms performed military service, so that the distinction between warriors and non-warriors was swept away, and the actual warriors are swallowed up in the ten thousand. *Babel* is the country of Babylonia, or rather the Babylonian empire.—Ver. 17. Over the lower classes of the people who had been left behind Nebuchadnezzar placed the paternal uncle of the king, who had been led away, *viz.* Mattaniah, and made him king under the name of Zedekiah. He was the youngest son of Josiah (Jer. i. 3, xxxvii. 1); was only ten years old when his father died, and twenty-one years old when he ascended the throne; and as the uncle of Jehoiachin, who being only a youth of eighteen could not have a son capable of reigning, had the first claim to the throne. Instead of *יָדוּ*, his uncle, we have in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10 *אָחִיו*, his brother, *i.e.* his nearest relation. On the change in the name see at ch. xxiii. 34. The name *צִדְקִיָּהוּ*, *i.e.* he who has Jehovah's righteousness, was probably chosen by Mattaniah in the hope that through him or in his reign the Lord would create the righteousness promised to His people.

CHAP. XXIV. 18-XXV. 30. REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH, DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH, AND FATE OF THE PEOPLE LEFT BEHIND, AND OF KING JEHOIACHIN.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 18-20. *Length and spirit of Zedekiah's reign* (cf. Jer. lii. 1-3, and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11-13).—Zedekiah's mother Ha-

<sup>1</sup> To this section the historical appendix to the book of Jeremiah (Jer. lii.) furnishes a parallel, which agrees with it for the most part word for word,

mital, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah, was also the mother of Jehoahaz (ch. xxiii. 31); consequently he was his own brother and the half-brother of Jehoiakim, whose mother was named Zebidah (ch. xxiii. 36). His reign lasted eleven years, and in its attitude towards the Lord exactly resembled that of his brother Jehoiakim, except that Zedekiah does not appear to have possessed so much energy for that which was evil. According to Jer. xxxviii. 5 and 24 sqq., he was weak in character, and completely governed by the great men of his kingdom, having no power or courage whatever to offer resistance. But, like them, he did not hearken to the words of the Lord through Jeremiah (Jer. xxxvii. 2), or, as it is expressed in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, "he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spake to him out of the mouth of the Lord."—Ver. 20. "For because of the wrath of the Lord it happened concerning Judah and Jerusalem." The subject to הִיָּה is to be taken from what precedes, viz. Zedekiah's doing evil, or that such a God-resisting man as Zedekiah became king. "Not that it was of God that Zedekiah was wicked, but that Zedekiah, a man (if we believe Brentius, *in loc.*) simple, dependent upon counsellors, yet at the same time despising the word of God and impenitent (2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, 13), became king, so as to be the cause of Jerusalem's destruction" (Seb. Schm.). On 'ער השליכו וגו' cf. ver. 3, and ch. xvii. 18, 23. "And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babel," who, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13, had made him swear by God, to whom he was bound

omitting only the short account of the murder of Gedaliah and of the flight of the people to Egypt (vers. 22–26), and adding instead a computation of the number of the people who were led away to Babel by Nebuchadnezzar (vers. 28–30). Apart from the less important variations, which have arisen in part simply from copyists' errors, we have in Jer. lii. 18, and especially in vers. 21 and 22, by no means unimportant notices concerning the vessels of the temple, especially concerning the ornaments of the brazen pillars, which do not occur anywhere in our books. It is evident from this that our text was not derived from Jer. lii. (Hävernicks), and that Jer. lii. was not borrowed from our books of Kings and appended to the book of Jeremiah's prophecies (Ros., Maur., Ew., Graf). On the contrary, the two accounts are simply brief extracts from one common and more elaborate history of the later times of the kingdom of Judah, possibly composed by Jeremiah or Baruch, analogous to the two extracts from the history of Hezekiah in 2 Kings xviii.–xx. and Isa. xxxv.–xxxix.—More minute accounts of this space of time are given in the historical portions of the prophecies of Jeremiah (ch. xxxix.–xliv.), which form an explanatory commentary to the section before us.



by oath to render fealty. This breach of covenant and frivolous violation of his oath Ezekiel also condemns in sharp words (Ezek. xvii. 13 sqq.), as a grievous sin against the Lord. Zedekiah also appears from the very first to have had no intention of keeping the oath of fealty which he took to the king of Babel with very great uprightness. For only a short time after he was installed as king he despatched an embassy to Babel (Jer. xxix. 3), which, judging from the contents of the letter to the exiles that Jeremiah gave to the ambassadors to take with them, can hardly have been sent with any other object than to obtain from the king of Babel the return of those who had been carried away. Then in the fourth year of his reign he himself made a journey to Babel (Jer. xli. 59), evidently to investigate the circumstances upon the spot, and to ensure the king of Babel of his fidelity. And in the fifth month of the same year, probably after his return from Babel, ambassadors of the Moabites, Ammonites, Tyrians, and Sidonians came to Jerusalem to make an alliance with him for throwing off the Chaldæan yoke (Jer. xxvii. 3). Zedekiah also had recourse to Egypt, where the enterprising Pharaoh *Hophra* (*Apries*) had ascended the throne; and then, in spite of the warnings of Jeremiah, trusting to the help of Egypt, revolted from the king of Babel, probably at a time when Nebuchadnezzar (according to the combinations of M. v. Nieb., which are open to question however) was engaged in a war with Media.

Ch. xxv. 1-7. *Siege and conquest of Jerusalem; Zedekiah taken prisoner and led away to Babel* (cf. Jer. lii. 4-11 and xxxix. 1-7).—Ver. 1. In the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar marched with all his forces against Jerusalem and commenced the siege (cf. Jer. xxxix. 1), after he had taken all the rest of the fortified cities of the land, with the exception of Lachish and Azekah, which were besieged at the same time as Jerusalem (Jer. xxxiv. 7). On the very same day the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem was revealed to the prophet Ezekiel in his exile (Ezek. xxiv. 1). “And they built against it (the city) siege-towers round about.” פִּתְּי, which only occurs here and in Jeremiah (lii. 4) and Ezekiel (iv. 2, xvii. 17, xxi. 27, xxvi. 8), does not mean either a line of circumvallation (J. D. Mich., Hitzig), or the outermost enclosure constructed of palisades (Thenius, whose assertion that פִּתְּי is always mentioned as the

first work of the besiegers is refuted by Ezek. xvii. 17 and xxi. 27), but a *watch*, and that in a collective sense: watch-towers or siege-towers (cf. Ges. *thes.* p. 330, and Hävernicks on Ezek. iv. 2).—Ver. 2. “And the city was besieged till the eleventh year of king Zedekiah,” in which the northern wall of the city was broken through on the ninth day of the fourth month (ver. 3). That Jerusalem could sustain a siege of this duration, namely eighteen months, shows what the strength of the fortifications must have been. Moreover the siege was interrupted for a short time, when the approach of the Egyptian king Hophra compelled the Chaldeans to march to meet him and drive him back, which they appear to have succeeded in doing without a battle (cf. Jer. xxxvii. 5 sqq., Ezek. xvii. 7).—Vers. 3, 4. Trusting partly to the help of the Egyptians and partly to the strength of Jerusalem, Zedekiah paid no attention to the repeated entreaties of Jeremiah, that he would save himself with his capital and people from the destruction which was otherwise inevitable, by submitting to the Chaldeans (cf. Jer. xxi. 37 and 38), but allowed things to reach their worst, until the famine became so intense, that inhuman horrors were perpetrated (cf. Lam. ii. 20, 21, iv. 9, 10), and eventually a breach was made in the city wall on the ninth day of the fourth month. The statement of the month is omitted in our text, where the words בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרְבִיעִי (Jer. lii. 6, cf. xxxix. 2) have fallen out before בְּחֹשֶׁעַ (ver. 3, commencement) through the oversight of a copyist. The overwhelming extent of the famine is mentioned, not “because the people were thereby rendered quite unfit to offer any further resistance” (Seb. Schm.), but as a proof of the truth of the prophetic announcements (Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 53–57; Jer. xv. 2, xxvii. 13; Ezek. iv. 16, 17). עַם הָאָרֶץ are the common people in Jerusalem, or the citizens of the capital. From the more minute account of the entrance of the enemy into the city in Jer. xxxix. 3–5 we learn that the Chaldeans made a breach in the northern or outer wall of the lower city, *i.e.* the second wall, built by Hezekiah and Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxii. 5, xxxiii. 14), and forced their way into the lower city (הַפְּשִׁעָה, xxii. 14), so that their generals took their stand at the gate of the centre, which was in the wall that separated the lower city from the upper city upon Zion, and formed the passage from the one to the other. When Zedekiah saw them here, he fled by night with the soldiers out of the city, through the gate



between the two walls at or above the king's garden, on the road to the plain of the Jordan, while the Chaldæans were round about the city. In ver. 4 a faulty text has come down to us. In the clause **וּכְל־אֲנִשִּׁי הַמְּלָחָמָה** the verb **יִבְרְחוּ** is omitted, if not even more, namely **יִבְרְחוּ וַיֵּצְאוּ מִן הָעִיר**, "fled and went out of the city." And if we compare Jer. xxxix. 4, it is evident that before **וּכְל־אֲנִשִּׁי הַמ'** still more has dropped out, not merely **וְהַמְּלָכָה**, which must have stood in the text, since according to ver. 5 the king was among the fugitives; but most probably the whole clause **וַיְהִי כִּאֲשֶׁר רָאָם צִדְקִיָּהוּ מֶלֶךְ הַיְּהוּדָה**, since the words **וּכְל־אֲנִשִּׁי הַמ'** have no real connection with what precedes, and cannot form a circumstantial clause so far as the sense is concerned. The "gate between the two walls, which (was) at or over (**עַל**) the king's garden," was a gate at the mouth of the Tyropæon, that is to say, at the south-eastern corner of the city of Zion; for, according to Neh. iii. 15, the king's garden was at the pool of Siloah, *i.e.* at the mouth of the Tyropæon (see Rob. *Pal.* ii. 142). By this defile, therefore, the approach to the city was barred by a double wall, the inner one running from Zion to the Ophel, whilst the outer one, at some distance off, connected the Zion wall with the outer surrounding wall of the Ophel, and most probably enclosed the king's garden. The subject to **וַיֵּלֶךְ** is **הַמְּלָכָה**, which has dropped out before **וּכְל־אֲנִשִּׁי הַמ'**. **הָעֵרְבָה** is the lowland valley on both sides of the Jordan (see at Deut. i. 1).—Ver. 5. As the Chaldæans were encamped around the city, the flight was immediately discovered. The Chaldæan army pursued him, and overtook him in the steppes of Jericho, whilst his own army was dispersed, all of which Ezekiel had foreseen in the Spirit (Ezek. xii. 3 sqq.). **עֵרְבוֹת יֶרֶחוֹ** are that portion of the plain of the Jordan which formed the country round Jericho (see at Josh. iv. 13).—Ver. 6. Zedekiah having been seized by the Chaldæans, was taken to the king of Babel in the Chaldæan headquarters at Riblah (see at ch. xxiii. 33), and was there put upon his trial. According to ver. 1, Nebuchadnezzar had commenced the siege of Jerusalem in person; but afterwards, possibly not till after the Egyptians who came to relieve the besieged city had been repulsed, he transferred the continuance of the siege, which was a prolonged one, to his generals, and retired to Riblah, to conduct the operations of the whole campaign from thence. **דָּבַר מִשְׁפָּט אֶת־כָּל־**, to conduct judicial proceedings with any one, *i.e.* to hear and judge him. For this

Jeremiah constantly uses the plural מִשְׁפָּטִים, not only in ch. lii. 9 and xxxix. 5, but also in ch. i. 16 and iv. 12.—Ver. 7. The punishment pronounced upon Zedekiah was the merited reward of the breach of his oath, and his hardening himself against the counsel of the Lord which was announced to him by Jeremiah during the siege, that he should save not only his own life, but also Jerusalem from destruction, by a voluntary submission to the Chaldæans, whereas by obstinate resistance he would bring an ignominious destruction upon himself, his family, the city, and the whole people (Jer. xxxviii. 17 sqq., xxxii. 5, xxxiv. 3 sqq.). His sons, who, though not mentioned in ver. 4, had fled with him and had been taken, and (according to Jer. lii. 10 and xxxix. 6) all the nobles (princes) of Judah, *sc.* those who had fled with the king, were slain before his eyes. He himself was then blinded, and led away to Babel, chained with double chains of brass, and kept a prisoner there till his death (Jer. lii. 11); so that, as Ezekiel (xii. 13) had prophesied, he came to Babel, but did not see the land, and died there. Blinding by pricking out the eyes was a common punishment for princes among the Babylonians and Persians (cf. Herod. vii. 18, and Brisson, *de regio Pers. princip.* p. 589). נְחֹשֶׁתַיִם, double brazen chains, are brazen fetters for the hands and feet. Samson was treated in the same manner by the Philistines (Judg. xvi. 21).

Vers. 8–21. *Destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The people carried away to Babel* (cf. Jer. lii. 12–27, and xxxix. 8–10).—In this section we have first a general account of the destruction of the temple and city (vers. 8–10), and of the carrying away of the people (vers. 11 and 12), and then a more particular description of what was done with the metal vessels of the temple (vers. 13–17), and how the spiritual and secular leaders of the people who had been taken prisoners were treated (vers. 18–21).—Vers. 8–10. The destruction of Jerusalem, by the burning of the temple, of the king's palace, and of all the larger buildings, and by throwing down the walls, was effected by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the body-guard of Nebuchadnezzar, on the seventh day of the fifth month in the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Instead of the *seventh* day we have the *tenth* in Jer. lii. 12. This difference might be reconciled, as proposed by earlier commentators, on the assumption that the burning of the city lasted several days, commencing on the seventh and ending on the tenth. But since there are



similar differences met with afterwards (vers. 17 and 19) in the statement of numbers, which can only be accounted for from the substitution of similar numeral letters, we must assume that there is a change of this kind here. Which of the two dates is the correct one it is impossible to determine. The circumstance that the later Jews kept the ninth as a fast-day cannot be regarded as decisive evidence in favour of the date given in Jeremiah, as Thenius supposes; for in Zech. vii. 3 and viii. 19 the fasting of the fifth month is mentioned, but no day is given; and though in the Talmudic times the ninth day of the month began to be kept as a fast-day, this was not merely in remembrance of the Chaldaean destruction of Jerusalem, but of the Roman also, and of three other calamities which had befallen the nation (see the statement of the Gemara on this subject in Lightfoot, *Opp.* ii. p. 139, ed. Leusden, and in Köhler on Zech. vii. 3), from which we see that the Gemarists in the most unhistorical manner grouped together different calamitous events in one single day. The nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar corresponds to the eleventh of Zedekiah (see at ch. xxiv. 12). Nebuzaradan is not mentioned in Jer. xxxix. 3 among the Chaldaean generals who forced their way into the city, so that he must have been ordered to Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar after the taking of the city and the condemnation of Zedekiah, to carry out the destruction of the city, the carrying away of the people, and the appointment of a deputy-governor over those who were left behind in the land. This explains in a very simple manner how a month could intervene between their forcing their way into the city, at all events into the lower city, and the burning of it to the ground, without there being any necessity to assume, with Thenius, that the city of Zion held out for a month, which is by no means probable, for the simple reason that the fighting men had fled with Zedekiah and had been scattered in their flight. שַׂר הַטְּבָחִים = רֶב־טְבָחִים in Gen. xxxvii. 36, xxxix. 1, was with the Babylonians, as with the Egyptians, the chief of the king's body-guard, whose duty it was to execute the sentences of death (see at Gen. xxxvii. 36). הַטְּבָחִים answers to the הַכְּרֵתִי of the Israelites (2 Sam. viii. 18, etc.). In Jer. lii. 12 we have עָמַר לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ instead of עָבַד מֶלֶךְ, without the אֲשֶׁר, which is rarely omitted in prose, and בִּירוּשָׁלַם instead of יְרוּשָׁלַם: he came into Jerusalem, not he forced a way into the real Jerusalem (Thenius). The meaning is not altered

by these two variations.—Ver. 9. By the words, “every great house,” **אֵת כָּל־בֵּיתִי יִר** is more minutely defined: not all the houses to the very last, but simply all the large houses he burned to the very last, together with the temple and the royal palaces. The victors used one portion of the dwelling-houses for their stay in Jerusalem. He then had all the walls of the city destroyed. In Jeremiah **כָּל** is omitted before **חֹמֹת**, as not being required for the sense; and also the **אֵת** before **רַב טַבָּחִים**, which is indispensable to the sense, and has fallen out through a copyist’s oversight.—Vers. 11, 12. The rest of the people he led away, both those who had been left behind in the city and the deserters who had gone over to the Chaldæans, and the remnant of the multitude. **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן**, for which we have **יֵתֶר הָאָמוֹן** in Jer. lii. 15, has been interpreted in various ways. As **אָמוֹן** signifies an artist or artificer in Prov. viii. 30, and **יֵתֶר הָעָם** has just preceded it, we might be disposed to give the preference to the reading **הָאָמוֹן**, as Hitzig and Graf have done, and understand by it the remnant of the artisans, who were called **הַחֲרָשׁ וְהַמְסִינָר** in ch. xxiv. 14, 16. But this view is precluded by Jer. xxxix. 9, where we find **יֵתֶר הָעָם** instead of **יֵתֶר הָאָמוֹן** or **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן**. These words cannot be set aside by the arbitrary assumption that they crept into the text through a copyist’s error; for the assertion that they contain a purposeless repetition is a piece of dogmatical criticism, inasmuch as there is a distinction drawn in Jer. xxxix. 9 between **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים** and **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים בְּעִיר**. Consequently **הָאָמוֹן** is simply another form for **הָהָמוֹן** (**ה** and **א** being interchanged) in the sense of a mass of people, and we have simply the choice left between two interpretations. Either **יֵתֶר הָעָם** means the fighting people left in the city, as distinguished from the deserters who had fled to the Chaldæans, and **הָאָמוֹן** = **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן** in Jer. lii. 15, or **יֵתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים** in Jer. xxxix. 9, the rest of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; or **יֵתֶר הָעָם** is the people left in Jerusalem (warriors and non-warriors), and **יֵתֶר הָהָמוֹן** the rest of the population of the land outside Jerusalem. The latter is probably the preferable view, not only because full justice is thereby done to **בְּעִיר** in the first clause, but also because it is evident from the exception mentioned in ver. 12 that the deportation was not confined to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but extended to the population of the whole land. The “poor people,” whom he allowed to remain in the land as vine-dressers and husbandmen, were the common



people, or people without property, not merely in Jerusalem, but throughout the whole land. דִּלְתָּ עִם־הָאָרֶץ = דִּלְתָּ הָאָרֶץ (ch. xxiv. 14). Instead of מִדִּלְתָּ we have in Jeremiah מִדְּלוֹת: the plural used in an abstract sense, "the poverty," i.e. the lower people, "the poor who had nothing" (Jer. xxxix. 10). Instead of the *Chethib* לִנְבִים from נוֹב, *secuit, aravit*, the *Keri* has לִנְבִים from נִיב, in the same sense, after Jer. lii. 16.—Vers. 13-17. The brazen vessels of the temple were broken in pieces, and the brass, and smaller vessels of brass, silver, and gold, were carried away. Compare Jer. lii. 17-23, where several other points are mentioned that have been passed over in the account before us. The pillars of brass (see 1 Kings vii. 15 sqq.), the stands (see 1 Kings vii. 27 sqq.), and the brazen sea (1 Kings vii. 23 sqq.), were broken in pieces, because it would have been difficult to carry these colossal things away without breaking them up. On the smaller vessels used in the worship (ver. 14) see 1 Kings vii. 40. In Jer. lii. 18 הַמְּזֻרְקוֹת are also mentioned. Ver. 15 is abridged still more in contrast with Jer. lii. 19, and only הַמְּחֻתָּוֹת and הַמְּזֻרְקוֹת are mentioned, whereas in Jeremiah six different things are enumerated beside the candlesticks. אֲשֶׁר אָשַׁף זָהָב... כֶּסֶף, "what was of gold, gold, what was of silver, silver, the captain of the guard took away," is a comprehensive description of the objects carried away. To this there is appended a remark in ver. 16 concerning the quantity of the brass of the large vessels, which was so great that it could not be weighed; and in ver. 17 a supplementary notice respecting the artistic work of the two pillars of brass. הָעֲמֻדִים וְגו' is placed at the head absolutely: as for the pillars, etc., the brass of all these vessels was not to be weighed. In Jer. lii. 20, along with the brazen sea, the twelve brazen oxen under it are mentioned; and in the description of the pillars of brass (vers. 21 sqq.) there are several points alluded to which are omitted in our books, not only here, but also in 1 Kings vii. 16 sqq. For the fact itself see the explanation given at pp. 97-103. The omission of the twelve oxen in so condensed an account as that contained in our text does not warrant the inference that these words in Jeremiah are a spurious addition made by a later copyist, since the assumption that Ahaz sent the brazen oxen to king Tiglath-pileser cannot be proved from ch. xvi. 17 (see p. 407). Instead of שְׁלֹשׁ אַמָּה we must read חֲמִשָּׁ אַמָּה, *five cubits*, according to Jer. lii. 22 and 1 Kings vii. 16. The עַל־הַשִּׁבְכָּה at the end of the verse is

very striking, since it stands quite alone, and when connected with *וּכְאֵלֶּה וְגו'* does not appear to yield any appropriate sense, as the second pillar was like the first not merely with regard to the trellis-work, but in its form and size throughout. At the same time, it is possible that the historian intended to give especial prominence to the similarity of the two pillars with reference to this one point alone.—Vers. 18–21 (cf. Jer. lii. 24–27). The principal officers of the temple and city, and sixty men of the population of the land, who were taken at the destruction of Jerusalem, Nebuzaradan sent to his king at Riblah, where they were put to death. *Seraiah*, the high priest, is the grandfather or great-grandfather of Ezra the scribe (Ezra vii. 1 ; 1 Chron. v. 40). *Zephaniah*, a priest of the second rank (*בֶּהֱן מִשְׁנֶה* ; in Jer. *בֶּהֱן הַמִּשְׁנֶה* : see at ch. xxiii. 4), is probably the same person as the son of Maaseiah, who took a prominent place among the priests, according to Jer. xxi. 1, xxix. 25 sqq., and xxxvii. 3. The “three keepers of the threshold” are probably the three superintendents of the Levites, whose duty it was to keep guard over the temple, and therefore were among the principal officers of the sanctuary.—Ver. 19. From the city, *i.e.* from the civil authorities of the city, Nebuzaradan took a king’s chamberlain (*סָרִיס*), who was commander of the men of war. Instead of *אֲשֶׁר הוּא פָקִיד* we find in Jer. lii. 25 *אֲשֶׁר הָיָה פ’*, who had been commander, with an allusion to the fact that his official function had terminated when the city was conquered. “And *five* (according to Jeremiah *seven*) men of those who saw the king’s face,” *i.e.* who belonged to the king’s immediate circle, *de intimis consiliariis regis*, and “the scribe of the commander-in-chief, who raised the people of the land for military service,” or who enrolled them. Although *הַפִּיָּר* has the article, which is omitted in Jeremiah, the following words *שַׁר הַצָּבָא* are governed by it, or connected with it in the construct state (Ewald, § 290, *d*). *שַׁר הַצָּבָא* is the commander-in-chief of the whole of the military forces, and *הַמְצַבֵּא וְגו'* a more precise definition of *הַפִּיָּר*, and not of *שַׁר הַצָּבָא*, which needed no such definition. “And sixty men of the land-population who were found in the city.” They were probably some of the prominent men of the rural districts, or they may have taken a leading part in the defence of the city, and therefore were executed in Riblah, and not merely deported with the rest of the people.—The account of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah closes with *וַיָּגֵל יְהוֹרָה*



in ver. 21, "thus was Judah carried away out of its own land ;" and in vers. 22-26 there follows merely a brief notice of those who had been left behind in the land, in the place of which we find in Jer. lii. 28-40 a detailed account of the number of those who were carried away.

Vers. 22-26. *Installation of Gedaliah the governor. His assassination, and the flight of the people to Egypt.*—Much fuller accounts have been handed down to us in Jer. xl.-xliv. of the events which are but briefly indicated here.—Vers. 22, 23. Over the remnant of the people left in the land Nebuchadnezzar placed Gedaliah as governor of the land, who took up his abode in Mizpah. *Gedaliah*, the son of Ahikam, who had interested himself on behalf of the prophet Jeremiah and saved his life (Jer. xxvi. 24), and the grandson of Shaphan, a man of whom nothing more is known (see at ch. xxii. 12), had his home in Jerusalem, and, as we may infer from his attitude towards Jeremiah, had probably secured the confidence of the Chaldæans at the siege and conquest of Jerusalem by his upright conduct, and by what he did to induce the people to submit to the judgment inflicted by God ; so that Nebuchadnezzar entrusted him with the oversight of those who were left behind in the land—men, women, children, poor people, and even a few princesses and court-officials, whom they had not thought it necessary or worth while to carry away (Jer. xl. 7, xli. 10, 16), *i.e.* he made him governor of the conquered land. Mizpah is the present *Nebi Samwil*, two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 26).—On hearing of Gedaliah's appointment as governor, there came to him "all the captains of the several divisions of the army and their men," *i.e.* those portions of the army which had been scattered at the flight of the king (ver. 5), and which had escaped from the Chaldæans, and, as it is expressed in Jer. xl. 7, had dispersed themselves "in the field," *i.e.* about the land. Instead of וְהָאֲנָשִׁים we have in Jer. xl. 7 the clearer expression וְאֲנָשֵׁיהֶם, "and their men," whilst וְהָאֲנָשִׁים in our text receives its more precise definition from the previous word הַחֲיִלִּים. Of the military commanders the following are mentioned by name: Ishmael, etc. (the ׀ before יִשְׁמָעֵאל is explic., "and indeed Ishmael"). Ishmael, son of Mattaniah and grandson of Elishama, probably of the king's secretary mentioned in Jer. xxxvi. 12 and 20, of royal blood. Nothing further is known about the other names. We simply learn from Jer. xl. 13 sqq. that Johanan had warned Gedaliah

against the treachery of Ishmael, and that when Gedaliah was slain by Ishmael, having disregarded the warning, he put himself at the head of the people and marched with them to Egypt, notwithstanding the dissuasions of Jeremiah (Jer. xli. 15 sqq.). Instead of "Johanan the son of Kareah," we have in Jer. xl. 8 "Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah;" but it is uncertain whether יוֹנָתָן has crept into the text of Jeremiah from the previous יְהוֹנָתָן merely through a mistake, and this mistake has brought with it the alteration of בֶּן into בְּנֵי (Ewald), or whether יוֹנָתָן has dropped out of our text through an oversight, and this omission has occasioned the alteration of בְּנֵי into בֶּן (Thenius, Graf, etc.). The former supposition is favoured by the circumstance that in Jer. xl. 13, xli. 11, 16, Johanan the son of Kareah alone is mentioned. In Jer. xl. 8 יְבִנִּי עֹפַי (*Chethîb עֵפִי*) stands before הַנְּטַפְתִּי, according to which it was not Seraiah who sprang from Netophah, but Ophai whose sons were military commanders. He was called *Netophathite* because he sprang from *Netopha* in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem (Neh. vii. 26; Ezra ii. 22), the identity of which with *Beit Nettif* is by no means probable (see at 2 Sam. xxiii. 28). The name יֶאֱזַנְיָהוּ is written יִזְנִיָּהוּ in Jeremiah; he was the son of the Maachathite, i.e. his father sprang from the Syrian district of Maacah in the neighbourhood of the Hermon (see at Deut. iii. 14).—Ver. 24. As these men were afraid of the vengeance of the Chaldæans because they had fought against them, Gedaliah assured them on oath that they had nothing to fear from them if they would dwell peaceably in the land, be submissive to the king of Babel, and cultivate the land (cf. Jer. xl. 9 and 10). "Servants of the Chaldees" are Chaldæan officials who were subordinate to the governor Gedaliah.—Ver. 25. In the seventh month, i.e. hardly two months after the destruction of Jerusalem, came Ishmael with ten men to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and murdered him together with the Jews and Chaldæans, whom he had with him as soldiers to do his bidding and for his protection. This occurred, according to Jer. xli. 1 sqq., when Gedaliah had received them hospitably and had invited them to eat with him. Ishmael was instigated to commit this murder by the Ammonitish king Baalis, and Gedaliah had previously been made acquainted with the intended crime and put upon his guard by Johanan, but had put no faith in the information (Jer. xl. 13–16).—Ver. 26. After Ishmael had performed this deed, and



had also treacherously murdered a number of men, who had come to the temple with a sacrifice from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria, he took the Jews who were at Mizpah prisoners, with some kings' daughters among them, intending to take them over to the Ammonites; but as soon as his deed became known, he was pursued by Johanan and the rest of the military chiefs and was overtaken at Gibeon, whereupon those who had been led away by him went over to Johanan, so that he was only able to make his escape with eight men and get away to the Ammonites (Jer. xli. 4-15). Johanan then went with the rest of the military commanders and the people whom he had brought back into the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, with the intention of fleeing to Egypt for fear of the Chaldæans. There they did indeed have recourse to the prophet Jeremiah, to inquire of him the word of the Lord; but they did not allow themselves to be diverted from their intention by the word of the Lord which he announced to them, that if they remained in the land they need not fear anything from the king of Babel, but if they went to Egypt they should all perish there with sword, hunger, and pestilence, or by the prediction that the Lord would also deliver Pharaoh Hophra into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xlii.). They went to Egypt notwithstanding, taking the prophet himself with them, and settled in different cities of Egypt, where they gave themselves up to idolatry, and did not suffer themselves to be drawn away from it even by the severe judgments which the prophet Jeremiah predicted as sure to fall upon them (Jer. xliii. and xliv.). In the verse before us we have simply a brief allusion to the eventual result of the whole affair. "Because they were afraid of the Chaldæans," namely, that they might possibly take vengeance upon them for the murder of the governor.

Vers. 27-30. *Jehoiachin delivered from prison, and exalted to royal honours* (cf. Jer. lii. 31-34).—In the thirty-seventh year after his deportation Jehoiachin was taken out of prison by Evil-merodach when he came to the throne. בִּשְׁנַת מָלְכוֹ, in the year of his becoming king, probably immediately after he had ascended the throne, for it was no doubt an act of grace at the commencement of his reign. נָשָׂא אֶת־רֹאשׁוֹ, to lift up a person's head, i.e. to release him from prison and exalt him to civil honours and dignities (cf. Gen. xl. 13). On the coincidence of the thirty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's imprisonment and the

commencement of the reign of Evil-merodach see the remarks at ch. xxiv. 12. Instead of the 27th day of the month, the 25th is given in Jeremiah, again through the substitution of similar numeral letters (see at ver. 8). *Evil-merodach*: אֵוִיל מֶרֶדַּח, *Eũial Marw̄dach* or *Eũialmarw̄dek* (LXX.); Ἰλλοαροόδαμος, possibly a copyist's error for Ἰλμαροόδακος, in the *Can. Ptol.*, and in other forms also: see M. v. Nieb. *Gesch. Ass.* p. 42, and *Ges. thes.* p. 41; compounded from the name of the Babylonian god *Mero-dach* (see at ch. xx. 12) and the prefix *Evil*, which has not yet been explained with certainty. He reigned two years, according to Berossus in *Jos. c. Ap.* i. 20, and the *Can. Ptol.*; and according to the verdict of Berossus, προστὰς τῶν πραγμάτων ἀνόμως καὶ ἀσελγῶς; and was murdered by his brother-in-law Neriglissor. The statement in *Jos. Ant.* x. 11, 2, to the effect that he reigned eighteen years, and that of Alex. Polyh. in Euseb. *Chron. arm.* i. p. 45, that he reigned twelve years, are evidently false.—Ver. 28. “He spake kindly to him (cf. Jer. xii. 6), and set his throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babel.” This is not to be understood literally, as signifying that he assigned him a loftier throne than the other kings (Hitzig, Thenius), but figuratively: *loco honestiore eum habuit* (Ros.). The “kings with him” were dethroned kings, who were kept at the court like Jehoiachin to add to its splendour, just as Cyrus kept the conquered Cræsus by his side (Herod. i. 88).—Vers. 29, 30. “And he (Jehoiachin) changed his prison garments,” *i.e.* took them off and put other regal clothing on (cf. Gen. xli. 42). “And ate continually before him all his life,” *i.e.* ate at the king's table (cf. 2 Sam. ix. 7). Moreover a daily ration of food was supplied to him by the king for the maintenance of his retainers, who formed his little court. The כָּל־יְמֵי יָדָיו of ver. 30, upon which Thenius throws suspicion without any reason, refers to Jehoiachin like that in ver. 29; for the historian intended to show how Jehoiachin had fared from the day of his elevation to the end of his life. At the same time, we cannot infer from this with any certainty that Jehoiachin died before Evil-merodach; for the favour shown to him might be continued by Evil-merodach's successor. We cannot make any safe conjecture as to the motives which induced Evil-merodach to pardon Jehoiachin and confer this distinction upon him. The higher ground of this joyful termination of his imprisonment lay in the gracious decree of God, that the seed of David,



though severely chastised for its apostasy from the Lord, should not be utterly rejected (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15). At the same time, this event was also intended as a comforting sign to the whole of the captive people, that the Lord would one day put an end to their banishment, if they would acknowledge that it was a well-merited punishment for their sins that they had been driven away from before His face, and would turn again to the Lord their God with all their heart.

**THE END.**





BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY

C. F. KEIL, D.D. AND F. DELITZSCH, D.D.

PROFESSORS OF THEOLOGY

THE BOOKS OF THE CHRONICLES

BY

C. F. KEIL

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY ANDREW HARPER, B.D.





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# INTRODUCTION

TO THE

## HAGIOGRAPHIC HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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**B**ESIDES the prophetico-historic writings—Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings—which describe from a prophetic point of view the development of the kingdom of God established by means of the mediatorial office of Moses, from the time of the bringing of the tribes of Israel into the land promised to the fathers till the Babylonian exile, the Old Testament contains five historical books,—Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. These latter stand in the Hebrew canon among the *כְּתוּבִים*, *i.e.* in the hagiography, and are at once distinguished from the above-mentioned prophetico-historic writings by this characteristic, that they treat only of single parts of the history of the covenant people from individual points of view. The book of Ruth gives a charming historical picture from the life of the ancestors of King David. The Chronicles, indeed, extend over a very long period of the historical development of the Israelite kingdom of God, embrace the history from the death of King Saul till the Babylonian exile, and go back in the genealogies which precede the narrative of the history to Adam, the father of the human race; yet neither in the genealogical part do they give a perfect review of the genealogical ramifications of the twelve tribes of the covenant people, nor in their historical portion contain the history of the whole people from the death of Saul till the exile. Besides the tables of the first progenitors of

humanity and the tribal ancestors of the people of Israel, borrowed from Genesis, the genealogical part contains only a collection of genealogical and topographical fragments differing in plan, execution, and extent, relating to the chief families of the most prominent tribes and their dwelling-places. The historical part contains, certainly, historical sketches from the history of all Israel during the reigns of the kings David and Solomon; but from the division of the kingdom, after the death of Solomon, they contain only the history of the kingdom of Judah, with special reference to the Levitical worship, to the exclusion of the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes. From a comparison of the manner of representing the history in the Chronicles with that in the books of Samuel and the Kings, we can clearly see that the chronicler did not purpose to portray the development of the Israelitic theocracy in general, nor the facts and events which conditioned and constituted that development objectively, according to their general course. He has, on the contrary, so connected the historical facts with the attitude of the kings and the people to the Lord, and to His law, that they teach how the Lord rewarded fidelity to His covenant with blessing and success both to people and kingdom, but punished with calamity and judgments every faithless revolt from His covenant ordinances. Now since Israel, as the people and congregation of Jahve, could openly show its adherence to the covenant only by faithful observance of the covenant laws, particularly of the ordinances for worship, the author of the Chronicles has kept this side of the life of the people especially in view, in order that he might hold up before his contemporaries as a mirror the attitude of the fathers to the God-appointed dwelling-place of His gracious presence in the holy place of the congregation. He does this, that they might behold how the faithful maintenance of communion with the covenant God in His temple would assure to them the fulfilment of the gracious promises of the covenant, and how falling away into idolatry, on the contrary, would bring misfortune and destruction. This special reference to the worship meets us also in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which describe the deliverance of the Jews from exile, and their restoration as the covenant people in the land of their fathers. The book of Ezra narrates, on the one hand, the return out of the Babylonian exile into the land of their fathers of a great part of the Jews who had been led away by Nebuchadnezzar,—partly in the first



year of the reign of Cyrus over Babylon, with Zerubbabel, a prince of the royal race of David, and Joshua the high priest as leaders; partly at a later period with the scribe Ezra, under Artaxerxes. On the other hand, it relates the restoration of the altar of burnt-offering, and of the divine service; together with the re-erection of the temple, and the effort of Ezra to regulate the affairs of the community according to the precepts of the Mosaic law, by doing away with the illegal marriages with heathen women. And Nehemiah describes in his book what he had accomplished in the direction of giving a firm foundation to the civil welfare of the newly-founded community in Judah: in the first place, by building the walls of Jerusalem so as to defend the city and holy place against the attacks and surprises of the hostile peoples in the neighbourhood; and secondly, by various measures for the strengthening of the capital by increasing the number of its inhabitants, and for the more exact modelling of the civil, moral, and religious life of the community on the precepts of the law of Moses, in order to lay enduring foundations for the prosperous development of the covenant people. In the book of Esther, finally, it is recounted how the Jewish inhabitants of the various parts of the great Persian kingdom were delivered by the Jewess Esther (who had been raised to the position of queen by a peculiar concatenation of circumstances) from the destruction which the Grand Vizier Haman, in the reign of King Ahashverosh (*i.e.* Xerxes), had determined upon, on account of the refusal of adoration by the Jew Mordecai.

Now, if we look somewhat more narrowly at the relation of these five historical books to the prophetic-historic writings, more especially in the first place in reference to their contents, we see that the books of Ruth and the Chronicles furnish us with not unimportant additions to the books of Samuel and Kings. The book of Ruth introduces us into the family life of the ancestors of King David, and shows the life-spring from which proceeded the man after God's own heart, whom God called from being a shepherd of sheep to be the shepherd of His people, that He might deliver Israel out of the power of his enemies, and found a kingdom, which received the promise of eternal duration, and which was to be established to all eternity through Christ the Son of David and the Son of God. The Chronicles supplement the history of the covenant people, principally during the period of the kings, by detailed accounts of

the *form* of the public worship of the congregation; from which we see how, in spite of the continual inclination of the people to idolatry, and to the worship of heathen gods, the service in the temple, according to the law, was the spiritual centre about which the pious in Israel crowded, to worship the Lord their God, and to serve Him by sacrifice. We see, too, how this holy place formed throughout a lengthened period a mighty bulwark, which prevented moral and religious decay from gaining the upper hand, until at length, through the godless conduct of the kings Asa and Manasseh, the holy place itself was profaned by the idolatrous abomination, and judgment broke in upon the incorrigible race in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the driving out of Judah from the presence of the Lord. But the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther are the only historical writings we possess concerning the times of the restoration of the covenant people after their emancipation from the captivity, and their return into the promised land; and even in this respect they are very valuable component parts of the Old Testament canon. The first two show how God the Lord fulfilled His promise, that He would again receive His people into favour, and collect them out of their dispersion among the heathen, if they should, in their misery, under the oppression of the heathen, come to a knowledge of their sins, and turn unto Him; and how, after the expiry of the seventy years of the Babylonian exile which had been prophesied, He opened up to them, through Cyrus the king of Persia, their return into the land of their fathers, and restored Jerusalem and the temple, that He might preserve inviolate, and thereafter perfect, by the appearance of the promised David who was to come, that gracious covenant which He had entered into with their fathers. But the providence of God ruled also over the members of the covenant people who had remained behind in heathen lands, to preserve them from the ruin which had been prepared for them by the heathen, in order that from among them also a remnant might be saved, and become partakers of the salvation promised in Christ. To show this by a great historical example is the aim of the book of Esther, and the meaning of its reception into the canon of the Holy Scriptures of the old covenant.

If, finally, we consider the style of historical writing found in these five books, we can scarcely characterize it in its relation to the prophetic books by a fitting word. The manner of writing



history which is prevalent in the hagiography has been, it is true, called the national (*volksthümlich*) or annalistic, but by this name the peculiarity of it has in no respect been correctly expressed. The narrative bears a national impress only in the book of Esther, and relatively also in the book of Ruth; but even between these two writings a great difference exists. The narrative in Ruth ends with the genealogy of the ancestors of King David; whereas in the book of Esther all reference to the theocratic relation, nay, even the religious contemplation of the events, is wholly wanting. But the books of the Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, have no national impress; in them, on the contrary, the Levitico-priestly manner of viewing history prevails. Still less can the hagiographic histories be called annalistic. The books of Ruth and Esther follow definite aims, which clearly appear towards the end. Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah contain, it is true, in the genealogical, geographical, and historical registers, a mass of annalistic material; but we find this also in the prophetic-historic works, and even in the books of Moses. The only thing which is common to and characteristic of the whole of the hagiographic historical books, is that the prophetic contemplation of the course of history according to the divine plan of salvation which unfolds itself in the events, either falls into the background or is wanting altogether; while in its place individual points of view appear which show themselves in the pursuit of parænetico-didactic aims, which have acted as a determining influence on the selection and treatment of the historical facts, as the introduction to the individual writings will show.

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# INTRODUCTION

## § 1. NAME, CONTENTS, PLAN, AND AIM OF THE CHRONICLES.



THE two books of the Chronicles originally formed one work, as their plan at once makes manifest, and were received into the Hebrew canon as such. Not only were they reckoned as one in the enumeration of the books of the Old Testament (cf. Joseph. *c. Apion*, i. 8; Origen, in Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* vi. 25; and Hieronym. *Prolog. galeat.*), but they were also regarded by the Masorites as one single work, as we learn from a remark of the Masora at the end of the Chronicle, that the verse 1 Chron. xxvii. 25 is the middle of the book. The division into two books originated with the Alexandrian translators (LXX.), and has been transmitted by the Latin translation of Hieronymus (Vulgata) not only to all the later translations of the Bible, but also, along with the division into chapters, into our versions of the Hebrew Bible. The first book closes, chap. xxix. 29 f., with the end of the reign of David, which formed a fitting epoch for the division of the work into two books. The Hebrew name of this book in our Bible, by which it was known even by Hieronymus, is רַבְרִי הַיָּמִים, *verba*, or more correctly *res gestæ dierum*, events of the days, before which סִפּוּר is to be supplied (cf. *e.g.* 1 Kings xiv. 19, 29, xv. 7, 23).

Its full title therefore is, Book of the Events of the Time (*Zeitereignisse*), corresponding to the annalistic work so often quoted in our canonical books of Kings and Chronicles, the Book of the Events of the Time (Chronicle) of the Kings of Israel and Judah. Instead of this the LXX. have chosen the name *Παραλειπόμενα*, in order to mark more exactly the relation of our work to the earlier historical books of the Old Testament, as containing much historical information which is not to be found in them. But the name is not used in the sense of *supplementa*,—"fragments of other historical works," as Movers, *die Bibl. Chron.* S. 95, interprets it,—but in the signification "*prætermissa*;" because, according to the explanation in the

*Synopsis script. sacr.* in Athanasii *Opera*, ii. p. 84, παραλειφθέντα πολλά ἐν ταῖς βασιλειαῖς (i.e. in the books of Samuel and Kings) περιέχεται ἐν τούτοις, "many things passed over in the Kings are contained in these." Likewise Isidorus, lib. vi. *Origin.* c. i. p. 45: *Paralipomenon græce dicitur, quod prætermisorum vel reliquorum nos dicere possumus, quia ea quæ in lege vel in Regum libris vel omissa vel non plene relata sunt, in isto summam et breviter explicantur.* This interpretation of the word παραλειπόμενα is confirmed by Hieronymus, who, in his *Epist. ad Paulin.* (*Opp.* t. i. ed. Vallars, p. 279), says: *Paralipomenon liber, id est instrumenti veteris epitome tantus et talis est, ut absque illo, si quis scientiam scripturarum sibi voluerit arrogare, seipsum irrideat; per singula quippe nomina juncturasque verborum et prætermissæ in Regum libris tanguntur historiæ et innumerabiles explicantur Evangelii quæstiones.* He himself, however, suggested the name Chronicon, in order more clearly to characterize both the contents of the work and at the same its relation to the historical books from Gen. i. to 2 Kings xxv.; as he says in *Prolog. galeat.*: דברי הימים, i.e. *verba dierum, quod significantius chronicon totius divinæ historiæ possumus appellare, qui liber apud nos Paralipomenon primus et secundus inscribitur.* Through Hieronymus the name Chronicles came into use, and became the prevailing title.

*Contents.*—The Chronicles begin with genealogical registers of primeval times, and of the tribes of Israel (1 Chron. i.–ix.); then follow the history of the reign of King David (chap. x.–xxix.) and of King Solomon (2 Chron. i.–ix.); the narrative of the revolt of the ten tribes from the kingdom of the house of David (chap. x.); the history of the kingdom of Judah from Rehoboam to the ruin of the kingdom, its inhabitants being led away into exile to Babylon (chap. xi.–xxxvi. 21); and at the close we find the edict of Cyrus, which allowed the Jews to return into their country (xxxvi. 22, 23). Each of the two books, therefore, falls into two, and the whole work into four divisions. If we examine these divisions more minutely, six groups can be without difficulty recognised in the genealogical part (1 Chron. i.–ix.). These are: (1) The families of primeval and ancient times, from Adam to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and his sons Edom and Israel, together with the posterity of Edom (chap. i.); (2) the sons of Israel and the families of Judah, with the sons and posterity of David (ii.–iv. 23); (3)



the families of the tribe of Simeon, whose inheritance lay within the tribal domain of Judah, and those of the trans-Jordanic tribes Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh (iv. 24–v. 26); (4) the families of Levi, or of the priests and Levites, with an account of the dwelling-places assigned to them (v. 27–vi. 66); (5) the families of the remaining tribes, viz. Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, the half-tribe of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher (only Dan and Zebulun being omitted), with the genealogy of the house of Saul (vii. viii.); and (6) a register of the former inhabitants of Jerusalem (ix. 1–34), and a second enumeration of the family of Saul, preparing us for the transition to the history of the kingdom of Israel (ix. 35–44). The history of David's kingship which follows is introduced by an account of the ruin of Saul and his house (chap. x.), and then the narrative falls into two sections. (1) In the first we have David's election to be king over all Israel, and the taking of the Jebusite fort in Jerusalem, which was built upon Mount Zion (xi. 1–9); then a list of David's heroes, and the valiant men out of all the tribes who made him king (xi. 10–xii. 40); the removal of the ark to Jerusalem, the founding of his house, and the establishment of the Levitical worship before the ark in Zion (xiii.–xvi.); David's design to build a temple to the Lord (xvii.); then his wars (xviii.–xx.); the numbering of the people, the pestilence which followed, and the fixing of the place for the future temple (xxi.). (2) In the second section are related David's preparations for the building of the temple (xxii.); the numbering of the Levites, and the arrangement of their service (xxiii.–xxvi.); the arrangement of the military service (xxvii.); David's surrender of the kingdom to his son, and the close of his life (xxviii. and xxix.). The history of the reign of Solomon begins with his solemn sacrifice at Gibeon, and some remarks on his wealth (2 Chron. i.); then follows the building of the temple, with the consecration of the completed holy place (chap. ii.–vii.). To these are added short aphoristic accounts of the cities which Solomon built, the statute labour which he exacted, the arrangement of the public worship, the voyage to Ophir, the visit of the queen of Sheba, and of the might and glory of his kingdom, closing with remarks on the length of his reign, and an account of his death (viii.–ix.). The history of the kingdom of Judah begins with the narrative of the revolt of the ten tribes from Rehoboam (chap. x.), and then in chap. xi.–xxxvi. it flows on according to the succession of the

kings of Judah from Rehoboam to Zedekiah, the reigns of the individual kings forming the sections of the narrative.

*Plan and Aim.*—From this general sketch of the contents of our history, it will be already apparent that the author had not in view a general history of the covenant people from the time of David to the Babylonian exile, but purposed only to give an outline of the history of the kingship of David and his successors, Solomon and the kings of the kingdom of *Judah* to its fall. If, however, in order to define more clearly the plan and purpose of the historical parts of our book in the first place, we compare them with the representation given us of the history of Israel in those times in the books of Samuel and Kings, we can see that the chronicler has passed over much of the history. (a) He has omitted, in the history of David, not only his seven years' reign at Hebron over the tribe of Judah, and his conduct to the fallen King Saul and to his house, especially towards Ishbosheth, Saul's son, who had been set up as rival king by Abner (2 Sam. i.-iv. and ix.), but in general has passed over all the events referring to and connected with David's family relations. He makes no mention, for instance, of the scene between David and Michal (2 Sam. vi. 20-23); the adultery with Bathsheba, with its immediate and more distant results (2 Sam. xi. 2-12); Amnon's outrage upon Tamar, the slaying of Amnon by Absalom and his flight to the king of Geshur, his return to Jerusalem, his rising against David, with its issues, and the tumult of Sheba (2 Sam. xiii.-xx.); and, finally, also omits the thanksgiving psalm and the last words of David (2 Sam. xxii. 1-xxiii. 7). Then (b) in the history of Solomon there have been left unrecorded the attempt of Adonijah to usurp the throne, with the anointing of Solomon at Gihon, which it brought about; David's last command in reference to Joab and Shimei; the punishment of these men and of Adonijah; Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kings i. 1-iii. 3); his wise judgment, the catalogue of his officials, the description of his royal magnificence and glory, and of his wisdom (1 Kings iii. 16-v. 14); the building of the royal palace (1 Kings vii. 1-12); and Solomon's polygamy and idolatry, with their immediate results (1 Kings xi. 1-40). Finally, (c) there is no reference to the history of the kingdom of Israel founded by Jeroboam, or to the lives of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, which are related in such detail in the books of Kings, while mention is made of the kings of the kingdom of the ten tribes only in so far as they came into



hostile struggle or friendly union with the kingdom of Judah. But, in compensation for these omissions, the author of the Chronicle has brought together in his work a considerable number of facts and events which are omitted in the books of Samuel and the Kings. For example, in the history of David, he gives us the list of the valiant men out of all the tribes who, partly before and partly after the death of Saul, went over to David to help him in his struggle with Saul and his house, and to bring the royal honour to him (1 Chron. xii.); the detailed account of the participation of the Levites in the transfer of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, and of the arrangements made by David for worship around this sanctuary (chap. xv. and xvi.); and the whole section concerning David's preparations for the building of the temple, his arrangements for public worship, the regulation of the army, and his last commands (chap. xxii.-xxix.). Further, the history of the kingdom of Judah from Rehoboam to Joram is narrated throughout at greater length than in the books of Kings, and is considerably supplemented by detailed accounts, not only of the work of the prophets in Judah, of Shemaiah under Rehoboam (chap. xii. 5-8), of Azariah and Hanani under Asa (xv. 1-8, xvi. 7-9), of Jehu son of Hanani, Jehaziel, and Ebenezer son of Dodava, under Jehoshaphat (xix. 1-3, xx. 14-20 and 37), and concerning Elijah's letter under Joram (xxi. 12-15); but also of the efforts of Rehoboam (xi. 5-17), Asa (xiv. 5-7), and Jehoshaphat (xvii. 2, 12-19) to fortify the kingdom, of Asa to raise and vivify the Jahve-worship (xv. 9-15), of Jehoshaphat to purify the administration of justice and increase the knowledge of the law (xvii. 7-9 and xix. 5-11), of the wars of Abijah against Jeroboam, and his victories (xiii. 3-20), of Asa's war against the Cushite Zerah (xiv. 8-14), of Jehoshaphat's conquest of the Ammonites and Moabites (xx. 1-30), and, finally, also of the family relations of Rehoboam (xi. 18-22), the wives and children of Abijah (xiii. 21), and Joram's brothers and his sickness (xxi. 2-4 and 18 f.). Of the succeeding kings also various undertakings are reported which are not found in the books of Kings. In this way we are informed of Joash's defection from the Lord, and his fall into idolatry after the death of the high priest Jehoiada (xxiv. 15-22); how Amaziah increased his military power (xxv. 5-10), and worshipped idols (xxv. 14-16); of Uzziah's victorious wars against the Philistines and Arabs, and his fortress-building, etc. (xxvi.

6-15); of Jotham's fortress-building, and his victory over the Ammonites (xxvii. 4-6); of the increase of Hezekiah's riches (xxxii. 27-30); of Manasseh's capture and removal to Babylon, and his return out of captivity (xxxiii. 11-17). But the history of Hezekiah and Josiah more especially is rendered more complete by special accounts of reforms in worship, and of celebrations of the passover (xxix. 3-31, 21, and xxxv. 2-15); while we have only summary notices of the godless conduct of Ahaz (chap. xxviii.) and Manasseh (xxxiii. 3-10), of the campaign of Sennacherib against Jerusalem and Judah, of Hezekiah's sickness and the reception of the Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem (chap. xxxii., cf. 2 Kings xviii. 13-20, xix.); as also of the reigns of the last kings, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. From all this, it is clear that the author of the Chronicle, as Bertheau expresses it, "has turned his attention to *those times* especially in which Israel's religion had showed itself to be a power dominating the people and their leaders, and bringing them prosperity; and to *those men* who had endeavoured to give a more enduring form to the arrangements for the service of God, and to restore the true worship of Jahve; and to *those events* in the history of the worship so intimately bound up with Jerusalem, which had important bearings."

This purpose appears much more clearly when we take into consideration the narratives which are common to the Chronicle and the books of Samuel and Kings, and observe the difference which is perceptible in the mode of conception and representation in those parallel sections. For our present purpose, however, those narratives in which the chronicler supplements and completes the accounts given in the books of Samuel and Kings by more exact and detailed information, or shortens them by the omission of unimportant details, come less into consideration.<sup>1</sup> For both additions and abridgments show only that the chronicler has not drawn his information from the canonical books of Samuel and Kings, but from other more circumstantial original

<sup>1</sup> Additions are to be found, *e.g.*, in the list of David's heroes, 1 Chron. xii. 42-47; in the history of the building and consecration of Solomon's temple; in the enumeration of the candlesticks, tables, and courts, 2 Chron. ii. 6-9; in the notice of the copper platform on which Solomon knelt at prayer, vi. 12, 13; and of the fire which fell from heaven upon the burnt-offering, vii. 1 ff. Also in the histories of the wars they are met with, 1 Chron. xi. 6, 8, 23, cf. 2 Sam. v. 8, 9, xxiii. 21; 1 Chron. xviii. 8, 12,



documents which he had at his command, and has used these sources independently. Much more important for a knowledge of the plan of the Chronicle are the variations in the parallel places between it and the other narrative; for in them the point of view from which the chronicler regarded, and has described, the events clearly appears. In the number of such passages is to be reckoned the narrative of the transfer of the ark (1 Chron. xiii. and xv., cf. 2 Sam. vi.), where the chronicler presents the fact in its religious import as the beginning of the restoration of the worship of Jahve according to the law, which had fallen into decay; while the author of the books of Samuel describes it only in its political import, in its bearing on the Davidic kingship. Of this character also is the narrative of the raising of Joash to the throne (2 Chron. xxiii., cf. 2 Kings xi.), where the share of the Levites in the completion of the work begun by the high priest Jehoiada is prominently brought forward, while in Kings it is not expressly mentioned. The whole account also of the reign of Hezekiah, as well as other passages, belong to this category. Now from these and other descriptions of the part the Levites played in events, and the share they took in assisting the efforts of the pious kings to revivify and maintain the temple worship, the conclusion has been rightly drawn that the chronicler describes with special interest the fostering of the Levitic worship according to the precepts of the law of Moses, and holds it up to his contemporaries for earnest imitation; yet this has been too often done in such a way as to cause this one element in the plans of the Chronicle to be looked upon as its main object, which has led to a very onesided conception of the character of the book. The chronicler does not desire to bring honour to the Levites and to the temple worship: his object is rather to draw from the history of the kingship in Israel a proof that faithful adherence to the covenant which the Lord had made with Israel brings happiness and blessing; the forsaking of it, on the contrary, ensures ruin and a curse. But Israel could show its faithfulness to the covenant only by walking according to the

cf. 2 Sam. viii. 8, 13, etc. More may be found in my *Handbook of Introd.* § 139, 5. Abridgments by the rejection of unimportant details are very frequent; e.g. the omission of the Jebusites' mockery of David's attack on their fortress, 1 Chron. xi. 5, 6, cf. 2 Sam. v. 6, 8; of the details of the storming of Rabbah, 1 Chron. xx. 1, 2, cf. 2 Sam. xii. 27-29; and of many more, *vide* my *Handbook of Introduction*, § 139, 8.

ordinances of the law given by Moses, and in worshipping Jahve, the God of their fathers, in His holy place in that way which He had established by the ceremonial ordinances. The author of the Chronicle attaches importance to the Levitic worship only because the fidelity of Israel to the covenant manifested itself in the careful maintenance of it.

This point of view appears clearly in the selection and treatment of the material drawn by our historian from older histories and prophetic writings. His history begins with the death of Saul and the anointing of David to be king over the whole of Israel, and confines itself, after the division of the kingdom, to the history of the kingdom of Judah. In the time of the judges especially, the Levitic worship had fallen more and more into decay; and even Samuel had done nothing for it, or perhaps *could* do nothing, and the ark remained during that whole period at a distance from the tabernacle. Still less was done under Saul for the restoration of the worship in the tabernacle; for "Saul died," as we read in 1 Chron. x. 13 f., "for his transgression which he had transgressed against the Lord; . . . and because he inquired not of the Lord, therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse." After the death of Saul the elders of all Israel came to David with the confession, "Jahve thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel; and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel" (1 Chron. xi. 2). David's first care, after he had as king over all Israel conquered the Jebusite hold on Mount Zion, and made Jerusalem the capital of the kingdom, was to bring the ark from its obscurity into the city of David, and to establish the sacrificial worship according to the law near that sanctuary (1 Chron. xiii. 15, 16). Shortly afterwards he formed the resolution of building for the Lord a permanent house (a temple), that He might dwell among His people, for which he received from the Lord the promise of the establishment of his kingdom for ever, although the execution of his design was denied to him, and was committed to his son (chap. xvii.). Only *after* all this has been related do we find narratives of David's wars and his victories over all hostile peoples (chap. xviii.-xx.), of the numbering of the people, and the pestilence, which, in consequence of the repentant resignation of David to the will of the Lord, gave occasion to the determination of the place for the erection of the temple (chap. xxi.). The second section of the history of



the Davidic kingship contains the preparations for the building of the temple, and the laying down of more permanent regulations for the ordering of the worship ; and that which David had prepared for, and so earnestly impressed upon his son Solomon at the transfer of the crown, Solomon carried out. Immediately after the throne had been secured to him, he took in hand the building of the temple ; and the account of this work fills the greater part of the history of his reign, while the description of his kingly power and splendour and wisdom, and of all the other undertakings which he carried out, is of the shortest. When ten tribes revolted from the house of David after his death, Rehoboam's design of bringing the rebellious people again under his dominion by force of arms was checked by the prophet Shemaiah with the words, "Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren, for this thing is done of me" (2 Chron. xi. 4). But in their revolt from the house of David, which Jeroboam sought to perpetuate by the establishment of an idolatrous national worship, Israel of the ten tribes had departed from the covenant communion with Jahve ; and on this ground, and on this account, the history of that kingdom is no further noticed by the chronicler. The priests and Levites came out of the whole Israelite dominion to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons expelled them from the priesthood. After them, from all the tribes of Israel came those who gave their hearts to seek Jahve the God of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to Jahve the God of their fathers (2 Chron. xi. 13-16), for "Jerusalem is the city which Jahve has chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put His name there" (xii. 13). The priests, Levites, and pious people who went over from Israel made the kingdom of Judah strong, and confirmed Rehoboam's power, for they walked in the ways of David and Solomon (xi. 17). But when the kingdom of Rehoboam had been firmly established, he forsook the law of Jahve, and all Israel with him (xii. 1). Then the Egyptian king Shishak came up against Jerusalem, "because they had transgressed against the Lord" (xii. 2). The prophet Shemaiah proclaimed the word of the Lord : "Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak" (xii. 5). Yet when Rehoboam and the princes of Israel humbled themselves, the anger of the Lord turned from him, that He would not destroy him altogether (xii. 6, 12). King Abijah reproaches

Jeroboam in his speech with his defection from Jahve, and concludes with the words, "O children of Israel, fight not ye against the Lord God of your fathers, for ye shall not prosper" (xiii. 12); and when the men of Judah cried unto the Lord in the battle, and the priests blew the trumpets, then did God smite Jeroboam and all Israel (xiii. 15). "Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers" (xiii. 18). King Asa commanded his subjects to seek Jahve the God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandments (xiv. 3). In the war against the Cushites, he cried unto Jahve his God, "Help us, for we rest on Thee;" and Jahve smote the Cushites before Judah (xiv. 10). After this victory Asa and Judah sacrificed unto the Lord of their spoil, and entered into a covenant to seek Jahve the God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul. And the Lord was found of them, and the Lord gave them rest round about (xv. 11 ff.). But when Asa afterwards, in the war against Baasha of Israel, made an alliance with the Syrian king Benhadad, the prophet Hanani censured this act in the words, "Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and hast not relied on Jahve thy God, therefore has the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thy hand. . . . Herein thou hast done foolishly," etc. (xvi. 7-9). Jehoshaphat became mighty against Israel, and Jahve was with him; for he walked in the ways of his father David, and sought not unto the Baals, but sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. And Jahve established his kingdom in his hand, and he attained to riches and great splendour (xvii. 1-5).

After this fashion does the chronicler show how God blessed the reigns and prospered all the undertakings of all the kings of Judah who sought the Lord and walked in His commandments; but at the same time also, how every defection from the Lord brought with it misfortune and chastisement. Under Joram of Judah, Edom and Libnah freed themselves from the supremacy of Judah, "because Joram had forsaken Jahve the God of his fathers" (xxi. 10). Because Joram had walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and had seduced the inhabitants of Jerusalem to whoredom (*i.e.* idolatry), and had slain his brothers, God punished him in the invasion of Judah by the Philistines and Arabs, who stormed Jerusalem, took away with them all the fur-



niture of the royal palace, and took captive his sons and wives, while He smote him besides with incurable disease (xxi. 11 ff., 16-18). Because of the visit which Ahaziah made to Joram of Israel, when he lay sick of his wound at Jezreel, the judgment was (xxii. 7) pronounced: "The destruction of Ahaziah was of God by his coming to Joram." When Amaziah, after his victory over the Edomites, brought back the gods of Seir and set them up for himself as gods, before whom he worshipped, the anger of Jahve was kindled against him. In spite of the warning of the prophets, he sought a quarrel with King Joash of Israel, who likewise advised him to abandon his design. "But Amaziah would not hear; for it was of God, that He might deliver them over, because they had sought the gods of Edom" (xxv. 20). With this compare ver. 27: "After the time that Amaziah turned away from following Jahve, they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem." Of Uzziah it is said (xxvi. 5), so long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper, so that he conquered his enemies and became very mighty. But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, so that he transgressed against Jahve his God, by forcing his way into the temple to offer incense; and for this he was smitten with leprosy. Of Jotham it is said, in xxvii. 6, "He became mighty, because he established his ways before Jahve his God."

From these and similar passages, which might easily be multiplied, we clearly see that the chronicler had in view not only the Levitic worship, but also and mainly the attitude of the people and their princes to the Lord and to His law; and that it is from this point of view that he has regarded and written the history of his people before the exile. But it is also not less clear, from the quotations we have made, in so far as they contain practical remarks of the historian, that it was his purpose to hold up to his contemporaries as a mirror the history of the past, in which they might see the consequences of their own conduct towards the God of their fathers. He does not wish, as the author of the books of Kings does, to narrate the events and facts objectively, according to the course of history; but he connects the facts and events with the conduct of the kings and people towards the Lord, and strives to put the historical facts in such a light as to teach that God rewards fidelity to His covenant with happiness and blessing, and avenges faithless defection from it with punitive judgments. Owing to this peculiarity, the historical narrative

acquires a hortative character, which gives occasion for the employment of a highly rhetorical style. The hortative-rhetorical character impressed upon his narrative shows itself not only in many of the speeches of the actors in the history which are interwoven with it, but also in many of the historical parts. For example, the account given in 2 Chron. xxi. 16 of the punitive judgments which broke in upon Joram for his wickedness is rhetorically arranged, so that the judgments correspond to the threatenings contained in the letter of Elijah, vers. 12-15. But this may be much more plainly seen in the description of the impious conduct of King Ahaz, and of the punishments which were inflicted upon him and the kingdom of Judah (chap. xxviii.); as also in the descriptions of the crime of Manasseh (chap. xxxiii. 3-13; cf. especially vers. 7 and 8), and of the reign of Zedekiah, and the ruin of the kingdom of Judah (chap. xxxvi. 12-21). Now the greater part of the differences between the chronicler's account and the parallel narrative in the books of Samuel and Kings, together with the omission of unimportant circumstances, and the careful manner in which the descriptions of the arrangements for worship and the celebration of feasts are wrought out, can be accounted for by this hortatory tendency so manifest in his writing, and by his subjective, reflective manner of regarding history. For all these peculiarities clearly have it for their object to raise in the souls of the readers pleasure and delight in the splendid worship of the Lord, and to confirm their hearts in fidelity to the Lord and to His law.

With this plan and object, the first part of our history (1 Chron. i.-ix.), which contains genealogies, with geographical sketches and isolated historical remarks, is in perfect harmony. The genealogies are intended to exhibit, on the one hand, the connection of the people of Israel with the whole human race; on the other, the descent and genealogical ramifications of the tribes and families of Israel, with the extent to which they had spread themselves abroad in the land received as a heritage from the Lord. In both of these respects they are the necessary foundation for the following history of the chosen people, which the author designed to trace from the time of the foundation of the promised kingdom till the people were driven away into exile because of their revolt from their God. And it is not to be considered as a result of the custom prevalent among the later Arabian historians, of beginning their histories and chronicles *ab ovo* with



Adam, that our author goes back in this introduction to Adam and the beginnings of the human race; for not only is this custom far too modern to allow of any inference being drawn from it with reference to the Chronicle, but it has itself originated, beyond a doubt, in an imitation of our history. The reason for going back to the beginnings of the human race is to be sought in the importance for the history of the world of the people of Israel, whose progenitor Abraham had been chosen and separated from all the peoples of the earth by God, that his posterity might become a blessing to all the families of the earth. But in order to see more perfectly the plan and object of the historian in his selection and treatment of the historical material at his command, we must still keep in view the age in which he lived, and for which he wrote. In respect to this, so much in general is admitted, viz. that the Chronicle was composed after the Babylonian exile. With their release from exile, and their return into the land of their fathers, Israel did not receive again its former political importance. That part of the nation which had returned remained under Persian supremacy, and was ruled by Persian governors; and the descendants of the royal race of David remained subject to this governor, or at least to the kings of Persia. They were only allowed to restore the temple, and to arrange the divine service according to the precepts of the Mosaic law; and in this they were favoured by Cyrus and his successors. In such circumstances, the efforts and struggles of the returned Jews must have been mainly directed to the re-establishment and permanent ordering of the worship, in order to maintain communion with the Lord their God, and by that means to prove their fidelity to the God of their fathers, so that the Lord might fulfil His covenant promises to them, and complete the restoration of Judah and Jerusalem. By this fact, therefore, may we account for the setting forth in our history of the religious and ecclesiastical side of the life of the Israelitish community in such relief, and for the author's supposed "fondness" for the Levitic worship. If the author of the Chronicle wished to strengthen his contemporaries in their fidelity to Jahve, and to encourage them to fulfil their covenant duties by a description of the earlier history of the covenant people, he could not hope to accomplish his purpose more effectively than by so presenting the history as to bring accurately before them the ordinances and arrangements of the worship, the blessings of

fidelity to the covenant, and the fatal fruits of defection from the Lord.

The chronicler's supposed predilection for genealogical lists arose also from the circumstances of his time. From Ezra ii. 60 ff. we learn that some of the sons of priests who returned with Zerubbabel sought their family registers, but could not find them, and were consequently removed from the priesthood; besides this, the inheritance of the land was bound up with the families of Israel. On this account the family registers had, for those who had returned from the exile, an increased importance, as the means of again obtaining possession of the heritage of their fathers; and perhaps it was the value thus given to the genealogical lists which induced the author of the Chronicle to include in his book all the old registers of this sort which had been received from antiquity.

## § 2. AGE AND AUTHOR OF THE CHRONICLES.

The Chronicle cannot have been composed before the time of Ezra, for it closes with the intelligence that Cyrus, by an edict in the first year of his reign, allowed the Jews to return to their country (2. xxxvi. 22 f.), and it brings down the genealogical tree of Zerubbabel to his grandchildren (1. iii. 19-21). The opinion brought into acceptance by de Wette and Ewald, that the genealogy (1. iii. 19-24) enumerates six or seven other generations after Zerubbabel, and so reaches down to the times of Alexander the Great or yet later, is founded on the undemonstrable assumption that the twenty-one names which in this passage (ver. 21b) follow בני רפיה are the names of direct descendants of Zerubbabel. But no exegetical justification can be found for this assumption; since the list of names, "the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah," etc. (vers. 21b-24), is connected neither in form nor in subject-matter with the grandsons of Zerubbabel, who have been already enumerated, but forms a genealogical fragment, the connection of which with Zerubbabel's grandchildren is merely asserted, but can neither be proved nor even rendered probable. (*Vide* the commentary on these verses.) Other grounds for the acceptance of so late a date for the composition of the Chronicle are entirely wanting; for the orthography and language of the book



point only in general to the post-exilic age, and the mention of the Daric, a Persian coin, in 1. xxix. 7, does not bring us further down than the period of the Persian rule over Judæa. On the other hand, the use of the name בֵּיִרָה (1. xxix. 1, 19) for the temple can scarcely be reconciled with the composition of the book in the Macedonian or even the Seleucidian age, since an author who lived after Nehemiah, when Jerusalem, like other Persian cities, had received in the fortress built by him (Neh. ii. 8, vii. 2), and afterwards called *Bâpis* and *Arx Antonia*, its own בֵּיִרָה, would scarcely have given this name to the temple.

In reference to the question of the authorship of our book, the matter which most demands consideration is the identity of the end of the Chronicle with the beginning of the book of Ezra. The Chronicle closes with the edict of Cyrus which summons the Jews to return to Jerusalem to build the temple; the book of Ezra begins with this same edict, but gives it more completely than the Chronicle, which stops somewhat abruptly with the word וַיַּעַל, "and let him go up," although in this וַיַּעַל everything is contained that we find in the remaining part of the edict communicated in the book of Ezra. From this relation of the Chronicle to the book of Ezra, many Rabbins, Fathers of the church, and older exegetes, have drawn the conclusion that Ezra is also the author of the Chronicle. But of course it is not a very strong proof, since it can be accounted for on the supposition that the author of the book of Ezra has taken over the conclusion of the Chronicle into his work, and set it at the commencement, so as to attach his book to the Chronicle as a continuation. In support of this supposition, moreover, the further fact may be adduced, that it was just as important for the Chronicle to communicate the terms of Cyrus' edict as it was for the book of Ezra. It was a fitting conclusion of the former, to show that the destruction of Jerusalem and the leading away of the inhabitants of Judah to Babylon, was not the final destiny of Judah and Jerusalem, but that, after the dark night of exile, the day of the restoration of the people of God had dawned under Cyrus; and for the latter it was an indispensable foundation and point of departure for the history of the new immigration of the exiles into Jerusalem and Judah. Yet it still remains more probable that one author produced both writings, yet not as a single book, which has been divided at some later time by another hand. For no reason can be perceived for any such later division,

especially such a division as would make it necessary to repeat the edict of Cyrus.<sup>1</sup> The introduction of this edict with the words, "And it came to pass in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, *that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished,*" connects it so closely with the end of the account of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the carrying away into Babylon, contained in the words, "And they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia, *to fulfil the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, . . . to fulfil the seventy years*" (ver. 20 f.), that it cannot be separated from what precedes. Rather it is clear, that the author who wrote verses 20 and 21, representing the seventy years' exile as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, must be the same who mentions the edict of Cyrus, and sets it forth in its connection with the utterances of the same prophet. This connecting of the edict with the prophecy gives us an irrefragable proof that the verses which contain the edict form an integral part of the Chronicle. But, at the same time, the way in which the edict is broken off in the Chronicle with *וַיַּעַל*, makes it likely that the author of the Chronicle did not give the contents of the edict in their entirety, only because he intended to treat further of the edict, and the fulfilment of it by the return of the Jews from Babylon, in a second work. A later editor would certainly have given the entire edict in both writings (the Chronicle and the book

<sup>1</sup> What Bertheau (p. xxi.) says in this connection (following Ewald, *Gesch. des V. Isr.* i. S. 264, der 2 Aufl.), viz., that "perhaps at first only that part of the great historical work which contains the history of the new community itself, to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, and the history of these its two heroes, was added to the books of the Old Testament, because it seemed unnecessary to add our present Chronicle, on account of its agreement in great part with the contents of the books of Samuel and Kings," is a supposition which merely evades giving a reason for the division of the work into two, by holding the division to have been made before the book came into the canon. But unless the division had been made before, no one would ever have thought of considering the first half of this book, *i.e.* our present Chronicle, unworthy of a place in the canon, since it contains, in great part, new information not found in the books of Samuel and Kings, and supplements in a variety of ways even the narratives which are contained in these books. And even supposing that the Chronicle was received into the canon as a supplement, after the books of Ezra and Nehemiah had already received a definite place in it, the verses 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22 f. could scarcely have been added to the Chronicle from the book of Ezra, to call attention to the fact that the Chronicle had received an unsuitable place in the canon, as it ought to have stood before the book of Ezra.



of Ezra), and would, moreover, hardly have altered בְּפִי (Chron.) into מִפִּי (Ezra), and יְהִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עִמּוֹ into יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עִמּוֹ.

The remaining grounds which are usually urged for the original unity of the two writings, prove nothing more than the possibility or probability that both originated with one author; certainly they do not prove that they originally formed one work. The long list of phenomena in Bertheau's Commentary, pp. xvi-xx, by which a certainty is supposed to be arrived at that the Chronicle and Ezra originally was one great historical work, compiled from various sources, greatly requires the help of critical bias. 1. "The predilection of the author for genealogical lists, for detailed descriptions of great feasts, which occurred at the most various times, for exact representations of the arrangement of the public worship, and the business of the Levites and priests, with their classifications and ranks," cannot be proved to exist in the book of Ezra. That book contains only one very much abridged genealogy, that of Ezra (vii. 1-5); only two lists,—those, namely, of the families who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Ezra (chap. ii. and viii.); only one account of the celebration of a feast, the by no means detailed description of the consecration of the temple (vi. 16); short remarks on the building of the altar, the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, and the laying of the foundation-stone of the temple, in chap. iii.; and it contains nothing whatever as to the divisions and ranks of the priests and Levites. That in these lists and descriptions some expressions should recur, is to be expected from the nature of the case. Yet all that is common to both books is the word הַתִּיחַשׁ, the use of כַּמִּשְׁפָּט in the signification, "according to the Mosaic law" (1 Chron. xxiii. 31, 2 Chron. xxxv. 13, Ezra iii. 4, and Neh. viii. 18), and the liturgical formulæ הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה, which occurs also in Isa. xii. 4 and Ps. xxxiii. 2, and לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלֵּל with the addition, "Jahve is God, and His mercy endureth for ever" (1 Chron. xvi. 34, 41; 2 Chron. vii. 6; Ezra iii. 11). The other expressions enumerated by Bertheau are met with also in other writings: נִקְבּוּ בְּשִׁמוֹת in Num. i. 17; רָאשֵׁי אֲבוֹת and רָאשֵׁי בֵית-אֲבוֹת, Ex. vi. 14 ff.; and the formula לְבָלִי-הַקָּדוֹשׁ or בְּקָדוֹשׁ בְּתוֹרָה (בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה) (1 Chron. xvi. 40; 2 Chron. xxxv. 12, 26; Ezra iii. 2, 4) is just as common in other writings: cf. Josh. i. 8, viii. 31, 34; 1 Kings ii. 3; 2 Kings xiv. 6, xxii. 13, xxiii. 21. Bertheau further remarks: "In those sections in which the regulation of the public worship, the duties, classification, and offices of the priests and Levites

are spoken of, the author seizes every opportunity to tell of the musicians and doorkeepers, their duties at the celebration of the great festivals, and their classification. He speaks of the musicians, 1 Chron. vi. 16 ff., ix. 14-16, 33, xv. 16-22, 27 f., xvi. 4-42, xxiii. 5, xxv.; 2 Chron. v. 12 f., vii. 6, viii. 14 f., xx. 19, 21, xxiii. 13, 18, xxix. 25-28, 30, xxx. 21 f., xxxi. 2, 11-18, xxxiv. 12, xxxv. 15; Ezra iii. 10 f.; Neh. xi. 17, xii. 8, 24, 27-29, 45-47, xiii. 5. The doorkeepers are mentioned nearly as often, and not seldom in company with the singers: 1 Chron. ix. 17-29, xv. 18, 23, 24, xvi. 38, xxiii. 5, xxvi. 1, 12-19; 2 Chron. viii. 14, xxiii. 4, 19, xxxi. 14, xxxiv. 13, xxxv. 15; Ezra ii. 42, 70, vii. 7, x. 24; Neh. vii. 1, 45, x. 29, xi. 19, xii. 25, 45, 47, xiii. 5. Now if these passages be compared, not only are the same expressions met with (*e.g.* מְנַלְתִּים only in Chron., Ezra, and Neh.; הַמְשִׁיר and הַמְשִׁירִים likewise only in these books, but here very frequently, some twenty-eight times), and also very often in different places the same names (cf. 1 Chron. ix. 17 with Neh. xii. 25); but everywhere also we can easily trace the same view as to the importance of the musicians and doorkeepers for the public worship, and see that all information respecting them rests upon a very well-defined view of their duties and their position." But does it follow from this "well-defined view" of the business of the musicians and doorkeepers, that the Chronicle, Ezra, and Nehemiah form a single book? Is this view an idea peculiar to the author of this book? In all the historical books of the Old Testament, from Exodus and Leviticus to Nehemiah, we find the idea that the laying of the sacrifice upon the altar is the business of the priest; but does it follow from that, that all those books were written by one man? But besides this, the representation given by Bertheau is very one-sided. The fact is, that in the Chronicle, and in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, mention is made of the priests just as often as of the Levitical musicians, and oftener than the doorkeepers are spoken of, as will be seen from the proofs brought forward in the following remarks; nor can any trace be discovered of a "fondness" on the part of the chronicler for the musicians and porters. They are mentioned only when the subject demanded that they should be mentioned.

2. As to the language.—Bertheau himself admits, after the enumeration of a long list of linguistic peculiarities of the Chronicle and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, that all these



phenomena are to be met with separately in other books of the Old Testament, especially the later ones; only their frequent use can be set down as the linguistic peculiarity of *one* author. But does the mere numbering of the places where a word or a grammatical construction occurs in this or that book really serve as a valid proof for the unity of the authorship? When, for example, the form **בָּיָה**, 2 Chron. xiv. 13, xxviii. 14, Ezra ix. 7, Neh. iii. 36, occurs elsewhere only in Esther and Daniel, or **קָבַל** in 1 Chron. xii. 18, xxi. 11, 2 Chron. xxix. 16, 22, and Ezra viii. 30, is elsewhere found only in Proverbs once, in Job once, and thrice in Esther, does it follow that the Chronicle and the book of Ezra are the work of one author? The greater number of the linguistic phenomena enumerated by Bertheau, such as the use of **הָאֱלֹהִים** for יהוה; the frequent use of **לְ**, partly before the infinitive to express shall or must, partly for subordinating or introducing a word; the multiplication of prepositions,—*e.g.* in **לְאֵין**, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; **עַד**, 2 Chron. xvi. 14; **לְמַעַן**, 2 Chron. xvi. 12, xvii. 12, xxvi. 8,—are characteristics not arising from a peculiar use of language by our chronicler, but belonging to the later or post-exilic Hebrew in general. The only words and phrases which are characteristic of and common to the Chronicle and the book of Ezra are: **כַּפּוֹר** (bowl), 1 Chron. xxviii. 17, Ezra i. 10, viii. 27; the infinitive Hophal **הוֹסִיד**, used of the foundation of the temple, 2 Chron. iii. 3, Ezra iii. 11; **בְּלִיָּה**, of the divisions of the Levites, 2 Chron. xxxv. 5 and Ezra vi. 18; **הַתְּנוּבָה**, of offerings, 1 Chron. xxix. 5, 6, 9, 14, 17, Ezra i. 6, ii. 68, iii. 5; **עַד לְמִרְחוֹק** (with three prepositions), 2 Chron. xxvi. 15, Ezra iii. 13; and **הָבִין** **לְדָרֶשׁ**, 2 Chron. xii. 14, xix. 3, xxx. 19, and Ezra vii. 10. These few words and constructions would *per se* not prove much; but in connection with the fact that neither in the language nor in the ideas are any considerable differences or variations to be observed, they may serve to strengthen the probability, arising from the relation of the end of the Chronicle to the beginning of the book of Ezra, that both writings were composed by the priest and scribe Ezra.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The opinion first propounded by Ewald, and adopted by Bertheau, Dillmann (art. "Chronik" in *Herzog's Realencykl.*), and others, that "the author belonged to the guild of musicians settled at the temple in Jerusalem" (*Gesch. des V. Isr.* i. p. 235), has no tenable ground for its support, and rests merely on the erroneous assumption that the author has not the same sympathy with the priests as he shows in speaking of the Levites, more especially

## § 3. THE SOURCES OF THE CHRONICLES.

The genealogical list in chap. i., which gives us the origin of the human race and of the nations, and that which contains the names of the sons of Jacob (ii. 1 and 2), are to be found in and have been without doubt extracted from Genesis, to be placed together here. For it is scarcely probable that genealogical lists belonging to primeval time and the early days of Israel should have been preserved till the post-exilic period. But all the genealogical registers which follow, together with the geographical and historical remarks interwoven with them (chap. ii. 3-viii. 40), have not been derived from the older historical books of the Old Testament: for they contain for the most part merely the names of the originators of those genealogical lines, of the grandsons and some of the great-grandsons of Jacob, and of the ancestors, brothers, and sons of David; but nowhere do they contain the whole lines. Moreover, in the parallel places the names often differ greatly, so that all the variations cannot be ascribed to errors of transcription. Compare the comparative table of these parallel places in my *apolog. Versuch über die Chron.* S. 159 ff., and in the *Handbook of Introduction*, § 139, 1. All these catalogues, together with that of the cities of the Levites (chap. vi. 39-66), have been derived from other, extra-biblical sources.

of the singers and doorkeepers (Berth.). If this assertion were true, the author might have been just as well a Levitical doorkeeper as a musician. But it is quite erroneous, as may be seen on a comparison of the passages adduced *supra*, p. 26, from Bertheau's commentary. In all the passages in which the musicians and doorkeepers are mentioned the priests are also spoken of, and in such a way that to both priests and Levites that is ascribed which belonged to their respective offices: to the priests, the sacrificial service and the blowing of the trumpets; to the Levites, the external business of the temple, and the execution of the instrumental music and psalm-singing introduced by David. From this it is clear that there is no reason why the priest and scribe Ezra might not have composed the Chronicle. The passages supporting the assertion that where musicians and doorkeepers are spoken of the priests are also mentioned, are: 1 Chron. vi. 34 ff., ix. 10-13, xv. 24, xvi. 6, 39 f., xxiii. 2, 13, 28, 32, xxiv. 1-19; 2 Chron. v. 7, 11-14, vii. 6, viii. 14 f., xiii. 9-12, xvii. 8, xix. 8, 11, xx. 28, xxiii. 4, 6, 18, xxvi. 17, 20, xxix. 4, 16, 21-24, 34, xxx. 3, 15, 21, 25, 27, xxxi. 2, 17, 19, xxxiv. 30, xxxv. 2, 8, 10, 14, 18; Ezra i. 5, ii. 61, 70, iii. 2, 8, 10-12, vi. 16, 18, 20, vii. 7, 24, viii. 15, 24-30, 33; Neh. ii. 16, iii. 1, vii. 73, viii. 13, x. 1-9, 29, 35, 39 f., xi. 3, 10 ff., xii. 1 ff., 30, 35, 41, 44, 47, xiii. 30.



But as Bertheau, S. xxxi, rightly remarks: "We cannot hold the lists to be the result of historical investigation on the part of the author of the Chronicle, in the sense of his having culled the individual names carefully either out of historical works or from traditions of the families, and then brought them into order: for in reference to Gad (chap. v. 12) we are referred to a genealogical register prepared in the time of Jotham king of Judah and Jeroboam king of Israel; while as to Issachar (chap. vii. 2) the reference is to the numbering of the people which took place in the time of David; and it is incidentally (?) stated (chap. ix. 1) that registers had been prepared of all Israelites (*i.e.* the northern tribes)." Besides this, in 1 Chron. xxiii. 3, 27, and xxvi. 31, numberings of the Levites, and in 1 Chron. xxvii. 24 the numbering of the people undertaken by Joab at David's command, are mentioned. With regard to the latter, however, it is expressly stated that its results were not incorporated in the *דְּבַרֵּי הַיָּמִים*, *i.e.* in the book of the chronicles of King David, while it is said that the results of the genealogical registration of the northern tribes of Israel were written in the book of the kings of Israel. According to this, then, it might be thought that the author had taken his genealogical lists from the great historical work made use of by him, and often cited, in the history of the kings of Judah—"the *national* annals of Israel and Judah." But this can be accepted only with regard to the short lists of the tribes of the northern kingdom in chap. v. and vii., which contain nothing further than the names of families and fathers'-houses, with a statement of the number of males in these fathers'-houses. It is possible that these names and numbers were contained in the national annals; but it is not likely that these registers, which are of a purely genealogical nature, giving the descent of families or famous men in longer or shorter lines of ancestors, were received into the national annals (*Reichsannalen*), and it does not at all appear from the references to the annals that this was the case. These genealogical lists were most probably in the possession of the heads of the tribes and families and households, from whom the author of the Chronicle would appear to have collected all he could find, and preserved them from destruction by incorporating them in his work.

In the historical part (1 Chron. x.—2 Chron. xxxvi.), at the death of almost every king, the author refers to writings in which the events and acts of his reign are described. Only in the case

of Joram, Abaziah, Athaliah, and the later kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah, are such references omitted. The books which are thus named are: (1) For David's reign, Dibre of Samuel the seer, of the prophet Nathan, and of Gad the seer (1 Chron. xxix. 29); (2) as to Solomon, the Dibre of the prophet Nathan, the prophecy (נְבִיאָה) of Abijah the Shilonite, and the visions (חֲזוֹן) of the seer Iddo against Jeroboam the son of Nebat (2 Chron. ix. 29); (3) for Rehoboam, Dibre of the prophet Shemaiah and the seer Iddo (chap. xii. 15); (4) for Abijah's reign, Midrash of the prophet Iddo (xiii. 22); (5) for Asa, the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (xvi. 11); (6) as to Jehoshaphat, Dibre of Jehu the son of Hanani, which had been incorporated with the book of the kings of Israel (xx. 34); (7) for the reign of Joash, Midrash-Sepher of the kings (xxiv. 27); (8) for the reign of Amaziah, the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (xxv. 26); (9) in reference to Uzziah, a writing (כְּתָב) of the prophet Isaiah (xxvi. 22); (10) as to Jotham, the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (xxvii. 7); (11) for the reign of Ahaz, the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (xxviii. 26); (12) for Hezekiah, the vision (חֲזוֹן) of the prophet Isaiah, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel (xxxii. 32); (13) as to Manasseh, Dibre of the kings of Israel, and Dibre of Hozaï (xxxiii. 18 and 19); (14) for the reign of Josiah, the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (xxxv. 27); and (15) for Jehoiakim, the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (xxxvi. 8).

From this summary, it appears that two classes of writings, of historical and prophetic contents respectively, are quoted. The book of the kings of Judah and Israel (No. 5, 8, 11), the book of the kings of Israel and Judah (10, 14, 15), the histories (הִיסְטוֹרְיָה) of the kings of Israel (13), and the Midrash-book of kings (7), are all historical. The first three titles are, as is now generally admitted, only variations in the designation of one and the same work, whose complete title, "Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel" (or Israel and Judah), is here and there altered into "Book of the Events (or History) of the Kings of Israel," *i.e.* of the whole Israelitish people. This work contained the history of the kings of both kingdoms, and must have been essentially the same as to contents with the two annalistic writings cited in the canonical books of Kings: the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, and the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah. This conclusion is forced upon us by the fact that the



extracts from them contained in our canonical books of Kings, coincide with the extracts from the books of the kings of Israel and Judah contained in our Chronicle where they narrate the same events, either verbally, or at least in so far that the identity of the sources from which they have been derived cannot but be recognised. The only difference is, that the author of the Chronicle had the two writings which the author of the book of Kings quotes as two separate works, before him as one work, narrating the history of both kingdoms in a single composition. For he cites the book of the kings of Israel even for the history of those kings of Judah who, like Jotham and Hezekiah, had nothing to do with the kingdom of Israel (*i.e.* the ten tribes), and even after the kingdom of the ten tribes had been already destroyed, for the reigns of Manasseh, Josiah, and Jehoiakim. But we are entirely without any means of answering with certainty the question, in how far the merging of the annals of the two kingdoms into *one* book of the kings of Israel was accompanied by remoulding and revision. The reasons which Bertheau, in his commentary on Chronicles, p. xli. ff., brings forward, after the example of Thenius and Ewald, for thinking that it underwent so thorough a revision as to become a different book, are without force. The difference in the title is not sufficient, since it is quite plain, from the different names under which the chronicler quotes the work which is used by him, that he did not give much attention to literal accuracy. The character of the parallel places in our books of Kings and the Chronicle, as Bertheau himself admits, forms no decisive criterion for an accurate determination of the relation of the chronicler to his original documents, which is now in question, since neither the author of the books of Samuel and Kings nor the author of the Chronicle intended to copy with verbal exactness: they all, on the contrary, treated the historical material which they had before them with a certain freedom, and wrought it up in their own writings in accordance with their various aims.

It is questionable if the work quoted for the reign of Joash, מִדְּרַשׁ סֵפֶר הַמַּלְכִּים (No. 7), is identical with the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, or whether it be not a commentary on it, or perhaps a revision of that book, or of a section of the history of the kings for purposes of edification. The narrative in the Chronicle of the chief events in the reign of Joash, his accession, with the fall of Athaliah, and the repairing of the temple (2

Chron. xxiii. and xxiv.), agrees with the account of these events in 2 Kings xi. and xii. where the annals of the kings of Judah are quoted, to such an extent, that both the authors seem to have derived their accounts from the same source, each making extracts according to his peculiar point of view. But the Chronicle recounts, besides this, the fall of Joash into idolatry, the censure of this defection by the prophet Zechariah, and the defeat of the numerous army of the Jews by a small Syrian host (xxiv. 15-25); from which, in Bertheau's opinion, we may come, without much hesitation, to the conclusion that the connection of these events had been already very clearly brought forward in a Midrash of that book of Israel and Judah which is quoted elsewhere. This is certainly possible, but it cannot be shown to be more than a possibility; for the further remark of Bertheau, that in the references which occur elsewhere it is not so exactly stated as in 2 Chron. xxiv. 27 what the contents of the book referred to are, is shown to be erroneous by the citation in chap. xxxiii. 18 and 19. It cannot, moreover, be denied that the title מִדְּרָשׁ כִּפָּר instead of the simple כִּפָּר is surprising, even if, with Ewald, we take מִדְּרָשׁ in the sense of "composition" or "writing," and translate it "writing-book" (*Schriftbuch*), which gives ground for supposing that an expository writing is here meant. Even taking the title in this sense, it does not follow with any certainty that the Midrash extended over the whole history of the kings, and still less is it proved that this expository writing may have been used by the chronicler here and there in places where it is not quoted.

So much, however, is certain, that we must not, with Jahn, Movers, Staehelin, and others, hold these annals of the kings of Israel and Judah, which are quoted in the canonical books of Kings and the Chronicle, to be the official records of the acts and undertakings of the kings prepared by the מִזְכִּירִים.<sup>1</sup> They are

<sup>1</sup> Against this idea Bähr also has very justly declared (*die Bücher der Könige*, in J. P. Lange's *theol. homilet. Bibelwerke*, S. x. f.), and among other things has rightly remarked, that in the separated kingdom of Israel there is no trace whatever of court or national historians. But he goes much too far when he denies the existence of national annals in general, even in the kingdom of Judah, and under David and Solomon. For even granting that the מִזְכִּיר derives his name from this, "that his duty was, as מְזַכֵּר, to bring to the recollection of the king all the state affairs which were to be cared for, and give advice in reference to them;" yet this function is so intimately connected with the recording and preserving of the national



rather annalistic national histories composed by prophets, partly from the archives of the kingdom and other public documents, partly from prophetic monographs containing prophecy and history, either composed and continued by various prophets in succession during the existence of both kingdoms, or brought together in a connected form shortly before the ruin of the kingdom out of the then existing contemporary historical documents and prophetic records. Two circumstances are strongly in favour of the latter supposition. On the one hand, the references to these annals in both kingdoms do not extend to the last kings, but end in the kingdom of Israel with Pekah (2 Kings xv. 31), in the kingdom of Judah with Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 5 and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 8). On the other hand, the formula "until this day" occurs in reference to various events; and since it for the most part refers not to the time of the exile, but to times when the kingdom still existed (cf. 1 Kings viii. 8 with 2 Chron. v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 13, 21, with 2 Chron. viii. 8; 1 Kings xii. 19 with 2 Chron. x. 19; 2 Kings viii. 22 with 2 Chron. xxi. 10, 2 Kings ii. 22, x. 27, xiv. 7, and xvi. 6), it cannot be from the hand of the authors of our canonical books of Kings and Chronicles, but must have come down to us from the original documents, and is in them possible only if they were written at some shorter or longer period after the events. When Bähr, in the place already quoted, says, on the contrary, that the time shortly before the fall of the kingdom, the time of complete uprooting, would appear to be the time least of all suited for the collection and editing of national year-books, this arises from his not having fully weighed the fact, that at that very time prophets like Jeremiah lived and worked, and, as is clear from documents of the kingdom and of all royal ordinances, that from it the composition of official annals of the kingdom follows almost as a matter of course. The existence of such national annals, or official year-books of the kingdom, is placed by 1 Chron. ix. 1 and xxvii. 24 beyond all doubt. According to ix. 1, a genealogical record of the whole of Israel was prepared and inserted in the book of the kings of Israel; and according to xxvii. 24, the result of the numbering of the people, carried out by Joab under David, was not inserted in the book of the "Chronicles of King David." Bähr's objections to the supposition of the existence of national annals, rest upon the erroneous presupposition that all judgments concerning the kings and their religious conduct which we find in our canonical histories, would have also been contained in the annals of the kingdom, and that thus the authors of our books of Kings and Chronicles would have been mere copyists giving us some excerpts from the original documents.

the prophecies of Jeremiah, gave much time to the accurate study of the older holy writings.

The book composed by the prophet Isaiah concerning the reign of King Uzziah (9) was a historical work ; as was also probably the Midrash of the prophet Iddo (4). But, on the other hand, we cannot believe, as do Ewald, Bertheau, Bähr, and others, that the other prophetic writings enumerated under 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, and 13, were merely parts of the books of the kings of Israel and Judah ; for the grounds which are brought forward in support of this view do not appear to us to be tenable, or rather, tend to show that those writings were independent books of prophecy, to which some historical information was appended. 1. The circumstance that it is said of two of those writings, the Dibre of Jehu and the דִּבְרֵי יִשְׁעָיָה of Isaiah (6 and 12), that they were incorporated or received into the books of the Kings, does not justify the conclusion "that, since two of the above-named writings are expressly said to be parts of the larger historical work, probably by the others also only parts of this work are meant" (Ew., Berth. S. xxxiv). For in the citations, those writings are not called parts of the book of Kings, but are only said to have been received into it as component parts ; and from that it by no means follows that the others, whose reception is not mentioned, were parts of that work. The admission of one writing into another book can only then be spoken of when the book is different from the writing which is received into it. 2. Since some of the writings are denominated דִּבְרֵי of a prophet, from the double meaning of the word דִּבְרֵי, *verba* and *res*, this title might be taken in the sense of "events of the prophets," to denote historical writings. But it is much more natural to think, after the analogy of the superscriptions in Amos i. 1, Jer. i. 1, of books of prophecies like the books of Amos and Jeremiah, which contained prophecies and prophetic speeches along with historical information, just as the sections Amos vii. 10-17, Jer. chap. xl.-xlv. do, and which differed from our canonical books of prophecies, in which the historical relations are mentioned only in exceptional cases, only by containing more detailed and minute accounts of the historical events which gave occasion to the prophetic utterances. On account of this fulness of historical detail, such prophetic writings, without being properly histories, would yet be for many periods of the history of the kings very abundant sources of history. The above-mentioned difference between our canonical



books of prophecy and the books now under discussion is very closely connected with the historical development of the theocracy, which showed itself in general in this, that the action of the older prophets was specially directed to the present, and to *vivâ voce* speaking, while that of those of a later time was more turned towards the future, and the consummation of the kingdom of God by the Messiah (cf. Küper, *das Prophetenthum des A. Bundes*, 1870, S. 93 ff.). This signification of the word דְּבָרִי is, in the present case, placed beyond all doubt by the fact that the writings of other prophets which are mentioned along with these are called נְבוּאָה, חֲזוֹן, and חֲזוֹן,—words which never denote historical writings, but always only prophecies and visions of the prophets. In accordance with this, the חֲזוֹן of Isaiah (12) is clearly distinguished from the writing of the same prophet concerning Uzziah, for which כְּתָב is used; while in the reign of Manasseh, the speeches of Hozai are named along with the events, *i.e.* the history of the kings of Israel (2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, 19), and a more exact account of what was related about Manasseh in each of these two books is given. From this we learn that the historical book of Kings contained the words which prophets had spoken against Manasseh; while in the writing of the prophet Hozai, of whom we know nothing further, information as to the places where his idolatry was practised, and the images which were the objects of it, was to be found. After all these facts, which speak decidedly against the identification of the prophetic writings cited in the book of Kings with that book itself, the enigmatic לְהַתִּיחַשׁ, after the formula of quotation, “They are written in the words (speeches) of the prophet Shemaiah and of the seer Iddo” (2 Chron. xii. 15), can naturally not be looked upon as a proof that here prophetic writings are denominated parts of a larger historical work. 3. Nor can we consider it, with Bertheau, decisive, “that for the whole history of David (דְּבָרֵי דָוִד מֶלֶךְ הָרִאשֹׁנִים וְהָאַחֲרֹנִים), Solomon, Rehoboam, and Jehoshaphat, prophetic writings are referred to; while for the whole history of Asa, Amaziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Josiah, the references are to the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.” From this fact no further conclusion can be drawn than that, in reference to the reigns of some kings the prophetic writings, and in reference to those of others the history of the kingdom, contained all that was important, and that the history of the kingdom contained also information as to the work of the prophets in

the kingdom, while the prophetic writings contained likewise information as to the undertakings of the kings. The latter might contain more detailed accounts in reference to some kings, the former in reference to others; and this very circumstance, or some other reason which cannot now be ascertained by us, may have caused the writer of the Chronicle to refer to the former in reference to one king, and to the latter in reference to another.

Finally, 4. Bähr remarks, S. viii. f.: "Quite a number of sections of our books (of Kings) are found in the Chronicle, where the words are identical, and yet the reference there is to the writings of single definite persons, and not to the three original documents from which the Kings is compiled. Thus, in the first place, in the history of Solomon, in which the sections 2 Chron. vi. 1-40 and 1 Kings viii. 12-50, 2 Chron. vii. 7-22 and 1 Kings viii. 64-ix. 9, 2 Chron. viii. 2-x. 17 and 1 Kings ix. 17-xxiii. 26, 2 Chron. ix. 1-28 and 1 Kings x. 1-28, etc., are identical, the Chronicle refers not to the book of the history of Solomon (as 1 Kings xi. 41), but to the דְּבָרֵי of the prophet Nathan, etc. (2 Chron. ix. 29); consequently the book of the history of Solomon must either have been compiled from those three prophetic writings, or at least have contained considerable portions of them. The case is identical with the second of the original documents, the book of the history of the kings of Judah (1 Kings xiv. 29 and elsewhere). The narrative as to Rehoboam is identical in 2 Chron. x. 1-19 and 1 Kings xii. 1-19, as also in 2 Chron. xi. 1-4 and 1 Kings xii. 20-24; further, in 2 Chron. xii. 13 f. as compared with 1 Kings xiv. 21 f.; but the history of the kings of Judah is not mentioned as an authority, as is the case in 1 Kings xiv. 29, but the דְּבָרֵי of the prophet Shemaiah and the seer Iddo (2 Chron. xii. 15). In the history of King Abijah we are referred, in the very short account, 1 Kings xv. 1-8, for further information to the book of the history of the kings of Judah; while the Chronicle, on the contrary, which gives further information, quotes from the מִדְּרָשׁ of the prophet Iddo (2 Chron. xiii. 22). The case is similar in the history of the kings Uzziah and Manasseh: our author refers in reference to both to the book of the kings of Judah (2 Kings xv. 6, xx. 17); the chronicler quotes, for the first the בְּתֵב of the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz (2 Chron. xxvi. 22), for the latter דְּבָרֵי הוֹנִי (2 Chron. xxxiii. 19). By all these quotations it is satisfactorily shown that the book of the kings of Judah is compiled from the historical writ-



ings of various prophets or seers." But this conclusion is neither valid nor necessary. It is not valid, for this reason, that the Chronicle, besides the narratives concerning the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah, Uzziah, and Manasseh, which it has in common with the books of Kings, and which are in some cases identical, contains a whole series of narratives peculiar to itself, which perhaps were not contained at all in the larger historical work on the kings of Judah, or at least were not there so complete as in the special prophetic writings cited by the chronicler. As to Solomon also, the Chronicle has something peculiar to itself which is not found in the book of Kings. Nor is the conclusion necessary; for from a number of identical passages in our canonical books of Kings and Chronicles, the only certain conclusion which can be drawn is, that these narratives were contained in the authorities quoted by both writers, but not that the variously named authorities form one and the same work.

By all this we are justified in maintaining the view, that the writings quoted by the author of the Chronicle under the titles, Words, Prophecy, Visions of this and that prophet, with the exception of the two whose incorporation with the book of Kings is specially mentioned, lay before him as writings separate and distinct from the "Books of the Kings of Israel and Judah," that these writings were also in the hands of many of his contemporaries, and that he could refer his readers to them. On this supposition, we can comprehend the change in the titles of the works quoted; while on the contrary supposition, that the special prophetic writings quoted were parts of the larger history of the kings of Israel and Judah, it remains inexplicable. But the references of the chronicler are not to be understood as if all he relates, for example, of the reign of David was contained in the words of the seer Samuel, of the prophet Nathan, and of the seer Gad, the writings he quotes for that reign. He may, as Berth. S. xxxviii. has already remarked, "have made use also of authorities which he did not feel called upon to name,"—as, for example, the lists of David's heroes, 1 Chron. xi. 10–47, and of those who gave in their adherence to David before the death of Saul, and who anointed him king in Hebron, chap. xii. Such also are the catalogues of the leaders of the host, of the princes of the tribes, and the stewards of the royal domains, chap. xxvii.; of the fathers'-houses of the Levites, and the divisions of the priests, Levites, and singers, etc., chap. xxiii.–xxvi. These lists contain records to whose sources

he did not need to refer, even if he had extracted them from the public annals of the kingdom during the reign of David, because he has embodied them in their integrity in his book.

But our canonical books of Samuel and Kings are by no means to be reckoned among the sources possibly used besides the writings which are quoted. It cannot well be denied that the author of the Chronicle knew these books; but that he has used them as authorities, as de Wette, Movers, Ewald, and others think, we must, with Bertheau and Dillmann, deny. The single plausible ground which is usually brought forward to prove the use of these writings, is the circumstance that the Chronicle contains many narratives corresponding to those found in the books of Samuel and Kings, and often verbally identical with them. But that is fully accounted for by the fact that the chronicler used the same more detailed writings as the authors of the books of Samuel and Kings, and has extracted the narratives in question, partly with verbal accuracy, partly with some small alterations, from them. Against the supposition that the above-named canonical books were used by the chronicler, we may adduce the facts that the chronicle, even in those corresponding passages, differs in many ways as to names and events from the account in those books, and that it contains, on an average, more than they do, as will be readily seen on an exact comparison of the parallel sections. Other and much weaker grounds for believing that the books of Samuel and Kings were used by the chronicler, are refuted in my *Handbook of Introduction*, § 141, 2; and in it, at § 139, is to be found a synoptical arrangement of the parallel sections.

#### § 4. THE HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF THE CHRONICLES.

The historic truth or credibility of the books of the Chronicle, which de Wette, in the *Beitr. zur Einleit.* 1806, violently attacked, in order to get rid of the evidence of the Chronicle for the Mosaic origin of the Sinaitic legislation, is now again in the main generally recognised.<sup>1</sup> The care with which the chronicler

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bertheau, *Com. S.* xliii, and Dillmann, *loc cit.* The decision of the latter is as follows, S. 693: "This work has a great part of its narratives and information in common with the older canonical historical books, and very often corresponds verbally, or almost verbally, with them; but another and equally important part is peculiar to itself. This relationship was, formerly,



has used his authorities may be seen, on a comparison of the narratives common to the Chronicle with the books of Samuel and Kings, not only from the fact that in these parallel sections the story of the chronicler agrees in all essential points with the accounts of these books, but also from the variations which are to be met with. For these variations, in respect to their matter, give us in many ways more accurate and fuller information, and in every other respect are of a purely formal kind, in great part affecting only the language and style of expression, or arising from the hortatory-didactic aim of the narrative. But this hortatory aim has nowhere had a prejudicial effect on the objective truth of the statement of historical facts, as appears on every hand on deeper and more attentive observation, but has only imparted to the history a more subjective impress, as compared with the objective style of the books of Kings.

Now, since the parallel places are of such a character, we are, as Bertheau and Dillmann frankly acknowledge, justified in believing that the author of the Chronicle, in the communication of narratives not elsewhere to be found in the Old Testament, has followed his authorities very closely, and that not only the many registers which we find in his work—the lists in 1 Chron. xii., xxiii.–xxvi., xxvii.; the catalogue of cities fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xi. 6–12; the family intelligence, chap. xi. 18–23, xxi. 2, and such matters—have been communicated in exact accordance with his authorities, but also the accounts of the wars

in the time of the specially negative criticism, explained by the supposition that the chronicler had derived the information which he has in common with these books from them, and that every difference and peculiarity arose from misunderstanding, misinterpretation, a desire to ornament, intentional misrepresentation, and pure invention (so especially de Wette in his *Beitr.*, and Gramberg, *die Chronik nach ihrem geschichtl. Karakter*, 1823). The historic credibility of the Chronicle has, however, been long ago delivered from such measureless suspicions, and recognised (principally by the efforts of Keil, *apologet. Versuch*, 1833; Movers, *die bibl. Chronik*, 1834; Haevernicks, in the *Einleitung*, 1839; and Ewald, in the *Geschichte Israels*). It is now again acknowledged that the chronicler has written everywhere from authorities, and that intentional fabrications or misrepresentations of the history can no more be spoken of in connection with him." Only K. H. Graf has remained so far behind the present stage of Old Testament inquiry as to seek to revive the views of de Wette and Gramberg as to the Chronicle and the Pentateuch. For further information as to the attacks of de Wette and Gramberg, and their refutation, see my *apologet. Versuche über die BB. der Chronik*, 1833, and in the *Handbook of Introduction*, § 143 and 144.

of Rehoboam, Abijah, Jehoshaphat (chap. xx.), Amaziah, etc. Only here and there, Bertheau thinks, has he used the opportunity offered to him to treat the history in a freer way, so as to represent the course of the more weighty events, and such as specially attracted his attention, according to his own view. This appears especially, he says, (1) in the account of the speeches of David, 1 Chron. xiii. 2 f., xv. 12 f., xxviii. 2-10, 20 f., xxix. 1-5 and 10-19, where, too, there occur statements of the value of the precious metals destined for the building of the temple (1 Chron. xxix. 4, 7), which clearly do not rest upon truthful historical recollection, and can by no means have been derived from a trustworthy source; as also in the reports of those of Abijah (2 Chron. xiii. 5-10) and of Asa (chap. xiv. 10, etc.); then (2) in the description of the religious ceremonies and feasts (1 Chron. xv. and xvi.; 2 Chron. v. 1-vii. 10, chap. xxix.-xxxi., chap. xxxv.): for in both speeches and descriptions expressions and phrases constantly recur which may be called current expressions with the chronicler. Yet these speeches stand quite on a level with those of Solomon, 2 Chron. i. 8-10, chap. vi. 4-11, 12-42, which are also to be found in the books of Kings (1. iii. 6-9, chap. viii. 14-53), from which it is to be inferred that the author here has not acted quite independently, but that in this respect also older histories may have served him as a model. But even in these descriptions information is not lacking which must rest upon a more accurate historical recollection, *e.g.* the names in 1 Chron. xv. 5-11, 17-24; the statement as to the small number of priests, and the help given to them by the Levites, in 2 Chron. xxix. 14 f., xxx. 17. Yet we must, beyond doubt, believe that the author of the Chronicle "has in these descriptions transferred that which had become established custom in his own time, and which according to general tradition rested upon ancient ordinance, without hesitation, to an earlier period." Of these two objections so much is certainly correct, that in the speeches of the persons acting in the history, and in the descriptions of the religious feasts, the freer handling of the authorities appears most strongly; but no alterations of the historical circumstances, nor additions in which the circumstances of the older time have been unhistorically represented according to the ideas or the taste of the post-exilic age, can, even here, be anywhere pointed out. With regard, first of all, to the speeches in the Chronicle, they are certainly not given according to the sketches or written reports of the hearers,



but sketched and composed by the historian according to a truthful tradition of the fundamental thoughts. For although, in all the speeches of the Chronicle, certain current and characteristic expressions and phrases of the author of this book plainly occur, yet it is just as little doubtful that the speeches of the various persons are essentially different from one another in their thoughts, and characteristic images and words. By this fact it is placed beyond doubt that they have not been put into the mouths of the historical persons either by the chronicler or by the authors of the original documents upon which he relies, but have been composed according to the reports or written records of the ear-witnesses. For if we leave out of consideration the short sayings or words of the various persons, such as 1 Chron. xi. 1 f., xii. 12 f., xv. 12 f., etc., which contain nothing characteristic, there are in the Chronicle only three longer speeches of King David (1 Chron. xxii. 7-16, xxviii. 2-10, 12-22, and xxix. 1-5), all of which have reference to the transfer of the kingdom to his son Solomon, and in great part treat, on the basis of the divine promise (2 Sam. vii. and 1 Chron. xvii.), of the building of the temple, and the preparations for this work. In these speeches the peculiarities of the chronicler come so strongly into view, in contents and form, in thought and language, that we must believe them to be free representations of the thoughts which in those days moved the soul of the grey-haired king. But if we compare with these David's prayer (1 Chron. xxix. 10-19), we find in it not only that multiplication of the predicates of God which is so characteristic of David (cf. Ps. xviii.), but also, in vers. 11 and 15, definite echoes of the Davidic psalms. The speech of Abijah, again, against the apostate Israel (2 Chron. xiii. 4-12), moves, on the whole, within the circle of thought usual with the chronicler, but contains in ver. 7 expressions such as **אֲנָשִׁים רָקִים** and **בְּנֵי בְלִיעַל**, which are quite foreign to the language of the Chronicle, and belong to the times of David and Solomon, and consequently point to sources contemporaneous with the events. The same thing is true of Hezekiah's speech (2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8), in which the expression **זְרֹעַ בָּשָׂר**, "the arm of flesh," recalls the intimacy of this king with the prophet Isaiah (cf. Isa. xxxi. 3). The sayings and speeches of the prophets, on the contrary, are related much more in their original form. Take, for instance, the remarkable speech of Azariah ben Oded to King Asa (2 Chron. xv. 1-7), which, on account of its obscurity, has been

very variously explained, and which, as is well known, is the foundation of the announcement made by Christ of the destruction of Jerusalem and the last judgment (Matt. xxiv. 6, 7 ; Luke xxi. 19). As C. P. Caspari (*der syrisch-ephraimit. Krieg.*, Christiania 1849, S. 54) has already remarked, it is so peculiar, and bears so little of the impress of the Chronicle, that it is impossible that it can have been produced by the chronicler himself : it must have been taken over by him from his authorities almost without alteration. From this one speech, whose contents he could hardly have reproduced accurately in his own words, and which he has consequently left almost unaltered, we can see clearly enough that the chronicler has taken over the speeches he communicates with fidelity, so far as their contents are concerned, and has only clothed them formally, more or less, in his own language. This treatment of the speeches in the Chronicle is, however, not a thing peculiar and confined to the author of this book, but is, as Delitzsch has shown (*Isaiah*, p. 17 ff. tr.), common to all the biblical historians ; for even in the prophecies in the books of Samuel and Kings distinct traces are observable throughout of the influence of the narrator, and they bear more or less visibly upon them the impress of the writer who reproduces them, without their historical kernel being thereby affected.

Now the historical truth of the events is just as little interfered with by the circumstance that the author of the Chronicle works out rhetorically the descriptions of the celebration of the holy feasts, represents in detail the offering of the sacrifices, and has spoken in almost all of these descriptions of the musical performances of the Levites and priests. The conclusion which has been drawn from this, that he has here without hesitation transferred to an earlier time that which had become established custom in his own time, would only then be correct if the restoration of the sacrificial worship according to the ordinance of Leviticus, or the introduction of instrumental music and the singing of psalms, dated only from the time of the exile, as de Wette, Gramberg, and others have maintained. If, on the contrary, these arrangements and regulations be of Mosaic, and in a secondary sense of Davidic origin, then the chronicler has not transferred the customs and usages of his own time to the times of David, Asa, Hezekiah, and others, but has related what actually occurred under these circumstances, only giving to the description an individual colouring. Take, for example, the



hymn (1 Chron. xvi. 8-36) which David caused to be sung by Asaph and his brethren in praise of the Lord, after the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem into the tabernacle prepared for it (1 Chron. xvi. 7). If it was not composed by David for this ceremony, but has been substituted by the chronicler, in his endeavour to represent the matter in a vivid way, from among the psalms sung in his own time on such solemn occasions, for the psalm which was then sung, but which was not communicated by his authority, nothing would be altered in the historical fact that then for the first time, by Asaph and his brethren, God was praised in psalms ; for the psalm given adequately expresses the sentiments and feelings which animated the king and the assembled congregation at that solemn festival. To give another example : the historical details of the last assembly of princes which David held (1 Chron. xxviii.) are not altered if David did not go over with his son Solomon, one by one, all the matters regarding the temple enumerated in 1 Chron. xxviii. 11-19.

There now remains, therefore, only some records of numbers in the Chronicle which are decidedly too large to be considered either accurate or credible. Such are the sums of gold mentioned in 1 Chron. xxii. 14 and xxix. 4, 7, which David had collected for the building of the temple, and which the princes of the tribes expended for this purpose ; the statements as to the greatness of the armies of Abijah and Jeroboam, of the number of the Israelites who fell in battle (2 Chron. xiii. 3, 17), of the number of King Asa's army and that of the Cushites (2 Chron. xiv 7 f.), of the military force of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xvii. 14-18), and of the women and children who were led away captive under Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 8). But these numbers cannot shake the historical credibility of the Chronicle in general, because they are too isolated, and differ too greatly from statements of the Chronicle in other places which are in accordance with fact. To estimate provisionally and in general these surprising statements, the more exact discussion of which belongs to the Commentary, we must consider, (1) that they all contain round numbers, in which thousands only are taken into account, and are consequently not founded upon any exact enumeration, but only upon an approximate estimate of contemporaries, and attest nothing more than that the greatness of the armies, and the multitude of those who had fallen in battle or were taken prisoner, was estimated at so high a number ; (2) that the actual

amount of the mass of gold and silver which had been collected by David for the building of the temple cannot with certainty be reckoned, because we are ignorant of the weight of the shekel of that time; and (3) that the correctness of the numbers given is very doubtful, since it is indubitably shown, by a great number of passages of the Old Testament, that the Hebrews have from the earliest times expressed their numbers not by words, but by letters, and consequently omissions might very easily occur, or errors arise, in copying or writing out in words the sums originally written in letters. Such textual errors are so manifest in not a few places, that their existence cannot be doubted; and that not merely in the books of the Chronicle, but in all the historical books of the Old Testament. The Philistines, according to 1 Sam. xiii. 5, for example, brought 30,000 chariots and 6000 horsemen into the field; and according to 1 Sam. vi. 19, God smote of the people at Beth-shemesh 50,070 men. With respect to these statements, all commentators are now agreed that the numbers 30,000 and 50,000 are incorrect, and have come into the text by errors of the copyists; and that instead of 30,000 chariots there were originally only 1000, or at most 3000, spoken of, and that the 50,000 in the second passage is an ancient gloss. There is, moreover, at present no doubt among investigators of Scripture, that in 1 Kings v. 6 (in English version, iv. 26) the number 40,000 (stalls) is incorrect, and that instead of it, according to 2 Chron. ix. 25, 4000 should be read; and further, that the statement of the age of King Ahaziah at 42 years (2 Chron. xxii. 22), instead of 22 years (2 Kings viii. 26), has arisen by an interchange of the numeral signs  $\beth$  and  $\daleth$ . A similar case is to be found in Ezra ii. 69, compared with Neh. vii. 70-72, where, according to Ezra, the chiefs of the people gave 61,000 darics for the restoration of the temple, and according to Nehemiah only 41,000 (viz. 1000 + 20,000 + 20,000). In both of these chapters a multitude of differences is to be found in reference to the number of the exiled families who returned from Babylon, which can only be explained on the supposition of the numeral letters having been confounded. But almost all these different statements of numbers are to be found in the oldest translation of the Old Testament, that of the LXX., from which it appears that they had made their way into the MSS. before the settlement of the Hebrew text by the Masoretes, and that consequently the use of letters as numeral signs was customary in the



pre-Masoretic times. This use of the letters is attested and presupposed as generally known by both Hieronymus and the rabbins, and is confirmed by the Maccabean coins. That it is a primeval custom, and reaches back into the times of the composition of the biblical books, is clear from this fact, that the employment of the alphabet as numeral signs among the Greeks coincides with the Hebrew alphabet. This presupposes that the Greeks received, along with the alphabet, at the same time the use of the letters as numeral signs from the Semites (Phœnicians or Hebrews). The custom of writing the numbers in words, which prevails in the Masoretic text of the Bible, was probably first introduced by the Masoretes in settling the rules for the writing of the sacred books of the canon, or at least then became law.

After all these facts, we may conclude the Introduction to the books of the Chronicle, feeling assured of our result, that the books, in regard to their historical contents, notwithstanding the hortatory-didactic aim of the author in bringing the history before us, have been composed with care and fidelity according to the authorities, and are fully deserving of belief.

As to the exegetical literature, see my *Handbook of Introduction*, § 138.

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## EXPOSITION

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### THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.

I. GENEALOGIES, WITH HISTORICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL  
NOTES.—CHAP. I.-IX.



IN order to show the connection of the tribal ancestors of Israel with the peoples of the earth, in chap. i. are enumerated the generations of the primeval world, from Adam till the Flood, and those of the post-diluvians to Abraham and his sons, according to the accounts in Genesis; in chap. ii.-viii., the twelve tribal ancestors of the people of Israel, and the most important families of the twelve tribes, are set down; and finally, in chap. ix., we have a list of the former inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the genealogical table of King Saul. The enumeration of the tribes and families of Israel forms, accordingly, the chief part of the contents of this first part of the Chronicle, to which the review of the families and tribes of the primeval time and the early days of Israel form the introduction, and the information as to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the family of King Saul the conclusion and the transition, to the following historical narrative. Now, if we glance at the order in which the genealogies of the tribes of Israel are ranged,—viz. (*a*) those of the families of Judah and of the house of David, chap. ii. 1-iv. 23; (*b*) those of the tribe of Simeon, with an account of their dwelling-place, chap. iv. 24-43; (*c*) those of the trans-Jordanic tribes, Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, chap. v. 1-26; (*d*) of the tribe of Levi, or the priests and Levites, chap. v. 27-vi. 66; (*e*) of the remaining tribes, viz. Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, cis-Jordanic Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher, chap. vii.; and of some still remaining families of Benjamin, with the family of Saul, chap. viii.,—it is at once seen that this arrangement is

the result of regarding the tribes from two points of view, which are closely connected with each other. On the one hand, regard is had to the historical position which the tribes took up, according to the order of birth of their tribal ancestors, and which they obtained by divine promise and guidance; on the other hand, the geographical position of their inheritance has been also taken into account. That regard to the historical position and importance of the tribes was mainly determinative, is plain from the introductory remarks to the genealogies of the tribe of Reuben, chap. v. 1, 2, to the effect that Reuben was the first-born of Israel, but that, because of his offence against his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, although they are not specified as possessors of it in the family registers; while it is narrated that Judah, on the contrary, came to power among his brethren, and that out of Judah had come forth the prince over Israel. Judah is therefore placed at the head of the tribes, as that one out of which God chose the king over His people; and Simeon comes next in order, because they had received their inheritance within the tribal domain of Judah. Then follows Reuben as the first-born, and after him are placed Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, because they had received their inheritance along with Reuben on the other side of the Jordan. After Reuben, according to age, only Levi could follow, and then after Levi come in order the other tribes. The arrangement of them, however — Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher, and again Benjamin—is determined from neither the historical nor by the geographical point of view, but probably lay ready to the hand of the chronicler in the document used by him, as we are justified in concluding from the character of all these geographical and topographical lists.

For if we consider the character of these lists somewhat more carefully, we find that they are throughout imperfect in their contents, and fragmentary in their plan and execution. The imperfection in the contents shows itself in this, that no genealogies of the tribes of Dan and Zebulun are given at all, only the sons of Naphtali being mentioned (vii. 13); of the half tribe of Manasseh beyond Jordan we have only the names of some heads of fathers'-houses<sup>1</sup> (v. 24); and even in the relatively

<sup>1</sup> It may perhaps be useful to notice *here* our author's use of the words *Geschlecht*, *Vaterhaus*, and *Familie*, and the rendering of them in English. As he states in a subsequent page, the *Geschlechter* are the larger divisions of



copious lists of the tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin, only the genealogies of single prominent families of these tribes are enumerated. In Judah, little more is given than the families descended from Pharez, chap. ii. 5-iv. 20, and a few notices of the family of Shelah; of Levi, none are noticed but the succession of generations in the high-priestly line of Aaron, some descendants of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, and the three Levites, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, set over the service of song; while of Benjamin we have only the genealogies of three families, and of the family of Saul, which dwelt at Gibeon. But the incompleteness of these registers comes still more prominently into view when we turn our attention to the extent of the genealogical lists, and see that only in the cases of the royal house of David and the high-priestly line of Eleazar do the genealogies reach to the Babylonian exile, and a few generations beyond that point; while all the others contain the succession of generations for only short periods. Then, again, in regard to their plan and execution, these genealogies are not only unsymmetrical in the highest degree, but they are in many cases fragmentary. In the tribe of Judah, besides the descendants of David, chap. iii., two quite independent genealogies of the families of Judah are given, in chap. ii. and iv. 1-23. The same is the case with the two genealogies of the Levites, the lists in chap. vi. differing from those in chap. v. 27-41 surprisingly, in vi. 1, 28, 47, 56, Levi's eldest son being called Gershom, while in chap. v. 27 and 1 Chron. xxiii. 61, and in the Pentateuch, he is called Gershon. Besides this, there is in chap. vi. 35-38 a fragment containing the names of some of Aaron's descendants, who had been already completely enumerated till the Babylonian exile in chap. v. 29-41. In the genealogies of Benjamin, too, the family of Saul is twice entered, viz. in chap. viii. 29-40 and in chap. ix. 35-44. The genealogies of the remaining tribes are throughout defective in the highest degree. Some consist merely of an enumeration of a number of heads of houses or families, with mention of their

the tribes tracing their descent from the *sons* of the twelve patriarchs; the *Väterhäuser* are the subdivisions descended from their grandsons or great-grandsons; while the *Familien* are the component parts of the *Väterhäuser*. The author's use of these words is somewhat vacillating; but *Geschlecht*, in this connection, has always been rendered by "family," *Väterhaus* by "father's-house," *Familie* by "household," and *Familiengruppen* by "groups of related households."—TR.

dwelling-place: as, for instance, the genealogies of Simeon, chap. iv. 24-43; of Reuben, Gad, half Manasseh, chap. v. 1-24; and Ephraim, chap. vii. 28, 29. Others give only the number of men capable of bearing arms belonging to the individual fathers'-houses, as those of Issachar, Benjamin, and Asher, chap. vii. 2-5, 7-11, 40; and finally, of the longer genealogical lists of Judah and Benjamin, those in chap. iv. 1-20 and in chap. viii. consist only of fragments, loosely ranged one after the other, giving us the names of a few of the posterity of individual men, whose genealogical connection with the larger divisions of these tribes is not stated.

By all this, it is satisfactorily proved that all these registers and lists have not been derived from one larger genealogical historical work, but have been drawn together from various old genealogical lists which single races and families had saved and carried with them into exile, and preserved until their return into the land of their fathers; and that the author of the Chronicle has received into his work all of these that he could obtain, whether complete or imperfect, just as he found them. Nowhere is any trace of artificial arrangement or an amalgamation of the various lists to be found.

Now, when we recollect that the Chronicle was composed in the time of Ezra, and that up to that time, of the whole people, for the most part only households and families of the tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin had returned to Canaan, we will not find it wonderful that the Chronicle contains somewhat more copious registers of these three tribes, and gives us only fragments bearing on the circumstances of præ-exilic times in the case of the remaining tribes.

#### CHAP. I.—THE FAMILIES OF PRIMEVAL TIME, AND OF THE ANTIQUITY OF ISRAEL.

Vers. 1-4. *The patriarchs from Adam to Noah and his sons.*—The names of the ten patriarchs of the primeval world, from the Creation to the Flood, and the three sons of Noah, are given according to Gen. v., and grouped together without any link of connection whatever: it is assumed as known from Genesis, that the first ten names denote generations succeeding one another, and that the last three, on the contrary, are the names of brethren.



Vers. 5-23. *The peoples and races descended from the sons of Noah.*—These are enumerated according to the table in Gen. x.; but our author has omitted not only the introductory and concluding remarks (Gen. x. 1, 21, 32), but also the historical notices of the founding of a kingdom in Babel by Nimrod, and the distribution of the Japhetites and Shemites in their dwelling-places (Gen. x. 5, 9-12, 18b-20, and 30 and 31). The remaining divergences are partly orthographic,—such as תִּבְלִי, ver. 5, for תִּבְלִי, Gen. x. 2, and רַעְמָא, ver. 9, for רַעְמָה, Gen. x. 7; and partly arising from errors of transcription,—as, for example, רִיפֹת, ver. 6, for רִיפֹת, Gen. x. 3, and conversely, רִוְרָנִים, ver. 7, for רִדְרָנִים, Gen. x. 4, where it cannot with certainty be determined which form is the original and correct one; and finally, are partly due to a different pronunciation or form of the same name,—as תַּרְשִׁישָׁה, ver. 7, for תַּרְשִׁישִׁי, Gen. x. 4, the ā of motion having been gradually fused into one word with the name, לוֹדִיִּים, ver. 11, for לוֹדִים, Gen. x. 13, just as in Amos ix. 7 we have כּוּשִׁים for כּוּשִׁיִּים; in ver. 22, עִבְלִי for עִבְלִי, Gen. x. 28, where the LXX. have also *Eὐάλα*, and מִשְׁנֶה, ver. 17, for מִשֶׁה, Gen. x. 23, which last has not yet been satisfactorily explained, since מִשְׁנֶה is used in Ps. cxx. 5 with קָדָר of an Arabian tribe. Finally, there is wanting in ver. 17 וּבְנֵי אָרָם before עֵוֶן, Gen. x. 23, because, as in the case of Noah's sons, ver. 4, where their relationship is not mentioned, so also in reference to the peoples descended from Shem, the relationship subsisting between the names Uz, Hul, etc., and Aram, is supposed to be already known from Genesis. Other suppositions as to the omission of the words וּבְנֵי אָרָם are improbable. That this register of seventy-one persons and tribes, descended from Shem, Ham, and Japhet, has been taken from Gen. x., is placed beyond doubt, by the fact that not only the names of our register exactly correspond with the table in Gen. x., with the exception of the few variations above mentioned, but also the plan and form of both registers is quite the same. In vers. 5-9 the sections of the register are connected, as in Gen. x. 2-7, by וּבְנֵי; from ver. 10 onwards by יֶלֶד, as in Gen. ver. 8; in ver. 17, again, by בְּנֵי, as in Gen. ver. 22; and in ver. 18 by יֶלֶד, and ver. 19 by יֶלֶד, as in Gen. vers. 24 and 25. The historical and geographical explanation of the names has been given in the commentary to Gen. x. According to Bertheau, the peoples descended from the sons of Noah amount to seventy, and fourteen of these are enumerated as descendants of Japhet, thirty of Ham, and twenty-six of Shem.

These numbers he arrives at by omitting Nimrod, or not enumerating him among the sons of Ham; while, on the contrary, he takes Arphaxad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, and Joktan, all of which are the names of persons, for names of peoples, in contradiction to Genesis, according to which the five names indicate persons, viz. the tribal ancestors of the Terahites and Joktanites, peoples descended from Eber by Peleg and Joktan.

Vers. 24-27. *The patriarchs from Shem to Abraham.*—The names of these, again, are simply ranged in order according to Gen. xi. 10-26, while the record of their ages before the begetting and after the birth of sons is omitted. Of the sons of Terah only Abram is named, without his brothers; with the remark that Abram is Abraham, in order to point out to the reader that he was the progenitor of the chosen people so well known from Genesis (cf. chap. xvii.).

Vers. 28-34. *The sons of Abraham.*—In ver. 28 only Isaac and Ishmael are so called; Isaac first, as the son of the promise. Then, in vers. 29-31, follow the posterity of Ishmael, with the remark that Ishmael was the first-born; in vers. 32 and 33, the sons of Keturah; and finally in ver. 34, the two sons of Isaac. —Ver. 29 ff. The names of the generations (תולדות) of Ishmael (Hebr. Yishma'el) correspond to those in Gen. xxv. 12-15, and have been there explained. In ver. 32 f. also, the names of the thirteen descendants of Abraham by Keturah, six sons and seven grandsons, agree with Gen. xxv. 1-4 (see commentary on that passage); only the tribes mentioned in Gen. xxv. 3, which were descended from Dedan the grandson of Keturah, are omitted. From this Bertheau wrongly concludes that the chronicler probably did not find these names in his copy of the Pentateuch. The reason of the omission is rather this, that in Genesis the great-grandchildren are not themselves mentioned, but only the tribes descended from the grandchildren, while the chronicler wished to enumerate only the sons and grandsons. Keturah is called כְּתוּרָה after Gen. xxv. 6, where Keturah and Hagar are so named. —Ver. 34. The two sons of Isaac. Isaac has been already mentioned as a son of Abram, along with Ishmael, in ver. 28. But here the continuation of the genealogy of Abraham is prefaced by the remark that Abraham begat Isaac, just as in Gen. xxv. 19, where the begetting of Isaac the son of Abraham is introduced with the same remark. Hence the supposition that the registers of the posterity of Abraham by Hagar and Keturah



(vers. 28-33) have been derived from Gen. xxv., already in itself so probable, becomes a certainty.

Vers. 35-42. *The posterity of Esau and Seir*.—An extract from Gen. xxxvi. 1-30. Ver. 35. The five sons of Esau are the same who, according to Gen. xxxvi. 4 f., were born to him of his three wives in the land of Canaan. עֵשָׂו is another form of עֵשָׂו, Gen. ver. 5 (Kethibh).—Vers. 36, 37. The grandchildren of Esau. In ver. 36 there are first enumerated five sons of his son Eliphaz, as in Gen. xxxvi. 11, for עֵשָׂו is only another form of עֵשָׂו (Gen.). Next to these five names are ranged in addition וְחִמְנָע וְעַמְלֵק, “Timna and Amalek,” while we learn from Gen. xxxvi. 12 that Timna was a concubine of Eliphaz, who bore to him Amalek. The addition of the two names *Timna* and *Amalek* in the Chronicle thus appears to be merely an abbreviation, which the author might well allow himself, as the posterity of Esau were known to his readers from Genesis. The name Timna, too, by its form (a feminine formation), must have guarded against the idea of some modern exegetes that Timna was also a son of Eliphaz. Thus, then, Esau had through Eliphaz six grandchildren, who in Gen. xxxvi. 12 are all set down as sons of Adah, the wife of Esau and the mother of Eliphaz. (*Vide com.* to Gen. xxxvi. 12, where the change of Timna into a son of Eliphaz is rejected as a misinterpretation.)—Ver. 37. To Reuel, the son of Esau by Bashemath, four sons were born, whose names correspond to those in Gen. xxxvi. 13. These ten (6 + 4) grandsons of Esau were, with his three sons by Aholibamah (Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah, ver. 35), the founders of the thirteen tribes of the posterity of Esau. They are called in Gen. xxxvi. 15 אֲלֹפִי בְנֵי עֵשָׂו, heads of tribes (φύλαρχοι) of the children of Esau, *i.e.* of the Edomites, but are all again enumerated, vers. 15-19, singly.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The erroneous statement of Bertheau, therefore, that “according to Genesis the Edomite people was also divided into twelve tribes, five tribes from Eliphaz, four tribes from Reuel, and the three tribes which were referred immediately to Aholibamah the wife of Esau. It is distinctly stated that Amalek was connected with these twelve tribes only very loosely, for he appears as the son of the concubine of Eliphaz,”—must be in so far corrected, that neither the Chronicle nor Genesis knows anything of the twelve tribes of the Edomites. Both books, on the contrary, mention thirteen grandsons of Esau, and these thirteen grandsons are, according to the account of Genesis, the thirteen phylarchs of the Edomite people, who are distributed according to the three wives of Esau; so that the thirteen families may be grouped together in three tribes. Nor is Amalek connected only in a loose way with the other tribes in

—Vers. 38–42. When Esau with his descendants had settled in Mount Seir, they subdued by degrees the aboriginal inhabitants of the land, and became fused with them into one people. For this reason, in Gen. xxxvi. 20–30 the tribal princes of the Seirite inhabitants of the land are noticed; and in our chapter also, ver. 38, the names of these seven בְּנֵי שֵׁעִיר, and in vers. 39–42 of their sons (eighteen men and one woman, Timna), are enumerated, where only Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, also mentioned in Gen. xxxvi. 25, is omitted. The names correspond, except in a few unimportant points, which have been already discussed in the Commentary on Genesis. The inhabitants of Mount Seir consisted, then, after the immigration of Esau and his descendants, of twenty tribes under a like number of phylarchs, thirteen of whom were Edomite, of the family of Esau, and seven Seirite, who are called in the Chronicle בְּנֵי שֵׁעִיר, and in Genesis חֲרִי, Troglodytes, inhabitants of the land, that is, aborigines.

If we glance over the whole posterity of Abraham as they are enumerated in vers. 28–42, we see that it embraces (*a*) his sons Ishmael and Isaac, and Isaac's sons Israel and Esau (together 4 persons); (*b*) the sons of Ishmael, or the tribes descended from Ishmael (12 names); (*c*) the sons and grandsons of Keturah (13 persons or chiefs); (*d*) the thirteen phylarchs descended from Esau; (*e*) the seven Seirite phylarchs, and eighteen grandsons and a granddaughter of Seir (26 persons). We have thus in all the names of sixty-eight persons, and to them we must add Keturah, and Timna the concubine of Eliphaz, before we get seventy persons. But these seventy must not by any means be reckoned as seventy tribes, which is the result Bertheau arrives at by means of strange calculations and errors in numbers.<sup>1</sup>

Genesis: he is, on the contrary, not only included in the number of the sons of Adah in ver. 12, probably because Timna stood in the same relationship to Adah the wife of Esau as Hagar held to Sarah, but also is reckoned in ver. 16 among the Allufim of the sons of Eliphaz. Genesis therefore enumerates not five but six tribes from Eliphaz; and the chronicler has not “completely obliterated the twelvefold division,” as Bertheau further maintains, but the thirteen sons and grandsons of Esau who became phylarchs are all introduced; and the only thing which is omitted in reference to them is the title אֱלֹפִימִי בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו, it being unnecessary in a genealogical enumeration of the descendants of Esau.

<sup>1</sup> That the Chronicle gives no countenance to this view appears from Bertheau's calculation of the 70 tribes: from Ishmael, 12; from Keturah, 13; from Isaac, 2; from Esau, 5 sons and 7 grandchildren by Eliphaz (Timna,



Upon this conclusion he founds his hypothesis, that as the three branches of the family of Noah are divided into seventy peoples (which, as we have seen at page 51 f., is not the case), so also the three branches of the family of Abraham are divided into seventy tribes; and in this again he finds a remarkable indication "that even in the time of the chronicler, men sought by means of numbers to bring order and consistency into the lists of names handed down by tradition from the ancient times."

Vers. 43-50. *The kings of Edom* before the introduction of the kingship into Israel.—This is a verbally exact repetition of Gen. xxxvi. 31-39, except that the introductory formula, Gen. ver. 32, "and there reigned in Edom," which is superfluous after the heading, and the addition "ben Achbor" (Gen. ver. 39) in the account of the death of Baal-hanan in ver. 50, are omitted; the latter because even in Genesis, where mention is made of the death of other kings, the name of the father of the deceased king is not repeated. Besides this, the king called Hadad (ver. 46 f.), and the city פְּעִי (ver. 50), are in Genesis Hadar (ver. 35 f.) and פְּעִי (ver. 39). The first of these variations has arisen from a transcriber's error, the other from a different pronunciation of the name. A somewhat more important divergence, however, appears, when in Gen. ver. 39 the death of the king last named is not mentioned, because he was still alive in the time of Moses; while in the Chronicle, on the contrary, not only of him also is it added, וַיָּמָת הָרָר, because at the time of the writing of the Chronicle he had long been dead, but the list of the names of the territories of the phylarchs, which in Genesis follows the introductory formula וַאֲלֵה שְׁמוֹת, is here connected with the enumeration of the kings by וַיָּהִי, "Hadad died, and there were chiefs of Edom." This may mean that, in the view of the ver. 36, being included in the number), and 4 grandsons by Reuel—16 in all; from Seir 7 sons, and from these 20 other descendants, 27 in all, which makes the sum of 70. But the biblical text mentions only 19 other descendants of Seir, so that only 26 persons came from Seir, and the sum is therefore 12+13+2+16+26=69. But we must also object to other points in Bertheau's reckoning: (1) the arbitrary change of Timna into a grandchild of Esau; (2) the arbitrary reckoning of Esau and Israel (= Jacob) without Ishmael. Was Esau, apart from his sons, the originator of a people? Had the author of the Chronicle cherished the purpose attributed to him by Bertheau, of bringing the lists of names handed down by tradition to the round or significant number 70, he would certainly in ver. 33 not have omitted the three peoples descended from Dedan (Gen. xxv. 3), as he might by these names have completed the number 70 without further trouble.

chronicler, the reign of the phylarchs took the place of the kingship after the death of the last king, but that interpretation is by no means necessary. The ׀ consec. may also merely express the succession of thought, only connecting logically the mention of the princes with the enumeration of the kings; or it may signify that, besides the kings, there were also tribal princes who could rule the land and people. The contents of the register which follows require that יִיִּי should be so understood.

Vers. 51-54. *The princes of Edom.*—The names correspond to those in Gen. xxxvi. 40-43, but the heading and the subscription in Genesis are quite different from those in the Chronicle. Here the heading is, “and the Allufim of Edom were,” and the subscription, “these are the Allufim of Edom,” from which it would be the natural conclusion that the eleven names given are proper names of the phylarchs. But the occurrence of two female names, Timna and Aholibamah, as also of names which are unquestionably those of races, *e.g.* Aliah, Pinon, Teman, and Mibzar, is irreconcilable with this interpretation. If we compare the heading and subscription of the register in Genesis, we find that the former speaks of the names “of the Allufim of Edom according to their habitations,<sup>1</sup> according to their places in their names,” and the latter of “the Allufim of Edom according to their habitations in the land of their possession.” It is there unambiguously declared that the names enumerated are not the names of persons, but the names of the dwelling-places of the Allufim, after whom they were wont to be named. We must therefore translate, “the Alluf of Timna, the Alluf of Aliah,” etc., when of course the female names need not cause any surprise, as places can just as well receive their names from women as their possessors as from men. Nor is there any greater difficulty in this, that only eleven dwelling-places are mentioned, while, on the contrary, the thirteen sons and grandsons of Esau are called Allufim. For in the course of time the number of phylarchs might have decreased, or in the larger districts two phylarchs may have dwelt together. Since the author of the Chronicle has taken this register also from Genesis, as the identity of the names clearly shows he did, he might safely assume that the matter was already known from that book, and so might

<sup>1</sup> So it is given by the author, “nach ihren Wohnsitzen;” but this must be a mistake, for the word is מִשְׁפְּחוֹתָם = their families, not מִשְׁבְּתָם, as it is in the subscription.—Tr.



allow himself to abridge the heading without fearing any misunderstanding; seeing, too, that he does not enumerate אֱדוֹם of Esau, but אֱלֹפִי אֲדוֹם, and Edom had become the name of a country and a people.

CHAP. II.—IV. 23.—THE TWELVE SONS OF ISRAEL AND THE FAMILIES OF JUDAH.

The list of the twelve sons of Israel (ii. 1, 2) serves as foundation and starting-point for the genealogies of the tribes of Israel which follow, chap. ii. 3–viii. The enumeration of the families of the tribe of Judah commences in ver. 3 with the naming of Judah's sons, and extends to chap. iv. 23. The tribe of Judah has issued from the posterity of only three of the five sons of Judah, viz. from Shelah, Pharez, and Zerah; but it was subdivided into five great families, as Hezron and Hamul, the two sons of Pharez, also founded families. The lists of our three chapters give us: (1) from the family of Zerah only the names of some famous men (ii. 6–8); (2) the descendants of Hezron in the three branches corresponding to the three sons of Hezron, into which they divided themselves (ii. 9), viz. the descendants of Ram to David (ii. 10–17), of Caleb (ii. 18–24), and of Jerahmeel (ii. 25–41). Then there follow in chap. ii. 42–55 four other lists of descendants of Caleb, who peopled a great number of the cities of Judah; and then in chap. iii. we have a list of the sons of David and the line of kings of the house of David, down to the grandsons of Zerubbabel; and finally, in chap. iv. 1–23, other genealogical fragments as to the posterity of Pharez and Shelah. Of Hamul, consequently, no descendants are noticed, unless perhaps some of the groups ranged together in chap. iv. 8–22, whose connection with the heads of the families of Judah is not given, are of his lineage. The lists collected in chap. iv. 1–20 are clearly only supplements to the genealogies of the great families contained in chap. ii. and iii., which the author of the Chronicle found in the same fragmentary state in which they are communicated to us.

Vers. 1, 2. *The twelve sons of Israel*, arranged as follows: first, the six sons of Leah; then Dan, the son of Rachel's handmaid; next, the sons of Rachel; and finally, the remaining sons of the handmaids. That a different place is assigned to Dan, viz. before the sons of Rachel, from that which he holds in the

list in Gen. xxxv. 23 ff., is perhaps to be accounted for by Rachel's wishing the son of her maid Bilhah to be accounted her own (*vide* Gen. xxx. 3-6).

Vers. 3-5. *The sons of Judah and of Pharez*, ver. 3 f.—The five sons of Judah are given according to Gen. xxxviii., as the remark on Er which is quoted from ver. 7 of that chapter shows, while the names of the five sons are to be found also in Gen. xlv. 12. The two sons of Pharez are according to Gen. xlv. 12, cf. Num. xxvi. 21.

Vers. 6-8. *Sons and descendants of Zerah*.—In ver. 6, five names are grouped together as בָּנֵי of Zerah, which are found nowhere else so united. The first, Zimri, may be strictly a son; but זִמְרִי may perhaps be a mistake for זִכְרִי, for Achan, who is in ver. 7 the son of Carmi, is in Josh. vii. 1 called the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah. But זִכְרִי (Josh.) may also be an error for זִמְרִי, or he may have been a son of Zimri, since in genealogical lists an intermediate member of the family is often passed over. Nothing certain can, however, be ascertained; both names are found elsewhere, but of persons belonging to other tribes: Zimri as prince of the Simeonites, Num. xxv. 14; as Benjamite, 1 Chron. viii. 36, ix. 42; and as king of Israel, 1 Kings xvi. 9; Zabdi, 1 Chron. viii. 19 (as Benjamite), and xxvii. 27, Neh. xi. 17. The four succeeding names, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, are met with again in 1 Kings v. 11, where it is said of Solomon he was wiser than the Ezrahite Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Machol, with the unimportant variation of דָּרַע for דָּרַע. On this account, Movers and Bertheau, following Clericus on 1 Kings iv. 31 (v. 11), hold the identity of the wise men mentioned in 1 Kings v. 11 with the sons (descendants) of Zerah to be beyond doubt. But the main reason which Clericus produces in support of this supposition, the *consensus quatuor nominum et quidem unius patris filiorum*, and the difficulty of believing that in *alia familia Hebræa* there should have been *quatuor fratres cognomines quatuor filiis Zerachi Judæ filii*, loses all its force from the fact that the supposition that the four wise men in 1 Kings v. 11 are brothers by blood, is a groundless and erroneous assumption. Since Ethan is called the Ezrahite, while the last two are said to be the sons of Machol, it is clear that the four were not brothers. The mention of them as men famous for their wisdom, does not at all require that we should think the men contem-



porary with each other. Even the enumeration of these four along with Zimri as בְּנֵי זֵרָה in our verse does not necessarily involve that the five names denote brothers by blood; for it is plain from vers. 7 and 8 that in this genealogy only single famous names of the family of Zerah the son of Judah and Tamar are grouped together. But, on the other hand, the reasons which go to disprove the identity of the persons in our verse with those named in 1 Kings v. 11 are not of very great weight. The difference in the names דָּרַע and דָּרַע is obviously the result of an error of transcription, and the form הַאֲזַרְתִּי (1 Kings v. 11) is most probably a patronymic from זֵרָה, notwithstanding that in Num. xxvi. 20 it appears as זֵרָה, for even the appellative אֲזַרְתִּי, *indigena*, is formed from זֵרָה. We therefore hold that the persons who bear the same names in our verse and in 1 Kings v. 11 are most probably identical, in spite of the addition בְּנֵי מָחֹל to Calcol and Darda (1 Kings v. 11). For that this addition belongs merely to these two names, and not to Ezrah, appears from Ps. lxxxviii. 1 and lxxxix. 1, which, according to the superscription, were composed by the Ezrahites Heman and Ethan. The authors of these psalms are unquestionably the Heman and Ethan who were famed for their wisdom (1 Kings v. 11), and therefore most probably the same as those spoken of in our verse as sons of Zerah. It is true that the authors of these psalms have been held by many commentators to be Levites, nay, to be the musicians mentioned in 1 Chron. xv. 17 and 19; but sufficient support for this view, which I myself, on 1 Kings v. 11, after the example of Hengstenberg, *Beitrr.* ii. S. 61, and on Ps. lxxxviii. defended, cannot be found. The statement of the superscription of Ps. lxxxviii. 1—"a psalm of the sons of Korah"—from which it is inferred that the Ezrahite Heman was of Levitic origin, does not justify such a conclusion.<sup>1</sup> For though the musician Heman the son of Joel was a Korahite of the race of Kohath (1 Chron. vi. 18-23), yet the musician Ethan the son of Kishi, or Kushaiah, was neither Korahite nor Kohathite, but a Merarite (vi. 29 ff.). Moreover, the Levites Heman and Ethan could not be enumerated among the Ezra-

<sup>1</sup> The above quoted statement of the superscription of Ps. lxxxviii. 1 can contain no information as to the author of the psalm, for this reason, that the author is expressly mentioned in the next sentence of the superscription. The psalm can only in so far be called a song of the children of Korah, as it bears the impress peculiar to the Korahite psalms in contents and form.

hites, that is, the descendants of Zerah, a man of Judah. The passages which are quoted in support of the view that the Levites were numbered with the tribes in the midst of whom they dwelt, and that, consequently, there were Judæan and Ephraimite Levites,—as, for example, 1 Sam. i. 1, where the father of the Levite Samuel is called an Ephrathite because he dwelt in Mount Ephraim; and Judg. xvii. 7, where a Levite is numbered with the family of Judah because he dwelt as sojourner (יָרֵךְ) in Bethlehem, a city of Judah,—certainly prove that the Levites were reckoned, as regards citizenship, according to the tribes or cities in which they dwelt, but certainly do not show that they were incorporated genealogically with those tribes because of their place of residence.<sup>1</sup> The Levites Heman and Ethan, therefore, cannot be brought forward in our verse “as adopted sons of Zerah, who brought more honour to their father than his proper sons” (Hengstb.). This view is completely excluded by the fact that in our verse not only Ethan and Heman, but also Zimri, Calcol, and Dara are called sons of Zerah, yet these latter were not adopted sons, but true descendants of Zerah. Besides, in ver. 8, there is an actual son or descendant of Ethan mentioned, and consequently יְהִיָּה and יִזְחִי cannot possibly be understood in some cases as implying only an adoptive relationship, and in the others actual descent. But the similarity of the names is not of itself sufficient to justify us in identifying the persons. As the name Zerah again appears in chap. vi. 26 in the genealogy of the Levite Asaph, so also the name Ethan occurs in the same genealogy, plainly showing that more than one Israelite bore this name. The author of the Chronicle, too, has sufficiently guarded against the opinion that Zerah’s sons Ethan and Heman are identical with the Levitical musicians who bear the same names, by tracing back in chap. vi. the family of these musicians to Levi, without calling them Ezrahites.<sup>2</sup> But to hold, with Movers, S. 237, that the recurrences of the same names in various races are contradictions, which are to be explained only on the supposition of genealogical combinations by various authors, will enter into

<sup>1</sup> Not even by intermarrying with heiresses could Levites become members of another tribe; for, according to the law, Num. xxxvi. 5 ff., heiresses could marry only men of their own tribe; and the possibility of a man of Judah marrying an heiress of the tribe of Levi was out of the question, for the Levites possessed no inheritance in land.

<sup>2</sup> The supposition of Ewald and Bertheau, that these two great singers of



the head of no sensible critic. We therefore believe the five persons mentioned in our verse to be actual descendants of the Judæan Zerah; but whether they were sons or grandsons, or still more distant descendants, cannot be determined. It is certainly very probable that Zimri was a son, if he be identical with the Zabdi of Josh. vii. 1; Ethan and Heman may have been later descendants of Zerah, if they were the wise men mentioned in 1 Kings v. 11; but as to Calcol and Dara no further information is to be obtained. From vers. 7 and 8, where of the sons (בְּנֵי) of Zimri and Ethan only one man in each case is named, it is perfectly clear that in our genealogy only individuals, men who have become famous, are grouped together out of the whole posterity of Zerah. The plural בְּנֵי in vers. 7 and 8, etc., even where only one son is mentioned, is used probably only in those cases where, out of a number of sons or descendants, one has gained for himself by some means a memorable name. This is true at least of Achan, ver. 7, who, by laying hands on the accursed spoils of Jericho, had become notorious (Josh. vii.). Because Achan had thus troubled Israel (עֲכָר), he is called here at once Achar. As to Carmi, *vide* on iv. 1.—Ver. 9. The only name given here as that of a descendant of Ethan is Azariah, of whom nothing further is known, while the name recurs frequently. Nothing more is said of the remaining sons of Zerah; they are merely set down as famous men of antiquity (Berth.). There follows in

Vers. 9-41. *The family of Hezron*, the first-born son of Pharez, which branches off in three lines, originating with his three sons respectively. The three sons of Hezron are Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai; but the families springing from them are enumerated in a different order. First (vers. 10-17) we have the family of Ram, because King David is descended from him; then (vers. 18-24) the family of Chelubai or Caleb, from whose lineage came the illustrious Bezaleel; and finally (vers. 25-41), the posterity of the first-born, Jerahmeel.—Ver. 9. וְאִשָּׁר נִלְדָּה לּוֹ, what was born to him. The passive stands impersonally instead of the more definite active, “to whom one bore,” so that the

the tribe of Judah had been admitted into their guild by the Levitic musical schools, and on that account had been received also into their family, and so had been numbered with the tribe of Levi, is thus completely refuted, even were it at all possible that members of other tribes should have been received into the tribe of Levi.

following names are subordinated to it with אִתָּהּ. The third person singular Niph. occurs thus also in iii. 4 and xxvi. 6; the construction of Niph. with אִתָּהּ frequently (Gen. iv. 18, xxi. 5, and elsewhere). Ram is called, in the genealogy in Matt. i. 3, 4, Aram; comp. אֲרָם, Job xxxii. 2, with אֲרָם, Gen. xxii. 21. פְּלִיבִי is called afterwards פְּלִיב; cf. on ver. 18.

Vers. 10–17 *The family of Ram* (vers. 10–12), traced down through six members to Jesse.—This genealogy is also to be found in Ruth iv. 19–21; but only here is Nahshon made more prominent than the others, by the addition, “prince of the sons of Judah.” Nahshon was a prince of Judah at the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt (Num. i. 7, ii. 3, vii. 12). Now between him, a contemporary of Moses, and Pharez, who at the immigration of Jacob into Egypt was about fifteen years old, lies a period of 430 years, during which the Israelites remained in Egypt. For that time only three names—Hezron, Ram, and Amminadab—are mentioned, from which it is clear that several links must have been passed over. So also, from Nahshon to David, for a period of over 400 years, four generations—Salma, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse—are too few; and consequently here also the less famous ancestors of David are omitted. שִׁלְמָה is called in Ruth iv. 20, 21, שִׁלְמָה and שִׁלְמֹן. In vers. 13–15, seven sons and two daughters of Jesse, with those of their sons who became famous (vers. 16, 17), are enumerated. According to 1 Sam. xvii. 12, Jesse had eight sons. This account, which agrees with that in 1 Sam. xvi. 8–12, may be reconciled with the enumeration in our verse, on the supposition that one of the sons died without posterity. In 1 Sam. xvi. 6 ff. and xvii. 13, the names of the eldest three—Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah—occur. Besides יִשַׁי, we meet with the form אִישַׁי (ver. 13); and the name שִׁמְהָ is only another form of שִׁמְעָה, which is found in 2 Sam. xiii. 3 and in 1 Chron. xx. 7, and is repeated in 2 Sam. xiii. 32 and xxi. 21 in the Kethibh (שִׁמְעִי). The names of the other three sons here mentioned (vers. 14 and 15) are met with nowhere else.—Ver. 16 f. The sisters of David have become known through their heroic sons. Zeruiah is the mother of the heroes of the Davidic history, Abishai, Joab, and Asahel (cf. 1 Sam. xxvi. 6; 2 Sam. ii. 18, iii. 39, viii. 16, and elsewhere). Their father is nowhere mentioned, “because their more famous mother challenged the greater attention” (Berth.). Abigail was, according to 2 Sam. xvii. 25, the daughter of Nahash, a sister of Zeruiah, and so was



only a half-sister of David, and was the mother of Amasa the captain of the host, so well known on account of his share in the conspiracy of Absalom; cf. 2 Sam. xvii. 25, xix. 14, and xx. 10. His father was Jether, or Jithra, the Ishmaelite, who in the Masoretic text of 2 Sam. xvii. 25 is called, through a copyist's error, **הַיִּשְׁמְעֵאֵלִי** instead of **הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִי**; see comm. on passage.

Vers. 18-24. *The family of Caleb.*—That **כָּלֵב** is merely a shortened form of **כְּלִיבִי**, or a form of that word resulting from the friction of constant use, is so clear from the context, that all exegetes recognise it. We have first (vers. 18-20) a list of the descendants of Caleb by two wives, then descendants which the daughter of the Gileadite Machir bore to his father Hezron (vers. 21-23), and finally the sons whom Hezron's wife bore him after his death (ver. 24). The grouping of these descendants of Hezron with the family of Caleb can only be accounted for by supposing that they had, through circumstances unknown to us, come into a more intimate connection with the family of Caleb than with the families of his brothers Ram and Jerahmeel. In vers. 42-55 follow some other lists of descendants of Caleb, which will be more fully considered when we come to these verses. The first half of the 18th verse is obscure, and the text is probably corrupt. As the words stand at present, we must translate, "Caleb the son of Hezron begat with Azubah, a woman, and with Jerioth, and these are her (the one wife's) sons, Jesher," etc. **בְּנֵיהָ**, *filii ejus*, suggests that only one wife of Caleb had been before mentioned; and, as appears from the "and Azubah died" of ver. 19, Azubah is certainly meant. The construction **הוֹלִיד אֵת**, "he begat with," is, it is true, unusual, but is analogous to **הוֹלִיד מִן**, viii. 9, and is explained by the fact that **הוֹלִיד** may mean to cause to bear, to bring to bearing; cf. Isa. lxvi. 9: therefore properly it is, "he brought Azubah to bearing." The difficulty of the verse lies in the **אִשָּׁה וְאֶת-יְרִיעוֹת**, for, according to the usual phraseology, we would have expected **אִשְׁתּוֹ** instead of **אִשָּׁה**. But **אִשָּׁה** may be, under the circumstances, to some extent justified by the supposition that Azubah is called indefinitely "woman," because Caleb had several wives. **וְאֶת-יְרִיעוֹת** gives no suitable meaning. The explanation of Kimchi, "with Azubah a woman, and with Jerioth," cannot be accepted, for only the sons of Azubah are hereafter mentioned; and the idea that the children of the other wives are not enumerated here because the list used by the chronicler

was defective, is untenable: for after two wives had been named in the enumeration of the children of one of them, the mother must necessarily have been mentioned; and so, instead of בְּנֵיהָ, we should have had בְּנֵי עֻזְבָּה. Hiller and J. H. Michaelis take וְאֵת as explicative, "with Azubah a woman, viz. with Jerioth;" but this is manifestly only the product of exegetical embarrassment. The text is plainly at fault, and the easiest conjecture is to read, with the Peschito and the Vulgate, אִשְׁתּוֹ אֵת instead of וְאֵת, "he begat with Azubah his wife, Jerioth (a daughter); and these are her sons." In that case אִשְׁתּוֹ would be added to עֻזְבָּה, to guard against עֻזְבָּה being taken for acc. obj. The names of the sons of Azubah, or of her daughter Jerioth, do not occur elsewhere.—Ver. 19. When Azubah died, Caleb took Ephrath to wife, who bore him Hur. For אֶפְרַתָּה we find in ver. 50 the lengthened feminine form אֶפְרַתָּה; cf. also iv. 4. From Hur descended, by Uri, the famous Bezaleel, the skilful architect of the tabernacle (Ex. xxxi. 2, xxxv. 30).—Vers. 21–24. The descendants of Hezron numbered with the stock of Caleb: (a) those begotten by Hezron with the daughter of Machir, vers. 21–23; (b) those born to Hezron after his death, ver. 24.—Ver. 21. Afterwards (אַחֵר), i.e. after the birth of the sons mentioned in ver. 9, whose mother is not mentioned, when he was sixty years old, Hezron took to wife the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, who bore him Segub. Machir was the first-born of Manasseh (Gen. i. 23; Num. xxvi. 29). But Machir is not called in vers. 21 and 23 the father of Gilead because he was the originator of the Israelite population of Gilead, but אָב has here its proper signification. Machir begot a son of the name of Gilead (Num. xxvi. 29); and it is clear from the genealogy of the daughters of Zelophead, communicated in Num. xxvii. 1, that this expression is to be understood in its literal sense. Machir is distinguished from other men of the same name (cf. 2 Sam. ix. 4, xvii. 27) by the addition, father of Gilead. Segub the son of Hezron and the daughter of Machir begat Jair. This Jair, belonging on his mother's side to the tribe of Manasseh, is set down in Num. xxxii. 40 f., Deut. iii. 14, as a descendant of Manasseh. After Moses' victory over Og king of Bashan, Jair's family conquered the district of Argob in Bashan, i.e. in the plain of Jaulan and Hauran; and to the conquered cities, when they were bestowed upon him for a possession by Moses, the name Havvoth-Jair, i.e. Jair's-life, was given. Cf. Num. xxxii. 41



and Deut. iii. 14, where this name is explained. These are the twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead, *i.e.* Peräa.—Ver. 23. These cities named *Jair's-life* were taken away from the *Jairites* by Geshur and Aram, *i.e.* by the Arameans of Geshur and of other places. Geshur denotes the inhabitants of a district of Aram, or Syria, on the north-western frontier of Bashan, in the neighbourhood of Hermon, on the east side of the upper Jordan, which had still its own kings in the time of David (2 Sam. iii. 3, xiii. 37, xiv. 23, xv. 8), but which had been assigned to the Manassites by Moses; cf. Josh. xiii. 13. The following 'את־קִנְתַּי וגו' must not be taken as an explanatory apposition to 'את־חַוֹּת יַאֲרִי': "*Jair's-life, Kenath and her daughters, sixty cities*" (Berth.). For since מֵאֶתָּם refers to the collective name *Jair*, Geshur and Aram could not take away from *Jair* sixty cities, for *Jair* only possessed twenty-three cities. But besides this, according to Num. xxxii. 42, Kenath with her daughters had been conquered by Nobah, who gave his own name to the conquered cities; and according to Deut. iii. 4, the kingdom of Og in Bashan had sixty fenced cities. But this kingdom was, according to Num. xxxii. 41 and 42, conquered by two families of Manasseh, by *Jair* and Nobah, and was divided between them; and as appears from our passage, twenty-three cities were bestowed upon *Jair*, and all the rest of the land, viz. Kenath with her daughters, fell to Nobah. These two domains together included sixty fenced cities, which in Deut. iii. 14 are called *Jair's-life*; while here, in our verse, only twenty-three cities are so called, and the remaining thirty-seven are comprehended under the name of Kenath and her daughters. We must therefore either supply a ו copul. before את־קִנְתַּי, or we must take 'את־ק' in the signification "*with Kenath,*" and refer שְׁשִׁים עִיר to both *Jair's-life* and Kenath. Cf. herewith the discussion on Deut. iii. 12-14; and for Kenath, the ruins of which still exist under the name Kanuat on the western slope of the Jebel Hauran, see the remarks on Num. xxxii. 42. The time when these cities were taken away by the Arameans is not known. From Judg. x. 4 we only learn that the *Jair* who was judge at a later time again had possession of thirty of these cities, and renewed the name *Jair's-life*. כָּל־אֶחָד is not all these sixty cities, but the before-mentioned descendants of Hezron, who are called sons, that is offspring, of Machir, because they were begotten with the daughter of Machir. Only two names, it is true, Segub and *Jair*, are enumerated; but from

these two issue the numerous families which took Jair's-life. To these, therefore, must we refer the בְּלִיאָה.—Ver. 24. After the death of Hezron there was born to him by his wife Abiah (the third wife, cf. vers. 9 and 21) another son, Ashur, the father of Tekoa, whose descendants are enumerated in chap. iv. 5-7. Hezron's death took place בְּכֶלֶב אֶפְרַתָּה, "in Caleb Ephrathah." This expression is obscure. According to 1 Sam. xxx. 14, a part of the Negeb (south country) of Judah was called Negeb Caleb, as it belonged to the family of Caleb. According to this analogy, the town or village in which Caleb dwelt with his wife Ephrath may have been called Caleb of Ephrathah, if Ephrath had brought this place as a dower to Caleb, as in the case mentioned in Josh. xv. 18 f. Ephrathah, or Ephrath, was the ancient name of Bethlehem (Gen. xxxiii. 19, xlviii. 1), and with it the name of Caleb's wife Ephrath (ver. 19) is unquestionably connected; probably she was so called after her birthplace. If this supposition be well founded, then Caleb of Ephrathah would be the little town of Bethlehem. Ashur is called father (אָבִי) of Tekoa, i.e. lord and prince, as the chief of the inhabitants of Tekoa, now Tekua, two hours south of Bethlehem (*vide* on Josh. xv. 59).

Vers. 25-41. *The family of Jerahmeel*, the first-born of Hezron, which inhabited a part of the Negeb of Judah called after him the south of the Jerahmeelites (1 Sam. xxvii. 10, xxx. 29).—Ver. 25. Four sons were born to Jerahmeel by his first wife. Five names indeed follow; but as the last, אֶחָיָה, although met with elsewhere as a man's name, is not ranged with the others by ו copul., as those that precede are with each other, it appears to be the name of a woman, and probably a ו has fallen out after the immediately preceding מ. So Cler., J. H. Mich., Berth. This conjecture gains in probability from the mention in ver. 26 of another wife, whence we might expect that in ver. 25 the first wife would be named.—Ver. 26. Only one son of the second wife is given, Onam, whose posterity follows in vers. 28-33; for in ver. 27 the three sons of Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel, are enumerated.—Ver. 28. Onam had two sons, Shammai and Jada; the second of these, again, two sons, Nadab and Abishur.—Ver. 29. To Abishur his wife Abihail bore likewise two sons, with whom his race terminates.—In vers. 30, 31, Nadab's posterity follow, in four members, ending with Ahlai, in the fourth generation. But Ahlai cannot well have been a son, but must have been a daughter, the heiress



of Sheshan; for, according to ver. 34, Sheshan had no sons, but only daughters, and gave his daughter to an Egyptian slave whom he possessed, to wife, by whom she became the mother of a numerous posterity. The שֵׁשָׁן בְּנֵי is not irreconcilable with this, for בְּנֵי denotes in genealogies only descendants in general, and has been here correctly so explained by Hiller in *Onomast.* p. 736: *quicquid habuit liberorum, sive nepotum, sustulit ex unica filia Achlai.*—Vers. 32 and 33. The descendants of Jada, the brother of Shammai, in two generations, after which this genealogy closes with the subscription, “these were the sons of Jerahmeel.”<sup>1</sup>—In vers. 34-41 there follows the family of Sheshan, which was originated by the marriage of his daughter with his Egyptian slave, and which is continued through thirteen generations. The name of this daughter is in ver. 25 f. not mentioned, but she is without doubt the Ahlai mentioned in ver. 31. But since this Ahlai is the tenth in descent from Judah through Pharez, she was probably born in Egypt; and the Egyptian slave Jarha was most likely a slave whom Sheshan had in Egypt, and whom he adopted as his son for the propagation of his race, by giving him his daughter and heir to wife. If this be the case, the race begotten by Jarha with the daughter of Sheshan is traced down till towards the end of the period of the judges. The Egyptian slave Jarha is not elsewhere met with; and though the names which his posterity bore are found again in various parts of the Old Testament, of none of them can it be proved that they belonged to men of this family, so as to show that one of these persons had become famous in history.

Vers. 42-55. *Other renowned descendants of Caleb.*—First of all there are enumerated, in vers. 42-49, three lines of descendants of Caleb, of which the two latter, vers. 46-49, are the issue of concubines.—The first series, vers. 42-45, contains some things which are very obscure. In ver. 42 there are mentioned, as sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel, Mesha his first-born,

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau reckons up to “the concluding subscription in ver. 33” the following descendants of Judah: “Judah’s sons=5; Hezron and Hamul=2; Zerah’s sons=5; Karmi, Akar, and Azariah=3; Ram and his descendants (including the two daughters of Jesse, and Jeter the father of Amasa)=21; Kaleb and his descendants=10; Jerahmeel and his descendants=24: together =70.” But this number also is obtained only by taking into account the father and mother of Amasa as two persons, contrary to the rule according to which only the father, without the mother, is to be counted, or, in case the mother be more famous than the father, or be an heiress, only the mother.

with the addition, "this is the father of Ziph; and the sons of Mareshah, the father of Hebron," as it reads according to the traditional Masoretic text. Now it is here not only very surprising that the sons of Mareshah stand parallel with Mesha, but it is still more strange to find such a collocation as "sons of Mareshah the father of Hebron." The last-mentioned difficulty would certainly be greatly lessened if we might take Hebron to be the city of that name, and translate the phrase "father of Hebron," lord of the city of Hebron, according to the analogy of "father of Ziph," "father of Tekoa" (ver. 24), and other names of that sort. But the continuation of the genealogy, "and the sons of Hebron were Korah, and Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema" (ver. 43), is irreconcilable with such an interpretation. For of these names, Tappuah, *i.e.* apple, is indeed met with several times as the name of a city (Josh. xii. 17, xv. 34, xvi. 8); and Rekem is the name of a city of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 27), but occurs also twice as the name of a person—once of a Midianite prince (Num. xxxi. 8), and once of a Manassite (1 Chron. vii. 16); but the other two, Korah and Shema, only occur as the names of persons. In ver. 44 f., moreover, the descendants of Shema and Rekem are spoken of, and that, too, in connection with the word הוֹלִיד, "he begat," which demonstrably can only denote the propagation of a race. We must therefore take Hebron as the name of a person, as in v. 28 and Ex. vi. 18. But if Hebron be the name of a man, then Mareshah also must be interpreted in the same manner. This is also required by the mention of the sons of Mareshah parallel with Mesha the first-born; but still more so by the circumstance that the interpretation of Mareshah and Hebron, as names of cities, is irreconcilable with the position of these two cities, and with their historical relations. Bertheau, indeed, imagines that as Mareshah is called the father of Hebron, the famous capital of the tribe of Judah, we must therefore make the attempt, however inadmissible it may seem at first sight, to take Mareshah, in the connection of our verse, as the name of a city, which appears as father of Hebron, and that we must also conclude that the ancient city Hebron (Num. xiii. 23) stood in some sort of dependent relationship to Mareshah, perhaps only in later times, although we cannot at all determine to what time the representation of our verse applies. But at the foundation of this argument there lies an error as to the position of the city Mareshah. Mareshah lay in the Shephelah (Josh. xv. 44), and exists at present as the



ruin Marasch, twenty-four minutes south of Beit-Jibrin: *vide* on Josh. xv. 44; and Tobler, *Dritte Wanderung*, § 129 and 142 f. Ziph, therefore, which is mentioned in 2 Chron. xi. 8 along with Mareshah, and which is consequently the Ziph mentioned in our verse, cannot be, as Bertheau believes, the Ziph situated in the hill country of Judah, in the wilderness of that name, whose ruins are still to be seen on the hill Zif, about four miles south-east from Hebron (Josh. xv. 55). It can only be the Ziph in the Shephelah (Josh. xv. 24), the position of which has not indeed been discovered, but which is to be sought in the Shephelah at no great distance from Marasch, and thus far distant from Hebron. Since, then, Mareshah and Ziph were in the Shephelah, no relation of dependence between the capital, Hebron, situated in the mountains of Judah, and Mareshah can be thought of, neither in more ancient nor in later time. The supposition of such a dependence is not made probable by the remark that we cannot determine to what time the representation of our verse applies; it only serves to cover the difficulty which renders it impossible. That the verse does not treat of post-exilic times is clear, although even after the exile, and in the time of the Maccabees and the Romans, Hebron was not in a position of dependence on Marissa. Bertheau himself holds Caleb, of whose son our verses treat, for a contemporary of Moses and Joshua, because in ver. 49 Achsa is mentioned as daughter of Caleb (Josh. xv. 16; Judg. i. 12). The contents of our verse would therefore have reference to the first part of the period of the judges. But since Hebron was never dependent on Mareshah in the manner supposed, the attempt, which even at first sight appeared so inadmissible, to interpret Mareshah as the name of a city, loses all its support. For this reason, therefore, the city of Hebron, and the other cities named in ver. 43 ff., which perhaps belonged to the district of Mareshah, cannot be the sons of Mareshah here spoken of; and the fact that, of the names mentioned in vers. 43 and 44, at most two may denote cities, while the others are undoubtedly the names of persons, points still more clearly to the same conclusion. We must, then, hold Hebron and Mareshah also to be the names of persons. Now, if the Masoretic text be correct, the use of the phrase, "and the sons of Mareshah the father of Hebron," instead of "and Mareshah, the sons of the father of Hebron," can only have arisen from a desire to point out, that besides Hebron there were also other sons of Mareshah

who were of Caleb's lineage. But the mention of the sons of Mareshah, instead of Mareshah, and the calling him the father of Hebron in this connection, make the correctness of the traditional text very questionable. Kimchi has, on account of the harshness of placing the sons of Mareshah on a parallel with Mesha the first-born of Caleb, supposed an ellipse in the expression, and construes 'ובני מר', *et ex filiis Ziphi Mareshah*. But this addition cannot be justified. If we may venture a conjecture in so obscure a matter, it would more readily suggest itself that מרשה is an error for מישע, and that אֲבֵי הֶבְרֹן is to be taken as a *nomen compos.*, when the meaning would be, "and the sons of Mesha were Abi-Hebron." The probability of the existence of such a name as Abihebron along with the simple Hebron has many analogies in its favour: cf. Dan and Abidan, Num. i. 11; Ezer, xii. 9, Neh. iii. 19, with Abi-ezer; Nadab, Ex. vi. 23, and Abinadab. In the same family even we have Abiner, or Abner, the son of Ner (1 Sam. xiv. 50 f.; 2 Sam. ii. 8; cf. Ew. § 273, S. 666, 7th edition). Abihebron would then be repeated in ver. 43, in the shortened form Hebron, just as we have in Josh. xvi. 8 Tappuah, instead of En-Tappuah, Josh. xvii. 7. The four names introduced as sons of Hebron denote persons, not localities: cf. for Korah, i. 35, and concerning Tappuah and Rekem the above remark (p. 68). In ver. 44 are mentioned the sons of Rekem and of Shema, the latter a frequently recurring man's name (cf. v. 8, viii. 13, xi. 44; Neh. viii. 4). Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkam. The name יִרְקָם is quite unknown elsewhere. The LXX. have rendered it 'Ιεκλάν, and Bertheau therefore holds Jorkam to be the name of a place, and conjectures that originally יִרְקָם (Josh. xv. 56) stood here also. But the LXX. give also 'Ιεκλάν for the following name רֶקֶם, from which it is clear that we cannot rely much on their authority. The LXX. have overlooked the fact that רֶקֶם, ver. 44, is the son of the Hebron mentioned in ver. 43, whose descendants are further enumerated. Shammai occurs as a man's name also in ver. 28, and is again met with in iv. 17. His son is called in ver. 45 Maon, and Maon is the father of Bethzur. בֵּית-צִוּר is certainly the city in the mountains of Judah which Rehoboam fortified (2 Chron. xi. 7), and which still exists in the ruin Bet-sur, lying south of Jerusalem in the direction of Hebron. Maon also was a city in the mountains of Judah, now Main (Josh. xv. 55); but we cannot allow that this city is meant by the



name מַעֲיִן, because Maon is called on the one hand the son of Shammai, and on the other is father of Bethzur, and there are no well-ascertained examples of a city being represented as son (בֶּן) of a man, its founder or lord, nor of one city being called the father of another. Dependent cities and villages are called daughters (not sons) of the mother city. The word מַעֲיִן, "dwelling," does not *per se* point to a village or town, and in Judg. x. 12 denotes a tribe of non-Israelites.

Vers. 46-49. *Descendants of Caleb by two concubines.*—The name מַעֲיִן occurs in ver. 47 and i. 33 as a man's name. Caleb's concubine of this name bore three sons: Haran, of whom nothing further is known; Moza, which, though in Josh. xviii. 26 it is the name of a Benjamite town, is not necessarily on that account the name of a town here; and Gazez, unknown, perhaps a grandson of Caleb, especially if the clause "Haran begat Gazez" be merely an explanatory addition. But Haran may also have given to his son the name of his younger brother, so that a son and grandson of Caleb may have borne the same name.—Ver. 47. The genealogical connection of the names in this verse is entirely wanting; for Jahdai, of whom six sons are enumerated, appears quite abruptly. Hiller, in *Onomast.*, supposes, but without sufficient ground, that יַהֲדָי is another name of Moza. Of his sons' names, Jotham occurs frequently of different persons; Ephah, as has been already remarked, is in i. 33 the name of a chief of a Midianite tribe; and lastly, Shaaph is used in ver. 49 of another person.—Ver. 48 f. Another concubine of Caleb was called Maachah, a not uncommon woman's name; cf. iii. 2, vii. 16, viii. 29, xi. 43, etc. She bore Sheber and Tirhanah, names quite unknown. The masc. מַלְכָּה instead of the fem. מַלְכָּה, ver. 46, is to be explained by the supposition that the father who begat was present to the mind of the writer. Ver. 49. Then she bore also Shaaph (different from the Shaaph in ver. 47), the father of Madmannah, a city in the south of Judah, perhaps identical with Miniay or Minieh, southwards from Gaza (see on Josh. xv. 31). Sheva (David's Sopher (scribe) is so called in the Keri of 2 Sam. xx. 25), the father of Machbenah, a village of Judah not further mentioned, and of Gibeah, perhaps the Gibeah mentioned in Josh. xv. 57, in the mountains of Judah, or the village Jeba mentioned by Robinson, *Palest.* ii. p. 327, and Tobler, *Dritte Wanderung*, S. 157 f., on a hill in the Wady Musurr (*vide* on Josh. xv. 57). This list closes with the abrupt remark, "and

Caleb's daughter was Achsah." This notice can only refer to the Achsah so well known in the history of the conquest of the tribal domain of Judah, whom Caleb had promised, and gave as a reward to the conqueror of Debir (Josh. xv. 16 ff.; Judg. i. 12); otherwise in its abrupt form it would have no meaning. Women occur in the genealogies only when they have played an important part in history. Since, however, the father of this Achsah was Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who was about forty years old when the Israelites left Egypt, while our Caleb, on the contrary, is called in ver. 42 the brother of Jerahmeel, and is at the same time designated son of Hezron, the son of Pharez (ver. 9), these two Calebs cannot be one person: the son of Hezron must have been a much older Caleb than the son of Jephunneh. The older commentators have consequently with one voice distinguished the Achsah mentioned in our verse from the Achsah in Josh. xv. 16; while Movers, on the contrary (*Chron. S.* 83), would eliminate from the text, as a later interpolation, the notice of the daughter of Caleb. Bertheau, however, attempts to prove the identity of Caleb the son of Hezron with Caleb the son of Jephunneh. The assertion of Movers is so manifestly a critical *tour de force*, that it requires no refutation; but neither can we subscribe to Bertheau's view. He is, indeed, right in rejecting Ewald's expedient of holding that vers. 18-20 and 45-50 are to be referred to Chelubai, and vers. 42-49 to a Caleb to be carefully distinguished from him; for it contradicts the plain sense of the words, according to which both Chelubai, ver. 9, and Caleb, vers. 18 and 42, is the son of Hezron and the brother of Jerahmeel. But what he brings forward against distinguishing Caleb the father of Achsah, ver. 49, from Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel, ver. 42, is entirely wanting in force. The reasons adduced reduce themselves to these: that Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the conqueror and possessor of Hebron, might well be called in the genealogical language, which sometimes expresses geographical relations, the son of Hezron, along with Ram and Jerahmeel, as the names Ram and Jerahmeel certainly denote families in Judah, who, originally at least, dwelt in other domains than that of Caleb; and again, that the individual families as well as the towns and villages in these various domains may be conceived of as sons and descendants of those who represent the great families of the tribe, and the divisions of the tribal territory. But we must deny the geographical signification of the genealogies when



pressed so far as this: for valid proofs are entirely wanting that towns are represented as sons and brothers of other towns; and the section vers. 42-49 does not treat merely, or principally, of the geographical relations of the families of Judah, but in the first place, and in the main, deals with the genealogical ramifications of the descendants and families of the sons of Judah. It by no means follows, because some of these descendants are brought forward as fathers of cities, that in vers. 42-49 towns and their mutual connection are spoken of; and the names Caleb, Ram, and Jerahmeel do not here denote families, but are the names of the fathers and chiefs of the families which descended from them, and dwelt in the towns just named. We accordingly distinguish Caleb, whose daughter was called Achsah, and whose father was Jephunneh (Josh. xv. 16 ff.), from Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel and the son of Hezron. But we explain the mention of Achsah as daughter of Caleb, at the end of the genealogical lists of the persons and families descended by concubines from Caleb, by the supposition that the Caleb who lived in the time of Moses, the son of Jephunneh, was a descendant of an older Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel. But it is probable that the Caleb in ver. 49 is the same who is called in ver. 42 the brother of Jerahmeel, and whose descendants are specified vers. 42-49; and we take the word בַּת, "daughter," in its wider sense, as signifying a later female descendant, because the father of the Achsah so well known from Josh. xv. 16 ff. is also called son of Jephunneh in the genealogy, chap. iv. 15.

Vers. 50-55. *The families descended from Caleb through his son Hur.* — Ver. 50. The superscription, "These are the sons (descendants) of Caleb," is more accurately defined by the addition, "the son of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah;" and by this definition the following lists of Caleb's descendants are limited to the families descended from his son Hur. That the words בְּנֵי-חֹר וְנִי are to be so understood, and not as apposition to בְּלֵב, "Caleb the son of Hur," is shown by ver. 19, according to which Hur is a son of Caleb and Ephrath. On that account, too, the relationship of Hur to Caleb is not given here; it is presupposed as known from ver. 19. A famous descendant of Hur has already been mentioned in ver. 20, viz. Bezaleel the son of Uri. Here, in vers. 50 and 51, three sons of Hur are named, Shobal, Salma, and Hareph, with the families descended from the first two. All information is wanting as to whether these sons of Hur were

brothers of Uri, or his cousins in nearer or remoter degree, as indeed is every means of a more accurate determination of the degrees of relationship. Both **בֶּן** and **הוֹלִיד** in genealogies mark only descent in a straight line, while intermediate members of a family are often omitted in the lists. Instead of **בְּנֵי-חֹר**, **בְּנֵי-חֹר** might have been expected, as two sons are mentioned. The singular **בֶּן** shows that the words are not to be fused with the following into one sentence, but, as the Masoretic punctuation also shows, are meant for a superscription, after which the names to be enumerated are ranged without any more intimate logical connection. For the three names are not connected by the ו copul. They stand thus: "sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah; Shobal . . . Salma . . . Hareph." Shobal is called father of Kirjath-jearim, now Kureyet el Enab (see on Josh. ix. 17). Salma, father of Bethlehem, the birth-place of David and Christ. This Salma is, however, not the same person as Salma mentioned in ver. 11 and Ruth iv. 20 among the ancestors of David; for the latter belonged to the family of Ram, the former to the family of Caleb. Hareph is called the father of Beth-Geder, which is certainly not the same place as Geder, Josh. xv. 36, which lay in the Shephelah, but is probably identical with Gedor in the hill country, Josh. xv. 58, west of the road which leads from Hebron to Jerusalem (*vide* on chap. xii. 4). Nothing further is told of Hareph, but in the following verses further descendants of both the other sons of Hur are enumerated.—Vers. 52 and 53. Shobal had sons, **הָרָאָה הַצִּי הַמְּנַחֹת**. These words, which are translated in the Vulgate, *qui videbat dimidium requietionum*, give, so interpreted, no fitting sense, but must contain proper names. The LXX. have made from them three names, *'Αραὰ καὶ Αἰσὶ καὶ Ἀμμανίθ*, on mere conjecture. Most commentators take **הָרָאָה** for the name of the man who, in chap. iv. 2, is called under the name Reaiah, **רֵאִיָּה**, the son of Shobal. This is doubtless correct; but we must not take **הָרָאָה** for another name of Reaiah, but, with Bertheau, must hold it to be a corruption of **רֵאִיָּה**, or a conjecture arising from a false interpretation of **הַצִּי הַמְּנַחֹת** by a transcriber or reader, who did not take Hazi-Hammenuhoth for a proper name, but understood it appellatively, and attempted to bring some sense out of the words by changing **רֵאִיָּה** into the participle **רֹאֶה**. The **הַצִּי הַמְּנַחֹת** in ver. 54 corresponds to our **הַצִּי הַמְּנַחֹת**, as one half of a race or district corresponds to the other, for the connection between the substantive **הַמְּנַחֹת** and the adjective **הַמְּנַחֹתִי**



cannot but be acknowledged. Now, although מְנוּחָה signifies resting-place (Num. x. 33; Judg. xx. 43), and the words “the half of the resting-place,” or “of the resting-places,” point in the first instance to a district, yet not only does the context require that Hazi-Hammenuthoth should signify a family sprung from Shobal, but it is demanded also by a comparison of our phrase with חֲצֵי הַמְּנוּחָה in ver. 54, which unquestionably denotes a family. It does not, however, seem necessary to alter the מְנוּחָה into חֲצֵי הַמְּנוּחָה; for as in ver. 54 Bethlehem stands for the family in Bethlehem descended from Salma, so the district Hazi-Hammenuthoth may be used in ver. 52 to denote the family residing there. As to the geographical position of this district, see on ver. 54.—Ver. 53. Besides the families mentioned in ver. 52, the families of Kirjath-jearim, which in ver. 53 are enumerated by name, came of Shobal also. וּמִשְׁפְּחוֹת ק' is simply a continuation of the families already mentioned, and the remark of Berth., that “the families of Kirjath-jearim are moreover distinguished from the sons of Shobal,” is as incorrect as the supplying of ו cop. before חֲצֵי הַמ' in ver. 52 is unnecessary. The meaning is simply this: Shobal had sons Reaiah, Hazi-Hammenuthoth, and the families of Kirjath-jearim, viz. the family of Jether, etc. David's heroes, Ira and Gareb, xi. 40, 2 Sam. xxiii. 38, belonged to the family of Jether (הִיתֵרִי). The other three families are not met with elsewhere. מֵאֵלֶּה, of these, the four families of Kirjath-jearim just mentioned, came the Zoreathites and the Eshtaulites, the inhabitants of the town of Zoreah, the home of Samson, now the ruin Sura, and of Eshtaul, which perhaps may be identified with Um Eshteyeh (see in Josh. xv. 33).—Vers. 54 and 55. The descendants of Salma: Bethlehem, *i.e.* the family of Bethlehem (see on ver. 52), the Netophathites, *i.e.* the inhabitants of the town of Netophah, which, according to our verse and Ezra ii. 22, and especially Neh. vii. 26, is to be looked for in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem (cf. ix. 16); a family which produced at various times renowned men (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 28 f.; 2 Kings xxv. 23; Ezra ii. 22). The following words, עֲטֵרוֹת ב' , *i.e.* “crowns of the house of Joab,” can only be the name of a place which is mentioned instead of its inhabitants; for עֲטֵרוֹת occurs elsewhere, sometimes alone, and sometimes in conjunction with a proper name, as the name of places: cf. Num. xxxii. 34 f.; Josh. xvi. 2, 5, 7, xviii. 13. Hazi-Hammanahath is certainly to be sought in the neighbourhood of Manahath, viii. 6, whose position has,

however, not yet been ascertained. הַצִּרְעִי is only another form of הַצִּרְעָתִי, and is derived from the masculine of the word. The Zorites here spoken of formed a second division of the inhabitants of Zoreah and the neighbourhood, along with the Zoreathites descended from Shobal, ver. 53.—Ver. 55. “And the families of the writers (scribes) who inhabited Jabez.” The position of the town Jabez, which is mentioned only here, and which derived its name from a descendant of Judah, has not yet been discovered, but is to be sought somewhere in the neighbourhood of Zoreah. This may be inferred from the fact that of the six בְּנֵי שְׁלֵמָה, two are always more closely connected with each other by ו cop.: (1) Bethlehem and Netophathite, (2) Ataroth-beth-Joab and Hazi-Hammanahath, (3) the Zorites and the families of the Sopherim inhabiting Jabez. These last were divided into three branches, שׁוֹכְתִים, שְׁמַעְתִּים, תְּרַעְתִּים, i.e. those descended from Tira, Shimea, and Suchah. The Vulgate has taken these words in an appellative sense of the occupations of these three classes, and translates *canentes et resonantes et in tabernaculis commemorantes*. But this interpretation is not made even probable by all that Bertheau has brought forward in support of it. Even if שׁוֹכְתִים might perhaps be connected with סֹכֶה, and interpreted “dwellers in tabernacles,” yet no tenable reason can be found for translating תְּרַעְתִּים and שְׁמַעְתִּים by *canentes et resonantes*. שְׁמַעְתִּי, from שָׁמְעָה, “that which is heard,” cannot signify those who repeat in words and song that which has been heard; and תְּרַעְתִּי no more means *canentes* than it is connected (as Bertheau tries to show) with שְׁעָרִים, “doorkeepers” (the Chaldee תְּרַע being equivalent to the Hebrew שַׁעַר); and the addition, “These are the Kenites who came of Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab” (בּוֹא מֵן), to issue from any one, to be descended from any one), gives no proof of this, for the phrase itself is to us so very obscure. קִינִים are not inhabitants of the city Kain (Josh. xv. 57) in the tribal domain of Judah (Kimchi), but, judging from the succeeding relative sentence, were descendants of Keni the father-in-law of Moses (Judg. i. 16), who had come with Israel to Canaan, and dwelt there among the Israelites (Judg. iv. 11, 17, v. 24; 1 Sam. xv. 6, xxvii. 10, xxx. 29); and Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab, i.e. of the Rechabites (Jer. xxxv. 6), is probably the grandfather of Jonadab the son of Rechab, with whom Jehu entered into alliance (2 Kings x. 15, 23). But how can the families of Sopherim inhabiting



Jabez, which are here enumerated, be called descendants of Salma, who is descended from Hur the son of Caleb, a man of Judah, if they were Kenites, who issued from or were descendants of the grandfather of the family of the Rechabites? From lack of information, this question cannot be answered with certainty. In general, however, we may explain the incorporation of the Kenites in the Judæan family of the Calebite Salma, on the supposition that one of these Kenites of the family of Hobab, the brother-in-law of Moses, married an heiress of the race of Caleb. On this account the children and descendants sprung of this marriage would be incorporated in the family of Caleb, although they were on their father's side Kenites, and where they followed the manner of life of their fathers, might continue to be regarded as such, and to bear the name.

Chap. iii. *The sons and descendants of David.*—After the enumeration of the chief families of the two sons of Hezron, Caleb and Jerahmeel, in chap. ii. 18-55, the genealogy of Ram the second son of Hezron, which in chap. ii. 10-17 was only traced down to Jesse, the father of the royal race of David, is in chap. iii. again taken up and further followed out. In vers. 1-9 all the sons of David are enumerated; in vers. 10-16, the line of kings of the house of David from Solomon to Jeconiah and Zedekiah; in 17-21, the descendants of Jeconiah to the grandsons of Zerubbabel; and finally, in vers. 22-24, other descendants of Shechaniah to the fourth generation.

Vers. 1-9. The sons of David: (a) Those born in Hebron; (b) those born in Jerusalem.—Vers. 1-4. The six sons born in Hebron are enumerated also in 2 Sam. iii. 2-5, with mention of their mother as here: but there the second is called בִּלְאָב; here, on the contrary, דְּנִיָּאל, —a difference which cannot well have arisen through an error of a copyist, but is probably to be explained on the supposition that this son had two different names. In reference to the others, see on 2 Sam. iii. The sing. אֲשֶׁר נִלְדָּ לוֹ after a preceding plural subject is to be explained as in ii. 9. שְׁנֵי, without the article, for מְשֻׁנָּהוּ, 2 Sam. iii. 3, or הַמְשֻׁנָּה, 1 Chron. v. 12, is surprising, as all the other numbers have the article; but the enumeration, the first-born, a second, the third, etc., may be justified without any alteration of the text being necessary. But the difference between our text and that of 2 Sam. in regard to the second son, shows that the chronicler did not take the register from 2 Sam. iii. The preposition לְ before אֲבִישָׁלֹם seems

to have come into the text only through a mistake occasioned by the preceding **לְאַבְיָיִל**, for no reason is apparent for any strong emphasis which might be implied in the **לְ** being placed on the name of Absalom. The addition of **אִשְׁתּוֹ** to **עֵגְלָה** (ver. 3) seems introduced only to conclude the enumeration in a fitting way, as the descent of Eglah had not been communicated; just as, for a similar reason, the additional clause "the wife of David" is inserted in 2 Sam. iii. 5, without Eglah being thereby distinguished above the other wives as the most honoured. The concluding formula, "six were born to him in Hebron" (ver. 4), is followed by a notice of how long David reigned in Hebron and in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Sam. ii. 11 and 55), which is intended to form a fitting transition to the following list of the sons who were born to him in Jerusalem.—Vers. 5–8. In Jerusalem thirteen other sons were born to him, of whom four were the children of Bathsheba. The thirteen names are again enumerated in the history of David, in chap. xiv. 7–11, while in the parallel passage, 2 Sam. v. 14–16, only eleven are mentioned, the two last being omitted (see on the passage). Some of the names are somewhat differently given in these passages, owing to differences of pronunciation and form: **שְׁמוּעָה** is in both places **שְׁמוּעָה**; **אֶלִישָׁמָה**, between Ibhar and Eliphalet, is in chap. xiv. more correctly written **אֶלִישָׁמָה**. Elishama is clearly a transcriber's error, occasioned by one of the following sons bearing this name. **אֶלִיפַלֵּט**, shortened in xiv. 6 into **אֶלִיפַלֵּט**, and **נוּגָה**, are wanting in 2 Sam. v. 15, probably because they died early. **אֶלִיָּדָע**, ver. 8, 2 Sam. v. 16, appears in chap. xiv. 7 as **בְּעִלְיָדָע**; the mother also of the four first named, **בְּתִשְׁבָּע**, the daughter of Ammiel, is elsewhere always **בְּתִשְׁבָּע**, e.g. 2 Sam. xi. 3, and 1 Kings i. 11, 15, etc.; and her father, Eliam (2 Sam. xi. 3). **בְּתִשְׁבָּע** has been derived from **בְּתִשְׁבָּע**, and **בְּתִשְׁבָּע** is softened from **בְּתִשְׁבָּע**; but **אֶלִיָּעָם** has arisen by transposition of the two parts of the name **עַמְיָאֵל**, or Ammiel has been altered to Eliam. Besides these, David had also sons by concubines, whose names, however, are nowhere met with. Of David's daughters only Tamar is mentioned as "their sister," i.e. sister of the before-mentioned sons, because she had become known in history through Amnon's crime (2 Sam. xiii.).

Vers. 10–16. The kings of the house of David from Solomon till the exile.—Until Josiah the individual kings are mentioned in their order, each with the addition **בְּנֵי**, son of the preceding, vers. 10–14; the only omission being that of the



usurper Athaliah, because she did not belong to the posterity of David. But in ver. 15 four sons of Josiah are mentioned, not "in order to allow of a halt in the long line of David's descendants after Josiah the great reformer" (Berth.), but because with Josiah the regular succession to the throne in the house of David ceased. For the younger son Jehoahaz, who was made king after his father's death by the people, was soon de-throned by Pharaoh-Necho, and led away captive to Egypt; and of the other sons Jehoiakim was set up by Pharaoh, and Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar, so that both were only vassals of heathen lords of the land, and the independent kingship of David came properly to an end with the death of Josiah. Johanan, the first-born of the sons of Josiah, is not to be identified with Jehoahaz, whom the people raised to the throne. For, in the first place, it appears from the statement as to the ages of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim in 2 Kings xxiii. 31, 36, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 2, 5, that Jehoahaz was two years younger than Jehoiakim, and consequently was not the first-born. In Jer. xxii. 11 it is expressly declared that Shallum, the fourth son of Josiah, was king of Judah instead of his father, and was led away into captivity, and never saw his native land again, as history narrates of Jehoahaz. From this it would appear that Shallum took, as king, the name Jehoahaz. Johanan, the first-born, is not met with again in history, either because he died early, or because nothing remarkable could be told of him. Jehoiakim was called Eliakim before he was raised to the throne (2 Kings xxiii. 24). Zedekiah was at first Mattaniah (2 Kings xxiv. 17). Zedekiah, on his ascending the throne, was younger than Shallum, and that event occurred eleven years after the accession of Shallum = Jehoahaz. Zedekiah was only twenty-one years old, while Jehoahaz had become king in his twenty-third year. But in our genealogy Zedekiah is introduced after Jehoiakim, and before Shallum, because, on the one hand, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah had occupied the throne for a longer period, each having been eleven years king; and on the other, Zedekiah and Shallum were sons of Hamutal (2 Kings xxiii. 31, xxiv. 18), while Jehoiakim was the son of Zebudah (2 Kings xxiii. 36). According to age, they should have followed each other in this order—Johanan, Jehoiakim, Shallum, and Zedekiah; and in respect to their kingship, Shallum should have stood before Jehoiakim. But in both cases those born of the same mother, Hamutal, would

have been separated. To avoid this, apparently, Shallum has been enumerated in the fourth place, along with his full brother Zedekiah. In ver. 6 it is remarkable that a son of Jehoiakim's son Jeconiah is mentioned, named Zedekiah, while the sons of Jeconiah follow only in vers. 17 and 18. Jeconiah (cf. Jer. xxiv. 1; shortened Coniah, Jer. xxii. 24, 28, and xxxvii. 1) is called, as king, in 2 Kings xxiv. 8 ff. and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, Jehoiachin, another form of the name, but having the same signification, "Jahve founds or establishes." Zedekiah can only be a son of Jeconiah, for the בְּנוֹ which is added constantly denotes that the person so called is the son of his predecessor. Many commentators, certainly, were of opinion that Zedekiah was the same person as the brother of Jehoiakim mentioned in ver. 15 under the name Zidkijahu, and who is here introduced as son of Jeconiah, because he was the successor of Jeconiah on the throne. For this view support was sought in a reference to ver. 10 ff., in which all Solomon's successors in the kingship are enumerated in order with בְּנוֹ. But all the kings who succeeded each other from Solomon to Josiah were also, without exception, sons of their predecessors; so that there בְּנוֹ throughout denotes a proper son, while King Zedekiah, on the contrary, was not the son, but an uncle of Jeconiah (Jehoiachin). We must therefore hold זִדְקִיָּה for a literal son of Jeconiah, and that so much the more, because the name זִדְקִיָּה differs also from זִדְקִיָּהוּ, as the name of the king is constantly written in 2 Kings xxiv. 17 ff. and in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10. But mention is made of this Zedekiah in ver. 16 apart from the other sons of Jeconiah (vers. 17 and 18), perhaps because he was not led away captive into exile with the others, but died in Judah before the breaking up of the kingdom.

Vers. 17-24. The descendants of the captive and exiled Jeconiah, and other families.—Ver. 17. In the list of the sons of Jeconiah it is doubtful if אַסִּיר be the name of a son, or should be considered, as it is by Luther and others, an appellative, "prisoner," in apposition to יְבִנְיָה, "the sons of Jeconiah, the captive, is Shealtiel" (A. V. Salathiel). The reasons which have been advanced in favour of this latter interpretation are: the lack of the conjunction with שְׁאֵלְתִּיאל; the position of בְּנוֹ after 'שְׁאֵלַת', not after אַסִּיר; and the circumstance that Assir is nowhere to be met with, either in Matt. i. 12 or in *Seder olam zuta*, as an intervening member of the family between Jeconiah and Shealtiel (Berth.).



But none of these reasons is decisive. The want of the conjunction proves absolutely nothing, for in ver. 18 also, the last three names are grouped together without a conjunction; and the position of בְּנֵי after שְׁאַלְתִּי is just as strange, whether Shealtiel be the first named son or the second, for in ver. 18 other sons of Jeconiah follow, and the peculiarity of it can only be accounted for on the supposition that the case of Shealtiel differs from that of the remaining sons. The omission of Assir in the genealogies in Matthew and the *Seder olam* also proves nothing, for in the genealogies intermediate members are often passed over. Against the appellative interpretation of the word, on the contrary, the want of the article is decisive; as apposition to יְנִיָּה, it should have the article. But besides this, according to the genealogy of Jesus in Luke iii. 27, Shealtiel is a son of Neri, a descendant of David, of the lineage of Nathan, not of Solomon; and according to Hagg. i. 1, 12, Ezra iii. 2, v. 2, and Matt. i. 12, Zerubbabel is son of Shealtiel; while, according to vers. 18 and 19 of our chapter, he is a son of Pedaiah, a brother of Shealtiel. These divergent statements may be reconciled by the following combination. The discrepancy in regard to the enumeration of Shealtiel among the sons of Jeconiah, a descendant of Solomon, and the statement that he was descended from Neri, a descendant of Nathan, Solomon's brother, is removed by the supposition that Jeconiah, besides the Zedekiah mentioned in ver. 16, who died childless, had another son, viz. Assir, who left only a daughter, who then, according to the law as to heiresses (Num. xxvii. 8, xxxvi. 8 f.), married a man belonging to a family of her paternal tribe, viz. Neri, of the family of David, in the line of Nathan, and that from this marriage sprang Shealtiel, Malchiram, and the other sons (properly grandsons) of Jeconiah mentioned in ver. 18. If we suppose the eldest of these, Shealtiel, to come into the inheritance of his maternal grandfather, he would be legally regarded as his legitimate son. In our genealogy, therefore, along with the childless Assir, Shealtiel is introduced as a descendant of Jeconiah, while in Luke he is called, according to his actual descent, a son of Neri. The other discrepancy in respect to the descendants of Zerubbabel is to be explained, as has been already shown on Hagg. i. 1, by the law of Levirate marriage, and by the supposition that Shealtiel died without any male descendants, leaving his wife a widow. In such a case, according to the law (Deut. xxv. 5-10, cf. Matt.

xxii. 24–28), it became the duty of one of the brothers of the deceased to marry his brother's widow, that he might raise up seed, *i.e.* posterity, to the deceased brother; and the first son born of this marriage would be legally incorporated with the family of the deceased, and registered as his son. After Shealtiel's death, his second brother Pedaiah fulfilled this Levirate duty, and begat, in his marriage with his sister-in-law, Zerubbabel, who was now regarded, in all that related to laws of heritage, as Shealtiel's son, and propagated his race as his heir. According to this right of heritage, Zerubbabel is called in the passages quoted from Haggai and Ezra, as also in the genealogy in Matthew, the son of Shealtiel. The בְּנֵי seems to hint at this peculiar position of Shealtiel with reference to the proper descendants of Jeconiah, helping to remind us that he was son of Jeconiah not by natural birth, but only because of his right of heritage only, on his mother's side. As to the orthography of the name שְׁאַלְתִּיאל, see on Hagg. i. 1. The six persons named in ver. 18 are not sons of Shealtiel, as Kimchi, Hiller, and others, and latterly Hitzig also, on Hagg. i. 1, believe, but his brothers, as the cop. ו before מִלְכִּירָם requires. The supposition just mentioned is only an attempt, irreconcilable with the words of the text, to form a series, thus: Shealtiel, Pedaiah his son, Zerubbabel his son,—so as to get rid of the differences between our verse and Hagg. i. 1, Ezra iii. 2. In vers. 19 and 20, sons and grandsons of Pedaiah are registered. Nothing further is known of the Bne Jeconiah mentioned in ver. 18. Pedaiah's son Zerubbabel is unquestionably the prince of Judah who returned to Jerusalem in the reign of Cyrus in the year 536, at the head of a great host of exiles, and superintended their settlement anew in the land of their fathers (Ezra i.–vi.). Of Shimei nothing further is known. In vers. 19b and 20, the sons of Zerubbabel are mentioned, and in ver. 21a two grandsons are named. Instead of the singular בֶּן some mss. have בָּנִי, and the old versions also have the plural. This is correct according to the sense, although בֶּן cannot be objected to on critical grounds, and may be explained by the writer's having had mainly in view the one son who continued the line of descendants. By the mention of their sister after the first two names, the sons of Zerubbabel are divided into two groups, probably as the descendants of different mothers. How Shelomith had gained such fame as to be received into the family register, we do not know. Those men-



tioned in ver. 20 are brought together in one group by the number "five." *וַיֵּשֶׁב הַקֶּדֶר*, "grace is restored," is one name. The grandsons of Zerubbabel, Pelatiah and Jesaiah, were without doubt contemporaries of Ezra, who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon seventy-eight years after Zerubbabel.

After these grandsons of Zerubbabel, there are ranged in ver. 21b, without any copula whatever, four families, the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, etc.; and of the last named of these, the sons of Shecaniah, four generations of descendants are enumerated in vers. 22-24, without any hint as to the genealogical connection of Shecaniah with the grandsons of Zerubbabel. The assertion of more modern critics, Ewald, Bertheau, and others, that Shecaniah was a brother or a son of Pelatiah or Jesaiah, and that Zerubbabel's family is traced down through six generations, owes its origin to the wish to gain support for the opinion that the Chronicle was composed long after Ezra, and is without any foundation. The argument of Bertheau, that "since the sons of Rephaiah, etc., run parallel with the preceding names Pelatiah and Jesaiah, and since the continuation of the list in ver. 22 is connected with the last mentioned Shecaniah, we cannot but believe that Pelatiah, Jesaiah, Rephaiah, Arnan, Obadiah, and Shecaniah are, without exception, sons of Hananiah," would be well founded if, and only if, the names Rephaiah, Arnan, etc., stood in our verse, instead of the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, etc., for Pelatiah and Jesaiah are not parallel with the *sons* of Arnan. Pelatiah and Jesaiah may perhaps be sons of Hananiah, but not the sons of Rephaiah, Arnan, etc. These would be grandsons of Hananiah, on the assumption that Rephaiah, Arnan, etc., were brothers of Pelatiah and Jesaiah, and sons of Hananiah. But for this assumption there is no tenable ground; it would be justified only if our present Masoretic text could lay claim to infallibility. Only on the ground of a belief in this infallibility of the traditional text could we explain to ourselves, as Bertheau does, the ranging of the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, etc., along with Pelatiah and Jesaiah, called sons of Hananiah, by supposing that Rephaiah, Arnan, Obadiah, and Shecaniah are not named as individuals, but are mentioned together with their families, because they were the progenitors of famous races, while Pelatiah and Jesaiah either had no descendants at all, or none at least who were at all renowned. The text, as we have it, in which the sons

of Rephaiah, etc., follow the names of the grandsons of Zerubbabel without a conjunction, and in which the words *וּבְנֵי שְׁכַנְיָה*, and a statement of the names of one of these *בְּנִים* and his further descendants, follow the immediately preceding *בְּנֵי שְׁכַנְיָה*, has no meaning, and is clearly corrupt, as has been recognised by Heidegger, Vitringa, Carpzov, and others. Owing, however, to want of information from other sources regarding these families and their connection with the descendants of Zerubbabel, we have no means whatever of restoring the original text. The sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, etc., were, it may be supposed, branches of the family of David, whose descent or connection with Zerubbabel is for us unascertainable. The list from *בְּנֵי רִפְיָה*, ver. 21*b*, to the end of the chapter, is a genealogical fragment, which has perhaps come into the text of the Chronicle at a later time.<sup>1</sup> Many of the names which this fragment contains are met with singly in genealogies of other tribes, but nowhere in a connection from which we might draw conclusions as to the origin of the families here enumerated, and the age in which they lived. Bertheau, indeed, thinks "we may in any case hold Hattush, ver. 22, for the descendant of David of the same name mentioned in Ezra viii. 2, who lived at the time of Ezra;" but he has apparently forgotten that, according to his interpretation of our verse, Hattush would be a great-grandson of Zerubbabel, who, even if he were then born, could not possibly have been a man and the head of a family at the time of his supposed return from Babylon with Ezra, seventy-eight years after the return of his great-grandfather to Palestine. Other men too, even priests, have borne the name Hattush; cf. Neh. iii. 10, x. 5, xii. 2. There returned, moreover, from Babylon with Ezra sons of Shecaniah (Ezra viii. 3), who may as justly be identified with the sons of Shecaniah mentioned in ver. 22 of our chapter as forefathers or ancestors of Hattush, as the Hattush here is identified with the Hattush of Ezra viii. 2. But from the fact that, in the genealogy of Jesus, Matt. i., not a single one of the names of

<sup>1</sup> Yet at a very early time, for the LXX. had before them our present text, and sought to make sense of it by expressing the four times recurring *בְּנֵי*, ver. 21*b*, by the singular *בֶּן* in every case, as follows: *καὶ Ἰεσίας υἱὸς αὐτοῦ, Παφάλ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ, Ορνά υἱὸς αὐτοῦ*, etc.; according to which, between Hananiah and Shecaniah seven consecutive generations would be enumerated, and Zerubbabel's family traced down through eleven generations. So also Vulg. and Syr.



descendants of Zerubbabel there enumerated coincides with the names given in our verses, we may conclude that the descendants of Shecaniah enumerated in vers. 22-24 did not descend from Zerubbabel in a direct line. Intermediate members are, it is true, often omitted in genealogical lists; but who would maintain that in Matthew seven, or, according to the other interpretation of our verse, nine, consecutive members have been at one bound overleapt? This weighty consideration, which has been brought forward by Clericus, is passed over in silence by the defenders of the opinion that our verses contain a continuation of the genealogy of Zerubbabel. The only other remark to be made about this fragment is, that in ver. 22 the number of the sons of Shecaniah is given as six, while only five names are mentioned, and that consequently a name must have fallen out by mistake in transcribing. Nothing further can be said of these families, as they are otherwise quite unknown.

CHAP. IV. 1-23.—FRAGMENTS OF THE GENEALOGIES OF  
DESCENDANTS AND FAMILIES OF JUDAH.

Ver. 1 is evidently intended to be a superscription to the genealogical fragments which follow. Five names are mentioned as sons of Judah, of whom only Pharez was his son (ii. 4); the others are grandchildren or still more distant descendants. Nothing is said as to the genealogical relationship in which they stood to each other; that is supposed to be already known from the genealogies in chap. ii. Hezron is the son of Pharez, and consequently grandson of Judah, ii. 8. Carmi, a descendant of Zerach, the brother of Pharez, see on ii. 6, 7. Hur is a son of Caleb, the son of Hezron, by Ephratah (see on ii. 19 and 50); and Shobal is the son of Hur, who has just been mentioned (ii. 50). These five names do not denote here, any more than in chap. ii., "families of the tribe of Judah" (Berth.), but signify persons who originated or were heads of families. The only conceivable ground for these five being called "sons of Judah," is that the families registered in the following lists traced their origin to them, although in the enumeration which follows the genealogical connection of the various groups is not clearly brought out. The enumeration begins,

Ver. 2, with *the descendants of Shobal*. As to Reaiah the son of Shobal, see ii. 52. He begat Jahath, a name often occurring

in Levite families, cf. vi. 5, 28, xxiii. 10 ff., xxiv. 22, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12; but of the descendant of David who bore this name nothing further is known. His sons Ahumai and Lahad founded the families of the Zorathites, *i.e.* the inhabitants of Zora, who also, according to ii. 53, were descended from sons of Shobal. Our verse therefore gives more detailed information regarding the lineage of these families.

Vers. 3 and 4 contain notices of the descendants of Hur. The first words of the third verse, "these, father of Etam, Jezreel," have no meaning; but the last sentence of the second verse suggests that מְשֻׁפְּחוֹת should be supplied, when we read, "and these are the families of (from) Abi-Etam." The LXX. and Vulgate have אֱלֹה בְּנֵי עֵיטָם, which is also to be found in several codices, while other codices read אֱלֹה בְּנֵי אַבִּי עֵיטָם. Both readings are probably only conjectures. Whether אַבִּי עֵיטָם is to be taken as the name of a person, or appellatively, father=lord of Etam, cannot be decided. עֵיטָם is in ver. 32, and probably also in Judg. xv. 8, 11, the name of a town of the Simeonites; and in 2 Chron. xi. 6, the name of a little town in the highlands of Judah, south of Jerusalem. If עֵיטָם be the name of a place, only the last named can be here meant. The names Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash denote persons as progenitors and head of families or branches of families. For יִזְרְעָאֵל as the name of a person, cf. Hos. i. 4. That these names should be those of persons is required by the succeeding remark, "and their sister Hazeleponi." The formation of this name, with the derivative termination *i*, seems to express a relationship of race; but the word may also be an adjective, and as such may be a proper name: cf. Ew. § 273, *e.*—Ver. 4. Penuel, in Gen. xxii. 31 f., Judg. viii. 8, name of a place in the East-Jordan land, as here, and in viii. 25 the name of a man. Gedor is, we may suppose, the town of that name in the mountains of Judah, which is still to be found in the ruin Jedur (see on Josh. xv. 58). Penuel is here called father of Gedor, while in ver. 18 one Jered is so called, whence we must conclude that the inhabitants of Gedor were descended from both. Ezer (Help) occurs in vii. 21, xii. 9, Neh. iii. 19, of other men; father of Hushah, *i.e.* according to the analogy of Abi-Gedor, also the name of a place not elsewhere mentioned, where the hero Sibbecai had his birth, xi. 29, 2 Sam. xxiii. 27. Those thus named in vers. 3 and 4 are sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah (ii. 19), the father of Bethlehem. The inhabitants



of Bethlehem then, according to this, were descended from Hur through his son Salma, who is called in ii. 51 father of Bethlehem. The circumstance, too, that in our verses (3 and 4) other names of persons are enumerated as descendants of Hur than those given in ii. 50-55 gives rise to no discrepancy, for there is no ground for the supposition that in ii. 50-55 *all* the descendants of Hur have been mentioned.

Vers. 5-7. *Sons of Ashur*, the father of Tekoa, who, according to ii. 24, was a posthumous son of Hezron. Ashur had two wives, Helah and Naarah. Of the latter came four sons and as many families: Ahuzam, of whom nothing further is known; Hepher, also unknown, but to be distinguished from the Gileadite of the same name in chap. xi. 36 and Num. xxvi. 32 f. The conjecture that the name is connected with the land of Hepher (1 Kings iv. 10), the territory of a king conquered by Joshua (Josh. xii. 17) (Berth.), is not very well supported. Temani (man of the south) may be simply the name of a person, but it is probably, like the following, the name of a family. Haahashtari, descended from Ahashtar, is quite unknown.—Ver. 7. The first wife, Helah, bore three sons, Zereth, Jezoar, and Ethnan, who are not elsewhere met with. For the Kethibh יֶזְעָר there is in the Keri יֶזְעָר, the name of a son of Simeon (Gen. xlv. 10), and of a Hittite chief in the time of the patriarchs (Gen. xxiii. 8), with whom the son of Helah has nothing to do.

Vers. 8-10 contain a fragment, the connection of which with the sons of Judah mentioned in chap. ii. is not clear. Coz begat Anub, etc. The name קֹיֹז occurs only here; elsewhere only קֹיֹז is found, of a Levite, xxiv. 10, cf. Ezra ii. 61 and Neh. iii. 4,—in the latter passage without any statement as to the tribe to which the sons of Hakkoz belonged. The names of the sons begotten by Coz, ver. 8, do not occur elsewhere. The same is to be said of Jabez, of whom we know nothing beyond what is communicated in vers. 9 and 10. The word יַעֲבֵז denotes in ii. 55 a town or village which is quite unknown to us; but whether our Jabez were father (lord) of this town cannot be determined. If there be any genealogical connection between the man Jabez and the locality of this name or its inhabitants (ii. 55), then the persons named in ver. 8 would belong to the descendants of Shobal. For although the connection of Jabez with Coz and his sons is not clearly set forth, yet it may be conjectured from the statements as to Jabez being connected

with the preceding by the words, "Jabez was more honoured than his brethren." The older commentators have thence drawn the conclusion that Jabez was a son or brother of Coz. Bertheau also rightly remarks: "The statements that he was more honoured than his brethren (cf. Gen. xxxiv. 19), that his mother called him Jabez because she had borne him with sorrow; the use of the similarly sounding word עֶצֶב along with the name יָבֵז (cf. Gen. iv. 25, xix. 37 f., xxix. 32, 33, 35, xxx. 6, 8, etc.); and the statement that Jabez vowed to the God of Israel (cf. Gen. xxxiii. 20) in a prayer (cf. Gen. xxviii. 20),—all bring to our recollection similar statements of Genesis, and doubtless rest upon primeval tradition." In the terms of the vow, לִבְלֹתִי עֶצֶב, "so that sorrow may not be to me," there is a play upon the name Jabez. But of the vow itself only the conditions proposed by the maker of the vow are communicated: "If Thou wilt bless me, and enlarge my coast, and Thy hand shall be with me, and Thou wilt keep evil far off, not to bring sorrow to me,"—without the conclusion, Then I vow to do this or that (cf. Gen. xxviii. 20 f.), but with the remark that God granted him that which he requested. The reason of this is probably that the vow had acquired importance sufficient to make it worthy of being handed down only from God's having so fulfilled his wish, that his life became a contradiction of his name; the son of sorrow having been free from pain in life, and having attained to greater happiness and reputation than his brothers.

Vers. 11, 12. The genealogy of the men of Rechah.—As to their connection with the larger families of Judah, nothing has been handed down to us. Chelub, another form of the name Caleb or Chelubai (see ii. 9 and 18), is distinguished from the better known Caleb son of Hezron (ii. 18 and 42), and from the son of Jephunneh (ver. 15), by the additional clause, "the son of Shuah." Shuah is not met with elsewhere, but is without reason identified with Hushah, ver. 4, by the older commentators. Mehir the father of Eshton is likewise unknown. Eshton begat the house (the family) of Rapha, of whom also nothing further is said; for they can be connected neither with the Benjamite Rapha (viii. 2) nor with the children of Rapha (xx. 4, 6, 8). Paseah and Tehinnah are also unknown, for it is uncertain whether the sons of Paseah mentioned among the Nethinim, Ezra ii. 49, Neh. vii. 51, have any connection with our Paseah. Tehinnah is called "father of the city of Nahash." The latter



name is probably not properly the name of a town, but rather the name of a person Nahash, not unlikely the same as the father of Abigail (2 Sam. xvii. 25), the step-sister of David (cf. ii. 16). The men (or people) of Rechah are unknown.

Vers. 13-15. *Descendants of Kenaz*.—קנז is a descendant of Hezron the son of Pharez, as may be inferred from the fact that Caleb the son of Jephunneh, a descendant of Hezron's son Caleb, is called in Num. xxxii. 12 and Josh. xiv. 6 קנזי, and consequently was also a descendant of Kenaz. Othniel and Seraiah, introduced here as קנזי קנזי, are not sons (in the narrower sense of the word), but more distant descendants of Kenaz; for Othniel and Caleb the son of Jephunneh were, according to Josh. xv. 17 and Judg. i. 13, brothers.<sup>1</sup> Kenaz, therefore, can neither have been the father of Othniel nor father of Caleb (in the proper sense of the word), but must at least have been the grandfather or great-grandfather of both. Othniel is the famous first judge of Israel, Judg. iii. 9 ff. Of Seraiah nothing further is known, although the name is often met with of different persons. The sons of Othniel are Hathath. The plural

<sup>1</sup> The words used in Judg. i. 13, cf. Josh. xv. 17, of the relationship of Othniel and Caleb, בן-קנז אחי כלב הקטן, may be, it is true, taken in different senses, either as signifying *filius Kenasi fratris Caleb*, according to which, not Othniel, but Kenaz, was a younger brother of Caleb; or in this way, *filius Kenasi, frater Calebi minor*, as we have interpreted them in the text, and also in the commentary on Josh. xv. 17. This interpretation we still hold to be certainly the correct one, notwithstanding what Bachmann (*Buch der Richter*, on i. 13) has brought forward against it and in favour of the other interpretation, and cannot see that his chief reasons are decisive. The assertion that we must predicate of Othniel, if he be a younger brother of Caleb, an unsuitably advanced age, is not convincing. Caleb was eighty-five years of age at the division of the land of Canaan (Josh. xiv. 10). Now if we suppose that his younger or youngest brother Othniel was from twenty-five to thirty years younger, as often happens, Othniel would be from sixty to sixty-one or fifty-five to fifty-six years of age at the conquest of Debir,—an age at which he might well win a wife as the reward of valour. Ten years later came the invasion of the land by Cushan Rishathaim, which lasted eight years, till Othniel had conquered Cushan R., and there were judges in Israel. This victory he would thus gain at the age of seventy-eight or seventy-three; and even if he filled the office of judge for forty years—which, however, Judg. iii. 11 does not state—he would have reached no greater age than 118 or 113 years, only three or eight years older than Joshua had been. If we consider what Caleb said of himself in his eighty-fifth year, Josh. xiv. 11, “I am still strong as in the day that Moses sent me (*i.e.* forty years before); as my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war, both to go out and to come in,” we cannot think that Othniel, in the seventy-third or seventy-

בְּנֵי, even when only one name follows, is met with elsewhere (*vide* on ii. 7); but the continuation is somewhat strange, "and Meonothai begat Ophrah," for as Meonothai is not before mentioned, his connection with Othniel is not given. There is evidently a hiatus in the text, which may most easily be filled up by repeating וַיַּמְעוֹנְתִי at the end of ver. 13. According to this conjecture two sons of Othniel would be named, Hathath and Meonothai, and then the posterity of the latter is given. The name מְעוֹנְתִי (my dwellings) is not met with elsewhere. It is not at all probable that it is connected with the town Maon, and still less that it is so in any way with the Mehunim, Ezra ii. 50. Ophrah is unknown, for of course we must not think of the towns called Ophrah, in the territory of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 23, and in that of Manasseh, Judg. vi. 11, 24. Seraiah, who is mentioned in ver. 13, begat Joab the father (founder) of the valley of the craftsmen, "for they (*i.e.* the inhabitants of this valley, who were descended from Joab) were craftsmen." The valley of the חֲרָשִׁים (craftsmen) is again mentioned in Neh. xi. 35, eighth years of his age, was too old to be a military leader. But the other reason: "that Caleb is always called son of Jephunneh, Othniel always son of Kenaz, should cause us to hesitate before we take Othniel to be the proper brother of Caleb," loses all its weight when we find that Caleb also is called in Num. xxxii. 12 and Josh. xiv. 6 בֶּן־קִנָּז=קִנְזִי, and it is seen that Caleb therefore, as well as Othniel, was a son of Kenaz. Now if the Kenazite Caleb the son of Jephunneh were a brother of Kenaz, the father of Othniel, we must suppose an older Kenaz, the grandfather or great-grandfather of Caleb, and a younger Kenaz, the father of Othniel. This supposition is certainly feasible, for, according to ver. 15 of our chapter, a grandson of Caleb again was called Kenaz; but if it be probable is another question. For the answering of this question in the affirmative, Bachmann adduces that, according to 1 Chron. iv. 13, Othniel is undoubtedly the son of Kenaz in the proper sense of the word; but it might perhaps be difficult to prove, or even to render probable, this "undoubtedly." In the superscriptions of the single genealogies of the Chronicle, more than elsewhere, בְּנֵי has in general a very wide signification. In ver. 1 of our chapter, for instance, sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of Judah are all grouped together as בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה. But besides this, the ranging of the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh (ver. 15) after the enumeration of the sons of Kenaz in vers. 13 and 14, is clearly much more easily explicable if Caleb himself belonged to the בְּנֵי קִנָּז mentioned in ver. 13, than if he was a brother of Kenaz. In the latter case we should expect, after the analogy of ii. 42, to find an additional clause אַחֵי קִנָּז after כָּלֵב בֶּן־יִפְנֶה; while if Caleb was a brother of Othniel, his descent from Kenaz, or the fact that he belonged to the בְּנֵי קִנָּז, might be assumed to be known from Num. xxxii. 12.



whence we may conclude that it lay at no great distance from Jerusalem, in a northern direction.—Ver. 15. Of Iru, Elah, and Naam, the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh (cf. on ver. 13), nothing more is known. To connect Elah with the Edomite chief of that name (i. 52) is arbitrary. Of Elah's sons only "and Kenaz" is mentioned; the ו copul. before קנז shows clearly that a name has been dropped out before it.

Vers. 16-20. *Descendants of various men*, whose genealogical connection with the sons and grandsons of Judah, mentioned in ver. 1, is not given in the text as it has come to us.—Ver. 16. Sons of Jehaleleel, a man not elsewhere mentioned. Ziph, Ziphah, etc., are met with only here. There is no strong reason for connecting the name יִזְחִי with the towns of that name, Josh. xv. 24, 55.—Ver. 17. Ezra, whose four sons are enumerated, is likewise unknown. The singular בֶּנִי is peculiar, but has analogies in iii. 19, 21, and 23. Of the names of his sons, Jether and Ephraim again occur, the former in ii. 53, and the latter in i. 33 and v. 24, but in other families. Jalon, on the contrary, is found only here. The children of two wives of Mered are enumerated in vers. 17b and 18, but in a fashion which is quite unintelligible, and shows clear traces of a corruption in the text. For (1) the name of a woman as subject of וַתַּהַר, "and she conceived (bare)," is wanting; and (2) in ver. 18 the names of two women occur, Jehudijah and Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh. But the sons of Jehudijah are first given, and there follows thereupon the formula, "and these are the sons of Bithiah," without any mention of the names of these sons. This manifest confusion Bertheau has sought to remove by a happy transposition of the words. He suggests that the words, "and these are the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered had taken," should be placed immediately after וַיֵּלֶן. "By this means we obtain (1) the missing subject of וַתַּהַר; (2) the definite statement that Mered had two wives, with whom he begat sons; and (3) an arrangement by which the sons are enumerated after the names of their respective mothers." After this transposition the 17th verse would read thus: "And the sons of Ezra are Jether, Mered, . . . and Jalon; and these are the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took; and she conceived (and bare) Miriam, and Shammai, and Ishbah, the father of Esh-temoa (ver. 18), and his wife Jehudijah bore Jered the father of Gedor, etc." This conjecture commends itself by its sim-

plicity, and by the clearness which it brings into the words. From them we then learn that two families, who dwelt in a number of the cities of Judah, were descended from Mered the son of Ezra by his two wives. We certainly know no more details concerning them, as neither Mered nor his children are met with elsewhere. From the circumstance, however, that the one wife was a daughter of Pharaoh, we may conclude that Mered lived before the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. The name Miriam, which Moses' sister bore, is here a man's name. The names introduced by אֲבֵי are the names of towns. Ishbah is father (lord) of the town Eshtemoa, in the mountains of Judah, now Semua, a village to the south of Hebron, with considerable ruins dating from ancient times (cf. on Josh. xv. 50). הַיְהוּדִיָּה means properly "the Jewess," as distinguished from the Egyptian woman, Pharaoh's daughter. Gedor is a town in the high lands of Judah (cf. on ver. 4). Socho, in the low land of Judah, now Shuweikeh, in Wady Sumt (cf. on Josh. xv. 35). Zanoah is the name of a town in the high lands of Judah, Josh. xv. 56 (which has not yet been discovered), and of a town in the low land, now Zanua, not far from Zoreah, in an easterly direction (cf. on Josh. xv. 34). Perhaps the latter is here meant. In ver. 19, "the sons of the wife of Hodia, the sister of Naham, are the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite." The *stat. constr.* אִשָּׁת before הוֹדִיָּה shows that Hodia is a man's name. Levites of this name are mentioned in Neh. viii. 7, ix. 5, x. 11. The relationship of Hodia and Naham to the persons formerly named is not given. קַעֲיֵלָה is a locality in the low land of Judah not yet discovered (see on Josh. xv. 44). The origin of the epithet הַגִּרְמִי we do not know. Before אִשְׁתֵּמֹעַ, אֲבִי with ו copul. is probably to be repeated; and the Maachathite, the chief of a part of the inhabitants of Eshtemoa, is perhaps a descendant of Caleb by Maachah (ii. 48).—Ver. 20. Of Shimon and his four sons, also, nothing is known. שִׁמְעוֹן is one name. Ishi is often met with, *e.g.* ver. 42 and ii. 31, but nowhere in connection with Zoheth (not further noticed). The names of the sons are wanting after בְּנוֹתָהּ.

Vers. 21–23. *Descendants of Shelah*, the third son of Judah, ii. 3, and Gen. xxxviii. 5.—All the families of Judah enumerated in vers. 2–20 are connected together by the conjunction ו, and so are grouped as descendants of the sons and grandsons of Judah named in ver. 1. The conjunction is omitted, however, before



שֶׁלָּה, as also before בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה in ver. 3, to show that the descendants of Shelah form a second line of descendants of Judah, co-ordinate with the sons of Judah enumerated in vers. 1-19, concerning whom only a little obscure but not unimportant information has been preserved. Those mentioned as sons are Er (which also was the name of the first-born of Judah, ii. 3 f.), father of Lecah, and Laadan, the father of Mareshah. The latter name denotes, beyond question, a town which still exists as the ruin Marash in the Shephelah, Josh. xv. 44 (see on ii. 42), and consequently Lecah (לֶכָּה) also is the name of a locality not elsewhere mentioned. The further descendants of Shelah were, "the families of the Byssus-work of the house of Ashbea," i.e. the families of Ashbea, a man of whom nothing further is known. Of these families some were connected with a famous weaving-house or linen (Byssus) manufactory, probably in Egypt; and then further, in ver. 22, "Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, which ruled over Moab, and Jashubi-lehem." Kimchi conjectured that כְּזִיבָה was the place called כְּזִיב in Gen. xxxviii. 5 = אֶזְבִּיב, Josh. xv. 44, in the low land, where Shelah was born. יִשְׁבִּי לָחֶם is a strange name, "which the punctuators would hardly have pronounced in the way they have done if it had not come down to them by tradition" (Berth.). The other names denote heads of families or branches of families, the branches and families being included in them.<sup>1</sup> Nothing is told us of them beyond what is found in our verses, according to which the four first named ruled over Moab during a period in the primeval time; for, as the historian himself remarks, "these things are old."—Ver. 23. "These are the potters and the inhabitants of Netaim and Gedera." It is doubtful whether הַמָּיָה refers to all the descendants of Shelah, or only to those named in ver. 22. Bertheau holds the latter to be the more probable reference; "for as those named in ver. 21 have already been denominated Byssus-workers, it appears fitting that those in ver. 22 should be regarded as the potters, etc." But all

<sup>1</sup> Jerome has given a curious translation of ver. 22, "*et qui stare fecit solem, virique mendacii et securus et incendens, qui principes fuerunt in Moab et qui reversi sunt in Lahem: hæc autem verba vetera*,"—according to the Jewish Midrash, in which בְּעֵלֹי לְמוֹאָב was connected with the narrative in the book of Ruth. For יוֹקִים, *qui stare fecit solem*, is supposed to be Elimelech, and the *virii mendacii* Mahlon and Chilion, so well known from the book of Ruth, who went with their father into the land of Moab and married Moabitesses.

those mentioned in ver. 22 are by no means called Byssus-weavers, but only the families of Ashbea. What the descendants of Er and Laadan were is not said. The *הַמָּה* may consequently very probably refer to all the sons of Shelah enumerated in vers. 21 and 22, with the exception of the families designated Byssus-weavers, who are, of course, understood to be excepted. *נִטְעִים* signifies "plantings;" but since *נִירָה* is probably the name of a city Gedera in the lowlands of Judah (cf. Josh. xv. 36; and for the situation, see on 1 Chron. xii. 4), Netaim also will most likely denote a village where there were royal plantations, and about which these descendants of Shelah were employed, as the words "with the king in his business to dwell there" expressly state. *הַמֶּלֶךְ* is not an individual king of Judah, for we know not merely "of King Uzziah that he had country lands, 2 Chron. xxvi. 10" (Berth.); but we learn from 1 Chron. xxvii. 25-31 that David also possessed great estates and country lands, which were managed by regularly appointed officers. We may therefore with certainty assume that all the kings of Judah had domains on which not only agriculture and the rearing of cattle, but also trades, were carried on.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From the arrangement of the names in vers. 2-20, in which Bertheau finds just twelve families grouped together, he concludes, S. 44 f., that the division of the tribe of Judah into these twelve families did actually exist at some time or other, and had been established by a new reckoning of the families which the heads of the community found themselves compelled to make after deep and wide alterations had taken place in the circumstances of the tribe. He then attempts to determine this time more accurately by the character of the names. For since only a very few names in these verses are known to us from the historical books, from Genesis to 2d Kings, and the few thus known refer to the original divisions of the tribe, which may have maintained themselves till post-exilic times, while, on the contrary, a great number of the other names recur in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah; and since localities which in the earliest period after the exile were important for the new community are frequently met with in our verses, while such as were constantly being mentioned in præ-exilic times are nowhere to be found,—Bertheau supposes that a division of the tribe of Judah is here spoken of, which actually existed at some time in the period between Zerubbabel and Ezra. This hypothesis has, however, no solid foundation. The assumption even that the names in vers. 2-20 belong to just twelve families is very questionable; for this number can only be arrived at by separating the descendants of Caleb, ver. 15, from the descendants of Kenaz, vers. 13 and 14, of whom Caleb himself was one, and reckoning them separately. But the circumstance that in this reckoning only the names in vers. 12-20 are taken into consideration, while no notice is taken of the descendants of Shelah the son of Judah,



## CHAP. IV. 24-43.—THE FAMILIES AND THE DWELLING-PLACES OF THE TRIBE OF SIMEON.

In 25-27 we have, traced down through several generations, the genealogy of only one of all the families of the tribe of Simeon. There follows thereupon, in vers. 28-33, an enumeration of the ancient dwelling-places of this tribe; and finally, in vers. 34-43, information is given concerning the emigrations of Simeonite families into other neighbourhoods.

Vers. 24-27. *The families of Simeon.*—Of the six sons of Simeon, Gen. xvi. 10 and Ex. vi. 15, only the five are here named who, according to Num. xxvi. 12-14, founded the families of this tribe. The third son, Ohad, is omitted even in Num. xxvi. 12 in the list of the families of Simeon, at the numbering of the people in the fortieth year of the journey through the wilderness, clearly only because the posterity of Ohad had either died out, or had so dwindled away that it could form no inde-

enumerated in vers. 21-23, is much more important. Bertheau considers this verse to be merely a supplementary addition, but without reason, as we have pointed out on ver. 21. For if the descendants of Shelah form a second line of families descended from Judah, co-ordinate with the descendants of Pharez and Zerah, the tribe of Judah could not, either before or after the exile, have been divided into the twelve families supposed by Bertheau; for we have no reason to suppose, on behalf of this hypothesis, that all the descendants of Shelah had died out towards the end of the exile, and that from the time of Zerubbabel only families descended from Pharez and Zerah existed. But besides this, the hypothesis is decisively excluded by the fact that in the enumeration, vers. 2-20, no trace can be discovered of a division of the tribe of Judah into twelve families; for not only are the families mentioned not ranged according to the order of the sons and grandsons of Judah mentioned in ver. 1, but also the connection of many families with Judah is not even hinted at. An enumeration of families which rested upon a division either made or already existing at any particular time, would be very differently planned and ordered. But if we must hold the supposition of a division of the tribe of Judah into twelve families to be unsubstantiated, since it appears irreconcilable with the present state of these genealogies, we must also believe the opinion that this division actually existed at any time between Zerubbabel and Ezra to be erroneous, and to rest upon no tenable grounds. The relation of the names met with in these verses to the names in the books from Genesis to 2d Kings on the one hand, and to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah on the other, is not really that which Bertheau represents it to be. If we turn our attention in the first place to the names of places, we find that, except a few quite unknown villages or towns, the localities mentioned in vers. 2-20 occur also in the book of Joshua, and many of them even here and there throughout Genesis, in the book of Judges, and in the books of Samuel and Kings. In

pendent family. The names of the five sons agree with the names in Num. xxvi. 12-14, except in the case of Jarib, who in Num. xxvi. 12, which coincides here with Gen. xli. 10 and Ex. vi. 15, is called Jachin; יָרִיב, consequently, must be looked upon as a transcriber's error for יָכִין. Nemuel and Zerah (זֶרַח, the rising of the sun) are called in Genesis and Exodus Jemuel (a different form of the same name) and Zohar (זֹהָר, *i.e.* *candor*), another name of similar meaning, which, at first used only as a by-name, afterwards supplanted the original name. — Ver. 25. "Shallum (was) his son;" without doubt the son of the last named Shaul, who in Genesis and Exodus is called the son of a Canaanitish woman, and is thereby distinguished from the other sons. His family is traced down, in vers. 25 and 26, through six generations to one Shimei. But this list is divided into two groups by the words "and the sons of Mishma," inserted at the beginning of ver. 26, but the reasons for the division are unknown. The plural, sons of Mishma, refers to Hammuel and his

these latter they are somewhat more rarely met with, but only because they played no great part in history. The fact of a disproportionate number of these towns occurring also in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah is connected with the peculiar character of the contents of these books, containing as they do a number of registers of the families of Judah which had returned out of exile. Then if we consider the names of persons in vers. 2-20, we find that not a few of them occur in the historical narratives of the books of Samuel and Kings. Others certainly are found only in the family registers of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, while others again are peculiar to our verses. This phenomenon also is completely accounted for by the contents of the various historical books of the Old Testament. For example, had Nehemiah not received into his book the registers of all the families who had returned from Babylon, and who took part in the building of the walls of Jerusalem, no more names would be met with in his book than are found in the books of Samuel and Kings. Bertheau attempts to find support for his hypothesis in the way in which the names are enumerated, and their loose connection with each other, inasmuch as the disconnected statements abruptly and intermittently following one another, which to us bring enigma after enigma, must have been intended for readers who could bring a key to the understanding of the whole from an accurate knowledge of the relations which are here only hinted at; but the strength of this argument depends upon the assumption that complete family registers were at the command of the author of the Chronicle, from which he excerpted unconnected and obscure fragments, without any regard to order. But such an assumption cannot be justified. The character of that which is communicated would rather lead us to believe that only fragments were in the hands of the chronicler, which he has given to us as he found them. We must therefore pronounce this attempt at an explanation of the contents and form of vers. 2-20 to be an utter failure.



descendants Zacchur and Shimei. Perhaps these two together form, with the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons mentioned in ver. 25, a single larger family.—Ver. 27. Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters, by whom he became the father of a numerous race. “His brothers,” *i.e.* the other Simeonites, on the contrary, had not many sons. Hence it happens that they made not their whole race, *i.e.* the whole race of the Simeonites, numerous unto the sons of Judah, *i.e.* that the Simeonites were not so numerous as the descendants of Judah. This account is corroborated by the statement made at the numberings of the people under Moses; see on Num. i.-iv. (i. 2, S. 192).

Vers. 28-33. *The ancient dwelling-places of the Simeonites*, which they received within the tribal domain of Judah at the division of the land by Joshua; cf. Josh. xix. 1 ff.—There are in all eighteen cities, divided into two groups, numbering thirteen and five respectively, as in Josh. xix. 2-6, where these same cities are enumerated in the same order. The only difference is, that in Joshua thirteen cities are reckoned in the first group and four in the second, although the first group contains fourteen names. Between Beersheba and Moladah there stands there a שֶׁבַע which is not found in our list, and which might be considered to be a repetition of the second part of בְּאֵר־שֶׁבַע, if it were not that in the list of the cities, Josh. xv. 26, the name שָׁמַע before Moladah corresponds to it. The other differences between the two passages arise partly from different forms of the same name being used,—as, for example, בִּלְהָה for בִּלְהָ (Josh.), אֶלְתוֹלַד for תוֹלַד (Josh.), בְּתוּאֵל for בְּתוּל; and partly from different names being used of the same city,—*e.g.* בֵּית־בְּרָאִי (ver. 31) instead of בֵּית־לִבְנָאוֹת, “the house of lions” (Josh.), שְׁרֵהָן instead of שְׁעָרִים (Josh.). All these cities lie in the south land of Judah, and have therefore been named in Josh. xv. 26-32 among the cities of that district. As to Beersheba, now Bir es Seba, see on Gen. xxi. 31; and for Moladah, which is to be identified with the ruin el Milh to the south of Hebron, on the road to Ailah, see on Josh. xv. 26. Bilhah (in Josh. xv. 29, בִּעְלָה), Ezem, Tolad, and Bethuel (for which in Josh. xv. 31 בְּסִיל is found), have not yet been discovered; cf. on Josh. xv. 29 and 30. Hormah, formerly Sephat, is now the ruin Sepata, on the western slope of the Rakhma table-land, 2½ hours south of Khalasa (Elusa); cf. on Josh. xii. 14. Ziklag is most probably to be sought in the ancient village Aschludsch or Kasludsch, to the east of Sepata; cf. on Josh. xv. 31. Beth-Mar-

caboth, *i.e.* "carriage-house," and Hazar-Susim (or Susa), *i.e.* horse-village, both evidently by-names, are called in Josh. xv. 31 Madmannah and Sansannah. Their position has not yet been discovered. Beth-Birei, or Beth-Leboath, is also as yet undiscovered; cf. on Josh. xv. 32. Shaaraim, called in Josh. xv. 32 Shilhim, is supposed to be the same as Tell Sheriah, between Gaza and Beersheba; cf. Van de Velde, *Reise*, ii. S. 154. The enumeration of these thirteen cities concludes in ver. 31 with the strange subscription, "These (were) their cities until the reign of David, and their villages." וְחִצְרֵיהֶם, which, according to the Masoretic division of the verses, stands at the beginning of ver. 32, should certainly be taken with ver. 31; for the places mentioned in ver. 32 are expressly called cities, and in Josh. xix. 6, cities and their villages, חִצְרֵיהֶם, are spoken of. This subscription can hardly "only be intended to remind us, that of the first-mentioned cities, one (*viz.* Ziklag, 1 Sam. xxvii. 6), or several, in the time of David, no longer belonged to the tribe of Simeon;" nor can it only be meant to state that "till the time of David the cities named were in possession of the tribe of Simeon, though they did not all continue to be possessed by this tribe at a later time" (Berth.). Ziklag had been, even before the reign of David, taken away from the Simeonites by the Philistines, and had become the property of King Achish, who in the reign of Saul presented it to David, and through him it became the property of the kings of Judah (1 Sam. xxvii. 6). The subscription can only mean that till the reign of David these cities rightfully belonged to the Simeonites, but that during and after David's reign this rightful possession of the Simeonites was trenched upon; and of this curtailing of their rights, the transfer of the city of Ziklag to the kings of Judah gives one historically attested proof. This, however, might not have been the only instance of the sort; it may have brought with it other alterations in the possessions of the Simeonites as to which we have no information. The remark of R. Salomo and Kimchi, that the men of Judah, when they had attained to greater power under David's rule, drove the Simeonites out of their domains, and compelled them to seek out other dwelling-places, is easily seen to be an inference drawn from the notices in vers. 33-43 of emigrations of the Simeonites into other districts; but it may not be quite incorrect, as these emigrations under Hezekiah presuppose a pressure upon or diminution of their territory. We would indeed



expect this remark to occur after ver. 33, but it may have been placed between the first and second groups of cities, for the reason that the alterations in the dwelling-places of the Simeonites which took place in the time of David affected merely the first group, while the cities named in ver. 32 f., with their villages, remained at a later time even the untouched possession of the Simeonites.—Ver. 32. Instead of the five cities, Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan, only four are mentioned in Josh. xix. 7, viz. Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan; תּוֹכֵן is written instead of עֶתֶר, and עֵיטָם is wanting. According to Movers, p. 73, and Berth. in his commentary on the passage, the list of these cities must have been at first as follows: עֵין רִמּוֹן (one city), עֶתֶר, תּוֹכֵן, and עֶשֶׂן; in Joshua תּוֹכֵן must have fallen out by mistake, in our text עֶתֶר has been erroneously exchanged for the better known city עֵיטָם in the tribe of Judah, while by reckoning both עֵין and רִמּוֹן the number four has become five. These conjectures are shown to be groundless by the order of the names in our text. For had עֶתֶר been exchanged for עֵיטָם, עֵיטָם would not stand in the first place, at the head of the four or five cities, but would have occupied the place of עֶתֶר, which is connected with עֵשֶׂן in Josh. xix. 7 and xv. 43. Then again, the fact that in Josh. xv. 32 רִמּוֹן is separated from עֵין by the ו cop., and in Josh. xix. 7 is reckoned by itself as one city as in our verse, is decisive against taking עֵין and רִמּוֹן together as one name. The want of the conjunction, moreover, between the two names here and in Josh. xix. 7, and the uniting of the two words into one name, עֵין־רִמּוֹן, Neh. xi. 29, is explained by the supposition that the towns lay in the immediate neighbourhood of each other, so that they were at a later time united, or at least might be regarded as one city. Rimmon is perhaps the same as the ruin Rum or Rummanim, four hours to the north of Beersheba; and Ain is probably to be identified with a large half-ruined and very ancient well which lies at from thirty to thirty-five minutes distance. cf. on Josh. xv. 32. Finally, the assertion that the name עֵיטָם has come into our text by an exchange of the unknown עֶתֶר for the name of this better known city of Judah, is founded upon a double geographical error. It rests (1) upon the erroneous assumption that besides the Etam in the high lands of Judah to the south of Bethlehem, there was no other city of this name, and that the Etam mentioned in Judg. xv. 8, 11 is identical with that in the high lands of Judah; and (2) on the mistaken idea that Ether was also situated in the high

lands of Judah, whereas it was, according to Josh. xv. 42, one of the cities of the Shephelah; and the Simeonites, moreover, had no cities in the high lands of Judah, but had their dwelling-places assigned to them in the Negeb and the Shephelah. The existence of a second Etam, besides that in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, is placed beyond doubt by Judg. xv. 8 and 11; for mention is there made of an Etam in the plain of Judah, which is to be sought in the neighbourhood of Khuweilfe, on the border of the Negeb and the mountainous district: cf. on Judg. xv. 8. It is this Etam which is spoken of in our verse, and it is rightly grouped with Ain and Rimmon, which were situated in the Negeb, while Tochen and Ashan were in the Shephelah. The statement of Josh. xix. 7 and xv. 42 leaves no doubt as to the fact that the הַיָּמָה of our verse is only another name for עֵתָר. Etam must therefore have come into the possession of the Simeonites after Joshua's time, but as to when, or under what circumstances, we have no information.—Ver. 33. Concerning the villages belonging to these cities, cf. on Josh. xix. 8, where for בְּעֵל we have the more accurate בְּעֵלֶת בְּאֵר, and Ramah of the south. The position of these places has not yet been certainly ascertained. "These are their dwelling-places, and their family register was to them;" i.e. although they were only a small tribe and dwelt in the midst of Judah, they yet had their own family register (Berth.). הַתְּחִיטִשׁ infin. is used substantively, "the entering in the family register."

Vers. 34–43. *Emigrations of Simeonite families into other districts.*—Vers. 34–41 record an expedition of the Simeonites, in the time of Hezekiah, undertaken for purposes of conquest. In vers. 34–36, thirteen princes of the tribe of Simeon are enumerated who undertook this expedition. The families of some of them are traced through several generations, but in no case are they traced down so far as to show their connection with the families named in vers. 24–26.—Ver. 38. "These mentioned by their names were princes in their families; whose fathers'-houses had increased to a multitude. And they went," etc. הַבָּאִים בְּשֵׁמוֹת, properly "those who have come with their names," i.e. those who have been mentioned by name; for בָּא with בְּ = to come with, is to bring something in, to introduce: cf. Ps. lxxi. 16. This formula is synonymous with הַבָּתוּבִים בְּשֵׁמוֹת, ver. 41; but we cannot consider it, as J. H. Mich., Berth., and others do, identical in meaning with נָקְבוּ בְּשֵׁמוֹת, xii. 31, Num. i. 17, etc. The predicate to אֵלֶּה is נִשְׂיָאִים, and הַבָּאִים is a relative sentence, more



accurately defining the subject אֱלֵה. Princes in their families are not heads of families, but heads of fathers'-houses, into which the families had divided themselves. בֵּית-אָבוֹת is not construed with the plural, as being collective (Berth.), but as the plural of the word בֵּית-אָב: cf. Ew. § 270, c.—Ver. 39. The princes named “went westward from Gedor to the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.” מְבוֹא גֵדֹר does not mean the entrance of Gedor (Mich., Berth., and others); but is, as the corresponding מְזֶרַח, “rising” of the sun, *i.e.* east, requires, a designation of the west, and is abridged from מְבוֹא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ, as in statements with reference to places מְזֶרַח is used instead of מְבוֹא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ. The locality itself, however, is to us at present unknown. So much is clear, that by Gedor, the Gedor mentioned in Josh. xv. 58, situated in the high lands of Judah, north of Hebron, cannot be intended, for in that district there is no open valley stretching out on either hand; and the Simeonites, moreover, could not have carried on a war of conquest in the territory of the tribe of Judah in the reign of Hezekiah. But where this Gedor is to be sought cannot be more accurately determined; for הַנִּיָּא is certainly not “the valley in which the Dead Sea lies, and the southern continuation of that valley,” as Ewald and Berth. think: that valley has, in the Old Testament, always the name הַעֲרֵבָה. From the use of the article, “the valley,” no further conclusion can be drawn, than that a definite valley in the neighbourhood of Gedor is meant.<sup>1</sup> Even the further statements, in ver. 30, with regard to the district, that they found there fat and good pasture, and that the land extended on both sides (*i.e.* was wide), and at rest and secure, because formerly the Hamites dwelt there, and the statement of ver. 41, that the Simeonites found the Meunim there, and smote them, give us no firm foothold for the ascertainment of the district referred to. The whole Negeb of Judah has been as yet too little travelled over and explored by modern travellers, to allow

<sup>1</sup> The LXX. have rendered גֵדֹר by Γεράρ, whence Ewald and Bertheau conclude that גֵדֹר is a transcriber's error for גֵרָר. But a slip of the pen which would make the Gerar so famed in the history of the patriarchs into Gedor is *a priori* not very probable; and the defective writing גֵדֹר, while Gedor in the high lands is written גֵדֹר, cannot be adduced, as Bertheau thinks, in support of the hypothesis, since Gedor even in ver. 18 is written defectively. It is decisive against Gerar, that the dwelling-places of the Simeonites demonstrably did not extend till towards sunset (westward) from Gerar, for the cities assigned to them all lie to the east of Gerar.

of our forming any probable conjecture as to Gedor and the wide valley stretching out on both sides. The description of the Hamite inhabitants, שְׁקֵטָה וְשָׁלֹה, reminds us of the inhabitants of the ancient Laish (Judg. xviii. 7, 27). Those מִן הָם are people from Ham, *i.e.* Hamites, and they may have been Egyptians, Cushites, or even Canaanites (chap. i. 8). This only is certain, that they were a peaceful shepherd people, who dwelt in tents, and were therefore nomads. לְפָנֵינוּ, “formerly,” before the Simeonites took possession of the land.—Ver. 41. The above-mentioned Simeonite princes, with their people, fell upon the peaceful little people of the Hamites in the days of Hezekiah, and smote, *i.e.* destroyed, their tents, and also the Meunites whom they found there. The Meunites were strangers in this place, and were probably connected with the city Maan in the neighbourhood of Petra, to the east of Wady Musa (cf. on 2 Chron. xx. 1 and xxvi. 7), who dwelt in tents as nomads, with the Hamites in their richly pastured valley. וַיַּחְרִימוּם, and they destroyed them utterly, as the Vulgate rightly renders it, *et deleverunt*; and J. H. Mich., *ad internecionem usque eos exciderunt*. The word יַחְרִים, to smite with the curse, having gradually lost its original religious signification, came to be used in a wider sense, to denote complete extirpation, because all accursed persons were slain. Undoubted examples are 2 Chron. xx. 23, xxxii. 14, 2 Kings xix. 11, Isa. xxxvii. 11; and it is to be so understood here also.<sup>1</sup> “Until this day,” *i.e.* till the composition of the historical work used by the author of the Chronicle, *i.e.* till the time before the exile.—Vers. 42 and 43. A part of the Simeonites undertook a second war of conquest against Mount Seir. Led by four chiefs of the sons of Shimei (cf. ver. 27), 500 men marched thither, smote the remainder of the Amalekites who had escaped, and they dwell there to this day (as in ver. 41). מֵהֶם is more accurately defined by

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau ignores this secondary use of the word, and has drawn from יַחְרִים the extremely wide inference, that the Simeonites, impelled by holy enthusiasm, arising from the wondrous deliverance of Judah from the attack of the Assyrian power, and the elevation of feeling which it produced in the community, and filled with the thought awakened by the discourses of the great prophets, that the time had come to extend Israel's rule, and to bring the conquered peoples under the curse, just as was done in the time of Joshua, had undertaken this war of annexation. But there is unfortunately not a single trace of this enthusiastic thought in the narrative of our verse, for it knows no other motive for the whole undertaking than the purely earthly need to seek and find new pasture lands.



מִבְּנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן, and is therefore to be referred to the Simeonites in general, and not to that part of them only mentioned in ver. 33 (Berth.). From the circumstance that the leaders were sons of Shimei, we may conclude that the whole troop belonged to this family. The escaped of Amalek are those who had escaped destruction in the victories of Saul and David over this hereditary enemy of Israel (1 Sam. xiv. 48, xv. 7; 2 Sam. viii. 12). A remnant of them had been driven into the mountain land of Idumea, where they were smitten, *i.e.* extirpated, by the Simeonites. It is not said at what time this was done, but it occurred most probably in the second half of Hezekiah's reign.

CHAP. V. 1-26.—THE FAMILIES OF REUBEN, GAD, AND THE HALF TRIBE OF MANASSEH BEYOND JORDAN.

Vers. 1-10. *The families of the tribe of Reuben.*—Vers. 1, 2. Reuben is called the first-born of Israel, because he was the first-born of Jacob, although, owing to his having defiled his father's bed (Gen. xlix. 4), his birthright, *i.e.* its privileges, were transferred to the sons of Joseph, who were not, however, entered in the family register of the house of Israel according to the birthright, *i.e.* as first-born sons. The inf. הִתְיַחֵשׁ with לֵּ expresses "shall" or "must," cf. Ew. § 237, *e*, "he was not to register," *i.e.* "he was not to be registered." The subject is Joseph, as the Rabbins, *e.g.* Kimchi, have perceived. The clauses after כִּי הָיָה form a parenthesis, containing the reason of Reuben's being called בְּכוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל, which is still further established by its being shown (in ver. 2) how it happened that Joseph, although the birthright was given to him, according to the disposition made by the patriarch (Gen. xlviii. 5 ff.), yet was not entered in the family registers as first-born. The reason of this was, "for Judah was strong among his brethren, and (one) from him became the Prince;" *scil.* on the strength of the patriarchal blessing (Gen. xlix. 8-12), and by means of the historic fulfilment of this blessing. The "prevailing" of Judah among his brethren showed itself even under Moses at the numbering of the people, when the tribe of Judah considerably outnumbered all the other tribes (cf. t. i. 2, S. 192). Then, again, it appeared after the division of the land of Canaan among the tribes of Israel, Judah being called by a declaration of the divine will to be the vanguard of the army in the war against the Canaanites

(Judg. i. 1 f.); and it was finally made manifest by the נָגִיד over Israel being chosen by God from the tribe of Judah, in the person of David (cf. xxviii. 4 with 1 Sam. xiii. 14, xxv. 30). From this we gather that the short, and from its brevity obscure, sentence וְלִנְגִיד מִמֶּנִּי bears the signification we have given it. "But the birthright was Joseph's;" *i.e.* the rights of the progenitor were transferred to or remained with him, for two tribal domains were assigned to his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, according to the law of the first-born (Deut. xxi. 15-17).

After this parenthetical explanation, the words "the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel," ver. 1, are again taken up in ver. 3, and the sons are enumerated. The names of the four sons correspond to those given in Gen. xli. 9, Ex. vi. 14, and Num. xxvi. 5-7.—Vers. 4-6. From one of these sons descended Joel, whose family is traced down through seven generations, to the time of the Assyrian deportation of the Israelites. But we are neither informed here, nor can we ascertain from any information elsewhere given in the Old Testament, from which of the four sons Joel was descended. For although many of the names in vers. 4-6 frequently occur, yet they are nowhere met with in connection with the family whose members are here registered. The last-named, Beerah, was נָשִׂיא לְרֵאשִׁית, a prince of the Reubenites, not a prince of the tribe of Reuben, but a prince of a family of the Reubenites. This is expressed by לְ being used instead of the *stat. constr.*; cf. Ew. § 292, a. In reference to the leading away of the trans-Jordanic tribes into captivity by Tiglath-pileser, cf. on 2 Kings xv. 29. The name of this king as it appears in the Chronicles is always Tiglath-pileser, and in the book of Kings Tiglath-pileser, but its meaning has not yet been certainly ascertained. According to Oppert's interpretation, it = תְּגִלְת־פִּלְא־סַחֵר, *i.e.* "worship of the son of the Zodiac" (*i.e.* the Assyrian Hercules); *vid.* Delitzsch on Isaiah, Introd.—Vers. 7-9. "And his brothers, (each) according to his families in the registration, according to their descent (properly their generations; *vide* for מוֹלְדוֹת on Gen. ii. 4), are (were) the head (the first) Jeiel and Zechariah, and Bela, . . . the son of Joel," probably the Joel already mentioned in ver. 4. "His (*i.e.* Beerah's) brothers" are the families related to the family of Beerah, which were descended from the brothers of Joel. That they were not, however, properly "brothers," is clear from the fact that Bela's descent is traced back to Joel as the third of the preceding



members of his family; and the conclusion would be the same, even if this Joel be another than the one mentioned in ver. 4. The singular suffix with *לְמִשְׁפַּחָתוֹ* is to be taken distributively, or *וְאִשׁ* may be supplied before it in thought; cf. Num. ii. 34, xi. 10. The word *רֹאשׁ*, "head," for the first-born, stands here before the name, as in xii. 3, xxiii. 8; elsewhere it stands after the name, *e.g.* ver. 12 and ix. 17. The dwelling-places of Bela and his family are then given in vers. 8*b* and 9. "He dwelt in Aroer," on the banks of the brook Arnon (Josh. xiii. 9, xii. 2), now the ruin Araayr on the northern bank of the Mojob (*vide* on Num. xxxii. 34). "Until Nebo and Baal-meon" westward. Nebo, a village on the hill of the same name in the mountains of Abarim, opposite Jericho (cf. on Num. xxxii. 38). Baal-meon is probably identical with the ruin Myun, three-quarters of an hour south-east from Heshbon.—Ver. 9. "Eastward to the coming to the desert (*i.e.* till towards the desert) from the river Euphrates," *i.e.* to the great Arabico-Syrian desert, which stretches from the Euphrates to the eastern frontier of Perea, or from Gilead to the Euphrates. Bela's family had spread themselves so far abroad, "for their herds were numerous in the land of Gilead," *i.e.* Perea, the whole trans-Jordanic domain of the Israelites.—Ver. 10. "In the days of Saul they made war upon the Hagarites, and they fell into their hands, and they dwelt in their tents over the whole east side of Gilead." The subject is not determined, so that the words may be referred either to the whole tribe of Reuben or to the family of Bela (ver. 8). The circumstance that in vers. 8 and 9 Bela is spoken of in the singular (*וְאִשׁ* and *הוּא יֹשֵׁב*), while here the plural is used in reference to the war, is not sufficient to show that the words do not refer to Bela's family, for the narrative has already fallen into the plural in the last clause of ver. 9. We therefore think it better to refer ver. 10 to the family of Bela, seeing that the wide spread of this family, which is mentioned in ver. 9, as far as the desert to the east of the inhabited land, presupposes the driving out of the Hagarites dwelling on the eastern plain of Gilead. The notice of this war, moreover, is clearly inserted here for the purpose of explaining the wide spread of the Belaites even to the Euphrates desert, and there is nothing which can be adduced against that reference. The *וְאִשׁ* in ver. 7 does not, as Bertheau thinks probable, denote that Bela was a contemporary of Beerah, even if the circumstance that from Bela to Joel only three

generations are enumerated, could be reconciled with this supposition. The spread of Bela's family over the whole of the Reubenite Gilead, which has just been narrated, proves decisively that they were not contemporaries. If Bela lived at the time of the invasion of Gilead by Tiglath-pileser, when the prince Beerah was carried away into exile, it is certainly possible that he might have escaped the Assyrians; but he could neither have had at that time a family "which inhabited all the east land," nor could he himself have extended his domain from "Aroer and Nebo towards the wilderness," as the words *הוא יושב*, ver. 8, distinctly state. We therefore hold that Bela was much older than Beerah, for he is introduced as a great-grandson of Joel, so that his family might have been as widely distributed as vers. 8, 9 state, and have undertaken and carried out the war of conquest against the Hagarites, referred to in ver. 10, as early as the time of Saul. Thus, too, we can most easily explain the fact that Bela and his brothers Jeiel and Zechariah are not mentioned. As to *הַנִּרְאִים*, cf. on ver. 19.

Vers. 11-17. *The families of the tribe of Gad, and their dwelling-places.*—Ver. 11. In connection with the preceding statement as to the dwelling-places of the Reubenites, the enumeration of the families of Gad begins with a statement as to their dwelling-places: "Over against them (the Reubenites) dwelt the Gadites in Bashan unto Salcah." Bashan is used here in its wider signification of the dominion of King Og, which embraced the northern half of Gilead, *i.e.* the part of that district which lay on the north side of the Jabbok, and the whole district of Bashan; cf. on Deut. iii. 10. Salcah formed the boundary towards the east, and is now Szalchad, about six hours eastward from Bosra (see on Deut. iii. 10).—Ver. 12. The sons of Gad (Gen. xvi. 16) are not named here, because the enumeration of the families of Gad had been already introduced by ver. 11, and the genealogical connection of the families enumerated in ver. 12 ff., with the sons of the tribal ancestor, had not been handed down. In ver. 12 four names are mentioned, which are clearly those of heads of families or fathers'-houses, with the addition "in Bashan," *i.e.* dwelling, for *יָשְׁבוּ* is to be repeated or supplied from the preceding verse.—In ver. 13 seven other names occur, the bearers of which are introduced as brothers of those mentioned (ver. 12), according to their fathers'-houses. They are therefore heads of fathers'-houses, but the district in which they dwelt is not given; whence



Bertheau concludes, but wrongly, that the place where they dwelt is not given in the text. The statement which is here omitted follows in ver. 16 at a fitting place; for in vers. 14 and 15 their genealogy, which rightly goes before the mention of their dwelling-place, is given. אֲלֵהֶם, ver. 14, is not to be referred, as Bertheau thinks, to the four Gadites mentioned in vers. 12 and 13, but only to those mentioned in ver. 13. Nothing more was known of those four (ver. 12) but that they dwelt in Bashan, while the genealogy of the seven is traced up through eight generations to a certain Buz, of whom nothing further is known, as the name בּוּז occurs nowhere else, except in Gen. xxii. 21 as that of a son of Nahor. The names of his ancestors also are not found elsewhere among the Gadites.—Ver. 15. The head of their fathers'-houses (*i.e.* of those mentioned in ver. 13) was Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, who is conjectured to have lived in the time of King Jotham of Judah, or of Jeroboam II. of Israel, when, according to ver. 17, genealogical registers of the Gadites were made up.—Ver. 16. The families descended from Buz “dwelt in Gilead,” in the part of that district lying to the south of the Jabbok, which Moses had given to the Gadites and Reubenites (Deut. iii. 12); “in Bashan and her daughters,” that is, in the villages belonging to the cities of Bashan and Gilead inhabited by them (for the suffix in בְּבָנוֹתֶיהָ is to be referred distributively to both districts, or the cities in them). “And in all the pasture grounds (מִגְרָשׁ, cf. on Num. xxxv. 2) of Sharon unto their outgoings.” שָׂרֹן, Sharon, lay not in Perea, but is a great plain on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, extending from Carmel to near Joppa, famed for its great fertility and its rich growth of flowers (Song ii. 1; Isa. xxxiii. 9, xxxv. 2, lxv. 10). “*A Casarea Palæstinae usque ad oppidum Joppe omnis terra, quæ cernitur, dicitur Saronas.*” Jerome in *Onom.*; cf. v. Raumer, *Pal. S.* 50, and Robins. *Phys. Geog. S.* 123. It is this plain which is here meant, and the supposition of the older commentators that there was a second Sharon in the east-Jordan land is without foundation, as Reland, *Palestina illustr.* p. 370 sq., has correctly remarked. For it is not said that the Gadites possessed cities in Sharon, but only pastures of Sharon are spoken of, which the Gadites may have sought out for their herds even on the coast of the Mediterranean; more especially as the domain of the cis-Jordanic half-tribe of Manasseh stretched into the plain of Sharon, and it is probable that at all times

there was intercourse between the cis- and trans-Jordanic Manassites, in which the Gadites may also have taken part. מַחֲנֵיכֵם are the outgoings of the pastures to the sea, cf. Josh. xvii. 9.—Ver. 17. "All these (בָּלֵם, all the families of Gad, not merely those mentioned in ver. 13 ff.) were registered in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel." These two kings did not reign contemporaneously, for Jotham ascended the throne in Judah twenty-five years after the death of Jeroboam of Israel. Here, therefore, two different registrations must be referred to, and that carried on under Jotham is mentioned first, because Judah had the legitimate kingship. That set on foot by Jeroboam was probably undertaken after that king had restored all the ancient boundaries of the kingdom of Israel, 2 Kings xiv. 25 ff. King Jotham of Judah could prepare a register of the Gadites only if a part of the trans-Jordanic tribes had come temporarily under his dominion. As to any such event, indeed, we have no accurate information, but the thing in itself is not unlikely. For as the death of Jeroboam II. was followed by complete anarchy in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and one ruler overthrew the other, until at last Pekah succeeded in holding the crown for ten years, while in Judah until Pekah ascended the throne of Israel Uzziah reigned, and raised his kingdom to greater power and prosperity, the southern part of the trans-Jordanic land might very well have come for a time under the sway of Judah. At such a time Jotham may have carried out an assessment and registration of the Gadites, until his contemporary Pekah succeeded, with the help of the Syrian king Rezin, in taking from the king of Judah the dominion over Gilead, and in humbling the kingdom of Judah in the reign of Ahaz.

Vers. 18–22. *War of the trans-Jordanic tribes of Israel with Arabic tribes.*—As the half-tribe of Manasseh also took part in this war, we should have expected the account of it after ver. 24. Bertheau regards its position here as a result of striving after a symmetrical distribution of the historical information. "In the case of Reuben," he says, "the historical information is in ver. 10; in the case of the half-tribe of Manasseh, in vers. 25 and 26; as to Gad, we have our record in vers. 18–22, which, together with the account in vers. 25 and 26, refers to all the trans-Jordanic Israelites." But it is much more likely that the reason of it will be found in the character of the authorities which the author of the Chronicle made use of, in which, probably, the



notes regarding this war were contained in the genealogical register of the Gadites.—Ver. 18. מְרַבֵּי חַיִּל belongs to the predicate of the sentence, “They were the sons of valour,” *i.e.* they belonged to the valiant warriors, “men bearing shield and sword (weapons of offence and defence), and those treading (or bending) the bow,” *i.e.* skilful bowmen. לְמוֹדֵי מִלְחָמָה, people practised in war; cf. the portrayal of the warlike valour of Gad and Manasseh, chap. xii. 8, 21. “The number 44,760 must be founded upon an accurate reckoning” (Berth.); but in comparison with the number of men capable of bearing arms in those tribes in the time of Moses, it is somewhat inconsiderable: for at the first numbering under him Reuben alone had 46,500 and Gad 45,650, and at the second numbering Reuben had 43,730 and Gad 40,500 men; see on Num. i.–iv. (i. 2, S. 192).—Ver. 19. “They made war with the Hagarites and Jetur, Nephish and Nodab.” So early as the time of Saul the Reubenites had victoriously made war upon the Hagarites (see ver. 10); but the war here mentioned was certainly at a later time, and has no further connection with that in ver. 10 except that both arose from similar causes. The time of the second is not given, and all we know from ver. 22b is that it had broken out before the trans-Jordanic Israelites were led captive by the Assyrians. הַגֵּרִיָּים, in Ps. lxxxiii. 7 contracted into הַגֵּרִים, are the Ἀγρᾶῖοι, whom Strabo, xvi. p. 767, introduces, on the authority of Eratosthenes, as leading a nomadic life in the great Arabico-Syrian desert, along with the Nabatæans and Chaulotæans. Jetur, from whom the Itureans are descended, and Nephish, are Ishmaelites; cf. on Gen. xxv. 15. Nodab, mentioned only here, is a Bedouin tribe of whom nothing more is known.—Ver. 20. The Israelites, with God’s help, gained the victory. יִעֲזְרוּ, “it was helped to them,” *i.e.* by God “against them”—the Hagarites and their allies. אֲשֶׁר עָמְדָהּ contracted from אֲשֶׁר עָמְדָהּ. יִעֲזְרוּ is not an uncommon form of the perf. Niph., which would not be suitable in a continuous sentence, but the inf. absol. Niph. used instead of the third pers. perf. (cf. Gesen. *Heb. Gramm.* § 131, 4): “and (God) was entreated of them, because they trusted in Him.” From these words we may conclude that the war was a very serious one, in which the possession of the land was at stake. As the trans-Jordanic tribes lived mainly by cattle-breeding, and the Arabian tribes on the eastern frontier of their land were also a shepherd people, quarrels could easily arise as to the possession of the pasture grounds, which might lead to a war

of extermination.—Ver. 21. The conquerors captured a great booty in herds, 50,000 camels, 250,000 head of small cattle (sheep and goats), 2000 asses, and 100,000 persons—all round numbers; cf. the rich booty obtained in the war against the Midianites, Num. xxxi. 11, 32 ff.—Ver. 22. This rich booty should not surprise us, “for there fell many slain,” *i.e.* the enemy had suffered a very bloody defeat. “For the war was from God,” *i.e.* conducted to this result: cf. 2 Chron. xxv. 20; 1 Sam. xvii. 47. “And they dwelt in their stead,” *i.e.* they took possession of the pasture grounds, which up to that time had belonged to the Arabs, and held them until they were carried away captive by the Assyrians; see ver. 26.

Vers. 23–26. *The families of the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, and the leading away of the East-Jordan Israelites into the Assyrian exile.*—Ver. 23. The half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan was very numerous (הַמָּנַחֶה רַבּוֹ), “and they dwelt in the land of Bashan (*i.e.* the Bashan inhabited by Gad, ver. 12) (northwards) to Baal Hermon,”—*i.e.*, according to the more accurate designation of the place in Josh. xii. 7 and xiii. 5, in the valley of Lebanon under Mount Hermon, probably the present Bânjas, at the foot of Hermon (see on Num. xxxiv. 8),—“and Senir and Mount Hermon.” שֵׁנִיר, which according to Deut. iii. 9 was the name of Hermon or Antilibanus in use among the Amorites, is here and in Ezek. xxvii. 5 the name of a part of those mountains (*vide* on Deut. iii. 9), just as “Mount Hermon” is the name of another part of this range.—Ver. 24. Seven heads of fathers’-houses of the half-tribe of Manasseh are enumerated, and characterized as valiant heroes and famous men. The enumeration of the names begins strangely with וַיְמַעְלֵי; perhaps a name has fallen out before it. Nothing has been handed down as to any of these names.—Vers. 25 and 26 form the conclusion of the register of the two and a half trans-Jordanic tribes. The sons of Manasseh are not the subject to וַיְמַעְלֵי, but the Reubenites and Manassites, as is clear from ver. 26. These fell away faithlessly from the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God had destroyed before them, *i.e.* the Amorites or Canaanites. “And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of the Assyrian kings Pul and Tiglath-pilneser, and he (this latter) led them away captives to Halah and Habor,” etc. וַיַּעַר אֱתֵרֵיהֶם, Lavater has rightly rendered, “*in mentem illis dedit, movit eos, ut expeditionem facerent contra illos;*” cf. 2 Chron. xxi. 16.



Pul is mentioned as being the first Assyrian king who attacked the land of Israel, cf. 2 Kings xv. 19 f. The deportation began, however, only with Tiglath-pileser, who led the East-Jordan tribes into exile, 2 Kings xv. 29. To him וַיִּגְלֹם sing. refers. The suffix is defined by the following acc., לְרִאשֹׁנָי וְנִי; לְ is, according to the later usage, *nota acc.*; cf. Ew. § 277, *e.* So also before the name חֶלֶה, "to Halah," *i.e.* probably the district *Καλαχίνη* (in Strabo) on the east side of the Tigris near Adiabene, to the north of Nineveh, on the frontier of Armenia (cf. on 2 Kings xvii. 6). In the second book of Kings (xv. 29) the district to which the two and a half tribes were sent as exiles is not accurately determined, being only called in general Asshur (Assyria). The names in our verse are there (2 Kings xvii. 6) the names of the districts to which Shalmaneser sent the remainder of the ten tribes after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel. It is therefore questionable whether the author of the Chronicle took his account from an authority used by him, or if he names these districts only according to general recollection, in which the times of Shalmaneser and of Tiglath-pileser are not very accurately distinguished (Berth.). We consider the first supposition the more probable, not merely because he inverts the order of the names, but mainly because he gives the name הָרֵא instead of "the cities of Media," as it is in Kings, and that name he could only have obtained from his authorities. חַבּוּר is not the river Chaboras in Mesopotamia, which falls into the Euphrates near Circesium, for that river is called in Ezekiel כְּבִיר, but is a district in northern Assyria, where Jakut mentions that there is both a mountain *Χαβώρας* on the frontier of Assyria and Media (Ptolem. vi. 1), and a river Khabur Chasanîæ, which still bears the old name Khâbur, rising in the neighbourhood of the upper Zab, near Amadijeh, and falling into the Tigris below Jezirah. This Khâbur is the river of Gozan (*vide* on 2 Kings xvii. 6). The word הָרֵא appears to be the Aramaic form of the Hebrew הָרַי, mountains, and the vernacular designation usual in the mouths of the people of the mountain land of Media, which is called also in Arabic el Jebâl (the mountains). This name can therefore only have been handed down from the exiles who dwelt there.

## CHAP. V. 27—VI. 66.—THE FAMILIES OF LEVI, AND THEIR CITIES.

As to the tribe of Levi, we have several communications : (1.) the genealogy of the high-priestly family of Aaron, down to Jehozadak, who was led away into exile by Nebuchadnezzar (v. 27–41) ; (2.) a short register of the families of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, which does not extend far into later times (vi. 1–15) ; (3.) the genealogies of the musicians Heman, Asaph, and Ethan (vi. 16–32), with remarks on the service of the other Levites (vers. 33, 34) ; (4.) a register of the high priests from Eleazar to Ahimaaz the son of Zadok (vi. 35–38), with a register of the cities of the Levites (vi. 39–66). If we look into these genealogies and registers, we see, both from a repetition of a part of the genealogy of the high priest (vi. 35–38), and also from the name of the eldest son of Levi appearing in two different forms—in v. 27 ff. Gershon ; in vi. 1, 2, 5, etc., Gershom—that the register in v. 27–41 is drawn from another source than the registers in chap. vi., which, with the exception of the genealogies of David's chief musicians, are throughout fragmentary, and in parts corrupt, and were most probably found by the author of the Chronicle in this defective state.

Chap. v. 27–41. *The family of Aaron, or the high-priestly line of Aaron, to the time of the Babylonian exile.*—Vers. 27–29. In order to exhibit the connection of Aharon (or Aaron) with the patriarch Levi, the enumeration begins with the three sons of Levi, who are given in ver. 27 as in Gen. xvi. 11, Ex. vi. 16, and in other passages. Of Levi's grandchildren, only the four sons of Kohath (ver. 28) are noticed ; and of these, again, Amram is the only one whose descendants—Aaron, Moses, and Miriam—are named (ver. 29) ; and thereafter only Aaron's sons are introduced, in order that the enumeration of his family in the high-priestly line of Eleazar might follow. With ver. 28 cf. Ex. i. 18, and on ver. 19 see the commentary on Ex. vi. 20. With the sons of Aaron (29b) compare besides Ex. vi. 23, also Num. iii. 2–4, and 1 Chron. xxiv. 1, 2. As Nadab and Abihu were slain when they offered strange fire before Jahve (Lev. x. 1 ff.), Aaron's race was continued only by his sons Eleazar and Ithamar. After Aaron's death, his eldest son Eleazar was chosen by God to be his successor in the high priest's office, and thus the line of Eleazar came into possession of the high-priestly dignity.

In vers. 30–41 the descendants of Eleazar are enumerated



in twenty-two generations; the word הוֹלִיד, "he begat," being repeated with every name. The son so begotten was, when he lived after his father, the heir of the high-priestly dignity. Thus Phinehas the son of Eleazar (Ex. vi. 25) is found in possession of it in Judg. xx. 28. From this the older commentators have rightly drawn the inference that the purpose of the enumeration in vers. 30-40 was to communicate the succession of high priests from Eleazar, who died shortly after Joshua (Josh. xxiv. 33), to Jehozadak, whom Nebuchadnezzar caused to be carried away into Babylon. From the death of Aaron in the fortieth year after Israel came forth from Egypt, till the building of the temple in the fourth year of the reign of Solomon, 440 years elapsed ( $480 - 40 = 440$ , 1 Kings vi. 1). From the building of the temple to the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple by the Chaldæans there was an interval of 423 years (36 years under Solomon, and 387 years during which the kingdom of Judah existed; see the chronological table to 1 Kings xii.). Between the death of Aaron, therefore, and the time when Jehozadak was led away into captivity, supposing that that event occurred only under Zedekiah, lay a period of  $440 + 423 = 863$  years. For this period twenty-two generations appear too few, for then the average duration of each life would be  $39\frac{1}{4}$  years. Such an estimate would certainly appear a very high one, but it does not pass the bounds of possibility, as cases may have occurred in which the son died before the father, when consequently the grandson would succeed the grandfather in the office of high priest, and the son would be omitted in our register. The ever-recurring הוֹלִיד cannot be brought forward in opposition to this supposition, because הוֹלִיד in the genealogical lists may express mediate procreation, and the grandson may be introduced as begotten by the grandfather. On the supposition of the existence of such cases, we should have to regard the average above mentioned as the average time during which each of the high priests held the office. But against such an interpretation of this list of the posterity of Eleazar two somewhat serious difficulties are raised. The less serious of these consists in this, that in the view of the author of our register, the line of Eleazar remained in uninterrupted possession of the high-priestly dignity; but in the historical books of the Old Testament another line of high priests, beginning with Eli, is mentioned, which, according to 1 Chron. xxiv. 5, and Joseph. *Antt.* v. 11. 5, belonged to the

family of Ithamar. The list is as follows: Eli (1 Sam. ii. 20); his son Phinehas, who, however, died before Eli (1 Sam. iv. 11); his son Ahitub (1 Sam. xiv. 3); his son Ahijah, who was also called Ahimelech (1 Sam. xiv. 3, xxii. 9, 11, 20); his son Abiathar (1 Sam. xxii. 20), from whom Solomon took away the high-priesthood (1 Kings ii. 26 f.), and set Zadok in his place (1 Kings ii. 35). According to Josephus, *loc. cit.*, the high-priestly dignity remained with the line of Eleazar, from Eleazar to Ozi (וִי, ver. 31 f.); it then fell to Eli and his descendants, until with Zadok it returned to the line of Eleazar. These statements manifestly rest upon truthful historical tradition; for the supposition that at the death of Ozi the high-priesthood was transferred from the line of Eleazar to the line of Ithamar through Eli, is supported by the circumstance that from the beginning of the judgeship of Eli to the beginning of the reign of Solomon a period of 139 years elapsed, which is filled up in both lines by five names,—Eli, Phinehas, Ahitub, Ahijah, and Abiathar in the passages above quoted; and Zerariah, Meraioth, Amariah, Ahitub, and Zadok in vers. 32–34 of our chapter. But the further opinion expressed by Joseph. *Antt.* viii. 1. 3, that the descendants of Eleazar, during the time in which Eli and his descendants were in possession of the priesthood, lived as private persons, plainly rests on a conjecture, the incorrectness of which is made manifest by some distinct statements of the Old Testament: for, according to 2 Sam. viii. 17 and xx. 25, Zadok of Eleazar's line, and Abiathar of the line of Ithamar, were high priests in the time of David; cf. 1 Chron. xxiv. 5 f. The transfer of the high-priestly dignity, or rather of the official exercise of the high-priesthood, to Eli, one of Ithamar's line, after Ozi's death, was, as we have already remarked on 1 Sam. ii. 27 ff., probably brought about by circumstances or relations which are not now known to us, but without an extinction of the right of Ozi's descendants to the succession in the dignity. But when the wave of judgment broke over the house of Eli, the ark was taken by the Philistines; and after it had been sent back into the land of Israel, it was not again placed beside the tabernacle, but remained during seventy years in the house of Abinadab (1 Sam. iv. 4–vii. 2). Years afterwards David caused it to be brought to Jerusalem, and erected a separate tent for it on Zion, while the tabernacle had meanwhile been transferred to Gibeon, where it continued to be the place where sacrifices were



offered till the building of the temple. Thus there arose two places of worship, and in connection with them separate spheres of action for the high priests of both lines,—Zadok performing the duties of the priestly office at Gibeon (1 Chron. xvi. 39; cf. 1 Kings iii. 4 ff.), while Abiathar discharged its functions in Jerusalem. But without doubt not only Zadok, but also his father Ahitub before him, had discharged the duties of high priest in the tabernacle at Gibeon, while the connection of Eli's sons with the office came to an end with the slaughter of Ahijah (Ahimelech) and all the priesthood at Nob (1 Sam. xxii.); for Abiathar, the only son of Ahimelech, and the single survivor of that massacre, fled to David, and accompanied him continuously in his flight before Saul (1 Sam. xxii. 20-23). But, not content with the slaughter of the priests in Nob, Saul also smote the city itself with the edge of the sword; whence it is probable, although all definite information to that effect is wanting, that it was in consequence of this catastrophe that the tabernacle was removed to Gibeon and the high-priesthood entrusted to Zadok's father, a man of the line of Eleazar, because the only son of Ahimelech, and the only representative of Ithamar's line, had fled to David. If this view be correct, of the ancestors of Ahitub, only Amariah, Meraioth, and Zerahiah did not hold the office of high priest. But if these had neither been supplanted by Eli nor had rendered themselves unworthy of the office by criminal conduct; if the only reason why the possession of the high-priesthood was transferred to Eli was, that Ozi's son Zerahiah was not equal to the discharge of the duties of the office under the difficult circumstances of the time; and if Eli's grandson Ahitub succeeded his grandfather in the office at a time when God had already announced to Eli by prophets the approaching ruin of his house, then Zerahiah, Meraioth, and Amariah, although not *de facto* in possession of the high-priesthood, might still be looked upon as *de jure* holders of the dignity, and so be introduced in the genealogies of Eleazar as such. In this way the difficulty is completely overcome.

But it is somewhat more difficult to explain the other fact, that our register on the one hand gives too many names for the earlier period and too few for the later time, and on the other hand is contradicted by some definite statements of the historical books. We find too few names for the time from the death of Aaron to the death of Uzzi (Ozi), when Eli became

high priest,—a period of 299 years (*vide the Chronological View of the Period of the Judges*, ii. 1, S. 217). Five high priests—Eleazar, Phinehas, Abishua, Bukki, and Uzzi—are too few; for in that case each one of them must have discharged the office for 60 years, and have begotten the son who succeeded him in the office only in his 60th year, or the grandson must have regularly succeeded the grandfather in the office,—all of which suppositions appear somewhat incredible. Clearly, therefore, intermediate names must have been omitted in our register. To the period from Eli till the deposition of Abiathar, in the beginning of Solomon's reign—which, according to the chronological survey, was a period of 139 years—the last five names from Zerariah to Zadok correspond; and as 24 years are thus assigned to each, and Zadok held the office for a number of years more under Solomon, we may reckon an average of 30 years to each generation. For the following period of about 417 years from Solomon, or the completion of the temple, till the destruction of the temple by the Chaldæans, the twelve names from Ahimaaz the son of Zadok to Jehozadak, who was led away into captivity, give the not incredible average of from 34 to 35 years for each generation, so that in this part of our register not many breaks need be supposed. But if we examine the names enumerated, we find (1) that no mention is made of the high priest Jehoiada, who raised the youthful Joash to the throne, and was his adviser during the first years of his reign (2 Kings xi., and 2 Chron. xxii. 10, xxiv. 2), and that under Ahaz, Urijah, who indeed is called only יְרִיָּהוּ, but who was certainly high priest (2 Kings xvi. 10 ff.), is omitted; and (2) we find that the name Azariah occurs three times (vers. 35, 36, and 40), on which Berth. remarks: "Azariah is the name of the high priest in the time of Solomon (1 Kings iv. 2), in the time of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 17), and in the time of Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxi. 10)." Besides this, we meet with an Amariah, the fifth after Zadok, whom Lightf., Oehler, and others consider to be the high priest of that name under Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xix. 11. And finally, (3) in the historical account in 2 Kings xxii. 4 ff., Hilkiyah is mentioned as high priest under Josiah, while according to our register (ver. 39) Hilkiyah begat Azariah; whence we must conclude either that Hilkiyah is not the high priest of that name under Josiah, or Azariah is not the person of that name who lived in the time of Hezekiah. As regards



the omission of the names Urijah and Jehoiada in our register, Urijah may have been passed over as an unimportant man; but Jehoiada had exerted far too important an influence on the fate of the kingdom of Judah to allow of his being so overlooked. The only possibilities in his case are, either that he occurs in our register under another name, owing to his having had, like so many others, two different names, or that the name יהוידע has fallen out through an old error in the transcription of the genealogical list. The latter supposition, viz. that Jehoiada has fallen out before Johanan, is the more probable. Judging from 2 Kings xii. 3 and 2 Chron. xxiv. 2, Jehoiada died under Joash, at least five or ten years before the king, and consequently from 127 to 132 years after Solomon, at the advanced age of 130 years (2 Chron. xxiv. 15). He was therefore born shortly before or after the death of Solomon, being a great-grandson of Zadok, who may have died a considerable time before Solomon, as he had filled the office of high priest at Gibeon under David for a period of 30 years.

Then, if we turn our attention to the thrice recurring name Azariah, we see that the Azariah mentioned in 1 Kings iv. 2 cannot be regarded as the high priest; for the word כֹּהֵן in this passage does not denote the high priest, but the viceroy of the kingdom (*vide* on the passage). But besides, this Azariah cannot be the same person as the Azariah in ver. 35 of our genealogy, because he is called a son of Zadok, while our Azariah is introduced as the son of Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, and consequently as a grandson of Zadok; and the grandson of Zadok who is mentioned as being high priest along with Abiathar, 1 Kings iv. 4, could not have occupied in his grandfather's time the first place among the highest public officials of Solomon. The Azariah mentioned in 1 Kings iv. 2 as the son of Zadok must not be considered to be a brother of the Ahimaaz of our register, for we very seldom find a nephew and uncle called by the same name. As to the Azariah of ver. 36, the son of Johanan, it is remarked, "This is he who was priest (or who held the priest's office; כֹּהֵן, cf. Ex. xl. 13, Lev. xvi. 32) in the house (temple) which Solomon had built in Jerusalem." R. Sal. and Kimchi have connected this remark with the events narrated in 2 Chron. xxvi. 17, referring it to the special jealousy of King Uzziah's encroachments on the priest's office, in arrogating to himself in the temple the priestly function of offering incense in the holy place. Against this, indeed, J. H.

Mich. has raised the objection, *quod tamen chronologicæ rationes viæ admittunt*; and it is true that this encroachment of Uzziah's happened 200 years after Solomon's death, while the Azariah mentioned in our register is the fourth after Zadok. But if the name Jehoiada has been dropped out before Johanan, and Jehoiada held the high priest's office for a considerable time under Joash, the high-priesthood of his grandson Azariah would coincide with Uzziah's reign, when of course the chronological objection to the above-mentioned explanation of the words הוּיָא אֲזַרְיָה בֶּרֶךְ יְהוֹיָדָא is removed.<sup>1</sup> But lastly, the difficulty connected with the fact that in our passage Azariah follows Hilkiah, while in 2 Kings xxii. 4 ff. and 2 Chron. xxxi. 10, 13, Azariah occurs as high priest under King Hezekiah, and Hilkiah in the time of his great-grandson Josiah, cannot be cleared away by merely changing the order of the names Hilkiah and Azariah. For, apart altogether from the improbability of such a transposition having taken place in a register formed as this is, "Shallum begat Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah, and Azariah begat," the main objection to it is the fact that between Azariah, ver. 26, who lived under Uzziah, and Hilkiah, four names are introduced; so that on this supposition, during the time which elapsed between Uzziah's forcing his way into the temple till the pass-over under Hezekiah, *i.e.* during a period of from 55 to 60 years,

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau's explanation is inadmissible. He says: "If we consider that in the long line of the high priests, many of them bearing the same name, it would naturally suggest itself to distinguish the Azariah who first discharged the duties of his office in the temple, in order to bring a fixed chronology into the enumeration of the names; and if we recollect that a high priest Azariah, the son, or according to our passage more definitely the grandson, of Zadok, lived in the time of Solomon; and finally, if we consider the passage chap. vi. 17, we must hold that the words, 'He it is who discharged the duties of priest in the temple which Solomon had built in Jerusalem,' originally stood after the name Azariah in ver. 35; cf. 1 Kings iv. 2." All justification of the proposed transposition is completely taken away by the fact that the Azariah of 1 Kings iv. 2 was neither high priest nor the same person as the Azariah in ver. 35 of our register; and it is impossible that a grandson of Zadok whom Solomon appointed to the high-priesthood, instead of Abiathar, can have been the first who discharged the duties of high priest in the temple. Oehler's opinion (in *Herzog's Realencyklop.* vi. 205), that the Amariah who follows Azariah (ver. 37) is identical with the Amariah under Jehoshaphat, is not less improbable; for Jehoshaphat was king sixty-one years after Solomon's death, and during these sixty-one years the four high priests who are named between Zadok and Amariah could not have succeeded each other.



four generations must have followed one another, which is quite impossible. In addition to this, between Hezekiah and Josiah came the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, who reigned 55 years and 2 years respectively; and from the passover of Hezekiah to the finding of the book of the law by the high priest Hilkiah in the eighteenth year of Josiah, about 90 years had elapsed, whence it is clear that on chronological grounds Hilkiah cannot well have been the successor of Azariah in the high-priesthood. The Azariah of ver. 39 f., therefore, cannot be identified with the Azariah who was high priest under Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxi. 10); and no explanation seems possible, other than the supposition that between Ahitub and Zadok the begetting of Azariah has been dropped out. On this assumption the Hilkiah mentioned in ver. 39 may be the high priest in the time of Josiah, although between him and the time when Jehozadak was led away into exile three names, including that of Jehozadak, are mentioned, while from the eighteenth year of Josiah till the destruction of the temple by the Chaldæans only 30 years elapsed. For Hilkiah may have been in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign very old; and at the destruction of Jerusalem, not Jehozadak, but his father Seraiah the grandson of Hilkiah, was high priest, and was executed at Riblah by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxv. 18, 21), from which we may conclude that Jehozadak was led away captive in his early years. The order in which the names occur in our register, moreover, is confirmed by Ezra vii. 1-5, where, in the statement as to the family of Ezra, the names from Seraiah onwards to Amariah ben-Azariah occur in the same order. The correspondence would seem to exclude any alterations of the order, either by transposition of names or by the insertion of some which had been dropped; but yet it only proves that both these genealogies have been derived from the same authority, and does not at all remove the possibility of this authority itself having had some defects. The probability of such breaks as we suppose in the case of Jehoiada and Azariah, who lived under Hezekiah, is shown, apart altogether from the reasons which have been already brought forward in support of it, by the fact that our register has only eleven generations from Zadok, the contemporary of Solomon, to Seraiah, who was slain at the destruction of Jerusalem; while the royal house of David shows seventeen generations, viz. the twenty kings of Judah, omitting Athaliah, and Jehoahaz and Zedekiah, the last two as being brothers of Jehoiakim (1 Chron.

iii. 10-27). Even supposing that the king's sons were, as a rule, earlier married, and begat children earlier than the priests, yet the difference between eleven and seventeen generations for the same period is too great, and is of itself sufficient to suggest that in our register of the high priests names are wanting, and that the three or four high priests known to us from the historical books who are wanting—Amariah under Jehoshaphat, Jehoiada under Joash, (Urijah under Ahaz,) and Azariah under Hezekiah—were either passed over or had fallen out of the list made use of by the author of the Chronicle.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 41. Jehozadak is the father of Joshua who returned from exile with Zerubbabel, and was the first high priest in the restored community (Ezra iii. 2, v. 2; Hagg. i. 1). After הֵלֵךְ, “he went forth,” בְּנוּלָה is to be supplied from בְּהַגְלוֹת וְגו', “he went into exile” to Babylon; cf. Jer. xlix. 3.

Chap. vi. *The families and cities of the Levites.*—Vers. 1-34. *Register of the families of the Levites.*—This is introduced by an enumeration of the sons and grandsons of Levi (vers. 1-4), which is followed by lists of families in six lines of descent: (a) the descendants of Gershon (vers. 5-7), of Kohath (vers. 8-13), and of Merari (vers. 14 and 15); and (b) the genealogies of David's chief musicians (vers. 16 and 17), of Heman the Kohathite (vers. 18-23), of Asaph the Gershonite (vers. 24-28), and of Ethan the Merarite (vers. 29-32); and in vers. 33, 34, some notes as to the service performed by the other Levites and the priests are added.

Vers. 1-4. The sons of Levi are in ver. 1 again enumerated as in v. 27; then in vers. 2-4a the sons of these three sons, i.e. the grandsons of Levi, are introduced, while in chap. v. 28 only the sons of Kohath are mentioned. The only object of this enumeration is to make quite clear the descent of the Levitic families which follow. The name of the first son of Levi is in vers. 1, 2, 4, etc. of this chapter גֵּרְשֹׁן, which was the name of Moses' son, cf. xxiii. 15 f.; whereas in v. 27 and in the Pentateuch we find a different pronunciation, viz. גֵּרְשֹׁן. The names of Levi's grandsons in vers. 2-4a coincide with the statements of the Pentateuch, Ex. vi. 17-19, and Num. iii. 17-20, cf. xxvi. 57 f. Bertheau and other commentators consider the words in 4b, “and these are the

<sup>1</sup> The extra-biblical information concerning the præ-exilic high priests in Josephus and the Seder Olam, is, in so far as it differs from the account of the Old Testament, without any historical warrant. *Vide* the comparison of these in Lightfoot, *Ministerium templi*, Opp. ed. ii. vol. i. p. 682 sqq.; Selden, *De success. in pontific. lib. i.*; and Reland, *Antiquitatt. ss. ii. c. 2.*



families of Levi according to their fathers," to be a "concluding subscription" to the statements of vers. 1-4a, and would remove ו before אֱלֹהֵי, as not compatible with this supposition. But in this he is wrong: for although the similar statement in Ex. vi. 20 is a subscription, yet it is in Num. iii. 20 a superscription, and must in our verse also be so understood; for otherwise the enumeration of the descendants of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, which follows, would be brought in very abruptly, without any connecting particle, and the ו before אֱלֹהֵי points to the same conclusion.

Vers. 5-15. The three lists of *the descendants of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari* are similar to one another in plan, and in all, each name is connected with the preceding by בְּנוֹ, "his son," but they differ greatly in the number of the names.—Vers. 5 and 6. The ו before גֵּרְשׁוֹן is introductory: "as to Gershon." Those of his descendants who are here enumerated belong to the family of his oldest son Libni, which is traced down through seven generations to Jeaterai, a name not elsewhere met with. Of the intermediate names, Johath, Zimmah, and Zerah occur also among the descendants of Asaph, who is descended from the line of Shimei, vers. 24-28.—Vers. 7-13. The genealogy of the descendants of Kohath consists of three lists of names, each of which commences afresh with בְּנוֹ, vers. 7, 10, and 13; yet we learn nothing from it as to the genealogical connection of these three lines. The very beginning, "The sons of Kohath, Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son," is somewhat strange. For, according to Ex. vi. 18, 21, and 24, Kohath's second son is called Izhar, whose son was Korah, whose sons were Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. Amminadab is nowhere met with as a son of Kohath; but among the descendants of Uzziel, a prince of a father's-house is met with in the time of David who bore this name. The name Amminadab occurs also in the time of Moses, in the genealogies of the tribe of Judah, chap. ii. 10, Num. i. 7, Ruth i. 19, as that of the father of the prince Nahshon, and of Elisheba, whom Aaron took to wife, Ex. vi. 23. But since the names Korah and Assir point to the family of Izhar, the older commentators supposed the Amminadab of our verse to be only another name for Izhar; while Bertheau, on the contrary, conjectures "that as an Amminadab occurs in the lists of the descendants of Kohath as father-in-law of Aaron, Amminadab has been substituted for Izhar by an ancient error, which might very easily slip into an abridgment of more detailed

lists." But we have here no trace of an abridgment of more detailed lists. According to Ex. vi. 21 and 24, Korah was a son of Izhar, and Assir a son of Korah; and consequently in our genealogies only the name Izhar is wanting between Korah and Kohath, while instead of him we have Amminadab. An exchange or confusion of the names of Izhar and Amminadab the father-in-law of Aaron, is as improbable as the supposition that Amminadab is another name for Izhar, since the genealogies of the Pentateuch give only the name Izhar. Yet no third course is open, and we must decide to accept either one or the other of these suppositions. For that our verses contain a genealogy, or fragments of genealogies, of the Kohathite line of Izhar there can be no doubt, when we compare them with the genealogy (vers. 18-23) of the musician Heman, a descendant of Kohath, which also gives us the means of explaining the other obscurities in our register. In vers. 7 and 8 the names of Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph, and again Assir, follow that of Korah, with כִּנִּי after each. This כִּנִּי cannot be taken otherwise than as denoting that the names designate so many consecutive generations; and the only peculiarity in the list is, that the conjunction ו is found before Abiasaph and the second Assir, while the other names do not have it. But if we compare the genealogy in Ex. vi. with this enumeration, we find that there, in ver. 24, the same three names, Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph, which are here enumerated as those of the son, grandson, and great-grandson of Korah, are said to be the names of the sons of the Izharite Korah. Further, from Heman's genealogy in ver. 22, we learn that the second Assir of our list is a son of Abiasaph, and, according to ver. 22 and ver. 8, had a son Tahath. Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph must consequently be held to have been brothers, and the following Assir a son of the last-named Abiasaph, whose family is in ver. 9 further traced through four generations (Tahath, Uriel, Uziah, and Shaul). Instead of these four, we find in vers. 22 and 21 the names Tahath, Zephaniah, Azariah, and Joel. Now although the occurrence of Uziah and Azariah as names of the same king immediately suggests that in our register also Uziah and Azariah are two names of the same person, yet the divergence in the other names, on the one hand Zephaniah for Joel, and on the other Uriel for Shaul, is strongly opposed to this conjecture. The discrepancy can scarcely be naturally explained in any other way, than by supposing that after Tahath



the two genealogies diverge,—ours introducing his son Uriel and his descendants; the other, in ver. 21 f., mentioning a second son of Tohath, Zephaniah, of whose race Heman came.—Ver. 10. “And the sons of Elkanah, Amasai and Ahimoth.” As it is clear that with **בְּנֵי אֶלְקָנָה** a new list begins, and that the preceding enumeration is that of the descendants of Abiasaph, it is at once suggested that this Elkanah was the brother of the Abiasaph mentioned in ver. 8. If, however, we compare the genealogy of Heman, we find there (vers. 21 and 20) a list of the descendants of Joel in an ascending line, thus,—Elkanah, Amasai, Mahath, Elkanah, Zuph; from which it would seem to follow that our Elkanah is the son of Joel mentioned in ver. 21, for Ahimoth may be without difficulty considered to be another form of the name Mahath. This conclusion would be assured if only the beginning of ver. 11 were in harmony with it. In this verse, indeed, **אֶלְקָנָה בְּנוֹ**, as we read in the Kethibh, may be without difficulty taken to mean that Elkanah was the son of Ahimoth, just as in ver. 20 Elkanah is introduced as son of Mahath. But in this way no meaning can be assigned to the **אֶלְקָנָה** which follows **בְּנֵי**, and Bertheau accordingly is of opinion that this **אֶלְקָנָה** has come into the text by an error. The Masoretes also felt the difficulty, and have substituted for the Kethibh **בְּנוֹ** the Keri **בְּנֵי**, but then nothing can be made of the first **אֶלְקָנָה** in ver. 11. Beyond doubt the traditional text is here corrupt, and from a comparison of vers. 20 and 19 the only conclusion we can draw with any certainty is that the list from **זִוְפִי** onwards contains the names of descendants of Elkanah the son of Mahath, which is so far favourable to the Keri **בְּנֵי אֶלְקָנָה**. The name Elkanah, on the contrary, which immediately precedes **בְּנוֹ**, seems to point to a hiatus in the text, and gives room for the conjecture that in ver. 10 the sons of Elkanah, the brother of Abiasaph and Assir, were named, and that there followed thereupon an enumeration of the sons or descendants of the Elkanah whom we meet with in ver. 21 as son of Joel, after which came the names Elkanah **בְּנוֹ**, Zophai **בְּנוֹ**, etc. **נַחֲתָא** and **אֶלְיָאב** we consider to be other forms of **תוֹחַ** and **אֶלְיָאֵל**, ver. 19, and **זִוְפִי** is only another form of **זִוְפִי**. The succeeding names, Jeroham and Elkanah (ver. 12), agree with those in ver. 19; but between the clauses “Elkanah his son” (ver. 12), and “and the sons of Samuel” (ver. 13), the connecting link **שְׁמוּאֵל בְּנוֹ**, cf. ver. 18, is again wanting, as is also, before or after **הַבְּכֹר** (ver. 13), the name of the first-born, viz.

Joel; cf. ver. 18 with 1 Sam. viii. 2. Now, although the two last-mentioned omissions can be supplied, they yet show that the enumeration in vers. 7-13 is not a continuous list of one Kohathite family, but contains only fragments of several Kohathite genealogies.—In vers. 14 and 15, descendants of Merari follow; sons of Mahli in six generations, who are not mentioned elsewhere. Bertheau compares this list of names, Mahli, Libni, Shimei, Uzza, Shimea, Haggiah, and Asaiah, with the list contained in vers. 29-32, Mushi, Mahli, Shamer, Bani, Amzi, Hilkiah, and Amaziah, and attempts to maintain, notwithstanding the great difference in the names, that the two lists were originally identical, in order to find support for the hypothesis "that the three lists in vers. 5-15 have not found a place in the Chronicle from their own intrinsic value, or, in other words, have not been introduced there in order to give a register of the ancestors of Jeaterai, the sons of Samuel and Asaiah, but have been received only because they bring us to Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, vers. 19, 24, 29, in another fashion than the lists of names in vers. 18-32." But this hypothesis is shown to be false, apart altogether from the other objections which might be raised against it, by the single fact of the total discrepancy between the names of the Merarites in vers. 14 and 15 and those found in vers. 29-32. Of all the six names only Mahli is found in both cases, and he is carefully distinguished in both—in the genealogy of Ethan as the son of Mushi and grandson of Merari; in our list as the son of Merari. When we remember that Merari had two sons, Mahli and Mushi, after whom the fathers'-houses into which his descendants divided themselves were named (Num. iii. 20, xxvi. 58), and that the same names very frequently occur in different families, it would never suggest itself to any reader of our register to identify the line of Mushi with the line of Mahli, seeing that, except the name of Mahli the son of Mushi, which is the same as that of his uncle, all the other names are different. Vers. 14 and 15 contain a register of the family of Mahli, while the ancestors of Ethan, vers. 29-32, belonged to the family of Mushi. Our list then absolutely cannot be intended to form a transition to Ethan or Ethan's ancestors. The same may be said of the two other lists vers. 5-7 and vers. 8-13, and this transition hypothesis is consequently a mere airspun fancy. The three lists are certainly not embodied in the Chronicle on account of the persons with whose



names they end—Jeaterai, the sons of Samuel, and Asaiah; but the author of the Chronicle has thought them worthy of being received into his work as registers of ancient families of the three sons of Levi which had been transmitted from ancient times.

Vers. 16-34. *The genealogies of the Levite musicians—Heman, Asaph, and Ethan.*—These registers are introduced by an account of the service of the Levites about the sanctuary (vers. 16, 17), and conclude with remarks on the service of the remaining Levites (vers. 33, 34).—Ver. 16. “These are they whom David set for the leading of the song in the house of Jahve, after the resting of the ark,” cf. 15, 17. *עַל יָדָיו* “upon the hands,” “to the hands;” that is, both for leading, and, according to arrangement. To the hands of the song, *i.e.* to manage the singing, to carry it on, to conduct it. *מִמְנוֹחַ הָאָרוֹן*, “from the resting of the ark,” *i.e.* from the time that the ark of the covenant, which in the præ-Davidic time had been carried about from one place to another, had received a permanent resting-place on Zion, and had become the centre of the worship instituted by David, 2 Sam. vi. 17. “And they served before the dwelling of the tabernacle with song.” *לִפְנֵי מִשְׁכָּנוֹ*, “before the dwelling,” for the sacrificial worship, with which the singing of psalms was connected, was performed in the court before the dwelling. The genitive *אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד* is to be taken as explanatory: “The dwelling (of Jahve), which was the tent of the meeting (of God with His people).” *אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד* was the usual designation of the tabernacle built by Moses, which was at first set up in Shiloh, then in the time of Saul at Nob, and after the destruction of that city by Saul (1 Sam. xxii.) in Gibeon (1 Chron. xxi. 29). It denotes here the tent which David had erected upon Mount Zion for the ark of the covenant, because from its containing the ark, and by the institution of a settled worship in it (cf. xvi. 1-4 ff.), it thenceforth took the place of the Mosaic tabernacle, although the Mosaic sanctuary at Gibeon continued to be a place of worship till the completion of the temple (1 Kings iii. 4; 2 Chron. i. 3),—“till Solomon built the house of Jahve in Jerusalem,” into which the ark was removed, and to which the whole of the religious services were transferred. In their services they stood *בְּמִשְׁפָּתָם*, according to their right, *i.e.* according to the order prescribed for them by David; cf. xvi. 37 ff.—Vers. 18-23. “These (following three men, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan) are they who stood (in service) with their sons.” The three were the heads of the three Levitic families, to

whom the execution of the liturgic singing was entrusted. The names of their sons, *vide* chap. xxv. 1-6. The object of the following genealogies is to show their descent from Levi. "Of the sons of the Kohathite family (is) Heman the singer." הֶמָּן שֹׁמֵר, *ó ψαλτωδός* LXX. Heman is named first as being the head of the choir of singers who stood in the centre, while Asaph and his choir stood on his right hand, and on the left Ethan and his choir, so that when they sang in concert the conducting of the whole fell to Heman. His family is traced back in vers. 18-23 through twenty members to "Kohath the son of Levi, the son of Israel" (Jacob).—Vers. 24-28. "His brother Asaph," who is Heman's brother only in the more general sense of being closely connected with him, partly by their common descent from Levi, partly by their common calling, was a descendant of Gershon from his younger son Shimei. His genealogy contains only fifteen names to Gershon, five less than that of his contemporary Heman, probably because here and there intermediate names are omitted.—Vers. 29-32. "And the sons of Merari their brethren (*i.e.* the brethren of the choirs of Heman and Asaph) on the left (*i.e.* forming the choir which stood on the left hand) were Ethan and his sons." As in the case of Asaph, so also in that of Ethan, וּבְנֵיהֶם (ver. 18) is omitted, but is to be supplied; when the introductory clause "and the sons of Merari" is at once explained. Ethan is a Merarite of the younger line of Mushi (see above). The name of his father is here קִישִׁי, and in chap. xv. 17 it is קִישִׁיהוּ, which latter is clearly the original form, which has been shortened into Kishi. Instead of the name Ethan (אֶתָּן) as here and in chap. xv. 19, we find in other passages a Jeduthun mentioned as third chief-musician, along with Heman and Asaph (cf. xxv. 1; 2 Chron. xxxv. 15; Neh. xi. 17, cf. 1 Chron. vi. 41); from which we see that Jeduthun was another name for Ethan, probably a by-name—יְדֻתָּן, "praiseman"—which he had received from his calling, although nothing is said in the Old Testament as to the origin of this name. His genealogy contains only twelve names to Merari, being thus still more abridged than that of Asaph.—Vers. 33 and 34. "And their brethren the Levites," *i.e.* the other Levites besides the singers just mentioned, "were נְתֻנִים given for every service of the dwelling of the house of God," *i.e.* given to Aaron and his sons (the priests) for the performance of service in the carrying on of the worship; cf. Num. iii. 9, viii. 16-19, xviii. 6. But Aaron and his sons had three duties to perform:



(1) they burnt the offerings on the altar of burnt-offering and on the altar of incense, cf. Num. xviii. 1-7; (2) they looked after all the service of the holy place; (3) they had to atone for Israel by offering the atoning-sacrifices, and performing the cleansings according to all that Moses commanded. This last clause refers to all the three above-mentioned duties of the priests. Moses is called the servant of God, as in Deut. xxxiv. 5, Josh. i. 1, 13.

Vers. 35-38. The remarks as to the service of the priests are followed by a catalogue of the high priests, which runs from Eleazar to Ahimaaz the son of Zadok (cf. 2 Sam. xv. 27), who probably succeeded his father in the high-priesthood even in the time of Solomon. This genealogy is similar in form to the genealogies given in vers. 5-15, and has therefore most probably been derived from the same source as this, and has been drawn in here to form a transition to the enumeration of the cities of the Levites; for it begins in ver. 39 with the dwelling-places of the sons of Aaron, and the *לְבָנֵי אַהֲרֹן* . . . *וְאֵלֶּה מוֹשְׁבֹתָם* of ver. 39 corresponds to the *וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן* of ver. 35. The order of the names coincides exactly with that of the longer register in chap. v. 30-34.

Vers. 39-66. *Register of the cities of the Levites*, which agrees on the whole with the register in Josh. xxi., if we except different forms of some names of cities, and many corruptions of the text, but differing in many ways from it in form; whence we gather that it is not derived from the book of Joshua, but from some other ancient authority.—Ver. 39 contains the superscription, “These are their dwelling-places according to their districts, in their boundaries.” So far the superscription belongs to the whole catalogue of cities. The suffixes point back to the *בְּנֵי לֵוִי*, ver. 1. *טִירָה*, from *טָוַר*, to surround in a circle, signifies in the older language a “nomad village” (cf. Gen. xxv. 16; Num. xxxi. 10); here, on the contrary, it is used in a derivative sense for “district,” to denote the circle of dwellings which were granted to the Levites in the cities of the other tribes. The following words, “For the sons of Aaron of the family of Kohath,” etc., are the superscription to vers. 42-45, and together with the confirmatory clause, “for to him the (first) lot had fallen,” are a repetition of Josh. xxi. 10, where, however, *רֵאשִׁיטָה* is found after *הַגּוֹרָל*, and has perhaps been here dropped out.—Vers. 40 and 41 correspond almost verbally with Josh. xxi. 11 and 12, as vers. 42-45 also do with Josh. xxi. 13-19. As we have already in our remarks on Joshua

commented upon the whole catalogue, it will not be necessary to do more here than to group together the errors and defects of our text.—Ver. 42. The plural עָרֵי הַמְּקָלָט is incorrect, for only one of the cities thereafter named, viz. Hebron, was a city of refuge for homicides, and in Josh. xxi. 13 it is correctly written עִיר מְקָלָט. After יְהוֹר the usual addition וְאֶת־מְנַשֶּׁשֶׁה is omitted, ver. 44 f. Before Bethshemesh the name Juttah has been lost, and before Geba (ver. 45) the name Gibeon, so that only eleven cities are mentioned, but the sum is rightly given as thirteen. Instead of the name הִילָן, ver. 43, there is found in Josh. xxi. 15 and xv. 51 הִלָן; instead of עֵז, Josh. xxi. 16, we have in ver. 44 the more correct name עֵזָא; and the name עֶלְשָׁה, ver. 45, is in Josh. xxi. 18 עֶלְמֹן.—Vers. 46–48. Summary statements of the number of cities which the remaining Kohathites, the Gershonites, and the Merarites received in the domains of the various tribes, corresponding to vers. 5–7 in Josh. xxi. In ver. 46 occurs a hiatus; between הַמִּשְׁפָּחָה and מִמְּחֶזֶיךָ the words “Ephraim and of the tribe of Dan and” have been omitted. In ver. 48 the words “of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan” are quite intelligible without הַצִּי, which is found in Joshua.—Vers. 49 and 50 are not here in their proper place; for their contents show that they should be in the middle of the thirty-ninth verse, after the general superscription, and before the words “for the sons of Aaron.” They are found also in Josh. xxi. 8, 9, as a superscription before the enumeration by name of the cities assigned to the priests; but how the confusion has arisen in our text cannot be certainly ascertained. Bertheau thinks “the wish to make mention of the cities of the high-priestly family at the beginning of the enumeration, has induced the author of the Chronicle to communicate the introductory remarks belonging to the lists of cities with their statements as to the tribal domains, only after the enumeration of the cities of the sons of Aaron.” By that supposition the position of vers. 46–48 is certainly explained, but not that of vers. 49 and 50; for even with the supposed desire, vers. 49 and 50 should have been placed before vers. 46–48. But besides this, the clause לְכֹהֲנֵי אֶהֱרָן in ver. 39 neither has anything to connect it with the preceding superscription nor a verb; and the subject of וַיִּתֵּן, ver. 40, is also wanting. That which was missed before ver. 39b and in ver. 40 is contained in vers. 49 and 50; whence it is manifest that vers. 49 and 50 ought to stand before ver. 39b, and have by some inexplicable accident



fallen out of their proper place, and have come into an unsuitable position after ver. 48. The plurals יִקְרְאוּ and שְׁמוֹת, instead of the singulars יִקְרָא and שֵׁם, as in Josh. xxi. 9b, bring the words into more manifest correspondence with the circumstances, since the subject of יִקְרְאוּ, "the sons of Israel," may be easily supplied from ver. 48, and *many* names of cities are mentioned. The masc. אֲתָהֶם instead of the fem. אֲתֵנָּה is probably only an oversight. With ver. 51 begins the enumeration of the cities of the other Levitic families only summarily given in vers. 46-48, which forms a very suitable continuation of ver. 48.

Vers. 51-55. *The cities of the remaining Kohathites*; cf. Josh. xxi. 20-26. For וּמִמִּשְׁפַּחֹת we must read וּלְמִשְׁפַּחֹת, for the preposition מִן gives no suitable sense: it is never used to introduce a subject. The sense is, "as regards the families of the sons of Kohath, the cities of their dominion in the tribe of Ephraim were (the following). They gave them." The plur. עָרֵי הַמִּקְלָט instead of the sing., as in ver. 42. As to the four cities of the tribe of Ephraim, vers. 52, 53, see on Josh. xxi. 21, 22, where instead of יִקְמָעִם we find the name קִבְצִים. Before ver. 54 a whole verse has been lost, which was as follows: "And of the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh and her pastures, Gibbethon and her pastures;" cf. Josh. xxi. 23. Then follows ver. 54, which contains the names of the two other cities of the tribe of Dan. In ver. 55 we have the names of the cities of half Manasseh, Aner and Bileam, *i.e.* Ibleam (Josh. xvii. 11), correctly given; but the names Taanach and Gath-rimmon in Josh. xxi. 25 are incorrect, and have been inserted through a transcriber's error, arising from the copyist's eye having wandered to the preceding verse. The singular לְמִשְׁפַּחַת, ver. 55, is incorrect; and the plural לְמִשְׁפַּחֹת is to be substituted (as in ver. 51). The words לְמִשְׁפַּחֹת לְבִנֵי וְגו' are a subscription, which corresponds to וַיִּתְּנוּ לָהֶם in ver. 52.

Vers. 56-61. *The cities of the Gershonites*; cf. Josh. xxi. 27-33. "To the sons of Gershon (they gave) out of the family of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Golan and Ashtaroth;" see on Josh. xxi. 27. In ver. 57, קָדֵשׁ is a mistake for קִשְׁיֹן, Josh. xxi. 28 (see on Josh. xix. 20); in ver. 58, רֶאֱמוֹת for the more correct יֶרְמוֹת, Josh. xxi. 29, a city which was also called רֶמֶת, Josh. xix. 21, or had been so called originally; and עֲנָם for עֵידֶנָּה (Josh.), as the city is called also in Josh. xix. 21. It cannot be determined whether עֲנָם is a transcriber's error, or another name for עֵידֶנָּה. In ver. 59, מִשְׁעָל (which should perhaps

be pointed (מִשָּׁל) is a contracted form of מִשְׁעָל, Josh. xxi. 30, xix. 26; and in ver. 60, חִזְקָה is probably an error for חִלְקָה, Josh. xxi. 31, xix. 25, occasioned by its being confounded with חִקָּה in the tribe of Naphtali, Josh. xix. 34. In ver. 61 the fact that Kadesh was a city of refuge is not mentioned, as it is in Josh. xxi. 32. חֲמֹן is a shortened form of חַמּוֹת-דָּאָר, Josh. xxi. 32; for this city is called in Josh. xix. 35 חֲמַת, from the warm springs in the neighbourhood. Finally, Kirjathaim is contracted in Josh. xxi. 32 into קִרְיָתַיִם.

Vers. 62-66. *The cities of the Merarites*; cf. Josh. xxi. 34-37. "To the sons of Merari the remaining," *sc.* Levites. In Josh. xxi. 34 it is more clearly put הַלְוִיִּים הַנּוֹתָרִים, for the remaining Merarites are not spoken of. What is intended to be said is, that the Merarites, alone of the Levites, are still to be mentioned. In the tribe of Zebulun, in ver. 62, only two cities are named, Rimmon and Tabor, instead of the four—Jokneam, Karthah, Dimnah, and Nahalal—in Josh. xxi. 34. The first two names have been dropped out of our text, while רִמּוֹן corresponds to the רִמְנָה of Joshua, but is a more correct reading, since רִמּוֹן occurs in Josh. xix. 13 among the cities of Zebulun, while רִמְנָה is not mentioned; and תָּבוֹר must consequently correspond to the נְהַלָּל in Joshua. Nahalal occurs in Josh. xix. 15 and in Judg. i. 30, in the form Nahalol, among the cities of Zebulun, and consequently seems to be the more correct name, but has not yet been pointed out with certainty, since its identification with Málul (معلول), south-west from Nazareth, rests upon very slender

foundation. Bertheau's conjecture that the name of the city has been dropped out, and that of a more exact description of its position, perhaps עַל גְּבוּל בְּסֵלַח תָּבוֹר, Josh. xix. 12, only the last word has remained, is no more probable than that of Movers, that instead of the name of the city, only the neighbourhood in which the city lay, viz. Mount Tabor, is mentioned.—Vers. 63 and 64 are wanting in some editions of the book of Joshua, but are found in many mss. and in the oldest printed copies, and have been omitted only by an oversight; see on Josh. xxi. 30 f., note 2. As to the city Bezer, see on Deut. iv. 43; and concerning Jahzah, Kedemoth, Mephaath, *vide* on Josh. xiii. 18.—Ver. 65 f. For Ramoth in Gilead, a city of refuge (Josh. xxi. 36), and Mahanaim, see on Josh. xiii. 26; and for Heshbon and Jazer, on Num. xxi. 28, 32.



CHAP. VII.—FAMILIES OF ISSACHAR, BENJAMIN, NAPHTHALI,  
HALF MANASSEH, EPHRAIM, AND ASHER.

Vers. 1-5. *Sons and families of Issachar.*—Ver. 1. Instead of וְלִבְנֵי, we must certainly read בְּנֵי, as in vers. 14, 30, or יִבְנֵי, as in ver. 20, chap. v. 11, and elsewhere. The לִבְנֵי has come into the text only by the recollection of the copyist having dwelt on the so frequently recurring לִבְנֵי in vi. 42, 46, 47, cf. vers. 48, 56, 62, for it is not possible to take לְ as the לְ of introduction, because the names of the sons follow immediately. The names of the four sons are given as in Num. xxvi. 23 f., while in Gen. xli. 13 the second is written פִּיֶּה, and the third יֹב; *vide* on Gen. *loc. cit.*—Ver. 2. The six sons of Tola are not elsewhere met with in the Old Testament. They were “heads of their fathers’-houses of Tola.” לְתוֹלָעַ after לְבֵית אֲבוֹתָם (with the suffix) is somewhat peculiar; the meaning can only be, “of their fathers’-houses which are descended from Tola.” It is also surprising, or rather not permissible, that לְתוֹלָדוֹתָם should be connected with גְּבוּרֵי חַיִּל. לְתוֹלָדוֹתָם belongs to the following: “(registered) according to their births, they numbered in the days of David 22,600.” The suffixes ׀-ם do not refer to רָאשִׁים, but to the בְּיַת-אֲבוֹת, the fathers’-houses, the males in which amounted to 22,600 souls. As David caused the people to be numbered by Joab (2 Sam. xxiv.; 1 Chron. xxi.), this statement probably rests on the results of that census.—Ver. 3. From Uzzi, the first-born of Tola, are descended through Izrahiah five men, all heads of groups of related households (ver. 4); “and to them (*i.e.* besides these) according to their generations, according to their fathers’-houses, bands of the war host, 36,000 (men), for they (these chiefs) had many wives and sons.” From the fact that Izrahiah is introduced as grandson of Tola, Bertheau would infer that vers. 3, 4 refer to times later than David. But this is an erroneous inference, for Tola’s sons did not live in David’s time at all, and consequently it is not necessary that his grandson should be assigned to a later time. The only assertion made is, that the descendants of Tola’s sons had increased to the number mentioned in ver. 2 in the time of David. By that time the descendants of his grandson Izrahiah might have increased to the number given in ver. 4. That the number, 36,000, of the descendants of the grandson Izrahiah was greater than the number of those descended from the sons of Tola (22,600), is

explained in the clause, "for they had many wives and sons." That the two numbers (in vers. 2, 4) refer to the same time, *i.e.* to the days of David, is manifest from ver. 5, "and their brethren of all the families of Issachar, valiant heroes; 87,000 their register, as regards everything," *i.e.* the sum of those registered of all the families of Issachar. Whence we gather that in the 87,000 both the 22,600 (ver. 2) and the 36,000 (ver. 4) are included, and their brethren consequently must have amounted to 28,400 ( $22,600 + 36,000 + 28,400 = 87,000$ ). In the time of Moses, Issachar numbered, according to Num. i. 29, 54,400; and at a later time, according to Num. xxvi. 25, already numbered 64,300 men.

Vers. 6–11. *Sons and families of Benjamin.*—In ver. 6 only three sons of Benjamin—Bela, Becher, and Jediael—are mentioned; and in vers. 7–11 their families are registered. Besides these, there are five sons of Benjamin spoken of in chap. viii. 1, 2,—Bela the first, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third, Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth; while in vers. 3–5 five other בָּנִים are enumerated, viz. גֵּרָא, אֶרֶד (twice), שְׁפּוּפִם, נַעֲמָן, and חוּרָם. If we compare here the statements of the Pentateuch as to the genealogy of Benjamin, we find in Gen. xvi. 21 the following sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi (אֶחִי) and Rosh, Muppim and Huppim and Ard (אֶרֶד); and in Num. xxvi. 38–40 seven families, of which five are descended from his sons Bela, Ashbel, Ahiram, Shephupham, and Hupham (חֻפָּם); and two from his grandsons, the sons of Bela, Ard and Naaman. From this we learn, not only that of the בָּנִים mentioned in Gen. xvi. 21 at least two were grandsons, but also that the names אֶחִי and מַפִּים (Gen.) are only other forms of אֶחָיִרָם and שְׁפּוּפִם (Num.). It is, however, somewhat strange that among the families (in Num.) the names גֵּרָא, בְּכֹר, and רֹאשׁ are wanting. The explanation which at once suggests itself, that their descendants were not numerous enough to form separate families, and that they on that account were received into the families of the other sons, though it may be accepted in the case of Gera and Rosh, of whom it is nowhere recorded that they had numerous descendants, cannot meet the case of Becher, for in vers. 8 and 9 of our chapter mention is made of nine sons of his, with a posterity of 20,200 men. The supposition that the name of Becher and his family has been dropped from the genealogical register of the families in Num. xxvi., will not appear in the



slightest degree probable, when we consider the accuracy of this register in other respects. The only remaining explanation therefore is, that the descendants of Becher were in reality not numerous enough to form a *משפחה* by themselves, but had afterwards so increased that they numbered nine fathers'-houses, with a total of 20,200 valiant warriors. The numbers in our register point unquestionably to post-Mosaic times; for at the second numbering by Moses, all the families of Benjamin together numbered only 45,600 men (Num. xxvi. 41), while the three families mentioned in our verses number together 59,434 (22,034 + 20,200 + 17,200). The tribe of Benjamin, which moreover was entirely destroyed, with the exception of 600 men, in the war which it waged against the other tribes in the earlier part of the period of the judges (Judg. xx. 47), could not have increased to such an extent before the times of David and Solomon. The name of the third son of Benjamin, Jediael, occurs only here, and is considered by the older commentators to be another name of Ashbel (Gen. xlvi. 21 and Num. xxvi. 38), which cannot indeed be accepted as a certainty, but is very probable.—Ver. 7. The five heads of fathers'-houses called sons of Bela are not sons in the proper sense of the word, but more distant descendants, who, at the time when this register was made up, were heads of the five groups of related households of the race of Bela. *גְּבוּרֵי הַיָּלִים* is synonymous with *גְּבוּרֵי הַיָּל*, ver. 9, and is a plural, formed as if from a *nomen compositum*, which arose after the frequent use of the words as they are bound together in the *status constructus* had obscured the consciousness of the relation between them.—Ver. 8. Becher's descendants. Of these nine names there are two, *עֵלְמָת* and *עֵנְתוֹת*, which occur elsewhere as names of cities (cf. for *עֵלְמָת* in the form *עֵלְמַת*, vi. 45; and for *עֵנְתוֹת*, Josh. xxi. 18, Isa. x. 30, Jer. i. 1). We may, without doubt, accept the supposition that in these cases the cities received their names from the heads of the families which inhabited them. In ver. 9, *רָאשֵׁי בֵּית אֲבוֹתָם* stands in apposition to, and is explanatory of, *לְתוֹלְדוֹתָם*: “And their register, according to their generations,” viz. according to the generations, that is, the birth-lists, “of the heads of their fathers'-houses, is (amounts to) in valiant heroes 20,200 men.”—Ver. 10 f. Among the descendants of Jediael we find Benjamin and Ehud, the first of whom is named after the patriarch; but the second is not the judge Ehud (Judg. iii. 15), who was indeed a Benjamite,

but of the family of Gera. Chenaanah does not necessarily indicate a Canaanite family. Tharshish, which is elsewhere a precious stone, is here the name of a person; Ahishahar, that is, Brother of the Dawn, perhaps so named because *sub auroram natus*.—In ver. 11 the expression is contracted, as often happens in formulæ which frequently recur; and the meaning is, “All these are sons of Jediael (for as sons of Bilhan the son of Jediael, they are at the same time sons of the latter), (registered) according to the heads of their fathers’-houses, valiant heroes 17,200, going forth in the host to war.” רָאִשֵׁי בֵית־אֲבוֹת is contracted from רָאִשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת, *vide* on Ex. vi. 25; and the ל before רָאִשֵׁי, which Bertheau from a misinterpretation wishes to remove, depends upon the הַתִּיחָשָׁם (ver. 9) to be supplied in thought.

Ver. 12 is unintelligible to us. The first half, “And Shuppim and Huppim, sons of Ir,” would seem, if we may judge from the 1 cop., to enumerate some other descendants of Benjamin. And besides, (1) the names מְפִים וְחָפִים occur in Gen. xli. 21 among those of the sons of Benjamin, and in Num. xxvi. 39, among the families of Benjamin, one called שׁוּפָמִי from שׁוּפָם, and another חוּפָמִי from חוּפָם, are introduced; we must consequently hold מְפִים to be an error for שְׁפָם or שׁוּפָם. And (2) the name עִיר is most probably identical with עִירִי in ver. 7. The peculiar forms of those names, viz. שְׁפָם וְחָפִים, seem to have arisen from an improper comparison of them with לְחָפִים וְלִשְׁפָם in ver. 15, in which the fact was overlooked that the Huppim and Shuppim of ver. 15 belong to the Manassites. Here, therefore, two other families descended from the Benjamite Ir or Iri would seem to be mentioned, which may easily be reconciled with the purpose (ver. 6) to mention none of the Benjamites but the descendants of Bela, Becher, and Jediael. The further statement, “Hushim, sons of Aher,” is utterly enigmatical. The name חֲשִׁים is found in Gen. xli. 23 as that of Dan’s only son, who, however, is called in Num. xxvi. 42 שְׁחָם, and who founded the family of the Shuhami. But as the names חֲשִׁים and חוּשִׁים are again met with in chap. viii. 8, 11 among the Benjamites, there is no need to imagine any connection between our חֲשִׁים and that family. The word אֲחֵר, *alius*, is not indeed found elsewhere as a *nomen proprium*, but may notwithstanding be so here; when we might, notwithstanding the want of the conjunction ו, take the Hushim sons of Aher to be another Benjamite family. In that case, certainly, the tribe of Dan would be omitted



from our chapter; but we must not allow that to lead us into arbitrary hypotheses, as not only Dan but also Zebulun is omitted.<sup>1</sup>

Ver. 13. *The sons of Naphtali*.—Only the sons of Naphtali are named, the families descended from them being passed over. The names correspond to those in Gen. xlv. 24 and Num. xxv. 48 f., except that there the first is יִזְבִּיָּאֵל, and the last שִׁלֹם instead of שְׁלֹמֹה.

Vers. 14-19. *Families of the half-tribe of Manasseh*.—The families of Manasseh which dwelt in Gilead and Bashan have already been mentioned in chap. v. 23, 14. Our verses deal with the families of this tribe which received their inheritance in Canaan, on this side Jordan. These were, according to Num. xxvi. 30, 34, and Josh. xvii. 2, six families, of which, however, only two are here spoken of—Ashriel, ver. 14, and Shemidah, ver. 19; or perhaps three, if Abiezer, ver. 18, be the same person as Jeezer (Num. xxvi. 30), who is called Abiezer in Josh. xvii. 2. The statements

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau's judgment in the matter is different. Starting from the facts that חֲשִׁים (Gen. xlv. 27) is called a son of Dan, and that further, in the enumeration of the tribes in Gen. xlv. and Num. xxvi., Dan follows after Benjamin; that in Gen. xlv. Dan stands between Benjamin and Naphtali, and that in our chapter, in ver. 13, the sons of Naphtali follow immediately; and that the closing words of this verse, "sons of Bilhah," can, according to Gen. xlv. 25, refer only to Dan and Naphtali, and consequently presuppose that Dan or his descendants have been mentioned in our passage,—he thinks there can be no doubt that originally Danites were mentioned in our verse, and that חֲשִׁים was introduced as the son of Dan. Moreover, from the word אֲחֵר, "the other," he draws the further inference that it may have been, according to its meaning, the covert designation of a man whose proper name fear, or dislike of some sort, prevented men from using, and was probably a designation of the tribe of Dan, which set up its own worship, and so separated itself from the congregation of Israel; cf. Judg. xvii. f. The name is avoided, he says, in our chapter, in chap. vi. 46 and 54, and is named only in chap. ii. 2 among the twelve tribes of Israel, and in chap. xii. 35. The conjecture, therefore, is forced upon us, that חֲשִׁים בֶּן אֲחֵר, "Hushim the son of the other," viz. of the other son of Bilhah, whose name he wished to pass over in silence, stands for וּבְנֵי דָן חֲשִׁים. The name Aher, then, had so completely concealed the tribe of Dan, that later readers did not mark the new commencement, notwithstanding the want of the conjunction, and had no scruple in adding the well-known names of the Benjamites, שִׁפּוֹן and חֲפִיִּם, to the similarly-sounding חֲשִׁים, though probably at first only in the margin. This hypothesis has no solid foundation. The supposed dislike to mention the name of Dan rests upon an erroneous imagination, as is manifest from the thrice repeated mention of that name, not merely in chap. ii. 2 and xii. 35,

of vers. 14 and 15 are very obscure. At the head of the register of the Manassites stands Ashriel, who, according to Num. xxvi. 31, belonged to the sons of Gilead the son of Manasseh and the grandson of Joseph (cf. Gen. l. 23), and founded one of the six families of the cis-Jordanic Manassites. But the words which follow are obscure; the words are 'אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָהּ וְגו', "whom his Aramaic concubine bore; she bore Machir the father of Gilead." But since Ashriel, according to this, was the great-grandson of Manasseh, while Machir was his son, the relative clause can refer only to Manasseh, to whom his concubine bore Machir. Movers and Berth. would therefore erase אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָהּ, as a gloss arising out of a doubling of the following אֲשֶׁר יִלְדָהּ. By this expedient the difficulty as to the connection of the relative clause is certainly got rid of, but the obscurities of the following verse (15) are not thereby removed. The analogy of the other registers in our chapter requires, rather, that immediately after בְּנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה there should stand the name of a descendant,—a fact which speaks

but also in chap. xxvii. 22. The omission of the tribe of Dan in chap. vi. 46, 54, is only the result of a corruption of the text in these passages; for in ver. 46 the words, "Ephraim and of the tribe of Dan," and after ver. 54 a whole verse, have been dropped out in the copying. In neither of these verses can there be any idea of omitting the name Dan because of a dislike to mention it, for in ver. 46 the name Ephraim is lacking, and in ver. 54 the names of two cities are also omitted, where even Berth. cannot suppose any "dislike." When Berth. quotes Judg. xviii. 30 in favour of his concealment hypothesis, where under the Keri מְנַשֶּׁה the name מְנַשֶּׁה is supposed to be concealed, he has forgotten that the opinion that in this passage מְנַשֶּׁה has been altered into מְנַשֶּׁה from a foolish dislike, is one of the rabbinic caprices, which we cannot attribute as a matter of course to the authors of the biblical writings. With this groundless suspicion falls of itself the attempt which he bases upon it "to solve the enigma of our verse." If the words in question do really contain a remark concerning the family of Dan, we must suppose, with Ewald (*Gesch.* i. S. 242), that the text has become corrupt, several words having been dropped out. Yet the בְּנֵי בְלָהָה at the end of ver. 13 is not sufficient to warrant such a supposition. Had the register originally contained not only the sons of Naphtali, but also the sons of Dan, so that בְּנֵי בְלָהָה would have to be referred to both, the conj. ו could not have been omitted before בְּנֵי נַפְתָּלִי. The want of this conjunction is, however, in conformity with the whole plan of our register, in which all the tribes follow, one after the other, without a conjunction; cf. vers. 6, 14, 30. ו is found only before בְּנֵי אֶפְרַיִם, ver. 20, because Ephraim and Manasseh are closely connected, both continuing to form the one tribe of Joseph. We must accordingly hold 'בְּנֵי נַפְתָּלִי, ver. 13, without ו cop., to have been the original reading, when the conjecture that בְּנֵי בְלָהָה includes also the sons of Dan is at once disposed of.



strongly in favour of the authenticity of אֲשֵׁרִיאל. It is therefore a much more probable suggestion, that after the name אֲשֵׁרִיאל, some additional clause, such as בֶּן-מְנַשֶּׁה, has been dropped, or regarded as superfluous by a copyist, and so omitted. To such an omitted בֶּן מְנַשֶּׁה, the relative sentence, which gives more details as to the descent of Ashriel, would be attached in a simple and natural manner, since it was known from Num. xxvi. 30 f. that Ashriel was descended from Manasseh through Gilead.—Ver. 15 is literally, “And Machir took a wife to Huppim and Shuppim, and the name of his sister was Maachah, and the name of the second Zelophehad.” According to ver. 16, on the contrary, Maachah is the wife of Machir, and we should consequently expect to find in ver. 15 only the simple statement, “And Machir took a wife whose name was Maachah.” From the words לַחָפִים no meaning which harmonizes with the context can be obtained. Since לָקַח אִשָּׁה לְ signifies “to take a wife for one” (cf. Judg. xiv. 2), we can only suppose that by the names Huppim and Shuppim Machir’s sons are meant, to whom he, as their father, gave wives. But we cannot suppose that the sons of Machir are referred to, for the birth of the sons is first mentioned in ver. 16. But we have found the names חָפִם and שָׁפִם spoken of as descendants of Benjamin; and Bertheau consequently conjectures that these names have been brought thence into our verse by some gloss, and that the beginning of our verse originally stood thus: “ומכיר לקח אשה ושמה מעכה ושם אחותו המלכת:” “And Machir took a wife whose name is Maachah, and the name of his sister is Hammoleketh” (the last according to ver. 18). By this means we certainly bring some meaning into the words; but we cannot venture to maintain that this conjecture corresponds to the original text, but rather incline to doubt it. For, in the first place, the following words, “And the name of the second (is) Zelophehad,” do not suit the proposed reading. Berth. must here alter הַשֵּׁנִי into אָחִיו (the name of his brother). But even after this alteration, the mention of the brother of Machir is not suitable to the context; and moreover Zelophehad was not a true brother, but only a nephew of Machir, the son of his brother Hephher; cf. Num. xxvi. 33, xxvii. 1. And besides this, according to the concluding formula, “These are the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh” (ver. 17), we should expect to find in vers. 15, 16, not merely sons or descendants of Machir, but rather descendants of Gilead. We therefore hold the state-

ment of ver. 15b, "And the name of the second is Zelophehad, and Zelophehad had (only) daughters," to be correct and beyond criticism, and the first part of ver. 15 to be corrupt and defective; and conjecture that a son of Gilead's was mentioned in it, to whose name the words, "And the name of the second," etc., belonged. This son who was mentioned in the text, which has been handed down to us only in a defective state, was probably the Ashriel mentioned in ver. 14, a son of Gilead, whose descent from Machir was given more in detail in the corrupt and consequently meaningless first half of ver. 15. In vers. 16, 17, other descendants of Machir by his wife Maachah are enumerated, which favours the probable conjecture that the wife whom Machir took, according to ver. 15, was different from Maachah, that Machir had two wives, and that in ver. 15 originally the sons of the first were enumerated, and in vers. 16, 17, the sons of the second. Peresh and Shelesh are mentioned only here. בְּנָי, "his sons" (that is, the sons of the last-named, Shelesh), were Ulam and Rakem, names which are also met with only here. The name אֶרֶב is found in our Masoretic text, 1 Sam. xii. 11, as the name of a judge, but probably בְּרָק should be read instead.—Ver. 18. A third branch of the descendants of Gilead were descended from Machir's sister Hammoleketh, a name which the Vulgate has taken in an appellative sense. Of her sons, Ishod, *i.e.* "man of splendour," is not elsewhere mentioned. The name Abiezer occurs, Josh. xvii. 2, as that of the head of one of the families of Manasseh. In Num. xxvi. 30, however, he is called Jeezer, which is probably the original reading, and consequently our Abiezer is different from that in Josh. xvii. 2. Another circumstance which speaks strongly against the identification of the two men is, that the family descended from Jeezer holds the first place among the families of Manasseh, which is not at all consonant with the position of the son of Machir's sister here mentioned. Of the family of Abiezer came the judge Gideon, Judg. xi. 15. A daughter of Zelophehad is called Mahlah in Num. xxvi. 33, xxvii. 1, but she is not the person here mentioned.—Ver. 19. The sons of Shemida, the founder of the fourth family of the Manassites, Num. xxvi. 32. His four sons are nowhere else referred to, for שִׁמְדָּה, the founder of a family of the Manassites (Num. xxvi. 31 and Josh. xvii. 2), is to be distinguished from the Shechem of our verse; nor is there any greater reason to identify Likhi with Helek, Num. xxvi. 30 (Berth.), than there



is for connecting אֲנִיעָם with נָעָה, the daughter of Zelophehad, Num. xxvi. 33, Josh. xvii. 3.

Vers. 20-29. *The families of Ephraim.*—Ver. 20 f. Among the Ephraimites, the descendants of Shuthelah, the founder of one of the chief families of this tribe, Num. xxvi. 35, are traced down through six generations to a later Shuthelah. The names וְעֶזֶר וְאֶלֶּאֶר which follow שׁוּתֶלֶחַ בְּנוֹ, “And his son Shuthelah,” after which בְּנוֹ is wanting, are not to be considered descendants of the second Shuthelah, but are heads of a family co-ordinate with that of Shuthelah, or of two fathers’-houses intimately connected with each other. These names are to be taken as a continuation of the list of the sons of Ephraim, which commenced with שׁוּתֶלֶחַ. The suffix in וְהַרְגִּים refers to both these names: “The men of Gath, that were born in the land, smote Ezer and Elead.” These “men born in the land” Ewald and Bertheau take to be the Avvites, the aboriginal inhabitants of that district of country, who had been extirpated by the Philistines emigrating from Caphtor (Deut. ii. 23). But there is no sufficient ground for this supposition; for no proof can be brought forward that the Avvæans (Avvites) had ever spread so far as Gath; and the Philistines had taken possession of the south-west part of Canaan as early as the time of Abraham, and consequently long before Ephraim’s birth. “The men of Gath who were born in the land” are rather the Canaanite or Philistine inhabitants of Gath, as distinguished from the Israelites, who had settled in Canaan only under Joshua. “For they (Ezer and Elead) had come down to take away their cattle” (to plunder). The older commentators assign this event to the time that Israel dwelt in Egypt (Ewald, *Gesch.* i. S. 490), or even to the pre-Egyptian time. But Bertheau has, in opposition to this, justly remarked that the narratives of Genesis know nothing of a stay of the progenitors of the tribe of Ephraim in the land of Palestine before the migration of Israel into Egypt, for Ephraim was born in Egypt (Gen. xlvi. 20). It would be more feasible to refer it to the time of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, as it is not impossible that the Israelites may have undertaken predatory expeditions against Canaan from Goshen; but even this supposition is not at all probable. Certainly, if in vers. 23-27 it were said, as Ewald thinks, that Ephraim, after the mourning over the sons thus slain, became by his wife the father of three other sons, from the last named of whom Joshua was descended

in the seventh generation, we should be compelled to refer the expedition to the pre-Egyptian period. But the opinion that Rephah and Resheph, ver. 25, were begotten only after that misfortune has no foundation. Moreover, the statement that Ephraim, after he was comforted for the loss of his slain sons, went in unto his wife and begat a son, to whom he gave the name Beriah, because he was born in misfortune in his house, does not at all presuppose that the patriarch Ephraim was still alive when Ezer and Elead were slain. Were that the case, the necessary result would of course be, that this event could only be referred to the time when the Israelites dwelt in Egypt. In opposition to this, Bertheau's remark that the event in that case would be *per se* enigmatical, as we would rightly have great hesitation in accepting the supposition of a war, or rather a plundering expedition to seize upon cattle carried out by the Ephraimites whilst they dwelt in Egypt, against the inhabitants of the Philistine city of Gath, is certainly not all decisive, for we know far too little about those times to be able to judge of the possibility or probability of such an expedition. The decision to which we must come as to this obscure matter depends, in the first place, on how the words **כִּי יָרְדוּ וְגו'** are to be understood; whether we are to translate "for they had gone," or "when they had gone down to fetch their cattle," *i.e.* to plunder. If we take the **כִּי** as *partic. ration.*, for, because, we can only take the sons of Ephraim, Ezer and Elead, for the subject of **יָרְדוּ**, and we must understand the words to mean that they had gone down to carry off the cattle of the Gathites. In that case, the event would fall in the time when the Ephraimites dwelt in Canaan, and went down from Mount Ephraim into the low-lying Gath, for a march out of Egypt into Canaan is irreconcilable with the verb **יָרַד**. If, on the contrary, we translate **כִּי יָרְדוּ** "when they had gone down," we might then gather from the words that men of Gath went down to Goshen, there to drive away the cattle of the Ephraimites, in which case the Gathites may have slain the sons of Ephraim when they were feeding their cattle and defending them against the robbers. Many of the old commentators have so understood the words; but we cannot hold this to be the correct interpretation, for it deprives the words "those born in the land," which stand in apposition to **אֲנָשֵׁי הָאָרֶץ**, of all meaning, since there can be absolutely no thought of men of Gath born in Egypt. We therefore take the words to mean,



that the sons of Ephraim who are named in our verse attempted to drive away the cattle of the Gathites, and were by them slain in the attempt. But how can the statement that Ephraim after this unfortunate event begat another son, Beriah, be reconciled with such a supposition, since the patriarch Ephraim was dead long before the Israelites came forth out of Egypt? Bertheau understands the begetting figuratively, of the whole of the tribe of Ephraim, and would interpret the begetting of Beriah of the reception either of a Benjamite family into the tribe of Ephraim, or of a small Ephraimite family, which at first was not numbered with the others, into the number of the famous families of this tribe. But this straining of the words by an allegorical interpretation is not worthy of serious refutation, since it is manifestly only a makeshift to get rid of the difficulty. The words, "And Ephraim went in unto his wife, and she conceived and bare a son," are not to be interpreted allegorically, but must be taken in their proper sense; and the solution of the enigma will be found in the name Ephraim. If this be taken to denote the actual son of Joseph, then the event is incomprehensible; but just as a descendant of Shuthelah in the sixth generation was also called Shuthelah, so also might a descendant of the patriarch Ephraim, living at a much later time, have received the name of the progenitor of the tribe; and if we accept this supposition, the event, with all its issues, is easily explained. If Ezer and Elead went down from Mount Ephraim to Gath, they were not actual sons of Ephraim, but merely later descendants; and their father, who mourned for their death, was not Ephraim the son of Joseph, who was born in Egypt, but an Ephraimite who lived after the Israelites had taken possession of the land of Canaan, and who bore Ephraim's name. *He* may have mourned for the death of his sons, and after he had been comforted for their loss, may have gone in unto his wife, and have begotten a son with her, to whom he gave the name Beriah, "because it was in misfortune in his house," *i.e.* because this son was born when misfortune was in his house.—Ver. 24. "And his daughter Sherah," the daughter of the above-mentioned Ephraim, "built Beth-horon the nether and the upper," the present Beit-Ur-Foka and Tachta (see on Josh. x. 10), "and Uzzen-sherah," a place not elsewhere referred to, which she probably founded, and which was called after her. The building of the two Beth-horons is merely an enlarging and

fortifying of these towns. Sherah was probably an heiress, who had received these places as her inheritance, and caused them to be enlarged by her family. In vers. 25–27 the ancestors of Joshua the son of Nun, who brought Israel into the land of Canaan, are enumerated. As the word בְּנוֹ is wanting after רִשָּׁה, we must hold Rephah and Resheph to be brothers, but we are not informed from which of the four Ephraimite stocks enumerated in Num. xxvi. 35 f. they were descended. “Telah his son,” Bertheau holds to be a son of Rephah. The name Tahan occurs in Num. xxvi. 35 as that of the founder of one of the families of Ephraim; but he can hardly be identical with our Tahan, who was probably a son of that Tahan from whom an Ephraimite family descended. If this conjecture be correct, Joshua would be of the family of Tahan.—Ver. 26. Elishama the son of Ammihud was a contemporary of Moses, Num. i. 10, and prince of the tribe of Ephraim, Num. vii. 48, x. 22. נֹן (Non) is so pronounced only in this place; in the Pentateuch and in the book of Joshua it is נֹן (Nun).

In vers. 28 and 29 the possessions and dwelling-places of the tribe of Ephraim (and as we learn from the superscription, ver. 29), also those of West Jordan Manasseh, are given, but in a very general way; only the chief places on the four sides being mentioned. Bethel, now Beitin, on the frontier of the tribal domains of Benjamin and Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 2, xviii. 13), and assigned to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 22), is here mentioned as an Ephraimite city on the southern frontier of the Ephraimite territory, as it belonged to the kingdom of the ten tribes; whence we gather that this register was prepared after that kingdom had come into existence. As to its position, see on Josh. vii. 2. Her daughters are the smaller villages which belonged to Bethel. Naaran, without doubt the same place which is called in Josh. xvi. 17 נַעֲרָתָה (with ה *loc.*), is the eastern frontier city lying to the north-east of Jericho; see on Josh. xvi. 7. “And westward Gezer,” according to Josh. xvi. 13, lying between Beth-horon and the sea (see on Josh. x. 33), is the frontier city on the south-west; and Shechem and Avvah (עֵיִתָה), with their daughters, are places which mark the boundary on the north-west. As to שֶׁכֶּם, Shechem, the present Nablus, see on Josh. xvii. 7. Instead of עֵיִתָה, most of the editions of the Bible agree with LXX. and Vulg. and Chald. in having עֵיִתָה, but not the Philistine Gaza: it is only an error of the transcribers



and printers, as all the more accurate MSS. and the better printed copies have עֵינָה; see De Rossi, *Varia Lectt. ad h. l.* The locality עֵינָה or עֵינָה is certainly met with nowhere else, but, if we may judge by Josh. xvi. 6 and xvii. 17, is to be sought not far from Shechem in a north-western direction, perhaps on the site of the there mentioned Michmethah, the position of which has, however, not yet been ascertained.—Ver. 29. According to Josh. xvii. 11, the Manassites had received the four cities here named, lying within the territory of Issachar and Asher. This is attested also by 'עַל-יְדֵי בְנֵי מַנַּשֶּׁה, to the hands, *i.e.* in possession of the sons of Manasseh. As to its position, see Josh. xvii. 11. These cities formed the boundaries on the extreme north, of the dwellings “of the sons of Joseph,” *i.e.* of the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

Vers. 30-40. *The sons and several families of Asher.*—Ver. 30. The names of the four sons of Asher and that of their sister coincide with the statement of Gen. xlv. 17; but in Num. xxvi. 44-47, on the contrary, the name Ishuai does not occur among the families of Asher.—Ver. 31. The sons of Beriah, Heber and Malchiel, are also to be found in Gen. xlv. 17 and Num. xxvi. 45 as the heads of two families; but the further statement, “he (*i.e.* Malchiel) the father of Birzavith,” is found only here. How בִּרְזָוִית, the Kethibh, is to be pronounced, cannot be with certainty determined. Gesen. in *Thes.* p. 239 makes it בִּרְזָוִית, and considers the word to be the name of a woman; Bertheau, on the contrary, conjectures that it is a compound of בֵּר = בָּאֵר and זֵית, “well of the olive-tree,” and so the name of a place. In vers. 32-34 the descendants of Heber are enumerated in three generations, which are mentioned nowhere else. In ver. 32 we have four sons and one daughter. The name יַפְלֵט is not to be connected with יַפְלָטִי, Josh. xvi. 3, “because a family of Asher is not to be sought for in the neighbourhood there referred to” (Berth.). In ver. 33 we have four sons of Japhlet, and in ver. 34 the sons of his brother Shemer. It is somewhat remarkable that שֹׁמֵר, ver. 32, is called here שֶׁמֶר. שֶׁמֶר is not an appellative, but a proper name, as the ו before the following name shows; cf. another Ali in v. 15. For יִחְבֶּה we should read יִחְבֶּה.—Vers. 35-39. Descendants of Helem—in ver. 35 sons, in vers. 36-38 grandsons. As Helem is called אֶחָיו, “his brother” (*i.e.* the brother of the Shemer mentioned in ver. 34), הֶלֶם would seem to be the third son of Heber, who is called in ver. 32 חֹתָם. If so, one of the two names must have resulted from an error in transcription;

but it is now impossible to determine which is the original and correct form of the name. Eleven names are introduced as those of the sons of Zophah (vers. 36, 37); and in ver. 38 we have, besides, three sons of Jether (יֶתֶר), who is called in ver. 38 יֶתֶרֶן. In ver. 39 there follow three names, those of the sons of Ulla; on which Bertheau rightly remarks, the whole character of our enumeration would lead us to conjecture that אֶלָּא had already occurred among the preceding names, although we find neither this name nor any similar one, with which it might be identified, in the preceding list.—Ver. 40 contains a comprehensive concluding statement as to the descendants of Asher: “All these (those just mentioned by name) were heads of fathers’-houses, chosen valiant heroes (חִיָּלִים, as in ver. 5), chief of the princes,” Vulg. *duces ducum*, i.e. probably leaders of the larger divisions of the army, under whom were other נְשִׂאִים. “And their genealogical register is for service of the host in war,” i.e. was prepared with reference to the men capable of bearing arms, and had not, like other registers, reference to the number of inhabitants of the various localities; cf. ix. 22. It amounted to 26,000 men. According to Num. i. 41, Asher numbered 41,500, and according to Num. xxvi. 47, 53,000 men. But we must observe that the number given in our verse is only that of the men capable of bearing arms belonging to one of the greater families of Asher, the family of Heber, of which alone a register had been preserved till the time of the chronicler.

#### CHAP. VIII.—FAMILIES OF BENJAMIN, AND GENEALOGY OF THE HOUSE OF SAUL.

The families of Benjamin enumerated in this chapter were probably separated from those in chap. vii. 6–11, merely on the ground that all the registers which are grouped together in chap. vii. were taken from another genealogical document than that from which the registers in our chapter, which form a supplement to the short fragments in chap. vii. 6–11, have been derived.

Vers. 1–5. *The sons of Benjamin and Bela*.—The manner in which the five sons begotten by Benjamin are enumerated is remarkable, “Bela his first-born, Ashbel the second,” etc., since, according to Gen. xlii. 21, after the first-born Bela, Becher follows as the second son, and Ashbel is the third; while Aharah, Nohah, and Rapha are not met with there, quite other



names occupying their place. In אֶחָרִיָּה we can easily recognise the אֶחָרִיָּה of Num. xxvi. 38, whence the enumeration in ver. 1 f. harmonizes with the order in Num. xxvi. 38. It is therefore clear, that in our genealogy only those sons are mentioned who founded the families of Benjamin. The names נֹחָה and רָפָא are nowhere else met with among the sons of Benjamin; but we may conclude, partly from the agreement of the first three names with the heads of the families of Benjamin enumerated in Num. xxvi. 38, and partly from the agreement as to the number, which is five in both passages, that נֹחָה and רָפָא are intended to correspond to the שִׁפְוֹפָם and הוֹפָם of Num. xxvi. 39. The only question which then remains is, whether the variation in the names arises from these two sons of Benjamin having had different names, or from the families which issued from Shephupham and Hupham having afterwards perhaps received new names from famous chiefs, instead of the original designations, so that Nohah and Rapha would be later descendants of Shephupham and Hupham. Even this second supposition seems possible, since הוֹלִיר in such genealogical registers may denote mediate procreation. If, *e.g.*, Nohah were a grandson or great-grandson of Shephupham the son of Benjamin, he might well be introduced in the genealogical lists of the families as begotten by Benjamin.—Vers. 3–5. The sons of Bela. Of the six names borne by these sons, גֵּרָא is twice met with; נַעֲמָן is found in Gen. xvi. 21 as the son, and in Num. xxvi. 40 as grandson of Benjamin; שִׁפְוֹפָן is another form of שִׁפְוֹפָם, Num. xxvi. 39; and הוֹרָם may be a transcriber's error for הוֹפָם, Num. xxvi. 39, just as אֶרֶר probably stands for אֶרֶר, Gen. xvi. 21. The occurrence of the name Gera would be incomprehensible only if בְּנִים denoted sons in the narrower sense of the word; but if בְּנִים are sons in the wider sense, *i.e.* descendants who founded fathers'-houses (groups of related households), two cousins might have the same name. In that case, Addar, Shephupham, and Hiram also may be different persons from Ard, Shephupham, and Hupham. Abihud and Abishua are met with as descendants of Benjamin only here, and אֶחָוִיָּה may be connected with אֶחָיָה, ver. 7.

Vers. 6, 7. *Sons of Ehud*.—The descent of Ehud from the sons, grandsons, and descendants of Benjamin, enumerated in vers. 1–5, is not given. The names of Ehud's sons follow only at the end of the 7th verse, “And he begat Uzza and Ahihud,” while the intermediate clauses contain historical remarks. These

sons were "heads of fathers'-houses of the inhabitants of Geba," i.e. Geba of Benjamin (1 Sam. xiii. 16), the Levite city, vi. 45, which still remains as the half-ruinous village Jeba, about three leagues to the north of Jerusalem; see on Josh. xviii. 24. "And they led them captive to Manahath, viz. Naaman and Ahiah and Gera, this man led them captive." The subject to ויגלום are the men mentioned in the following verse, while the הוּא which follows shows that, of the three above mentioned, the last, Gera, was the author of their captivity. The place Manahath is not known, but is conjectured to be connected with Hazi-Hammanahti and Hazi-Hammenuhoth, ii. 54 and 52; but we cannot ascertain with certainty whether the name denotes a city or a district, and the situation of it has not yet been discovered. Of the hostile collision of these Benjamite families also, no more detailed accounts have come down to us.

Vers. 8-12. *The descendants of Shaharaim.*—The descent of Shaharaim from the sons and grandsons named in vers. 1-3 is obscure, and the conjecture which connects him with Ahishahar of chap. vii. 10 is unsupported. He was the father of a considerable number of heads of fathers'-houses, whom his two or three wives bore to him. According to ver. 8, he begat "in the country of Moab after he had sent them, Hushim and Baara his wives, away; (ver. 9) there begat he with Hodesh his wife, Jobab," etc. When and how Shaharaim, a Benjamite, came into the country of Moab, is not known; all that can be gathered from our verse is that he must have lived there for a considerable time. שְׁלֹחוֹ is *infin. Pi.*, the "i" being retained, and the Daghesh forte omitted with Sheva (cf. as to this formation, Ew. § 238, d). אֹתָם, accus. of the pronoun, which, as it precedes its noun, is in *gen. masc.*, although the names of women follow (cf. for this use of the pronoun, Ew. § 309, c). בַּעֲרָה and חוּשִׁים are women, as we learn from the following נָשָׁיו. By this parenthesis, the beginning of the main sentence has been lost sight of, and the הוּלִיד is taken up again in וַיֹּלֵד. As to הוּלִיד with מִן, cf. the remark on ii. 8. חֲדָשׁ is the third wife, which he took instead of those he had sent away. The seven names in vers. 9, 10 are grouped together as sons or descendants of the last-named wife, by the concluding remark, "These his sons are heads of fathers'-houses." Then, further, in vers. 11, 12, the sons and grandsons of the first (divorced) wives, one of whom built the cities Ono and Lydda, are enumerated; but we have no means of determining whether



the **הוּא בְנֵה** refers to Shemer, the last mentioned, or to Elpaal the father of the three sons, Eber, and Misham, and Shemer. It would, however, naturally suggest itself, that the words referred to the first. **לֹד** (Lod) is without doubt the city Lydda, where Peter healed the paralytic (Acts ix. 32 ff.). It belonged in the Syrian age to Samaria, but it was added to Judea by the King Demetrius Soter, and given to Jonathan for a possession (1 Macc. xi. 34, cf. with x. 30, 38). In the Jewish war it was destroyed by the Roman general Cestius (Joseph. *de Bell. Jud.* ii. 19. 1), but was rebuilt at a later time, and became the site of a toparchy of Judea. In still later times it was called Diospolis, but is now a considerable Mohammedan village, lying between Jafa and Jerusalem to the north of Ramleh, which bears the old name Ludd, by the Arabs pronounced also Lidd. See v. Raumer, *Pal. S.* 10; Robins. *Pal. sub voce*; and Tobler, *Dritte Wanderung*, S. 69 f. Ono is mentioned elsewhere only in Ezra ii. 33, Neh. vii. 37 and xi. 35, along with Lod, and must have been a place in the neighbourhood of Lydda.

Vers. 13-28. *Heads of fathers'-houses of the tribe of Benjamin*, who dwelt partly in Aijalon (ver. 13) and partly in Jerusalem.—Their connection with the heads of fathers'-houses already mentioned is not clear. The names **בְּרִיעָה וְשָׁמַע** might be taken for a fuller enumeration of the sons of Elpaal (ver. 12), were it not that the names enumerated from ver. 14 or 15 onwards, are at the end of ver. 16 said to be those of sons of Beriah; whence we must conclude that with **וּבְרִיעָה**, ver. 13, a new list of heads of Benjamite fathers'-houses begins. This view is supported by the fact that the names from ver. 14 or 15 to ver. 27 are divided into five groups of families: the sons of Beriah (ver. 16), of Elpaal (ver. 18), of Shimhi (ver. 21), of Shashak (ver. 25), and of Jeroham (ver. 27). But as two of these, Beriah and Shashak, occur in vers. 13, 14, and **שָׁמַעִי** is probably another form of **שָׁמַע**, Bertheau conjectures that the last two names, Shashak and Jeroham, are represented by **אֶחָיו** and **יְרֵמוֹת** (ver. 14). **יְרֵחַם** and **יְרֵמוֹת** may be explained by the supposition of a transcriber's error, or by one person having two names; but the word **אֶחָיו** is rendered by the LXX. by **ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ** (= **אֶחָיו**); and the view that **אֶחָיו** is a *nom. prop.* is opposed, as in ver. 31, by the fact that the **ו** cop. is not found before the following **שָׁשַׁק**, for here, throughout, the names are all connected with each other by the **ו** cop. Bertheau therefore conjectures that the text originally

ran thus, וְאֶלְפָּאֵל אָחִיו וְשָׁשָׁק, and that the name Elpaal was dropped out; and that in consequence of that, אָחִיו had been punctuated as a *nom. prop.* These conjectures seem satisfactory, especially as it may be adduced in their favour that אָחִיו has been added to the name Elpaal to connect the names in ver. 14 with the enumeration (ver. 13) interrupted by the parenthetical remarks. No certainty, however, can be attained in a matter so obscure. If a new series of groups of families begins with ver. 13, we should expect an introductory formula, as in ver. 6. Beriah and Shema are called heads of the fathers'-houses of the inhabitants of Aijalon, *i.e.* heads of the groups of related households inhabiting Aijalon, the present Jalo to the west of Gibeon (see on Josh. xix. 42). It is quite consistent with this that their sons or descendants dwelt in Jerusalem. Next a heroic deed of theirs is related, viz. that they (in some war or other) turned to flight the inhabitants of Gath (without doubt Philistines). This remark reminds us of the statement in chap. vii. 21, that sons of Ephraim were slain by those born in Gath, because they had gone down to drive away the herds of the inhabitants. But Bertheau draws an erroneous conclusion from this fact, when he says that because in both passages the name Beriah occurs, both refer to the same event, and thereafter attempts by various hypotheses to make the Benjamites mentioned in our verse into Ephraimites. For the name Beriah is not at all so rare as to allow of our inferring from that alone that the various persons so called are identical, for Jacob's son Asher also named one of his sons Beriah; cf. vii. 30 with Gen. xvi. 17. The notion that the Benjamites Beriah and Shema defeated those inhabitants of Gath who had slain the sons of Ephraim (vii. 21) is quite unsupported, as the Philistines lived at war and in feud with the Israelites for hundreds of years.—Vers. 15, 16. Several of the names of these six sons of Beriah who are mentioned in our verse occur elsewhere, but nowhere else are they met with as sons of Beriah.—Vers. 17, 18. Bertheau would identify three of the sons of Elpaal—Meshullam, Heber, and Ishmerai—with Misham, Eber, and Shemer, ver. 12, but without any sufficient reason; for it is questionable if even the Elpaal whose sons are named in our verses be the same person as the Elpaal mentioned in ver. 12. Of these descendants of Elpaal, also, nothing further is known, and the same may be said of the nine sons of Shimhi, vers. 19–21; of the eleven sons of Shashak, vers. 22–25; and of the six sons



of Jeroham, vers. 26, 27, although some of these names are met with elsewhere singly. The concluding remark, ver. 28, "These are heads of fathers'-houses," refers, without doubt, to all the names from ver. 15 or 14 to ver. 27. "According to their generations—heads" is in apposition to the preceding, as in ix. 24, but the meaning of the apposition is doubtful. The word ראשים can hardly be repeated merely for emphasis, as the old commentators understood it, in harmony with the Vulgate *principes inquam*, for why should this word be so emphasized? Bertheau thinks that "according to their births—heads" is to be taken to mean that those who are enumerated by name are not the heads living at the time of the preparation of this register, but the individual families, with the name of their progenitor after whom they were named in the genealogical lists. But how this meaning can be found in the words in question, I at least cannot understand. Can the individual families be called ראשי אבות, "heads of fathers'-houses"? The families are the fathers'-houses themselves, *i.e.* they are made up of the groups of related households comprehended under the name fathers'-houses. These groups of related households have, it is true, each of them their head, but cannot possibly be themselves called heads. The meaning seems rather to be that the persons named in the family registers, or registers of births, are introduced as heads (of fathers'-houses); and the reason why this is remarked would seem to be, to prevent those who are enumerated as the sons of this or that man from being regarded simply as members of fathers'-houses. The further remark, "these dwelt in Jerusalem," is manifestly not to be taken to mean that the heads alone dwelt there, while the households that were subordinated to them lived elsewhere; for it signifies that they dwelt in Jerusalem with the households which composed their respective fathers'-houses. That the households dwelt there also is not stated, merely because the register contains only the names of the heads.

Vers. 29-40. *The genealogy of Saul*.—Vers. 29-38 recur in chap. ix. 35-44 (see on that passage).—Vers. 29-32. The ancestors of Saul. They dwelt mainly in Gibeon, but a branch of them were settled in Jerusalem, ver. 32 f. In Gibeon, now El Jib, two hours north-west from Jerusalem (see on Josh ix. 3), dwelt the father of Gibeon, with his wife and his sons. The plural יִשְׁבֵי is used because there dwelt there, besides the father of Gibeon, also his wife and his sons. The father, *i.e.* the lord

and possessor of Gibeon, was called, according to ix. 35, Jehiel (יְעִיאל, Keth. יַעֲזֵאל), and his wife Maachah, a not uncommon female name (see on ii. 48). The descent of Jehiel from Benjamin is not given. In ver. 30 eight names are given as those of his sons, while in ix. 36 f. ten are mentioned, the latter statement being correct; for a comparison of the two passages shows that in our verse two names have been dropped out,—Ner between Baal and Nadab, and Mikloth at the end, which must have originally stood in our register also,—for in vers. 32, 33 their descendants are mentioned. נֶזֶר is called in ix. 37 נִזְרִיהָ. These names are evidently those of actual sons of Jehiel who were progenitors of fathers'-houses (groups of related households), but in the case of only two is the race descended from these further noticed. In ver. 32 we have that of the youngest Mikloth, who begat Shimeah, called in ix. 38 Shimeam. These also (viz. Shimeah and his family) dwelt in Jerusalem נֶגֶד אֶחְיָהֶם, "before their brethren," i.e. over against them, and עִם אֶחְיָהֶם, "with their brethren." The brethren are the other Benjamites in the first clause, those dwelling outside of Jerusalem and inhabiting the neighbouring country as far as Gibeon (ver. 30); in the second, those dwelling in Jerusalem (ver. 28). From this it is clear that of the descendants of Abi-Gibeon only that branch which was descended from Mikloth went to Jerusalem.—Ver. 33. The family of Ner. Ner begat Kish, and Kish Saul. According to 1 Sam. ix. 1 and xiv. 51, Kish was a son of Abiel. This statement, on account of which Bertheau proposes to make alterations in the text, may be reconciled with that in our verses, by the simple supposition that in our verse intermediate names mentioned in 1 Sam. ix. 1, and probably others besides, are passed over, and Ner the son of Abi-Gibeon is named only because he was the progenitor of the line by which Saul was descended from him. Saul (שָׁאֻל) is King Saul. Only three of his four sons, 1 Sam. xiv. 49, are mentioned,—those, namely, who fell with him in the battle against the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxxi. 2. The second is called, in 1 Sam. xiv. 49, Ishui, but in xxxi. 2 Abinadab, as in our register, whence we gather that Ishui is another name for Abinadab. The fourth, Eshbaal, is the same who is called in 2 Sam. ii. 8, and elsewhere, Ishbosheth, who was set up as king in opposition to David by Abner (see on 2 Sam. ii. 8).—Ver. 34. Jonathan's sons and grandsons. His son is called here and in ix. 40 Meribbaal, while in 2 Sam. iv. 4, ix. 6, xvi. 1 ff.,



xix. 25, he is called Mephibosheth, because the name "striver with Baal" has been changed into מְפִיבִשֶׁת, *exterminans idolum*. This Meribbaal, who was lame in his feet (cf. 2 Sam. iv. 4), had a son Micha (מִיכָה, in 2 Sam. ix. 12 written מִיכָא), of whom came a numerous race. He had four sons (ver. 35), and the family of the last-named of these (Ahaz) is traced down, in vers. 36-40, through ten generations to the great-grandson of Eshek. First it is traced from Ahaz to Alemeth (ver. 36); then through Zimri, brother of this latter, to Binea, by הוֹלִיר; then further by בְּנוֹ (his son) to Azel, of whom in ver. 38 six sons are enumerated; and finally, in ver. 39, the sons of his brother Eshek are named, and the sons and grandsons of the first-born of this latter are then enumerated. The last two verses are wanting after ix. 44. The names in the two registers correspond, except at one point, where we cannot get rid of the discrepancy that for יְהוֹעָדָה (ver. 36) there stands in ix. 42 יַעֲרָה both times, probably through an error of transcription, by which out of the shortened form יַעֲרָה there arose יַעֲרָה, יַעֲרָה and יַעֲרָה being interchanged. Besides this, instead of the תַּאֲרָע of ver. 35, we have in ix. 41, according to the harder pronunciation of the gutturals, תַּחֲרָע; and for רַפָּה, ver. 37, we have in ix. 41 the longer original form רַפָּיָה. Now since Ahaz, whose posterity is traced down to the tenth generation, was descended from Jonathan in the third generation, and his grandfather Mephibosheth was a boy of five years of age at the death of Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. iv. 4), the grandsons of Ulam, mentioned in ver. 40, will be the thirteenth generation of Jonathan's descendants. Now Jonathan fell along with Saul in the year 1055 B.C. (see the chronological table of the period of the judges, p. 217), and consequently this thirteenth generation of Jonathan's descendants lived probably about 700 B.C., i.e. about 100 years before the Babylonian exile; for, according to the analogy of the royal race of David, we cannot reckon more than twenty-five years on an average for each generation.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 40.

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau holds a contrary opinion to that given in the text, and thinks that by the numerous sons and grandsons of Ulam the son of Eshek we are brought down to post-exilic times, seeing that if Saul lived about 1080 B.C., and thirty years are reckoned to each one of the thirteen generations (Eshek being a descendant of Saul in the thirteenth generation), Azel and Eshek must have lived about 690 B.C. But this estimate is too high, for we cannot reckon sixty years to Saul and Jonathan from 1080 onwards, since Jonathan fell along with Saul in 1055, and his son Meribbaal was then hardly five years old, and must consequently have been born in 1060. For the following

The sons of Ulam are called valiant heroes and archers, and must have shown the same capability for war by which the tribe of Benjamin had been distinguished at an earlier time; cf. Judg. xx. 16, and for *יִרְבֵּי קֶשֶׁת*, cf. 1 Chron. v. 16. The subscription *בְּל־אֵלֶּה ט'* refers back to the superscription in ver. 1, and binds all the names in our chapter together.

CHAP. IX.—THE FORMER INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM, AND  
THE FAMILY OF SAUL.

Vers. 1-3 form the transition from the genealogies to the enumeration of the former inhabitants of Jerusalem in vers. 4-34. —Ver. 1. "And all the Israelites were registered; and, behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel, and Judah was led away to Babylon for her transgressions." The LXX. and Vulg. have erroneously connected *וַיִּהְיֶה* with the preceding words, and render, "in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah," and then have translated the following words *הִגְלוּ וְגו'* arbitrarily. Not less incorrect is Bertheau's opinion, that Israel here denotes only the tribes of the northern kingdom, because Israel is contrasted with Judah, and kings of Israel are spoken of, for both reasons are quite worthless. "The book of the kings of Israel" is cited in 2 Chron. xx. 34 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18), and is declared by Bertheau himself to be identical with the historical work cited as the "book of the kings of Israel and Judah" (2 Chron. xxvii. 7, xxxv. 27, xxxvi. 8), or as the "book of the kings of Judah and Israel" (2 Chron. xvi. 11, xxv. 26, and elsewhere). How then can it be inferred from the shortened title, "book of the kings of Israel," that kings of the northern kingdom are spoken of? Then, as to the contrast between Israel and Judah, it might, when looked at by itself, be adduced in favour of taking the name in its narrower sense; but when we

generations, moreover, not more than twenty-five years on an average should be reckoned. That being the case, the children's children of Ulam's sons, who were the twelfth generation of Micha's descendants, may have lived from 760 B.C. onwards, and during this period, from 760 to 700, may have increased to the troop of blooming grandchildren of Ulam mentioned in ver. 40. But even supposing that thirty years should be reckoned for each generation, the last-named generation of 150 grandsons and great-grandsons of Ulam would have lived in the period from 660 to 600, *i.e.* before the exile, or at least before the first great deportation of the people with Jehoiakim in the year 599 B.C.



consider the grouping together in ver. 10 of "Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the Nethinim," we see clearly that Israel in ver. 2 incontrovertibly denotes the whole Israel of the twelve tribes. In ver. 1, Israel is used in the same sense as in ver. 2; and the contrast between Israel and Judah, therefore, is analogous to the contrast "Judah and Jerusalem," *i.e.* Israel is a designation of the whole covenant people, Judah that of one section of it. The position of our verse also at the end of the genealogies of all the tribes of Israel, and not merely of the ten tribes of the northern kingdom, requires that the name Israel should be understood to denote the whole covenant people. That ver. 1 forms the transition from the genealogies to the enumeration of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and so is properly the conclusion of the genealogies in chap. ii.-viii., is so manifest that Bertheau cannot adduce a single tenable ground for his assertion to the contrary, that "the verse forms clearly quite a new beginning." For the assertion, "We recognise in it a short introduction to the historical statements regarding the tribe of Judah or the Israelites after the exile," cannot be adduced in support of his view, since it not only contradicts his former assertion that Israel here denotes the northern kingdom, but is also irreconcilable with the words of the verse.<sup>1</sup> The statement, "Judah was led captive to Babylon for her transgressions," corresponds to the statement chap. v. 25 f., 41. But when, after this statement, our writer continues, "And the former inhabitants which (lived) in their possessions in their cities were Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the Nethinim; and in Jerusalem there dwelt of the sons of Judah," etc., the "former inhabitants" can only be those who dwelt in their possessions before Judah was led captive into Babylon. This could hardly be misunderstood by any commentator, if the right interpretation of our passage were not obscured by the similarity of the register of the inhabitants of Jerusalem which follows to that contained in Neh xi.,—a similarity which has led some to believe that both registers treat of

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau's further remark, "Ver. 1 cannot have been written by our historian, because he did not consider it sufficient to refer his readers to the work he quotes from, but thought himself bound to communicate genealogical registers of the tribes of the northern kingdom (chap. v.-vii.), which he must have extracted from older registers prepared in the time of the kings (cf. v. 27), perhaps even out of the work here named," is quite incomprehensible by me. Notwithstanding repeated consideration of it clause by clause, I have not succeeded in comprehending the logic of this argument.

the post-exilic inhabitants of Jerusalem. Bertheau, *e.g.*, comes to the following decision as to the relation of our register, vers. 2-34, to that in Neh. xi. 3-24: "As the result of the comparison, we have found that both registers correspond exactly in their plan, and agree as to all the main points in their contents." The first point in this result has some foundation; for if we turn our attention only to the enumeration of chiefs dwelling in Jerusalem, then the registers in vers. 4-17 of our chapter and in Neh. xi. 3-19 are identical in plan. But if we consider the whole of the registers, as found in 1 Chron. ix. 2-34 and Neh. xi. 3-24, we see that they do differ in plan; for in ours, the enumeration of the inhabitants of Jerusalem is introduced by the remark, ver. 2, "The former inhabitants in their possessions in their cities, were Israel, the priests," etc., according to which the following words, ver. 3, "And in Jerusalem there dwelt of the sons of Judah," etc., can only be understood of the pre-exilic inhabitants. When Bertheau refers, in opposition to this, to Neh. v. 15, where the time between Zerubbabel and Ezra is called the time of the former governors (הַפְּחוֹת הָרָאשִׁים), with whom Nehemiah contrasts himself, the later governor, to prove that according to that the former inhabitants in our passage may very well denote the inhabitants of the land in the first century of the restored community, he forgets that the governors were changed within short periods, so that Nehemiah might readily call his predecessors in the office "former governors;" while the inhabitants of the cities of Judah, on the contrary, had not changed during the period from Zerubbabel to Ezra, so as to allow of earlier and later inhabitants being distinguished. From the fact that the inhabitants "of their cities" are not contrasted as the earlier, with the inhabitants of Jerusalem as the later, but that both are placed together in such a way as to exclude such a contrast, it is manifest that the conclusion drawn by Movers and Bertheau from Neh. xi. 1, that the "former inhabitants in their possessions in their cities" are those who dwelt in Jerusalem before it was peopled by the inhabitants of the surrounding district, is not tenable. In Neh. xi., on the contrary, the register is introduced by the remark, ver. 3, "These are the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem; and they dwelt in the cities of Judah, each in his possession in their cities, Israel, the priests," etc. This introduction, therefore, announces a register of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the other cities



of Judah, at that time, *i.e.* at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. To this corresponds the manner in which the register has been made out, as in vers. 3-24 the inhabitants of Jerusalem are enumerated, and in vers. 25-36 the inhabitants of the other cities. The register in our chapter, on the contrary, deals only with the inhabitants of Jerusalem (vers. 3-19*a*), while in vers. 19*b*-34 there follow remarks as to the duties devolving upon the Levites. No mention is made in the register of the inhabitants of other cities, or of Israelites, priests, and Levites, who dwelt in their cities outside of Jerusalem (ver. 2), because all that was necessary had been already communicated in the preceding genealogies (chap. ii.-viii.).—Ver. 3, too, is not, as Bertheau and others think, “the superscription of the register of those dwelling in Jerusalem;” for were it that, mention must have been made in it of the priests and Levites, the enumeration of whom fills up the greater part of the following register, vers. 10-33. Ver. 3 corresponds rather to ver. 35, and serves to introduce the contents of the whole chapter, and with it commences the enumeration itself. In Neh. xi., consequently, we have a register of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, while our chapter contains only a register of the former inhabitants of Jerusalem. Only in so far as it treats of the inhabitants of Jerusalem does Nehemiah’s register resemble ours in plan; that is, to this extent, that the sons of Judah, the sons of Benjamin, priests and Levites, are enumerated *seriatim* as dwelling in Jerusalem, that is, the heads of the fathers’-houses of these inhabitants, as is stated by Nehemiah in the superscription xi. 3, and in our chapter, at the end of the respective paragraphs, vers. 9, 13, and in the subscription, vers. 33 and 34.

But if we examine the contents of the two catalogues more minutely, their agreement is shown by the identity of several of the names of these heads. On this point Bertheau thus speaks: “Of the three heads of Judah, Uthai, Asaiah, and Jeuel, vers. 4-6, we recognise the first two in Athaiah and Maaseiah, Neh. xi. 4, 5; only the third name, Jeuel, is omitted. Of the five heads of Benjamin, vers. 5-7, it is true, we meet with only two, Sallu and Hodaviah, in Neh. xi. 7-9; but it is manifest that there was no intention to communicate in that place a complete enumeration of the hereditary chiefs of Benjamin. The names of the six heads of the divisions of the priests, Jedaiah and Jehoiarib, Jachin, Azariah (Seriah occupies his place in the book of Nehe-

miah), Adaiah and Maasiai (represented in Nehemiah by Amashai), are enumerated in both places in the same order. Among the Levites there occur the names of Shemaiah and Mattaniah as representatives of the great Levitic divisions of Merari and Gershon-Asaph, and we easily recognise our עֲבֵדֵיהָ in the עֲבָדָא of the book of Nehemiah. Only the two first of the four chiefs of the doorkeepers, Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, and Ahiman, are named in the abridged enumeration of the book of Nehemiah, while the two others are only referred to in the added וְאַחֵיהֶם." Now, even according to this statement of the matter, the difference is seen to be almost as great as the agreement; but in reality, as a more exact comparison of the catalogues shows, the true state of the case is very different. According to ver. 3, there dwelt in Jerusalem also sons of Ephraim and Manasseh; but the catalogue from ver. 4 onwards contains only sons of Judah and Benjamin, and not a single Ephraimite or Manassite. The reason of that is probably this, that only single families and individuals from among the latter dwelt there, while the register only makes mention of the heads of the larger family groups in the population of Jerusalem.—Vers. 4–6. In the same place there dwelt, of the sons of Judah, three chiefs of the three most important families of Judah, that of Pharez, that of Shelah, and that of Zerah; cf. ii. 3, 4. Of the family of Pharez was Uthai, whose descent is traced back in ver. 4 to Bani, of the children of Pharez. The Kethibh בְּנֵי-בָנִי is clearly to be read according to the Keri בְּנֵי-בָנִי. The name Bani occurs, vi. 31, among the Merarites; while in the genealogies of Judah, chap. ii.–iv., neither Bani nor Uthai, nor any one of his ancestors who are here named, is mentioned. In Neh. xi. 4, on the contrary, there is named of the sons of Pharez, Athaiah (אֶתְיָה), perhaps only another form of (עֵיתִי), with quite other ancestors; while not a single one of the five names of the persons through whom his race is traced back to Mahalaleel, of the sons of Pharez, coincides with the ancestors of Uthai.—Ver. 5. Of the family of Shelah, Asaiah the first-born, and his (other) sons. בְּנֵי, after הַבְּכוֹר, can only be understood of the other sons or descendants. But the epithet given to Asaiah, הַשִּׁילִי, is surprising, for it is a formation from שִׁילָה or שִׁילָן, and appears to denote a native of Shiloh, a well-known city of Ephraim. This derivation, however, is not suitable, since here the sons (descendants) of Judah are enumerated; and no connection between the inhabitants of Judah and the



Ephraimite city Shiloh can either be proved or is at all likely. The older commentators, therefore, have suggested the reading  $\text{הַשִּׁלֹּנִי}$ , as in Num. xxvi. 20, where the family of Shelah, the third son of Judah, is so called. This suggestion is doubtless correct, and the erroneous punctuation  $\text{הַשִּׁלֹּנִי}$  has probably arisen only from the *scriptio plena* of the word  $\text{שִׁלָּה}$  instead of  $\text{שִׁלָּה}$ . This supposition is confirmed by the fact that the form  $\text{הַשִּׁלֹּנִי}$  is found in Neh. xi. 5, although it also is pointed  $\text{הַשִּׁלֹּנִי}$ . In Neh. *loc. cit.*, instead of Asaiah, Maaseiah is introduced as  $\text{בֶּן-הַשִּׁלֹּנִי}$  in the seventh generation, while no ancestors whatever of our Asaiah are mentioned. The name  $\text{עֲשָׂיָה}$ , moreover, is not unfrequent, and occurs in iv. 36 among the Simeonites; in vi. 15, xv. 6, 11, among the Levites; in 2 Kings xxii. 12, 14 and 2 Chron. xxxiv. 20, as  $\text{עֲבָר}$  of the King Josiah.  $\text{מַעֲשִׂיָה}$  is the name of many persons, *e.g.* in xv. 18, 20, and likewise in 2 Chron. xxiii. 1, Jer. xxi. 1, xxix. 21, xxxv. 4; and elsewhere it is used of men of other tribes: so that even should Maaseiah have been written instead of Asaiah merely by an error of transcription, we are not warranted in identifying our Asaiah with the Maaseiah of Nehemiah.—Ver. 6. “Of the sons of Zerah, Jeuel;” also the name of various persons; cf. v. 7, 2 Chron. xxvi. 11: the register in Neh. xi. notices no descendants of Zerah. “And their brethren, 690 (men).” The plural suffix in  $\text{אֶחָיָהֶם}$  cannot be referred, as Bertheau thinks, to Jeuel, for that name, as being that of the head of a father’s-house, cannot be a collective. The suffix must consequently refer to the three heads mentioned in vers. 4-6, Uthai, Asaiah, and Jeuel, whose brethren are the other heads of fathers’-houses of the three families descended from Judah; cf. ver. 9, where the number of the  $\text{אֶחָיָהֶם}$  mentioned refers to all the heads who had formerly been spoken of.—Vers. 7-9. Of the sons of Benjamin, *i.e.* of the Benjamites, four heads are named, Sallu, Ibneiah, Elah, and Meshullam; and of the first and fourth of these, three generations of ancestors are mentioned, of the second only the father, of the third the father and grandfather. “And their brethren according to their generations, 956;” cf. on ver. 6. “All these men” are not the brethren whose number is given, but the heads who have been mentioned by name. Now, if we compare this with Neh. xi., we meet in vers. 7-9 with only one of the four heads of Benjamin, Sallu, and that too, as in the Chronicle, as a son of Meshullam, while the ancestors of both are different. Instead of the three others in ver. 8, we have  $\text{נָבִי סָלִי}$ , 928; and in

ver. 9, Joel as overseer (prefect), and Jehudah as ruler over the city.

Vers. 10-13. *The priests.*—The three names Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, and Jachin (ver. 10) denote three classes of priests (cf. xxiv. 7, 17), who accordingly dwelt in Jerusalem. There also dwelt there (ver. 11) Azariah the son of Hilkiah, etc., the prince of the house of God; cf. 2 Chron. xxxi. 13. This is the Azariah mentioned in chap. v. 40, the son of Hilkiah, etc., the grandfather of the Jehozadak who was led captive into Babylon. Then in ver. 12 we have two other heads of the priestly fathers'-houses, with an enumeration of their ancestors, through whom they are traced back to the classes of priests to which they belonged respectively, viz. Adaiah to the class Malchijah (1 Chron. xxiv. 9), and Maasiai to the class Immer (1 Chron. xxiv. 14). According to this, therefore, there dwelt at Jerusalem, of the priesthood, the three classes Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, and Jachin, Azariah the prince of the temple, and of the classes Malchijah and Immer, the fathers'-houses Adaiah and Maasiai. In ver. 13 the whole number is estimated at 1760. A difficulty is raised by the first words of this verse, "And their brethren, heads of their fathers'-houses, 1760," which can hardly be taken in any other sense than as denoting that the number of the heads of the fathers'-houses amounted to 1760. This, however, is not conceivable, as "fathers'-houses" are not single households, but larger groups of related families. Moreover, אֲחֵיהֶם, which is co-ordinate with the heads of the fathers'-houses, can only denote, as in vers. 6, 9, the heads of the families which belonged to or constituted the fathers'-houses. To arrive at this meaning, however, we must transpose the words רָאשִׁים לְבֵית־אֲבוֹתָם and וְאֲחֵיהֶם, connecting ר' with ver. 12, and אֲחֵיהֶם with the number, thus: heads of fathers'-houses, etc., were those mentioned in ver. 12, and their brethren 1760 (men), valiant heroes in the work of the service of the house of God. Before מְלָאכָה one would expect the word עָשִׂי, as in 1 Chron. xxiii. 24 and Neh. xi. 12, but its presence is not so absolutely necessary as to warrant us in supposing that it has been dropped out, and in inserting it. מְלָאכָה may be also taken as an accusative of relation, "valiant heroes in reference to the work;" or at most a ל may be supplied before מְלָאכָה, as it might easily have been omitted by a clerical error after the immediately preceding הָיָה. On comparing our passage with Neh. xi. 10-14, we find there, if בְּיָדֵינוּ in ver. 10 be altered into יְהוֹדֵינוּ, the same three



classes of priests; but instead of Azariah, Seraiah is prince of the house of God, ver. 11: thereafter we have 822 brethren, performing the work of the house (of God). Then follows Adaiah of the class Malchijah (as in the Chronicles), but with the addition, "his brethren 242;" and then Amashai of the class Immer, but with other ancestors than those of the Maasiai of the Chronicles, and with the addition, "and their brethren, valiant heroes, 128;" and finally, Zabdiel Ben Hagdolim as overseer (president over them). The sum of the three numbers is 1192, as contrasted with the 1760 of the Chronicle.

Vers. 14-17. *The Levites*.—Of these there dwelt in Jerusalem, Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of, etc., a Merarite; and (ver. 15) Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal; and Mattaniah the son of Micah, a descendant of Asaph, and consequently a Gershonite (ver. 16); and Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, a descendant of Jeduthun, consequently also a Merarite; and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, who dwelt in the villages of the Netophathite, *i.e.* of the lord or possessor of Netopha, a locality in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem; cf. Neh. vii. 26. This remark does not refer to Shemaiah, who cannot have dwelt at the same time in Jerusalem and in the village of the Netophathite, but to his grandfather or ancestor Elkanah, who is thereby to be distinguished from the other men who bore this name, which often occurs in the family of Kohath. All these men are, according to the analogy of the other names in our register, and according to the express statement of the superscription, ver. 34, to be regarded as heads of Levitic fathers'-houses, and were probably leaders of the music, since those mentioned in vers. 15, 16 were descendants of Asaph and Jeduthun, and may therefore with certainty be assumed to have belonged to the Levitic musicians. A confirmation of this supposition is found in the superscription, ver. 33, inasmuch as the mention of the singers in the first line goes to show that the enumeration of the Levites began with the singers. If we compare Neh. xi. 15-18 with our passage, we find that these two, Shemaiah and Mattaniah, are mentioned, and on the whole their forefathers have the same names, vers. 15 and 17; but between the two we find Shabbethai and Jozabad of the chief of the Levites set over the external service of the house of God. After Mattaniah, who is chief of the Asaphites there also, mention is made of Bakbukiah as the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, a descendant of Jeduthun (ver.

17); according to which, even if we identify Bakkakkar with Bakkukiah, and Abda with Obadiah, the Heresh, Galal, and Berechiah of the Chronicles are wanting in Nehemiah, and instead of these three, only Jozabad is mentioned.—Ver 17. “The doorkeepers, Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum the chief.” The service was so divided among the four just named, that each along with his brethren performed the duty of watching by one of the four sides and chief entrances of the temple (cf. vers. 24 and 26), and these four were consequently heads of those divisions of the Levites to whom was committed the duty of the watch. In Neh. xi. 20, on the contrary, the doorkeepers mentioned are Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren, 172 (men); but the other two chiefs named in the Chronicle are there omitted, while in the Chronicle no number is given. Here the agreement between the two registers ceases. In the Chronicle there follows first of all, in vers. 18–26*a*, some remarks on the service of the doorkeepers; and then in 26*b*–32 the duties of the Levites in general are spoken of; and finally, in vers. 32 and 34 we have subscriptions. In Nehemiah, on the other hand, we find in ver. 20 the statement that the remaining Israelites, priests, and Levites dwelt in their cities; and after some statements as to the service of the Levites, the enumeration of these cities is introduced.

In glancing back over the two catalogues, it is seen that the differences are at least as great as the coincidences. But what conclusions are we to deduce from that fact? Bertheau thinks “from this it is certain that both catalogues cannot have been drawn up independently of each other,” and “that both have been derived from one and the same source, which must have been much more complete, and much richer in names, than our present catalogues; cf. Movers, S. 234.” We, however, judge otherwise. The discrepancies are much too great to allow us to refer them to free handling by epitomizers of some hypothetical more detailed catalogue, or to the negligence of copyists. The coincidence, in so far as it actually exists, does not justify us in accepting such far-fetched suppositions, but may be satisfactorily explained in another way. It consists indeed only in this, that in both registers, (1) sons of Judah and Benjamin, priests and Levites, are enumerated; (2) that in each of these four classes of the inhabitants of Jerusalem some names are identical. The first of these coincidences clearly does not in



the least prove that the two catalogues are derived from the same source, and treat of the same time ; for the four classes enumerated constituted, both before and after the exile, the population of Jerusalem. But neither does the identity of some of the names prove in the slightest degree the identity of the two catalogues, because the names denote, partly classes of inhabitants, and partly heads of fathers'-houses, *i.e.* of groups of related households, which did not change with each generation, but sometimes continued to exist for centuries ; and because, *à priori*, we should expect that those who returned from exile would, as far as it was possible, seek out again the dwelling-places of their pre-exilic ancestors ; and that consequently after the exile, on the whole, the same families who had dwelt at Jerusalem before it would again take up their abode there. In this way the identity of the names Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, and Jachin in the two catalogues may be accounted for, as these names do not denote persons, but classes of priests, which existed both before and after the exile. A similar explanation would also apply to the names of the doorkeepers Akkub and Talmon (ver. 17 ; Neh. ver. 19), as not merely the priests, but also the other Levites, were divided for the service according to their fathers'-houses into classes which had permanent names (cf. chap. xxv. and xxvi.). Of the other names in our register only the following are identical : of the Benjamites, Sallu the son of Meshullam (ver. 7 ; Neh. ver. 7) ; of the priests, Adaiah (ver. 12 ; Neh. ver. 12), with almost the same ancestors ; and of the Levites, Shemaiah and Mattaniah (ver. 10 f. ; Neh. vers. 15, 17). All the other names are different ; and even if among the priests Maasiai (ver. 12) should be identical with Amashai (Neh. ver. 13), and among the Levites Bakbakkar and Obadiah (vers. 16 and 15) with Bakbukiah and Abda (Neh. ver. 17), we cannot identify the sons of Judah, Uthai and Azaiah (ver. 4 f.), with Athaiah and Maaseiah (Neh. ver. 4 f.), for their ancestors are quite different. The similarity or even the identity of names, were it in two or three generations, cannot of itself prove the identity of the persons, as we have already seen, in the genealogy of the line of Aaron (v. 29 ff.), that, *e.g.*, the series Amariah, Ahitub, and Zadok recurs at various times ; cf. ver. 33 f. and ver. 37 f. Everywhere in the genealogical lines the same names very often recur, as it was the custom to give the children the names of their ancestors ; cf. Tob. i. 9, Luke i. 59. Win. *bibl. R. W.* ii. S. 133 :

Hävern. *Einl.* ii. 1, S. 179 f. But if, on the one hand, the identity of these names in the two catalogues is not at all a valid proof of the identity of the catalogues, and by no means justifies us in identifying similarly-sounding names by supposing errors of transcription, on the other hand we must hold that the register refers to the pre-exilic population of Jerusalem, both because of the wide discrepancies in all points, and in accordance with the introductory statements in ver. 2 f. This interpretation is also demanded by the succeeding remarks in reference to the service of the Levites, since they throughout refer to the pre-exilic time.

Vers. 18–34. *The duties of the Levites.*—Ver. 18. The first half of this verse, “And until now (is he) in the king’s gate eastward,” must be referred to Shallum (Berth.). To imagine a reference to all the doorkeepers, “until now are they,” does not suit vers. 24–26, according to which the doorkeepers kept guard upon all the four sides. The eastern gate of the temple was called the king’s gate, because by this gate the king went in and out to the temple; cf. Ezek. xlvi. 1, 2, xli. 3. The remark, “until now is Shallum watcher,” etc., presupposes the existence of the temple at the time of the preparation of this register, and points to the pre-exilic time. Against this Bertheau has raised the objection that the name king’s gate may have been retained even in the post-exilic times for the eastern gate. This must of course be in general admitted, but could only be accepted if it were proved that Shallum lived after the exile. This proof Bertheau obtains by taking the words, “until now is Shallum in the king’s gate,” to mean, “that, according to the ancient arrangement, Shallum, the chief of all the doorkeepers, had still to guard the eastern entrance; according to which Shallum would be the collective designation of the whole series of the chiefs of the doorkeepers who lived from David’s time till after the exile;” but the words cannot be thus interpreted. Such an interpretation cannot be made plausible by identifying the name Shallum with Meshelemiah or Shelemiah, to whose lot it fell in the time of David to be doorkeeper to the eastward (xxvi. 1, 14); for in doing so, we would overlook the fact that in ver. 21 of our chapter also he bears the name Meshelemiah. The circumstance that both Shallum and Meshelemiah are called Ben-Kore, of the sons of Abiasaph, by no means justifies the identification of these two quite different names; for it is neither necessary nor



probable that כֹּרֶה should here be taken in its narrower sense, and Kore regarded as the immediate father of both. The name כֹּרֶה is repeated in the family of the east doorkeepers, as we learn from 2 Chron. xxxi. 14, where it is stated that this office was held by a Kore ben Jimna. "These (who are named in ver. 17) are the doorkeepers for the camp of the sons of Levi" (of the Levites),—an antiquated expression, bringing to remembrance the time of Moses, when the Levites, on the journey through the wilderness, were encamped about the tabernacle (Num. iii. 21 ff.).—Ver. 19 gives more exact information as to Shallum's person and his official position. He, the descendant of Kore, the son (descendant) of Abiasaph, a Korahite, and his brethren according to his father's-house (*i.e.* called brethren because they, like him, belonged to the father's-house of Korah), were over the work of the service, viz. keepers of the thresholds of the tent, *i.e.* of the house of God, of the temple, which, according to the ancient custom, was called tent, because God's house was formerly a tent—the tabernacle. "And his fathers (the ancestors of Shallum) were by the encampment of Jahve, guardians of the entrance." With these words the author of this register goes back into the ancient time; and we learn that Shallum's ancestors, of the father's-house of the Korahite Abiasaph, had held the office of guardian of the entrance to the house of God from the time of the conquest of Canaan and the setting up of the tabernacle in Shiloh. The remark in ver. 20, that Phinehas the son of Eleazar was prince over them in time past, points to the same period. In the book of Joshua and the older books there is no record of the matter; but since the Korahites were descended through Ishhar from Kohath, and the Kohathites held, according to Num. iv. 4 ff., the first place among the servants of the holy place, and were responsible for the holiest vessels, we cannot doubt that the statement here rests upon accurate historical tradition. The "encampment of Jahve" is the holy place of the tabernacle, the dwelling of Jahve in the midst of His people. This designation also is derived from the circumstances of the Israelites in their wandering in the Arabian desert, and is likewise employed in 2 Chron. xxxi. 2 in reference to Solomon's temple; but in our verse the tabernacle is intended. It had only one entrance, מִכְוָּז, the guarding of which was entrusted to the above-mentioned Korahites.—Ver. 20. Phinehas was prince over them, not as high priest, but during the high-

priesthood of his father Eleazar, *i.e.* in the time of Joshua, just as Eleazar, under the high-priesthood of Aaron in the time of Moses, had the oversight of the keepers of the holy place, as prince of the princes of Levi (Num. iii. 32). The words יהוה עִמּוֹ do not contain a historical remark, "Jahve was with him," for then the conjunction ו would stand before it, as in xi. 9; they are a blessing—"Jahve be with him"—in reference, probably, to the covenant of peace entered into with him and his descendants by Jahve (Num. xxv. 11-13).—Ver. 21 is quite unconnected with the preceding context, the conjunction ו being omitted, and its contents also present considerable difficulties. Zechariah, the son of Meshelemiah, can only be the Zechariah who is mentioned in xxvi. 2 as the first-born of Meshelemiah, and who lived in the time of David; for at the time when David divided the porters into classes, there fell to him the lot towards midnight, *i.e.* the duty of waiting at the door on the north side of the holy place (xxvi. 14). With this, indeed, the general statement of our verse, "he was porter of the door (or the entrance) of the tent of the covenant," is not inconsistent. But what purpose does this general statement serve? With what design is Zechariah, and he alone, mentioned? We have no means of giving a definite answer to this question; but he may perhaps be named as being the person who, before David's division of the Levites into classes was carried out, had charge of the porters' service in the tabernacle. But even if this conjecture be accepted as well grounded, the abrupt way in which it is mentioned still remains enigmatical.

With ver. 22 the narrative seems to return to the enumeration begun in vers. 17-19*a*, so that the reflections on the earlier times, vers. 19*b*-21, are to be regarded as a parenthesis. Ver. 22 runs: "They all who were chosen for doorkeepers for the thresholds, 212 (men): they, in their villages were they registered; they were ordained by David and Samuel the seer on their fidelity." The infinitive הִתְּחַשׁ is used substantively, "in reference to them, in their villages was their genealogical registration accomplished." If ver. 22 be the continuation of vers. 17-21*a*, then the number given (212) will refer to the doorkeepers in active service at the time of the preparation of the register. With this hypothesis, however, the last clause of the verse, which states that David and Samuel had appointed them, does not seem to harmonize. But if we consider that the four men



mentioned in ver. 17 are heads of fathers'-houses, and that their fathers'-houses were not extinguished at the death of their temporary heads, and performed the same service from generation to generation, it might well be said of the generation performing the service at the time of the preparation of our register, that David had appointed them to their office. The case would of course be similar, if, as we have above supposed, the four names in ver. 17 are designations of the classes of doorkeepers, for these classes also performed the same service continually. The statements of our 22d verse cannot be referred to the time of David, for in chap. xxvi. 8–10 the number of the doorkeepers appointed by David amounted only to eighty, viz. sixty-two of the sons of Obed-Edom, and eighteen of the sons of Meshelemiah, which, with the addition of thirteen Merarites (xxvi. 10, 11), gives a total of ninety-three, while in our verse the number is 212. According to Ezra ii. 42, the number of doorkeepers who returned with Zerubbabel was 139 men; and in the register, Neh. xi. 19, the number is stated to be 172. From the remark that they were registered in their villages (הַצִּירִיָּהִם, as in vi. 41, Josh. xiii. 23, and elsewhere), we learn that the doorkeepers dwelt in villages near Jerusalem, whence they came to the city so often as their service required, as the singers also did in the post-exilic time, Neh. xii. 29 f. יָסַר, to found, set, ordain, and so appoint to an office. “David and Samuel the seer:” הַרְאָה, the ancient designation of the prophets, for which at a later time נָבִיָּא was the more usual word; cf. 1 Sam. ix. 9. Nowhere else do we find any record of Samuel’s having taken any part in David’s arrangement of the service of the Levites in the holy place. Samuel, moreover, was no longer living when David began to arrange the worship at the time when the ark was brought to Jerusalem, for he died before Saul, and consequently before the beginning of David’s reign; cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 1 with xxviii. 3. Bertheau is consequently of opinion that this statement of our historian rests merely upon the general recollection, according to which the worship was organized afresh, and established in its newer form, in the time of David and Samuel. This is of course possible, but there is no cogent reason against accepting the much less remote supposition that the chronicler took this remark from his authority. The mention of Samuel after David has not a chronological signification, but David is named first on account of his connection with the matter in

hand; for the thorough re-organization of the worship, and the classification of the persons engaged in carrying it on, originated with David. For these arrangements of David, however, Samuel had prepared the way in his struggle for the restoration of the theocracy, and of the worship which had fallen into desuetude under Eli and his profligate sons. To do this in any measure, he must have, without doubt, ordained trustworthy men to the individual offices, and thus have prepared the way for King David. **בְּאֵמוּנָתָם** is found in vers. 26, 31 without the suffix, with the meaning "in good faith" (cf. 2 Kings xii. 16, xxii. 7, 2 Chron. xxxi. 12), and accordingly is here upon their fidelity, *i.e.* because they had been recognised to be faithful.—Ver. 23 f. They (those ordained by David) and their sons (descendants) were at the doors of the house of Jahve—of the tent-house (**בֵּית הָאֹהֶל**) is added to **בֵּית־יהוה**, in order that the latter might not be confined to Solomon's temple); for the watch (**מִשְׁמֶרוֹת**) of persons, as in Neh. xii. 9, iv. 3, 16), according to the four winds (quarters) were they, *i.e.* the doorkeepers stood so, in accordance with the arrangement made by David; cf. xxvi. 14 ff.—Ver. 25. "And their brethren in their villages (cf. ver. 22) were bound to come the seventh day, from time to time, with these." The infinitive **בּוֹא** with **לְ** expresses duty, as in v. 1. The seventh day is the Sabbath of the week, on which each class in order had to take charge of the services. **עַם אֱלֹהֵי** are the chiefs mentioned in ver. 17 who dwelt in Jerusalem, and of whom it is said in ver. 26, "for they are on their fidelity, the four mighty of the doorkeepers." In explanation of the **גִּבּוֹרֵי**, Bertheau very fittingly compares *στρατηγοὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ*, Luke xxii. 52. The words **הֵם הַלְוִיִּם**, which may be translated, "they are the Levites," or "they (*viz.* the Levites)," are somewhat surprising. The Masoretic punctuation demands the latter translation, when the words would be an emphatic elucidation of the preceding **הַמָּה**. Were they a subscription, we should expect **אֵלֶּה** instead of **הֵם**; while, on the other hand, the circumstance noticed by Bertheau, that in the following verses the duties not merely of the doorkeepers, but of the Levites in general, are enumerated, would seem to favour that sense. Even in the second half of the 22d verse it is not the doorkeepers who are spoken of, but the Levites in general. May we not suppose that the text originally stood **וּמִן הַלְוִיִּם הָיוּ** (cf. ver. 14) instead of **וְהֵם הַלְוִיִּם וְהָיוּ**, and that the reading of our present text, having originated in a transcriber's error, found



acceptance from the circumstance that ver. 27 apparently still treats of, or returns to, the service of the doorkeepers? So much is certain, that from ver. 26b onward the duties of the Levites in general, no longer those of the doorkeepers, are spoken of, and that consequently we must regard the Levites (הַלְוִיִּים), and not the before-mentioned four doorkeepers, as the subject of וְהָיוּ: "and the Levites were over the cells of the storehouses of the house of God." The cells in the outbuildings of the temple served as treasure-chambers and storehouses for the temple furniture. הָאוֹצְרוֹת with the article in the *stat. constr.* (Ew. § 290, *d*), because of the looser connection, since the genitive בֵּית-הָאֵל also belongs to הַלְשָׁבוֹת. — Ver. 27 refers again to the doorkeepers. They passed the night around the house of God, because the care of or watch over it was committed to them, and "they were over the key, and that every morning," *i.e.* they had to open the door every morning. מִפְתָּח occurs again in Judg. iii. 25 and Isa. xxii. 22, in the signification key, which is suitable here also.—Ver. 28. And of them (the Levites), some were over the vessels of the service, by which we are probably to understand the costly vessels, *e.g.* the golden cups for the libations, etc., which were brought from the treasure-chamber only for a short time for use in the service. They were brought, according to the number, into the place where the service took place, and after being again numbered, were again carried forth; and according to ver. 29, other Levites were set over הַכֵּלִים and over כְּלֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ.—Ver. 29. And of them, others were set over the vessels (in general), and over all the holy vessels which were used for the daily sacrificial service, and over the fine flour (סֹלֶת, *vide* on Lev. ii. 1), wine, oil, and incense which was required therein for the meat and drink offerings, and the בְּשָׂמִים, spicery, for the holy perfumes (frankincense, cf. Ex. xxv. 6).—Ver. 30. And of the priests' sons were preparers of the ointments for the spices. It is the preparation from various spices of the holy anointing oil, Ex. xxx. 23-25, which is meant, and which consequently was part of the priest's duty.—Ver. 31. Mattithiah, the first-born of the Korahite Shallum (*vide* ver. 19), was on good faith over the panbakings (pastry) for the meat-offerings, over the preparation of which he was to watch. To the name Mattithiah מַתִּיתִיָּה is added, in contrast to the מַדְבִּנִּי in ver. 30. The word הַחֲבֻתִּים (pastry, panbaking) occurs here only; cf. מַחֲבֹת, pan of sheet iron, Ex. iv. 3.—Ver. 32.

Finally, to some of the Kohathites was committed the preparation of the shew-bread, which required to be laid on the table fresh every Sabbath; cf. Lev. xxiv. 5-8. The suffix **אַחֵיהֶם** refers back to the Levites of the father's-house of Korah in ver. 32.—Vers. 33, 34 contain subscriptions to the section 14-32. Since the enumeration of the Levites dwelling in Jerusalem in vers. 14-16 began with the Levitic singer families, so here we find that the singers are mentioned in the first subscription, "these are the singers, heads of fathers'-houses of the Levites," with an additional remark as to their service: "In the cells free, for day and night it is incumbent upon them to be in service," which is somewhat obscure. **פְּטוּרִים**, from **פָּטַר**, in later Hebrew, let loose, set free. Rashi and Kimchi have already translated it, *immunes ab aliis nempe ministeriis*, or *ab omni alio officio*. Adopting this linguistically assured translation, we must supply with **בְּלִשְׁכָּת**, dwelling or waiting in the cells of the courts of the temple, freed from every other business in order that they may apply themselves wholly to their service, for they are wholly busied therewith day and night. Day and night is not to be pressed, but signifies perpetually, continually. Bertheau translates **עֲלֵיהֶם** **בְּמִלְאָכָה**, "they were over them in the service," i.e. had to take the oversight of the singers subordinate to them. But this can hardly be correct; and the passage quoted to justify this translation, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12, proves nothing, because there **מִפְקָד** is used along with it. We therefore prefer to take **עֲלֵיהֶם** in the signification "it is incumbent upon them," although we should then expect **הַמִּלְאָכָה** instead of **בְּמִלְאָכָה**; cf. ver. 27. Yet **בְּמִלְאָכָה** can in this connection quite well be used elliptically or concisely for "to be in service," i.e. to carry on their musical duties. The second subscription (ver. 34) refers to all the Levites, and is similar in contents and form to that in chap. viii. 28.

Vers. 35-44. *The family of King Saul*.—This register has already occurred in chap. viii. 29-38, along with those of other families of the tribe of Benjamin, and is repeated here only to connect the following history of the kingship with the preceding genealogical lists. It forms here the introduction to the narrative of Saul's death in chap. x., which in turn forms the transition to the kingship of David. The deviations of this register from that in chap. viii. 29-38, show that it has been derived from another document in more complete preservation than that in chap. viii., which had been handed down in connection with other genealogies of the



Benjamite families, and had suffered considerably in its text. See the commentary on viii. 29-38.

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## II.—THE HISTORY OF DAVID'S KINGSHIP.—CHAP. X.-XXIX.

The account of the ruin of Saul and his house in chap. x., cf. 1 Sam. xxxi., forms the introduction to the history of the kingship of David, which is narrated in two sections. In the first, chap. xi.-xxi., we have a consecutive narrative of the most important events of David's life, and his attempts to settle the kingship of Israel on a firmer basis, from the time of his being anointed king over all Israel to the numbering of the people in the latter years of his reign. The second, chap. xxii.-xxix., contains an account of the preparations made towards the end of his reign for the building of the temple, of the arrangement of the service of the Levites and the army, and the last commands of the grey-haired king as to the succession of his son Solomon to the kingdom, and matters connected with it. The first section runs parallel to the account of the reign of David in 2d Samuel; the second is peculiar to the Chronicle, and has no parallel in the earlier historical books, Samuel and Kings. Now, if we compare the first section with the parallel narrative in 2d Samuel, it is manifest that, apart from that omission of David's seven years' reign over the tribe of Judah in Hebron, and of all the events having reference to and connection with his family relationships, of which we have already spoken in p. 12, in the Chronicle the same incidents are recounted as in the second book of Samuel, and with few exceptions the order is the same. The main alterations in the order of the narrative are: (*a*) that the catalogues of David's heroes who helped him to establish his kingdom (xi. 10-47), and of the valiant men of all the tribes, who even in Saul's lifetime had joined themselves to David (chap. xii.), follow immediately upon the account of the choosing of Jerusalem to be the capital of the kingdom, after the conquest of the fortress Jebus (xi. 1-9), while in 2d Samuel the former of these catalogues is found in chap. xxiii. 8-39, in connection with the history of his reign, and the latter is entirely omitted; and (*b*) the account of his palace-building, his wives and children, and of some battles with the Philistines, which in 2 Sam. v. 11-25 follows immediately after the account of the conquest of the citadel of Zion, is inserted

in the fourteenth chapter of Chronicles, in the account of the bringing of the ark of the covenant from Kirjath-jearim (chap. xiii.), and its transfer to Jerusalem (chap. xv. f.). Both these transpositions and the before-mentioned omissions are connected with the peculiar plan of the Chronicle. In the second book of Samuel the reign of David is so described as to bring out, in the first place, the splendidly victorious development of his kingship, and then its humiliation through great transgression on David's part; the author of the Chronicle, on the other hand, designed to portray to his contemporaries the glories of the Davidic kingship, so that the divine election of David to be ruler over the people of Israel might be manifest. In accordance with this purpose he shows, firstly, how after the death of Saul Jahve bestowed the kingship upon David, all Israel coming to Hebron and anointing him king, with the confession, "Jahve thy God hath said to thee, Thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel;" how the heroes of the whole nation helped him in the establishing of his kingdom (chap. xi.); and how, even before the death of Saul, the most valiant men of all the tribes had gone over to him, and had helped him in the struggle (chap. xii.). In the second place, he narrates how David immediately determined to bring the ark into the capital of his kingdom (chap. xv.); how, notwithstanding the misfortunes caused by a transgression of the law (chap. xiii. 7, 9 ff.), so soon as he had learned that the ark would bring a blessing (chap. xiii. xiv.), and that God would bless him in his reign (chap. xiv.), he carried out his purpose, and not only brought the ark to Jerusalem, but organized the public worship around this sanctuary (chap. xv. and xvi.); and how he formed a resolution to build a temple to the Lord, receiving from God, because of this, a promise that his kingdom should endure for ever (chap. xvii.). Then, in the third place, we have an account of how he, so favoured by the Lord, extended the power of his kingdom by victorious wars over all the enemies of Israel (chap. xviii.—xx.); and how even the ungodly enterprise of the numbering of the people, to which Satan had tempted him, David, had by the grace of God, and through his penitent submission to the will of the Lord, such an issue, that the place where the Lord should be thereafter worshipped in Israel was determined by the appearance of the angel and by the word of the prophet Gad (chap. xxi.). And so the grey-haired king was able to spend the latter part of his reign in making preparations for the building of the temple, and in



establishing permanent ordinances for the public worship, and the protection of the kingdom: gave over to his son Solomon, his divinely chosen successor on the throne, a kingdom externally and internally well ordered and firmly established, and closed his life at a good old age, after a reign of forty years (cf. 1 Sam. xxii.-xxix.).

CHAP. X.—THE RUIN OF SAUL AND OF HIS HOUSE.

(CF. 1 SAM. CHAP. XXXI.)

The account of Saul's struggle with the Philistines, in which he fell together with his sons, vers. 1-7, exactly coincides with the narrative in 1 Sam. xxxi. 1-7; and the statements as to the fate of the fallen king, vers. 8-12, differ from 1 Sam. xxxi. 8-13 only to this extent, that both narratives make mention only of the main points, and mutually supplement each other. In vers. 13 and 14 there follow reflections on the ruin of the unfortunate king, which show that the account of the death of Saul is only intended to form an introduction to the history of David.

Vers. 1-7. In 1 Sam. xxxi. this narrative forms the conclusion of Saul's last war with the Philistines. The battle was fought in the plain of Jezreel; and when the Israelites were compelled to retire, they fell back upon Mount Gilboa, but were hard pressed by the Philistines, so that many fell upon the mountain. The Philistines pressed furiously after Saul and his sons, and slew the latter (as to Saul's sons, see on viii. 33); and when the archers came upon Saul he trembled before them (יָהָל from יָלַח), and ordered his armour-bearer to thrust him through. Between הַמִּוֹרִים and בְּקֶשֶׁת the superfluous אֲנָשִׁים is introduced in Samuel, and in the last clause מֵאֵד is omitted; and instead of מִן־הַמִּוֹרִים we have the unusual form מִן־הַיּוֹרִים (cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 23). In Saul's request to his armour-bearer that he would thrust him through with the sword, וְדָקְקָנִי (1 Sam. ver. 4) is omitted in the phrase which gives the reason for his request; and Bertheau thinks it did not originally stand in the text, and has been repeated merely by an oversight, since the only motive for the command, "Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith," was that the Philistines might not insult Saul when alive, and consequently the words, "that they may not thrust me through," cannot express the reason. But that is scarcely a conclusive reason for this belief; for although the Philistines might seek out Saul after he had been slain by his armour-bearer, and dishonour his dead body, yet the anxiety lest

they should seek out his corpse to wreak their vengeance upon it could not press so heavily upon him as the fear that they would take vengeance upon him if he fell alive into their hands. It is therefore a more probable supposition that the author of the Chronicle has omitted the word **וְדָקְרָנִי** only as not being necessary to the sense of the passage, just as **עָמוֹ** is omitted at the end of ver. 5. In ver. 6 we have **וְכָל-בֵּיתוֹ** instead of the **כָּל-אֲנָשָׁיו** of Samuel, and in ver. 7 **אֲנָשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל** is omitted after the words **בִּי נָסִי** (Samuel). From this Bertheau concludes that the author of the Chronicle has designedly avoided speaking of the men of Saul's army or of the Israelites who took part in the battle, because it was not his purpose to describe the whole course of the conflict, but only to narrate the death of Saul and of his sons, in order to point out how the supreme power came to David. Thenius, on the contrary, deduces the variation between the sixth verse of the Chronicles and the corresponding verse in Samuel from "a text which had become illegible." Both are incorrect; for **כָּל-אֲנָשָׁיו** are not all the men of war who went with him into the battle (Then.), or all the Israelites who took part in the battle (Berth.), but only all those who were about the king, *i.e.* the whole of the king's attendants who had followed him to the war. **כָּל-בֵּיתוֹ** is only another expression for **כָּל-אֲנָשָׁיו**, in which the **נָסִי** is included. The author of the Chronicle has merely abridged the account, confining himself to a statement of the main points, and has consequently both omitted **אֲנָשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל** in ver. 7, because he had already spoken of the flight of the warriors of Israel in ver. 1, and it was here sufficient to mention only the flight and death of Saul and of his sons, and has also shortened the more exact statement as to the inhabitants of that district, "those on the other side of the valley and on the other side of Jordan" (Samuel), into **אֲשֶׁר בְּעֶמֶק**. In this abridgment also Thenius scents a "defective text." As the inhabitants of the district around Gilboa abandoned their cities, they were taken possession of by the Philistines.

Vers. 8–13. On the following day the Philistines, in their search among the fallen, found and plundered the bodies of Saul and of his sons, and sent the head and the armour of Saul round about the land of the Philistines, to proclaim the news of their victory to their people and their gods. That for this purpose they cut off Saul's head from the trunk, is, as being a matter of course, not specially mentioned. In regard to the other dis-



crepancies between the two texts, both in vers. 8-10 and in the account of the burial of Saul and of his sons by valiant men of Jabesh, vers. 11, 12, cf. the commentary on 1 Sam. xxxi. 8-13. In the reflection on Saul's death, vers. 13 and 14, a double transgression against the Lord on Saul's part is mentioned: first, the *נִעַל* (on the meaning of this word, *vide* on Lev. v. 15) of not observing the word of Jahve, which refers to the transgression of the divine command made known to him by the prophet Samuel, 1 Sam. xiii. 8 ff. (cf. with x. 8), and xv. 2, 3, 11, cf. xxviii. 18; and second, his inquiring of the *אֹנִי*, the summoner of the dead (*vide* on Lev. xix. 31), *לְדַרֹּשׁ*, *i.e.* to receive an oracle (cf. in reference to both word and thing, 1 Sam. xxviii. 7).—Ver. 14. And because he inquired not of the Lord, therefore He slew him. According to 1 Sam. xxviii. 6, Saul did indeed inquire of Jahve, but received no answer, because Jahve had departed from him (xxviii. 15); but instead of seeking with all earnestness for the grace of Jahve, that he might receive an answer, Saul turned to the sorceress of Endor, and received his death-sentence through her from the mouth of Samuel, 1 Sam. xxviii. 19.

CHAP. XI.—THE ANOINTING OF DAVID TO BE KING IN HEBRON,  
AND THE CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM. A LIST OF DAVID'S  
HEROES.

In the second book of Samuel there are passages parallel to both sections of this chapter; vers. 1-9 corresponding to the narrative in 2 Sam. v. 1-10, and vers. 10-47 to the register in 2 Sam. xxiii. 8-39.

Vers. 1-3. *The anointing of David to be king over the whole of Israel in Hebron*; cf. 2 Sam. v. 1-3.—After Saul's death, in obedience to a divine intimation, David left Ziklag, whither he had withdrawn himself before the decisive battle between the Philistines and the Israelites, and betook himself with his wives and his warriors to Hebron, and was there anointed by the men of Judah to be king over their tribe (2 Sam. ii. 1-4). But Abner, the captain of Saul's host, led Ishbosheth, Saul's son, with the remainder of the defeated army of the Israelites, to Mahanaim in Gilead, and there made him king over Gilead, and gradually also, as he reconquered it from the Philistines, over the land of Israel, over Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and all (the remainder of) Israel, with the exception of the tribal domain of Judah. Ishbosheth's

kingship did not last longer than two years, while David reigned over Judah in Hebron for seven years and a half (2 Sam. ii. 10 and 11). When Abner advanced with Ishbosheth's army from Mahanaim against Gibeon, he was defeated by Joab, David's captain, so that he was obliged again to withdraw beyond Jordan (2 Sam. ii. 12-32); and although the struggle between the house of Saul and the house of David still continued, yet the house of Saul waxed ever weaker, while David's power increased. At length, when Ishbosheth reproached the powerful Abner because of a concubine of his father's, he threatened that he would transfer the crown of Israel to David, and carried his threat into execution without delay. He imparted his design to the elders of Israel and Benjamin; and when they had given their consent, he made his way to Hebron, and announced to David the submission of all Israel to his sway (2 Sam. iii. 1-21). Abner, indeed, did not fully carry out the undertaking; for on his return journey he was assassinated by Joab, without David's knowledge, and against his will. Immediately afterwards, Ishbosheth, who had become powerless and spiritless through terror at Abner's death, was murdered in his own house by two of the leaders of his army. There now remained of Saul's family only Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (2 Sam. iv.), then not more than twelve years old, and lame in both his feet, and all the tribes of Israel determined to anoint David to be their king. The carrying out of this resolution is narrated in vers. 1-3, in complete agreement as to the facts with 2 Sam. v. 1-3, where the matter has been already commented upon. In chap. xii. 23-40 there follows a more detailed account of the assembly of the tribes of Israel in Hebron. The last words in ver. 3, כִּדְבַר יְהוָה וְגו', are a didactic addition of the author of the Chronicle, which has been derived from 1 Sam. xvi. 13 and 1 Sam. xv. 28. In 2 Sam. v. 4, 5, in accordance with the custom of the author of the books of Samuel and Kings to state the age and duration of the reign of each of the kings immediately after the announcement of their entry upon their office, there follows after the preceding a statement of the duration of David's reign; cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 1, 2 Sam. ii. 10 f., 1 Kings xiv. 21, xv. 2, etc. This remark is to be found in the Chronicle only at the close of David's reign; see xxix. 29, which shows that Thenius' opinion that this verse has been omitted from the Chronicle by a mistake is not tenable.



Vers. 4-9. *The capture of the citadel of Zion, and Jerusalem chosen to be the royal residence under the name of the city of David*; cf. 2 Sam. v. 6-10, and the commentary on this section at that place.—יָחִיָּה, ver. 8, to make alive, is used here, as in Neh. iii. 34, of the rebuilding of ruins. The general remark, ver. 9, “and David increased continually in might,” etc., opens the way for the transition to the history of David’s reign which follows. As a proof of his increasing greatness, there follows in

Vers. 10-47. *A register of the heroes who stood by him in the establishment of his kingdom.* The greater part of this register is found in 2 Sam. xxiii. 8-39 also, though there are many divergences in the names, which for the most part have found their way into one or other of the texts by errors of transcription. The conclusion (vers. 41-47 of the Chronicle) is not found in 2 Sam. xxiii., either because the author of the Chronicle followed another and older register than that used by the author of the book of Samuel, or because the latter has not communicated all the names contained in his authority. The former of these is the more probable supposition. In the Chronicle the superscription of the register is enlarged by the insertion in ver. 10, before the simple superscription in ver. 11a, cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8a, of a further superscription informing us of the design which the chronicler had in introducing the register at this place. “These are the chiefs of David’s heroes who stood by him strongly (הַתְּחֻקָּם עִם, as Dan. x. 21) in his kingdom, with the whole of Israel to make him king, according to the word of Jahve, over Israel.” The collocation רָאִשֵׁי הַגִּבּוֹרִים is accounted for by the fact that הַגִּבּוֹר is a designation of a valiant or heroic man in general, without reference to his position, whether co-ordinate with or subordinate to others. Among David’s גִּבּוֹרִים who helped to establish his kingdom, are not merely those who are mentioned by name in the following register, but also, as we learn from chap. xii., the great number of valiant men of all the tribes, who, even during his persecution by Saul, crowded round him, and immediately after Saul’s death came to him in Hebron to hail him king. The enumeration in our passage contains only the chiefs, רָאִשֵׁים, of those valiant men, i.e. those who held the first rank among them, and who were in great part leaders in the army of David, or became so. לְהַמְלִיכוֹ is not to be confined to the mere appointment to the kingship, but includes also his establishment in it; for there follows an account of the heroic deeds which the

men enumerated by name performed in the wars which David waged against his enemies in order to maintain and increase his kingly power. דָּבַר יְהוָה concerning Israel is the word of the Lord, the import of which is recorded in ver. 3, that David should feed His people Israel, and be ruler over them. The *ipsissima verba* are not found in the earlier history of David, but the substance of them has been deduced from 1 Sam. xvi. 13 and xv. 28; cf. herewith the remarks on 2 Sam. iii. 18. The enumeration of these heroes is introduced in ver. 11 by a short supplementary superscription, "these the number of the heroes." That מִסְפָּר should be used instead of the שְׁמוֹת of Samuel is surprising, but is explained by the fact that these heroes at first constituted a corps whose designation was derived from their number. They originally amounted to thirty, whence they are still called the thirty, הַשְּׁלִשִּׁים; cf. ver. 12, and the discussion on 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 ff. In both narratives three classes are distinguished.

Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah hold the first place, and specially bold and heroic deeds performed by them are recorded, vers. 11–14, and 2 Sam. xxiii. 8–12. For details as to themselves and their deeds, see on the last cited passage. There we have already remarked, that in ver. 13 of the text of the Chronicle, the three lines which in Samuel come between בַּפְּלִשְׁתִּים נֶאֱסַפּוּ שָׁם (Sam. ver. 9) and וַיֵּאֱסַפּוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים, ver. 11, have been, through wandering of the copyist's eye, omitted; and with them the name of the third hero, שָׁמָּה, has also been dropped, so that the heroic deed done by him, vers. 13b, 14, appears, according to our present text, to have been performed by Eleazar. In place of the words, "And the Philistines had gathered themselves together there to battle, and there was a parcel of ground full of barley," ver. 13, the text, according to the narrative in 2 Sam. xxiii. 11, must have stood originally thus: "The Philistines had gathered themselves together there to battle, and the men of Israel went up (*sc.* retreating from the Philistines up the mountain); he, however, stood firm, and smote the Philistines till his hand was wearied, and cleaved unto the sword (*i.e.* clung crampedly to his sword through fatigue): there wrought Jahve a great deliverance on that day, and the people returned (from their flight) behind him only to spoil. And after him was Shammah the son of Aga the Hararite, and the Philistines had gathered themselves together to battle," etc. In ver. 14 the plural forms וַיָּכּוּ, וַיִּצְלוּהוּ, יְתִיצְבוּ, are incorrect, and should be changed



into singulars, as in Sam. vers. 12 and 70, since only the deed of the hero Shammah is here spoken of. The plurals were probably introduced into the text after the missing lines had been dropped out by a reader or copyist, who, on account of the **הוּא הָיָה עִם דָּוִד** (ver. 13), understood the three clauses of ver. 14 to refer to Eleazar and David. **וַיִּשָּׂע**, on the contrary, is here perfectly appropriate, and is not to be altered to suit the **וַיַּעַשׂ** of Samuel, ver. 14, for the *καὶ ἐποίησε* of the LXX. is not of itself a sufficient reason for doing so.

In vers. 15-19 (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 13-17) there follows an exploit of three others of the thirty, whose names have not been handed down. **הַשְּׁלוֹשִׁים רֹאשׁ**, the thirty chiefs (not, as Thenius wrongly interprets the words, these three knights the chief parts, *i.e.* these three chief knights), are David's heroes hereafter mentioned, the thirty-two heroes of the third class named in vers. 26-40 (or vers. 24-39 of Samuel). That three others, different from the before-mentioned Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah are intended, is plain from the omission of the article with **שְׁלוֹשָׁה**; for if these three were spoken of, we would have **הַשְּׁלוֹשָׁה**, as in ver. 18. For further remarks on this exploit, which was probably performed in the war treated of in chap. xiv. 8 ff., and in 2 Sam. v. 17 ff., see on 2 Sam. xxiii. 13-17. The words **הָרֶם הָאֲנָשִׁים וְגו'**, ver. 19, are to be translated, "The blood of these men shall I drink in their souls? for for their souls (*i.e.* for the price of their souls, at the risk of their life) have they brought it." The expression "blood in their souls" is to be understood according to Gen. ix. 4 and Lev. xvii. 14 (**דָּמּוֹ בְּנַפְשׁוֹ הוּא**), "his blood is in the soul," is that which constitutes his soul). As there blood and soul are used synonymously (the blood as seat of and container of the soul, and the soul as floating in the blood), so here David, according to our account of his words, compares the water, which those heroes had brought for the price of their souls, to the souls of the men, and the drinking of the water to the drinking of their souls, and finally the souls to the blood, in order to express his abhorrence of such a draught. The meaning therefore may be thus expressed: "Shall I drink in this water the souls, and so the blood, of these men; for they have brought the water even for the price of their souls?"

In vers. 20-25 the second class of heroes, to which Abshai (Abishai) and Benaiah belonged, cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 18-23, is spoken of. They were not equal to the preceding three in heroic

deeds, but yet stood higher than the list of heroes which follows in ver. 26 and onwards. אֲבִישַׁי, as ii. 16 and 2 Sam. x. 10, while in 2 Sam. xxiii. 18 and elsewhere he is called אֲבִישַׁי, was one of the three sons of Zeruiah (ii. 16). It is difficult to explain ראש הַשְּׁלוֹשָׁה, "he was the chief of the three," instead of which we find in Sam. ver. 18 הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, i.e. הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, "chief of the body-guard" (knights). But owing to the succeeding שָׁם (וְלוֹ) וְלֹא הָיוּ שָׁם, where Samuel also has בְּשָׁלוֹשָׁה, and to the recurrence of הַשְּׁלוֹשָׁה on two occasions in ver. 21 (cf. Sam. ver. 19), it does not seem possible to alter the text with Thenius. Bertheau proposes to get rid of the difficulty by taking the word שְׁלוֹשָׁה in two different significations,—on the one hand as denoting the numeral three, and on the other as being an abstract substantive, "the totality of the thirty." He justifies the latter signification by comparison of ver. 21 with ver. 25, and of 2 Sam. xxiii. 19 with ver. 23, from which he deduces that שְׁלוֹשָׁה and שְׁלוֹשִׁים denote a larger company, in which both Abishai and Benaiah held a prominent place. But this signification cannot be made good from these passages. In both clauses of ver. 25 (and ver. 23 in Sam.) הַשְּׁלִישִׁים and הַשְּׁלִישָׁה are contrasted, which would rather go to prove the contrary of Bertheau's proposition, viz. that הַשְּׁלִישָׁה, the three, cannot at the same time denote the whole of the thirty, הַשְּׁלִישִׁים. The truth of the matter may be gathered from a comparison of ver. 18 with ver. 15. In ver. 18 הַשְּׁלִישָׁה is synonymous with הַשְּׁלוֹשָׁה מִן הַשְּׁלוֹשִׁים, ver. 15; i.e., the three in ver. 18 are the same men who in ver. 15, where they are first met with, are called three of the thirty; and consequently הַשְּׁלִישָׁה, the three (triad), vers. 21 and 25, can only denote the triad of heroes previously named. This is placed beyond doubt by a comparison of ver. 24 with ver. 25, since the שְׁלוֹשָׁה הַגִּבּוֹרִים, the triad of heroes, ver. 24, corresponds to the simple הַשְּׁלִישָׁה of ver. 25. The only remaining question is, whether by this triad of heroes we are to understand those spoken of in vers. 11–14,—Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah,—or the three whose names are not given, but whose exploit is narrated in vers. 15–19. But the circumstance that the names of the three latter are not mentioned goes decidedly to show that הַשְּׁלִישָׁה in vers. 20–25 does not denote that nameless triad, whose exploit is manifestly adduced incidentally only as a similar case, but the three most valiant, who held the first rank among David's heroes. Bertheau's opinion, that in vers. 20–25 one triad of heroes is dis-



tinguished from another, cannot be regarded as well-founded, for the three of whom Abishai was chief are not distinguished, and are not different from the three to whom, according to ver. 21, he did not attain. Nor is there greater reason to believe that the triad of vers. 20 and 21 is different from that in vers. 24 and 25, among whom Benaiah made himself a name, and to whom he did not attain. The fact of being chief or prince over the three is not irreconcilably contradictory to the statement that he did not attain to them, *i.e.* did not come up to them in heroic strength, as is shown by the two classes being connected in ver. 21*b*. As to the rank which the triad held in the regular forces of David, we know nothing further than that Jashobeam was, according to chap. xxvii. 2, leader of that part of the army which was on duty during the first month. Eleazar the son of Dodo, and the Hararite Shammah the son of Aga, are not mentioned anywhere but in our list. Abishai, on the contrary, who had already distinguished himself by his audacious courage in David's struggle with Saul (1 Sam. xxvi. 6 ff.), conducted together with Joab the war against Abner (2 Sam. ii. 24-iii. 30). Afterwards, in David's war with the Ammonites, he was under Joab in command of the second half of the host (2 Sam. x. 10 ff.); in the war against Absalom he commanded a third part of the host (xviii. 2 ff.); and in the struggle with the rebel Sheba he commanded the vanguard of the royal troops sent against the rebel (xx. 6 ff.); and in general held, along with Joab the commander-in-chief, the first place among David's captains. In this position he was chief of the three heroes before mentioned, and their leader (רֹאשׁ), and among them had made himself a name. וְלִי, ver. 20, is an orthographical error for וְלִי, as in fifteen other passages, according to the Masora. See on Ex. xxi. 10 and Isa. lxiii. 9.—Ver. 21*a* should be translated: honoured before the three as two; *i.e.* doubly honoured—he became to them prince, leader. With regard to בְּשָׁנִים, which, as meaningless, Bertheau would alter so as to make it correspond with הָרִי (Sam.), cf. Ew. *Lehrb.* § 269, *b*. For Benaiah and his exploits, vers. 22-25, see the commentary on 2 Sam. xxiii. 20-23.

No special deeds of the heroes enumerated in vers. 26-47 are related, so that we may regard them as a third class, who are not equal to the first triad, and to the second pair, Abishai and Benaiah, and consequently occupied a subordinate place in the collective body of the royal body-guards. In 2 Sam. xxiii.

thirty-two names are mentioned, which, with the above-mentioned three and two of the first and second classes, amount in all to thirty-seven men, as is expressly remarked in 2 Sam. xxiii. 39 at the conclusion. In the text of the Chronicle no number is mentioned, and the register is increased by sixteen names (vers. 41–47), which have been added in the course of time to the earlier number. The words **וַגְּבֹרֵי הַחַיִּלִּים**, ver. 26, are to be regarded as a superscription: And valiant heroes were, etc.; equivalent to, But besides these, there remain still the following valiant heroes. The words **וַגְּבֹרֵי הַחַיִּלִּים** are not synonymous with **שְׂרָיֵי הַחַיִּלִּים**, leaders of the host, 1 Kings xv. 20, Jer. xl. 7, (Berth.), but signify heroes in warlike strength, *i.e.* heroic warriors, like **וַגְּבֹרֵי חַיִּלִּים** (vii. 5, 7, 11, 40). That **חַיִּלִּים** has here the article, while it is not found in the passages quoted from the seventh chapter, does not make any difference in the meaning of the words. The article is used here, as with **הַגְּבֹרִים**, vers. 10, 11, because the heroes of David are spoken of, and **אֲשֶׁר לְדָוִיד** is to be mentally supplied from ver. 10 f. As to the names in vers. 26–41, which are also found in the register in the book of Samuel, see the commentary to 2 Sam. xxiii. 24–39. This list, which is common to both books, begins with Asahel, a brother of Joab, who was slain by Abner in the war which he waged against David (2 Sam. ii. 19–23), and concludes in the book of Samuel with Uriah the Hittite, so well known from 2 Sam. xi. 3 ff. (Chron. ver. 41*a*), with whose wife David committed adultery. But to the continuation of the register which is found in vers. 41*b*–47 of our text, there is no parallel in the other writings of the Old Testament by which we might form an idea as to the correctness of the names. The individual names are indeed to be met with, for the most part, in other parts of the Old Testament, but denote other men of an earlier or later time. The names **יִרְעָאֵל**, ver. 45, and **אֶלְיָאֵל**, ver. 46 f., are found also in chap. xii. 20, 11, among those of the valiant men who before Saul's death went over to David, but we cannot with any certainty ascertain whether the persons meant were the same. The expression **וְעִלָּיו שְׁלָשִׁים** (ver. 42) is also obscure,—“and to him in addition,” *i.e.* together with him, thirty,—since the thought that with Adina the chief of the Reubenites, or besides him, there were thirty (men), has no meaning in this register. The LXX. and the Vulgate read **עָלָיו**, while the Syriac, on the contrary, makes use of the periphrasis, “And even he was a ruler over



thirty heroes;” and Bertheau accordingly recommends the emendation על השלשים, and thence concludes that the tribe of Reuben had thirty leaders in its army,—a conjecture as bold as it is improbable. Were על השלשים to be read, we could not but refer the words to the thirty heroes of ver. 11, and hold Adina to be their leader, which could not be easily reconciled with ver. 11. See on xii. 4.—Ver. 43. בן־מעכה is perhaps the same as המעכתי, 2 Sam. xxiii. 34.—Ver. 44. העשתייתי, he of the city Ashtaroth (vi. 56), in the trans-Jordanic domain of Manasseh. הערערי, he of Aroer, of Reuben or Gad (Josh. xiii. 16, 25).—Ver. 46. Bertheau conjectures that the somewhat strange המחיים (LXX. ὁ Μῶνι, Vulg. Mahumites) denotes המחנימי, he of Mahanaim, in the East-Jordan land; see Josh. xiii. 26.—Ver. 47. המעביה, which, so far as the form is concerned, is not a *nomen gentis*, Reland (*Palæst. ill.* p. 899) holds for a contraction of מגדל זבוביה, Migdal Zebujah,—a place which, according to the rabbins, is said to have been somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hebron. Bertheau’s opinion is, that the article has come into the text by mistake; and when it has been struck out, the remaining consonants, מצביה, recall the מצבה of 2 Sam. xxiii. 36 (?).

CHAP. XII.—REGISTERS OF THE VALIANT MEN WHO HELPED  
DAVID TO THE KINGDOM.

This chapter contains two somewhat long registers, viz.: (1) a register of the valiant men who before Saul’s death went over to David, vers. 1-22; and (2) a register of the fighting men who anointed him king in Hebron. The first is divided into three smaller registers: (a) that of the valiant Benjamites who came to David during his stay in Ziklag (vers. 1-7); (b) that of the Gadites and the men of Judah and Benjamin who went over to him while he remained in the mountain fastnesses; and (c) that of the Manassites who, on his return to Ziklag before Saul’s last battle with the Philistines, joined themselves to him (vers. 19-22).

Vers. 1-7. *The Benjamites who came to David to Ziklag.*—Ver. 1. Ziklag was originally allotted to the Simeonites by Joshua (Josh. xix. 5; 1 Chron. iv. 30), but at a later time came into possession of the Philistines, and was assigned and presented by king Achish to David, who had fled for refuge to him, as a dwelling-place for himself and his followers; see 1 Sam. xxvii.

1-7. As to its situation, which has not yet been with certainty ascertained, see the discussion on Josh. xv. 31. In it David dwelt for a year and four months, until he went to Hebron on the death of Saul. During this time it was that the warriors of the tribe of Benjamin mentioned in the succeeding register went over to him, as we learn from the words עֹדֵר עֲצוּר, "he was still held back before Saul," a concise expression for "while he was still held back before Saul." This last expression, however, does not signify, "hindered from coming before Saul" (Berth.), but *inter Israelitas publice versari prohibitus* (J. H. Mich.), or rather, "before Saul, imprisoned as it were, without being able to appear in a manner corresponding to his divine election to be ruler over Israel." וְהָמָּה בְּגִבּוֹרֵי, and they were among the heroes, *i.e.* belonged to the heroes, the helpers of the war, *i.e.* to those who helped him in his former wars; cf. vers. 17 f., 21 f.—Ver. 2. נִשְׁקֵי קֶשֶׁת, "those preparing bows," *i.e.* those armed with bows, synonymous with דִּרְכֵי קֶשֶׁת (viii. 40); cf. 2 Chron. xvii. 17, Ps. lxxviii. 9. "With the right and left hand practised upon stones," *i.e.* to hurl stones, cf. Judg. xx. 16; "and in arrows on the bow," *i.e.* to shoot therewith. מֵאֲחֵי שָׁאוּל, of Saul's brethren, *i.e.* of the men of the tribe, not "of his nearer relatives," and consequently of Benjamin, has been added as an explanation; cf. ver. 29, where בְּנֵי בְנִימִן and אֲחֵי שָׁאוּל are synonyms.—In ver. 3 et seq. we have the names. הָרֹאשׁ, the head, *i.e.* the leader of this host of warriors; compare chap. v. 7, 12. הַגִּבֹּעָתִי, cf. Gibeah of Saul or Benjamin, cf. xi. 31; and for its situation, see on Josh. xviii. 28. הָעֵנָתִי, from the priests' city Anathoth, now Anata; see on Josh. xviii. 24. In ver. 4 the Gibeonite Ismaiah is called "hero among the thirty, and over the thirty,"—words which can hardly have any other sense than that Ismaiah belonged also to David's corps of thirty heroes (chap. xi.), and was (temporarily) their leader, although his name does not occur in chap. xi. It is probable that the reason of the omission was, that at the time when the list was prepared he was no longer alive. הַגִּדְרָתִי, of Gedera, a city of the tribe of Judah in the Shephelah, which, according to Van de Velde (*Reise*, ii. S. 166), was probably identical with the village Ghedera, which lies to the left of the road Tel-es-Safieh to Akir, about an hour to the south-west of Jabne. In any case, it corresponds well with the statements of the *Onom.* As to Gedrus, or Gaedur, see on Josh. xv. 36. Immediately afterwards in ver. 7 Gedor is mentioned, a city in the mountains of Judah, to the



westward of the road which leads from Hebron to Jerusalem (see on Josh. xv. 58); and from that fact Bertheau imagines we must conclude that the men of Judah are enumerated as well as the Benjamites. But this conclusion is not valid; for from the very beginning, when the domains and cities were assigned to the individual tribes under Joshua, they were not the exclusive possession of the individual tribes, and at a later period they were still less so. In course of time the respective tribal domains underwent (in consequence of wars and other events) many alterations, not only in extent, but also in regard to their inhabitants, so that in Saul's time single Benjamite families may quite well have had their home in the cities of Judah.—Ver. 5. **הַחֲרִיפִי** (**הַחֲרִיפִי**) is a patronymic, which denotes either one descended from Haruph, or belonging to the **בְּנֵי חָרִיף** mentioned in Neh. vii. 34 along with the Gibeonites. The **קֹרָחִים**, Korahites, in ver. 6 are, without doubt (cf. Delitzsch, *Ps. S.* 300), descendants of the Levite Korah, one division of whom David made guardian of the thresholds of the tent erected for the ark of the covenant on Zion, because their fathers had been watchers of the entrance of the camp of Jahve, *i.e.* had in that earlier time held the office of watchers by the tabernacle; see on ix. 18 f. The names Elkanah and Azareel are thoroughly Levitic names, and their service in the porter's office in the holy place may have roused in them the desire to fight for David, the chosen of the Lord. But there is no reason why we should, with Bertheau, interpret the words as denoting descendants of the almost unknown Korah of the tribe of Judah (ii. 43), or, with the older commentators, refer it to some other unmentioned Benjamite who bore this name. The explanation of the connection existing between these Levitic Korahites and the Benjamites, which is presupposed by the mention of them among the Benjamites, may be found in the fact that the Levites received no tribal domain of their own, and possessed only cities for dwelling in in the domains of the other tribes, with whom they were consequently civilly incorporated, so that those who dwelt in the cities of Benjamin were properly reckoned among the Benjamites. At the partition of the land under Joshua, it is true, only the priests received their cities in Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin; while, on the contrary, the Kohathites, who were not priests, among whom the Korahites were, received their cities in the tribal domain of Ephraim, Dan, and half-Manasseh (Josh. xxi. 9-26). But

when the tabernacle was transferred from Shiloh to Nob, and afterwards to Gibeon, the Korahite doorkeepers must, without doubt, have migrated to one of the Levitic cities of Benjamin, probably for the most part to Gibeon, and so were reckoned among the Benjamites. As to *בְּנֵי הַגִּבְעֹנִי*, *vide* ver. 4. If this be so, there remains no cogent reason for supposing that in our register, besides the Benjamites, men out of other tribes are also introduced. With that there falls away at once Bertheau's further conclusion, that the author of the Chronicle has considerably abridged the register, and that from ver. 4*b* onwards men of Judah also are named, the list of whom must certainly (?) have been originally introduced by special superscription similar to those in vers. 8, 16, 19. His further reason for his conjecture—namely, that our register makes use of the qualificative epithets, "the Gibeathite," "the Anathothite," etc., only in a few special cases—is of no force whatever; for we are not justified in assuming that we may expect to find here, as in the register in chap. xi. 26–47, such qualificatives after every individual name. The character of our register cannot be arrived at by a comparison with the list of David's heroes in chap. xi.; it should rather be sought for by comparing it with the succeeding list, whose contents are of a similar kind with its own. David's chosen corps of thirty heroes was much more important for the history of his reign, than the lists of the men who joined themselves to him and fought on his behalf before he ascended the throne. For that reason the thirty heroes are not only mentioned by name, but their descent also is told us, while that more detailed information is not given with regard to the others just mentioned. Only the names of the Gadites and Manassites are mentioned; of the Benjamites and men of Judah, who came to him in the mountain fastness (vers. 16–18), the name of only one, Amasai, is given; while of the Benjamites who came to Ziklag, vers. 3–7, such qualificative statements are made in reference to only a few individuals, and in these cases the object probably was to distinguish them from other well-known persons of the same name.

Vers. 8–18. *The Gadites, Benjamites, and men of Judah who joined themselves to David during his sojourn in the mountain fastness.*—Ver. 8. David's sojourn in the mountain hold falls in the first years of his flight from Saul, 1 Sam. xxii. ff. *מִצֵּר*, pointed with Pathach instead of with Kamets (*מִצֵּר*, cf. ver. 16), on account



of its intimate connection with *מִדְבָּרָה*, is synonymous with *מְצוּדָה* (1 Sam. xxiv. 23, etc.). The addition *מִדְבָּרָה*, "towards the wilderness," shows that *מָצֵד* denotes a mountain-top or mountain-fortress in the wilderness of Judah. If we compare the account in 1 Sam. xxii.-xxiv., we learn that David at that time did not hide himself in one single definite mountain-fortress, but sought and found resting-places, now here, now there, in the wilderness, on the summits of the hills (cf. *בְּמִדְבָּר בְּמִצְדוֹת*, 1 Sam. xxiii. 14, xxiv. 1); so that *מָצֵד* here is to be understood, as *הַמְצוּדָה*, 1 Sam. xxiv. 3, also is, generally of the fastnesses in the mountains of Judah. At that time there gathered round David a great company of discontented and oppressed men, to the number of about 400,—men dissatisfied with Saul's rule, whose leader he became, and who soon amounted to 600 men (1 Sam. xxii. 2 and xxiii. 13). To these belong the Gadites, and the men out of Benjamin and Judah, whose adhesion to David is noticed in our verses. *נְבָרָיו*, they separated themselves from the other Gadites who were on Saul's side, "strong heroes," as in Josh. viii. 3; cf. *נְבָרֵי הַיָּל*, v. 24, vii. 2, 9, etc. *אֲנָשֵׁי צָבָא לְמִלְחָמָה*, men for service in the host for the war, *i.e.* combatants practised in war. *עֲרִבֵי צֶנֶה וְרֵמַח*, preparing shield and spear, *i.e.* wielding shield and spear, practised in their use: the preparing of these weapons includes the handling of them. Instead of *וְרֵמַח*, Veneta and many of the older copies have *וּמָנִי*; but it is not supported by MS. authority, and moreover is not congruous with the passage. Lions' faces their faces, *i.e.* lion-like in appearance, thoroughly warlike figures; cf. 2 Sam. i. 23. "As roes running swiftly on the mountains;" cf. 2 Sam. ii. 18. This description of the strength and swiftness of these warriors recalls, as Bertheau remarks, the similar expressions used in the historical books concerning heroes of David's time. It has manifestly been drawn from the original documents, not added by the chronicler. In vers. 9-13 the names are enumerated individually. *עֲשָׂתִי עָשָׂר*, at the end of a series of ordinal numbers, denotes the eleventh; cf. xxiv. 12.—Ver. 14. *רָאשֵׁי הַצָּבָא*, heads of the war-host, *i.e.* chief warriors, not leaders of the host. *אֶחָד לְמֵאָה וְגו'*, "one for a hundred, (*viz.*) the small and the greater for a thousand," *i.e.* the smaller (weaker) could cope with a hundred, the stronger with a thousand men; cf. Lev. xxvi. 8. This, which is the only correct interpretation, is that received by Bertheau and the older Jewish commentators. The Vulgate, on the contrary, translates, *novissimus centum militibus præerat et maximus*

*mille*, which is inadmissible, for in that case עַל must have been used instead of ל. The אַחֵר belongs to both the clauses which it precedes, to הַקָּטָן and to הַגָּדוֹל, and is placed immediately before לְמֵאָה to emphasize the contrast between one and a hundred. In ver. 15 we have a proof of their valour, in an account of a bold exploit performed by them. In the first month of the year, that is, in spring, when the Jordan overflows all its banks, they crossed the river and put to flight all the dwellers in the valleys towards the east and towards the west. This happened, probably, when they separated themselves from their brethren and went over to David, when they must have had to cut their way through the adherents of Saul (Berth.). The Piel מָלֵא with עַל denotes to make full, to make to run over, in the signification to overflow. The Kethibh גִּדְּיָיו comes from גִּדָּה, elsewhere only the plural גִּדְּתָיו, so also here in the Keri. In the dry summer season the Jordan may be crossed by wading at various points (fords); while in spring, on the contrary, when it is so swollen by the melting snows of Lebanon, that in some parts it overflows its banks, it is very dangerous to attempt to cross. See on Josh. iii. 15. הַעֲמָקִים, “the valleys,” for the inhabitants of the valleys.—Vers. 16–18. There came to David in the mountain-fastness also men of Benjamin and Judah (cf. ver. 8). Their names are not in the lists, possibly because they were not handed down in the historical works made use of by the chronicler. At their head, as we learn from ver. 18, stood Amasai, chief of the thirty, *i.e.* of the corps formed of the thirty heroes (see xi. 11), although his name does not occur in the catalogue, chap. xi. According to this, Amasai must have occupied a very important position under David; but since the name עֲמָשִׁי is not elsewhere mentioned in the history of David, the older commentators have conjectured that עֲמָשִׁי may have been the same person as עֲמִשָּׂא, son of Abigail (ii. 17), whom Absalom made captain in Joab’s place, and whom David, after the victory over the rebels, wished to make commander-in-chief in the room of Joab, and whom for that reason Joab afterwards murdered (2 Sam. xvii. 25, xix. 14, xx. 4, 8 ff.); or identical with אֲבִישִׁי the son of Zeruiah, ii. 16 and xi. 20. Of these conjectures the first is much more probable than the second. To meet these men, David went forth from his fastness, and asked them with what purpose they came to him. “If for peace,” to stand by him, “then shall there be to me towards you a heart for union,” *i.e.* I will be with you of one heart, be true to you.



לִּבְּךָ לֵיחֹדֶר is plainer than לִבְּךָ אֶחָד, ver. 38. "But if לְרַמּוֹתַי, to practise deceit against me (to be guilty of a מִרְמָה) for mine enemies (to deliver me to them), although there be no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look thereon and punish;" cf. 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. The God of our fathers, *i.e.* of the patriarchs (cf. Ezra vii. 27, 2 Chron. xx. 6, and Ex. iii. 13 f.), who rules in and over Israel, who shields the innocent and punishes the guilty.—Ver. 18. Then came the Spirit upon Amasai, so that he proclaimed himself enthusiastic for David and his cause. With רוּחַ לִבְשָׁה cf. Judg. vi. 34. Usually יהוה or אֱלֹהִים is found with this expression (2 Chron. xxiv. 20), and here also the Spirit of God is meant; and אֱלֹהִים is omitted only because all that was of importance here was to show that the resolution announced by Amasai was an effect of higher spiritual influence. לָּךְ, to thee, David (do we belong), thine are we. עִמָּךְ, "with thee," *sc.* will we remain and fight. "Peace be to thee, and peace be to thy helpers; for thy God helpeth thee." עֲזָרְךָ, He has helped thee in the fortunate combats in which you have heretofore been engaged (1 Sam. xviii. 12 ff.), and He will help still further. David thereupon received them and made them captains of his band. הַיְּגִדֹּד, the warrior-band, which had gathered round David, and were still gathering round him, 1 Sam. xxii. 2, xxvii. 8, cf. also ver. 21; 1 Sam. xxx. 8, 15, 23, etc.

Vers. 19-22. *The Manassites who went over to David before the last battle of the Philistines against Saul.*—נָפַל עַל, to fall to one, is used specially of deserters in war who desert their lord and go over to the enemy: cf. 2 Kings xxv. 11; 1 Sam. xxix. 3. יָפַל אֵל, in the last clause of the verse, is a synonymous expression. The Manassites went over "when David went with the Philistines against Israel to the war, and (yet) helped them not; for upon advisement (בְּעֵצָה, cf. Prov. xx. 18), the lords of the Philistines had sent him away, saying, 'For our heads, he will fall away to his master Saul.'" 1 Sam. xxix. 2-11 contains the historical commentary on this event. When the lords of the Philistines collected their forces to march against Saul, David, who had found refuge with King Achish, was compelled to join the host of that prince with his band. But when the other Philistine princes saw the Hebrews, they demanded that they should be sent out of the army, as they feared that David might turn upon them during the battle, and so win favour by his treachery with Saul his lord. See the commentary on 1 Sam. xxix. בְּרֹאשֵׁינוּ, for our heads, *i.e.* for the price of them, giving them as a price

to obtain a friendly reception from Saul (cf. 1 Sam. xxix. 4). In consequence of this remonstrance, Achish requested David to return with his warriors to Ziklag. On this return march ("as he went to Ziklag," cf. with בָּלָכְתִּי the לָלַכְתָּ of 1 Sam. xxix. 11), and consequently before the battle in which Saul lost his life (Berth.), and not after Saul's great misfortune, as Ewald thinks, the Manassites whose names follow went over to David. The seven named in ver. 20 were "heads of the thousands of Manasseh," i.e. of the great families into which the tribe of Manasseh was divided, and as such were leaders of the Manassite forces in war: cf. Num. xxxi. 14 with Ex. xviii. 25, and the commentary on the latter passage.—Ver. 21. These<sup>1</sup> helped David עַל הַיָּדָיו, against the detachment of Amalekites, who during David's absence had surprised and burnt Ziklag, and led captive the women and children (1 Sam. xxx. 1–10). This interpretation, which Rashi also has (*contra turmam Amalekitarum*), and which the Vulgate hints at in its *adversus latrunculos*, rests upon the fact that in 1 Sam. xxx. 8, 15, the word הַיָּדָיו, which in

<sup>1</sup> We take יְהִמָּה to refer to the Manassites named in ver. 20, like the יְהִמָּה of ver. 1 and the אֱלֵהָם of ver. 15. Bertheau, on the contrary, thinks on various grounds that יְהִמָּה refers to all the heroes who have been spoken of in vers. 1–20. In the first place, it was not the Manassites alone who took part in the conflict with Amalek, for David won the victory with his whole force of 600 men (1 Sam. xxx. 9), among whom, without doubt, those named in vers. 1–18 were included. Then, secondly, a clear distinction is made between those who gave in their adhesion to and helped David at an earlier period (vers. 1, 7, 22), and those who came to him in Hebron (ver. 23). And finally, the general remark in ver. 22 is connected with ver. 21 by the grounding כִּי, so that we must regard vers. 21 and 22 as a subscription closing the preceding catalogues. But none of these arguments are very effective. The grounding כִּי in ver. 22 does not refer to the whole of ver. 21, but only to the last clause, or, to be more accurate, only to בָּעֶצְבָא, showing that David had an army. The second proves nothing, and in the first only so much is correct, that not merely the seven Manassites named in ver. 20 took part in the battle with Amalek, but also the warriors who had formerly gone over to David; but from that there is not the slightest reason to conclude that this is expressed by יְהִמָּה. It is manifest from the context and the plan of the register, that יְהִמָּה עֲזָרוּ וְגו' can only refer to those of whom it is said in ver. 20 that they went over to David as he was returning to Ziklag. If vers. 21 and 22 were a subscription to all the preceding registers, instead of יְהִמָּה another expression which would separate the verse somewhat more from that immediately preceding would have been employed, perhaps כָּל-אֵלֶּה.



general only denotes single detachments or predatory bands, is used of the Amalekite band; whence the word can only refer to the march of David against the Amalekites, of which we have an account in 1 Sam. xxx. 9 ff., and not to the combats which he had with Saul. "For they were all valiant heroes, and were שָׁרִים, captains in the army," *sc.* which gathered round David.—Ver. 22. "For every day" (לְעֵת יוֹם בְּיוֹם, at the time of each day) "came (people) to David to help him, until to a great host, like a host of God," *i.e.* until his band grew to a camp like to a host of God. מַחֲנֵה אֱלֹהִים, a host which God has formed, and in which the power of God shows itself; cf. hills and cedars of God, Ps. xxxvi. 7, lxxx. 11. In these concluding remarks to the enumeration by name of the valiant men who during Saul's lifetime went over to David, there is no exaggeration which would betray an idealizing historian (Movers, S. 270). The greatness of a host of God is to be estimated according to the power and the spirit, not according to the number, of the warriors, so that we need not take the words to mean a host of thousands and tens of thousands. David had at first 400, afterwards 600, valiant warriors, against whom Saul with his thousands could accomplish nothing. The increase in their number from 400 to 600 shows that the host increased from day to day, especially when we keep in mind the fact that after Saul's defeat considerable bands of fugitives must certainly have gone over to David before he was anointed in Hebron to be king over Judah. The expression is only rhetorical, not idealizing or exaggerating.

Vers. 23-40. *List of the warriors who made David king in Hebron.*—The superscription (ver. 23) runs: "These are the numbers of the bands of the men equipped for war, who came," etc. הַחֲלָיִין is a collective noun, denoting the equipped manhood. רָאשֵׁי signifies here, not *principes exercitus*, as the Vulgate renders it, heads, *i.e.* leaders of the army (Berth.), but literally denotes sums, *i.e.* companies, bands of soldiers, as in Judg. vii. 16, 20, ix. 34, 37, 44, 1 Sam. xi. 11; or it may perhaps also be heads for individuals, as ראש in Judg. v. 30. Both these meanings are linguistically certain; so that we cannot say, with Bertheau, that רָאשֵׁי before הַחֲלָיִין denotes, according to the well-ascertained use of language, leaders of the army, and that גִּלְגַּלֹּת would have been used had it been wished to express the number by heads, *e.g.* xxiii. 3-24. That use of the word is indeed also found, but it cannot be proved to be the only proper one. If we take

רָאשֵׁי here to denote leaders, we bring the superscription into irreconcilable contradiction with the contents of the following catalogue, which gives the names of the heads and the number of the warriors (ver. 27 f.) only in the case of the families of Aaron, and in that of Issachar the number of the princes; while in the case of the other tribes we have only the numbers of the bands or detachments. This contradiction cannot be got rid of, as Bertheau imagines, by the hypothesis that the superscription referred originally to a catalogue which was throughout similar in plan to that which we find in vers. 26–28, and that the author of the Chronicle has very considerably abridged the more detailed statements of the original documents which he used. This hypothesis is a mere makeshift, in which we have the less need “to take refuge,” as the catalogue has neither the appearance of having been abridged or revised by the author of our Chronicle. It is shown to be a faithful copy of a more ancient authority, both by the characteristic remarks which it contains on the individual tribes, and by the inequality in the numbers. Bertheau, indeed, derives support for his hypothesis “from the inequality of the statements of number, and their relation to each other,” and upon that ground throws doubt upon the accuracy and correctness of the numbers, but in both cases without sufficient warrant. If we place the respective statements together synoptically, we see that there came to David to Hebron—

Of the tribe of Judah, . . . . .	6,800 men.	
„ „ Simeon, . . . . .	7,100 „	
„ „ Levi, . . . . .	4,600 „	
With Jehoiada the prince of Aaron,	3,700 „	
With Zadok and his father's-house,	... „	22 שָׂרִים (captains).
Of the tribe of Benjamin, . . . . .	3,000 „	
„ „ Ephraim, . . . . .	20,800 „	
„ half-tribe of Manasseh, . . .	18,000 „	
„ tribe of Issachar, . . . . .	... „	200 chiefs and all their
„ „ Zebulun, . . . . .	50,000 „	[brethren.
„ „ Naphtali, . . . . .	37,000 „	with 1000 שָׂרִים.
„ „ Dan, . . . . .	28,000 „	
„ „ Asher, . . . . .	40,000 „	
Of two and a half trans-Jordanic tribes,	120,000 „	

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Total, 339,600 men, with 1222 heads and captains.

The total is not objected to by Bertheau, and its correctness is placed beyond a doubt by the recollection that we have here



to do not with the representation of the various estates of the kingdom, but with a declaration of the will of the whole nation, who wished to make David their king. We must, if we are to estimate these statements, endeavour to go back in imagination to the circumstances of that time when Israel, although settled in the land, had not quite laid aside the character of a nation of warriors, in which every man capable of bearing arms marched to battle with, and for, his king. Now if the total number of fighting men in Israel was 600,000 in the time of Moses, and if, when the people were numbered in the last year of David's reign, there were in Israel 800,000, and in Judah 500,000 (2 Sam. xxiv. 9)—the Levites being excluded in both cases—the 340,000 men of all the tribes, except Issachar, in reference to which no number is given, or after subtracting Judah and Levi, the 324,500 men out of the remaining tribes, is not much more than a half of the men capable of bearing arms in Moses' time, and about a fourth part of the fighting population towards the end of David's reign. But the relation of the numbers in the respective tribes, on the contrary, is somewhat surprising, and calls forth from Bertheau the following remarks: "To Judah, David's tribe, which from the earliest time had been famous for its numbers and its powers, 6800 are assigned; to Zebulun, on the contrary, 50,000; to Naphtali, 1000 princes at the head of 37,000 warriors; to the two and a half East-Jordanic tribes, 120,000 men, etc. How does it happen that Zebulun and Naphtali, for example, two tribes that play no great part in Israel's history, are so strongly represented, while Judah sends only a relatively small number of warriors?" To this question we answer, that Judah's being represented by a number of warriors relatively so small, is accounted for simply by the fact that David had already been king over Judah for seven years, and consequently that tribe did not need to make him king by coming with the whole of its warriors, or the majority of them, when the other tribes were doing homage to David, but sent only a small number of its male population to this solemn act, who were witnesses in the name of the whole tribe to the homage proffered by the others. The same remark applies to the tribe of Simeon, whose domain was enclosed by that of Judah, and which had consequently recognised David as king at the same time as the larger tribe. In regard to the numbers of the other tribes, Levi had in the last year of David's reign 38,000 men from thirty years old and

upwards (xxiii. 3); and when here only 4600 Levites, besides the priestly families, are spoken of, the question arises, whether this number is to be understood to refer to the Levites in all the tribes, or only to those dwelling outside of Judah and Simeon, in the cities assigned to them by Moses and Joshua. The smallness of the number (3000) from the tribe of Benjamin is explained by the remark that the majority of this tribe still held to the house of Saul (ver. 29). The only thing which is at all remarkable about the other numbers is, that the Ephraimites are so few (20,800 men) in contrast to the 180,000 men brought into the field by the half-tribe of Manasseh. But if we consider that Ephraim, which at the first census under Moses at Sinai had 40,500 men, had decreased to 32,500 at the second census in the wilderness of Moab, it is not improbable that at the time now treated of that tribe may not have been very strong in fighting men. For in Saul's last war with the Philistines, when they had pressed forward so far as Mount Gilboa, and also in Abner's struggle on behalf of King Ishbosheth for the re-conquest of the territory occupied by them, it probably suffered more, and was more weakened, than any of the other tribes. Perhaps also we may add that Ephraim, owing to its jealousy of Judah, which dates from the time of the judges, was not very much disposed to make David king over all Israel. That Zebulun and Naphtali are here so numerous represented, although they do not otherwise play an important part, is no reason for suspecting that the numbers given are incorrect. Since Zebulun under Moses numbered 57,400 men, and at a later time 60,500, and Naphtali 53,400 and 45,400 men capable of bearing arms respectively on the same occasions (see t. i. 2, S. 192); the first named tribe may easily have sent 50,000, the other 37,000 men to David, as the tribes dwelling in the north had been least affected by the wars which Israel carried on in the second half of the period of the judges and under Saul. Both of these tribes, too, are praised in the song of Deborah as a people ready to risk their lives for their fatherland (Judg. v. 18), and may have very much increased in the succeeding time. And besides all this, the tribes Asher, Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh are indeed more feebly represented than Zebulun, but more strongly than Naphtali. There therefore remains no reason for doubting the historical accuracy of the numbers given; but it is of course to be understood that the numbers, which are stated



only in hundreds, are not the result of an enumeration of the individual persons, but only of an estimate of the various detachments, according to the military partition of the tribes.

In regard to 'לְהַסֵּב מ', cf. x. 14; and as to כְּפִי יְהוָה, see the remark on כְּדָבַר יְהוָה, xi. 3, 10.—Ver. 24 f. For נִשְׁאִי צִנָּה וְרִמָּה, cf. ver. 8, v. 18. נְבוֹרֵי חַיִּל לְצָבָא, valiant men for the war service.—Ver. 26. Jehoiada is thought by Rashi, Kimchi, and others, to be the father of Benaiah, xi. 22. He was נָגִיד for Aaron, *i.e.* prince of the house of Aaron, head of the family of the Aaronites, not *princeps sacerdotum*, which was a title appertaining to the high-priesthood, an office held at that time by Abiathar (1 Sam. xxiii. 9).—Ver. 28. Zadok, a youth, *i.e.* then still a youth, may be the same who was made high priest in place of Abiathar (1 Kings ii. 26, but see on v. 34). "And his father's-house, twenty-two princes." The father's-house of Zadok is the Aaronite family descended from Eleazar, which was at that time so numerous that it could muster twenty-two שָׂרִים, family chiefs, who went with Zadok to Hebron.—Ver. 29. From the tribe of Benjamin, to which Saul belonged (אָחִי שָׁאוּל, see on ver. 2), only 3000 men came, for until that time (וְעַד הַנֶּהָה, cf. ix. 18) the greater number of them were keeping the guard of the house of Saul, *i.e.* were devoted to the interests of the fallen house. For שָׁמַר מִשְׁמֶרֶת, see on Gen. xxvi. 5 and Lev. viii. 35. From this we learn that the attachment of the Benjamites to Saul continued even after the death of his son Ishbosheth, and that it was with difficulty that they could bring themselves to recognise David as king.—Ver. 30. Of Ephraim 20,800 famous men (אֲנָשֵׁי שְׁמוֹת, see on Gen. vi. 4); לְבֵית-אָב, "in their fathers'-houses."—Ver. 31. Of half Manasseh, this side Jordan (cf. ver. 37), 18,000, who were appointed by name, *i.e.* chosen as famous men to go thither and make David king. נִקְבְּנוּ בְּשֵׁמוֹת, as in Num. i. 17, *vide* on Lev. xxiv. 16. The tribe of Manasseh had consequently held a general consultation on the matter, and determined upon sending their representatives.—Ver. 32. From Issachar came "men of understanding in reference to the times, to know (*i.e.* who knew) what Israel should do." יוֹרֵעַ בִּינָה, knowing in insight (cf. 2 Chron. ii. 12), *i.e.* experienced in a thing, having understanding of it. From this remark some of the older commentators (Chald., various Rabbins, and Cleric.) concluded that the tribe of Issachar had distinguished itself beyond the other tribes by astronomical and physical knowledge,

by which it was qualified to ascertain and make choice of proper times for political action. But the words do not suggest astronomical or astrological knowledge, but merely state, as Salomo ben-Melech in the *Miclol Yophi* long ago interpreted them, *noverant tempora ad omnem rem et quodque negotium, sicut sapiens dixit: Suum cuique tempus est et opportunitas cuique rei*, *Koh. iii. 1*. The words refer not to the whole tribe, but only to the two hundred heads, who, as Lavater expresses it, are designated *prudentes viri*, as being men *qui quid, quando et quomodo agendum esset, varia lectione et usu rerum cognoscebant*. The only thing to be objected to in his statement is the *varia lectione*, since a sound and correct judgment in political matters does not necessarily presuppose scientific training and a wide acquaintance with books. The statement in question, therefore, affirms nothing more than that the tribe of Issachar (in deciding to raise David to the throne) followed the judgment of its princes, who rightly estimated the circumstances of the time. For all their brethren, *i.e.* all the men of this tribe, went with the two hundred chiefs. עַל־פִּיהֶם, according to their mouth, *i.e.* followed their judgment; cf. Num. iv. 27, Deut. xxi. 5.—Ver. 33. עָרְבִי מִלְחָמָה, preparing war with all manner of warlike weapons, *i.e.* practice in the use of all kinds of weapons for war; cf. ver. 8. The infinitive לַעְרֹר is substantially a continuation of the preceding participles, but grammatically is dependent on בָּאוּ understood (cf. vers. 23, 38). Cf. as to this free use of the infinitive with לַ, *EW. § 351, c*. The signification of the verb עָרַר, which occurs only here (vers. 33, 38), is doubtful. According to the LXX. and the Vulg. (*Βοηθησαυ, venerunt in auxilium*), and nine mss., which read לַעְרֹר, we would be inclined to take עָרַר for the Aramaic form of the Hebrew עָזַר (cf. עָזַר), to help; but that meaning does not suit עָרַר מִעֲרֹבָה, ver. 38. Its connection there demands that עָרַר should signify “to close up together,” to set in order the battle array; and so here, closing up together with not double heart, *i.e.* with whole or steadfast heart (בְּלֵבָב שְׁלֵם, ver. 38), *animo integro et firmo atque concordia*; cf. Ps. xii. 3 (Mich.).—In ver. 38 we have a comprehensive statement; כָּל־אֵלֶיהָ, which refers to all the bodies of men enumerated in vers. 24–37. שְׂאֵרִית is שְׂאֵרִית defectively written; and as it occurs only here, it may be perhaps a mere orthographical error. The whole of the remainder of Israel who did not go to Hebron were לֵב אֶחָד, of one, *i.e.* of united heart (2 Chron. xxx. 12): they had a unanimous wish to make



David king.—Ver. 39. Those gathered together were there three days eating and drinking, holding festive meals (cf. 1 Sam. xxx. 16, 1 Kings i. 45, etc.), for their brethren had prepared them for them. The object of *הֵכִינֵהוּ*, *sc.* the eating and drinking, may easily be supplied from the context. *אֲחֵיהֶם* are the inhabitants of Hebron and the neighbourhood; the tribe of Judah in general, who had already recognised David as king.—Ver. 40. But it was not only these who performed this service, but also those of the remaining tribes dwelling near them; and indeed the men of Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali, those on the northern frontier of Canaan as well as those who bordered upon Judah, had sent provisions upon beasts of burden, “for joy was in Israel.” This joy moved those who remained at home to show their sympathy with the national festival solemnized at Hebron by sending the provisions. For *רֵבִלִים*, masses of dried figs, and *צִמּוּקִים*, masses of raisins or cakes, see on 1 Sam. xxv. 18.

CHAP. XIII.—XVI. THE REMOVAL OF THE ARK FROM KIRJATH-JEARIM. DAVID’S BUILDING, HIS WIVES AND CHILDREN, AND HIS VICTORIES OVER THE PHILISTINES. THE BRINGING IN OF THE ARK INTO THE CITY OF DAVID, AND THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE WORSHIP IN MOUNT ZION.

All these facts are described in the second book of Samuel, for the most part in the same words. There, however, the contents of our chapter xiv., David’s building, wives and children, and victories over the Philistines, immediately follow, in chap. v. 11–25, the account of the conquest of the citadel of Zion (1 Chron. xi. 4–8); and then in 2 Sam. vi. the removal of the ark from Kirjath-jearim, and the bringing of it, after an interval of three months, to Jerusalem, are narrated consecutively, but much more shortly than in the Chronicle. The author of the books of Samuel confined himself to a mere narration of the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem, as one of the first acts of David tending to the raising of the Israelitish kingship, and has consequently, in his estimation of the matter, only taken account of its importance politically to David as king. The author of our Chronicle, on the contrary, has had mainly in view the religious significance of this design of David to restore the Levitic *cultus* prescribed in the Mosaic law; and in order to impress that upon the reader, he not only gives a detailed account of the part which the Levites took

in the solemn transfer of the ark of God (chap. xv.), but he sets forth minutely the arrangements which David made, after the ark had been brought into the capital of the kingdom, for the restoration of a permanent worship about that sanctuary (chap. xvi.). Both the narratives are taken from an original document which related the matter more at length; and from it the author of 2d Samuel has excerpted only what was important for his purpose, while the author of the Chronicle gives a more detailed account. The opinion held by de Wette and others, that the narrative in the Chronicle is merely an expansion by the author of the Chronicle, or by the author of the original document followed by our chronicler, of the account in 2 Sam. vi., for the purpose of glorifying the Levitic *cultus*, is shown to be incorrect and untenable by the multitude of historical statements peculiar to chap. xv. and xvi., which could not possibly have been invented.

Chap. xiii. *The removal of the ark from Kirjath-jearim.* Cf. 2 Sam. vi. 1-11, with the commentary on the substance of the narrative there given.—Vers. 1-5. The introduction to this event is in 2 Sam. vi. 1 and 2 very brief; but according to our narrative, David consulted with the chief men over thousands and hundreds (cf. xv. 25), viz. with all the princes. The preposition לְ before כָּל־נָגִיד groups together the individual chiefs of the people just named. He laid his purpose before “all the congregation of Israel,” i.e. before the above-mentioned princes as representatives of the whole people. “If it seem good to you, and if it come from Jahve our God,” i.e. if the matter be willed of and approved by God, we will send as speedily as possible. The words נִפְרָצָה נִשְׁלָחָה without the conjunction are so connected that נִשְׁלָחָה defines the idea expressed by נִפְרָצָה, “we will break through, will send,” for “we will, breaking through,” i.e. acting quickly and energetically, “send thither.” The construction of שְׁלַח with עַל is accounted for by the fact that the sending thither includes the notion of commanding (עָלָה). כָּל־אֲרָצוֹת, all the provinces of the various tribal domains, is used for כָּל־הָאָרֶץ, 1 Sam. xiii. 19, here, and 2 Chron. xi. 23 and xxxiv. 33; in all which places the idea of the division of the land into a number of territories is prominent. This usage is founded upon Gen. xxvi. 3 and 4, where the plural points to the number of small tribes which possessed Canaan. After וְעַמָּהֶם עַל or נִשְׁלָחָה עַל is to be repeated. The words לֹא דִרְשָׁנוּ in ver. 3, we have not sought it, nor asked after it, are meant to include all.—Ver. 4 f. As the whole assembly



approved of David's design (לַעֲשׂוֹת כֵּן), it is to do so = so must we do), David collected the whole of Israel to carry it out. "The whole of Israel," from the southern frontier of Canaan to the northern; but of course all are not said to have been present, but there were numerous representatives from every part,—according to 2 Sam. vi. 1, a chosen number of 30,000 men. The שִׁיחור מִצְרַיִם, which is named as the southern frontier, is not the Nile, although it also is called שִׁחור (Isa. xxiii. 3 and Jer. ii. 18), and the name "the black river" also suits it (see Del. on Isaiah, *loc. cit.*); but is the שִׁיחור before, *i.e.* eastward from Egypt (אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי מִצְרַיִם), *i.e.* the brook of Egypt, נַחַל מִצְרַיִם, the Rhinocorura, now el Arish, which in all accurate statements of the frontiers is spoken of as the southern, in contrast to the neighbourhood of Hamath, which was the northern boundary: see on Num. xxxiv. 5. For the designation of the northern frontier, לְבוֹא הַמָּת, see on Num. xxxiv. 8. Kirjath-jearim, the Canaanitish Baalah, was known among the Israelites by the name Baale Jehudah or Kirjath-baal, as distinguished from other cities named after Baal, and is now the still considerable village Kureyeh el Enab; see on Josh. ix. 17. In this fact we find the explanation of 'י בַּעֲלָתָהּ אֵל ק', ver. 6: to Baalah, to Kirjath-jearim of Judah. The ark had been brought thither when the Philistines sent it back to Beth-Shemesh, and had been set down in the house of Abinadab, where it remained for about seventy years; see 1 Sam. vi. and vii. 1, 2, and the remarks on 2 Sam. vi. 3 f. אֲשֶׁר נִקְרָא שֵׁם is not to be translated "which is named name," which gives no proper sense. Translating it so, Bertheau would alter שֵׁם into שָׁם, according to an arbitrary conjecture of Thenius on 2 Sam. vi. 2, "who there (by the ark) is invoked." But were שָׁם the true reading, it could not refer to the ark, but only to the preceding מִשְׁם, since in the whole Old Testament the idea that by or at the resting-place of the ark Jahve was invoked (which אֲשֶׁר שָׁם would signify) nowhere occurs, since no one could venture to approach the ark. If שָׁם referred to מִשְׁם, it would signify that Jahve was invoked at Kirjath-baal, that there a place of worship had been erected by the ark; but of that the history says nothing, and it would, moreover, be contrary to the statement that the ark was not visited in the days of Saul. We must consequently reject the proposal to alter שֵׁם into שָׁם as useless and unsuitable, and seek for another explanation: we must take אֲשֶׁר in the sense of ὡς, which it sometimes has; cf. Ew. § 333, a: "as he is called by name," where

שם does not refer only to יהוה, but also to the additional clause יוֹשֵׁב הַכְּרוּבִים, and the meaning is that Jahve is invoked as He who is enthroned above the cherubim; cf. Ps. lxxx. 2, Isa. xxxvii. 16.—On the following vers. 7–14, cf. the commentary on 2 Sam. vi. 3–11.

Chap. xiv. *David's palace-building, wives and children*, vers. 1–7; cf. 2 Sam. v. 11–16. *Two victories over the Philistines*, vers. 8–17; cf. 2 Sam. v. 17–25.—The position in which the narrative of these events stands, between the removal of the ark from Kirjath-jearim and its being brought to Jerusalem, is not to be supposed to indicate that they happened in the interval of three months, during which the ark was left in the house of Obed-edom. The explanation of it rather is, that the author of our Chronicle, for the reasons given in page 170, desired to represent David's design to bring the ark into the capital city of his kingdom as his first undertaking after he had won Jerusalem, and was consequently compelled to bring in the events of our chapter at a later period, and for that purpose this interval of three months seemed to offer him the fittest opportunity. The whole contents of our chapter have already been commented upon in 2 Sam. v. 1, so that we need not here do more than refer to a few subordinate points.—Ver. 2. Instead of בִּי נִשָּׂא, that He (Jahve) had lifted up (נִשָּׂא, perf. Pi.), as in Sam. ver. 2, in the Chronicle we read בִּי נִשְׂאתָ לְמַעַלָּה, that his kingdom had been lifted up on high. The unusual form נִשְׂאתָ may be, according to the context, the third pers. fem. perf. Niph., נִשְׂאתָ having first been changed into נִשְׂאת, and thus contracted into נִשְׂאת; cf. Ew. § 194, *b*. In 2 Sam. xix. 43 the same form is the infin. abs. Niph. לְמַעַלָּה is here, as frequently in the Chronicles, used to intensify the expression: cf. xxii. 5, xxiii. 17, xxix. 3, 25; 2 Chron. i. 1, xvii. 12. With regard to the sons of David, see on iii. 5–8.

In the account of the victories over the Philistines, the statement (Sam. ver. 17) that David went down to the mountain-hold, which has no important connection with the main fact, and would have been for the readers of the Chronicle somewhat obscure, is exchanged in ver. 8 for the more general expression וַיֵּצֵא לַפְּנִיָּהֶם, “he went forth against them.” In ver. 14, the divine answer to David's question, whether he should march against the Philistines, runs thus: לֹא תֵעָלֶה אַחֲרֵיהֶם הָסֵב מֵעֲלֵיהֶם, Thou shalt not go up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the baca-bushes;—while in Sam. ver. 23,



on the contrary, we read : **לֹא תֵעָלָה הָסֵב אֶל-אֲחֵרֵיהֶם**, Thou shalt not go up (*i.e.* advance against the enemy to attack them in front); turn thee behind them (*i.e.* to their rear), and come upon them over against the baca-bushes. Bertheau endeavours to get rid of the discrepancy, by supposing that into both texts corruptions have crept through transcribers' errors. He conjectures that the text of Samuel was originally **לֹא תֵעָלָה אֲחֵרֵיהֶם**, while in the Chronicle a transposition of the words **עֲלֵיהֶם** and **אֲחֵרֵיהֶם** was occasioned by a copyist's error, which in turn resulted in the alteration of **עֲלֵיהֶם** into **מֵעֲלֵיהֶם**. This supposition, however, stands or falls with the presumption that by **לֹא תֵעָלָה** (Sam.) an attack is forbidden; but for that presumption no tenable grounds exist: it would rather involve a contradiction between the first part of the divine answer and the second. The last clause, "Come upon them from over against the baca-bushes," shows that the attack was not forbidden; all that was forbidden was the making of the attack by advancing straight forward: instead of that, they were to try to fall upon them in the rear, by making a circuit. The chronicler consequently gives us an explanation of the ambiguous words of 2d Samuel, which might easily be misunderstood. As David's question was doubtless expressed as it is in ver. 10, **הֲאֵעָלָה עַל הַפִּל**, the answer **לֹא תֵעָלָה** might be understood to mean, "Go not up against them, attack them not, but go away behind them;" but with that the following **וּבָאתָ לָהֶם וּגו'**, "Come upon them from the baca-bushes," did not seem to harmonize. The chronicler consequently explains the first clauses of the answer thus: "Go not up straight behind them," *i.e.* advance not against them so as to attack them openly, "but turn thyself away from them," *i.e.* strike off in such a direction as to turn their flank, and come upon them from the front of the baca-bushes. In this way the apparently contradictory texts are reconciled without the alteration of a word. In ver. 17, which is wanting in Samuel, the author concludes the account of these victories by the remark that they tended greatly to exalt the name of David among the nations. For similar reflections, cf. 2 Chron. xvii. 10, xx. 29, xiv. 13; and for **וַיֵּצֵא שָׁם**, 2 Chron. xxvi. 15.

Chap. xv. to xvi. 3. *The bringing of the ark into Jerusalem.*—In the parallel account, 2 Sam. vi. 11–23, only the main facts as to the transfer of the holy ark to Jerusalem, and the setting of it up in a tent erected for its reception on Mount Zion, are shortly narrated; but the author of the Chronicle elaborately

portrays the religious side of this solemn act, tells of the preparations which David had made for it, and gives a special enumeration of the Levites, who at the call of the king laboured with him to carry it out according to the precepts of the law. For this purpose he first gives an account of the preparations (xv. 1-24), viz. of the erection of a tent for the ark in the city of David (ver. 1), of the consultation of the king with the priests and Levites (vers. 2-13), and of the accomplishment of that which they had determined upon (vers. 14-29).—Ver. 1. In 2 Sam. vi. 12<sup>a</sup> the whole matter is introduced by a statement that the motive which had determined the king to bring the ark to Jerusalem, was his having heard of the blessing which the ark had brought upon the house of Obed-edom. In our narrative (ver. 1), the remark that David, while building his house in Jerusalem, prepared a place for the ark of God, and erected a tent for it, forms the transition from the account of his palace-building (xiv. 1 ff.) to the bringing in of the ark. The words, “he made unto himself houses,” do not denote, as Bertheau thinks, the building of other houses besides the palaces built with the help of King Hiram (xiv. 1). For עֲשָׂה is not synonymous with בָּנָה, but expresses the preparation of the building for a dwelling, and the words refer to the completion of the palace as a dwelling-place for the king and his wives and children. In thus making the palace which had been built fit for a habitation, David prepared a place for the ark, which, together with its tent, was to be placed in his palace. As to the reasons which influenced David in determining to erect a new tabernacle for the ark, instead of causing the old and sacred tabernacle to be brought from Gibeon to Jerusalem for the purpose, see the remarks introductory to 2 Sam. vi.

Ver. 2 ff. The reason for the preparations made on this occasion for the solemn progress is assigned in the statement that David had resolved to cause the ark to be carried by the Levites alone, because God had chosen them thereto; cf. Num. i. 50, iv. 15, vii. 9, x. 17. וְאֵלֶּיךָ, “at that time,” i.e. at the end of the three months, xiii. 14. לֹא לְשָׂאתָ, “there is not to bear,” i.e. no other shall bear the ark than the Levites. “By this arrangement, it is expressly acknowledged that it was contrary to the law to place it upon a cart; chap. xiii. 17” (Berth.). For this purpose, the king assembled “the whole of Israel” in Jerusalem, i.e. the elders, the rulers over thousands, the heads of families; cf. 2 Sam. vi. 15, where it is stated that כָּל-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל took part



in the solemn march.—Ver. 4. From among assembled Israel David then specially gathered together the heads of the priests and Levites, to determine upon the details of this solemn procession. “The sons of Aaron” are the high priests Zadok and Abiathar, ver. 11; and the “Levites” are the six princes named in vers. 5-10, with their brethren, viz. (vers. 5-7) the three heads of the families into which the tribe of Levi was divided, and which corresponded to the three sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, respectively (Ex. vi. 16): Uriel head of the Kohathites, Asaiah of the Merarites, and Joel head of the Gershonites, with their brethren. Kohath is first enumerated, because Aaron the chief of the priests was descended from Kohath, and because to the Kohathites there fell, on account of their nearer relationship to the priests, the duty of serving in that which is most holy, the bearing of the holiest vessels of the tabernacle. See Num. iv. 4, 15, vii. 9; as to Uriel, see on vi. 9; for Asaiah, see vi. 15; and as to Joel, see vi. 21. Then in vers. 8, 9 we have the heads of three other Kohathite families: Shemaiah, chief of the sons of Elizaphan, *i.e.* Elizaphan son of the Kohathite Uzziel (Ex. vi. 22); Eliel, chief of the sons of Hebron the Kohathite (Ex. vi. 18); and Amminadab, chief of the sons of Uzziel. The sons of Uzziel, consequently, were divided into two fathers’-houses: the one founded by Uzziel’s son Elizaphan, and named after him (ver. 8); the other founded by his other sons, and called by his name. Of the fathers’-houses here enumerated, four belong to Kohath, and one each to Merari and Gershon; and the Kohathites were called to take part in the solemn act in greater numbers than the Merarites and Gershonites, since the transport of the ark was the Kohathites’ special duty.—Ver. 11. Zadok of the line of Eleazar (chap. v. 27-41), and Abiathar of the line of Ithamar, were the heads of the two priestly lines, and at that time both held the office of high priest (xxiv. 3; cf. 2 Sam. xv. 24 ff., xx. 25). These priests and the six princes of the Levites just enumerated were charged by David to consecrate themselves with their brethren, and to bring up the ark of God to the place prepared for it. הִתְקַדְּשׁ, to consecrate oneself by removal of all that is unclean, washing of the body and of the clothes (Gen. xxxv. 2), and careful keeping aloof from every defilement, avoiding coition and the touching of unclean things; cf. Ex. xix. 10, 15. אֶל-הַמִּקְדָּשׁ, to (the place) which I have prepared for it. הַמִּקְדָּשׁ is a relative clause with אֶשֶׁר, construed with a

preposition as though it were a substantive: cf. similar constructions, xxix. 3, 2 Chron. xvi. 9, xxx. 18, Neh. viii. 10; and Ew. § 333, *b*.—Ver. 13. “For because in the beginning (*i.e.* when the ark was removed from the house of Amminadab, chap. xiii.) it was not you (*sc.* who brought it up), did Jahve our God make a breach upon us,” *sc.* by the slaying of Uzza, xiii. 11. In the first clause the predicate is wanting, but it may easily be supplied from the context. The contracted form לְמַבְרַאשׁוֹנָה, made up of לְמָה and מַבְרַאשׁוֹנָה, is unique, since מָה is so united only with small words, as in מִיּוֹה, Ex. iv. 2, מִלְכֶם, Isa. iii. 15; but we find מַתְלָאָה for מַה־תְּלָאָה, Mal. i. 13; cf. Ew. § 91, *d*. לְמָה here signifies: on account of this which = because; cf. Ew. § 222, *a*, and 353, *a*. “This was done, because we did not seek Him according to the right,” which required that the ark, upon which Jehovah sits enthroned, should be carried by Levites, and touched by no unholy person, or one who is not a priest (Num. iv. 15).—Ver. 14 f. The Levites consecrated themselves, and bare—as ver. 15 anticipatively remarks—the ark of God upon their shoulders, according to the prescription in Num. vii. 9, בְּמוֹטוֹת עֲלֵיהֶם, by means of poles upon them (the shoulders). מוֹטָה, the flexible pole used for carrying burdens, Num. xiii. 23. Those used to carry the ark are called בָּרִים in the Pentateuch, Ex. xxv. 13 ff.

Vers. 16–24. David gave the princes of the Levites a further charge to appoint singers with musical instruments for the solemn procession, which they accordingly did. כְּלֵי שִׁיר, instruments to accompany the song. In ver. 16 three kinds of these are named: נַבְלִים, *nablia*, ψαλτήρια, which Luther has translated by psalter, corresponds to the Arabic santir, which is an oblong box with a broad bottom and a somewhat convex sounding-board, over which strings of wire are stretched; an instrument something like the *cithara*. כַּנְרוֹת, harps, more properly lutes, as this instrument more resembled our lute than the harp, and corresponded to the Arabic catgut instrument *el'ūd* (العود); cf. Wetzstein in Delitzsch,

*Isaiah*, S. 702, der 2 Aufl., where, however, the statement that the santir is essentially the same as the old German cymbal, *vulgo* Hackebrett, is incorrect, and calculated to bring confusion into the matter, for the cymbal was an instrument provided with a small bell. מְצַלְצִים, the later word for צִלְצָלִים, cymbals, castanets; see on 2 Sam. vi. 5. מִשְׁמָעִים does not belong to the three before-mentioned instruments (Berth.), but, as is clear from vers. 19,



28, xvi. 5, 42, undoubtedly only to מְצַלְתִּים (Böttcher, *Neue krit. Achrenlese*, iii. S. 223); but the meaning is not “modulating,” but “sounding clear or loud,”—according to the proper meaning of the word, to make to hear. The infinitive clause לְהָרִים וְנו' belongs to the preceding sentence: “in order to heighten the sound (both of the song and of the instrumental music) to joy,” i.e. to the expression of joy. לְשִׂמְחָה is frequently used to express festive joy: cf. ver. 25, 2 Chron. xxiii. 18, xxix. 30; but also as early as in 2 Sam. vi. 12, 1 Sam. xviii. 6, Judg. xvi. 23, etc.—In vers. 17, 18 the names of the singers and players are introduced; then in vers. 19-21 they are named in connection with the instruments they played; and finally, in vers. 22-24, the other Levites and priests who took part in the celebration are mentioned. The three chief singers, the Kohathite Heman, the Gershonite Asaph, and the Merarite Ethan, form the first class. See on vi. 18, 24, and 29. To the second class (הַמְשִׁנִּים, cf. הַמְשִׁנָּה, 2 Kings xxiii. 4) belonged thirteen or fourteen persons, for in ver. 21 an Azaziah is named in the last series who is omitted in ver. 18; and it is more probable that his name has been dropped out of ver. 18 than that it came into our text, ver. 21, by an error. In ver. 18 בֶּן comes in after זְבִירָה by an error of transcription, as we learn from the ו before the following name, and from a comparison of vers. 20 and 25. The name יְעִיָּאל is in ver. 20 written יְעִיָּאל, *Yodh* being rejected; and in xvi. 5 it is יְעִיָּאל, which is probably only a transcriber's error, since יְעִיָּאל occurs along with it both in ver. 18 and in xvi. 5. The names Benaiah and Maaseiah, which are repeated in ver. 20, have been there transposed. All the other names in vers. 18 and 20 coincide.—Vers. 19-21. These singers formed three choirs, according to the instruments they played. Heman, Asaph, and Ethan played brazen cymbals לְהִשְׁמִיעַ (ver. 19); Benaiah and the seven who follow played *nablia* (*psalteria*) עַל עֲלָמוֹת (ver. 20); while the last six played lutes (harps) עַל הַשְּׁמִינִית לְנֶצַח (ver. 21). These three Hebrew words plainly denote different keys in singing, but are, owing to our small acquaintance with the music of the Hebrews, obscure, and cannot be interpreted with certainty. נֶצַח, going over from the fundamental signification glitter, shine, into the idea of outshining and superior capacity, overwhelming ability, might also, as a musical term, denote the conducting of the playing and singing as well as the leading of them. The signification to direct is here, however, excluded by the context, for the conductors were without doubt the

three chief musicians or bandmasters (*Capellenmeister*), Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, with the cymbals, not the psaltery and lute players belonging to the second rank. The conducting must therefore be expressed by לְהַשְׁמִיעַ, and this word must mean “in order to give a clear tone,” *i.e.* to regulate the tune and the tone of the singing, while לָנֶצַח signifies “to take the lead in playing;” cf. Del. on Ps. iv. 1. This word, moreover, is probably not to be restricted to the singers with the lutes, the third choir, but must be held to refer also to the second choir. The meaning then will be, that Heman, Asaph, and Ethan had cymbals to direct the song, while the other singers had partly psalteries, partly lutes, in order to play the accompaniment to the singing. The song of these two choirs is moreover distinguished and defined by עַל עֲלָמוֹת and עַל הַשְּׁמִינִית. These words specify the kind of voices; עַל עֲלָמוֹת after the manner of virgins, *i.e.* in the soprano; עַל הַשְּׁמִינִית, after the octave, *i.e.* in bass—*al ottava bassa*. See Del. on Ps. vi. 1, xlv. 1. In vers. 22–24 the still remaining priests who were engaged in the solemn procession are enumerated.—Ver. 22. “Chenaniah, the prince of the Levites, for the bearing, teacher in bearing; for he was instructed in it.” Since Chenaniah does not occur among the six princes of the Levites in vers. 5–10, and is called in ver. 27 הַשֵּׁר הַמִּשָּׁא, we must here also join בְּמִשָּׁא (as most editions punctuate the first בְּמִשָּׁא, while according to Norzi בְּמִשָּׁא is the right reading even in the first case) closely with שֵׁר־הַלְלוֹת, with the meaning that Chenaniah was captain of the Levites who had charge of the bearing of the ark, a chief of the Levites who bore it. The word מִשָּׁא is, however, very variously interpreted. The LXX. have ἀρχων τῶν ᾠδῶν, and the Vulgate, *prophetiæ præerat ad præcinentendam melodiam*; whence Luther translates: the master in song to teach them to sing. This translation cannot, however, be linguistically upheld; the word מִשָּׁא means only the bearing of the burden (Num. iv. 19, 27, etc.; 2 Chron. xxxv. 3), and a prophetic utterance of an oppressive or threatening character (Isa. xiii. 1, and xv. 1, etc.). But from this second signification neither the general meaning *prophetia*, nor, if we wish to go back upon the נִשָּׂא קוֹל, to raise the voice, the signification master of song, *supremus musicus* (Lavat.), or *qui principatum tenebat in cantu illo sublimiore* (Vatabl.), can be derived. The meaning *prophetia*, moreover, does not suit the context, and we must consequently, with Bertheau and others, hold fast the signification of bearing. We are determined in



favour of this, (1) by the context, which here treats of the bearing of the ark, for which מִשָּׁא is the usual word; and (2) by the circumstance that in xxvi. 29 Chenaniah is mentioned as the chief of the Levites for the external business, which goes to show, if the persons are identical, that he here had the oversight of the external business of the transport. יָסַר is not the inf. absol., which cannot stand directly for the *verb. finit.*; nor is it the imperf. of סָרַר in the signification of שָׁרַר (Bertheau and others), but a nominal formation from יָסַר (cf. on this formation as the most proper designation of the actor, Ew. § 152, *l*), in the signification teacher, which is shown by Isa. xxviii. 26 certainly to belong to יָסַר. The clause יָסַר בְּמִשָּׁא gives the explanation of the preceding בְּמִשָּׁא, or it specifies what Chenaniah had to do in the procession. He had to take the lead in the bearing because he was מְבִיָּן in it, *i.e.* was instructed in that which was to be observed in it.—In ver. 23 two doorkeepers for the ark are named; and in ver. 24, at the end of the enumeration of the Levites who were busied about the transport, two additional names are mentioned as those of men who had the same duty. The business of these doorkeepers was, as Seb. Schmidt has already remarked on 2 Sam. vi., *non tam introitum aperire arcae, quam custodire, ne ad eam irrumperetur*. Between these two pairs of doorkeepers in ver. 24, the priests, seven in number, who blew the trumpets, are named. The Kethibh מַחֲצִירִים is to be read מַחֲצִצִּירִים, a denom. from חֲצִצְרָה; the Keri מַחֲצִירִים is Hiph. of חֲצַר, as in 2 Chron. vii. 6, xiii. 14, and xxix. 28. In 2 Chron. v. 12 and 13, on the contrary, מַחֲצִירִים is partic. Pi. The blowing of the silver trumpets by the priests in this solemn procession rests on the prescription in Num. x. 1-10, which see. The place assigned to these trumpet-blowing priests was either immediately before the ark, like the priestly trumpeters in the march round Jericho (Josh. vi. 4, 6), or immediately after it. For, that these priests entered in the immediate vicinity of the ark, may be inferred from the fact that before and behind them were doorkeepers of the ark. The procession, then, was probably arranged in this way: (1) the singers and players in front, in three divisions; (2) Chenaniah, the captain of the bearers; (3) two doorkeepers; (4) the priests with the trumpets immediately before or after the ark; (5) two doorkeepers; (6) the king with the elders and captains of thousands (ver. 25). The two doorkeepers Obededom and Jehiah (יְחִיָּה), Rashi, Berth., and others consider to be the

same persons as the singers Obedom and Jeiel (יְעִיֵּאל), supposing that the latter name is wrongly written in one of the passages. This, however, is incorrect, for the identity of the name Obedom is no sufficient ground for supposing the persons to be the same, since in xvi. 38 the singer Obedom and the doorkeeper Obedom the son of Jeduthun seem to be distinguished. And besides that, Obedom and his colleagues could not possibly at the same time as porters precede, and as singers come after, the priests and the ark, and there is consequently no reason to doubt that the name יְחִיָּה is correct.

Ver. 25—chap. xvi. 3 narrate the further proceedings connected with the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem; cf. 2 Sam. vi. 12–19. By the words יְיָהִי דָוִיד וְגו' the account of the execution of the design is connected with the statements as to the preparations (vers. 2–24): “And so were David . . . who went to bring up the ark.”—Ver. 26. When God had helped the Levites who bare the ark of the covenant of Jahve, they offered seven bullocks and seven rams, *i.e.* after the journey had been happily accomplished. Instead of this, in 2 Sam. vi. 13, the offering which was made at the commencement of the journey to consecrate it is mentioned; see on the passage. The discrepancy between ver. 27 and 2 Sam. vi. 14 is more difficult of explanation. Instead of the words דָּוִד מְכַבֵּד בְּכָל־עוֹ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, David danced with all his might before Jahve, we read in the Chronicle דָּוִד מְכַרְבֵּל בְּמַעֲיָל בּוֹן, David was clothed with a robe of byssus. But since מְכַרְבֵּל differs from מְכַבֵּד only in the last two letters, and כַּר might be easily exchanged for כָּל, we may suppose that מְכַרְבֵּל has arisen out of מְכַבֵּד. Bertheau accordingly says: “Any one who remembered that in this verse David’s clothing was spoken of might write מְכַרְבֵּל as מְכַבֵּד, while the words עוֹ לִפְנֵי, which were probably illegible, were conjectured to be בְּמַעֲיָל בּוֹן.” This opinion would be worthy of consideration, if only the other discrepancies between the Chronicle and Samuel were thereby made more comprehensible. That, besides David, the bearers of the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah are mentioned, Bertheau thinks can be easily explained by what precedes; but how can that explain the absence of the לִפְנֵי יְהוָה of Samuel from our text? Bertheau passes this over in silence; and yet it is just the absence of these words in our text which shows that מְכַרְבֵּל בְּמַעֲיָל בּוֹן cannot have arisen from an orthographical error and the illegibility of עוֹ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, since מְכַרְבֵּל must have been purposely



omitted. Böttcher's opinion (*N. kr. Achrenl.* iii. S. 224), that the Chaldaizing מְרַבֵּל can scarcely have been written by the chronicler, because it is not at all like his pure Hebrew style, and that consequently a later reader, who considered it objectionable that a Levite should dance, and perhaps impossible that the bearers should (forgetting that they were released in turn from performing their office), while holding as closely to the letter of the text as possible, corrected מְרַבֵּל בָּלָעוּ into מְרַבֵּל בּוֹן, and that the same person, or perhaps a later, added besides וְהַמְשִׁירִים וְכִנְנִיָּה, is still less probable. In that way, indeed, we get no explanation of the main difficulty, viz. how the words from הַלְלוּם to הַמְשִׁירִים came into the text of the Chronicle, instead of the לפני יהוה of Samuel. The supposition that originally the words from וְהַמְשִׁירִים to וְדָוִד מְרַבֵּר בָּלָעוּ וְכָל-הַלְלוּם stood in the text, when of course the statement would be, not only that David danced with all his might, but also that all the Levites who bore the ark danced, is in the highest degree unsatisfactory; for this reason, if for no other, that we cannot conceive how the singers could play the *nebel* and the *kinnor* and dance at the same time, since it is not alternations between singing and playing, and dancing and leaping that are spoken of. The discrepancy can only be got rid of by supposing that both narratives are abridged extracts from a more detailed statement, which contained, besides David's dancing, a completer account of the clothing of the king, and of the Levites who took part in the procession. Of these the author of the books of Samuel has communicated only the two characteristic facts, that David danced with all his might before the Lord, and wore an ephod of white; while the author of the Chronicle gives us an account of David's clothing and that of the Levites, while he omits David's dancing. This he does, not because he was scandalized thereby, for he not only gives a hint of it in ver. 29, but mentions it in xiii. 8, which is parallel to 2 Sam. vi. 5; but because the account of the king's clothing, and of that of the Levites, in so far as the religious meaning of the solemn progress was thereby brought out, appeared to him more important for his design of depicting at length the religious side of the procession. For the clothing of the king had a priestly character; and not only the ephod of white (see on 2 Sam. vi. 14), but also the *me'il* of בּוֹן, white byssus, distinguished the king as head of a priestly people. The *me'il* as such was, it is true, an outer gar-

ment which every Israelite might wear, but it was worn usually only by persons of rank and distinction (cf. 1 Sam. ii. 19, xv. 27, xviii. 4, xxiv. 5; Ezra ix. 3; Job xxix. 14), and white byssus was the material for the priests' garments. Among the articles of clothing which the law prescribed for the official dress of the simple priest (Ex. xxviii. 40) the *מַעִיל* was not included, but only the *כְּתוֹנֶת*, a tight close-fitting coat; but the priests were not thereby prevented from wearing a *me'il* of byssus on special festive occasions, and we are informed in 2 Chron. v. 12 that even the Levites and singers were on such occasions clad in byssus. In this way the statement of our verse, that David and all the Levites and bearers of the ark, the singers, and the captain Chenaniah, had put on *me'ilim* of byssus, is justified and shown to be in accordance with the circumstances. The words therefore are to be so understood. The words from *וְכָל-הַלְוִיִּים* to *הָעֹשֶׂה הַמִּשְׁחָה* are co-ordinate with *וַיַּדְוִיד*, and after them we must supply in thought *בְּמַעִיל בִּיזָה*, and may translate the verse thus: "David was clothed in a *me'il* of byssus, as also were all the Levites," etc. No objection can be taken to the *הָעֹשֶׂה הַמִּשְׁחָה* when we have the article with a *nomen regens*, for cases of this kind frequently occur where the article, as here, has a strong retrospective force; cf. Ew. § 290, *d*. On the contrary, *הַמִּשְׁחָה* after *הָעֹשֶׂה* is meaningless, and can only have come into the text, like *בֵּן* in ver. 18, by an error of the transcriber, although it was so read as early as the time of the LXX. For the last clause, cf. 2 Sam. vi. 14.—Ver. 28 is, as compared with 2 Sam. vi. 5, somewhat enlarged by the enumeration of the individual instruments.—Ver. 29 and chap. xvi. 1–3 agree in substance with 2 Sam. vi. 15–19*a*, only some few words being explained: *e.g.* *מִרְקָד וּמִשְׁחָק*, ver. 29, instead of *מִפֶּה וּמִבְּרִיר* (Sam.), and *אֶרֶן בְּרִית* *אֶרֶן* instead of *אֶרֶן יְהוָה* (Sam.); see the commentary on 2 Sam. *l.c.*

Chap. xvi. 4–42. *The religious festival, and the arrangement of the sacred service before the ark of the covenant in the city of David.*—This section is not found in 2d Samuel, where the conclusion of this whole description (ver. 43, Chron.) follows immediately upon the feasting of the people by the king, vers. 19*b* and 20.—Ver. 46. When the solemnity of the transfer of the ark, the sacrificial meal, and the dismissal of the people with a blessing, and a distribution of food, were ended, David set in order the service of the Levites in the holy tent on Zion. He appointed before the ark, from among the Levites, servants to



praise and celebrate God, *i.e.* singers and players to sing psalms as a part of the regular worship. לְהַזְכִּיר, literally, “in order to bring into remembrance,” is not to praise in general, but is to be interpreted according to the לְהַזְכִּיר in the superscription of Ps. xxxviii. and lxx., by which these psalms are designated as the appointed prayers at the presentation of the Azcarah of the meat-offering (Lev. ii. 2). הַזְכִּיר accordingly is a *denom.* from אֶזְכְּרָה, to present the Azcarah (cf. Del. on Ps. xxxviii. 1), and is in our verse to be understood of the recital of these prayer-songs with musical accompaniment. הוֹדוֹת, to confess, refers to the psalms in which invocation and acknowledgment of the name of the Lord predominates, and הַלֵּל to those in which praise (Hallelujah) is the prominent feature. In vers. 5 and 6 there follow the names of the Levites appointed for this purpose, who have all been already mentioned in xv. 19-21 as accompanying the ark in its transmission; but all who are there spoken of are not included in our list here. Of the chief singers only Asaph is mentioned, Heman and Ethan being omitted; of the singers and players of the second rank, only nine; six of the eight nebel-players (xv. 20. יַעֲזִיאל is a transcriber’s error for יַעֲזִיאל, xv. 18), and only three of the six kinnor-players; while instead of seven trumpet-blowing priests only two are named, viz. Benaiah, one of those seven, and Jehaziel, whose name does not occur in xv. 24.—Ver. 7. On that day David first committed it to Asaph and his sons to give thanks to Jahve. נָתַן is to be connected with בָּרַךְ, which is separated from it by several words, and denotes to hand over to, here to commit to, to enjoin upon, since that which David committed to Asaph was the carrying out of a business which he enjoined, not an object which may be given into the hand. בְּיָוֶם הַהוּא is accented by אֶזְכְּרָה, “at the beginning;” “at first,” to bring out the fact that liturgical singing was then first introduced. אֶזְכְּרָה, the brethren of Asaph, are the Levites appointed to the same duty, whose names are given in vers. 5, 6. But in order to give a more exact description of the הוֹדוֹת לַיהוָה committed to Asaph in vers. 8-36, a song of thanks and praise is given, which the Levites were to sing as part of the service with instrumental accompaniment. It is not expressly said that this song was composed by David for this purpose; but if Asaph with his singers was to perform the service committed to him, he must have been provided with the songs of praise (psalms) which were necessary for this purpose; and if David were in any way the

founder of the liturgical psalmody, he, as a richly endowed psalm-singer, would doubtless compose the necessary liturgical psalms. These considerations render it very probable that the following psalm was a hymn composed by David for the liturgical song in the public worship. The psalm is as follows:—

- Ver. 8. Give thanks unto Jahve ; preach His name ;  
Make known His deeds among the peoples :
9. Sing to Him, play to Him ;  
Meditate upon all His wondrous works.
10. Glory ye in His holy name :  
Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.
11. Seek ye the Lord, and His strength ;  
Seek His face continually.
12. Remember His wonders which He has done ;  
His wondrous works, and the judgments of His mouth ;
13. O seed of Israel, His servants,  
Sons of Jacob, His chosen.
14. He, Jahve, is our God ;  
His judgments go forth over all the earth.
15. Remember eternally His covenant,  
The word which He commanded to a thousand generations :
16. Which He made with Abraham,  
And His oath to Isaac ;
17. And caused it to stand to Jacob for a law,  
To Israel as an everlasting covenant ;
18. Saying, “ To thee I give the land Canaan,  
As the heritage meted out to you.”
19. When ye were still a people to be numbered,  
Very few, and strangers therein,
20. And they wandered from nation to nation,  
From one kingdom to another people,
21. He suffered no man to oppress them,  
And reprov'd kings for their sake :
22. “ Touch not mine anointed ones,  
And do my prophets no harm.”
23. Sing unto Jahve, all the lands ;  
Show forth from day to day His salvation.
24. Declare His glory among the heathen,  
Among all people His wondrous works.
25. For great is Jahve, and greatly to be praised ;  
And to be feared is He above all the gods.
26. For all the gods of the people are idols ;  
And Jahve has made the heavens.
27. Majesty and splendour is before Him ;  
Strength and joy are in His place.



28. Give unto Jahve, ye kindreds of the people,  
Give unto Jahve glory and strength.
29. Give unto Jahve the honour of His name :  
Bring an offering, and come before His presence ;  
Worship the Lord in the holy ornaments.
30. Tremble before Him, all the lands ;  
Then will the earth stand fast unshaking.
31. Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice ;  
And they will say among the heathen, Jahve is King.
32. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof ;  
Let the field exult, and all that is thereon.
33. Then shall the trees of the wood rejoice  
Before the Lord ; for He comes to judge the earth.
34. Give thanks unto Jahve, for He is good ;  
For His mercy endureth for ever.
35. And say, " Save us, God of our salvation :"  
And gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen,  
To give thanks to Thy holy name,  
To glory in Thy praise.
36. Blessed be Jahve, the God of Israel,  
From everlasting to everlasting.

*And all the people said Amen, and praised Jahve.*

This hymn forms a connected and uniform whole. Beginning with a summons to praise the Lord, and to seek His face (vers. 8-11), the singer exhorts his people to remember the wondrous works of the Lord (vers. 12-14), and the covenant which He made with the patriarchs to give them the land of Canaan (vers. 15-18), and confirms his exhortation by pointing out how the Lord, in fulfilment of His promise, had mightily and gloriously defended the patriarchs (vers. 19-22). But all the world also are to praise Him as the only true and almighty God (vers. 23-27), and all peoples do homage to Him with sacrificial gifts (vers. 28-30); and that His kingdom may be acknowledged among the heathen, even inanimate nature will rejoice at His coming to judgment (vers. 31-33). In conclusion, we have again the summons to thankfulness, combined with a prayer that God would further vouchsafe salvation; and a doxology rounds off the whole (vers. 34-36). When we consider the contents of the whole hymn, it is manifest that it contains nothing which would be at all inconsistent with the belief that it was composed by David for the above-mentioned religious service. There is nowhere any reference to the condition of the people in exile, nor yet to their circumstances after the exile. The subject of the praise to

which Israel is summoned is the covenant which God made with Abraham, and the wonderful way in which the patriarchs were led. The summons to the heathen to acknowledge Jahve as alone God and King of the world, and to come before His presence with sacrificial offerings, together with the thought that Jahve will come to judge the earth, belong to the Messianic hopes. These had formed themselves upon the foundation of the promises given to the patriarchs, and the view they had of Jahve as Judge of the heathen, when He led His people out of Egypt, so early, that even in the song of Moses at the Red Sea (Ex. xv.), and the song of the pious Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 1-10), we meet with the first germs of them; and what we find in David and the prophets after him are only further developments of these.

Yet all the later commentators, with the exception of Hitzig, *die Psalmen*, ii. S. ix. f., judge otherwise as to the origin of this festal hymn. Because the first half of it (vers. 8-22) recurs in Ps. cv. 1-15, the second (vers. 23-33) in Ps. xcvi., and the conclusion (vers. 34-36) in Ps. cvi. 1, 47, 48, it is concluded that the author of the Chronicle compounded the hymn from these three psalms, in order to reproduce the festive songs which were heard after the ark had been brought in, in the same free way in which the speeches in Thucydides and Livy reproduce what was spoken at various times. Besides the later commentators, Aug. Koehler (in the *Luth. Ztschr.* 1867, S. 289 ff.) and C. Ehrt (*Abfassungszeit und Abschluss des Psalters*, Leipz. 1869, S. 41 ff.) are of the same opinion. The possibility that our hymn may have arisen in this way cannot be denied; for such a supposition would be in so far consistent with the character of the Chronicle, as we find in it speeches which have not been reported *verbatim* by the hearers, but are given in substance or in freer outline by the author of our Chronicle, or, as is more probable, by the author of the original documents made use of by the chronicler. But this view can only be shown to be correct if it corresponds to the relation in which our hymn may be ascertained to stand to the three psalms just mentioned. Besides the fact that its different sections are again met with scattered about in different psalms, the grounds for supposing that our hymn is not an original poem are mainly the want of connection in the transition from ver. 22 to ver. 23, and from ver. 33 to ver. 34; the fact that in ver. 35 we have a verse referring to the Babylonian exile borrowed from Ps. cvi.; and that



ver. 36 is even the doxology of the fourth book of Psalms, taken to be a component part of the psalm. These two latter grounds would be decisive, if the facts on which they rest were well authenticated. If ver. 36 really contained only the doxology of the fourth book of Psalms,—which, like the doxologies of the first, second, and third books (Ps. xli. 14, lxxii. 18, 19, and lxxxix. 53), was merely formally connected with the psalm, without being a component part of it,—there could be no doubt that the author of the Chronicle had taken the conclusion of his hymn from our collection of psalms, as these doxologies only date from the originators of our collection. But this is not the state of the case. The 48th verse of the 106th Psalm does, it is true, occupy in our Psalter the place of the doxology to the fourth book, but belonged, as Bertheau also acknowledges, originally to the psalm itself. For not only is it different in form from the doxologies of the first three books, not having the double  $\text{אָמֵן וְאָמֵן}$  with which these books close, but it concludes with the simple  $\text{אָמֵן הַלְלוּ־יָהּ}$ . If the  $\text{אָמֵן וְאָמֵן}$  connected by  $\text{ו}$  is, in the Old Testament language, exclusively confined to these doxologies, which thus approach the language of the liturgical Beracha of the second temple, as Del. Ps. p. 15 rightly remarks, while in Num. v. 22 and Neh. viii. 6 only  $\text{אָמֵן אָמֵן}$  without copulative  $\text{ו}$  occurs, it is just this peculiarity of the liturgical Beracha which is wanting, both in the concluding verse of the 106th Psalm and in ver. 36 of our festal hymn. Moreover, the remainder of the verse in question,—the last clause of it, “And let all the people say Amen, Halleluiah,”—does not suit the hypothesis that the verse is the doxology appended to the conclusion of the fourth book by the collector of the Psalms, since, as Hengstenberg in his commentary on the psalm rightly remarks, “it is inconceivable that the people should join in that which, as mere closing doxology of a book, would have no religious character;” and “the praise in the conclusion of the psalm beautifully coincides with its commencement, and the Halleluiah of the end is shown to be an original part of the psalm by its correspondence with the beginning.”<sup>1</sup> The last verse of our hymn does not therefore

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau also rightly says: “If in Ps. lxxii. (as also in Ps. lxxxix. and xli.) the author of the doxology himself says Amen, while in Ps. cvi. 48 the saying of the Amen is committed to the people, this difference can only arise from the fact that Ps. cvi. originally concluded with the exhortation to say Amen.” Hitzig speaks with still more decision, *die Ps.* (1865), ii. S. x.: “If (in Ps.

presuppose the existence of the collection of psalms, nor in ver. 35 is there any indubitable reference to the exilic time. The words, "Say, 'Save us, Thou God of our salvation; gather us together, and deliver us from among the heathen,'" do not presuppose that the people had been previously led away into the Chaldean exile, but only the dispersion of prisoners of war, led away captive into an enemy's land after a defeat. This usually occurred after each defeat of Israel by their enemies, and it was just such cases Solomon had in view in his prayer, 1 Kings viii. 46-50.

The decision as to the origin of this festal hymn, therefore, depends upon its internal characteristics, and the result of a comparison of the respective texts. The song in itself forms, as Hitz. *l.c.* S. 19 rightly judges, "a thoroughly coherent and organic whole. The worshippers of Jahve are to sing His praise in memory of His covenant which He made with their fathers, and because of which He protected them (vers. 18-22). But all the world also are to praise Him, the only true God (vers. 23-27); the peoples are to come before Him with gifts; yea, even inanimate nature is to pay the King and Judge its homage (vers. 28-33). Israel—and with this the end returns to the beginning—is to thank Jahve, and invoke His help against the heathen (vers. 34 and 35)." This exposition of the symmetrical disposition of the psalm is not rendered questionable by the objections raised by Koehler, *l.c.*; nor can the recurrence of the individual parts of it in three different psalms of itself at all prove that in the Chronicle we have not the original form of the hymn. "There is nothing to hinder us from supposing that the author of Ps. xcvi. may be the same as the author of Ps. cv. and cvi.; but even another might be induced by example to appropriate the first half of 1 Chron. xvi. 8 ff., as his predecessor had appropriated

cvi.) ver. 47 is the conclusion, a proper ending is wanting; while ver. 48, on the contrary, places the psalm on a level with Ps. ciii.-cv., cvii. Who can believe that the author himself, for the purpose of ending the fourth book with ver. 48, caused the psalm to extend to the 48th verse? In the Chronicle, the people whom the verse mentions are present from xv. 3-xvi. 2, while in the psalm no one can see how they should come in there. Whether the verse belong to the psalm or not, the turning to all the people, and the causing the people to say Amen, Amen, instead of the writer, has no parallel in the Psalms, and is explicable only on the supposition that it comes from the Chronicle. Afterwards a Diaskeuast might be satisfied to take the verse as the boundary-stone of a book."



the second, and it would naturally occur to him to supply from his own resources the continuation which had been already taken away and made use of" (Hitz. *l.c.*). A similar phenomenon is the recurrence of the second half of Ps. xl. 17 ff. as an independent psalm, Ps. lxx. "But it is also readily seen," continues Hitzig, "how easily the psalmist might separate the last three verses from each other (vers. 34 to 36 of the Chronicle), and set them as a frame round Ps. cvi. Ver. 34 is not less suitable in the Chronicle for the commencement of a paragraph than in Ps. cvii., while ver. 36 would admit of no continuation, but was the proper end. On the other hand, we can scarcely believe that the chronicler compiled his song first from Ps. cv., then from Ps. xcvi., and lastly from Ps. cvi., striking off from this latter only the beginning and the end."

Finally, if we compare the text of our hymn with the text of these psalms, the divergences are of such a sort that we cannot decide with certainty which of the two texts is the original. To pass over such critically indifferent variations as *פִּיהוּ*, Chron. ver. 12, for *פִּיו*, Ps. cv. 5; the omission of the *nota acc.* *אֵת*, Chron. ver. 18, compared with Ps. cv. 10, and *vice versa* in Ps. xcvi. 3 and Chron. ver. 24; *עֲצֵי הַיָּעַר*, Chron. ver. 33, instead of *בְּלִעְצֵי הַיָּעַר*, Ps. xcvi. 12,—the chronicler has in *יִצְחָק*, ver. 16, instead of *יִשְׁחָק*, Ps. cv. 9, and *יַעֲלִין*, ver. 32, instead of *יַעֲלוּ*, Ps. xcvi. 12, the earlier and more primitive form; in *אֶל תִּרְעוּ*, Chron. ver. 22, instead of *לִבְיָאֵי אֶל תִּרְעוּ*, Ps. cv. 15, a quite unusual construction; and in *מִיּוֹם אֶל יוֹם*, ver. 23, the older form (cf. Num. xxx. 15), instead of *מִיּוֹם לְיוֹם*, Ps. xcvi. 2, as in Esth. iii. 7; while, on the other hand, instead of the unexampled phrase *הַנִּיחַ אָדָם לְעִשְׂקָם*, Ps. cv. 14, there stands in the Chronicle the usual phrase *הַנִּיחַ לְאִישׁ*, and *שָׁרִי* in Ps. xcvi. 12 is the poetical form for the *הַיָּעָרָה* of Chron. ver. 32. More important are the wider divergences: not so much *זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל*, Chron. ver. 13, for *זֶרַע אַבְרָהָם*, Ps. cv. 6, in which latter case it is doubtful whether the *עֲבָדָיו* refers to the patriarchs or to the people, and consequently, as the *parallelismus membrorum* demands the latter reference, *יִשְׂרָאֵל* is clearly the more correct and intelligible; but rather the others, viz. *זָכְרוּ*, Chron. ver. 15, for *זָכֹר*, Ps. cv. 8; since *זָכְרוּ* not only corresponds to the *זָכְרוּ* of ver. 11, but also to the use made of the song for the purposes stated in the Chronicle; while, on the contrary, *זָכֹר* of the psalm corresponds to the object of the psalm, viz. to exalt the covenant grace shown to the patriarchs. Connected with this also is the

reading בְּהִיוֹתְכֶם, "when ye (sons of Jacob) were" (ver. 19), instead of בְּהִיוֹתָם, Ps. cv. 12, "when they (the patriarchs) were," since the narrative of what the Lord had done demanded בְּהִיוֹתָם. Now the more likely the reference of the words to the patriarchs was to suggest itself, the more unlikely is the hypothesis of an alteration into בְּהִיוֹתְכֶם; and the text of the Chronicle being the more difficult, is consequently to be regarded as the earlier. Moreover, the divergences of vers. 23 to 33 of our hymn from Ps. xcvi. are such as would result from its having been prepared for the above-mentioned solemn festival. The omission of the two strophes, "Sing unto Jahve a new song, sing unto Jahve, bless His name" (Ps. xcvi. 1a and 2a), in ver. 23 of the Chronicle might be accounted for by regarding that part of our hymn as an abridgment by the chronicler of the original song, when connecting it with the preceding praise of God, were it certain on other grounds that Ps. xcvi. was the original; but if the chronicler's hymn be the original, we may just as well believe that this section was amplified when it was made into an independent psalm. A comparison of ver. 33 (Chron.) with the end of the 96th Psalm favours this last hypothesis, for in the Chronicle the repetition of בִּי בָא is wanting, as well as the second hemistich of Ps. xcvi. 13. The whole of the 13th verse recurs, with a single בִּי בָא, at the end of the 98th Psalm (ver. 9), and the thought is borrowed from the Davidic Psalm ix. 9. The strophes in the beginning of Ps. xcvi., which are omitted from Chron. ver. 16, often recur. The phrase, "Sing unto Jahve a new song," is met with in Ps. xxxiii. 3, xcvi. 1, and cxlix. 1, and שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ in Ps. xl. 4, a Davidic psalm. בָּרְכוּ אֱתֵשְׁמוֹ is also met with in Ps. c. 4; and still more frequently בָּרְכוּ אֱתֵיהוָה, in Ps. ciii. 20, 22, cxxxiv. 1, and elsewhere, even as early as Deborah's song, Judg. v. 2, 9; while שִׁיר לַיהוָה occurs in the song of Moses, Ex. xv. 1. Since, then, the strophes of the 96th Psalm are only reminiscences of, and phrases which we find in, the oldest religious songs of the Israelites, it is clear that Ps. xcvi. is not an original poem. It is rather the re-grouping of well-known and current thoughts; and the fact that it is so, favours the belief that all which this psalm contains at the beginning and end, which the Chronicle does not contain, is merely an addition made by the poet who transformed this part of the chronicler's hymn into an independent psalm for liturgical purposes. This purpose clearly appears in such variations as וְתִפְאֶרֶת בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ, Ps. xcvi. 6, instead



of  $\text{וְחִדְוָה בְּמִקְדָּמוֹ}$ , Chron. ver. 27, and  $\text{וּבְאוּ לְחַצְרוֹתָיו}$ , Ps. xcvi. 8, instead of  $\text{וּבְאוּ לְפָנָיו}$ , Chron. ver. 29. Neither the word  $\text{מִקְדָּשׁ}$  nor the mention of "courts" is suitable in a hymn sung at the consecration of the holy tent in Zion, for at that time the old national sanctuary with the altar in the court (the tabernacle) still stood in Gibeon. Here, therefore, the text of the Chronicle corresponds to the circumstances of David's time, while the mention of  $\text{מִקְדָּשׁ}$  and of courts in the psalm presupposes the existence of the temple with its courts as the sanctuary of the people of Israel. Now a post-exilic poet would scarcely have paid so much attention to this delicate distinction between times and circumstances as to alter, in the already existing psalms, out of which he compounded this festal hymn, the expressions which were not suitable to the Davidic time. Against this, the use of the unusual word  $\text{חִדְוָה}$ , joy, which occurs elsewhere only in Neh. x. 8, 10, and in Chaldee in Ezra vi. 18, is no valid objection, for the use of the verb  $\text{חָדָה}$  as early as Ex. xviii. 9 and Job iii. 6 shows that the word does not belong to the later Hebrew. The discrepancy also between vers. 30 and 31 and Ps. xcvi. 9-11, namely, the omission in the Chronicle of the strophe  $\text{יֵרֵן עַמִּים בְּמִישָׁרִים}$  (Ps. ver. 10), and the placing of the clause  $\text{וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּנוֹת יְהוָה מִלֵּךְ}$  after  $\text{וַתִּגַּל הָאָרֶץ}$  (Chron. ver. 31, cf. Ps. xcvi. 10), does not really prove anything as to the priority of Ps. xcvi. Hitzig, indeed, thinks that since by the omission of the one member the parallelism of the verses is disturbed, and a triple verse appears where all the others are double merely, and because by this alteration the clause, "Say among the people, Jahve is King," has come into an apparently unsuitable position, between an exhortation to the heaven and earth to rejoice, and the roaring of the sea and its fulness, this clause must have been unsuitably placed by a copyist's error. But the transposition cannot be so explained; for not only is that one member of the verse misplaced, but also the  $\text{אָמְרוּ}$  of the psalm is altered into  $\text{וַיֹּאמְרוּ}$ , and moreover, we get no explanation of the omission of the strophe  $\text{יֵרֵן וְגו'}$ . If we consider  $\text{וַיֹּאמְרוּ}$  (with consecutive), "then will they say," we see clearly that it corresponds to  $\text{אֲזַי יֵרָנְנוּ וְגו'}$  in ver. 33; and in ver. 30 the recognition of Jahve's kingship over the peoples is represented as the issue and effect of the joyful exultation of the heaven and earth, just as in vers. 32 and 33 the joyful shouting of the trees of the field before Jahve as He comes to judge the earth, is regarded as the result of the roaring of the sea and the gladness of the fields. The

אָמַר of the psalm, on the other hand, the summons to the Israelites to proclaim that Jahve is King among the peoples, is, after the call, "Let the whole earth tremble before Him," a somewhat tame expression; and after it, again, we should not expect the much stronger אֵף תִּבְכּוּ וְגו'. When we further consider that the clause which follows in the Chronicle, "He will judge the people in uprightness," is a reminiscence of Ps. ix. 9, we must hold the text of the Chronicle to be here also the original, and the divergences in Ps. xcvi. for alterations, which were occasioned by the changing of a part of our hymn into an independent psalm. Finally, there can be no doubt as to the priority of the chronicler's hymn in vers. 34-36. The author of the Chronicle did not require to borrow the liturgical formula הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב וְגו' from Ps. cvi. 1, for it occurs in as complete a form in Ps. cvii. 1, cxviii. 1, 29, cxxxvi. 1, and, not to mention 2 Chron. v. 13, vii. 3, xx. 21, is a current phrase with Jeremiah (xxxiii. 11), and is without doubt an ancient liturgical form. Vers. 35 and 36, too, contain such divergences from Ps. cvi. 47 and 48, that it is in the highest degree improbable that they were borrowed from that psalm. Not only is the prayer הוֹשִׁיעֵנו וְגו' introduced by אָמַר, but also, instead of יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ of the psalm, we have אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל; and to וְקִבְּצֵנוּ, וְהַצִּילֵנוּ is added,—a change which causes the words to lose the reference to the Chaldean exile contained in the text of the Psalms. The post-exilic author of the Chronicle would scarcely have obliterated this reference, and certainly would not have done so in such a delicate fashion, had he taken the verse from Ps. cvi. A much more probable supposition is, that the post-exilic author of the 106th Psalm appropriated the concluding verse of David's to his well-known hymn, and modified it to make it fit into his poem. Indubitable instances of such alterations are to be found in the conclusion, where the statement of the chronicler, that all the people said Amen and praised Jahve, is made to conform to the psalm, beginning as it does with Halleluiah, by altering וַיֹּאמְרוּ into וַיִּזְמְרוּ, "and let them say," and of יהלל ליהוה into הִלְלוּ־יָהּ.

On the whole, therefore, we must regard the opinion that David composed our psalm for the above-mentioned festival as by far the most probable. The psalm itself needs no further commentary; but compare Delitzsch on the parallel psalms and parts of psalms.

Vers. 37-43. *Division of the Levites for the management of*



*the public worship.*—At the same time as he set up the ark in the tent erected for it on Mount Zion, David had prepared a new locality for the public worship. The Mosaic tabernacle had continued, with its altar of burnt-offering, to be the general place of worship for the congregation of Israel even during the long period when the ark was separated from it, and it was even yet to be so; and it became necessary, in order to carry on the religious service in both of these sanctuaries, to divide the staff of religious officials: and this David now undertook.—Ver. 37. Before the ark he left Asaph with his brethren (לְפָנֵי הָאֲרוֹן, *accus. obj.*, according to the later usage), to serve, to minister there continually. לְכָבֶד־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ, “according to the matter of the day on its day,” *i.e.* according to the service necessary for each day; cf. for this expression, Ex. v. 13, 19, xvi. 4, etc. “And Obed-edom and their brethren.” In these words there is a textual error: the plural suffix in אֲחֵיהֶם shows that after עֲבֶד־הָאֲרוֹן at least one name has been dropped out. But besides that, the relation in which the words, “and Obed-edom the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah, to be porters,” stand to the preceding clause, “and Obed-edom and their brethren,” is obscure. Against the somewhat general idea, that the words are to be taken in an explicative sense, “and Obed-edom indeed,” etc., the objection suggests itself, that Obed-edom is here defined to be the son of Jeduthun, and would seem to be thereby distinguished from the preceding Obed-edom. In addition to that, in xv. 21 an Obed-edom is mentioned among the singers, and in ver. 24 one of the doorkeepers bears that name, and they are clearly distinguished as being different persons (see p. 206). On the other hand, however, the identity of the two Obed-edom in our verse is supported by the fact that in chap. xxvi. 4-8 the doorkeepers Obed-edom with his sons and brethren number sixty-two, which comes pretty nearly up to the number mentioned in our verse, viz. sixty-eight. Yet we cannot regard this circumstance as sufficient to identify the two, and must leave the question undecided, because the text of our verse is defective. Jeduthun the father of Obed-edom is different from the chief musician Jeduthun (= Ethan); for the chief musician is a descendant of Merari, while the doorkeeper Jeduthun belongs to the Korahites (*i.e.* Kohathites): see on xxvi. 4.—Ver. 39. וְאַתָּה צָדִיק is still dependent on the וְיָעֻזְךָ in ver. 37. The priest Zadok with his brethren he left before the tent of Jahve, *i.e.* the tabernacle at the Bamah in Gibeon. For בְּקֶדֶה

see on 2 Chron. i. 13, and for Zadok on v. 38. It is surprising here that no priest is named as superintendent or overseer of the sacrificial worship in the tent of the ark of the covenant. But the omission is accounted for by the fact that our chapter treats properly only of the arrangement of the sacred music connected with the worship, and Zadok is mentioned as overseer of the sanctuary of the tabernacle at Gibeon only in order to introduce the statement as to the Levitic singers and players assigned to that sanctuary. Without doubt Abiathar as high priest had the oversight of the sacrificial worship in the sanctuary of the tabernacle: see on xviii. 16; with ver. 40 cf. Ex. xxix. 38, Num. xxviii. 3, 6. לְכָל־הַכֹּהֲנִים corresponds to לְהַעֲלוֹת: and in reference to all, *i.e.* to look after all, which was written. This refers not only to the bringing of the sacrifices prescribed, in addition to the daily burnt-offering, but in general to everything that it was the priests' duty to do in the sanctuary.—Ver. 41. וְעִמָּהֶם, and with them (with Zadok and his brethren) were Heman and Jeduthun, *i.e.* Ethan (the two other chief musicians, xv. 19), with the other chosen famous, *sc.* singers (נִקְבוּ בְשִׁמּוֹת, see on xii. 31). To these belonged those of the number named in xv. 18–21, 24, who are not mentioned among those assigned to Asaph in xvi. 5 and 6, and probably also a number of others whose names have not been handed down. In ver. 42, if the text be correct, וְיִמֵּן וְיָרִיחָן can only be in apposition to עִמָּהֶם: “and with them, *viz.* with Heman and Jeduthun, were trumpets,” etc. But, not to mention the difficulty that passages analogous and parallel to this statement are not to be found, the mention of these two chief musicians in the connection is surprising; for the musical instruments mentioned are not merely the מְצִלְתִּים (*s.* xv. 19) played by them, but also the הַצִּצְרוֹת which the priests blew, and other instruments. Moreover, the names Heman and Jeduthun are not found here in the LXX., and have probably been inserted in our verse by some copyist from ver. 41, which likewise begins with וְעִמָּהֶם. If we omit these names, then, the verse contains no other difficulty worthy of consideration, or any which would occasion or necessitate such violent alterations of the text as Berth. has proposed. The suffix in עִמָּהֶם refers to the persons mentioned in ver. 41, Heman, Jeduthun, and the other chosen ones. “With them were,” *i.e.* they had by them, trumpets, cymbals, etc. The לְ before מְשִׁמְעִים is strange, since מְשִׁמְעִים is in xv. 16 connected with מְצִלְתִּים as an adjective, and in xv. 19



we have לְהַשְׁמִיעַ. But if we compare ver. 5 of our chapter, where מְשַׁמְעֵי is predicate to Asaph, "Asaph gave forth clear notes with cymbals," then here also לְמְשַׁמְעֵים in connection with מְצַלְתִּים is thoroughly justified in the signification, "and cymbals for those who gave forth the notes or the melody," i.e. for Heman and Jeduthun. כְּלֵי נְשִׁיר הָאֵלֹהִים are the other instruments used in the service of song, viz. the *nablia* and *kinnoroth*. "The sons of Jeduthun for the gate," i.e. as doorkeepers. As Obed-edom, who was doorkeeper by the ark, according to ver. 38, was likewise a son of Jeduthun, here other sons of the same Jeduthun, brothers of Obed-edom, must be meant, the number of whom, if we may judge from xxvi. 8, was very considerable; so that the members of this family were able to attend to the doorkeeping both by the ark and in the tabernacle at Gibeon.—Ver. 43 brings the account of the transfer of the ark to a conclusion, and coincides in substance with 2 Sam. vi. 19 and 20a, where, however, there follows in addition a narrative of the scene which David had with his wife Michal. This, as *res domestica*, the author of the Chronicle has omitted, since the reference to it in xv. 29 seemed sufficient for the design of his work. לְבָרַךְ is not to greet, but to bless his house, just as in ver. 2 he had already pronounced a blessing on his people in the name of God.

CHAP. XVII.—DAVID'S DESIGN TO BUILD A TEMPLE, AND THE  
CONFIRMATION OF HIS KINGDOM.

In the Chronicle, as in the second book of Samuel chap. vii., the account of the removal of the ark to the city of David is immediately followed by the narrative of David's design to build a temple to the Lord; and this arrangement is adopted on account of the connection between the subjects, though the events must have been separated by a period of several years. Our account of this design of David's, with its results for him and for his kingdom, is in all essential points identical with the parallel account, so that we may refer to the commentary on 2 Sam. vii. for any necessary explanation of the matter. The differences between the two narratives are in great part of a merely formal kind; the author of the Chronicle having sought to make the narrative more intelligible to his contemporaries, partly by using later phrases current in his own time, such as אֱלֹהִים for יְהוָה, מְלָכָה for מַלְכוּת, partly by simplifying and explaining the bolder

and more obscure expressions. Very seldom do we find divergences in the subject-matter which alter the meaning or make it appear to be different. To supplement and complete the commentary already given on 2d Samuel, we will now shortly treat of these divergences. In ver. 1, the statement that David communicated his purpose to build a temple to the Lord to the prophet Nathan, "when Jahve had given him rest from all his enemies round about," is wanting. This clause, which fixes the time, has been omitted by the chronicler to avoid the apparent contradiction which would have arisen in case the narrative were taken chronologically, seeing that the greatest of David's wars, those against the Philistines, Syrians, and Ammonites, are narrated only in the succeeding chapter. As to this, cf. the discussion on 2 Sam. vii. 1-3.—In ver. 10, וְלַמָּיִם, like וְלַמָּן-הַיּוֹם (Sam. ver. 11), is to be connected with the preceding בְּרֵאשִׁיתָהּ in this sense: "As in the beginning (*i.e.* during the sojourn in Egypt), and onward from the days when I appointed judges," *i.e.* during the time of the judges. לָמָּן is only a more emphatic expression for מִן, to mark off the time from the beginning as it were (cf. Ew. § 218, *b*), and is wrongly translated by Berth. "until the days." In the same verse, וְהִבַּנְעֵתִי, "I bow, humble all thine enemies," substantially the same as the וְהִנֵּחֵתִי, "I give thee peace from all thine enemies" (Sam.); and the suffix in אֹיְבֶיךָ is not to be altered, as Berth. proposes, into that of the third person אֹיְבָיו, either in the Chronicle or in Samuel, for it is quite correct; the divine promise returning at the conclusion to David direct, as in the beginning, vers. 7 and 8, while that which is said of the people of Israel in vers. 9 and 10a is only an extension of the words, "I will destroy all *thine* enemies before thee" (ver. 8).—In ver. 11, לֵלְכָתָּהּ, "to go with thy fathers," used of going the way of death, is similar to "to go the way of all the world" (1 Kings ii. 2), and is more primitive than the more usual עִם אֲבוֹתָהּ (Sam. ver. 12). אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה מִבְּנֶיךָ, too, is neither to be altered to suit יֵצֵא מִמֶּעֶד of Samuel; nor can we consider it, with Berth., an alteration made by the author of the Chronicle to get rid of the difficulty, that here the birth of Solomon is only promised, while Nathan's speech was made at a time when David had rest from all his enemies round about (2 Sam. viii. 1), *i.e.*, as is usually supposed, in the latest years of his life, and consequently after Solomon's birth. For the difficulty had already been got rid of by the omission of those words in ver. 1; and the word, "I have



cut off all thine enemies from before thee" (ver. 8), does not necessarily involve the destruction of all the enemies who ever rose against David, but refers, as the connection shows, only to the enemies who up till that time had attacked him. Had the author of the Chronicle only wished to get rid of this supposed difficulty, he would simply have omitted the clause, since "thy seed" included the sons of David, and needed no explanation if nothing further was meant than that one of his sons would ascend the throne after him. And moreover, the thought, "thy seed, which shall be among thy sons," which Bertheau finds in the words, would be expressed in Hebrew by *אֲשֶׁר מִבְּנֵי*, while *אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה מִבְּנֵי* signifies, "who will come out of (from) thy sons;" for *יִהְיֶה מִן* does not denote to be of one, *i.e.* to belong to him, but to arise, be born, or go forth, from one: cf. Gen. xvii. 16; Eccles. iii. 20. According to this, the linguistically correct translation, the words cannot be referred to Solomon at all, because Solomon was not a descendant of David's sons, but of David himself.<sup>1</sup> The author of the Chronicle has interpreted *אֶת־יִרְעֶד אַחֲרָיו* theologically, or rather set forth the Messianic contents of this conception more clearly than it was expressed in *אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמֶּעֵד*. The seed after David, which will arise from his sons, is the Messiah, whom the prophets announced as the Son of David, whose throne God will establish for ever (ver. 12). This Messianic interpretation of David's *יִרְעֶד* explains the divergence of the chronicler's text in vers. 13 and 14 from 2 Sam. vii. 14-16. For instance, the omission of the words after *בֵּן* in ver. 13, "If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men" (Sam. ver. 14), is the result of the Messianic interpretation of *יִרְעֶד*, since the reference to the chastisement would of course be important for the earthly sons of David and the kings of Judah, but could not well find place in the case of the Messiah. The only thing said of this son of David is, that God will not withdraw His grace from him. The case is exactly similar, with the difference between ver. 14 and Sam. ver. 16. Instead of the words, "And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee, thy throne shall be established for ever" (Sam.), the promise runs thus in the Chronicle: "And I will settle (*הָעֲמִיד*, cause to stand, maintain, 1 Kings xv. 4; 2 Chron. ix. 8) him (the seed arising from thy sons) in my house and in my kingdom for ever, and his throne

<sup>1</sup> As old Lavater has correctly remarked: *Si tantum de Salomone hic locus accipiendus esset, non dixisset: semen quod erit de filiis tuis, sed quod erit de te.*

shall be established for evermore." While these concluding words of the promise are, in the narrative in Samuel, spoken to David, promising to him the eternal establishment of his house, his kingdom, and his throne, in the Chronicle they are referred to the seed of David, *i.e.* the Messiah, and promise to Him His establishment for ever in the house and kingdom of God, and the duration of His throne for ever. That בֵּיתִי here does not signify the congregation of the Lord, the people of Israel, as Berth. thinks it must be translated, is clear as the sun; for בֵּית, immediately preceding, denotes the temple of Jahve, and בֵּיתִי manifestly refers back to בֵּית לִי (ver. 12), while such a designation of the congregation of Israel or of the people as "house of Jahve" is unheard of in the Old Testament. The house of Jahve stands in the same relation to the kingdom of Jahve as a king's palace to his kingdom. The house which David's seed will build to the Lord is the house of the Lord in his kingdom: in this house and kingdom the Lord will establish Him for ever; His kingdom shall never cease; His rule shall never be extinguished; and He himself, consequently, shall live for ever. It scarcely need be said that such things can be spoken only of the Messiah. The words are therefore merely a further development of the saying, "I will be to him a Father, and I will not take my mercy away from him, and will establish his kingdom for ever," and tell us clearly and definitely what is implicitly contained in the promise, that David's house, kingdom, and throne will endure for ever (Sam.), viz. that the house and kingdom of David will be established for ever only under the Messiah. That this interpretation is correct is proved by the fact that the divergences of the text of the chronicler from the parallel narrative cannot otherwise be explained; Thenius and Berth. not having made even an attempt to show how יְהוָה עֲמִידָתוֹ בְּבֵיתִי could have arisen out of וְנִצָּחַן בֵּיתִי. The other differences between the texts in the verses in question, לִי (Chron.) for אֶת-בְּסֹא מִמְלַכְתּוֹ, לְשִׁמִּי (Chron. ver. 12, cf. Sam. ver. 13), and מֶלֶךְ אֱשֶׁר הָיָה לְפָנָי instead of מֶלֶךְ אֱשֶׁר הָיָה לְפָנָי (Chron. ver. 13, cf. Sam. ver. 15), are only variations in expression which do not affect the sense. With reference to the last of them, indeed, Berth. has declared against Thenius, that the chronicler's text is thoroughly natural, and bears marks of being more authentic than that of 2 Sam. vii.

In the prayer of thanksgiving contained in vers. 16 to 27 we meet with the following divergences from the parallel text, which



are of importance for their effect on the sense.—Ver. 17b. Instead of the words *וַיֵּאָחַז תֹּרַת הָאָדָם* (Sam. ver. 19), the Chronicle has *וַיֵּרְאֵנִי כְּתוּר הָאָדָם הַמַּעֲלָה*, and sawest me (or, that thou sawest me) after the manner of men; *תוּר* being a contraction of *תֹּרַה* = *תֹּרָה*. *רָאָה*, to see, may denote to visit (cf. 2 Sam. xiii. 5; 2 Kings viii. 29), or look upon in the sense of regard, *respicere*. But the word *הַמַּעֲלָה* remains obscure in any case, for elsewhere it occurs only as a substantive, in the significations, “the act of going up” (or drawing up) (Ezra vii. 9), “that which goes up” (Ezek. xi. 5), “the step;” while for the signification “height” (*locus superior*) only this passage is adduced by Gesenius in *Thes.* But even had the word this signification, the word *הַמַּעֲלָה* could not signify *in loco excelso* = *in cælis* in its present connection; and further, even were this possible, the translation *et me intuitus es more hominum in cælis* gives no tolerable sense. But neither can *הַמַּעֲלָה* be the vocative of address, and a predicate of God, “Thou height, Jahve God,” as Hgstb. *Christol.* i. p. 378 trans., takes it, with many older commentators. The passage Ps. xcii. 9, “Thou art *מָרוֹם*, height, sublimity for ever, Jahve,” is not sufficient to prove that in our verse *הַמַּעֲלָה* is predicated of God. Without doubt, *הַמַּעֲלָה* should go with *וַיֵּרְאֵנִי וְגו'*, and appears to correspond to the *לְמַרְחֹק* of the preceding clause, in the signification: as regards the elevation, in reference to the going upwards, *i.e.* the exaltation of my race (seed) on high. The thought would then be this: After the manner of men, so condescendingly and graciously, as men have intercourse with each other, hast Thou looked upon or visited me in reference to the elevation of myself or my race,—the text of the Chronicle giving an explanation of the parallel narrative.<sup>1</sup> The divergence in ver. 18, *אֵלַי לְכָבוֹד אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ*

<sup>1</sup> This interpretation of this extremely difficult word corresponds in sense to the not less obscure words in 2d Samuel, and gives us, without any alteration of the text, a more fitting thought than the alterations in the reading proposed by the moderns. Ewald and Berth. would alter *וַיֵּרְאֵנִי* into *וַיֵּרְאֵנִי וְגו'* (Hiph.), and *הַמַּעֲלָה* into *לְמַרְחֹק*, in order to get the meaning, “Thou hast caused me to see like the series of men upwards,” *i.e.* the line of men who stretch from David outward into the far future in unbroken series, which Thenius rightly calls a thoroughly modern idea. Böttcher’s attempt at explanation is much more artificial. He proposes, in *N. k. Aehrenlese*, iii. S. 225, to read *לְמַרְחֹק . . . וַיֵּרְאֵנִי*, and translates: “so that I saw myself, as the series of men who follow upwards shall see me, *i.e.* so that I could see myself as posterity will see me, at the head of a continuous family of rulers;” where the main idea has to be supplied.

instead of לְרַבֵּר אֵלָיִךְ (Sam. ver. 20), which cannot be an explanation or interpretation of Samuel's text, is less difficult of explanation. The words in Samuel, "What can David say more unto Thee?" have in this connection the very easily understood signification, What more can I say of the promise given me? and needed no explanation. When, instead of this, we read in the Chronicle, "What more can Thy servant add to Thee in regard to the honour to Thy servant?" an unprejudiced criticism must hold this text for the original, because it is the more difficult. It is the more difficult, not only on account of the omission of לְרַבֵּר, which indeed is not absolutely necessary, though serving to explain יוֹסִיף, but mainly on account of the unusual construction of the *nomen* כְּבוֹד with אֶת-עַבְדְּךָ, honour towards Thy servant. The construction יָדָעָה אֵת יְהוָה is not quite analogous, for כְּבוֹד is not a *nomen actionis* like יָדָעָה; כָּבַד אֶת- is rather connected with the practice which begins to obtain in the later language of employing אֵת as a general *casus obliquus*, instead of any more definite preposition (Ew. § 277, d, S. 683 f., der 7 Aufl.), and is to be translated: "honour concerning Thy servant." The assertion that אֶת-עַבְדְּךָ is to be erased as a later gloss which has crept into the text, cuts the knots, but does not untie them. That the LXX. have not these words, only proves that these translators did not know what to make of them, and so just omitted them, as they have omitted the first clause of ver. 19. In ver. 19 also there is no valid ground for altering the כְּבוֹד עַבְדְּךָ of the Chronicle to make it correspond to כְּבוֹד עַבְדְּךָ in Samuel; for the words, "for Thy servant's sake," i.e. because Thou hast chosen Thy servant, give a quite suitable sense; cf. the discussion on 2 Sam. vii. 21. In the second half of the verse, however, the more extended phrases of 2d Samuel are greatly contracted.—Ver. 21. The combining of גְּדֻלּוֹת וְנוֹרָאוֹת with לָשׂוּם לְךָ שֵׁם as one sentence, "to make Thee a name with great and fearful deeds," is made clearer in 2d Samuel by the interpolation of לַבָּם וְלַעֲשׂוֹת, "and for you doing great and fearful things." This explanation, however, does not justify us in supposing that וְלַעֲשׂוֹת has been dropped out of the Chronicle. The words גְּדֻלּוֹת וְנוֹרָאוֹת are either to be subordinated in a loose connection to the clause, to define the way in which God has made Himself a name (cf. Ew. § 283), or connected with שֵׁם in a pregnant sense: "to make Thee a name, (doing) great and fearful things." But, on the other hand, the converse expression in Samuel, "fearful things for Thy land, before



Thy people which Thou redeemedst to Thee from Egypt (from) the nations and their gods," is explained in Chronicles by the interpolation of לְנִרְשָׁה: "fearful things, to drive out before Thy people, which . . . nations." The divergences cannot be explained by the hypothesis that both texts are mutilated, as is sufficiently shown by the contradictions into which Thenius and Bertheau have fallen in their attempts so to explain them.

All the remaining divergences of one text from the other are only variations of the expression, such as involuntarily arise in the endeavour to give a clear and intelligible narrative, without making a literal copy of the authority made use of. Among these we include even מָצָא עֲבָדְךָ לְהִתְפַּלֵּל, "Thy servant hath found to pray" (Chron. ver. 25), as compared with מָצָא עֲבָדְךָ אֶת-לְבוֹ לְהִתְפַּלֵּל, "Thy servant hath found his heart," i.e. found courage, to pray (Sam. ver. 28); where it is impossible to decide whether the author of the books of Samuel has added אֶת-לְבוֹ as an explanation, or the author of the Chronicle has omitted it because the phrase "to find his heart" occurs only in this single passage of the Old Testament. מָצָא עֲבָדְךָ לְהִתְפַּלֵּל signifies, Thy servant has reached the point of directing this prayer to Thee.

CHAP. XVIII.—XX.—DAVID'S WARS AND VICTORIES; HIS PUBLIC OFFICIALS; SOME HEROIC DEEDS DONE IN THE PHILISTINE WARS.

The events recorded in these three chapters are all narrated in the second book of Samuel also, and in the same order. First, there are grouped together in our 18th chapter, and in 2 Sam. viii., in such a manner as to afford a general view of the whole, all the wars which David carried on victoriously against all his enemies round about in the establishment of the Israelitish rule, with a short statement of the results, followed by a catalogue of David's chief public officials. In chap. xix. and in 2 Sam. x. we have a more detailed account of the arduous war against the Ammonites and Syrians, and in chap. xx. 1-3 and 2 Sam. xii. 26-31 the conclusion of the war with the capture of Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites; and finally, in chap. xx. 4-8, we have a few short accounts of the victories of the Israelitish heroes over giants from the land of the Philistines, which are inserted in 2 Sam. xxi. 18-22 as a supplement to the last section of David's history. Apart from this last section, which is to be regarded even in the

Chronicle as an appendix, we find the arrangement and succession of the events to be the same in both books, since the sections which in 2 Sam. ix. and xi. 1–12, 25, stand between the histories of the wars, contain sketches of David's family life, which the author of the Chronicle has, in accordance with his plan, omitted. Even as to individual details the two narratives are perfectly agreed, the divergences being inconsiderable; and even these, in so far as they are original, and are not results of careless copying,—as, for instance, the omission of the word נְצִיבִים, xviii. 6, as compared with ver. 13 and 2 Sam. viii. 6, and the difference in the numbers and names in chap. xviii. 4, 8, as compared with 2 Sam. iv. 4, 8, are,—are partly mere explanations of obscure expressions, partly small additions or abridgments. For the commentary, therefore, we may refer to the remarks on 2d Samuel, where the divergences of the Chronicle from the record in Samuel are also dealt with. With chap. xviii. 1–13 cf. 2 Sam. viii. 1–14; and with the register of public officials, xviii. 14–17, cf. 2 Sam. viii. 15–18.

Examples of paraphrastic explanation are found in chap. xviii. 1, where the figurative expression, David took the bridle of the mother out of the hands of the Philistines, *i.e.* deprived them of the hegemony, is explained by the phrase, David took Gath and her cities out of the hands of the Philistines, *i.e.* took from the Philistines the capital with her daughter cities; and in ver. 17, פְּהִינִים is rendered by, the first at the king's hand. Among the abridgments, the omission of David's harsh treatment of the Moabites who were taken prisoners is surprising, no reason for it being discoverable; for the assertion that the chronicler has purposely omitted it in order to free David from the charge of such barbarous conduct, is disposed of by the fact that he does not pass over in silence the similar treatment of the conquered inhabitants of Rabbah in chap. xx. 3. Instead of this, the chronicler has several historical notes peculiar to himself, which are wanting in the text of Samuel, and which prove that the author of the Chronicle has not derived his account from the second book of Samuel. Such, *e.g.*, is the statement in chap. xviii. 8, that Solomon caused the brazen sea and the pillars and vessels of the court of the temple to be made of the brass taken as booty in the war against Hadadezer; in ver. 11, the word מִאֲדָרִים, which is wanting in Samuel, as מִאֲזָרִים, which in ver. 11 of that book is used in place of it, probably stood originally in the



Chronicle also. Such also are the more accurate statements in ver. 12 as to the victory over the Edomites in the Valley of Salt (see on 2 Sam. viii. 13).

The same phenomena are met with in the detailed account of the Ammonite-Syriac war, chap. xix. 1, 2, xx. 3, as compared with 2 Sam. x. 1–xi. 1, and xii. 26–31. In xix. 1 the omission of the name חֲנָן after בָּנוּ is merely an oversight, as the omission of the name נָחָשׁ in 2 Sam. x. 1 $\alpha$  also is. In ver. 3 there is no need to alter חָקַר אֶת-הָעִיר וְלָרְגֶלָהּ וְגו' into חָקַר וְלָהֶפֶךְ וְגו' 2 Sam. x. 3, although the expression in Samuel is more precise. If the actual words of the original document are given in Samuel, the author of the Chronicle has made the thought more general: "to search and to overthrow, and to spy out the land." Perhaps, however, the terms made use of in the original document were not so exact and precise as those of the book of Samuel. In vers. 6, 7, at least, the divergence from 2 Sam. x. 16 cannot be explained otherwise than by supposing that in neither of the narratives is the text of the original document exactly and perfectly reproduced. For a further discussion of the differences, see on 2 Sam. x. 6. The special statement as to the place where the mercenaries encamped, and the Ammonites gathered themselves together from out their cities (ver. 7), is wanting in 2d Samuel. The city Medeba, which, according to Josh. xiii. 16, was assigned to the tribe of Reuben, lay about two hours south-east from Heshbon, and still exists as ruins, which retain the ancient name Medaba (see on Num. xxi. 30). In ver. 9, פָּתַח הָעִיר, "outside the city" (*i.e.* the capital Rabbah), more correct or exact than פָּתַח הַשָּׁעַר (Sam. ver. 8). On וַיָּבֹא אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט, as compared with וַיָּבֹא חֵלְאָמָה (Sam. ver. 17), cf. the discussion on 2 Sam. x. 16, 17.

The account of the siege of Rabbah, the capital, in the following year, chap. xx. 1–3, is much abridged as compared with that in 2 Sam. xi. 1, xii. 26–31. After the clause, "but David sat (remained) in Jerusalem," in 2 Sam. xi., from ver. 2 onwards, we have the story of David's adultery with Bathsheba, and the events connected with it (2 Sam. xi. 3–xii. 25), which the author of the Chronicle has omitted, in accordance with the plan of his book. Thereafter, in 2 Sam. xii. 26, the further progress of the siege of Rabbah is again taken up with the words, "And Joab warred against Rabbah of the sons of Ammon;" and in vers. 27–29 the capture of that city is cir-

cumstantially narrated, viz. how Joab, after he had taken the water-city, *i.e.* the city lying on both banks of the upper Jabbok (the Wady Ammân), with the exception of the Acropolis built on a hill on the north side of the city, sent messages to David, and called upon him to gather together the remainder of the people, *i.e.* all those capable of bearing arms who had remained in the land; and how David, having done this, took the citadel. Instead of this, we have in the Chronicle only the short statement, "And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it" (xx. 1, at the end). After this, both narratives (Chron. vers. 2, 3, and Sam. vers. 30, 31) coincide in narrating how David set the heavy golden crown of the king of the Ammonites on his head, brought much booty out of the city, caused the prisoners of war taken in Rabbah and the other fenced cities of the Ammonites to be slain in the cruellest way, and then returned with all the people, *i.e.* with the whole of his army, to Jerusalem. Thus we see that, according to the record in the Chronicle also, David was present at the capture of the Acropolis of Rabbah, then put on the crown of the Ammonite king, and commanded the slaughter of the prisoners; but no mention is made of his having gone to take part in the war. By the omission of this circumstance the narrative of the Chronicle becomes defective; but no reason can be given for this abridgment of the record, for the contents of 2 Sam. xii. 26-39 must have been contained in the original documents made use of by the chronicler. On the differences between ver. 31 (Sam.) and ver. 3 of the Chronicle, see on 2 Sam. xii. 31. וַיִּשֶׁר, "he sawed asunder," is the correct reading, and וַיִּשֶׁם in Samuel is an orthographical error; while, on the contrary, בַּמִּגְרוֹת in the Chronicle is a mistake for בַּמִּגְרוֹת in Samuel. The omission of וַהֲעֵבִיר אוֹתָם בַּמִּלְבָּן is probably explained by the desire to abridge; for if the author of the Chronicle does not scruple to tell of the sawing asunder of the prisoners with saws, and the cutting of them to pieces under threshing instruments and scythes, it would never occur to him to endeavour to soften David's harsh treatment of them by passing over in silence the burning of them in brick-kilns.

The passages parallel to the short appendix-like accounts of the valiant deeds of the Israelitish leaders in chap. xx. 4-8 are to be found, as has already been remarked, in 2 Sam. xxi. 18-24. There, however, besides the three exploits of which we are informed by the chronicler in vers. 15-17, a fourth is recorded,



and that in the first place too, viz. the narrative of David's fight with the giant Jishbi-Benob, who was slain by Abishai the son of Zeruiah. The reason why our historian has not recounted this along with the others is clear from the position which he assigns to these short narratives in his book. In the second book of Samuel they are recounted in the last section of the history of David's reign, as palpable proofs of the divine grace of which David had had experience during his whole life, and for which he there praises the Lord in a psalm of thanksgiving (2 Sam. xxii.). In this connection, David's deliverance by the heroic act of Abishai from the danger into which he had fallen by the fierce attack which the Philistine giant Jishbi-Benob made upon him when he was faint, is very suitably narrated, as being a visible proof of the divine grace which watched over the pious king. For the concluding remark in 2 Sam. xxi. 17, that in consequence of this event his captains adjured David not to go any more into battle along with them, that the light of Israel might not be extinguished, shows in how great danger he was of being slain by this giant. For this reason the author of the book of Samuel has placed this event at the head of the exploits of the Israelite captains which he was about to relate, although it happened somewhat later in time than the three exploits which succeed. The author of the Chronicle, on the contrary, has made the account of these exploits an appendix to the account of the victorious wars by which David obtained dominion over all the neighbouring peoples, and made his name to be feared among the heathen, as a further example of the greatness of the power given to the prince chosen by the Lord to be over His people. For this purpose the story of the slaughter of the Philistine giant, who had all but slain the weary David, was less suitable, and is therefore passed over by the chronicler, although it was contained in his authority,<sup>1</sup> as is clear from the almost verbal coincidence of the stories which follow with 2 Sam. xxi. 18 ff. The very first is introduced by the formula, "It happened after this," which in 2d Samuel naturally connects the preceding narrative with this; while the chronicler has retained אַחֲרֵי־כֵן as a general formula of transition,—omitting, however, עֹד (Sam.) in the following clause, and writing וַתֵּעָמֹד, "there arose," instead of וַתֵּהָי. עָמַר in the later Hebrew is the same as קוּם. The hypothesis that

<sup>1</sup> Lightfoot says, in his *Chronol. V. T.* p. 68: *Illud prælium, in quo David in periculum venit et unde decore et illæsus exire non potuit, omissum est.*

וַתֵּעָמַד has arisen out of וַתְּהִי עֹד (in Samuel) is not at all probable, although עָמַד is not elsewhere used of the origin of a war. Even קָיָם is only once (Gen. xli. 30) used of the coming, or coming in, of a time. On בָּנָוּ and סָפִי instead of בָּנָב and סָף, see on 2 Sam. xxi. 18. וַיִּכְנְעוּ at the end of the fourth verse is worthy of remark, "And they (the Philistines) were humbled," which is omitted from Samuel, and "yet can scarcely have been arbitrarily added by our historian" (Berth.). This remark, however, correct as it is, does not explain the omission of the word from 2d Samuel. The reason for that can scarcely be other than that it did not seem necessary for the purpose which the author of the book of Samuel had in the first place in view. As to the two other exploits (vers. 6–8), see the commentary on 2 Sam. xxi. 19–22. אֱלֹהִים for אֱלֹהֵי in the closing remark (ver. 8) is archaic, but the omission of the article (אֱלֹהִים instead of הָאֱלֹהִים, as we find it in Gen. xix. 8, 25, and in other passages in the Pentateuch) cannot be elsewhere paralleled. In the last clause, "And they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants," that David should be named is surprising, because none of those here mentioned as begotten of Rapha, *i.e.* descendants of the ancient Raphaite race, had fallen by the hand of David, but all by the hand of his servants. Bertheau therefore thinks that this clause has been copied *verbatim* into our passage, and also into 2 Sam. xxi. 22, from the original document, where this enumeration formed the conclusion of a long section, in which the acts of David and of his heroes, in their battles with the giants in the land of the Philistines, were described. But since the author of the second book of Samuel expressly says, "These four were born to Rapha, and they fell" (ver. 22), he can have referred in the words, "And they fell by the hand of David," only to the four above mentioned, whether he took the verse in question unaltered from his authority, or himself added אֶת־עַרְבֵעַת אֱלֹהִים. In the latter case he cannot have added the בִּיַּד־דָּוִד without some purpose; in the former, the reference of the בִּיַּד־דָּוִד in the "longer section," from which the excerpt is taken, to others than the four giants mentioned, to Goliath perhaps in addition, whom David slew, is rendered impossible by אֶת־עַרְבֵעַת אֱלֹהִים. The statement, "they fell by the hand of David," does not presuppose that David had slain all of them, or even one of them, with his own *hand*; for בִּיַּד frequently signifies only through, *i.e.* by means of, and denotes here that those giants fell in wars which David had



waged with the Philistines—that David had been the main cause of their fall, had brought about their death by his servants through the wars he waged.

CHAP. XXI.—XXII. 1.—THE NUMBERING OF THE PEOPLE, THE PESTILENCE, AND THE DETERMINATION OF THE SITE FOR THE TEMPLE (CF. 2 SAM. XXIV.).

The motive which influenced the king, in causing a census of the men capable of bearing arms throughout the kingdom to be taken in the last year of his reign, has already been discussed in the remarks on 2 Sam. xxiv., where we have also pointed out what it was which was so sinful and displeasing to God in the undertaking. We have, too, in the same place commented upon the various stages of its progress, taking note of the differences which exist between the numbers given in 2 Sam. xxiv. 9, 13, 24, and those in our record, vers. 5, 12, 25; so that here we need only compare the two accounts somewhat more minutely. They correspond not merely in the main points of their narrative of the event, but in many places make use of the same terms, which shows that they have both been derived from the same source; but, at the same time, very considerable divergences are found in the conception and representation of the matter. In the very first verse, David's purpose is said in 2d Samuel to be the effect of the divine anger; in the Chronicle it is the result of the influence of Satan on David. Then, in 2 Sam. xxiv. 4–9, the numbering of the people is narrated at length, while in the Chronicle, vers. 4–6, only the results are recorded, with the remark that Joab did not complete the numbering, Levi and Benjamin not being included, because the king's command was an abomination to him. On the other hand, the Chronicle, in vers. 19–27, narrates the purchase of Araunah's threshing-floor for a place of sacrifice, and gives not merely a more circumstantial account of David's offering than we find in Samuel (vers. 19–25), but also states, in conclusion (vers. 28–30), the circumstances which induced David to offer sacrifice even afterwards, on the altar which he had built at the divine command, on the threshing-floor bought of Araunah. The purpose which the author of the Chronicle had in view in making this concluding remark is manifest from ver. 1 of chap. xxii., which should properly be connected with chap. xxi.: "And David said, Here is the house

of Jahve God, and here the altar for the burnt-offering of Israel." Only in this verse, as Bertheau has correctly remarked, do we find the proper conclusion of the account of the numbering of the people, the pestilence, and the appearance of the angel, and yet it is omitted in the book of Samuel; "although it is manifest from the whole connection, and the way in which the history of David and Solomon is presented in the books of Samuel and Kings, that the account is given there also only to point out the holiness of the place where Solomon built the temple even in the time of David, and to answer the question why that particular place was chosen for the site of the sanctuary." This remark is perfectly just, if it be not understood to mean that the author of our book of Samuel has given a hint of this purpose in his narrative; for the conclusion of 2 Sam. xxiv. 25, "And Jahve was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed," is irreconcilable with any such idea. This concluding sentence, and the omission of any reference to the temple, or to the appointment of the altar built on the threshing-floor of Araunah to be a place of sacrifice for Israel, and of the introductory words of the narrative, "And again the wrath of Jahve was kindled against Israel, and moved David against them" (2 Sam. xxiv. 1), plainly show that the author of the book of Samuel regarded, and has here narrated, the event as a chastisement of the people of Israel for their rebellion against the divinely chosen king, in the revolts of Absalom and Sheba (cf. the remarks on 2 Sam. xxiv. 1). The author of the Chronicle, again, has without doubt informed us of the numbering of the people, and the pestilence, with its results, with the design of showing how God Himself had chosen and consecrated this spot to be the future place of worship for Israel, by the appearance of the angel, the command given to David through the prophet Gad to build an altar where the angel had appeared, and to sacrifice thereon, and by the gracious acceptance of this offering, fire having come down from heaven to devour it. For this purpose he did not require to give any lengthened account of the numbering of the people, since it was of importance to him only as being the occasion of David's humiliation.

Vers. 1-7. "And Satan stood up against Israel, and incited David to number Israel." The mention of Satan as the seducer of David is not to be explained merely by the fact that the Israelites in later times traced up everything contrary to God's will to this evil spirit, but in the present case arises from the



author's design to characterize David's purpose from the very beginning as an ungodly thing.—Ver. 2. The naming of the שָׂרֵי הָעָם along with Joab is in accordance with the circumstances, for we learn from 2 Sam. xxiv. 4 that Joab did not carry out the numbering of the people alone, but was assisted by the captains of the host. The object of וַהֲבִיאוּ אֵלַי, which is not expressed, the result of the numbering, may be supplied from the context. No objection need be taken to the simple בָּהֶם of ver. 3, instead of the double וְבָהֶם וְבָהֶם in Samuel. The repetition of the same word, "there are so and so many of them," is a peculiarity of the author of the book of Samuel (cf. 2 Sam. xii. 8), while the expression in the Chronicle corresponds to that in Deut. i. 11. With the words הֲלֹא אֲדָנִי וְנֹר, "Are they not, my lord king, all my lord's servants," *i.e.* subject to him? Joab allays the suspicion that he grudged the king the joy of reigning over a very numerous people. In Sam. ver. 3 the thought takes another turn; and the last clause, "Why should it (the thing or the numbering) become a trespass for Israel?" is wanting. אֲשַׁמָּה denotes here a trespass which must be atoned for, not one which one commits. The meaning is therefore, Why should Israel expiate thy sin, in seeking thy glory in the power and greatness of thy kingdom? On the numbers, ver. 5, see on 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. In commenting on ver. 6, which is not to be found in Samuel, Berth. defends the statement that Joab did not make any muster of the tribes Levi and Benjamin, against the objections of de Wette and Gramberg, as it is done in my *apologet. Versuche*, S. 349 ff., by showing that the tribe of Levi was by law (cf. Num. i. 47-54) exempted from the censuses of the people taken for political purposes; and the tribe of Benjamin was not numbered, because David, having become conscious of his sin, stopped the numbering before it was completed (cf. also the remarks on 2 Sam. xxiv. 9). The reason given, "for the king's word was an abomination unto Joab," is certainly the subjective opinion of the historian, but is shown to be well founded by the circumstances, for Joab disapproved of the king's design from the beginning; cf. ver. 3 (Samuel and Chronicles).—In ver. 7, the author of the Chronicle, instead of ascribing the confession of sin on David's part which follows to the purely subjective motive stated in the words, "and David's heart smote him," *i.e.* his conscience (Sam. ver. 10a), has ascribed the turn matters took to objective causes: the thing displeased God; and antici-

pating the course of events, he remarks straightway, "and He (God) smote Israel." This, however, is no reason for thinking, with Berth., that the words have arisen out of a misinterpretation or alteration of 2 Sam. xxiv. 10a; for such anticipatory remarks, embracing the contents of the succeeding verses, not unfrequently occur in the historical books (cf. *e.g.* 1 Kings vi. 14, vii. 2).—In reference to vers. 8–10, see on 2 Sam. xxiv. 10–16.—In ver. 12, נִסְפָּה has not come into the text by mistake or by misreading נִסָּה (Sam. ver. 13), but is original, the author of the Chronicle describing the two latter evils more at length than Samuel does. The word is not a participle, but a noun formed from the participle, with the signification "perishing" (the being snatched away). The second parallel clause, "the sword of thine enemies to attaining" (so that it reach thee), serves to intensify. So also in reference to the third evil, the חֶרֶב יהוה which precedes דָּבַר בְּאָרֶץ, and the parallel clause added to both: "and the angel of the Lord destroying in the whole domain of Israel." — Ver. 15. וַיִּשְׁלַח הָאֱלֹהִים מַלְאָךְ לִיר, "And God sent an angel towards Jerusalem," gives no suitable sense. Not because of the improbability that God sent the angel with the commission to destroy Jerusalem, and at the same moment gives the contrary command, "Stay now," etc. (Berth.); for the reason of this change is given in the intermediate clause, "and at the time of the destroying the Lord repented it," and command and prohibition are not given "at the same moment;" but the difficulty lies in the indefinite מַלְאָךְ (without the article). For since the angel of Jahve is mentioned in ver. 12 as the bringer of the pestilence, in our verse, if it treats of the sending of this angel to execute the judgment spoken of, הַמַּלְאָךְ must necessarily be used, or אֶת הַמַּלְאָךְ, as in ver. 16; the indefinite מַלְאָךְ can by no means be used for it. In 2 Sam. xxiv. 16 we read, instead of the words in question, וַיִּשְׁלַח יְרֹ הַמַּלְאָךְ יר, "and the angel stretched out his hand towards Jerusalem;" and Bertheau thinks that the reading הָאֱלֹהִים (in the Chron.) has arisen out of that, by the letters ירו ה being exchanged for יהוה, and אֱלֹהִים being substituted for this divine name, as is often the case in the Chronicle; while Movers, S. 91, on the contrary, considers the reading of the Chronicle to be original, and would read יִשְׁלַח יהוה in Samuel. But in that way Movers leaves the omission of the article before מַלְאָךְ in the Chronicle unexplained; and Bertheau's conjecture is opposed by the improbability of such a misunderstanding of a phrase so frequent and



so unmistakeable as יְשַׁלַּח יְדוֹ, as would lead to the exchange supposed, ever occurring. But besides that, in Samuel the simple מַלְאָךְ is strange, for the angel has not been spoken of there at all before, and the LXX. have consequently explained the somewhat obscure מַלְאָךְ by ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ Θεοῦ. This explanation suggests the way in which the reading of our text arose. The author of the Chronicle, although he had already made mention of the מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה in ver. 12, wrote in ver. 15 וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים, "the angel of God stretched (his hand) out towards Jerusalem," using הָאֱלֹהִים instead of יְהוָה,—as, for example, in Judg. vi. 20, 22, xiii. 6, 9, and 13, 15, 17. מַלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים alternates with מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה, and omitting יְדוֹ with יִשְׁלַח, as is often done, e.g. 2 Sam. vi. 6, Ps. xviii. 17, etc. By a copyist מַלְאָךְ and הָאֱלֹהִים have been transposed, and מַלְאָךְ was then taken by the Masoretes for an accusative, and pointed accordingly. The expression is made clearer by וַיִּכְשַׁח, "And as he destroyed, Jahve saw, and it repented Him of the evil." The idea is: Just as the angel had begun to destroy Jerusalem, it repented God. רַב, adverb, "enough," as in 1 Kings xix. 4, etc., with a *dativ. commodi*, Deut. i. 6, etc. Bertheau has incorrectly denied this meaning of the word, connecting רַב with בָּעָם in 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, and desiring to alter our text to make it conform to that. In 2d Samuel also רַב is an adverb, as Thenius also acknowledges.

Vers. 16-26. The account of David's repentant beseeching of the Lord to turn away the primitive judgment, and the word of the Lord proclaimed to him by the prophet, commanding him to build an altar to the Lord in the place where the destroying angel visibly appeared, together with the carrying out of this divine command by the purchase of Araunah's threshing-floor, the erection of an altar, and the offering of burnt-offering, is given more at length in the Chronicle than in 2 Sam. xxiv. 17-25, where only David's negotiation with Araunah is more circumstantially narrated than in the Chronicle. In substance both accounts perfectly correspond, except that in the Chronicle several subordinate circumstances are preserved, which, as being minor points, are passed over in Samuel. In ver. 16, the description of the angel's appearance, that he had a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem, and the statement that David and the elders, clad in sackcloth (garments indicating repentance), fell down before the Lord; in ver. 20, the mention of Ornan's (Araunah's) sons, who hid themselves on beholding the angel, and of the fact that

Ornan was engaged in threshing wheat when David came to him ; and the statement in ver. 26, that fire came down from heaven upon the altar,—are examples of such minor points. We have already commented on this section in our remarks on 2 Sam. xxiv. 17–25, and the account in the Chronicle is throughout correct and easily understood. Notwithstanding this, however, Bertheau, following Thenius and Böttcher, conjectures that the text is in several verses corrupt, and wishes to correct them by 2d Samuel. But these critics are misled by the erroneous presumption with which they entered upon the interpretation of the Chronicle, that the author of it used as his authority, and revised, our Masoretic text of the second book of Samuel. Under the influence of this prejudice, emendations are proposed which are stamped with their own unlikelihood, and rest in part even on misunderstandings of the narrative in the book of Samuel. Of this one or two illustrations will be sufficient. Any one who compares ver. 17 (Sam.) with vers. 16 and 17 of the Chronicle, without any pre-formed opinions, will see that what is there (Sam.) concisely expressed is more clearly narrated in the Chronicle. The beginning of ver. 17, “And David spake unto Jahve,” is entirely without connection, as the thought which forms the transition from ver. 16 to ver. 17, viz. that David was moved by the sight of the destroying angel to pray to God that the destruction might be turned away, is only brought in afterwards in the subordinate clause, “on seeing the angel.” This abrupt form of expression is got rid of in the Chronicle by the clause: “And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel . . . and fell . . . upon his face ; and David spake to God.” That which in Samuel is crushed away into an infinitive clause subordinate to the principal sentence, precedes in the Chronicle, and is circumstantially narrated. Under these circumstances, of course, the author of the Chronicle could not afterwards in ver. 17 make use of the clause, “on seeing the angel who smote the people,” without tautology. Berth., on the contrary, maintains that ver. 16 is an interpolation of the chronicler, and proposes then to cull out from the words and letters בראתי בראתו אמרתי למנותי בעם (Sam.), the words בראתו אמרתי למנותי בעם (Chron. ver. 17), great use being made in the process of the ever ready auxiliaries, mistakes, and a text which has become obscure. This is one example out of many. Ver. 16 of the Chronicle is not an addition which the Chronicle has interpolated between vers. 16 and 17 of Samuel, but a more detailed representa-



tion of the historical course of things. No mention is made in 2d Samuel of the drawn sword in the angel's hand, because there the whole story is very concisely narrated. This detail need not have been borrowed from Num. xxii. 23, for the drawn sword is a sensible sign that the angel's mission is punitive; and the angel, who is said to have visibly appeared in 2d Samuel also, could be recognised as the bearer of the judicial pestilence only by this emblem, such recognition being plainly the object of his appearance. The mention of the elders along with David as falling on their faces in prayer, clad in sackcloth, will not surprise any reader or critic who considers that in the case of so fearful a pestilence the king would not be alone in praying God to turn away the judgment. Besides, from the mention of the עֲבָדָיו of the king who went with David to Ornan (Sam. ver. 20), we learn that the king did not by himself take steps to turn away the plague, but did so along with his servants. In the narrative in 2d Samuel, which confines itself to the main point, the elders are not mentioned, because only of David was it recorded that his confession of sin brought about the removal of the plague. Just as little can we be surprised that David calls his command to number the people the *delictum* by which he had brought the judgment of the plague upon himself.—To alter בָּדַר, ver. 19, into בָּדַר, as Berth. wishes, would show little intelligence. בָּדַר, at Gad's word David went up, is proved by Num. xxxi. 16 to be good Hebrew, and is perfectly suitable.—Ver. 20. וַיֵּשֶׁב אֹרְנָן, “and Ornan turned him about,” is translated by Berth. incorrectly, “then Ornan turned back,” who then builds on this erroneous interpretation, which is contrary to the context, a whole nest of conjectures. וַיֵּשֶׁב is said to have arisen out of וַיִּשְׁקֶה, the succeeding הִמְלִיךָ out of הִמְלִיךְ, עֲרַבְעַת בָּנָיו עִמּוֹ out of עֲבָדָיו עִבְרִים עָלָיו (Sam. ver. 20), “by mistake and further alteration.” In saying this, however, he himself has not perceived that ver. 20 (Sam.) does not correspond to the 20th verse of the Chronicle at all, but to the 21st verse, where the words, “and Araunah looked out (וַיִּשְׁקֶה) and saw the king,” are parallel to the words, “and Ornan looked (וַיֵּבֵט) and saw David.” The 20th verse of the Chronicle contains a statement which is not found in Samuel, that Ornan (Araunah), while threshing with his four sons, turned and saw the angel, and being terrified at the sight, hid himself with his sons. After that, David with his train came from Zion to the threshing-floor in Mount Moriah, and Araunah looking out saw the king, and came out of the

threshing-floor to meet him, with deep obeisance. This narrative contains nothing improbable, nothing to justify us in having recourse to critical conjecture.—Ver. 24. The infinitive *הַעֲלֹת* is very frequently used in Hebrew as the continuation of the *verb. fin.*, and is found in all the books of the Old Testament (cf. the collection of passages illustrative of this peculiar form of brief expression, which Ew. gives, § 351, *c*), and that not only with regard to the *infin. absol.*, but the *infin. constr.* also. David's answer to Ornan's offer to give him the place for the altar, and the cattle, plough, and wheat for the burnt-offering, was therefore: "No, I will buy it for full price; I will not take what belongs to thee for Jahve, and bring burnt-offerings without cost," *i.e.* without having paid the price for them.—Ver. 25. As to the different statements of the price, cf. on 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.

Vers. 26–30. In 2 Sam. xxiv. 25 the conclusion of this event is shortly narrated thus: David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and Jahve was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel. In the Chronicle we have a fuller statement of the *יַעֲתֵר יְהוָה* in ver. 26*b*. David called upon Jahve, and He answered with fire from heaven upon the altar of burnt-offering (ver. 27); and Jahve spake to the angel, and he returned the sword into its sheath. The returning of the sword into its sheath is a figurative expression for the stopping of the pestilence; and the fire which came down from heaven upon the altar of burnt-offering was the visible sign by which the Lord assured the king that his prayer had been heard, and his offering graciously accepted. The reality of this sign of the gracious acceptance of an offering is placed beyond doubt by the analogous cases, Lev. ix. 24, 1 Kings xviii. 24, 38, and 2 Chron. vii. 1. It was only by this sign of the divine complacence that David learnt that the altar built upon the threshing-floor of Araunah had been chosen by the Lord as the place where Israel should always thereafter offer their burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as is further recorded in vers. 28–30 and in xxii. 1. From the cessation of the pestilence in consequence of his prayer and sacrifice, David could only draw the conclusion that God had forgiven him his transgression, but could not have known that God had chosen the place where he had built the altar for the offering demanded by God as a permanent place of sacrifice. This certainly he obtained only by the divine answer, and this answer was the fire which came down upon the altar of burnt-offering and devoured



the sacrifice. This ver. 28 states: "At the time when he saw that Jahve had answered him at the threshing-floor of Ornan, he offered sacrifice there," *i.e.* from that time forward; so that we may with Berth. translate *וַיִּזְבֹּחַ שָׁם*, "then he was wont to offer sacrifice there." In vers. 29 and 30 we have still further reasons given for David's continuing to offer sacrifices at the threshing-floor of Ornan. The legally sanctioned place of sacrifice for Israel was still at that time the tabernacle, the Mosaic sanctuary with its altar of burnt-offering, which then stood on the high place at Gibeon (cf. xvi. 39). Now David had indeed brought the ark of the covenant, which had been separated from the tabernacle from the time of Samuel, to Zion, and had there not only erected a tent for it, but had also built an altar and established a settled worship there (chap. xvii.), yet without having received any express command of God regarding it; so that this place of worship was merely provisional, intended to continue only until the Lord Himself should make known His will in the matter in some definite way. When therefore David, after the conquest of his enemies, had obtained rest round about, he had formed the resolution to make an end of this provisional separation of the ark from the tabernacle, and the existence of two sacrificial altars, by building a temple; but the Lord had declared to him by the prophet Nathan, that not he, but his son and successor on the throne, should build Him a temple. The altar by the ark in Zion, therefore, continued to co-exist along with the altar of burnt-offering at the tabernacle in Gibeon, without being sanctioned by God as the place of sacrifice for the congregation of Israel. Then when David, by ordering the numbering of the people, had brought guilt upon the nation, which the Lord so heavily avenged upon them by the pestilence, he should properly, as king, have offered a sin-offering and a burnt-offering in the national sanctuary at Gibeon, and there have sought the divine favour for himself and for the whole people. But the Lord said unto him by the prophet Gad, that he should bring his offering neither in Gibeon, nor before the ark on Zion, but in the threshing-floor of Ornan (Araunah), on the altar which he was there to erect. This command, however, did not settle the place where he was afterwards to sacrifice. But David—so it runs, ver. 29 f.—sacrificed thenceforward in the threshing-floor of Ornan, not at Gibeon in the still existent national sanctuary, because he (according to ver. 30) "could not

go before it (לִפְנֵי) to seek God, for he was terrified before the sword of the angel of Jahve." This statement does not, however, mean, *ex terrore visionis angelicæ infirmitatem corporis contraxerat* (J. H. Mich.), nor yet, "because he, being struck and overwhelmed by the appearance of the angel, did not venture to offer sacrifices elsewhere" (Berth.), nor, "because the journey to Gibeon was too long for him" (O. v. Gerl.). None of these interpretations suit either the words or the context. נִבְעַת מִפְּנֵי הָרֶב, terrified before the sword, does indeed signify that the sword of the angel, or the angel with the sword, hindered him from going to Gibeon, but not during the pestilence, when the angel stood between heaven and earth by the threshing-floor of Araunah with the drawn sword, but—according to the context—afterwards, when the angelophany had ceased, as it doubtless did simultaneously with the pestilence. The words כִּי נִבְעַת וּגו' can therefore have no other meaning, than that David's terror before the sword of the angel caused him to determine to sacrifice thereafter, not at Gibeon, but at the threshing-floor of Araunah; or that, since during the pestilence the angel's sword had prevented him from going to Gibeon, he did not venture ever afterwards to go. But the fear before the sword of the angel is in substance the terror of the pestilence; and the pestilence had hindered him from sacrificing at Gibeon, because Gibeon, notwithstanding the presence of the sanctuary there, with the Mosaic altar, had not been spared by the pestilence. David considered this circumstance as normative ever for the future, and he always afterwards offered his sacrifices in the place pointed out to him, and said, as we further read in chap. xxii. 1, "Here (זֶה הַמָּקוֹם), properly this, mas. or neut.) is the house of Jahve God, and here is the altar for the burnt-offering of Israel." He calls the site of the altar in the threshing-floor of Araunah בֵּית יְהוָה, because there Jahve had manifested to him His gracious presence; cf. Gen. xxviii. 17.

CHAP. XXII. 2-19.—DAVID'S PREPARATIONS FOR THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

With this chapter commences the second section of the history of David's kingship, viz. the account of the preparations, dispositions, and arrangements which he made in the last years of his reign for the establishment of his kingdom in the future



under his successors (see above, p. 169 ff.). All these preparations and dispositions had reference to the firm establishment of the public worship of the Lord, in which Israel, as the people and congregation of Jahve, might show its faithfulness to the covenant, so as to become partakers of the divine protection, and the blessing which was promised. To build the temple—this desire the Lord had not indeed granted the fulfilment of to David, but He had given him the promise that his son should carry out that work. The grey-haired king accordingly made preparations, after the site of the house of God which should be built had been pointed out to him, such as would facilitate the execution of the work by his successor. Of these preparations our chapter treats, and in it we have an account how David provided the necessary labour and materials for the building of the temple (vers. 2-5), committed the execution of the work in a solemn way to his son Solomon (vers. 6-16), and called upon the chiefs of the people to give him their support in the work (vers. 17-19).

Vers. 2-5. *Workmen and materials for the building of the temple.*—Ver. 2. In order to procure the necessary workmen, David commanded that the strangers in the land of Israel should be gathered together, and, as we learn from 2 Chron. ii. 16, also numbered. הַגֵּרִים, the strangers, are the descendants of the Canaanites whom the Israelites had not destroyed when they took possession of the land, but had reduced to bondage (2 Chron. viii. 7-9; 1 Kings ix. 20-22). This number was so considerable, that Solomon was able to employ 150,000 of them as labourers and stone-cutters (1 Kings v. 29; 2 Chron. ii. 16 f.). These strangers David appointed to be stone-cutters, to hew squared stones, אֲבָנֵי גִזִּית (see on 1 Kings v. 31).—Ver. 3. Iron and brass he prepared in abundance: the iron for the nails of the doors, *i.e.* for the folding-doors of the gates, *i.e.* partly for the pivots (*Zapfen*) on which the folding-doors turned, partly to strengthen the boards of which doors were made; as also for the מַחְבְּרוֹת, literally, things to connect, *i.e.* properly iron cramps.—Ver. 4. The Tyrians sent him cedar trees or beams in abundance, probably in exchange for grain, wine, and fruit of various sorts, which the Phœnicians obtained from the Israelites; cf. Movers, *Phönizier*, iii. 1, S. 88 ff. Sidonians and Tyrians are named to denote the Phœnicians generally, as in Ezra iii. 7. When Solomon began to build the temple, he made a regular treaty with Hiram king of Tyre about the delivery of the necessary cedar wood, 1 Kings v. 15 ff.—Ver. 5 gives in

substance the reason of what precedes, although it is connected with it only by ו consec. Because his son Solomon was still in tender youth, and the building to be executed was an exceedingly great work, David determined to make considerable preparation before his death. נֶעַר יָרֵךְ, *puer et tener*, repeated in xxix. 1, indicates a very early age. Solomon could not then be quite twenty years old, as he was born only after the Syro-Ammonite war (see on 2 Sam. xii. 24), and calls himself at the commencement of his reign still נֶעַר קָטָן (1 Kings iii. 7). The word נֶעַר may of itself denote not merely a boy, but also a grown youth; but here it is limited to the boyish age by the addition of יָרֵךְ. Berth. wrongly compares Ex. xxxiii. 11, where נֶעַר denotes not a boy, but a lad, *i.e.* a servant. In the succeeding clause לְבָנוֹת לַיהוָה is to be taken relatively: and the house which is to be built to the Lord is to be made great exceedingly (לְמַעַלָּה, see on xiv. 2), for a name and glory for all lands, *i.e.* that it might be to the Lord for whom it should be built for an honour and glory in all lands. אֲכַיֶּנָּה נָא לוֹ, I will (= therefore will I) prepare for him (Solomon), *scil.* whatever I can prepare to forward this great work.

Vers. 6–16. *Solomon commissioned to build the temple.*—Ver. 6. Before his death (ver. 5) David called his son Solomon, in order to commit to him the building of the temple, and to press it strongly upon him, vers. 7–10. With this design, he informs him that it had been his intention to build a temple to the Lord, but the Lord had not permitted him to carry out this resolve, but had committed it to his son. The Keri בְּנִי (ver. 7) is, notwithstanding the general worthlessness of the corrections in the Keri, probably to be preferred here to the Keth. בְּנוֹ, for בְּנוֹ might have easily arisen by the copyist's eye having wandered to לְשִׁלְמָה בְּנוֹ, ver. 6. David's addressing him as בְּנִי is very fitting, nay, even necessary, and not contrary to the following אֲנִי לִבִּי. עִם, it was with my heart, *i.e.* I had intended, occurs indeed very often in the Chronicle, *e.g.* xxviii. 2, 2 Chron. i. 11, vi. 7 f., ix. 1, xxiv. 4, xxix. 10, but is also found in other books where the sense demands it, *e.g.* Josh. xiv. 7, 1 Kings viii. 17 f., x. 2. In יְהִי עָלַי, There came to me the word of Jahve (ver. 8), it is implied that the divine word was given to him as a command. The reason which David gives why the Lord did not allow him to build the temple is not stated in chap. xvii. (2 Sam. vii.), to which David here refers; instead of the reason, only the promise



is there communicated, that the Lord would first build him a house, and enduringly establish his throne. This promise does not exclude the reason stated here and in chap. xxviii. 3, but rather implies it. As the temple was only to be built when God had enduringly established the throne of David, David could not execute this work, for he still had to conduct wars—wars, too, of the Lord—for the establishment of his kingdom, as Solomon also states it in his embassy to Hiram. Wars and bloodshed, however, are unavoidable and necessary in this earth for the establishment of the kingdom of God in opposition to its enemies, but are not consonant with its nature, as it was to receive a visible embodiment and expression in the temple. For the kingdom of God is in its essence a kingdom of peace; and battle, or war, or struggle, are only means for the restoration of peace, the reconciliation of mankind with God after the conquest of sin and all that is hostile to God in this world. See on 2 Sam. vii. 11. David, therefore, the man of war, is not to build the temple, but (ver. 9 f.) his son; and to him the Lord will give peace from all his enemies, so that he shall be *אִישׁ מְנוּחָה*, a man of rest, and shall rightly bear the name Shelomo (Solomon), *i.e.* Friederich (rich in peace, Eng. Frederick), for God would give to Israel in his days, *i.e.* in his reign, peace and rest (*שָׁקֵט*). The participle *נֹלָד* after *הָיָה* has the signification of the future, shall be born; cf. 1 Kings xiii. 2. *אִישׁ מְנוּחָה*, not a man who procures peace (Jer. li. 59), but one who enjoys peace, as the following *וַהֲנִיחוּתִי לוֹ* shows. As to the name *שְׁלֹמֹה*, see on 2 Sam. xii. 24. Into ver. 10 David compresses the promise contained in chap. xvii. 12 and 13.—Ver. 11. After David had so committed to his son Solomon the building of the temple, a task reserved and destined for him by the divine counsel, he wishes him, in ver. 11, the help of the Lord to carry out the work. *וַהֲצִלָּהוּ*, *ut prospere agas et felici successu utaris* (J. M. Mich.), cf. Josh. i. 8. *וְדִבַּר עָלַי* of a command from on high; cf. *עָלַי*, ver. 8. Above all, however, he wishes (ver. 12) him right understanding and insight from God (*שִׁכְלָל וּבִינָה*), so connected in 2 Chron. ii. 11 also), and that God may establish him over Israel, *i.e.* furnish him with might and wisdom to rule over the people Israel; cf. 2 Sam. vii. 11. *וְלִשְׁמֹר*, “to observe” = and mayest thou observe the law of Jahve; not thou must keep (Berth.), for *וְלִשְׁמֹר* is to be regarded as a continuation of the *verb. finit.*; cf. Ew. § 351, c, S. 840.—Ver. 13. The condition of obtaining the result is the faithful observing of the commands of

the Lord. The speech is filled with reminiscences of the law, cf. Deut. vii. 11, xi. 32; and for the exhortation to be strong and of good courage, cf. Deut. xxxi. 6, Josh i. 7, 9, etc.

In conclusion (vers. 14–16), David mentions what materials he has prepared for the building of the temple. בְּעָנִי, not, in my poverty (LXX., Vulg., Luth.), but, by my painful labour (*magna molestia et labore*, Lavat.); cf. Gen. xxxi. 42, and the corresponding בְּכָל-בוֹתִי, chap. xxix. 2. Gold 100,000 talents, and silver 1,000,000 talents. As the talent was 3000 shekels, and the silver shekel coined by the Maccabees, according to the Mosaic weight, was worth about 2s. 6d., the talent of silver would be about £375, and 1,000,000 talents £375,000,000. If we suppose the relative value of the gold and silver to be as 10 to 1, 100,000 talents of gold will be about the same amount, or even more, viz. about £450,000,000, *i.e.* if we take the gold shekel at thirty shillings, according to Thenius' calculation. Such sums as eight hundred or eight hundred and twenty-five millions of pounds are incredible. The statements, indeed, are not founded upon exact calculation or weighing, but, as the round numbers show, only upon a general valuation of those masses of the precious metals, which we must not think of as bars of silver and gold, or as coined money; for they were in great part vessels of gold and silver, partly booty captured in war, partly tribute derived from the subject peoples. Making all these allowances, however, the sums mentioned are incredibly great, since we must suppose that even a valuation in round numbers will have more or less correspondence to the actual weight, and a subtraction of some thousands of talents from the sums mentioned would make no very considerable diminution. On the other hand, it is a much more important circumstance that the above estimate of the value in our money of these talents of silver rests upon a presumption, the correctness of which is open to well-founded doubts. For in that calculation the weight of the Mosaic or holy shekel is taken as the standard, and it is presumed that the talents weighed 3000 Mosaic shekels. But we find in 2 Sam. xiv. 26 mention made in David's time of another shekel, "according to the king's weight," whence we may with certainty conclude that in common life another shekel than the Mosaic or holy shekel was in use. This shekel according to the king's weight was in all probability only half as heavy as the shekel of the sanctuary, *i.e.* was equal in weight to a Mosaic beka or half-shekel. This is proved by a



comparison of 1 Kings x. 17 with 2 Chron. ix. 16, for here three golden minæ are reckoned equal to 300 shekels,—a mina containing 100 shekels, while it contained only 50 holy or Mosaic shekels. With this view, too, the statements of the Rabbins agree, *e.g.* R. Mosis Maimonidis *constitutiones de Siclis, quas—illustravit Joa. Esgers.*, Lugd. Bat. 1718, p. 19, according to which the שקל שלחול or שקל המדינה, *i.e.* the common or civil shekel, is the half of the שקל הקדש. That this is the true relation, is confirmed by the fact that, according to Ex. xxxviii. 26, in the time of Moses there existed silver coins weighing ten gera (half a holy shekel) called beka, while the name beka is found only in the Pentateuch, and disappears at a later time, probably because it was mainly such silver coins of ten gera which were in circulation, and to them the name shekel, which denotes no definite weight, was transferred. Now, if the amounts stated in our verse are reckoned in such common shekels (as in 2 Chron. ix. 16), the mass of gold and silver collected by David for the building of the temple would only be worth half the amount above calculated, *i.e.* about £375,000,000 or £400,000,000. But even this sum seems enormously large, for it is five times the annual expenditure of the greatest European states in our day.<sup>1</sup> Yet the calculation of the income or expenditure of modern states is no proper standard for judging of the correctness or probability of the statements here made, for we cannot estimate the accumulation of gold and silver in the states and chief cities of Asia in antiquity by the budgets of the modern European nations. In the capitals of the Asiatic kingdoms of antiquity, enormous quantities of the precious metals were accumulated. Not to mention the accounts of Ktesias, Diodor. Sic., and others, which sound so fabulous to us now, as to the immense booty in gold and silver vessels which was accumulated in Nineveh and Babylon (see the table in Movers, *die Phönizier*, ii. 3, S. 40 ff.), according to Varro, in Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxii. 15, Cyrus obtained by the conquest of Asia a booty of 34,000 pounds of gold, besides that which was wrought into vessels and ornaments, and 500,000 talents of silver; and in this statement, as Movers rightly remarks, it does not seem

<sup>1</sup> According to Otto Hübner, *Statistical Table of all Lands of the Earth*, 18th edition, Frankf. a. M. 1869, the yearly expenditure of Great Britain and Ireland (exclusive of the extra-European possessions) amounts to a little over £70,000,000; of the French Empire, to £85,000,000; of Russia, to about £78,000,000; of Austria and Hungary, to £48,500,000.

probable that there is any exaggeration. In Susa, Alexander plundered the royal treasury of 40,000, according to other accounts 50,000 talents, or, as it is more accurately stated, 40,000 talents of uncoined gold and silver, and 9000 talents in coined darics. These he caused to be brought to Ecbatana, where he accumulated in all 180,000 talents. In Persepolis he captured a booty of 120,000 talents, and in Pasargada 6000 talents (see *Mov. loc. cit.* S. 43). Now David, it is true, had not conquered Asia, but only the tribes and kingdoms bordering on Canaan, including the kingdom of Syria, and made them tributary, and had consecrated all the gold and silver taken as booty from the conquered peoples, from the Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, Amalekites, and Hadadezer the king of Zobah (2 Sam. viii. 11 f.), to Jahve. Now, in consequence of the ancient connection between Syria and the rich commercial countries of the neighbourhood, great treasures of silver and gold had very early flowed in thither. According to 2 Sam. viii. 7, the servants (*i.e.* generals) of King Hadadezer had golden shields, which David captured; and the ambassadors of King Toi of Hamath brought him vessels of silver, gold, and copper, to purchase his friendship.<sup>1</sup> The other peoples whom David overcame are not to be regarded as poor in the precious metals. For the Israelites under Moses had captured so large a booty in gold rings, bracelets, and other ornaments from the nomadic Midianites, that the commanders of the army alone were able to give 16,750 shekels (*i.e.* over  $5\frac{1}{2}$  talents of gold, according to the Mosaic weight) to the sanctuary as a consecrating offering (Num. xxxi. 48 ff.). We cannot therefore regard the sums mentioned in our verse either as incredible or very much exaggerated,<sup>2</sup> nor hold

<sup>1</sup> Apropos of the riches of Syria even in later times, Movers reminds us, S. 45, of the rich temple treasures—of the statue of Jupiter in Antioch, which was of pure gold and fifteen yards high, and of the golden statues in the temple at Hierapolis—and adds: “Even Antiochus the Great had immense treasures in his possession. The private soldiers in his army had their half-boots studded with gold nails, and their cooking utensils were of silver.” See the proofs, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> As Berth. for example does, expressing himself as follows: “In our verse, 100,000 talents of gold, 1,000,000 talents of silver,—a sum with which the debts of the European nations might almost be paid! It is absolutely inadmissible to take these at their literal value, and to consider them as a repetition, though perhaps a somewhat exaggerated one, of actual historical statements. They can have been originally nothing else than the freest periphrasis for much, an extraordinary quantity, such as may even yet be heard from the mouths of those who have not reflected on the value and importance of num-



the round sums which correspond to the rhetorical character of the passage with certainty to be mistakes.<sup>1</sup> Brass and iron were not weighed for abundance; cf. ver. 3. Beams of timber also, and stones—that is, stones hewed and squared—David had prepared; and to this store Solomon was to add. That he did so is narrated in 2 Chron. chap. ii.—Ver. 15. David then turns to the workmen, the carpenters and stone-cutters, whom he had appointed (ver. 2) for the building. **הַצִּבִּים**, properly hewers, in ver. 2 limited to stone-hewers, is here, with the addition **הָרָשִׁי אֶבֶן** **וְעֵץ**, used of the workers in stone and wood, stonemasons and carpenters. **כָּל־הָחָכְם ב'**, all manner of understanding persons in each work, in contradistinction to **עֹשֵׂי מְלָאכָה**, includes the idea of thorough mastery and skill in the kind of labour. These workmen, whom David had levied for the building of the temple, are mentioned by Solomon, 2 Chron. ii. 6 f.—In ver. 16 all the metals, as being the main thing, are again grouped together, in order that the exhortation to proceed with the erection of the

bers, and consequently launch out into thousands and hundreds of thousands, in an extremely unprejudiced way.” On this we remark: (1) The assertion that with the sums named in our verse the debts of the European nations could be paid, is an enormous exaggeration. According to O. Hübner’s tables, the national debt of Great Britain and Ireland alone amounts to £809,000,000, that of France to £564,000,000, that of Russia to £400,000,000, that of Austria to £354,000,000, and that of the kingdom of Italy to £288,000,000; David’s treasures, consequently, if the weight be taken in sacred shekels, would only have sufficed to pay the national debt of Great Britain and Ireland. (2) The hypothesis that the chronicler, without reflecting on the value and importance of numbers, has launched out into thousands and hundreds of thousands, presupposes such a measure of intellectual poverty as is irreconcilable with evidences of intellect and careful planning such as are everywhere else observable in his writing.

<sup>1</sup> As proof of the incorrectness of the above numbers, it cannot be adduced “that, according to 1 Kings x. 14, Solomon’s yearly revenue amounted to 666 talents of gold, i.e. to about £3,000,000 in gold; that the queen of Sheba presented Solomon with 120 talents of gold, 1 Kings x. 10, 2 Chron. ix. 9; and King Hiram also gave him a similar amount, 1 Kings ix. 14; all of which sums the context shows are to be considered extraordinarily great” (Berth.). For the 666 talents of gold are not the entire annual income of Solomon, but, according to the distinct statement of the Biblical historian, are only the annual income in gold, exclusive of the receipts from the customs, and the tributes of the subject kings and tribes, which were probably more valuable. The 120 talents of the queen of Sheba are certainly a very large present, but Solomon would give in return not inconsiderable presents also. But the quantities of silver and gold which David had collected for the building of the temple had not been saved out of his yearly income, but had been in great

building may be introduced. The ל before each word serves to bring the thing once more into prominence; cf. Ew. § 310, a. "As for the gold, it cannot be numbered." "Arise and be doing! and Jahve be with thee" (vers. 17-19).

Vers. 17-19. *Exhortation to the princes of Israel to assist in the building of the temple.*—David supports his exhortation by calling to remembrance the proofs of his favour which the Lord had showed His people. The speech in ver. 18 is introduced without לאמר, because it is clear from the preceding וַיְצַו דָּוִד that the words are spoken by David: "The Lord has given you peace round about; for He has given the inhabitants of the land into my hands, and the land is subdued before Jahve and before His people." The subdued land is Canaan: the inhabitants of the land are, however, not the Israelites over whom the Lord had set David as king, for the words נָתַן בְּיָדֵי cannot apply to them, cf. xiv. 10 f., Josh. ii. 24; it is the Canaanites still left in the land in the time of David, and other enemies, who, like the Philistines, possessed

part captured as booty in war, and laid up out of the tribute of the subject peoples. A question which would more readily occur than this is, Whether such enormous sums were actually necessary for the temple? But the materials necessary to enable us to arrive at even a proximate estimate of this building are entirely wanting. The building of a stone temple from 60 to 70 yards long, 20 yards broad, and 30 yards high, would certainly not have cost so much, notwithstanding that, as we read in 2 Chron. iii. 8 f., 650 talents of gold were required to gild the inner walls of the Holy Place, and at the same rate 2000 talents must have been required to gild the inside of the Sanctuary, which was three times as large; and notwithstanding the great number of massive gold vessels, e.g. the ten golden candlesticks, for which alone, even if they were no larger and heavier than the candlesticks in the tabernacle, ten talents of gold must have been required. But there belonged to the temple many subordinate buildings, which are not further described; as also the colossal foundation structures and the walls enclosing the temple area, the building of which must have swallowed up millions, since Solomon sent 70,000 porters and 80,000 stone-hewers to Lebanon to procure the necessary materials. Consul Rosen has recently indeed attempted to show, in *das Haram von Jerusalem und der Tempelplatz des Moria*, Gotha (1866), that there is reason to suppose that the temple area was enlarged to the size it is known to have had, and surrounded by a wall only by Herod; but he has been refuted by Himpel in the *Tübinger theol. Quartalschr.* 1867, S. 515 f., who advances very weighty reasons against his hypothesis. Finally, we must have regard to the statement in 1 Kings vii. 51 and 2 Chron. v. 1, that Solomon, after the building was finished, deposited the consecrated silver and gold collected by his father David among the temple treasures. Whence we learn that the treasures collected by David were not intended merely for the building of the House of God.



parts of the land, and had been subdued by David. On נִכְבְּשָׁה הָאָרֶץ, cf. Josh. xviii. 1, Num. xxxii. 22, 29. This safety which the Lord had granted them binds them in duty to seek Him with all their heart, and to build the sanctuary, that the ark and the sacred vessels may be brought into it. The לְ in לְבֵית is not a sign of the accusative (Berth.), for הַבַּיִת is not construed with *accus. loci*, but generally with לְ, for which, however, so early as Josh. iv. 5, לְ is used, or it is construed with the *acc.* and הַ locale —הַבַּיִתָּה, Gen. xix. 10, xliii. 47.

CHAP. XXIII.—XXVI.—ENUMERATION AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE LEVITES ACCORDING TO THEIR DIVISIONS AND EMPLOYMENTS.

These four chapters give a connected view of the condition of the Levites towards the end, *i.e.* in the fortieth year, of David's reign (cf. xxiii. 1 and xxvi. 31), and of the sections into which they were divided according to their various services. This review begins with a statement of the total number belonging to the tribe of Levi according to the census then undertaken, and their divisions according to the duties devolving upon (xxiii. 2–5); which is followed by an enumeration of the heads of the fathers'-houses into which the four families of Levites had branched out (xxiii. 6–23), together with a short review of their duties (xxiii. 24–32). Thereafter we have: 1. In chap. xxiv., a catalogue of the Aaronites, *i.e.* of the priests, who were divided into twenty-four classes, corresponding to the sons of Eleazar and Ithamar, and were appointed to perform the service in succession, according as it was determined by lot, special mention being made of the heads of these twenty-four classes; and a catalogue of the heads of the fathers'-houses of the other descendants of Levi, in an order of succession, which was likewise settled by lot (xxiv. 20–31). Then, 2. In chap. xxv. we have a catalogue of the twenty-four orders of Levitic musicians, in an order fixed by lot. And, 3. In chap. xxvi. the classes of doorkeepers (vers. 1–19), the administrators of the treasures of the sanctuary (vers. 20–28), and the officials who performed the external services (vers. 29–32).

Chap. xxiii. *Number, duties, and fathers'-houses of the Levites.*—This clear account of the state and the order of service of the tribe of Levi is introduced by the words, ver. 1, "David was old, and life weary; then he made his son Solomon king over Israel." זָקֵן, generally an adjective, is here *third pers. perf.* of the verb, as in Gen.

xviii. 12, as שָׁבַע also is, to which יָמִים is subordinated in the accusative. Generally elsewhere יָמִים שָׁבַע is used, cf. Gen. xxxv. 29, Job xlii. 17, and also שָׁבַע alone, with the same signification, Gen. xxv. 8. These words are indeed, as Berth. correctly remarks, not a mere passing remark which is taken up again at a later stage, say chap. xxix. 28, but an independent statement complete in itself, with which here the enumeration of the arrangements which David made in the last period of his life begins. But notwithstanding that, it serves here only as an introduction to the arrangements which follow, and is not to be taken to mean that David undertook the numbering of the Levites and the arrangement of their service only after he had given over the government to his son Solomon, but signified that the arrangement of this matter immediately preceded Solomon's elevation to the throne, or was contemporaneous with it. Our verse therefore does not contain, in its few words, a "summary of the contents of the narrative 1 Kings chap. i.," as Berth. thinks, for in 1 Kings i. we have an account of the actual anointing of Solomon and his accession to the throne in consequence of Adonijah's attempt to usurp it. By that indeed Solomon certainly was made king; but the chronicler, in accordance with the plan of his book, has withdrawn his attention from this event, connected as it was with David's domestic relations, and has used הִמְלִיךָ in its more general signification, to denote not merely the actual elevation to the throne, but also his nomination as king. Here the nomination of Solomon to be king, which preceded the anointing narrated in 1 Kings i., that taking place at a time when David had already become bed-ridden through old age, is spoken of. This was the first step towards the transfer of the kingdom to Solomon; and David's ordering of the Levitical service, and of the other branches of public administration, so as to give over a well-ordered kingdom to his successor, were also steps in the same process. Of the various branches of the public administration, our historian notices in detail only the Levites and their service, compressing everything else into the account of the army arrangements and the chief public officials, chap. xxvii.

Vers. 2-5. *Numbering of the Levites, and partition of their duties.*—Ver. 2. For this purpose David collected "all the princes of Israel, and the priests and Levites." The princes of Israel, because the numbering of the Levites and the determination of their duties was a matter of national importance. "The meaning is, that David, in a solemn assembly of the princes, *i.e.* of the



representatives of the lay tribes, and of the priests and Levites, fixed the arrangements of which an account is to be given" (Berth.).—Ver. 3. The Levites were numbered from thirty years old and upwards. This statement agrees with that in Num. iv. 3, 23, 30, 39 ff., where Moses caused those from thirty to fifty years of age to be numbered, and appointed them for service about the tabernacle during the journey through the wilderness. But Moses himself, at a later time, determined that their period of service should be from twenty-five to fifty; Num. viii. 23-26. It is consequently not probable that David confined the numbering to those of thirty and upwards. But besides that, we have a distinct statement in ver. 24 that they were numbered from twenty years of age, the change being grounded by David upon the nature of their service; and that this was the proper age is confirmed by 2 Chron. xxxi. 17 and Ezra iii. 8, according to which the Levites under Hezekiah, and afterwards, had to take part in the service from their twentieth year. We must therefore regard שלשים in ver. 3 as having crept into the text through the error of copyists, who were thinking of the Mosaic census in Num. iv., and must read עשרים instead of it. The various attempts of commentators to get rid of the discrepancy between ver. 3 and ver. 24 are mere makeshifts; and the hypothesis that David took two censuses is as little supported by the text, as that other, that our chapter contains divergent accounts drawn from two different sources; see on ver. 24. The number amounted to 38,000, according to their heads in men. לַגְּבָרִים serves for a nearer definition of לַגְּלִלָתָם, and explains that only men were numbered, women not being included.—Vers. 4 and 5 contain words of David, as we learn from אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי לַחֲלֹל (ver. 5, end), so that we must supply וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד before ver. 4. מֵאַלְפֵה, of these (38,000) 24,000 shall be לְנֹצֶחַ וְגו', to superintend the business, i.e. to conduct and carry on the business (the work) of the house of Jahve. This business is in vers. 28-32 more nearly defined, and embraces all the business that was to be carried on about the sanctuary, except the specifically priestly functions, the keeping of the doors, and the performance of the sacred music. For these two latter offices special sections were appointed, 4000 for the porters' service, and the same number for the sacred music (ver. 5). Besides these, 5000 men were appointed Shoterim and judges. "The instruments which I have made to sing praise" are the stringed instruments which David had introduced into the service to

accompany the singing of the psalms; cf. 2 Chron. xxix. 26, Neh. xii. 36.

Vers. 6–23. *The fathers'-houses of the Levites.*—Ver. 6. “And David divided them into courses according to the sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari;” see on v. 27. The form **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם**, which recurs in xxiv. 3 with the same pointing, is in more accurate MSS. in that place pointed **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם**. There are also found in MSS. and editions **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם**, and the rare form of the Kal **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם** (for **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם**); cf. J. H. Mich. *Notæ crit.* This last pronunciation is attested for, xxiv. 3, by D. Kimchi, who expressly remarks that the regular form **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם** corresponds to it; cf. Norzi on this passage. Gesen. (in *Thes.* p. 483) and Ew. (§ 83, c) regard **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם** as a variety of the Piel (**וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם**), to which, however, Berth. rightly remarks that it would be worth a thought only if the punctuation **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם** were confirmed by good MSS., which is not the case, though we find the Piel in the Chronicle in xv. 3, and then with the signification to distribute. Berth. therefore holds—and certainly this is the more correct opinion—that the form **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם**, attested by Kimchi for xxiv. 3, was the original reading in our verse also, and considers it a rare form of the impf. Kal derived from **וַיַּחֲלֶקֶם** (cf. xxiv. 4, 5), by Kamets coming into the pretonic syllable, after the analogy of **יִשְׁחָטוּם** for **יִשְׁחָטוּם**, 2 Kings x. 14, and by the passing of an *ā* (Pathach) into *ē* (Seghol) before the Kamets, according to well-known euphonic rules. **מִחֲלָקוֹת** is a second accusative: “in divisions.” The tribe of Levi had been divided from ancient times into the three great families of Gershonites, Kohathites, and Merarites, corresponding to the three sons of Levi; cf. v. 27–vi. 15, xxviii. 32.—From ver. 7 onwards we have an enumeration of the fathers'-houses into which these three families were divided: vers. 7–11, the fathers'-houses of the Gershonites; vers. 12–20, those of the Kohathites; and vers. 21–23, those of the Merarites. Berth., on the other hand, thinks that in these verses only the fathers'-houses of those Levites who performed the service of the house of Jahve, i.e. the 24,000 in ver. 4, and not the divisions of all the Levites, are enumerated. But this opinion is incorrect, and certainly is not proved to be true by the circumstance that the singers, porters, and the scribes and judges, are only spoken of afterwards; nor by the remark that, in great part, the names here enumerated appear again in the sections chap. xxiv. 20–31 and xxvi. 20–28, while in the enumeration of the twenty-four classes of musicians



(xxv. 1-31), of the doorkeepers (xxvi. 1-19), and of the scribes and judges (xxvi. 29-32), quite other names are met with. The recurrence of many of the names here enumerated in the sections chap. xxiv. 20-31 and xxvi. 20-28 is easily explained by the fact that these sections treat of the divisions of the Levites, according to the service they performed, and of course many heads of fathers'-houses must again be named. The occurrence of quite other names in the lists of musicians and doorkeepers, again, is simply the result of the fact that only single branches of fathers'-houses, not whole fathers'-houses, were appointed musicians and doorkeepers. Finally, Bertheau's statement, that in the catalogue of the scribes and judges quite other names occur than those in our verses, is based upon an oversight; cf. xxvi. 31 with xxiii. 19.

Vers. 7-11. *The fathers'-houses of the Gershonites.*—According to the natural development of the people of Israel, the twelve sons of Jacob founded the twelve tribes of Israel; his grandsons, or the sons of the twelve patriarchs, founded the families (מִשְׁפָּחוֹת); and their sons, *i.e.* the great-grandsons of Jacob, founded the fathers'-houses (בֵּית-אָבוֹת). But this natural division or ramification of the people into tribes, families, and fathers'-houses (groups of related households), was not consistently carried out. Even the formation of the tribes suffered a modification, when the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born before Jacob's arrival in Egypt, were adopted by him as his sons, and so made founders of tribes (Gen. xlviii. 5). The formation of the families and fathers'-houses was also interfered with, partly by the descendants of many grandsons or great-grandsons of Jacob not being numerous enough to form independent families and fathers'-houses, and partly by individual fathers'-houses (or groups of related households) having so much decreased that they could no longer form independent groups, and so were attached to other fathers'-houses, or by families which had originally formed a בֵּית-אָב becoming so numerous as to be divided into several fathers'-houses. In the tribe of Levi there came into operation this special cause, that Aaron and his sons were chosen to be priests, and so his family was raised above the other Levites. From these causes, in the use of the words מִשְׁפָּחָה and בֵּית-אָב many fluctuations occur; cf. my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 140. Among the Levites, the fathers'-houses were founded not by the grandsons, but by the great-grandsons of the patriarch.—Ver. 7.

“Of the Gershonites, Laadan and Shimei,” *i.e.* these were heads of groups of related families, since, according to ver. 9, their sons and descendants formed six fathers’-houses. The sons of Gershon, from whom all branches of the family of Gershon come, are called in vi. 2, as in Ex. vi. 17 and Num. xiii. 18, Libni and Shimei; while in our verse, on the contrary, we find only the second name Shimei, whose sons are enumerated in vers. 10, 11; and instead of Libni we have the name Laadan, which recurs in xxvi. 21. Laadan seemingly cannot be regarded as a surname of Libni; for not only are the sons of Shimei named along with the sons of Laadan in vers. 8 and 9 as heads of the fathers’-houses of Laadan, without any hint being given of the genealogical connection of this Shimei with Laadan, but mainly because of לַגֵּרְשֹׁנִי in ver. 7. In the case of Kohath and Merari, the enumeration of the fathers’-houses descended from them is introduced by the mention of their sons, בְּנֵי מֵרָרִי and בְּנֵי קָהָת (vers. 12, 21), while in the case of Gershon it is not so;—in his case, instead of בְּנֵי גֵרְשֹׁן, we find the Gentilic designation גֵּרְשֹׁנִי, to point out that Laadan and Shimei are not named as being sons of Gershon, but as founders of the two chief lines of Gershonites, of which only the second was named after Gershon’s son Shimei, while the second derived their name from Laadan, whose family was divided in David’s time into two branches, the sons of Laadan and the sons of Shimei, the latter a descendant of Libni, not elsewhere mentioned. That the Shimei of ver. 9 is not the same person as Shimei the son of Gershon mentioned in ver. 7, is manifest from the fact that the sons of the latter are enumerated only in ver. 10. Each of these two lines numbered at that time three fathers’-houses, the heads of which are named in vers. 8 and 9. הָרֵאשִׁי in ver. 8 belongs to יְהִיֵּאל: “the sons of Laadan were: the head (also the first; cf. vers. 11, 16) Jehiel, Zetham, and Joel, three.”—Ver. 9. The sons of Shimei: Shelomoth or Shelomith (both forms are found in xxvi. 35 of another Shelomith), Haziël, and Haran, three. These (three and three) are the heads of the fathers’-houses of Laadan.—In vers. 10 and 11 there follow the fathers’-houses of the Shimei mentioned in ver. 7 along with Laadan: they are likewise three, derived from the four sons of Shimei, Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah; for the last two, as they had not many sons, were included in one father’s-house, one פְּקֻדָּה, *i.e.* one official class (xxiv. 3; 2 Chron. xvii. 14). The Gershonites at that time,



therefore, numbered nine fathers'-houses — six named after Laadan, and three after Shimei.

Vers. 12-20. *The fathers'-houses of the Kohathites.*—The four sons of Kohath who are named in ver. 12, as in v. 28, vi. 3, and Ex. vi. 18, founded the four families of Kohath, Num. iii. 27. From Amram came Aaron and Moses; see on Ex. vi. 20. Of these, Aaron with his sons was set apart “to sanctify him to be a most holy one; he and his sons for ever to offer incense before Jahve, to serve Him, and to bless in His name for ever.” **לְהַקְדִּישׁוּ קָדֵשׁ** signifies neither, *ut ministraret in sancto sanctorum* (Vulg., Syr.), nor, *ut res sanctissimas, sacrificia, vasa sacra etc. consecrarent* (Cler.). Against this interpretation we adduce not only the objection advanced by Hgstb. *Christol.* iii. p. 119, trans., that the office assigned by it to the Levites is far too subordinate to be mentioned here in the first place, but also the circumstance that the suffix in **לְהַקְדִּישׁוּ**, after the analogy of **לְשָׁרְתוֹ**, must denote the object of the sanctifying; and this view is confirmed by the subject, who offers incense and blesses, not being expressed with **לְהַקְטִיר** and **לְבָרֵךְ**. The Vulgate translation cannot be accepted, for **קָדֵשׁ קְדָשִׁים** cannot be the ablative, and the most holy place in the temple is always called **קָדֵשׁ הַקְדָּשִׁים** with the article. **קָדֵשׁ קְדָשִׁים**, without the article, is only used of the most holy things, *e.g.* of the vessels connected with the worship, the sacrificial gifts, and other things which no lay person might touch or appropriate. See on Ex. xxx. 10, Lev. ii. 3, and Dan. ix. 24. Here it is committed to Aaron, who, by being chosen for the priest's service and anointed to the office, was made a most holy person, to discharge along with his sons all the priestly functions in the sanctuary. Specimens of such functions are then adduced: **הַקְטִיר לִפְנֵי י'**, the offering of the sacrifice of incense upon the altar of the inner sanctuary, as in 2 Chron. ii. 3, 5, Ex. xxx. 7 f.; **לְשָׁרְתוֹ**, “to serve Him,” Jahve,—a general expression, including all the other services in the sanctuary, which were reserved for the priests; and **לְבָרֵךְ בְּשֵׁמוֹ**, to bless in His name, *i.e.* to pronounce the blessing in the name of the Lord over the people, according to the command in Num. vi. 23, cf. xvi. 2, Deut. xxi. 5; not “to bless His name” (Ges., Berth.). To call upon or praise the name of God is **בָּרַךְ שְׁמוֹ**, Ps. xcvi. 2, c. 4; and the assertion that **בָּרַךְ בְּשֵׁם** is a somewhat later phrase formed on the model of **קָרָא בְּשֵׁם**, for “to call upon God” (Ges. in *Lex. sub voce בָּרַךְ*), is quite groundless. Our phrase occurs as early as in Deut. x. 8 and xxi. 5; in the latter passage

in connection with לְשֵׁרֵתוֹ of the priests; in the former, of the tribe of Levi, but so used that it can refer only to the priests, not to the Levites also.—Ver. 14. “But as to Moses the man of God” (cf. Deut. xxxiii. 1), “his sons were called after the tribe of Levi,” *i.e.* were reckoned in the ranks of the Levites, not of the priests. On נִקְרָא עַל, cf. Gen. xlviii. 6, Ezra ii. 61, Neh. vii. 63.—Vers. 15–17. Each of his two sons Gershon and Eliezer (see Ex. ii. 22 and xviii. 3 f.) founded a father’s-house; Gershon through his son Shebuel (שֶׁבּוּעַל, in xxiv. 20 שְׁבּוּעַל), Eliezer through Rehabiah. The plurals בְּנֵי אֵל, בְּנֵי גֵ are used, although in both cases only one son, he who was head (רֹאשׁ) of the father’s-house, is mentioned, either because they had other sons, or those named had in their turn sons, who together formed a father’s-house. From the remark in ver. 17, that Eliezer had no other sons than Rehabiah, while Rehabiah had very many, we may conclude that Gershon had other sons besides Shebuel, who are not mentioned because their descendants were numbered with Shebuel’s father’s-house.—Ver. 18. Only one son of Jizhar, the brother of Amram, is mentioned, Shelomith as head, after whom the Jizharite father’s-house is named.—Ver. 19. Amram’s next brother Hebron had four sons, and the youngest brother Uzziel two, who founded fathers’-houses; so that, besides the priests, nine Levitical fathers’-houses are descended from Kohath, and their chiefs who served in the sanctuary are enumerated in chap. xxiv. 20–25.

Vers. 21–23. *The fathers’-houses of the Merarites.*—Ver. 21 f. As in vi. 4, Ex. vi. 19, and Num. iii. 33, two sons of Merari are mentioned—Mahli and Mushi—who founded the two families of Merari which existed in the time of Moses. Mahli had two sons, Eleazar and Kish; the first of whom, however, left behind him at his death only daughters, who were married to the sons of Kish (אֶחָיוֹתָם, *i.e.* their cousins), according to the law as to daughters who were heiresses (Num. xxxvi. 6–9). The descendants of Mahli, therefore, were comprehended in the one father’s-house of Kish, whose head at that time (xxiv. 29) was Jerahmeel.—Ver. 23. Of the sons of Mushi, three founded fathers’-houses; so that the Merarites formed only four fathers’-houses in all. If we compare the enumeration of the Merarites in chap. xxiv. 26–30, we find there in ver. 30 Eleazar and Kish called sons of Mahli, with the remark that Eleazar had no sons. In ver. 26, however, of the same passage we read, “sons of Merari



(were) Mahli and Mushi, sons of Jaaziah his son;" and ver. 27, "sons of Merari by Jaaziah his son; and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri." From this Bertheau concludes that Merari had really three sons, and that the name of the third has been dropped out of chap. xxiii.; but in this he is incorrect, for vers. 26 and 27 of the 24th chapter are at once, from their whole character, recognisable as arbitrary interpolations. Not only is it strange that  $\text{בְּנֵי יַעֲזִיָּהוּ}$  should follow the before-mentioned sons of Merari in this unconnected way (*Vav* being omitted before  $\text{בְּנֵי}$ ), but the form of the expression also is peculiar. If  $\text{יַעֲזִיָּהוּ}$  be a third son of Merari, or the founder of a third family of Merarites, co-ordinate with the families of Mahli and Mushi, as we must conclude from the additional word  $\text{בְּנֵי}$ , we should expect, after the preceding, simply the name with the conjunction, *i.e.*  $\text{וַיַּעֲזִיָּהוּ}$ . The  $\text{בְּנֵי יַעֲזִיָּהוּ}$  is all the more surprising that the names of the sons of Jaaziah follow in ver. 27, and there the name of the first son  $\text{שֹׁהַם}$  is introduced by the *Vav* copulative. This misled the older commentators, so that they took  $\text{בְּנֵי}$  for a proper name. The repetition of  $\text{בְּנֵי מֵרָרִי}$ , too, at the beginning of the second verse is strange, and without parallel in the preceding enumeration of the fathers'-houses founded by Amram's sons (xxiv. 20-25). We must, then, as the result of all this, since the Pentateuch knows only two descendants of Merari who founded families of fathers'-houses,<sup>1</sup> regard the additions in xxiv. 26, 27 as later glosses, although we are not in a position to explain the origin or the meaning of the interpolation. This inability arises from the fact that, of the names Jaaziah, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri, only Zaccur again occurs among the Asaphites (xxv. 2), and elsewhere of other persons, while the

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau, on the contrary, proceeding on the hypothesis that we may presume the list of Merari's descendants which is given in our verses to have been originally in perfect agreement with that in xxii. 26-31, would emend our text according to chap. xxiv. 26, 27, for it cannot be doubted that in our passage also Jaaziah and his three sons were named. But since elsewhere only the two sons Mahli and Mushi occur, one can easily see why the third son Jaaziah came to be omitted from our passage, while we cannot conceive any motive which would account for the later and arbitrary interpolation of the names in xxiv. 26 f. This argumentation is weak to a degree, since it quite overlooks the main difficulty connected with this hypothesis. Had we no further accounts of the descendants of Merari than those in the two passages of the Chronicle (chap. xxiii. 11 f. and xxiv. 26-29), it would be natural to suppose that in xxiii. 21 ff. the additional names which we find in

others are nowhere else to be met with. The three families of Levi numbered therefore  $9 + 9 + 4 = 22$  fathers'-houses, exclusive of the priests.

Vers. 24–32. *Concluding remarks.*—Ver. 24. “These (the just enumerated) are the sons of Levi according to their fathers'-houses, according to those who were counted (Num. i. 21 f.; Ex. xxx. 14) in the enumeration by name (Num. i. 18, iii. 43), by the head, performing the work for the service of the house of Jahve, from the men of twenty years and upwards.” עֲשֵׂה הַמְלָאכָה is not singular, but plural, as in 2 Chron. xxiv. 12, xxxiv. 10, 13, Ex. iii. 9, Neh. ii. 16, cf. 2 Chron. xi. 1. It occurs along with עָשָׂה, with a similar meaning and in a like position, 2 Chron. xxiv. 13, xxxiv. 17, Neh. xi. 12, xiii. 10. It is only another way of writing עָשָׂה, and the same form is found here and there in other words; cf. Ew. § 16, b. The statement that the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and upwards is accounted for in ver. 25 thus: David said, The Lord has given His people rest, and He dwells in Jerusalem; and the Levites also have no longer to bear the dwelling (tabernacle) with all its vessels. From this, of course, it results that they had not any longer to do such heavy work as during the march through the wilderness, and so might enter upon their service even at the age of twenty. In ver. 27 a still further reason is given: “For by the last words of David was this, (viz.) the numbering of the sons of Levi from twenty years old and upwards.” There is a difference of opinion as to how בְּדִבְרֵי דָוִד הָאֲחֵרִים are to be understood. Bertheau translates, with Kimchi, “in the later histories of David are the number = the numbered,” and adduces in support of his translation chap. xxix. 29, whence it is clear that by “the later

chap. xxiv. had been dropped out. But in the genealogical lists in the Pentateuch also (Ex. vi. 19 and Num. iii. 33), only two sons of Merari are named; and according to them, the Merarites, when Moses' census of the Levites was taken, formed only two families. Had Merari had yet a third son besides the two—Mahli and Mushi, who alone were known in the time of Moses—who left descendants, forming three fathers'-houses in David's time, the omission of this third son in the family register in the Pentateuch would be quite incomprehensible. Or are we to suppose that in Ex. vi. 19 also the name Jaaziah had been dropped out, and that in consequence of that the family descended from him has been omitted from Num. iii. 33? Supported by the Pentateuch, the text of our verses is presumably entire, and this presumption of its integrity is confirmed by the character of the additions in xxiv. 26, 27, as above exhibited.



histories of David" a part of a historical work is meant. But the passage quoted does not prove this. In the formula דְּבַרֵּי הָרִאשׁוֹנִים וְהָאַחֲרֹנִים . . . (xxix. 29; 2 Chron. ix. 29, xii. 15, xvi. 11, etc.), which recurs at the end of each king's reign, דְּבַרֵּי denotes not *historiæ*, in the sense of a history, but *res gestæ*, which are recorded in the writings named. In accordance with this, therefore, דְּבַרֵּי דָוִד cannot denote writings of David, but only words or things (= deeds); but the Levites who were numbered could not be in the acts of David. We must rather translate according to 2 Chron. xxix. 30 and 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. In the latter passage דְּבַרֵּי דָוִד הָאַחֲרֹנִים are the last words (utterances) of David, and in the former בְּדְבַרֵּי דָוִד, "by the words of David," i.e. according to the commands or directions of David. In this way, Cler. and Mich., with the Vulg. *juxta præcepta*, have already correctly translated the words: "according to the last commands of David." הֵמָּה is nowhere found in the signification *sunt* as the mere copula of the subject and verb, but is everywhere an independent predicate, and is here to be taken, according to later linguistic usage, as *neutr. sing.* (cf. Ew. § 318, *b*): "According to the last commands of David, this," i.e. this was done, viz. the numbering of the Levites from twenty years and upwards. From this statement, from twenty years and upwards, which is so often repeated, and for which the reasons are so given, it cannot be doubtful that the statement in ver. 3, "from thirty years and upwards," is incorrect, and that, as has been already remarked on ver. 3, שְׁלֹשִׁים has crept into the text by an error of the copyist, who was thinking of the Mosaic census.<sup>1</sup> In vers. 28-32 we have, in the enumeration of the duties which the Levites had to perform, another ground for the employment

<sup>1</sup> The explanation adopted from Kimchi by the older Christian commentators, e.g. by J. H. Mich., is an untenable makeshift. It is to this effect: that David first numbered the Levites from thirty years old and upwards, according to the law (Num. iv. 3, xxiii. 30), but that afterwards, when he saw that those of twenty years of age were in a position to perform the duties, lightened as they were by its being no longer necessary for the Levites to bear the sanctuary from place to place, he included all from twenty years of age in a second census, taken towards the end of his life; cf. ver. 27. Against this Bertheau has already rightly remarked that the census of the Levites gave the number at 38,000 (ver. 3), and these 38,000 and no others were installed; it is nowhere said that this number was not sufficient, or that the arrangements based upon this number (vers. 4, 5) had no continued existence. He is, however, incorrect in his further remark, that the historian clearly enough is

of those from twenty years old and upwards in actual service. —Ver. 28. Their appointed place or post was at the hand of the sons of Aaron, *i.e.* they were ready to the priest's hand, to aid him in carrying on the service of the house of God. "Over the courts and the cells (of the courts; cf. ix. 26), and the purifying of every holy thing," *i.e.* of the temple rooms and the temple vessels. On ל before בְּלִקְרֹשׁ, used for mediate connection after the *stat. const.*, cf. Ew. § 289, b. וּמַעֲשֵׂה עֲבֹדָתָא, and for the performance of the service of the house of God. Before מַעֲשֵׂה, ל is to be supplied from the preceding. The individual services connected with the worship are specialized in vers. 29–31, and introduced by the preposition ל. For the bread of the pile, *i.e.* the shew-bread (see on Lev. xxiv. 8 f.), viz. to prepare it; for the laying of the bread upon the table was the priest's business. For fine meal (בִּלְתָּא, see on Lev. ii. 1) for the meat-offering and unleavened cakes (רִקְיֵי הַמִּצּוֹת, see on Lev. ii. 4), and for the pans, *i.e.* that which was baked in pans (see on Lev. ii. 5), and for that which was roasted (מִרְבֶּכֶת, see on Lev. vi. 14), and for all measures of capacity and measures of length which were kept by the Levites, because meal, oil, and wine were offered along with the sacrifices in certain fixed quantities (cf. *e.g.* Ex. xxix. 40, xxx. 24), and the Levites had probably to watch over the weights and measures in general (Lev. xix. 35).—Ver. 30. "On each morning and evening to praise the Lord with song and instruments." These words refer to the duties of the singers and musicians, whose classes and orders are enumerated in chap. xxv. The referring of them to the Levites who assisted the priests in the sacrificial worship (Berth.) needs no serious refutation, for

desirous of calling attention to the fact that here a statement is made which is different from the former, for of this there is no trace; the contrary, indeed, is manifest. Since אֵלֶּה (ver. 24) refers back to the just enumerated fathers'-houses of the Levites, and ver. 24 consequently forms the subscription to the preceding register, the historian thereby informs us plainly enough that he does not communicate here a statement different from the former, but only concludes that which he has formerly communicated. We cannot very well see how, from the fact that he here for the first time adduces the motive which determined David to cause the Levites from twenty years old and upwards to be numbered and employed in the service, it follows that he derived this statement of David's motive from a source different from that account which he has hitherto made use of. Nor would it be more manifest if ver. 27 contained—as it does not contain—a reference to the source from which he derived this statement.



הַזֹּהֶרֶם is the standing phrase for the sacred temple music; and we can hardly believe that the Levites sang psalms or played on harps or lutes while the beasts for sacrifices were slaughtered and skinned, or the meat-offerings baked, or such duties performed.—Ver. 31. “And for all the bringing of offerings to Jahve on the sabbaths, the new moons, and the feasts, in the number according to the law concerning them (*i.e.* according to the regulations that existed for this matter), continually before Jahve.” It was the duty of the Levites to procure the necessary number of beasts for sacrifice, to see to their suitableness, to slaughter and skin them, etc. תָּמִיד refers to עֲלֹת, the burnt-offerings for Jahve, which are תָּמִיד, because they must always be offered anew on the appointed days.—Ver. 32. In conclusion, the whole duties of the Levites are summed up in three clauses: they were to keep the charge of the tabernacle, the charge of the sacred things, *i.e.* of all the sacred things of the worship, and the charge of the sons of Aaron, *i.e.* of all that the priests committed to them to be done; cf. Num. xviii. 3 ff., where these functions are more exactly fixed.

Chap. xxiv. *The division of the priests and Levites into classes.*—Vers. 1-19. *The twenty-four classes of priests.* After the statement as to the fathers'-houses of the Levites (chap. xxiii.), we have next the arrangements of the priests for the performance of the service in the sanctuary; the priestly families descended from Aaron's sons Eleazar and Ithamar being divided into twenty-four classes, the order of whose service was settled by lot.—Ver. 1a contains the superscription, “As for the sons of Aaron, their divisions (were these).” To make the division clear, we have an introductory notice of Aaron's descendants, to the effect that of his four sons, the two elder, Nadab and Abihu, died before their father, leaving no sons, so that only Eleazar and Ithamar became priests (יִבְהִנִּי), *i.e.* entered upon the priesthood. The four sons of Aaron, ver. 1, as in v. 29, Ex. vi. 23.—Ver. 2; cf. Lev. x. 1 f., Num. iii. 4. These priestly families David caused (ver. 3) to be divided, along with the two high priests (see on xviii. 16), “according to their service.” פְּקִידָה, office, official class, as in xxiii. 11.—Ver. 4. As the sons of Eleazar proved to be more numerous in respect of the heads of the men than the sons of Ithamar, they (David, Zadok, and Ahimelech) divided them thus: “For the sons of Eleazar, heads of fathers'-houses, sixteen; and for the sons of Ithamar, (heads)

of fathers'-houses, eight." לְרֹאשֵׁי הַנְּבָרִים means neither in respect to the number of the men by the head (cf. xxiii. 3), nor with respect to the chiefs of the men, divided according to their fathers'-houses (Berth.). The supplying of the words, "divided according to their fathers'-houses," is perfectly arbitrary. The expression רֹאשֵׁי הַנְּבָרִים is rather to be explained by the fact that, according to the natural articulations of the people, the fathers'-houses, *i.e.* the groups of related families comprehended under the name בֵּית-אָבוֹת, divided themselves further into individual households, whose heads were called נְבָרִים, as is clear from Josh. vii. 16–18, because each household had in the man, הַנְּבָר, its natural head. רֹאשֵׁי הַנְּבָרִים are therefore the heads, not of the fathers'-houses, but of the individual households, considered in their relation to the men as heads of households. Just as בֵּית-אָב is a technical designation of the larger groups of households into which the great families fell, so הַנְּבָר is the technical expression for the individual households into which the fathers'-houses fell.—Ver. 5. They divided them by lot, אֵלֶּה עִם-אֵלֶּה, these with these, *i.e.* the one as the other (cf. xxv. 8), so that the classes of both were determined by lot, as both drew lots mutually. "For holy princes and princes of God were of the sons of Eleazar, and among the sons of Ithamar;" *i.e.*, of both lines of priests holy princes had come, men who had held the highest priestly dignity. The high-priesthood, as is well known, went over entirely to Eleazar and his descendants, but had been held for a considerable period in the time of the judges by the descendants of Ithamar; see above, p. 113. In the settlement of the classes of priests for the service, therefore, neither of the lines was to have an advantage, but the order was to be determined by lot for both. שְׂרֵי קָדָשׁ, cf. Isa. xliii. 28, = שְׂרֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14, are the high priests and the heads of the priestly families, the highest officers among the priests, but can hardly be the same as the ἀρχιερεῖς of the gospel history; for the view that these ἀρχιερεῖς were the heads of the twenty-four classes of priests cannot be made good: cf. Wichelhaus, *Comment. zur Leidensgesch.* (Halle, 1855), S. 32 ff. שְׂרֵי הָאֱלֹהִים would seem to denote the same, and to be added as synonymous; but if there be a distinction between the two designations, we would take the princes of God to denote only the regular high priests, who could enter in before God into the most holy place.—Ver. 6. "He set them down," viz. the classes, as the lot had determined them. מִן-הָאֵלֶּיךָ,



of the tribe of Levi. רֹאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת belongs to לַכֹּהֲנִים וְלִלְוִי, heads of the fathers'-houses of the priests and of the Levites. The second hemistich of ver. 6 gives a more detailed account of the drawing of the lots: "One father's-house was drawn for Eleazar, and drawn for Ithamar." The last words are obscure. אָחֲזוּ, to lay hold of, to draw forth (Num. xxxi. 30, 47), here used of drawing lots, signifies plucked forth or drawn from the urn. The father's-house was plucked forth from the urn, the lot bearing its name being drawn. וְאֶחָדָם אָחֲזוּ, which is the only well-attested reading, only some few MSS. containing the reading וְאֶחָדָם אָחֲזוּ, is very difficult. Although this various reading is a mere conjecture, yet Gesen. (*Thes.* p. 68), with Cappell and Grotius, prefers it. The repetition of the same word expresses sometimes totality, multitude, sometimes a distributive division; and here can only be taken in this last signification: one father's-house drawn for Eleazar, and then always drawn (or always one drawn) for Ithamar. So much at least is clear, that the lots of the two priestly families were not placed in one urn, but were kept apart in different urns, so that the lots might be drawn alternately for Eleazar and Ithamar. Had the lot for Eleazar been first drawn, and thereafter that for Ithamar, since Eleazar's family was the more numerous, they would have had an advantage over the Ithamarites. But it was not to be allowed that one family should have an advantage over the other, and the lots were consequently drawn alternately, one for the one, and another for the other. But as the Eleazarites were divided into sixteen fathers'-houses, and the Ithamarites into eight, Bertheau thinks that it was settled, in order to bring about an equality in the numbers sixteen and eight, in so far as the drawing of the lots was concerned, that each house of Ithamar should represent two lots, or, which is the same thing, that after every two houses of Eleazarites one house of Ithamarites should follow, and that the order of succession of the single houses was fixed according to this arrangement. To this or some similar conception of the manner of settling the order of succession we are brought, he says, by the relation of the number eight to sixteen, and by the words אָחֲזוּ and וְאֶחָדָם אָחֲזוּ. But even though this conception be readily suggested by the relation of the number sixteen to eight, yet we cannot see how the words אָחֲזוּ and וְאֶחָדָם אָחֲזוּ indicate it. These words would much rather suggest that a lot for Eleazar alternated with the drawing of one for Ithamar, until the eight

heads of Ithamar's family had been drawn, when, of course, the remaining eight lots of Eleazar must be drawn one after the other. We cannot, however, come to any certain judgment on the matter, for the words are so obscure as to be unintelligible even to the old translators. In vers. 7-18 we have the names of the fathers'-houses in the order of succession which had been determined by the lot. **אֵלֶּזָר**, of the lot coming forth from the urn, as in Josh. xvi. 1, xix. 1. The names Jehoiarib and Jedaiah occur together also in ix. 10; and Jedaiah is met with, besides, in Ezra ii. 36 and Neh. vii. 39. The priest Mattathias, 1 Macc. ii. 1, came of the class Jehoiarib. Of the succeeding names, **שַׁעְרִים** (ver. 8), **יִשְׁבָּבֶב** (ver. 13), and **הַפְּעִיז** (ver. 15) do not elsewhere occur; others, such as **הַפָּה** (ver. 13), **נָמִל** (ver. 17), do not recur among the names of priests. The sixteenth class, Immer, on the contrary, and the twenty-first, Jachin, are often mentioned; cf. ix. 10, 12. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, belonged to the eighth, Abiah (Luke i. 5).—Ver. 19. These are their official classes for their service (cf. ver. 3), **לְבֹנָה**, so that they came (according to the arrangement thus determined) into the house of Jahve, according to their law, through Aaron their father (ancestor), *i.e.* according to the lawful arrangement which was made by Aaron for their official service, as Jahve the God of Israel had commanded. This last clause refers to the fact that the priestly service in all its parts was prescribed by Jahve in the law.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 20-31. *The classes of the Levites.*—The superscription, "As to the other Levites" (ver. 20), when compared with the subscription, "And they also cast lots, like to their brethren the sons of Aaron" (ver. 31), leads us to expect a catalogue of these classes of Levites, which performed the service in the house of God at the hand of, *i.e.* as assistants to, the priests. **הַנֹּתָרִים** are

<sup>1</sup> Of these twenty-four classes, each one had to perform the service during a week in order, and, as may be gathered with certainty from 2 Kings xi. 9 and 2 Chron. xxiii. 9, from Sabbath to Sabbath. Josephus bears witness to this division in *Antt.* vii. 14. 7: *διεμενεν οὕτως ὁ μερισμὸς ἄχρι τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας*. Herzfeld, on the contrary (*Geschichte des Volks Israel von der Zerstörung des ersten Tempels*, Bd. i. S. 381 ff.), following de Wette and Gramb., has declared the reference of this organization of the priests to David to be an invention of the chronicler, and maintains that the twenty-four classes of priests were formed only after the exile, from the twenty-two families of priests who returned out of exile with Zerubbabel. But this baseless hypothesis is sufficiently refuted by the evidence adduced by Movers, *die bibl.*



the Levites still remaining after the enumeration of the priests. We might certainly regard the expression as including all the Levites except the Aaronites (or priests); but the statement of the subscription that they cast lots like the sons of Aaron, and the circumstance that in chap. xxv. the twenty-four orders of singers and musicians, in chap. xxvi. 1-19 the class of the doorkeepers, and in xxvi. 20-32 the overseers of the treasures, and the scribes and judges, are specially enumerated, prove that our passage treats only of the classes of the Levites who were employed about the worship. Bertheau has overlooked these circumstances, and, misled by false ideas as to the catalogue in chap. xxiii. 6-23, has moreover drawn the false conclusion that the catalogue in our verses is imperfect, from the circumstance that a part of the names of the fathers'-houses named in xxiii. 6-23 recur here in vers. 20-29, and that we find a considerable number of the names which are contained in chap. xxiii. 6-23 to be omitted from them. In vers. 20-25, for example, we find only names of Kohathites, and in vers. 26-29 of Merarites, and no Gershonites. But it by no means follows from that, that the classes of the Gershonites have been dropped out, or even omitted by the author of the Chronicle as an unnecessary repetition. This conclusion would only be warrantable if it were otherwise demonstrated, or demonstrable, that the Levites who were at the hand of the priests in carrying on the worship had been taken from all the three Levite families, and that consequently Gershonites also must have been included. But no such thing can be proved. Several fathers'-houses of the Gershonites were, according to xxvi. 20 ff., entrusted with the oversight of the treasures of the sanctuary. We have indeed no further accounts as to the employment of the other Gershonites; but the statements about the management of the treasures, and the scribes and judges, in chap. xxvi. 20-32, are everywhere imperfect. David had appointed 6000 men to be

*Chron.* S. 279 ff., for the historical character of the arrangements attributed to David, and described in our chapters; but the remarks of Oehler in Herzog's *Realenc.* xii. S. 185 f. may also be compared. An unimpeachable witness for the præ-exilie origin of the division of the priests into twenty-four orders is the vision of Ezekiel (chap. viii. 16-18), where the twenty-five men who worship the sun in the priests' court represent the twenty-four classes of priests, with the high priest at their head. In Neh. xii. 1-7 and 12-21 also unimpeachable evidence for the Davidic origin of the division of the priests into twenty-four classes is to be found, as we shall show in treating of these passages.

scribes and judges : those mentioned in chap. xxvi. 29–32 amounted to only 1700 and 2700, consequently only 4400 persons in all ; so that it is quite possible the remaining 1600 were taken from among the Gershonites. Thus, therefore, from the fact that the Gershonites are omitted from our section, we cannot conclude that our catalogue is mutilated. In it all the chief branches of the Kohathites are named, viz. the two lines descended from Moses' sons (vers. 20, 21) ; then the Izharites, Hebronites, and Uzzielites (vers. 22–25), and the main branches of the Merarites (vers. 26–30).—Ver. 20*b* is to be taken thus : Of the sons of Amram, *i.e.* of the Kohathite Amram, from whom Moses descended (xxiii. 13), that is, of the chief Shubael, descended from Moses' son Gershon (xxiii. 16), his son Jehdeiah, who as head and representative of the class made up of his sons, and perhaps also of his brothers, is alone mentioned.—Ver. 21. Of the father's-house Rehabiah, connected with Eliezer the second son of Moses (xxiii. 16) ; of the sons of this Rehabiah, Isshiah was the head.—Ver. 22. Of the Izharites, namely of the father's-house Shelomoth (xxiii. 18), his sons were under the head Jahath. The heads of the class formed by David mentioned in vers. 20–22, Jehdeiah, Isshiah, and Jahath, are not met with in chap. xxiii.,—a clear proof that chap. xxiii. treats of the fathers'-houses ; our section, on the contrary, of the official classes of the Levites.—Ver. 23 treats of the Hebronites, as is clear from xxiii. 19 ; but here the text is imperfect. Instead of enumerating the names of the chiefs of the classes into which David divided the four fathers'-houses into which Hebron's descendants fell for the temple service, we find only the four names of the heads of the fathers'-houses repeated, just as in xxiii. 19,—introduced, too, by *וּבְנֵי* as sons of . . . Bertheau would therefore interpolate the name *הַכֹּהֵנִים* after *וּבְנֵי* (according to xxiii. 19). This interpolation is probably correct, but is not quite beyond doubt, for possibly only the *בְּנֵי* of the four sons of Hebron named could be mentioned as being busied about the service of the sanctuary according to their divisions. In any case, the names of the heads of the classes formed by the Hebronites are wanting ; but it is impossible to ascertain whether they have been dropped out only by a later copyist, or were not contained in the authority made use of by our historian, for even the LXX. had our text.—Vers. 26–28. The classes of the Merarites. As to Jaaziah and his sons, see the remarks on xxiii. 31. As Mahli's son



Eleazar had no sons, only Jerahmeel from his second son Kish, as head of the class formed by Mahli's sons, is named. Of Mushi's sons only the names of the four fathers'-houses into which they fell are mentioned, the chiefs of the classes not being noticed. The heads mentioned in our section are fifteen in all; and supposing that in the cases of the fathers'-houses of the Hebronites and of the Merarite branch of the Mushites, where the heads of the classes are not named, each father's-house formed only one class, we would have only fifteen classes. It is, however, quite conceivable that many of the fathers'-houses of the Hebronites and Mushites were so numerous as to form more than one class; and so out of the Levite families mentioned in vers. 20-29 twenty-four classes could be formed. The subscription, that they cast the lot like their brethren, makes this probable; and the analogy of the division of the musicians into twenty-four classes (chap. xxv.) turns the probability that the Levites who were appointed to perform service for the priests, were divided into the same number of classes, into a certainty, although we have no express statement to that effect, and in the whole Old Testament no information as to the order of succession of the Levites is anywhere to be found.—Ver. 31. לְפָנַי דָּוִיד וְגו', as in ver. 6. In the last clause אָבוֹת is used for בֵּית-אָבוֹת, as אָבִי אָבוֹת stands frequently for אָבִי בֵּית-אָבוֹת in these catalogues. הָרֹאשׁ stands in apposition to בֵּית-אָבוֹת, the father's-house; the head even as his younger brother, *i.e.* he who was the head of the father's-house as etc., *i.e.* the oldest among the brethren as his younger brethren. The Vulgate gives the meaning correctly: *tam majores quam minores; omnes sors æqualiter dividebat.*

Chap. xxv. *The twenty-four classes of musicians.*—Ver. 1. "David and the princes of the host separated for the service the sons of Asaph," etc. שְׂרָרֵי הַצֶּבֶא are not princes of the Levite host; for although the service of the Levites is called צֶבֶא צָבָא in Num. iv. 23, yet the princes of the Levites are nowhere called שְׂרָרֵי הַצֶּבֶא. This expression rather denotes either the leaders of the army or the chiefs of Israel, as the host of Jahve, Ex. xii. 17, 41, etc. Here it is used in the last signification, as synonymous with princes of Israel (xxiii. 2); in xxiv. 6 we have simply the princes, along with whom the heads of the fathers'-houses of the priests and the Levites are mentioned. הַבְּדִיל לְעִבְדָּה, separate for the service; cf. Num. xvi. 9. The לְ in לְבָנֵי אָסָף is *nota acc.* Since Asaph was, according to vi. 24-28, a descendant of Gershon, Heman,

according to vi. 18–23, a descendant of Kohath, and Jeduthun (=Ethan) a descendant of Merari (vi. 29–32), all the chief families of Levi had representatives among the singers. The Kethibh הַנְּבִיאִים is an orthographical error for הַקְּבָאִים (Keri), *partic. Niph.*, corresponding to the singular הַקְּבָא, vers. 2 and 3. נָבִיא, *prophetae*, is here used in its wider signification of the singing and playing to the praise of God performed in the power of the Divine Spirit. In reference to the instruments of these chief musicians, cf. xv. 16. The suffix in מְסַפְּרִים refers to the following noun, which is subordinated to the word מְסַפֵּר as genitive; cf. the similar construction נַפְשׁוֹ עָצֵל, his, the sluggard's, soul, Prov. xiii. 4, and Ew. § 309, *e*. “Their number (the number) of the workmen for the service, *i.e.* of those who performed the work of the service, was (as follows).”—Ver. 2. With לְבְנֵי אָסָף the enumeration begins: “Of Asaph's sons were, or to Asaph's sons belonged, Zacchur,” etc. Four are here named, but the number is not stated, while it is given in the case of the sons of Jeduthun and Heman, vers. 3 and 5. עַל-יָד, at the hand, alternates with עַל-יָדֵי (vers. 3 and 6), and עַל יָד אָסָף does not of itself express a different relationship to Asaph than that expressed by עַל יָדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ with reference to the king. It signifies only “under (according to) the direction of;” and in ver. 6 the king, Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman are co-ordinated, inasmuch as the musical part of the worship was arranged by David and the three chief musicians in common, although only the latter were concerned in its performance. In ver. 3 לְיְדוּתֻן is placed at the beginning, because the choir of singers led by him bore his name; and so also in the case of Heman, ver. 4. “As to Jeduthun, were sons of Jeduthun.” The word sons in these catalogues denotes not merely actual sons, but those intellectually sons, *i.e.* scholars taught by the master. This is clear from the fact that the twenty-four classes, each of which numbered twelve men, consist of sons and brothers of the leaders. The names given as those of the sons of Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman, in vers. 2–5, do not represent the whole number of the scholars of these masters, but only the presidents of the twenty-four classes of Levites who were engaged under their leadership in performing the sacred music. Only five sons of Jeduthun are named in our text, while according to the number given there should be six. A comparison of the names in vers. 9–31 shows that in ver. 3 the name שִׁמְעִי (ver. 17) has been dropped out. יְדוּתֻן בְּבָנוֹר belongs to יְדוּתֻן: under the direction of their father



Jeduthun (the master), upon the kinnor (see on xv. 16), who was inspired to sing praise, *i.e.* who played inspiredly to bring praise and honour to the Lord; cf. xvi. 4, xxiii. 30, etc.—Ver. 4 f. Fourteen sons of Heman are enumerated. רַמְמַתִּי עֶזֶר is one name, cf. 31, although עֶזֶר is without doubt to be supplied also after גִּדְּלַתִּי. Probably also מַחְזִיאוֹת is to be supplied in thought after the names. מְלוֹתִי, I made full, and הוֹתִיר, increased.<sup>1</sup> Heman is called in ver. 5 the seer of the king in the words of God, because he, along with his gift of song, was endowed also with the prophetic gift, and as seer made known to the king revelations of God. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 15 the same thing is predicated also of Jeduthun, and in the same sense the prophet Gad is called in xxi. 9 David's seer. לְהָרִים קֶרֶן the Masoretes have connected with the preceding, by placing Athnach under the קֶרֶן, and the phrase has been wholly misunderstood by the Rabbins and Christian commentators. Berth., *e.g.*, connects it with בְּרַבְרֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, and translates, "to sound loud upon horns, according to the divine command," referring to 2 Chron. xxix. 15, where, however, both meaning and accentuation forbid us to connect בְּרַבְרֵי יְהוָה with what follows. This interpretation of the words is thoroughly wrong, not only because the Levites under Heman's direction did not blow horns, the horn not being one of the instruments played by the Levites in connection with the worship, but also because on linguistic grounds it is objectionable. קֶרֶן never has the signification to blow the horn; for to elevate the horn signifies everywhere to heighten the power of any one, or unfold, show power; cf. 1 Sam. ii. 10; Lam. ii. 17; Ps. cxlviii. 14, lxxxix. 18, xcii. 11, etc. That is the meaning of the phrase here, and the words are to be connected, according to their sense, with what follows: "to elevate the horn," *i.e.* to give power, God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters; *i.e.* to make Heman's race

<sup>1</sup> On these names Ewald says, *ausf. Lehrb. der hebr. Sprache*, § 274, S. 672, der 7 Ausg.: "It is thought that the utterance of a great prophet is to be found cut up into names of near relatives, when the words,

גִּדְּלַתִּי רַמְמַתִּי עֶזֶר  
מְלוֹתִי הוֹתִיר מַחְזִיאוֹת

‘I have given great and lofty help,  
I have to fulness spoken oracles,’

which manifestly form a verse, and may have been the commencement of a famed ancient oracle, are found transferred to the five musical sons of Heman, Giddalti(ezer), Romamtiezer, Mallothi, Hothir, and Machazioth."

mighty for the praise of God, God gave him so many sons and daughters.—Ver. 6 is the subscription to the enumeration, vers. 2-5. כָּל-אֶלֶה are not the fourteen sons of Heman, but all the sons of Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman. All these were under the direction of their fathers for song in the house of Jahve, with cymbals . . . for the service in the house of God under the direction of the king, etc. אֲבִיהֶם is used distributively of each father of the sons named. Bertheau supplies after אֲבִיהֶם the name Heman, and thereby the first half of the verse contradicts the second, which he correctly understands to refer to the twenty-four persons enumerated.—In ver. 7 the total number is given. Their number (the number) of the sons of Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman (*i.e.* of the twenty-four [4+6+14] mentioned by name), with their brethren, was 288 ( $24 \times 12$ ); whence we learn that each of those named had eleven אֶחָיו, all of them מְלַמְדֵי שִׁיר, learned, practised in song for Jahve. In כָּל-הַמִּבְיֵן the sons and the brothers are both included, in order to give the total number. מִבְיֵן, having understanding, knowledge of a thing, denotes here those who by education and practice were skilled in song—the accomplished musicians. Their number was 288, and these were divided into twenty-four choirs (classes). David had, according to xxiii. 5, appointed 4000 Levites for the performance of the music. Of these, 288 were מְבַיִּיִם skilled in song; the others were scholars (תַּלְמִידִים), as ver. 8 shows, where מִבְיֵן and תַּלְמִיד are the two categories into which the musicians are divided.—Ver. 8. They cast lots, נִזְרְלוּ מִשְׁמֶרֶת, ἀλγους ἐφημερίων (LXX.), by which the מִשְׁמֶרֶת, the waiting upon the service, was fixed, that is, the order of their succession in the official service. לְעֵמֶת is variously translated. As no name follows, R. Shel. and Kimchi would repeat the preceding מִשְׁמֶרֶת: one class as the other; and this is supported by xxvi. 16 and Neh. xii. 24, and by the fact that in xvii. 5, after מִפְּשֵׁבֶן, the words אֶל מִשְׁבֶּן have been dropped out. But according to the accentuation מִשְׁמֶרֶת belongs to נִזְרְלוּ, and so the proposed completion is at once disposed of. Besides this, however, the thought “class like class” does not appear quite suitable, as the classes were only formed by the lots, and so were not in existence so as to be able to cast lots. We therefore, with Ewald, § 360, *a*, and Berth., hold the clause בְּקֶמֶן בְּנִדּוּל to be the genitive belonging to לְעֵמֶת, since עֵמֶת is in Eccles. v. 15 also connected with a clause: “in the manner of, as the small, so the great,” *i.e.* the small and the great, the older as the younger.



This is further defined by "the skilled as the scholars." From these words it is manifest that not merely the 288 cast lots, for these were כָּל־מִבְּנֵי (ver. 7), but also the other 3712 Levites appointed for the service of the singers; whence it further follows that only the 288 who were divided by lot into twenty-four classes, each numbering twelve persons, were thoroughly skilled in singing and playing, and the scholars were so distributed to them that each class received an equal number of them, whom they had to educate and train. These, then, were probably trained up for and employed in the temple music according to their progress in their education, so that the ἐφημερία which had at any time charge of the service consisted not only of the twelve skilled musicians, but also of a number of scholars who assisted in singing and playing under their direction.

Vers. 9-31. The order of succession was so determined by lot, that the four sons of Asaph (ver. 3) received the first, third, fifth, and seventh places; the six sons of Jeduthun, the second, fourth, eighth, twelfth, and fourteenth; and finally, the four sons of Heman (first mentioned in ver. 4), the sixth, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth places; while the remaining places, 15-24, fell to the other sons of Heman. From this we learn that the lots of the sons of the three chief musicians were not placed in separate urns, and one lot drawn from each alternately; but that, on the contrary, all the lots were placed in one urn, and in drawing the lots of Asaph and Jeduthun came out so, that after the fourteenth drawing only sons of Heman remained.<sup>1</sup> As to the details in ver. 9, after Joseph we miss the statement, "he and his sons and his brothers, twelve;" which, with the exception of the הָיָה, used only of the second lot, and omitted for the sake of brevity in all the other cases, is repeated with all the 23 numbers, and so can have been dropped here only by an error. The words לְאַסָּף לְיֹסֵף are to be understood thus: The first lot drawn was for

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau, S. 218, draws quite another conclusion from the above-mentioned order in which the lots were drawn. He supposes "that two series, each of seven, were first included in the lot: to the one series belonged the four sons of Asaph and the three sons of Heman, Mattaniah, Uzziel or Azarel, and Shebuel or Shubael; to the other, the six sons of Jeduthun and Bukkiah the son of Heman. A lot was drawn from each series alternately, commencing with the first, so that the four sons of Asaph and the three sons of Heman obtained the places 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13; while to the six sons of Jeduthun, and the son of Heman added to them, fell the places 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14. The still remaining ten sons of Heman were then finally drawn for, and re-

Asaph, viz. for his son Joseph. In the succeeding verses the names are enumerated, sometimes with and sometimes without ל. Some of the names diverge somewhat in form. Izri, ver. 11, stands for Zeri, ver. 3; Jesharelah, ver. 14, for Asarelah, ver. 2; Azarel, ver. 18, for Uzziel, ver. 4 (like the king's names Uziah and Azariah, iii. 12, and 2 Chron. xxvi. 1); Shubael, ver. 20, for Shebuel, ver. 4 (cf. xxiii. 16 with xxiv. 20); Jeremoth, ver. 22, for Jerimoth, ver. 4; Eliyathah, ver. 27, for Eliathah, ver. 4. Besides these, the fuller forms Nethanyahu (ver. 12), Hashab-yahu (ver. 3), Hananyahu (ver. 23), are used instead of the shorter Nethaniah, etc. (vers. 2, 19, 4). Of the 24 names which are here enumerated, besides those of Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman, only Mattithiah recurs (xv. 18, 21) in the description of the solemnities connected with the bringing in of the ark; "but we are not justified in seeking there the names of our twenty-four classes" (Berth.).

Chap. xxvi. *The classes of the doorkeepers, the stewards of the treasures of the sanctuary, and the officers for the external business.*—Vers. 1–19. *The classes of the doorkeepers.* Ver. 1. The superscription runs shortly thus: "As to (ל) the divisions of the doorkeepers." The enumeration begins with לְקֹרְחִים: to the Korahites (belongs) Meshelemiah (in ver. 14, Shelemiah). Instead of מִן־בְּנֵי אֶסָּף we should read, according to ix. 19, מִן־בְּנֵי אֶבְיָסָף, for the Korahites are descended from Kohath (Ex. vi. 21, xviii. 16), but Asaph is a descendant of Gershon (vi. 24 f.).—In vers. 2, 3, seven sons of Meshelemiah are enumerated; the first-born Zechariah is mentioned also in ix. 21, and was entrusted, according to ver. 14, with the guarding of the north side.—Vers. 4–8. Obed-edom's family. Obed-edom has been already mentioned in chap. xvi. 38 and xv. 24 as doorkeeper; see the commentary on the passage. From our passage we learn that Obed-edom belonged to the Kohathite family of the Korahites. According to ver. 19, the doorkeepers were Korahites and Merarites. The Merarites,

ceived the places from the 15th to the 24th." This very artificial hypothesis explains, indeed, the order of the lots, but we cannot think it probable, because (1) for the supposed dividing of the lots to be drawn into divisions of 10 and 14 no reason can be assigned; (2) by any such division the sons of Heman would have been placed at a disadvantage from the beginning as compared with the sons of Asaph and Jeduthun, since not only Asaph's four sons, but also all Jeduthun's six sons, would have been placed in the first rank, while only four sons of Heman accompany them, Heman's ten remaining sons having had the last place assigned them.



however, are only treated of from ver. 10 and onwards. וְלַעֲבָד אֲדָם (ver. 4) corresponds to וְלַמְּשָׁלִמִּיהוּ (ver. 2), and is consequently thereby brought under לְקָרְחִים (ver. 1). Here, vers. 4, 5, eight sons with whom God had blessed him (cf. xiii. 14), and in 6 and 7 his grandchildren, are enumerated. The verb נוֹלֵךְ is used in the singular, with a subject following in the plural, as frequently (cf. Ew. § 316, *a*). The grandchildren of Obed-edom by his first-born son Shemaiah are characterized as הַמְּשָׁלִים, the dominions, *i.e.* the lords (rulers) of the house of their fathers (מְשָׁל, the abstract dominion, for the concrete מִשָּׁל; cf. Ew. § 160, *b*), because they were גִּבּוֹרֵי חַיִּל, valiant heroes, and so qualified for the office of doorkeepers. In the enumeration in ver. 7, the omission of the ו cop. with אֶלְעָזָר אֶחָיו is strange; probably we must supply ו before both words, and take them thus: And Elzabad and his brethren, valiant men, (*viz.*) Elihu and Semachiah. For the conjecture that the names of the אֶחָיו are not given (Berth.) is not a very probable one.—Ver. 8. The whole number of doorkeepers of Obed-edom's family, his sons and brethren, was sixty-two; able men with strength for the service. The singular אִישׁ חַיִּל, after the preceding plural, is most simply explained by taking it to be in apposition to the בָּל at the beginning of the verse, by repeating בָּל mentally before אִישׁ.—In ver. 9 the number of Meshelemiah's sons and brothers is brought in in a supplementary way.—Vers. 10, 11. The Merarites. Hosah's sons and brothers. הוֹסָה has been already mentioned (xvi. 38) along with Obed-edom as doorkeeper. Hosah made Shimri head of the Merarites, who served as doorkeepers, because there was no first-born, *i.e.* because his first-born son had died without leaving any descendant, so that none of the families descended from Hosah had the natural claim to the birthright. All the sons and brothers of Hosah were thirteen. Meshelemiah had eighteen (cf. ver. 9), and Obed-edom sixty-two (ver. 8); and all taken together they make ninety-three, whom we are (according to ver. 12 *f.*) to regard as the heads of the 4000 doorkeepers. In ix. 22 the number of the doorkeepers appointed by David is stated to be 212, but that number most probably refers to a different time (see on ix. 22). Bertheau further remarks: "According to xvi. 38, sixty-eight are reckoned to Obed-edom and Hosah, in our passage seventy-five; and the small difference between the numbers is explained by the fact that in the first passage only the doorkeepers before the ark are referred to." Against this we

have already shown, in our remarks on xvi. 38, that the number there mentioned cannot be held with certainty to refer to the doorkeepers. — Vers. 12–19. The division of the doorkeepers according to their posts of service. Ver. 12. “To these classes of doorkeepers, viz. to the heads of the men, (were committed) the watches, in common with their brethren, to serve in the house of Jahve.” By לְאֵלֶּה מַחְלָקוֹת it is placed beyond doubt that the above-mentioned names and numbers give us the classes of the doorkeepers. By the apposition לְרֹאשֵׁי הַבָּיִת, the meaning of which is discussed in the commentary on xxiv. 4, מַחְלָקוֹת הַשֵּׁ' is so defined as to show that properly the heads of the households are meant, only these having been enumerated in the preceding section, and not the classes.—Ver. 13. The distribution of the stations by lot followed (cf. xxv. 8), the small as the great; *i.e.* the younger as the older cast lots, according to their fathers' houses, “for door and door,” *i.e.* for each door of the four sides of the temple, which was built so that its sides corresponded to the points of the compass.—Ver. 14. The lot towards the east, *i.e.* for the guarding of the east side, fell to Shelemiah (cf. vers. 1, 2); while that towards the north fell to his first-born Zechariah. Before וְזַכְרְיָהוּ, לְ is to be repeated. To him the title יִעֲזֹר בְּשַׁבָּל is given, for reasons unknown to us. הַפִּילֹי נֹ, (for him) they threw lots.—Ver. 15. To Obed-edom (fell the lot) towards the south, and to his sons it fell (to guard) the house Asuppim. As to בֵּית-הָאֲסָפִים, called for brevity אֲסָפִים in ver. 17, *i.e.* house of collections or provisions (cf. Neh. xii. 25), we can say nothing further than that it was a building used for the storing of the temple goods, situated in the neighbourhood of the southern door of the temple in the external court, and that it probably had two entrances, since in ver. 19 it is stated that two guard-stations were assigned to it.—Ver. 16. The word לְשָׁפִים is unintelligible, and probably has come into the text merely by a repetition of the two last syllables of the preceding word, since the name שָׁפִים (vii. 12) has no connection with this passage. To Hosah fell the lot towards the west, by the door Shallecheth on the ascending highway. הַמַּסְלָה הָעוֹלָה is the way which led from the lower city up to the more lofty temple site. Instead of the door on this highway, in ver. 18, in the statement as to the distribution of the guard-stations, Parbar is named, and the highway distinguished from it, four doorkeepers being appointed for the מַסְלָה, and two for פַּרְבָּר. פַּרְבָּר, probably identical



with פִּרְוִיִּים, 2 Kings xxiii. 11, a word of uncertain meaning, was the name of an out-building on the western side, the back of the outer court of the temple by the door Shallecheth, which contained cells for the laying up of temple goods and furniture. שְׁלֵכֶת, Böttcher translates, *Proben*, S. 347, "refuse-door;" see on 2 Kings xxiii. 11. Nothing more definite can be said of it, unless we hold, with Thenius on 2 Kings xxiii. 11, that Ezekiel's temple is in all its details a copy of the Solomonic temple, and use it, in an unjustifiable way, as a source of information as to the præ-exilic temple. מִשְׁמָר לְעֵמֶת מִשְׁמָר (as in Neh. xii. 24), guard with (over against?) guard, or one guard as the other (cf. on לְעֵמֶת, ver. 12 and xxv. 8), Bertheau connects with Hosah, according to the Masoretic punctuation, and explains it thus: "Because it was Hosah's duty to set guards before the western gate of the temple, and also before the gate Shallecheth, which lay over against it." Clericus, on the contrary, refers the words to all the guard-stations: *cum ad omnes januas essent custodiæ, sibi ex adverso respondebant*. This reference, according to which the words belong to what follows, and introduce the statement as to the number of guards at the individual posts which follows in ver. 17 ff., seems to deserve the preference. So much is certain in any case, that there is no ground in the text for distinguishing the gate Shallecheth from the western gate of the temple, for the two gates are not distinguished either in ver. 16 or in ver. 18.—Ver. 17 f. Settlement of the number of guard-stations at the various sides and places. Towards morning (on the east side) were six of the Levites (six kept guard); towards the north by day (*i.e.* daily, on each day), four; towards the south daily, four; and at the storehouse two and two, consequently four also; at Parbar towards the west, four on the highway and two at Parbar, *i.e.* six. In all, therefore, there were twenty-four guard-stations to be occupied daily; but more than twenty-four persons were required, because, even supposing that one man at a time was sufficient for each post, one man could not stand the whole day at it: he must have been relieved from time to time. Probably, however, there were always more than one person on guard at each post. It further suggests itself that the number twenty-four may be in some way connected with the divisions or classes of doorkeepers; but there is only a deceptive appearance of a connection. The division of the priests and musicians each into twenty-four classes respectively is no sufficient analogy in the case, for these classes

had to perform the service in succession each for a week at a time, while the twenty-four doorkeepers' stations had to be all occupied simultaneously every day.—In vers. 2–11, then, twenty-eight heads in all are enumerated by name (Meshelemiah with seven sons, Obed-edom with eight sons and six grandsons, and Hosah with four sons); but the total number in all the three families of doorkeepers is stated at ninety-three, and neither the one nor the other of these numbers bears any relation to twenty-four. Finally, the posts are so distributed that Meshelemiah with his eighteen sons and brothers kept guard on the east and north sides with six posts; Obed-edom with his sixty-two sons and brothers on the south side with four and  $2 \times 2$ , that is, eight posts; and Hosah with his thirteen sons and brothers on the western side with four and two, that is, six; so that even here no symmetrical distribution of the service can be discovered.—Ver. 19. Subscription, in which it is again stated that the classes of doorkeepers were taken from among the Korahites and Merarites.

Vers. 20–28. *The stewards of the treasures of the sanctuary.*—Ver. 20 appears to contain the superscription of the succeeding section. For here the treasures of the house of God and the treasures of the consecrated things are grouped together, while in vers. 22 and 26 they are separated, and placed under the oversight of two Levite families: the treasures of the house of Jahve under the sons of the Gershonite Laadan (vers. 21, 22); the treasures of the consecrated things under the charge of the Amramites. But with this the words **הַלְלוֹיִם אֲחִיָּה** cannot be made to harmonize. According to the Masoretic accentuation, **הַלְלוֹיִם** alone would be the superscription; but **הַלְלוֹיִם** alone gives no suitable sense, for the Levites have been treated of already from chap. xxiii. onwards. Moreover, it appears somewhat strange that there is no further characterization of **אֲחִיָּה**, for the name is a very common one, but has not before occurred in our chapter, whence we would expect a statement of his descent and his family, such as we find in the case of the succeeding chief overseers. All these things tend to throw doubt upon the correctness of the Masoretic reading, while the LXX., on the contrary, in *καὶ οἱ Λευῖται ἀδελφοὶ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τῶν θησαυρῶν, κ.τ.λ.*, give a perfectly suitable superscription, which involves the reading **אֲחִיָּהם** instead of **אֲחִיָּה**. This reading we, with J. D. Mich. and Berth., hold to be the original. On **הַלְלוֹיִם אֲחִיָּהם**, cf. vi. 29, 2 Chron. xxix. 34.—



Vers. 21 and 22 go together: "The sons of Laadan, (namely) the sons of the Gershonite family which belong to Laadan, (namely) the heads of the fathers'-houses of Laadan of the Gershonite family: Jehieli, (namely) the sons of Jehieli, Zetham and his brother Joel (see xxiii. 7), were over the treasures of the house of Jahve." The meaning is this: "Over the treasures of the house of Jahve were Zetham and Joel, the heads of the father's-house of Jehieli, which belonged to the Laadan branch of the Gershonites." Light is thrown upon these words, so obscure through their brevity, by chap. xxiii. 7, 8, according to which the sons of Jehiel, or the Jehielites, are descended from Laadan, the older branch of the Gershonites. This descent is briefly but fully stated in the three clauses of the 21st verse, each of which contains a more definite characterization of the father's-house Jehieli, whose two heads Zetham and Joel were entrusted with the oversight of the treasures of the house of God.—Vers. 23 and 24 also go together: "As to the Amramites, Jisharites, Hebronites, and Uzzielites (the four chief branches of the Kohathite family of Levites, chap. xxiii. 15-20), Shebuel the son of Gershon, the son of Moses, was prince over the treasures" (י before Shebuel introduces the apodosis, cf. Ew. § 348, *a*, and = Germ. "so war").—Ver. 25. "And his (Shebuel's) brethren of Eliezer were Rehabiah his (Eliezer's) son, and Jeshaiiah his son, . . . and Shelomoth his son." These descendants of Eliezer were called brethren of Shebuel, because they were descended through Eliezer from Moses, as Shebuel was through his father Gershon.—Ver. 26. This Shelomoth (a descendant of Eliezer, and so to be distinguished both from the Jisharite Shelomith (xxiii. 18 and xxiv. 22), and the Gershonite of the same name (xxiii. 9)), and his brethren were over the treasures of the consecrated things which David the king had consecrated, and the heads of the fathers'-houses, etc. Instead of לְשָׂרֵי we must read וְשָׂרֵי, according to xxix. 6. The princes over the thousands and hundreds are the war captains, and the שָׂרֵי הָעֲבֹתָהּ are the commanders-in-chief, e.g. Abner, Joab, xxvii. 34, 2 Sam. viii. 16, 1 Chron. xviii. 15.—The 27th verse is an explanatory parenthesis: "from the wars and from the booty," i.e. from the booty taken in war had they consecrated. לְחַזֵּק, to make strong, i.e. to preserve in strength and good condition the house of Jahve. חָזַק elsewhere of the renovation of old buildings, 2 Kings xii. 8 ff., Neh. iii. 2 ff., here in a somewhat general signification.—In ver. 28 the enumeration of

those who had consecrated, thus interrupted, is resumed, but in the form of a new sentence, which concludes with a predicate of its own. In הַהִקְדִּישׁ the article represents אֲשֶׁר, as in xxix. 17, 2 Chron. xxix. 36, and elsewhere; cf. *Ew.* § 331, *b.* With כָּל הַמִּקְדִּישׁ, all who had consecrated, the enumeration is concluded, and the predicate, “was at the hand of Shelomith and his brethren,” is then brought in. עַל־יָד, laid upon the hand, *i.e.* entrusted to them for preservation; Germ. *unter der Hand* (under the hand).

If we glance back at the statements as to the stewards of the treasures (vers. 20–28), we find that the treasures of the house of Jahve were under the oversight of the Jehielites Zetham and Joel, with their brethren, a branch of the Gershonites (ver. 22); and the treasures of the consecrated things under the oversight of the Kohathite Shelomith, who was of the family of Moses' second son Eliezer, with his brethren (ver. 28). But in what relation does the statement in ver. 24, that Shebuel, the descendant of Moses through Gershon, was נָגִיד עַל־הָאֲצֹרוֹת, stand to this? Bertheau thinks “that three kinds of treasures are distinguished, the guarding of which was committed to different officials: (1) The sons of Jehieli, Zetham and Joel, had the oversight of the treasures of the house of God, which, as we may conclude from xxix. 8, had been collected by voluntary gifts: (2) Shebuel was prince over the treasures, perhaps over the sums which resulted from regular assessment for the temple (*Ex.* xxx. 11–16), from redemption-money, *e.g.* for the first-born (*Num.* xviii. 16 ff.), or for vows (*Lev.* xxvii.); consequently over a part of the sums which are designated in 2 Kings xii. 5 by the name כֶּסֶף הַקִּדְשִׁים: (3) Shelomith and his brothers had the oversight of all the אוֹצְרוֹת הַקִּדְשִׁים, *i.e.* of the consecrated gifts which are called in 2 Kings xii. 19 קִדְשִׁים, and distinguished from the כֶּסֶף קִדְשִׁים in ver. 5.” But this view has no support in the text. Both in the superscription (ver. 20) and in the enumeration (vers. 22, 26) only two kinds of treasures—treasures of the house of God (of Jahve), and treasures of the קִדְשִׁים—are mentioned. Neither by the facts nor by the language used are we justified in supposing that there was a third kind of treasures, *viz.* the sums resulting from the regular assessment for the holy place. For it is thoroughly arbitrary to confine the treasures of the house of God to the voluntary contributions and the consecrated gifts given from the war-booty; and it is still more arbitrary to limit the treasures



over which Shebuel was prince to the sums flowing into the temple treasures from the regular assessment; for the reference to 2 Kings xii. 19 and 5 is no proof of this, because, though two kinds of קרשים are there distinguished, yet both are further defined. The quite general expression הָאֲצֻרֹת, the treasures, can naturally be referred only to the two different kinds of treasures distinguished in ver. 22. This reference is also demanded by the words נָגִיד . . . שְׁבוּאֵל (ver. 24). Heads of fathers'-houses, with their brethren (אֲחֵיהֶם), are mentioned as guardians of the two kinds of treasures spoken of in ver. 20; while here, on the contrary, we have Shebuel alone, without assistants. Further, the other guardians are not called נָגִיד, as Shebuel is. The word נָגִיד denotes not an overseer or steward, but only princes of kingdoms (kings), princes of tribes (xii. 27, xiii. 1, xxvii. 16; 2 Chron. xxxii. 21), ministers of the palace and the temple, and commanders-in-chief (2 Chron. xi. 11, xxviii. 7), and is consequently used in our section neither of Zetham and Joel, nor of Shelomoth. The calling of Shebuel נָגִיד consequently shows that he was the chief guardian of the sacred treasures, under whose oversight the guardians of the two different kinds of treasures were placed. This is stated in vers. 23, 24; and the statement would not have been misunderstood if it had been placed at the beginning or the end of the enumeration; and its position in the middle between the Gershonites and the Kohathites is explained by the fact that this prince was, according to xxiii. 16, the head of the four Levite families descended from Kohath.

Vers. 29-32. *The officials for the external business.*—Ver. 29. "As to the Izharites, Chenaniah (see on xv. 22) with his sons was for the outward business over Israel for scribes and judges." According to this, the external business of the Levites consisted of service as scribes and judges, for which David had set apart 6000 Levites (xxiii. 4). Without sufficient reason, Bertheau would refer the external business to the exaction of the dues for the temple, because in Neh. xi. 16 הַמְּלָאכָה הַחֵיצוֹנָה for the temple is spoken of. But it does not at all follow that in our verse the external work had any reference to the temple, and that the scribes and judges had only this narrow sphere of action, since here, instead of the house of God, עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל is mentioned as the object with which the external service was connected.—Ver. 30. Of Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, 1700 valiant men,

were 'עַל פְּקָדָת יִשְׂרָאֵל, for the oversight (inspection) of Israel this side Jordan, for all the business of Jahve and the service of the king. Bertheau takes פְּקָדָה to mean "due," "fixed tribute," a meaning which the word cannot be shown to have. The LXX. have translated correctly, ἐπὶ τῆς ἐπισκέψεως τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, *ad inspectionem Israelis, i.e. praecepti erant* (J. H. Mich.). For 'עַל פְּקָדָת is in ver. 32 rendered by יִפְקִיד עַל. מַעְבֵּר לַיַּרְדֵּן is shown by the addition מַעְרָבָה to refer to the land of Canaan, as in Josh. v. 1, xxii. 7, since Israel, both under Joshua and also after the exile, had come from the eastward over Jordan into Canaan. The words מְלֹאכֶת and עֲבֹדָה are synonymous, and are consequently both represented in ver. 32 by דְּבַר.—Ver. 31 f. David set another branch of the Hebronites, under the head Jeriah (cf. xxiii. 9), over the East-Jordan tribes. Between the words "Jeriah the head," ver. 31, and וְאַחֵי, ver. 32, a parenthesis is inserted, which gives the reason why David made these Hebronites scribes and judges among the East-Jordan tribes. The parenthesis runs thus: "As to the Hebronites, according to their generations, according to fathers, they were sought out in the fortieth year of David's rule, and valiant heroes were found among them in Jazer of Gilead." Jazer was a Levite city in the tribal domain of Gad, assigned, according to Josh. xxi. 39, to the Merarites (see on vi. 66). The number of these Hebronites was 2700 valiant men (ver. 32). The additional רָאשֵׁי הָאֲבוֹת is obscure, for if we take אֲבוֹת to be, as it often is in the genealogies, a contraction for בֵּית-אֲבוֹת, the number given does not suit; for a branch of the Hebronites cannot possibly have numbered 2700 fathers'-houses (πατριά, groups of related households): they must be only 2700 men (נַבְרִים), or heads of families, *i.e.* households. Not only the large number demands this signification, but also the comparison of this statement with that in ver. 30. The 1700 בְּנֵי חֵיל of which the Hebronite branch, Hashabiah with his brethren, consisted, were not so many πατριά, but only so many men of this πατριά. In the same way, the Hebronite branch of which Jeriah was head, with his brethren, 2700 בְּנֵי חֵיל, were also not 2700 πατριά, but only so many men, that is, fathers of families. It is thus placed beyond doubt that רָאשֵׁי אֲבוֹת cannot here denote the heads of fathers'-houses, but only heads of households. And accordingly we must not understand לְאֲבוֹת (ver. 31) of fathers'-houses, as the LXX. and all commentators do, but only of heads of households. The use of the verb נִדְרְשׁוּ also



favours this view, for this verb is not elsewhere used of the legal census of the people, *i.e.* the numbering and entering of them in the public lists, according to the great families and fathers'-houses. There may therefore be in נִרְשָׁו a hint that it was not a genealogical census which was undertaken, but only a numbering of the heads of households, in order to ascertain the number of scribes and judges to be appointed. There yet remain in this section three things which are somewhat strange: 1. Only 1700 scribes and judges were set over the cis-Jordanic land, inhabited as it was by ten and a half tribes, while 2700 were set over the trans-Jordanic land with its two and a half tribes. 2. Both numbers taken together amount to only 4400 men, while David appointed 6000 Levites to be scribes and judges. 3. The scribes and judges were taken only from two fathers'-houses of the Kohathites, while most of the other Levitical offices were filled by men of all the families of the tribe of Levi. On all these grounds, it is probable that our catalogue of the Levites appointed to be scribes and judges, *i.e.* for the external business, is imperfect.

CHAP. XXVII.—DIVISION OF THE ARMY. TRIBAL PRINCES, ADMINISTRATORS OF THE DOMAINS, AND COUNCILLORS OF STATE.

This chapter treats of the organization of the army (vers. 1–15) and the public administration; in vers. 16–24, the princes of the twelve tribes being enumerated; in vers. 25–31, the managers of the royal possessions and domains; and in vers. 32–34, the chief councillors of the king. The information on these points immediately succeeds the arrangement of the service of the Levites, because, as we learn from ver. 23 f., David attempted in the last year of his reign to give a more stable form to the political constitution of the kingdom also. In the enumeration of the twelve divisions of the army, with their leaders (vers. 1–15), it is not indeed said when David organized the men capable of bearing arms for the alternating monthly service; but the reference in ver. 23 f. of our chapter to the numbering of the people, spoken of in chap. xxi., leaves no doubt of the fact that this division of the people stands in intimate connection with that numbering of the people, and that David caused the people to be numbered in order to perfect the military constitution of the

kingdom, and to leave his kingdom to his son strong within and mighty without.

Vers. 1-15. *The twelve divisions of the army.*—Ver. 1. The lengthy superscription, “And the sons of Israel according to their number, the heads of the fathers’-houses, and the princes over the thousands and the hundreds, and their scribes, who served the king in regard to every matter of the divisions; which month for month of all months of the year went and came, one division 24,000 men,” is towards the end so intimately interwoven with the divisions of the army, that it can only refer to this, *i.e.* only to the catalogue, vers. 2-15. Since, then, we find in this catalogue only the twelve classes, the number of the men belonging to each, and their leaders, and since for this the short superscription, “the Israelites according to their number, and the princes of the divisions which served the king,” would be amply sufficient, Bertheau thinks that the superscription originally belonged to a more complete description of the classes and their different officers, of which only a short extract is here communicated. This hypothesis is indeed possible, but is not at all certain; for it is questionable whether, according to the above superscription, we have a right to expect an enumeration by name of the various officials who served the king in the classes of the army. The answer to this question depends upon our view of the relation of the words, “the heads of the fathers’-houses, and the princes,” to the first clause, “the sons of Israel according to their number.” Had these words been connected by the conjunction ו (וְ) with this clause, and thereby made co-ordinate with it, we should be justified in having such an expectation. But the want of the conjunction shows that these words form an apposition, which as to signification is subordinate to the main idea. If we take this appositional explanation to mean something like this, “the sons of Israel, according to their number, with the heads of the fathers’-houses and the princes,” the emphasis of the superscription falls upon לְמִסְפָּרָם, and the number of the sons of Israel, who with their heads and princes were divided into classes, is announced to be the important thing in the following catalogue. That this is the meaning and object of the words may be gathered from this, that in the second half of the verse, the number of the men fit for service, who from month to month came and went as one class, is stated הָאֶחָד, one at a time (distributive), as in Judg. viii. 18, Num. xvii. 18, etc.; cf. Ew. § 313, *a*, note 1. בּוֹא



וַיָּצֵא, used of entering upon and leaving the service (cf. 2 Chron. xxiii. 4, 8; 2 Kings xi. 5, 7, 9). But the words are hardly to be understood to mean that the classes which were in service each month were ordered from various parts of the kingdom to the capital, and there remained under arms; but rather, as Clericus, that they *paratæ essent ducum imperiis parere, si quid contigisset, dum ceteræ copice, si necesse essent, convenirent*.—Ver. 2 ff. Over the first division was Jashobeam, *scil.* commander. The second *עַל מַחֲלָקְתּוֹ* is to be rendered, “in his division were 24,000 men,” *i.e.* they were reckoned to it. As to Jashobeam, see on xi. 11 and 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.—Ver. 3 further relates of him that he was of the sons (descendants) of Perez, and the head of all the army chiefs in the first month (*i.e.* in the division for the first month).—Ver. 4. Before *יָדִיר*, according to xi. 12, *אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן* has been dropped out (see on 2 Sam. xxiii. 9). The words *וּמַחֲלָקְתּוֹ* and *וּמִקְלֹת הַנָּגִיד* are obscure. At the end of the sixth verse similar words occur, and hence Bertheau concludes that *ו* before *מִקְלֹת* is to be struck out, and translates, “and his divisions, Mikloth the prince,” which might denote, perhaps, “and his division is that over which Mikloth was prince.” Older commentators have already translated the word in a similar manner, as signifying that Mikloth was prince or chief of this division under the Ahohite Eleazar. All that is certain is, that *מִקְלֹת* is a name which occurred in viii. 32 and ix. 37 among the Benjamites.—Ver. 5. Here the form of expression is changed; *שֵׁר הַצָּבָא*, the chief of the third host, begins the sentence. As to Benaiah, see xi. 22 and the commentary on 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. *רֹאשׁ* does not belong to *הַכֹּהֵן*, but is the predicate of Benaiah: “the prince of the ... was Benaiah ... as head,” *sc.* of the division for the third month. This is added, because in ver. 6 still a third military office held by Benaiah is mentioned. He was hero of the (among the) thirty, and over the thirty, *i.e.* more honoured than they (cf. xi. 25 and 2 Sam. xxiii. 23).—With ver. 6b cf. what is said on the similar words, ver. 4.—Ver. 7. From here onwards the mode of expression is very much compressed: the fourth of the fourth month, instead of the chief of the fourth host of the fourth month. Asahel (see xi. 26 and on 2 Sam. xxiii. 24) was slain by Abner (2 Sam. ii. 18-23) in the beginning of David’s reign, and consequently long before the division of the army here recorded. The words, “and Zebadiah his son after him,” point to his death, as they mention his son as his successor in the command of the fourth division of the

army. When Asahel, therefore, is called commander of the fourth division of the host, it is done merely *honoris causâ*, since the division over which his son was named, *de patris defuncti nomine* (Cler.).—Ver. 8. Shamhuth is called in xi. 27 Shammoth, and in 2 Sam. xxiii. 25 Shamma. He was born in Harod; here he is called הַיִּזְרָחִי, the Jizrahite, = הַיִּזְרָחִי, ver. 13, of the family of Zerah the son of Judah (ii. 4, 6).—Ver. 9. Ira; see xi. 28, 2 Sam. xxiii. 26.—Ver. 10. Helez: xi. 27; 2 Sam. xxiii. 26.—Ver. 11. Sibbecai; see xi. 29, 2 Sam. xxiii. 27.—Ver. 12. Abiezer; see xi. 28, 2 Sam. xxiii. 27; he was of Anathoth in the tribe of Benjamin (Jer. i. 1).—Ver. 13. Maharai (see xi. 30, 2 Sam. xxiii. 28) belonged also to the family of Zerah; see vers. 11, 8.—Ver. 14. Benaiah of Pirathon; see xi. 31, 2 Sam. xxiii. 30.—Ver. 15. Heldai, in xi. 30 Heled, in 2 Sam. xxiii. 29 erroneously called Heleb, belonging to Othniel's family (Josh. xv. 17).

Vers. 16–24. *The princes of the twelve tribes.*—The enumeration of the tribal princes, commencing with the words, “and over the tribes of Israel,” immediately follows the catalogue of the divisions of the army with their commanders, because the subjects are in so far connected as the chief management of the internal business of the people, divided as they were into tribes, was deposited in their hands. In the catalogue the tribes Gad and Asher are omitted for reasons unknown to us, just as in chap. iv.–vii., in the genealogies of the tribes, Dan and Zebulun are. In reference to Levi, on the contrary, the *Nagid* of Aaron, *i.e.* the head of the priesthood, is named, viz. Zadok, the high priest of the family of Eleazar.—Ver. 18. Elihu, of the brethren of David, is only another form of the name Eliab, ii. 13, David's eldest brother, who, as Jesse's first-born, had become tribal prince of Judah.—Ver. 20 f. Of Manasseh two tribal princes are named, because the one half of this tribe had received its inheritance on this side Jordan, the other beyond Jordan. גִּלְעָדָה, towards Gilead, to designate the East-Jordan Manassites.—Vers. 23 and 24 contain a concluding remark on the catalogue of the twelve detachments into which the men capable of bearing arms in Israel were divided, contained in vers. 2–15. David had not taken their number from the men of twenty years and under, *i.e.* he had only caused those to be numbered who were over twenty years old. The word מִסְפָּרָם points back to לְמִסְפָּרָם, ver. 1. נִשָּׂא מִסְפָּר as in Num. iii. 40 = נִשָּׂא רֹאשׁ, Ex. xxx. 12, Num. i. 49, to take up the sum or total. The reason of this is given in the clause, “for Jahve had said



(promised) to increase Israel like to the stars of heaven" (Gen. xxii. 17), which cannot mean: For it was impossible for David to number all, because they were as numerous as the stars of heaven, which of course cannot be numbered (Berth.). The thought is rather that David never intended to number the whole people from the youngest to the eldest, for he did not desire *in fidem divinarum promissionum inquirere aut eam labefactare* (J. H. Mich.); and he accordingly caused only the men capable of bearing arms to be numbered, in order to organize the military constitution of the kingdom in the manner recorded in vers. 2-15. But even this numbering which Joab had begun was not completed, because wrath came on Israel because of it, as is narrated in chap. xxi. For this reason also the number, *i.e.* the result of the numbering begun by Joab, but not completed, is not included in the number of the chronicle of King David, *i.e.* in the official number which was usually inserted in the public annals. **בְּמִסְפָּר** neither stands for **בְּסִפְּר** (according to 2 Chron. xx. 34), nor does it denote, "in the section which treats of the numberings" (Berth.). **סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים** is a shorter expression for **סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי ה'**, book of the events of the day.

Vers. 25-31. *The managers of David's possessions and domains.*—The property and the income of the king were (ver. 25) divided into treasures of the king, and treasures in the country, in the cities, the villages, and the castles. By the "treasures of the king" we must therefore understand those which were in Jerusalem, *i.e.* the treasures of the royal palace. These were managed by Azmaveth. The remaining treasures are specified in ver. 26 ff. They consisted in fields which were cultivated by labourers (ver. 26); in vineyards (ver. 27); plantations of olive trees and sycamores in the Shephelah, the fruitful plain on the Mediterranean Sea (ver. 28); in cattle, which pastured partly in the plain of Sharon between Cæsarea Palestina and Joppa (see p. 107 f.), partly in various valleys of the country (ver. 29); and in camels, asses, and sheep (ver. 30 f.). All these possessions are called **רְכוּשׁ**, and the overseers of them **שְׂרֵי הָרְכוּשׁ**. They consisted in the produce of agriculture and cattle-breeding, the two main branches of Israelitish industry.—Ver. 27. Special officers were set over the vineyards and the stores of wine. The **שׁ** in **שְׂבָבִירָמִים** is a contraction of **אֵשֶׁר**: "over that which was in the vineyards of treasures (stores) of wine." The officer over the vineyards, Shimei, was of Ramah in Benjamin (cf. Josh. xviii. 25); he who

was over the stores of wine, Zabdi, is called *הַשָּׁבִי*, probably not from *שָׁבַע* on the northern frontier of Canaan, Num. xxxiv. 10, the situation of which has not yet been discovered, but from the equally unknown *שָׁבִי* in the Negeb of Judah, 1 Sam. xxx. 28. For since the vineyards, in which the stores of wine were laid up, must certainly have lain in the tribal domain of Judah, so rich in wine (Num. xiii. 23 ff.; Gen. xlix. 11), probably the overseers of it were born in the same district.—Ver. 28. As to the *שָׁפֵלָה*, see on Josh. xv. 33. *הַגִּדְרִי*, he who was born in Geder, not Gadera, for which we should expect *הַגִּדְרָתִי* (xii. 4), although the situation of Gadera, south-east from Jabne (see on xii. 4), appears to suit better than that of *גִּדְרִי* or *גִּדְרִי* in the hill country of Judah; see Josh. xii. 13 and xv. 58.—Ver. 30. The name of the Ishmaelite who was set over the camels, Obil (*אֹבִיל*), reminds us of the Arab

*أبل* *multos possedit vel acquisivit camelos*. *הַמֶּרֶנְתִּי*, he of Mero-noth (ver. 30 and Neh. iii. 17). The situation of this place is unknown. According to Neh. iii. 7, it is perhaps to be sought in the neighbourhood of Mizpah. Over the smaller cattle (sheep and goats) Jaziz the Hagarite, of the people Hagar (cf. v. 10), was set. The oversight, consequently, of the camels and sheep was committed to a Hagarite and an Ishmaelite, probably because they pastured in the neighbourhood where the Ishmaelites and Hagarites had nomadized from early times, they having been brought under the dominion of Israel by David. The total number of these officials amounted to twelve, of whom we may conjecture that the ten overseers over the agricultural and cattle-breeding affairs of the king had to deliver over the annual proceeds of the property committed to them to the chief manager of the treasures in the field, in the cities, and villages, and towns.

Vers. 32–34. *David's councillors*. This catalogue of the king's officials forms a supplementary companion piece to the catalogues of the public officials, chap. xviii. 15–17, and 2 Sam. viii. 15–18 and xx. 25, 26. Besides Joab, who is met with in all catalogues as prince of the host, *i.e.* commander-in-chief, we find in our catalogue partly other men introduced, partly other duties of the men formerly named, than are mentioned in these three catalogues. From this it is clear that it is not the chief public officials who are enumerated, but only the first councillors of the king, who formed as it were his senate, and that the catalogue probably is derived from the same source as the preceding cata-



logues. Jonathan, the דוד of David. The word דוד generally denotes a father's brother; but since a Jonathan, son of Shimea, the brother of David, occurs xx. 7 and 2 Sam. xxi. 21, Schmidt and Bertheau hold him to be the same as our Jonathan, when דוד would be used in the general signification of "relative," here of a nephew. Nothing certain can be ascertained in reference to it. He was יועץ, councillor, and, as is added, a wise and learned man. סופר is here not an official designation, but signifies *litteratus*, learned, scholarly, as in Ezra vii. 6. Jehiel, the son of Hachmon, was with the children of the king, *i.e.* was governor of the royal princes.—Ver. 33. Ahithophel was also, according to 2 Sam. xv. 31, xvi. 23, David's confidential adviser, and took his own life when Absalom, in his conspiracy against David, did not regard his counsel (2 Sam. xvii.). Hushai the Archite was also a friend and adviser of David (2 Sam. xv. 37 and xvi. 16), who caused Absalom to reject Ahithophel's counsel (2 Sam. xvii.).—Ver. 34. After Ahithophel, *i.e.* after his death, was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah (*scil.* counsellor of the king), and Abiathar. As Benaiah the son of Jehoiada is elsewhere, when named among the public officials of David, called chief of the royal body-guard (cf. xviii. 17), Bertheau does not scruple to transpose the names here. But the hypothesis of such a transposition is neither necessary nor probable in the case of a name which, like Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, so frequently occurs (*e.g.* in ver. 5). Since sons not unfrequently received the name of the grandfather, Jehoiada the son of the hero Benaiah may have been named after his grandfather Jehoiada. Abiathar is without doubt the high priest of this name of Ithamar's family (xv. 11, etc.; see on v. 27–31), and is here mentioned as being also a friend and adviser of David. As to Joab, see on xviii. 15.

CHAP. XXVIII. AND XXIX.—DAVID'S LAST DIRECTIONS, AND  
HIS DEATH.

In order to give over the throne before his death to his son Solomon, and so secure to him the succession, and facilitate his accomplishment of the great work of his reign, the building of the temple, David summoned the estates of his kingdom, the court officials, and the heroes of the people in Jerusalem. In a solemn address he designated Solomon as his divinely chosen successor on the throne, and exhorted him to keep the command-

ments of God, to serve the Lord with devoted heart, and to build Him a house for a sanctuary (xxviii. 1-10). He then committed to Solomon the sketches and plans for the sacred buildings and sacred objects of various sorts, with the confident promise that he, by the help of God, and with the co-operation of the priests and of the people, would complete the work (vers. 11-21). Finally, he announced, in the presence of the whole assembly, that he gave over his treasures of gold and silver to this building, and called upon the chiefs of the people and kingdom for a voluntary contribution for the same purpose; and on their freely answering this call, concluded with a solemn prayer of thanks, to which the whole assembly responded, bowing low before God and the king (xxix. 1-20). This reverence they confirmed by numerous burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, and by the repeated anointing of Solomon to be king (vers. 21 and 22).

Chap. xxviii. 1-10. David summoned the estates of the kingdom, and presented Solomon to them as his divinely chosen successor on the throne.—Ver. 1. “All the princes of Israel” is the general designation, which is then specialized. In it are included the princes of the tribes who are enumerated in chap. xxvii. 16-22, and the princes of the divisions which served the king, who are enumerated in xxvii. 1-15; the princes of thousands and hundreds are the chiefs and captains of the twelve army corps (xxvii. 1), who are subordinate to the princes of the host; the princes of all the substance and possessions of the king are the managers of the domains enumerated in xxvii. 25-31. **וְלִבְנָיו** is added to **לְמֶלֶךְ**, “of the king and of his sons,” because the possession of the king as a property belonging to the house (*domanium*) belonged also to his sons. The Vulg. incorrectly translates **לִבְנָיו** *filiosque suos*, for in this connection **ל** cannot be *nota accus.* **עִם הַפְּרִיסִים**, with (together with) the court officials. **סְרִיסִים** are not eunuchs, but royal chamberlains, as in 1 Sam. viii. 15; see on Gen. xxxvii. 36. **הַגִּבּוֹרִים** has been well translated by the LXX. *τοὺς δυνάστας*, for here the word does not denote properly or merely war heroes, but powerful influential men in general, who did not occupy any special public or court office. In **וְלִכָּל-גִּבּוֹר הָהוּא** all the others who were present in the assembly are comprehended.—Ver. 2. The king rose to his feet, in order to speak to the assembly standing; till then he had, on account of his age and feebleness, sat, not lain in bed, as Kimchi and others infer from 1 Kings i.—Ver. 3. The address, “My brethren and



my people," is expressive of condescending goodwill; cf. on יָחַד, 1 Sam. xxx. 23, 2 Sam. xix. 13. What David here says (vers. 3-7) of the temple building, he had in substance already (chap. xxii. 7-13) said to his son Solomon: I, it was with my heart, *i.e.* I purposed (cf. xxii. 7) to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of Jahve, and the footstool of the feet of our God, *i.e.* for the ark and for the capporeth upon it, which is called "footstool of the feet of our God," because God was enthroned above the cherubim upon the capporeth. "And I have prepared to build," *i.e.* prepared labour and materials, xxii. 2-4 and 14 ff.; on ver. 3, cf. xxii. 8.—In ver. 4 David states how his election to be king was of God, who had chosen Judah to be ruler (cf. v. 2); and just so (vers. 5, 6) had God chosen Solomon from among all his many sons to be heir to the throne, and committed to him the building of the temple; cf. xxii. 10. The expression, "throne of the kingdom of Jahve," and more briefly, "throne of Jahve" (xxix. 23, or מִלְכֻתִּי, xvii. 14), denotes that Jahve is the true King of Israel, and had chosen Solomon as He had chosen David to be holder and administrator of His kingly dominion.—On vers. 6b and 7, cf. xxii. 10 and xvii. 11 f.; and with the condition אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, cf. 1 Kings iii. 14, ix. 4, where God imposes an exactly similar condition on Solomon. בְּיָוֶם הַהוּא, as is done at this time; cf. 1 Kings viii. 61, and the commentary on Deut. ii. 30. On this speech J. H. Mich. well remarks: "*tota hæc narratio aptata est ad propositum Davidis: vult enim Salomoni auctoritatem apud principes et fratres conciliare, ostendendo, non humana, sed divina voluntate electum esse.*" To this David adds an exhortation to the whole assembly (ver. 8), and to his son Solomon (ver. 9), to hold fast their faithfulness to God.—Ver. 8. "And now before the eyes of all Israel, of the congregation of Jahve (collected in their representatives), and into the ears of our God (so that God should hear as witness), (*scil.* I exhort you), observe and seek . . . that ye may possess (that is, keep as possession) the good land (cf. Deut. iv. 21 f.), and leave it to your sons after you for an inheritance" (cf. Lev. xxv. 46).—In ver. 9 he turns to his son Solomon in particular with the fatherly exhortation, "My son, know thou the God of thy father (*i.e.* of David, who has ever helped him, Ps. xviii. 3), and serve Him with whole (undivided) heart (xxix. 9, 19; 1 Kings viii. 61) and willing soul." To strengthen this exhortation, David reminds him of the omniscience of God. Jahve seeks, *i.e.* searches, all

hearts and knows all the imagination of the thoughts; cf. Ps. vii. 10, 1 Sam. xvi. 7, Jer. xi. 20, Ps. cxxxix. 1 ff. *וַיַּזְכֵּר מַחֲשָׁבוֹת* as in Gen. vi. 5. With the last clauses cf. Deut. iv. 29, Isa. lv. 6, etc. *וַיִּזְכֹּר*, only here and 2 Chron. xi. 14, xxix. 19.—With ver. 10 the discourse turns to the building of the temple. The exhortation *וַעֲשֵׂה חֶזֶק* is interrupted by the giving over of the sketches and plans of the temple, and is taken up again only in ver. 20.

Vers. 11–19. *The sketches and plans of the sacred buildings and vessels.*—The enumeration begins in ver. 11 with the temple house, progressing from outside to inside, and in ver. 12 goes on to the courts and the buildings in them, and in ver. 13 ff. to the vessels, etc. *תְּבִנִית*, model, pattern; cf. Ex. xxv. 9; here the sketches and drawings of the individual things. *וְאֶת-תְּבִנִית בְּתֵי* is a contraction for *וְאֶת-תְּבִנִית בְּתֵי*, and the suffix refers, as the succeeding words show, not to *הָאֵלִים*, but to *הַבָּיִת*, which may be easily supplied from the context (ver. 10). In the porch there were no houses. The *בָּתִּים* are the buildings of the temple house, viz. the holy place and the most holy, with the three-storeyed side-building, which are specified in the following words. *וַיִּזְכֹּר* occurs only here, but is related to *וַיִּזְכֹּר*, Esth. iii. 9, iv. 7, Ezra xxvii. 24, and to the Chald. *וַיִּזְכֹּר*, Ezra vii. 20, and signifies store and treasure chambers, for which the chambers of the three-storeyed side-building served. *עֲלִיּוֹת* are the upper chambers over the most holy place, 2 Chron. iii. 9; *חֲדָרֵי הַפְּנִימִים* are the inner rooms of the porch and of the holy place, since *בֵּית הַכַּפֹּרֶת*, the house of the ark with the mercy-seat, i.e. the most holy place, is mentioned immediately after.—Ver. 12. And the pattern, i.e. the description of all that was in the spirit with him, i.e. what his spirit had designed, *לְחֲצֹרוֹת*, as to the courts. *לְכָל-הַלְשָׁבוֹת סָבִיב*, in reference to all the chambers round about, i.e. to all the rooms on the four sides of the courts. *לְאֲצֻרוֹת*, for the treasures of the house of God; see on xxvi. 20.—Ver. 13. *וְלִמְחֻלֹּת הַכֹּהֲנִים* (continuation of *לְאֲצֻרוֹת*), “and for the divisions of the priests and Levites, and for all the work of the service, and for all vessels,”—for for all these purposes, viz. for the sojourn of the priests and Levites in the service, as well as for the performance of the necessary works, e.g. preparation of the shew-bread, cooking of the sacrificial flesh, holding of the sacrificial meals, and for the storing of the vessels necessary for these purposes, the cells and buildings of the courts were set apart.—With ver. 14 begins the enumeration of the vessels. *לְכָל-הַלְשָׁבוֹת* . . . *לְחֲצֹרוֹת*, ver. 12:



he gave him the description of that which he had in mind "with regard to the golden (*i.e.* to the golden vessels, cf. xxix. 2), according to the weight of the golden, for all vessels of every service," in regard to all silver vessels according to the weight.—With ver. 15 the construction hitherto employed is dropped. According to the usual supposition, the verb יִיתֵן is to be supplied from ver. 11 after וּמִשְׁקָל : "and gave him the weight for the golden candlesticks and their golden lamps," זָהָב being in a state of free subordination to the word וְגִרְתֵּיהֶם (J. H. Mich., Berth., and others). But apart from the fact that no analogous case can be found for such a subordination (for in 2 Chron. ix. 15, which Berth. cites as such, there is no subordination, for there the first זָהָב is the accusative of the material dependent upon וַיַּעַשׂ), the supplying of יִיתֵן gives no suitable sense; for David here does not give Solomon the metal for the vessels, but, according to vers. 11, 12, 19, only a תַּבְנִית, pattern or model for them. If יִיתֵן be supplied, נָתַן must be "he appointed," and so have a different sense here from that which it has in ver. 11. This appears very questionable, and it is simpler to take מִשְׁקָל without the article, as an accusative of nearer definition, and to connect the verse thus: "and (what he had in mind) as weight for the golden candlesticks and their lamps, in gold, according to the weight of each candlestick and its lamps, and for the silver candlesticks, in weight—בְּעֵבֹרָת, according to the service of each candlestick" (as it corresponded to the service of each).—In ver. 16 the enumeration is continued in very loose connection: "And as to the gold (אֶת, *quoad*; cf. Ew. § 277, *d*) by weight (מִשְׁקָל, acc. of free subordination) for the tables of the spreading out, *i.e.* of the shew-bread (מַעֲרֶכֶת לֶחֶם = מַעֲרֶכֶת, 2 Chron. xiii. 11; see on Lev. xxiv. 6), for each table, and silver for the silver tables." Silver tables, *i.e.* tables overlaid with silver-lamin, and silver candlesticks (ver. 15), are not elsewhere expressly mentioned among the temple vessels, since the whole of the vessels are nowhere individually registered even in the description of the building of the temple. Yet, when the temple was repaired under Joash, 2 Kings xii. 14, 2 Chron. xxiv. 14, and when it was destroyed by the Chaldeans, 2 Kings xxv. 15, vessels of gold and silver are spoken of. The silver candlesticks were probably, as Kimchi has conjectured, intended for the priests engaged in the service, and the tables for reception of the sacrificial flesh after it had been prepared for burning upon the altar.—Ver. 17. Before יְהִימָלְכוּת וגו'.

we should probably supply from ver. 11: "he gave him the pattern of the forks . . . וְלִכְפֹּרִי, and for the golden tankards, according to the weight of each tankard." For מִזְלָגוֹת and מִזְרְקוֹת, see on 2 Chron. iv. 22. קִשְׁוֹת, σπονδεῖα, cups for the libations, occur only in Ex. xxv. 29, xxxvii. 16, and Num. iv. 7. זָהָב טָהוֹר, in free subordination: of pure gold. כְּפֹרִים from כָּפַר, to cover, are vessels provided with covers, tankards; only mentioned here and in Ezra i. 10, viii. 27.—Ver. 18. And (the pattern) for the altar of incense of pure gold by weight. In the second member of the verse, at the close of the enumeration, תְּבִנִית, from vers. 11, 12, is again taken up, but with לְ, which Berth. rightly takes to be *nota accus.*: and (gave him) "the model of the chariot of the cherubim of gold, as spreading out (wings), and sheltering over the ark of the covenant of Jahve." הַכְּרוּבִים is not subordinated in the genitive to הַמְרַכְּבָה, but is in explanatory apposition to it. The cherubim, not the ark, are the chariot upon which God enters or is throned; cf. Ps. xviii. 11, xcix. 1, Ex. xxv. 22. The conception of the cherubim set upon the golden cover of the ark as מְרַכְּבָה is derived from the idea יֹרֵכֵב עַל-כְּרוֹב, Ps. xviii. 11. Ezekiel, it is true, saw wheels on the throne of God under the cherubim (i. 15 ff., 26), and in accordance with this the LXX. and Vulg. have made a cherubim-chariot out of the words (ἄρμα τῶν Χερουβίμ, *quadriga cherubim*); but as against this Berth. rightly remarks, that the idea of a chariot of the cherubim does not at all appear in the two sculptured cherubim upon the ark, nor yet in our passage. לְפָרָשִׁים (without the article, and with לְ) Berth. thinks quite unintelligible, and would alter the text, reading הַפָּרָשִׁים וְהַפְּכָכִים, because the two participles should be in apposition to הַכְּרוּבִים. But this is an error; for neither by the meaning of the words, nor by the passages, 2 Chron. v. 8, Ex. xxv. 20, 1 Kings viii. 7, are we compelled to make this alteration. The two first-mentioned passages prove the opposite, viz. that these participles state for what purpose the cherubim are to serve. וְהָיוּ הַכְּרוּבִים פָּרָשִׁי לְפָרָשִׁים וְסֻכָּכִים have the signification of פָּרָשִׁי כְּנָפִים, "that the cherubim might be spreading wings and protecting" (Ex. xxv. 20), as J. H. Mich. has rightly seen. This use of לְ, where in לְ even without a verb the idea of "becoming something" lies, but which Berth. does not understand, has been already discussed, Ew. § 217, *d*, and illustrated by passages, among which 1 Chron. xxviii. 18 is one. The reference to Ex. xxv. 20 explains also the use of פָּרָשִׁי without כְּנָפִים, the author of the



Chronicle not thinking it necessary to give the object of פָּרֵשׁ, as he might assume that that passage would be known to readers of his book.—Ver. 19. In giving over to Solomon the model of all the parts and vessels of the temple enumerated in vers. 11-18, David said: "All this, viz. all the works of the pattern, has He taught by writing from the hand of Jahve which came upon me." כָּל מְלָאכֹת is more closely defined by the apposition הַתָּה. That the verse contains words of David is clear from עָלַי. The subject of הַשְּׁבִיל is Jahve, which is easily supplied from מִיַּד יְהוָה. It is, however, a question with what we should connect עָלַי. Its position before the verb, and the circumstance that הַשְּׁבִיל construed with עַל pers. does not elsewhere occur, are against its being taken with הַשְּׁבִיל; and there remains, therefore, only the choice between connecting it with מִיַּד יְהוָה and with בְּכֶתֶב. In favour of the last, Ps. xl. 8, בְּתוֹב עָלַי, prescribed to me, may be compared; and according to that, בְּכֶתֶב עָלַי can only mean, "what is prescribed to me;" cf. for the use of כֶּתֶב for written prescription, the command in 2 Chron. xxxv. 4. Bertheau accordingly translates מִיַּד יְהוָה עָלַי, בְּכֶתֶב, "by a writing given to me for a rule from Jahve's hand," and understands the law of Moses to be meant, because the description of the holy things in Ex. xxv. ff. is manifestly the basis of that in our verses. But had David wished to say nothing further than that he had taken the law in the Scriptures for the basis of his pattern for the holy things, the expression which he employs would be exceedingly forced and wilfully obscure. And, moreover, the position of the words would scarcely allow us to connect בְּכֶתֶב with עָלַי, for in that case we should rather have expected מִיַּד יְהוָה עָלַי בְּכֶתֶב. We must there take עָלַי along with מִיַּד יְהוָה: "writing from the hand of Jahve came upon me," i.e., according to the analogy of the phrase הִיָּתָה עָלַי (2 Kings iii. 15, Ezek. i. 3, iii. 14, etc.), a writing coming by divine revelation, or a writing composed in consequence of divine revelation, and founded upon divine inspiration. David therefore says that he had been instructed by a writing resting upon divine inspiration as to all the works of the pattern of the temple. This need not, however, be understood to mean that David had received *exemplar vel ideam templi et vasorum sacrorum* immediately from Jahve, either by a prophet or by vision, as the model of the tabernacle was shown to Moses on the mount (Ex. xxv. 40, xxvii. 8); for it signifies only that he had not himself invented the pattern which he had committed to

writing, *i.e.* the sketches and descriptions of the temple and its furniture and vessels, but had drawn them up under the influence of divine inspiration.

Vers. 20, 21. In conclusion, David encourages his son to go forward to the work with good courage, for his God would not forsake him; and the priests and Levites, cunning workmen, and the princes, together with the whole people, would willingly support him. With the encouragement, ver. 20a, cf. xxii. 13; and with the promise, ver. 20b, cf. Deut. xxxi. 6, 8, Josh. i. 5. אֱלֹהֵי, my God, says David, *ut in mentem ei revocet, quomodo multis in periculis servatus sit* (Lav.). כָּל-מְלָאכֶת עֲבֹדָה, all the work-business, *i.e.* all the labour necessary for the building of the house of God.—Ver. 21. וְהִנֵּה is fittingly translated by Clericus, “*en habes.*” The reference which lies in the הִנֵּה to the classes of the priests and Levites, *i.e.* the priests and Levites divided into classes, does not presuppose their presence in the assembly. With the וְהִנֵּה corresponds וְעִמָּךְ, with thee, *i.e.* for assistance to thee, in the second half of the verse. The ל before לְכָל-נָדִיב, “are all freely willing with wisdom,” in the middle of the sentence introducing the subject is strange; Bertheau would therefore strike it out, thinking that, as לְכָל goes immediately before, and follows immediately afterwards twice, לְכָל here may easily be an error for כָּל. This is certainly possible; but since this ל is very frequently used in the Chronicle, it is a question whether it should not be regarded as authentic, “serving to bring into emphatic prominence the idea of the כָּל נָדִיב: with thee is for each business, what regards each willing person, for also all willing persons;” cf. Ew. § 310, a. נָדִיב לֵב = נָדִיב, 2 Chron. xxix. 31, Ex. xxxv. 5, 22, usually denotes him who brings voluntary gifts, but here, him who voluntarily brings wisdom to every service, who willingly employs his wisdom and knowledge in a service. Cunning, intelligent workmen and artists are meant, xxii. 15, 2 Chron. ii. 6. לְכָל-דְּבָרֶיךָ, “towards all thy words,” *i.e.* as thou sayest or commandest them, the princes and the people, or callest upon them for assistance in the work.

Chap. xxix. 1–9. *Contributions of the collected princes for the building of the temple.*—David then turns to the assembled princes to press upon them the furthering of the building of the temple. After referring to the youth of his son, and to the greatness of the work to be accomplished (ver. 1), he mentions what materials he has prepared for the building of the temple (ver. 2); then



further states what he has resolved to give in addition from his private resources (ver. 4); and finally, after this introduction, calls upon those present to make a voluntary collection for this great work (ver. 5). The words, "as only one hath God chosen him," form a parenthesis, which is to be translated as a relative sentence for "my son, *whom* alone God hath chosen." נַעַר וְיָרָךְ as in xxii. 5. The work is great, because not for man the palace, *scil.* is intended, *i.e.* shall be built, but for Jahve God. הַבִּירָה, the citadel, the palace; a later word, generally used of the residence of the Persian king (Esth. i. 2, 5, ii. 3; Neh. i. 1), only in Neh. ii. 8 of the citadel by the temple; here transferred to the temple as the glorious palace of Jahve, the God-king of Israel. With ver. 2a, cf. xxii. 14. הַזָּהָב לְזָהָב וְנָגִיד, the gold for the golden, etc., *i.e.* for the vessels and ornaments of gold, cf. xxviii. 14. אֲבָנֵי שָׁהָם as in Ex. xxv. 7, xxxv. 9, precious stones for the ephod and choshen. שָׁהָם, probably beryl. אֲבָנֵי מְלֻאִים, stones of filling, that is, precious stones which are put in settings. אֲבָנֵי פִיזָה, stones of pigment, *i.e.* ornament, conjecturally precious stones which, from their black colour, were in appearance like פִּיזָה, *stibium*, a common eye pigment (see 2 Kings ix. 30). אֲבָנֵי רֶקֶמָה, stones of variegated colour, *i.e.* with veins of different colours. אֲבָנֵי יָקָרָה, precious stones, according to 2 Chron. iii. 6, for ornamenting the walls. אֲבָנֵי שֵׁשׁ, white marble stones.—Ver. 3. "And moreover, because I have pleasure in the house of my God, there is to me a treasure of gold and silver; it have I appointed for the house of my God over and above all that . . ." הַכִּינוּתִי with כֹּל without the relative, cf. xv. 12.—Ver. 4. Gold 3000 talents, *i.e.* about  $13\frac{1}{2}$ , or, reckoning according to the royal shekel,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  millions of pounds; 7000 talents of silver, *circa*  $2\frac{1}{2}$  or  $1\frac{1}{4}$  millions of pounds: see on xxii. 14. Gold of Ophir, *i.e.* the finest, best gold, corresponding to the pure silver. לָטֹחַ, to overlay the inner walls of the houses with gold and silver leaf. הַבָּתִּים as in xxviii. 11, the different buildings of the temple. The walls of the holy place and of the most holy, of the porch and of the upper chambers, were overlaid with gold (cf. 2 Chron. iii. 4-6, 8, 9), and probably only the inner walls of the side buildings.—Ver. 5. לְזָהָב לְזָהָב, for every golden thing, etc., cf. ver. 2. וְלִכְלֵל, and in general for every work to be wrought by the hands of the artificer. וְיָמִי, who then is willing (י expressing it as the consequence). To fill one's hand to the Lord, means to provide oneself with something which one brings to the Lord; see on

Ex. xxxii. 29. The infinitive מִלְאוֹת occurs also in Ex. xxxi. 5 and Dan. ix. 4, and along with מִלָּא, 2 Chron. xiii. 9.—Ver. 6 f. The princes follow the example, and willingly respond to David's call. שָׂרֵי הָאַבֹּת = רָאשֵׁי הָאַבֹּת, xxiv. 31, xxvii. 1, etc. וְשָׂרֵי מִלְאֲכַת הַמֶּלֶךְ, and as regards the princes of the work of the king. The שָׂרֵי רִכּוּשׁ וּמִקְנֶה לַמֶּלֶךְ, xxviii. 1, the officials enumerated in xxvii. 25–31 are meant; on לֵ see on xxviii. 21. They gave 5000 talents of gold ( $22\frac{1}{2}$  or  $11\frac{1}{2}$  millions of pounds), and 1000 darics =  $11\frac{1}{2}$  millions of pounds. אֲדָרְכָּוֹן, with א *prosth.* here and in Ezra viii. 27, and דִּרְכָּמוֹן, Ezra ii. 69, Neh. vii. 70 ff., does not correspond to the Greek δραχμή, Arab. *dirhem*, but to the Greek δαρεικός, as the Syrian translation כִּנְבָּטָן, Ezra viii. 27, shows; a Persian gold coin worth about 22s. 6d. See the description of these coins, of which several specimens still exist, in Cavedoni *bibl. Numismatik*, übers. von A. Werlhof, S. 84 ff.; J. Brandis, *das Münz-Mass und Gewichtssystem in Vorderasien* (1866), S. 244; and my *bibl. Archäol.* § 127, 3. “Our historian uses the words used in his time to designate the current gold coins, without intending to assume that there were darics in use in the time of David, to state in a way intelligible to his readers the amount of the sum contributed by the princes” (Bertheau). This perfectly correct remark does not, however, explain why the author of the Chronicle has stated the contribution in gold and that in silver in different values, in talents and in darics, since the second cannot be an explanation of the first, the two sums being different. Probably the sum in darics is the amount which they contributed in gold pieces received as coins; the talents, on the other hand, probably represent the weight of the vessels and other articles of gold which they brought as offerings for the building. The amount contributed in silver is not large when compared with that in gold: 10,000 talents = £3,500,000, or one half that amount. The contribution in copper also, 18,000 talents, is not very large. Besides these, those who had stones, *i.e.* precious stones, also brought them. הַנִּמְצָא אִתּוֹ, that was found with him, for: that which he (each one) had of stones they gave. The sing. אִתּוֹ is to be taken distributively, and is consequently carried on in the plural, נִתְּנוּ; cf. Ew. § 319, *a.* אֲבָנִים is *accus.* of subordination. נָתַן עַל יָד, to give over for administration (Ew. § 282, *b*). יְחִיאל, the Levite family of this name which had the oversight of the treasures of the house of God (xxvi. 21 f.).—Ver. 9. The people and



the king rejoiced over this willingness to give. בָּלַב שָׁלֵם, as in xxviii. 9.

Vers. 10-19. *David's thanksgiving prayer.*—David gives fitting expression to his joy on the success of the deepest wish of his heart, in a prayer with which he closes the last parliament of his reign. Since according to the divine decree, not he, the man of war, but his son, the peace-king Solomon, was to build a temple to the Lord, David had taken it upon himself to prepare as far as possible for the carrying out of the work. He had also found the princes and chiefs of the people willing to further it, and to assist his son Solomon in it. In this the pious and grey-haired servant of the Lord saw a special proof of the divine favour, for which he must thank God the Lord before the whole congregation. He praises Jahve, “the God of Israel our father,” ver. 10, or, as it is in ver. 18, “the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, our fathers.” Jahve had clearly revealed himself to David and his people as the God of Israel and of the patriarchs, by fulfilling in so glorious a manner to the people of Israel, by David, the promises made to the patriarchs. God the Lord had not only by David made His people great and powerful, and secured to them the peaceful possession of the good land, by humbling all their enemies round about, but He had also awakened in the heart of the people such love to and trust in their God, that the assembled dignitaries of the kingdom showed themselves perfectly willing to assist in furthering the building of the house of God. In this God had revealed His greatness, power, glory, etc.; as David (in vers. 11, 12) acknowledges with praise: “Thine, Jahve, is the greatness,” etc. הַגָּדָה, according to the Aramaic usage, *gloria*, splendour, honour. כִּי כָל, yea all, still dependent on לָךְ at the commencement of the sentence, so that we do not need to supply לָךְ after כִּי. “Thine is the dominion, and the raising of oneself to be head over all.” In His מְלָכָה God reveals His greatness, might, glory, etc. מְהִנְיָא is not a participle requiring אַתָּה, “thou art,” to be supplied (Berth.), but an appellative, an Aramaic infinitive,—the raising oneself (Ew. § 160, e).—Ver. 12. “From Thee came the riches and the glory . . . , and in Thy hand is it (it lies) to make all things great and strong.”—Ver. 13. For this we must thank God, and sing praise to His holy name. By the partic. מְהִנְיָא, from הִנְיָא, confess, praise, the praising of God is characterized as an enduring praise, always rising anew.—Ver. 14. For man of him-

self can give nothing: "What am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to show ourselves so liberal?" עֲצֵר כּוֹחַ, to hold strength together; both to have power to do anything (here and 2 Chron. ii. 5, xxii. 9), and also to retain strength (2 Chron. xiii. 20; Dan. x. 8, 16, xi. 6), only found in Daniel and in the Chronicle. הִתְנַדֵּב, to show oneself willing, especially in giving. בְּזוֹת refers to the contribution to the building of the temple (vers. 3-8). From Thy hand, *i.e.* that which is received from Thee, have we given.—Ver. 15. For we are strangers (as Ps. xxxix. 13), *i.e.* in this connection we have no property, no enduring possession, since God had only given them the usufruct of the land; and as of the land, so also of all the property of man, it is only a gift committed to us by God in usufruct. The truth that our life is a pilgrimage (Heb. xi. 12, 13, 14), is presented to us by the brevity of life. As a shadow, so swiftly passing away, are our days upon the earth (cf. Job viii. 9, Ps. xc. 9 f., cii. 12, cxliv. 4). וְאֵין מִקְוֶה, and there is no trust, *scil.* in the continuance of life (cf. Jer. xiv. 8).—Ver. 16. All the riches which we have prepared for the building of the temple come from the hand of God. The Keth. הֵיא is neuter, the Keri הוא corresponds to הֵהָמוֹן.—Ver. 17. Before God, who searches the heart and loves uprightness, David can declare that he has willingly given in uprightness of heart, and that the people also have, to his joy, shown equal willingness. בְּלִ-אֵלֶּה, all the treasures enumerated (vers. 3-8). The plural הַנִּמְצָאוֹת refers to עֲמֻדָּה, and the demonstrative הֵ stands for אֲשֶׁר as in xxvi. 28.—Ver. 18. He prays that God may enable the people ever to retain this frame of heart. לִצֵּר מַח' is more closely defined by לִצֵּר מַח' viz. the frame of the thoughts of the heart of Thy people. "And direct their heart (the people's heart) to Thee," cf. 1 Sam. vii. 3.—Ver. 19. And to Solomon may God give a whole (undivided) heart, that he may keep all the divine commands and do them, and build the temple. לֵב שָׁלֵם as in ver. 9. לַעֲשׂוֹת הַכֹּל, that he may do all, *scil.* that the commands, testimonies, and statutes require. For הַבִּירָה, see ver. 1.

Vers. 20-22. *Close of the public assembly.*—Ver. 20. At the conclusion of the prayer, David calls upon the whole assembly to praise God; which they do, bowing before God and the king, and worshipping. יִקְרְאוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ, connected as in Ex. iv. 31, Gen. xliii. 28, etc.—Ver. 21. To seal their confession, thus made in word and deed, the assembled dignitaries prepared a great sacrificial feast to the Lord on the following day. They sacrificed to



the Lord sacrifices, viz. 1000 bullocks, 1000 rams, and 1000 lambs as burnt-offering, with drink-offerings to correspond, and sacrifices, *i.e.* thank-offerings (שְׁלָמִים), in multitude for all Israel, *i.e.* so that all those present could take part in the sacrificial meal prepared from these sacrifices. While זִבְחִים in the first clause is the general designation of the bloody offerings as distinguished from the meat-offerings, in the last clause it is restricted by the contrast with עֹלֹת and the שְׁלָמִים, from which joyous sacrificial meals were prepared.—Ver. 22. On this day they made Solomon king a second time, anointing him king to the Lord, and Zadok to be priest, *i.e.* high priest. The שָׁנִית refers back to chap. xxiii. 1, and the first anointing of Solomon narrated in 1 Kings i. 32 ff. לִיהוָה, not: before Jahve, which לִי cannot signify, but: “to Jahve,” in accordance with His will expressed in His choice of Solomon (xxviii. 4). The לִי before צִדּוֹק is *nota accus.*, as in לְשִׁלֹּמֹה. From the last words we learn that Zadok received the high-priesthood with the consent of the estates of the kingdom.

Vers. 23-30. *Solomon's accession and David's death*, with a statement as to the length of his reign and the sources of the history.—Vers. 23-25. The remarks on Solomon's accession and reign contained in these verses are necessary to the complete conclusion of a history of David's reign, for they show how David's wishes for his son Solomon, whom Jahve chose to be his successor, were fulfilled. On עַל-כֵּפֶא יְהוָה see the commentary on xxviii. 5. וַיִּצְלַח, he was prosperous, corresponds to the hope expressed by David (xxii. 13), which was also fulfilled by the submission of all princes and heroes, and also of all the king's sons, to King Solomon (ver. 24). There can hardly, however, be in these last words a reference to the frustrating of Adonijah's attempted usurpation of the throne (cf. 1 Kings i. 15 ff.). נָתַן יָד תַּחַת = to submit. But this meaning is not derived (Rashi) from the custom of taking oaths of fidelity by clasping of hands, for this custom cannot be certainly proved to have existed among the Israelites; still less can it have arisen from the ancient custom mentioned in Gen. xxiv. 2, 9, xlvii. 29, of laying the hand under the thigh of the person to whom one swore in making promises with oath. The hand, as the instrument of all activity, is here simply a symbol of power.—Ver. 25. Jahve made Solomon very great, by giving him the glory of the kingdom, as no king before him had had it. כָּל is to be taken along with לֹא, *nullus*, and does not presuppose a number of kings before Solomon; it involves only

more than one. Before him, Saul, Ishbosheth, and David had been kings, and the kingship of the latter had been covered with glory.—Ver. 26-30. **עַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל** (as in xi. 1, xii. 38), referring to the fact that David had been for a time king only over Judah, but had been recognised at a later time by all the tribes of Israel as king. The length of his reign as in 1 Kings ii. 11. In Hebron seven years; according to 2 Sam. v. 5, more exactly seven years and six months.—Ver. 28. On **עֵשָׂר וְכָבוֹד** cf. 1 Kings iii. 13, 2 Chron. xvii. 5.—Ver. 29. On the authorities cited see the Introduction, p. 30 ff. **הַנֶּחֱמָם בְּתוֹבִים עִם כָּל־מַלְכוּתוֹ וְגו'** goes with **הַנֶּחֱמָם בְּתוֹבִים**: the acts of David . . . are written . . . together with his whole reign and his power, and the times which went over him. **הַעֲתִים**, the times, with their joys and sorrows, as in Ps. xxxi. 16, Job xxiv. 1. The kingdoms of the lands (cf. 2 Chron. xii. 8, xvii. 10, xx. 29) are the kingdoms with which the Israelites under David came into contact,—Philistia, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Aram.



## THE SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES

### III. HISTORY OF SOLOMON'S KINGSHIP.—CHAP. I.-IX.



THE kingship of Solomon centres in the building of the temple of the Lord, and the account of that begins in chap. ii. with a statement of the preparations which Solomon made for the accomplishment of this great work, so much pressed upon him by his father, and concludes in chap. vii. with the answer which the Lord gave to his consecrating prayer in a vision. In chap. i., before the history of the temple building, we have an account of the sacrifice at Gibeon by which Solomon inaugurated his reign (ver. 1-13), with some short notices of his power and riches (vers. 14-17); and in chap. viii. and ix., after the temple building, we have summary statements about the palaces and cities which he built (viii. 1-11), the arrangement of the regular religious service (vers. 12-16), the voyage to Ophir (vers. 17 and 18), the visit of the queen of Sheba (ix. 1-12), his riches and his royal magnificence and glory (vers. 13-28), with the concluding notices of the duration of his reign, and of his death (vers. 29, 30). If we compare with this the description of Solomon's reign in 1 Kings i.-xi., we find that in the Chronicle not only are the narratives of his accession to the throne in consequence of Adonijah's attempted usurpation, and his confirming his kingdom by punishing the revolter (1 Kings chap. i. and ii.), of his marriage to the Egyptian princess (iii. 1 and 2), his wise judgment (iii. 16-28), his public officers, his official men, his royal magnificence and glory (1 Kings iv. 1-v. 14), omitted, but also the accounts of the building of his palace (1 Kings vii. 1-12), of his idolatry, and of the adversaries who rose against him (1 Kings xi. 1-40). On the other hand, the description of the building and consecration of the temple is supplemented by various important details which are omitted from the first book of Kings. Hence it is clear that the author of the Chronicle purposed only to portray more exactly the building of

the house of God, and has only shortly touched upon all the other undertakings of this wise and fortunate king.

CHAP. I. 1-17.—SOLOMON'S SACRIFICE, AND THE THEOPHANY AT GIBEON. CHARIOTS, HORSES, AND RICHES OF SOLOMON.

Vers. 1-13. *The sacrifice at Gibeon, and the theophany.*—Vers. 1-6. When Solomon had established himself upon his throne, he went with the princes and representatives of the congregation of Israel to Gibeon, to seek for the divine blessing upon his reign by a solemn sacrifice to be offered there before the tabernacle. Ver. 1 forms, as it were, the superscription of the account of Solomon's reign which follows. In יִתְחַזֵּק גִּוִּי = Solomon established himself in his kingdom, *i.e.* he became strong and mighty in his kingdom, the older commentators saw a reference to the defeat of Adonijah, the pretender to the crown, and his followers (1 Kings ii.). But this view of the words is too narrow; we find the same remark made of other kings whose succession to the throne had not been questioned (cf. xii. 13, xiii. 21, xvii. 1, and xxi. 4), and the remark refers to the whole reign,—to all that Solomon undertook in order to establish a firm dominion, not merely to his entry upon it. With this view of the words, the second clause, "his God was with him, and made him very great," coincides. God gave His blessing to all that Solomon did for this end. With the last words cf. 1 Chron. xxix. 25.

We have an account of the sacrifice at Gibeon (vers. 7-13) in 1 Kings iii. 4-15 also. The two narratives agree in all the main points, but, in so far as their form is concerned, it is at once discernible that they are two independent descriptions of the same thing, but derived from the same sources. In 1 Kings iii. the theophany—in our text, on the contrary, that aspect of the sacrifice which connected it with the public worship—is more circumstantially narrated. While in 1 Kings iii. 4 it is briefly said the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, our historian records that Solomon summoned the princes and representatives of the people to this solemn act, and accompanied by them went to Gibeon. This sacrifice was no mere private sacrifice,—it was the religious consecration of the opening of his reign, at which the estates of the kingdom were present as a matter of course. "All Israel" is defined by "the princes over the thousands . . . , the



judges, and all the honourable;" then לְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל is again taken up and explained by the apposition רָאִשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת: to all Israel, viz. the heads of the fathers'-houses. לְ is to be repeated before רָאִשֵׁי. What Solomon said to all Israel through its representatives, is not communicated; but it may be gathered from what succeeds, that he summoned them to accompany him to Gibeon to offer the sacrifice. The reason why he offered his sacrifice at the בְּמָה, *i.e.* place of sacrifice, is given in ver. 3 f. There the Mosaic tabernacle stood, yet without the ark, which David had caused to be brought up from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem (1 Chron. xiii. and xv f.). In בְּהֵכָן לוֹ the article in בְּ represents the relative בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הֵכָן לוֹ or בְּאֶשֶׁר = אֲשֶׁר; cf. Jud. v. 27, Ruth i. 16, 1 Kings xxi. 19; see on 1 Chron. xxvi. 28. Although the ark was separated from the tabernacle, yet by the latter at Gibeon was the Mosaic altar of burnt-offering, and on that account the sanctuary at Gibeon was Jahve's dwelling, and the legal place of worship for burnt-offerings of national-theocratic import. "As our historian here brings forward emphatically the fact that Solomon offered his burnt-offering at the legal place of worship, so he points out in 1 Chron. xxi. 28-xxx. 1, how David was only brought by extraordinary events, and special signs from God, to sacrifice on the altar of burnt-offering erected by him on the threshing-floor of Ornan, and also states how he was prevented from offering his burnt-offering in Gibeon" (Berth.). As to Bezaleel, the maker of the brazen altar, cf. Ex. xxxi. 2 and xxxvii. 1. Instead of שָׁם, which most manuscripts and many editions have before לִפְנֵי, and which the Targ. and Syr. also express, there is found in most editions of the 16th century, and also in manuscripts, שָׁם, which the LXX. and Vulgate also read. The reading שָׁם is unquestionably better and more correct, and the Masoretic pointing שָׁם, *posuit*, has arisen by an undue assimilation of it to Ex. xl. 29. The suffix in יִרְשֶׁהוּ does not refer to the altar, but to the preceding word יהוה; cf. דָּרַשׁ אֱלֹהִים, 1 Chron. xxi. 30, xv. 13, etc.—Vers. 7-13. The theophany, cf. 1 Kings iii. 5-15. In that night, *i.e.* on the night succeeding the day of the sacrifice. The appearance of God by night points to a dream, and in 1 Kings xxxv. 15 we are expressly informed that He appeared in a vision. Solomon's address to God, vers. 8-10, is in 1 Kings v. 6-10 given more at length. The mode of expression brings to mind 1 Chron. xvii. 23, and recurs in 2 Chron. vi. 17, 1 Kings viii. 26. מִדֶּעַ, with Pathach in the second syllable,

elsewhere מִדֶּע (vers. 11, 12), occurs elsewhere only in Dan. i. 4, 17, Eccles. x. 20.—Vers. 11 and 12. The divine promise. Here עֲשֵׂה is strengthened by the addition נִכְסִים, treasures (Josh. xxii. 8; Eccles. v. 18, vi. 2). אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁפֹּט, *ut judicare possis*. In general, the mode of expression is briefer than in 1 Kings iii. 11–13, and the conditional promise, “long life” (1 Kings iii. 14), is omitted, because Solomon did not fulfil the condition, and the promise was not fulfilled. In ver. 13 לְבָמָה is unintelligible, and has probably come into our text only by a backward glance at ver. 3, instead of מִהַבְּמָה, which the contents demand, and as the LXX. and Vulgate have rightly translated it. The addition, “from before the tabernacle,” which seems superfluous after the preceding “from the Bamah at Gibeon,” is inserted in order again to point to the place of sacrifice at Gibeon, and to the legal validity of the sacrifices offered there (Berth.). According to 1 Kings iii. 15, Solomon, on his return to Jerusalem, offered before the ark still other burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, and prepared a meal for his servants. This is omitted by the author of the Chronicle, because these sacrifices had no ultimate import for Solomon’s reign, and not, as Then. supposes, because in his view only the sacrifices offered on the ancient brazen altar of burnt-offering belonging to the temple had legal validity. For he narrates at length in 1 Chron. xxi. 18, 26 ff. how God Himself directed David to sacrifice in Jerusalem, and how the sacrifice offered there was graciously accepted by fire from heaven, and the threshing-floor of Araunah thereby consecrated as a place of sacrifice; and it is only with the purpose of explaining to his readers why Solomon offered the solemn burnt-offering in Gibeon, and not, as we should have expected from 1 Chron. xxi., in Jerusalem, that he is so circumstantial in his statements as to the tabernacle. The last clause of ver. 13, “and he was king over Israel,” does not belong to the section treating of the sacrifice at Gibeon, but corresponds to the remark in 1 Kings iv. 1, and forms the transition to what follows.

Vers. 14–17. *Solomon’s chariots, horses, and riches.*—In order to prove by facts the fulfilment of the divine promise which Solomon received in answer to his prayer at Gibeon, we have in 1 Kings iii. 16–28 a narrative of Solomon’s wise judgment, then in chap. iv. an account of his public officers; and in chap. v. 1–14 the royal magnificence, glory, and wisdom of his reign is further portrayed. In our Chronicle, on the contrary, we have in vers. 14–17 only a short statement as to his chariots and horses, and



the wealth in silver and gold to be found in the land, merely for the purpose of showing how God had given him riches and possessions. This statement recurs verbally in 1 Kings x. 26–29, in the concluding remarks on the riches and splendour of Solomon's reign; while in the parallel passage, 2 Chron. ix. 13–28, it is repeated in an abridged form, and interwoven with other statements. From this we see in how free and peculiar a manner the author of the Chronicle has made use of his authorities, and how he has arranged the material derived from them according to his own special plan.<sup>1</sup> For the commentary on this section, see on 1 Kings x. 26–28.—Vers. 14, 15, with the exception of one divergence in form and one in matter, correspond word for word to 1 Kings x. 26 and 27. Instead of וַיְנַיֵּם, he led them (Kings), there stands in ver. 15, as in ix. 25, the more expressive word וַאֲתֵּהוּקֵם, “he laid them” in the chariot cities; and in ver. 15 וַאֲתֵּהוּקֵם is added to אֶת־הַבָּסָף, while it is omitted from both 1 Kings x. 27 and also 2 Chron. ix. 27. It is, however, very suitable in this connection, since the comparison “like stones” has reference to quantity, and Solomon had collected not only silver, but also gold, in quantity.—Vers. 16, 17 coincide with 1 Kings x. 28, 29, except that מְקוֹנָא is used for מְקוֹנָה, and וַתַּעֲלֶה וַתַּצִּא is altered into וַיַּעֲלֶה וַיַּצִּא. For the commentary on these verses, see 1 Kings x. 28 f.

CHAP. I. 18—II. 17. SOLOMON'S PREPARATIONS FOR THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE. (CF. 1 KINGS V. 15–32.)

The account of these is introduced by i. 18: “Solomon thought to build.” אָמַר with an infinitive following does not signify here to command one to do anything, as *e.g.* in 1 Chron. xxi. 17, but to purpose to do something, as *e.g.* in 1 Kings v. 19. For לָשֵׁם יְהוָה, see on 1 Kings v. 17. בֵּית לְמַלְכוּתוֹ, house for his kingdom, *i.e.* the royal palace. The building of this palace is indeed shortly spoken of in ii. 11, vii. 11, and viii. 1, but is not in the Chronicle described in detail as in 1 Kings vii. 1–12.

<sup>1</sup> The assertion of Thenius on 1 Kings x. 26 ff., that he found this section in his authorities in two different places and in different connections, copied them mechanically, and only towards the end of the second passage remarked the repetition and then abridged the statement, is at once refuted by observing, that in the supposed repetition the first half (ix. 25, 26) does not at all agree with 1 Kings x. 26, but coincides with the statement in 1 Kings v. 6, 7.

With chap. ii. 1 begins the account of the preparations which Solomon made for the erection of these buildings, especially of the temple building, accompanied by a statement that the king caused all the workmen of the necessary sort in his kingdom to be numbered. There follows thereafter an account of the negotiations with King Hiram of Tyre in regard to the sending of a skilful architect, and of the necessary materials, such as cedar wood and hewn stones, from Lebanon (vers. 2-15); and, in conclusion, the statements as to the levying of the statute labourers of Israel (ver. 1) are repeated and rendered more complete (vers. 16, 17). If we compare the parallel account in 1 Kings v. 15-32, we find that Solomon's negotiation with Hiram about the proposed buildings is preceded (ver. 15) by a notice, that Hiram, after he had heard of Solomon's accession, had sent him an embassy to congratulate him. This notice is omitted in the Chronicle, because it was of no importance in the negotiations which succeeded. In the account of Solomon's negotiation with Hiram, both narratives (Chron. vers. 2-15 and 1 Kings v. 16-26) agree in the main, but differ in form so considerably, that it is manifest that they are free adaptations of one common original document, quite independent of each other, as has been already remarked on 1 Kings v. 15. On ver. 1 see further on ver. 16 f.

Vers. 2-9. Solomon, through his ambassadors, addressed himself to Hiram king of Tyre, with the request that he would send him an architect and building wood for the temple. On the Tyrian king Hiram or Hiram, the contemporary of David and Solomon, see the discussion on 2 Sam. v. 11. According to the account in 1 Kings v., Solomon asked cedar wood from Lebanon from Hiram; according to our account, which is more exact, he desired an architect, and cedar, cypress, and other wood. In 1 Kings v. the motive of Solomon's request is given in the communication to Hiram, viz. that David could not carry out the building of the proposed temple on account of his wars, but that Jahve had given him (Solomon) rest and peace, so that he now, in accordance with the divine promise to David, desired to carry on the building (vers. 17-19). In the Chron. vers. 2-5, on the contrary, Solomon reminds the Tyrian king of the friendliness with which he had supplied his father David with cedar wood for his palace, and then announces to him his purpose to build a temple to the Lord, at the same time stating that it was designed for the worship of God, whom the heavens and the



earth cannot contain. It is clear, therefore, that both authors have expanded the fundamental thoughts of their authority in somewhat freer fashion. The apodosis of the clause beginning with **פֶּאֱשֶׁר** is wanting, and the sentence is an anacolouthon. The apodosis should be: "do so also for me, and send me cedars." This latter clause follows in vers. 6, 7, while the first can easily be supplied, as is done *e.g.* in the Vulg., by *sic fac mecum*.—Ver. 3. "Behold, I will build." **הִנֵּה** with a participle of that which is imminent, what one intends to do. **לְהַקְדִּישׁ לוֹ**, to sanctify (the house) to Him. The infinitive clause which follows (**לְהַקְטִיר וְגו'**) defines more clearly the design of the temple. The temple is to be consecrated by worshipping Him there in the manner prescribed, by burning incense, etc. **קְטֹרֶת רִיחִים**, incense of odours, Ex. xxv. 6, which was burnt every morning and evening on the altar of incense, Ex. xxx. 7 f. The clauses which follow are to be connected by zeugma with **לְהַקְטִיר**, *i.e.* the verbs corresponding to the objects are to be supplied from **הַקְטִיר**: "and to spread the continual spreading of bread" (Ex. xxv. 30), and to offer burnt-offerings, as is prescribed in Num. xxviii. and xxix. **לְעוֹלָם זֶאת וְגו'**, for ever is this enjoined upon Israel, cf. 1 Chron. xxiii. 31.—Ver. 4. In order properly to worship Jahve by these sacrifices, the temple must be large, because Jahve is greater than all gods; cf. Ex. xviii. 11, Deut. x. 17.—Ver. 5. No one is able (**עֹצֵר בּוֹחַ** as in 1 Chron. xxix. 14) to build a house in which this God could dwell, for the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. These words are a reminiscence of Solomon's prayer (1 Kings viii. 27; 2 Chron. vi. 18). How should I (Solomon) be able to build Him a house, *scil.* that He should dwell therein? In connection with this, there then comes the thought: and that is not my purpose, but only to offer incense before Him will I build a temple. **הַקְטִיר** is used as *pars pro toto*, to designate the whole worship of the Lord. After this declaration of the purpose, there follows in ver. 6 the request that he would send him for this end a skilful chief workman, and the necessary material, viz. costly woods. The chief workman was to be a man wise to work in gold, silver, etc. According to chap. iv. 11-16 and 1 Kings vii. 13 ff., he prepared the brazen and metal work, and the vessels of the temple; here, on the contrary, and in ver. 13 also, he is described as a man who was skilful also in purple weaving, and in stone and wood work, to denote that he was an artificer who could take charge of all the artistic work connected with

the building of the temple. To indicate this, all the costly materials which were to be employed for the temple and its vessels are enumerated. **אַרְנָן**, the later form of **אַרְנָמָן**, deep-red purple, see on Ex. xxv. 4. **בְּרָמִיל**, occurring only here, vers. 6, 13, and in iii. 14, in the signification of the Heb. **תּוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי**, crimson or scarlet purple, see on Ex. xxv. 4. It is not originally a Hebrew word, but is probably derived from the Old-Persian, and has been imported, along with the thing itself, from Persia by the Hebrews. **תְּכֵלֶת**, deep-blue purple, hyacinth purple, see on Ex. xxv. 4. **בַּתָּחָה פְּתוּחִים**, to make engraved work, and Ex. xxviii. 9, 11, 36, and xxxix. 6, of engraving precious stones, but used here, as **כָּל-פְּתוּחָה**, ver. 13, shows, in the general signification of engraved work in metal or carved work in wood; cf. 1 Kings vi. 29. **לְעִשְׂוֹת עִם-הַחֲכָמִים** depends upon **לְעִשְׂוֹת**: to work in gold . . . , together with the wise (skilful) men which are with me in Judah. **אִשָּׁר הִכִּין**, *quos comparavit*, cf. 1 Chron. xxviii. 21, xxii. 15.—Ver. 7. The materials Hiram was to send were cedar, cypress, and alghummim wood from Lebanon. **אַלְגֻּמִּים**, ver. 7 and ix. 10, instead of **אַלְמֻגִּים**, 1 Kings x. 11, probably means sandal wood, which was employed in the temple, according to 1 Kings x. 12, for stairs and musical instruments, and is therefore mentioned here, although it did not grow in Lebanon, but, according to ix. 10 and 1 Kings x. 11, was procured at Ophir. Here, in our enumeration, it is inexactly grouped along with the cedars and cypresses brought from Lebanon.—Ver. 8. The infinitive **יִלְהֲבִין** cannot be regarded as the continuation of **לְבָרֹת**, nor is it a continuation of the imperat. **נְעֻלַח לִי** (ver. 7), with the signification, “and let there be prepared for me” (Berth.). It is subordinated to the preceding clauses: send me cedars, which thy people who are skilful in the matter hew, and in that my servants will assist, in order, viz. to prepare me building timber in plenty (the **ו** is *explic.*). On ver. 8b cf. ver. 4. The infin. abs. **הַפִּלָּא** is used adverbially: “wonderfully” (Ew. § 280, c). In return, Solomon promises to supply the Tyrian workmen with grain, wine, and oil for their maintenance,—a circumstance which is omitted in 1 Kings v. 10; see on ver. 14. **לְבָרְתִי הָעֵצִים** is more closely defined by **לְחַטְבִּים**, and **לִ** is the introductory **לִ**: “and behold, as to the hewers, the fellers of trees.” **חָטַב**, to hew (wood), and to dress it (Deut. xxix. 10; Josh. ix. 21, 23), would seem to have been supplanted by **הָצַב**, which in vers. 1, 17 is used for it, and it is therefore explained by **בְּרֹת הָעֵצִים**. “I will give wheat **מִכּוֹת** to thy servants” (the



hewers of wood). The word מִבוֹת gives no suitable sense; for "wheat of the strokes," for threshed wheat, would be a very extraordinary expression, even apart from the facts that wheat, which is always reckoned by measure, is as a matter of course supposed to be threshed, and that no such addition is made use of with the barley. מִבוֹת is probably only an orthographical error for מִבֹּלֶת, food, as may be seen from 1 Kings v. 25.

Vers. 10-15. *The answer of King Hiram*; cf. 1 Kings v. 21-25.—Hiram answered בְּכֹתֵב, in a writing, a letter, which he sent to Solomon. In 1 Kings v. 21 Hiram first expresses his joy at Solomon's request, because it was of importance to him to be on a friendly footing with the king of Israel. In the Chronicle his writing begins with the congratulation: because Jahve loveth His people, hath He made thee king over them. Cf. for the expression, ix. 8 and 1 Kings x. 9. He then, according to both narratives, praises God that He has given David so wise a son. וַיֹּאמֶר, ver. 11, means: then he said further. The praise of God is heightened in the Chronicle by Hiram's entering into Solomon's religious ideas, calling Jahve the Creator of heaven and earth. Then, further, בֶּן־חָכָם is strengthened by יוֹדֵעַ שְׂכָל וּבִינָה, having understanding and discernment; and this predicate is specially referred to Solomon's resolve to build a temple to the Lord. Then in ver. 12 f. he promises to send Solomon the artificer Hiram-Abi. On the title אָבִי, my father, i.e. minister, counsellor, and the descent of this man, cf. the commentary on 1 Kings vii. 13, 14. In ver. 13 of the Chronicle his artistic skill is described in terms coinciding with Solomon's wish in ver. 6, only heightened by small additions. To the metals as materials in which he could work, there are added stone and wood work, and to the woven fabrics בּוּץ (byssus), the later word for שֵׁשׁ; and finally, to exhaust the whole, he is said to be able וְלַחֲשֹׁב כָּל־מַח', to devise all manner of devices which shall be put to him, as in Ex. xxxi. 4, he being thus raised to the level of Bezaleel, the chief artificer of the tabernacle. עַם־הַחֲכָמִים is dependent upon לַעֲשׂוֹת, as in ver. 6. The promise to send cedars and cypresses is for the sake of brevity here omitted, and only indirectly indicated in ver. 15. In ver. 14, however, it is mentioned that Hiram accepted the promised supply of grain, wine, and oil for the labourers; and ver. 15 closes with the promise to fell the wood required in Lebanon, and to cause it to be sent in floats to Joppa (Jaffa), whence Solomon could take it up

to Jerusalem. The word צָרָךְ, "need," is a ἀπαξ λεγ. in the Old Testament, but is very common in Aramaic writings. רַפְסָרוֹת, "floats," too, occurs only here instead of דִּבְרוֹת, 1 Kings v. 23, and its etymology is unknown. If we compare vers. 12–15 with the parallel account in 1 Kings v. 22–25, we find that, besides Hiram's somewhat verbose promise to fell the desired quantity of cedars and cypresses on Lebanon, and to send them in floats by sea to the place appointed by Solomon, the latter contains a request from Hiram that Solomon would give him לָחֶם, maintenance for his house, and a concluding remark that Hiram sent Solomon cedar wood, while Solomon gave Hiram, year by year, 20,000 kor of wheat as food for his house, *i.e.* the royal household, and twenty kor beaten oil, that is, of the finest oil. In the book of Kings, therefore, the promised wages of grain, wine, and oil, which were sent to the Tyrian woodcutters, is passed over, and only the quantity of wheat and finest oil which Solomon gave to the Tyrian king for his household, year by year, in return for the timber sent, is mentioned. In the Chronicle, on the contrary, only the wages or payment to the woodcutters is mentioned, and the return made for the building timber is not spoken of; but there is no reason for bringing these two passages, which treat of different things, into harmony by alterations of the text. For further discussion of this and of the measures, see on 1 Kings v. 22.

In vers. 16 and 17 the short statement in ver. 1 as to Solomon's statute labourers is again taken up and expanded. Solomon caused all the men to be numbered who dwelt in the land of Israel as strangers, *viz.* the descendants of the Canaanites who were not exterminated, "according to the numbering (סֶפֶר occurs only here) as his father David had numbered them." This remark refers to 1 Chron. xxii. 2, where, however, it is only said that David commanded the strangers to be assembled. But as he caused them to be assembled in order to secure labourers for the building of the temple, he doubtless caused them to be numbered; and to this reference is here made. The numbering gave a total of 153,000 men, of whom 70,000 were made bearers of burdens, 80,000 הָעֵב, *i.e.* probably hewers of stone and wood בְּהָר, *i.e.* on Lebanon, and 3600 foremen or overseers over the workmen, לְהַעֲבִיר אֶת-הָעָם, to cause the people to work, that is, to hold them to their task. With this cf. 1 Kings v. 29 f., where the number of the overseers is stated at 3300. This difference



is explained by the fact that in the Chronicle the total number of overseers, of higher and lower rank, is given, while in the book of Kings only the number of overseers of the lower rank is given without the higher overseers. Solomon had in all 550 higher overseers of the builders (Israelite and Canaanite),—cf. 1 Kings ix. 23; and of these, 250 were Israelites, who alone are mentioned in 2 Chron. viii. 10, while the remaining 300 were Canaanites. The total number of overseers is the same in both accounts—3850; who are divided in the Chronicle into 3600 Canaanitish and 250 Israelitish, in the book of Kings into 3300 lower and 550 higher overseers (see on 1 Kings v. 30). It is, moreover, stated in 1 Kings v. 27 f. that Solomon had levied a force of 30,000 statute labourers from among the people of Israel, with the design that a third part of them, that is, 10,000 men, should labour alternately for a month at a time in Lebanon, looking after their own affairs at home during the two following months. This levy of workmen from among the people of Israel is not mentioned in the Chronicle.

#### CHAP. III.—V. 1. THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

(CF. 1 KINGS VI., VII. 13–51.)

The description of the building begins with a statement of the place where and of the time when the temple was built (iii. 1, 2). Then follows an account of the proportions of the building, a description of the individual parts, commencing on the outside and advancing inwards. First we have the porch (vers. 3, 4), then the house, *i.e.* the interior apartment or the holy place (vers. 5–7), then the holiest of all, and cherubim therein (vers. 8–13), and the veil of partition between the holy place and the most holy (ver. 14). After that we have the furniture of the court, the pillars of the porch (vers. 15–17), the brazen altar (iv. 1), the brazen sea (iv. 2–5), the ten lavers (ver. 6), the furniture of the holy place, candlesticks and tables (vers. 7, 8), and of the two courts (vers. 9, 10), and finally a summary enumeration of the brazen and golden utensils of the temple (vers. 11, 12). The description in 1 Kings vi. and vii. is differently arranged; the divine promise which Solomon received while the building was in progress, and a description of the building of the palace, being inserted: see on 1 Kings vi. and vii.

Chap. iii. *The building of the temple.*—Vers. 1–3. The statements as to the place where the temple was built (ver. 1) are found here only. Mount Moriah is manifestly the mountain in the land of Moriah where Abraham was to have sacrificed his son Isaac (Gen. xxii. 2), which had received the name הַמֹּרְיָה, *i.e.* “the appearance of Jahve,” from that event. It is the mountain which lies to the north-east of Zion, now called Haram after the most sacred mosque of the Mohammedans, which is built there; cf. Rosen, *das Haram von Jerusalem*, Gotha 1866. אֲשֶׁר נִרְאָה לְדָוִד is usually translated: “which was pointed out to David his father.” But נִרְאָה has not in Niphal the signification “to be pointed out,” which is peculiar to the Hophal (cf. Ex. xxv. 40, xxvi. 30, Deut. iv. 35, etc.); it means only “to be seen,” “to let oneself be seen,” to appear, especially used of appearances of God. It cannot be shown to be anywhere used of a place which lets itself be seen, or appears to one. We must therefore translate: “on mount Moriah, where He had appeared to David his father.” The unexpressed subject יהוה is easily supplied from the context; and with בְּהָרֵי אֲשֶׁר, “on the mountain where,” cf. בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר, Gen. xxxv. 13 f., and Ew. § 331, c, 3. אֲשֶׁר הֵכִין is separated from what precedes, and connected with what follows, by the Athnach under אֲבִיהִי, and is translated, after the LXX., Vulg., and Syr., as a hyperbaton thus: “in the place where David had prepared,” *scil.* the building of the temple by the laying up of the materials there (1 Chron. xxii. 5, xxix. 2). But there are no proper analogies to such a hyperbaton, since Jer. xiv. 1 and xlv. 1 are differently constituted. Berth. therefore is of opinion that our text can only signify, “which temple he prepared on the place of David,” and that this reading cannot be the original, because הֵכִין occurs elsewhere only of David’s activity in preparing for the building of the temple, and “place of David” cannot, without further ceremony, mean the place which David had chosen. He would therefore transpose the words thus: בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הֵכִין דָּוִד. But this conjecture is by no means certain. In the first place, the mere transposition of the words is not sufficient; we must also alter בְּמָקוֹם into מְבָרָא, to get the required sense; and, further, Berthieu’s reasons are not conclusive. הֵכִין means not merely to make ready for (*zurüsten*), to prepare, but also to make ready, make (*bereiten*), found *e.g.* 1 Kings vi. 19, Ezra iii. 3; and the frequent use of this word in reference to David’s action in preparing for the building of the temple



does not prove that it has this signification here also. The clause may be quite well translated, with J. J. Rambach: "*quam domum præparavit (Salomo) in loco Davidis.*" The expression "David's place," for "place which David had fixed upon," cannot in this connection be misunderstood, but yet it cannot be denied that the clause is stiff and constrained if we refer it to אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה. We would therefore prefer to give up the Masoretic punctuation, and construe the words otherwise, connecting אֲשֶׁר הָיָה with the preceding thus: where Jahve had appeared to his father David, who had prepared (the house, *i.e.* the building of it), and make בְּמָקוֹם ד' with the following designation of the place, to depend upon לְבָנוֹת as a further explanation of the בְּהָר הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, viz. in the place of David, *i.e.* on the place fixed by David on the threshing-floor of the Jebusite Ornan; cf. 1 Chron. xxi. 18.—In ver. 2 יִהְיֶה לְבָנוֹת is repeated in order to fix the time of the building. In 1 Kings vi. 1 the time is fixed by its relation to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. בִּשְׁנֵי, which the older commentators always understood of the second day of the month, is strange. Elsewhere the day of the month is always designated by the cardinal number with the addition of לַחֹדֶשׁ or יוֹם, the month having been previously given. Berth. therefore considers בִּשְׁנֵי to be a gloss which has come into the text by a repetition of הַשְּׁנֵי, since the LXX. and Vulg. have not expressed it.—Ver. 3. "And this is Solomon's founding, to build the house of God;" *i.e.* this is the foundation which Solomon laid for the building of the house of God. The infin. Hoph. הוֹסִיד is used here and in Ezra iii. 11 substantively. The measurements only of the length and breadth of the building are given; the height, which is stated in 1 Kings vi. 2, is omitted here. The former, *i.e.* the ancient measurement, is the Mosaic or sacred cubit, which, according to Ezek. xl. 5 and xliii. 13, was a handbreadth longer than the civil cubit of the earlier time; see on 1 Kings vi. 2.

Vers. 4-7. *The porch and the interior of the holy place.*—Ver. 4. The porch which was before (*i.e.* in front of) the length (of the house), was twenty cubits before the breadth of the house, *i.e.* was as broad as the house. So understood, the words give an intelligible sense. הָאֹרֶךְ with the article refers back to הָאֹרֶךְ in ver. 3 (the length of the house), and עַל־פָּנָיו in the two defining clauses means "in front;" but in the first clause it is "lying in front of the house," *i.e.* built in front; in the second it is "mea-

sured across the front of the breadth of the house.”<sup>1</sup> There is certainly either a corruption of the text, or a wrong number in the statement of the height of the porch, 120 cubits; for a front 120 cubits high to a house only thirty cubits high could not be called אולם; it would have been a מִגְדָּל, a tower. It cannot with certainty be determined whether we should read twenty or thirty cubits; see in 1 Kings vi. 3. He overlaid it (the porch) with pure gold; cf. 1 Kings vi. 21.—Vers. 5–7. The interior of the holy place. Ver. 5. The “great house,” *i.e.* the large apartment of the house, the holy place, he wainscotted with cypresses, and overlaid it with good gold, and carved thereon palms and garlands. חָפָה from חָפָה, to cover, cover over, alternates with the synonymous צָפָה in the signification to coat or overlay with wood and gold. תְּמָרִים as in Ezek. xli. 18, for תְּמָרוֹת, 1 Kings vi. 29, 35, are artificial palms as wall ornaments. שִׁשְׁרֹת are in Ex. xxviii. 14 small scroll-formed chains of gold wire, here spiral chain-like decorations on the walls, garlands of flowers carved on the wainscot, as we learn from 1 Kings vi. 18.—Ver. 6. And he garnished the house with precious stones for ornament (of the inner sides of the walls); cf. 1 Chron. xxix. 2, on which Bähr on 1 Kings vi. 7 appositely remarks, that the ornamenting of the walls with precious stones is very easily credible, since among the things which Solomon brought in quantity from Ophir they are expressly mentioned (1 Kings x. 11), and it was a common custom in the East so to employ them in buildings and in vessels; cf. *Symbolik des mos. Cult.* i. S. 280, 294, 297. The gold was from פְּרוּיִם. This, the name of a place rich in gold, does not

<sup>1</sup> There is consequently no need to alter the text according to 1 Kings vi. 3, from which passage Berth. would interpolate the words הַבַּיִת עֶשְׂרִי הַבַּיִת עֶשְׂרִי בְּאֶמֶת רָחְבוֹ עַל פְּנֵיו between עַל-פְּנֵי and הָאֶרֶץ, and thereby get the signification: “and the porch which is before the house, ten cubits is its breadth before the same, and the length which is before the breadth twenty cubits.” But this conjecture is neither necessary nor probable. It is not necessary, for (1) the present text gives an intelligible sense; (2) the assertion that the length and breadth of the porch must be stated cannot be justified, if for no other reason, for this, that even of the main buildings all three dimensions are not given, only two being stated, and that it was not the purpose of the author of the Chronicle to give an architecturally complete statement, his main anxiety being to supply a general idea of the splendour of the temple. It is not probable; because the chronicler, if he had followed 1 Kings vi. 3, would not have written עַל-פְּנֵיו, but עַל-פְּנֵי הַבַּיִת, and instead of הָאֶרֶץ would have written וְאֶרְצוֹ, to correspond with רָחְבוֹ.



elsewhere occur, and has not as yet been satisfactorily explained. Gesen. with Wilson compares the Sanscrit *parvam*, the first, foremost, and takes it to be the name of the foremost, *i.e.* eastern regions; others hold the word to be the name of some city in southern or eastern Arabia, whence Indian gold was brought to Palestine.—In ver. 7 the garnishing of the house with gold is more exactly and completely described. He garnished the house, the beams (of the roof), the thresholds (of the doors), and its walls and its doors with gold, and carved cherubs on the walls. For details as to the internal garnishing, decoration, and gilding of the house, see 1 Kings vi. 18, 29, and 30, and for the doors, vers. 32-35.

Vers. 8-14. *The most holy place, with the figures of the cherubim and the veil*; cf. 1 Kings vi. 19-28.—The length of the most holy place in front of the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, consequently measured in the same way as the porch (ver. 4); the breadth, *i.e.* the depth of it, also twenty cubits. The height, which was the same (1 Kings vi. 20), is not stated; but instead of that we have the weight of the gold which was used for the gilding, which is omitted in 1 Kings vi., viz. 600 talents for the overlaying of the walls, and 50 shekels for the nails to fasten the sheet gold on the wainscoting. He covered the upper chambers of the most holy place also with gold; see 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. This is not noticed in 1 Kings vi.—Vers. 10 ff. The figures of the cherubim are called מַעֲשֵׂה צַעְצָעִים, sculpture work. The ἀπ. λεγ. צַעְצָעִים comes from צָעַע, Arab. صاغ, *formavit, finxit*, and signifies sculptures. The plur. יָצְפוּ, “they overlaid them,” is indefinite. The length of the wings was five cubits, and the four outspread wings extended across the whole width of the most holy place from one wall to the other. The repetition of the clauses בְּנֹף הָאֶחָד . . . הַכְּרוֹב הָאֶחָד (vers. 11, 12) has a distributive force: the top of one wing of each cherub reached the wall of the house, that of the other wing reached the wing of the other cherub standing by. In the repetition the masc. מִנֵּי alternates with the fem. מִנְעֵה, being construed in a freer way as the principal gender with the fem. בְּנֹף, and also with רִבְבָהָה, *adhærebat*, in the last clause.—In ver. 12 Bertheau would strike out the word בְּנֹפֵי because it does not suit פִּרְשִׁים, which occurs in 1 Chron. xxviii. 18, 2 Chron. v. 8, 1 Kings viii. 7, in the transitive signification, “to stretch out the wings.” But nothing is

gained by that, for we must then supply the erased word after פְּרָשִׁים again. And, moreover, the succeeding clause is introduced by וְהֵם, just because in the first clause the wings, and not the cherubim, were the subject. We hold the text to be correct, and translate: "the wings of these cherubim were, for they stretched them out, twenty cubits." הַכְּרוּבִים וְהֵם refers to הַכְּרוּבִים. They stood upon their feet, consequently upright, and were, according to 1 Kings vi. 26, ten cubits high. "And their faces towards the house," *i.e.* turned towards the holy place, not having their faces turned towards each other, as was the case with the cherubim upon the Caphoreth (Ex. xxv. 20).—Ver. 14. The veil between the holy place and the most holy, not mentioned in 1 Kings vi. 21, was made of the same materials and colours as the veil on the tabernacle, and was inwoven with similar cherub figures; cf. Ex. xxvi. 31. פָּרָמִיל וְבוּץ as in ii. 13. עָלָה עַל, to bring upon; an indefinite expression for: to weave into the material.

Vers. 15–17. *The two brazen pillars before the house, i.e.* before the porch, whose form is more accurately described in 1 Kings vii. 15–22. The height of it is here given at thirty-five cubits, while, according to 1 Kings vii. 15, 2 Kings xxv. 17, Jer. lii. 21, it was only eighteen cubits. The number thirty-five has arisen by confounding יח = 18 with לה = 35; see on 1 Kings vii. 16. הַצִּפָּה (ἀπ. λεγ.) from צָפָה, overlay, cover, is the hood of the pillar, *i.e.* the capital, called in 1 Kings vii. 16 ff. כִּתְרוֹת, crown, capital, five cubits high, as in 1 Kings vii. 16.—Ver. 16. "And he made little chains on the collar (Halsreife), and put it on the top of the pillars, and made 100 pomegranates, and put them on the chains." In the first clause of this verse, בְּדִבְרֵי, "in (on) the most holy place," has no meaning, for the most holy place is not here being discussed, but the pillars before the porch, or rather an ornament on the capital of these pillars. We must not therefore think of chains in the most holy place, which extended thence out to the pillars, as the Syriac and Arabic seem to have done, paraphrasing as they do: chains of fifty cubits (*i.e.* the length of the holy place and the porch). According to 1 Kings vii. 17–20 and ver. 41 f., compared with 2 Chron. iv. 12, 13, each capital consisted of two parts. The lower part was a circumvolution (Wulst) covered with chain-like net-work, one cubit high, with a setting of carved pomegranates one row above and one row below. The upper part, or that which formed the crown of the capital, was four cubits high, and carved in the form of an open lily-calyx.



In our verse it is the lower part of the capital, the circumvolution, with the chain net-work and the pomegranates, which is spoken of. From this, Bertheau concludes that רָבִיר must signify the same as the more usual שִׁבְכָה, viz. "the lattice-work which was set about the top of the pillars, and served to fasten the pomegranates," and that בְּרָבִיר has arisen out of בִּרְבִיר by a transposition of the letters. בִּרְבִיר (chains) should be read here. This conjecture so decidedly commends itself, that we regard it as certainly correct, since רָבִיר denotes in Gen. xli. 42, Ezek. xvi. 11, a necklace, and so may easily denote also a ring or hoop; but we cannot adopt the translation "chains on a ring," nor the idea that the שִׁבְכָה, since it surrounded the head of the pillars as a girdle or broad ring, is called the ring of the pillars. For this idea does not agree with the translation "chains in a ring," even when they are conceived of as "chain-like ornaments, which could scarcely otherwise be made visible on the ring than by open work." Then the chain-like decorations were not, as Bertheau thinks, on the upper and under border of the ring, but formed a net-work which surrounded the lower part of the capital of the pillar like a ring, as though a necklace had been drawn round it. רָבִיר consequently is not the same as שִׁבְכָה, but rather corresponds to that part of the capital which is called נֶלֶה (נִלּוֹת) in 1 Kings vii. 14; for the שִׁבְכוֹת served to cover the נִלּוֹת, and were consequently placed on or over the נִלּוֹת, as the pomegranates were on the chains or woven work. הַנֶּלֶה denotes the curve, the circumvolution, which is in 1 Kings vii. 20 called הַבֶּטֶן, a broad-arched band, bulging towards the middle, which formed the lower part of the capital. This arched part of the capital the author of the Chronicle calls רָבִיר, ring or collar, because it may be regarded as the neck ornament of the head of the pillar, in contrast to the upper part of the capital, that consisted in lily-work, i.e. the ball wrought into the form of an open lily-calyx (כִּתְרִית).—Ver. 17. As to the position of the pillars, and their names, see on 1 Kings vii. 21.

Chap. iv. 1-11a. *The sacred furniture and the courts of the temple.*—Vers. 1-6. The copper furniture of the court. Ver. 1. *The altar of burnt-offering.* Its preparation is passed over in 1 Kings vi. and vii., so that there it is only mentioned incidentally in connection with the consecration of the temple, viii. 22, 54, and ix. 25. It was twenty cubits square (long and broad) and ten cubits high, and constructed on the model of the Mosaic altar of

burnt-offering, and probably of brass plates, which enclosed the inner core, consisting of earth and unhewn stones ; and if we may judge from Ezekiel's description, chap. xliii. 13-17, it rose in steps, as it were, so that at each step its extent was smaller ; and the measurement of twenty cubits refers only to the lowest scale, while the space at the top, with the hearth, was only twelve cubits square ; cf. my *Bibl. Archæol.* i. S. 127, with the figure, plate iii. fig. 2.—Vers. 2-5. *The brazen sea* described as in 1 Kings vii. 23-26. See the commentary on that passage, and the sketch in my *Archæol.* i. plate iii. fig. 1. The differences in substance, such as the occurrence of *בְּקָרִים* and *הַבְּקָר*, ver. 3, instead of *פְּקָעִים* and *הַפְּקָעִים*, and 3000 baths instead of 2000, are probably the result of orthographical errors in the Chronicle. *יָבִיל* in ver. 5 appears superfluous after the preceding *בְּיָמֶיךָ*, and Berth. considers it a gloss which has come from 1 Kings into our text by mistake. But the expression is only pleonastic : "receiving baths, 3000 it held;" and there is no sufficient reason to strike out the words.—Ver. 6. *The ten lavers* which, according to 1 Kings vii. 38, stood upon ten brazen stands, *i.e.* chests provided with carriage wheels. These stands, the artistic work on which is circumstantially described in 1 Kings vii. 27-37, are omitted in the Chronicle, because they are merely subordinate parts of the lavers. The size or capacity of the lavers is not stated, only their position on both sides of the temple porch, and the purpose for which they were designed, "to wash therein, viz. the work of the burnt-offering (the flesh of the burnt-offering which was to be burnt upon the altar) they rinsed therein," being mentioned. For details, see in 1 Kings vii. 38 f. and the figure in my *Archæol.* i. plate iii. fig. 4. Occasion is here taken to mention in a supplementary way the use of the brazen sea.—Vers. 7-9. *The golden furniture of the holy place and the courts.* These three verses are not found in the parallel narrative 1 Kings vii., where in ver. 39b the statement as to the position of the brazen sea (ver. 10 of Chron.) follows immediately the statement of the position of the stands with the lavers. The candlesticks and the table of the shew-bread are indeed mentioned in the summary enumeration of the temple furniture, 1 Kings vii. 48 and 49, as in the corresponding passage of the Chronicle (vers. 19 and 20) they again occur ; and in 1 Kings vi. 36 and vii. 12, in the description of the temple building, the inner court is spoken of, but the outer court is not expressly mentioned. No reason can be given for the



omission of these verses in 1 Kings vii.; but that they have been omitted or have dropped out, may be concluded from the fact that not only do the whole contents of our fourth chapter correspond to the section 1 Kings vii. 23-50, but both passages are rounded off by the same concluding verse (Chron. v. 1 and 1 Kings li.).—Ver. 7. He made ten golden candlesticks **בְּמִשְׁפָּטָם**, according to their right, *i.e.* as they should be according to the prescript, or corresponding to the prescript as to the golden candlesticks in the Mosaic sanctuary (Ex. xxv. 31 ff.). **מִשְׁפָּט** is the law established by the Mosaic legislation.—Ver. 8. Ten golden tables, corresponding to the ten candlesticks, and, like these, placed five on the right and five on the left side of the holy place. The tables were not intended to bear the candlesticks (Berth.), but for the shew-bread; cf. on ver. 19 and 1 Chron. xxviii. 16. And a hundred golden basins, not for the catching and sprinkling of the blood (Berth.), but, as their connection with the tables for the shew-bread shows, wine flagons, or sacrificial vessels for wine libations, probably corresponding to the **מִנְקִיּוֹת** on the table of shew-bread in the tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 29). The signification, wine flagons, for **מִנְקִיּוֹת**, is placed beyond a doubt by Amos vi. 6.—Ver. 9. The two courts are not further described. For the court of the priests, see on 1 Kings vi. 36 and vii. 12. As to the great or outer court, the only remark made is that it had doors, and its doors, *i.e.* the folds or leaves of the doors, were overlaid with copper. In ver. 10 we have a supplementary statement as to the position of the brazen sea, which coincides with 1 Kings vii. 39; see on the passage. In ver. 11a the heavier brazen (copper) utensils, belonging to the altar of burnt-offering, are mentioned: **סִירֹת**, pots for the removal of the ashes; **יָעִים**, shovels, to take the ashes out from the altar; and **מִנְקִיּוֹת**, basins to catch and sprinkle the sacrificial blood. This half verse belongs to the preceding, notwithstanding that Hiram is mentioned as the maker. This is clear beyond doubt, from the fact that the same utensils are again introduced in the summary catalogue which follows (ver. 16).

Vers. 11b-22. *Summary catalogue of the temple utensils and furniture.*—Vers. 11b-18. The brass work wrought by Hiram.—Ver. 19-22. The golden furniture of the holy place and the gilded doors of the temple. This section is found also in 1 Kings vii. 40b-50. The enumeration of the things wrought in brass coincides to a word, with the exception of trifling linguistic differences and some defects in the text, with 1 Kings vii. 40b-

47. In ver. 12 **הַגִּלּוֹת וְהַכְתָּרוֹת** is the true reading, and we should so read in 1 Kings vii. 41 also, since the **גִּלּוֹת**, circumvolutions, are to be distinguished from the **כְּתָרוֹת**, crowns; see on iii. 16. In ver. 14 the first **עָשָׂה** is a mistake for **עָשָׂר**, the second for **עֲשָׂרָה**, Kings ver. 43; for the verb **עָשָׂה** is not required nor expected, as the accusative depends upon **לַעֲשׂוֹת**, ver. 11, while the number cannot be omitted, since it is always given with the other things. In ver. 16 **מִזְלָגוֹת** is an orthographic error for **מִזְרָקוֹת**; cf. ver. 11 and 1 Kings vii. 44. **וְאֶת-כָּל-בְּלִיָּהֶם** is surprising, for there is no meaning in speaking of the utensils of the utensils enumerated in ver. 12–16c. According to 1 Kings vii. 45, we should read **אֶת כָּל-הַבְּלִיִּים הָאֵלֶּה**. As to **אֲבִיו**, see on ii. 12. **נְחֹשֶׁת מְרוֹק** is accusative of the material, of polished brass; and so also **מִמָּרְט נָח**, 1 Kings vii. 45, with a similar signification. In reference to the rest, see the commentary on 1 Kings vii. 40 ff.—Vers. 19–22. In the enumeration of the golden furniture of the holy place, our text diverges somewhat more from 1 Kings vii. 48–50. On the difference in respect to the tables of the shew-bread, see on 1 Kings vii. 48. In ver. 20 the number and position of the candlesticks in the holy place are not stated as they are in 1 Kings vii. 49, both having been already given in ver. 7. Instead of that, their use is emphasized: to light them, according to the right, before the most holy place (**בְּמִשְׁפָּט** as in ver. 7). As to the decorations and subordinate utensils of the candlesticks, see on 1 Kings vii. 49. To **זָהָב**, ver. 21 (accus. of the material), is added **הוּא מְבִלּוֹת זָהָב**, “that is perfect gold.” **מְבִלָּה**, which occurs only here, is synonymous with **מְבִלָּל**, perfection. This addition seems superfluous, because before and afterwards it is remarked of these vessels that they were of precious gold (**זָהָב קָדוֹר**), and it is consequently omitted by the LXX., perhaps also because **מְבִלּוֹת** was not intelligible to them. The words, probably, are meant to indicate that even the decorations and the subordinate utensils of the candlesticks (lamps, snuffers, etc.) were of solid gold, and not merely gilded.—Ver. 22. **מִזְמָרוֹת**, knives, probably used along with the snuffers for the cleansing and trimming of the candlesticks and lamps, are not met with among the utensils of the tabernacle, but are here mentioned (Chron. and Kings), and in 2 Kings xii. 14 and Jer. lii. 18, among the temple utensils. Along with the **מִזְרָקוֹת**, sacrificial vessels (see on ver. 8), in 1 Chron. xxviii. 17 **כַּלְלִיָּוֹת**, forks of gold, are also mentioned, which are not elsewhere spoken of. Among the utensils of the tabernacle we



find only מַלְגוֹת of brass, flesh-forks, as an appurtenance of the altar of burnt-offering (Ex. xxvii. 3, xxxviii. 3, Num. iv. 14; cf. 1 Sam. ii. 13 f.), which, however, cannot be intended here, because all the utensils here enumerated belonged to the holy place. What purpose the golden forks served cannot be determined, but the mention of golden knives might lead us to presuppose that there would be golden forks as well. That the forks are not mentioned in our verse does not render their existence doubtful, for the enumeration is not complete: *e.g.* the כַּפֹּת, 1 Kings vii. 50, are also omitted. בַּבֹּת, vessels for the incense, and מַחְתֹּת, extinguishers, as in 1 Kings vii. 50. Instead of וַתִּפְתַּח הַבַּיִת דְּלָתוֹתָיו, “and as regards the opening (door) of the house, its door-leaves,” in 1 Kings vii. 50 we have וַתִּפְתַּח לְדָלְתוֹת הַבַּיִת, “and the hinges of the door-leaves of the house.” This suggests that פָּתַח is only an orthographical error for פֶּתַח; but then if we take it to be so, we must alter דְּלָתוֹתָיו into לְדָלְתוֹתָיו. And, moreover, the expression פֶּתַח הַבַּיִת, door-hinges of the house, is strange, as פֶּתַח properly denotes a recess or space between, and which renders the above-mentioned conjecture improbable. The author of the Chronicle seems rather himself to have generalized the expression, and emphasizes merely the fact that even the leaves of the doors in the most holy place and on the holy place were of gold;—of course not of solid gold; but they were, as we learn from iii. 7, overlaid with gold. This interpretation is favoured by the simple זָהָב being used without the predicate כָּנֹגֶה. To the sing. פֶּתַח no objection can be made, for the word in its fundamental signification, “opening,” may easily be taken collectively.—Chap. v. 1 contains the conclusion of the account of the preparation of the sacred utensils as in 1 Kings vii. 51, and with it also the whole account of the building of the temple is brought to an end. The ו before אֶת־הַבֶּסֶף and אֶת־הַזָּהָב corresponds to the Lat. *et—et*, both—and also. As to David’s offerings, cf. 1 Chron. xviii. 10 and 11; and on the whole matter, compare also the remarks on 1 Kings vii. 51.

CHAP. V. 2-VII. 22.—THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

(CF. 1 KINGS VIII. AND IX. 1-9.)

This solemnity, to which Solomon had invited the elders and heads of all Israel to Jerusalem, consisted in four acts: (*a*) the transfer of the ark into the temple (v. 2-vi. 11); (*b*) Solomon’s

dedicatory prayer (vi. 12–42); (c) the solemn sacrifice (vii. 1–10) and (d) the Lord's answer to Solomon's prayer (vii. 11–22). In the first two acts the temple was dedicated by the king and the congregation of Israel to its holy purpose; by the two last it was consecrated by Jahve to be the dwelling-place of His name. If we compare our account of this solemnity with the account given in the book of Kings, we find that they agree in their main substance, and for the most part even verbally coincide. Only, in the Chronicle the part performed by the priests and Levites is described more in detail; and in treating of the third act, instead of the blessing spoken by Solomon (1 Kings viii. 54–61), we have in Chron. vii. 1–3 a narrative of the devouring of the sacrifice by fire from heaven.

Chap. v. 2–vi. 11. The first part of the celebration was the transfer of the ark from Mount Zion to the temple (v. 2–14) and in connection with this we have the words in which Solomon celebrates the entry of the Lord into the new temple (vi. 1–11). This section has been already commented on in the remarks on 1 Kings viii. 1–21, and we have here, consequently, only to set down briefly those discrepancies between our account and the other, which have any influence upon the meaning.—In ver. 3 the name of the month, בִּירַח הָאֶתָנִים (Kings ver. 2), with which the supplementary clause, “that is the seventh month,” is theologically connected, is omitted, so that we must either change הַחֹדֶשׁ in בַּחֹדֶשׁ, or supply the name of the month; for the festival is not the seventh month, but was held in that month.—Ver. 4. Instead of הַלְוִיִּם, we have in 2 Kings הַכֹּהֲנִים, the priests bare the ark; and since even according to the Chronicle (ver. 7) the priests bare the ark into the holy place, we must understand by הַלְוִיִּם such Levites who were also priests.—In ver. 5, too, the words הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם are inexact and are to be corrected by Kings ver. 4, הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם. For even if the Levitic priests bare the ark and the sacred utensils of the tabernacle into the temple, yet the tabernacle itself (the planks, hangings, and coverings of it) was borne into the temple, to be preserved as a holy relic, not by priests, but only by Levites. The conj. ו before הַלְוִיִּם has probably been omitted only by a copyist who was thinking of הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם (Josh. iii. 3, Deut. xvii. 9, 1 Kings etc.).—In ver. 8 וַיִּכְסּוּ is an orthographical error for וַיִּסְכּוּ, 1 Kings viii. 7; cf. 1 Chron. xxviii. 18, Ex. xxv. 20.—In ver. 9, תִּמְנוֹן מִן־הָאֲרֹז has probably come into our text only by a copyist's mistake instead of מִן־הַקֹּדֶשׁ (Kings ver. 8).—Ver. 10. אֲשֶׁר נָתַן, which



had given, *i.e.* laid in, is not so exact as אֲשֶׁר הָנִיחַ שָׁם (Kings ver. 9), but may be justified by a reference to Ex. xl. 20.—Vers. 11b-13a describe the part which the priests and Levitical singers and musicians took in the solemn act of transferring the ark to the temple,—a matter entirely passed over in the narrative in Kings viii. 11, which confines itself to the main transaction. The mention of the priests gives occasion for the remark, ver. 11b, “for all the priests present had sanctified themselves, but the courses were not to be observed,” *i.e.* the courses of the priests (1 Chron. xxiv.) could not be observed. The festival was so great, that not merely the course appointed to perform the service of that week, but also all the courses had sanctified themselves and co-operated in the celebration. In reference to the construction לְשִׁמּוֹר אֵין, cf. Ew. § 321, b.—Ver. 12. All the Levitic singers and musicians were also engaged in it, to make the festival glorious by song and instrumental music: “and the Levites, the singers, all of them, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, and their sons and brethren, clad in byssus, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, stood eastward from the altar, and with them priests to 120, blowing trumpets.” The לְ before כָּלֶם and the following noun is the introductory לְ: “as regards.” On the form מַחֲזִירִים, see on 1 Chron. xv. 24; on these singers and musicians, their clothing, and their instruments, see on 1 Chron. xv. 17-28 and chap. xxv. 1-8.—Ver. 13a runs thus literally: “And it came to pass, as one, regarding the trumpeters and the singers, that they sang with one voice to praise and thank Jahve.” The meaning is: and the trumpeters and singers, together as one man, sang with one voice to praise. בְּאַחַד is placed first for emphasis; stress is laid upon the subject, the trumpeters and singers, by the introductory לְ; and הָיָה is construed with the following infinitive (לְהַשְׁמִיעַ): it was to sound, to cause to hear, for they were causing to hear, where לְ *c. infin.* is connected with הָיָה, as the participle is elsewhere, to describe the circumstances; cf. Ew. § 237. But in order to express very strongly the idea of the *unisono* of the trumpet-sound, and the singing accompanied by the harp-playing, which lies in בְּאַחַד, קוֹל אֶחָד is added to לְהַשְׁמִיעַ. By וּבְהָרִים קוֹל וְגו' all that was to be said of the song and music is drawn together in the form of a protasis, to which is joined וְהָבִית מִלֵּא, the apodosis both of this latter and also of the protasis which was interrupted by the parenthesis in ver. 11: “When the priests went forth from the holy place, for . . . (ver. 11), and

when they lifted up the voice with trumpets and with cymbals, and the (other) instruments of song, and with the praise of Jahve, that He is good, that His mercy endureth for ever (cf. 1 Chron. xvi. 34), then was the house filled with the cloud of the house of Jahve." The absence of the article before עָנָן requires us thus to connect the בֵּית יְהוָה at the close of the verse with עָנָן (*stat. constr.*), since the indefinite עָנָן (without the article) is not at all suitable here; for it is not any cloud which is here spoken of, but that which overshadowed the glory of the Lord in the most holy place.—Ver. 14, again, agrees with 1 Kings viii. 6, and has been there commented upon, chap. vi. 1–11. The words with which Solomon celebrates this wondrous evidence of divine favour, entirely coincide with the narrative in 1 Kings viii. 12–21, except that in ver. 5 f. the actual words of Solomon's speech are more completely given than in 1 Kings viii. 16, where the words, "and I have not chosen a man to be prince over my people Israel, and I have chosen Jerusalem that my name might be there," are omitted. For the commentary on this address, see on 1 Kings viii. 12–21.

Chap. vi. 12–42. *Solomon's dedicatory prayer* likewise corresponds exactly with the account of it given in 1 Kings viii. 22–53 till near the end (vers. 40–42), where it takes quite a different turn. Besides this, in the introduction (ver. 13) Solomon's position during the prayer is more accurately described, it being there stated that Solomon had caused a high stage (בִּיֹר, a basin-like elevation) to be erected, which he ascended, and kneeling, spoke the prayer which follows. This fact is not stated in 1 Kings viii. 22, and Then. and Berth. conjecture that it has been dropped out of our text only by mistake. Perhaps so, but it may have been passed over by the author of the books of Kings as a point of subordinate importance. On the contents of the prayer, which begins with the joyful confession that the Lord had fulfilled His promise to David in reference to the building of the temple, and proceeds with a request for a further bestowment of the blessing promised to His people, and a supplication that all prayers made to the Lord in the temple may be heard, see the Com. on 1 Kings viii. 22 ff. The conclusion of the prayer in the Chronicle is different from that in 1 Kings viii. There the last supplication, that the prayers might be heard, is followed by the thought: for they (the Israelites) are Thy people and inheritance; and in the further amplification of this thought the prayer



returns to the idea with which it commenced. In the narrative of the Chronicle, on the other hand, the supplications conclude with the general thought (ver. 40): "Now, my God, let, I beseech Thee, Thine eyes be open, and Thine ears attend unto the prayer of this place" (*i.e.* unto the prayer spoken in this place). There follows, then, the conclusion of the whole prayer,—a summons to the Lord (ver. 41 f.): "And now, Lord God, arise into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy strength; let Thy priests, Lord God, clothe themselves in salvation, and Thy saints rejoice in good! Lord God, turn not away the face of Thine anointed: remember the pious deeds of Thy servant David." וְהָסֵרִים as in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 32, xxxv. 26, and Neh. xiii. 14. On this Thenius remarks, to 1 Kings viii. 53: "This conclusion is probably authentic, for there is in the text of the prayer, 1 Kings viii., no special expression of dedication, and this the summons to enter into possession of the temple very fittingly supplies. The whole contents of the conclusion are in perfect correspondence with the situation, and, as to form, nothing better could be desired. It can scarcely be thought an arbitrary addition made by the chronicler for no other reason than that the summons spoken of, if taken literally, is irreconcilable with the entrance of the cloud into the temple, of which he has already given us an account." Berth. indeed thinks that it does not thence follow that our conclusion is authentic, and considers it more probable that it was introduced because it appeared more suitable, in place of the somewhat obscure words in 1 Kings viii. 51-53, though not by the author of the Chronicle, and scarcely at an earlier time. The decision on this question can only be arrived at in connection with the question as to the origin of the statements peculiar to the Chronicle contained in chap. vii. 1-3. If we consider, in the first place, our verses in themselves, they contain no thought which Solomon might not have spoken, and consequently nothing which would tend to show that they are not authentic. It is true that the phrase אֲנִיךְ קִשְׁבוֹת occurs only here and in vii. 15, and again in Ps. cxxx. 2, and the noun נִיחַ instead of מְנוּחָה is found only in Esth. ix. 16-18 in the form נִיחַ; but even if these two expressions be peculiar to the later time, no further conclusion can be drawn from that, than that the author of the Chronicle has here, as often elsewhere, given the thoughts of his authority in the language of his own time. Nor is the relation in which vers. 41 and 42 stand to Ps. cxxxii. 8-10 a valid proof of the

later composition of the conclusion of our prayer. For (a) it is still a question whether our verses have been borrowed from Ps. cxxxii., or the verses of the psalm from our passage; and (b) the period when Ps. cxxxviii. was written is so doubtful, that some regard it as a Solomonic psalm, while others place it in the post-exilic period. Neither the one nor the other of these questions can be determined on convincing grounds. The appeal to the fact that the chronicler has compounded the hymn in 1 Chron. xv. also out of post-exilic psalms proves nothing, for even in that case it is at least doubtful if that be a correct account of the matter. But the further assertion, that the conclusion (ver. 42) resembles Isa. lv. 3, and that recollections of this passage may have had some effect also on the conclusion (ver. 41), is undoubtedly erroneous, for *חַסְדֵי דָוִד* in ver. 42 has quite a different meaning from that which it has in Isa. lv. 3. There *חַסְדֵי דָוִד* are the favours granted to David by the Lord; in ver. 42, on the contrary, they are the pious deeds of David,—all that he had done for the raising and advancement of the public worship (see above). The phrase 'קוּמָה וְגו', "Arise, O Lord God, into Thy rest," is modelled on the formula which was spoken when the ark was lifted and when it was set down on the journey through the wilderness, which explains both *קוּמָה* and the use of *לְנוּחָהּ*, which is formed after *בְּנוּחָהּ*, Num. x. 36. The call to arise into rest is not inconsistent with the fact that the ark had already been brought into the most holy place, for *קוּמָה* has merely the general signification, "to set oneself to anything." The idea is, that God would now take the rest to which the throne of His glory had attained, show Himself to His people from this His throne to be the God of salvation, endue His priests, the guardians of His sanctuary, with salvation, and cause the pious to rejoice in His goodness. *יִשְׁמְחוּ* is generalized in Ps. cxxxii. 9 into *יִרְנְנוּ*. *הִשְׁבַּח פָּנַי פ'*, to turn away the face of any one, *i.e.* to deny the request, cf. 1 Kings ii. 16.

Chap. vii. 1-22. *The divine confirmation of the dedication of the temple.*—Vers. 1-10. The consecration of the sacrificial service by fire from heaven (vers. 1-3), and the sacrifices and festival of the people (vers. 4-10).—Vers. 1-3. At the conclusion of Solomon's prayer there fell fire from heaven, which devoured the burnt-offering and the thank-offering, and the glory of the Lord filled the house, so that the priests could not enter the house of Jahve. The assembled congregation, when they saw



the fire and the glory of the Lord descend, bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped God to praise. Now since this narrative is not found in 1 Kings viii. 54 ff., and there a speech of Solomon to the whole congregation, in which he thanks God for the fulfilment of His promise, and expresses the desire that the Lord would hear his prayers at all times, and bestow the promised salvation on the people, is communicated, modern criticism has rejected this narrative of the Chronicle as a later unhistorical embellishment of the temple dedication. "If we turn our attention," says Berth. in agreement with Then., "to chap. v. 11-14, and compare chap. v. 14 with our second verse, we must maintain that our historian found that there existed two different narratives of the proceedings at the dedication of the temple, and received both into his work. According to the one narrative, the clouds filled the house (1 Kings viii. 10, cf. 2 Chron. v. 11-14); and after this was done Solomon uttered the prayer, with the conclusion which we find in 1 Kings viii.; according to the other narrative, Solomon uttered the prayer, with the conclusion which we find in Chron., and God thereafter gave the confirmatory signs. Now we can hardly imagine that the course of events was, that the glory of Jahve filled the house (chap. v. 14); that then Solomon spoke the words and the prayer in chap. vi.; that while he uttered the prayer the glory of Jahve again left the house, and then came down in a way manifest to all the people (chap. vii. 3), in order to fill the house for a second time." Certainly it was not so; but the narrative itself gives no ground for any such representation. Not a word is said in the text of the glory of Jahve having left the temple during Solomon's prayer. The supposed contradiction between chap. v. 14 and the account in chap. vii. 1-3 is founded entirely on a misinterpretation of our verse. The course of events described here was, as the words run, this: Fire came down from heaven upon the sacrifices and devoured them, and the glory of the Lord filled the house; and this is in ver. 3 more exactly and precisely repeated by the statement that the people saw the fire and the glory of Jahve descend upon the house. According to these plain words, the glory of Jahve descended upon the temple in the fire which came down from heaven. In the heavenly fire which devoured the sacrifices, the assembled congregation saw the glory of the Lord descend upon the temple and fill it. But the filling of the

temple by the cloud when the ark was brought in and set in its place (v. 14) can be without difficulty reconciled with this manifestation of the divine glory in the fire. Just as the manifestation of the gracious divine presence in the temple by a cloud, as its visible vehicle, does not exclude the omnipresence of God or His sitting enthroned in heaven, God's essence not being so confined to the visible vehicle of His gracious presence among His people that He ceases thereby to be enthroned in heaven, and to manifest Himself therefrom; so the revelation of the same God from heaven by a descending fire is not excluded or set aside by the presence of the cloud in the holy place of the temple, and in the most holy. We may consequently quite well represent to ourselves the course of events, by supposing, that while the gracious presence of God enthroned above the cherubim on the ark made itself known in the cloud which filled the temple, or while the cloud filled the interior of the temple, God revealed His glory from heaven, before the eyes of the assembled congregation, in the fire which descended upon the sacrifices, so that the temple was covered or overshadowed by His glory. The parts of this double manifestation of the divine glory are clearly distinguished even in our narrative; for in chap. v. 13, 14 the cloud which filled the house, as vehicle of the manifestation of the divine glory, and which hindered the priests from standing and serving (in the house, *i.e.* in the holy place and the most holy), is spoken of; while in our verses, again, it is the glory of God which descended upon the temple in the fire coming down from heaven on the sacrifices, and so filled it that the priests could not enter it, which is noticed.

Since, therefore, the two passages involve no contradiction, the hypothesis of a compounding together of discrepant narratives loses all standing ground; and it only remains to determine the mutual relations of the two narratives, and to answer the question, why the author of the book of Kings has omitted the account of the fire which came down from heaven upon the sacrifices, and the author of the Chronicle the blessing of the congregation (1 Kings viii. 54-61). From the whole plan and character of the two histories, there can be no doubt that in these accounts we have not a perfect enumeration of all the different occurrences, but only a record of the chief things which were done. The authority made use of by both, however, doubtless contained both the blessing of the congregation (1 Kings viii.



55-61) and the account of the fire which devoured the sacrifices (2 Chron. vii. 2, 3); and probably the latter preceded the blessing spoken by Solomon to the congregation (Kings). In all probability, the fire came down from heaven immediately after the conclusion of the dedicatory prayer, and devoured the sacrifices lying upon the altar of burnt-offering; and after this had happened, Solomon turned towards the assembled congregation and praised the Lord, because He had given rest to His people, of which the completion of the temple, and the filling of it with the cloud of the divine glory, was a pledge. To record this speech of Solomon to the congregation, falls wholly in with the plan of the book of Kings, in which the prophetic interest, the realization of the divine purpose of grace by the acts and omissions of the kings, is the prominent one; while it did not lie within the scope of his purpose to enter upon a detailed history of the public worship. We should be justified in expecting the fire which devoured the sacrifices to be mentioned in the book of Kings, only if the temple had been first consecrated by this divine act to be the dwelling-place of the gracious presence of God, or a sanctuary of the Lord; but such significance the devouring of the sacrifices by fire coming forth from God did not possess. Jahve consecrated the temple to be the dwelling-place of His name, and the abode of His gracious presence, in proclaiming His presence by the cloud which filled the sanctuary, when the ark was brought into the most holy place. The devouring of the sacrifices upon the altar by fire from heaven was merely the confirmatory sign that the Lord, enthroned above the ark in the temple, accepted, well pleased, the sacrificial service carried on on the altar of this temple; and since the people could draw near to the Lord only with sacrifices before the altar, it was a confirmatory sign that He from His throne would bestow His covenant grace upon those who appeared before Him with sacrifices; cf. Lev. ix. 23 f. Implicitly, this grace was already secured to the people by God's consecrating the sanctuary to be the throne of His grace by the cloud which filled the temple; and the author of the book of Kings thought it sufficient to mention this sign, and passed over the second, which only served as a confirmation of the first. With the chronicler the case was different; for his plan to portray in detail the glory of the worship of the former time, the divine confirmation of the sacrificial worship, which was to be carried on continually in the temple as the only

legitimate place of worship, by fire from heaven, was so important that he could not leave it unmentioned; while the words of blessing spoken by Solomon to the congregation, as being already implicitly contained in the dedicatory prayer, did not appear important enough to be received into his book. For the rest, the sacrifices which the fire from heaven devoured are the sacrifices mentioned in chap. v. 6, which the king and the congregation had offered when the ark was borne into the temple. As there was an immense number of these sacrifices, they cannot all have been offered on the altar of burnt-offering, but, like the thank-offerings afterwards brought by Solomon and the congregation, must have been offered on the whole space which had been consecrated in the court for this purpose (ver. 7). This is expressly attested by ver. 7, for the *העלות* can only be the sacrifices in v. 6, since the sacrifices in ver. 5 of our chapter were only *שְׁלָמִים*; cf. 1 Kings viii. 62.

Vers. 4–10. The sacrifices and the festival. After fire from heaven had devoured the sacrifices, and Solomon had praised the Lord for the fulfilment of His word, and sought for the congregation the further bestowal of the divine blessing (1 Kings viii. 54–61), the dedication of the temple was concluded by a great thank-offering, of which we have in vers. 5, 6 an account which completely agrees with 1 Kings viii. 62, 63.—In ver. 6 the author of the Chron. again makes express mention of the singing and playing of the Levites when these offerings were presented. In the performance of this sacrificial act the priests stood *על-מִשְׁמֹרוֹתָם*, in their stations; but that does not signify separated according to their divisions (Berth.), but *in officiis suis* (Vulg.), *i.e. ordines suos et functiones suas a Davide* 1 Chron. xxiv. 7 sqq. *institutas servarunt* (Ramb.); see on Num. viii. 26. The Levites with the instruments of song of Jahve, which David had made, *i.e.* with the instruments invented and appointed by David for song to the praise of the Lord. *בְּהַלֵּל דָּוִיד*, not *hymnos David canentes per manus suas* (Vulg.), taking *הַלֵּל דָּוִיד* for the praising appointed by David, which by the hands of the Levites, *i.e.* was performed by the hands of the Levites (Berth.), but literally: when David sang praise by their hand (*i.e.* their service). This clause seems to be added to the relative clause, “which king David had made,” for nearer definition, and to signify that the Levites used the same instruments which David had introduced when he praised God by the playing of the Levites. The form *מִתְעַצְרִים* as in 1 Chron. xv. 24.—



Ver. 7 contains a supplementary remark, and the *ṯ* relat. expresses only the connection of the thought, and the verb is to be translated in English by the pluperfect. For the rest, compare on vers. 4-10 the commentary on 1 Kings viii. 62-66.

Vers. 11-22. The Lord's answer to Solomon's dedicatory prayer. Cf. 1 Kings ix. 1-9. The general contents, and the order of the thoughts in the divine answer in the two texts, agree, but in the Chronicle individual thoughts are further expounded than in the book of Kings, and expressions are here and there made clear. The second clause of ver. 11 is an instance of this, where "and all the desire of Solomon, which he was pleased to do," is represented by "and all that came into Solomon's heart, to make in the house of the Lord and in his own house, he prosperously effected." Everything else is explained in the Com. on 1 Kings ix.

CHAP. VIII.—SOLOMON'S CITY-BUILDING, STATUTE LABOUR, ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC WORSHIP, AND NAUTICAL UNDERTAKINGS. (CF. 1 KINGS IX. 10-28.)

The building of the temple was the most important work of Solomon's reign, as compared with which all the other undertakings of the king fall into the background; and these are consequently only summarily enumerated both in the book of Kings and in the Chronicle. In our chapter, in the first place, we have, (a) the building or completion of various cities, which were of importance partly as strongholds, partly as magazines, for the maintenance of the army necessary for the defence of the kingdom against hostile attacks (vers. 1-6); (b) the arrangement of the statute labour for the execution of all his building works (vers. 7-11); (c) the regulation of the sacrificial service and the public worship (vers. 12-16); and (d) the voyage to Ophir (vers. 17, 18). All these undertakings are recounted in the same order and in the same aphoristic way in 1 Kings ix. 10-28, but with the addition of various notes, which are not found in our narrative; while the Chronicle, again, mentions several not unimportant though subordinate circumstances, which are not found in the book of Kings; whence it is clear that in the two narratives we have merely short and mutually supplementary extracts from a more elaborate description of these matters.

Vers. 1-6. *The city-building.*—Ver. 1. The date, “at the end of twenty years, when Solomon . . . had built,” agrees with that in 1 Kings ix. 10. The twenty years are to be reckoned from the commencement of the building of the temple, for he had spent seven years in the building of the temple, and thirteen years in that of his palace (1 Kings vi. 38, vii. 1).—Ver. 2 must be regarded as the apodosis of ver. 1, notwithstanding that the object, the cities which . . . precedes. The unusual position of the words is the result of the aphoristic character of the notice. As to its relation to the statement 1 Kings ix. 10-13, see the discussion on that passage. **בָּנָהּ**, ver. 2, is not to be understood of the fortification of these cities, but of their completion, for, according to 1 Kings ix. 10, 13, they were in very bad condition. **וַיֵּשֶׁב**, he caused to dwell there, *i.e.* transplanted Israelites thither, cf. 2 Kings xvii. 6. The account of the cities which Solomon built, *i.e.* fortified, is introduced (ver. 3) by the important statement, omitted in 1 Kings ix.: “Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it.” **חָזַק עָלָיָהּ**, to be strong upon, that is, prevail against, conquer; cf. xxvii. 5. Hamath-zobah is not the city Hamath in Zobah, but, as we learn from ver. 4, the land or kingdom of Hamath. This did not lie, any more than the city Hamath, in Zobah, but bordered on the kingdom of Zobah: cf. 1 Chron. xviii. 3; and as to the position of Zobah, see the Commentary on 2 Sam. viii. 3. In David’s time Hamath and Zobah had their own kings; and David conquered them, and made their kingdoms tributary (1 Chron. xviii. 49). Because they bordered on each other, Hamath and Zobah are here bound together as a *nomen compos.* **יַחַזְקָה עֲלֵיהֶן** signifies at least this, that these tributary kingdoms had either rebelled against Solomon, or at least had made attempts to do so; which Solomon suppressed, and in order to establish his dominion over them fortified Tadmor, *i.e.* Palmyra, and all the store cities in the land of Hamath (see on 1 Kings ix. 18 f.); for, according to 1 Kings xi. 23 ff., he had Rezon of Zobah as an enemy during his whole reign; see on that passage.—Vers. 5 ff. Besides these, he made Upper and Nether Beth-horon (see on 1 Chron. vii. 24) into fortified cities, with walls, gates, and bars. **עָרֵי מְצוּר** is the second object of **וַיְבָנֶה**, and **הַחֲמוֹת** is in apposition to that. Further, he fortified Baalah, in the tribe of Dan, to defend the kingdom against the Philistines, and, according to 1 Kings ix. 15-17, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer also,—which are omitted here, while in 1 Kings ix. 17 Upper



Beth-horon is omitted,—and store cities, chariot cities, and cavalry cities; see on 1 Kings ix. 15-19.

Vers. 7-10. *On the arrangement of the statute labour*, see on 1 Kings ix. 20-23.—This note is in Chron. abruptly introduced immediately after the preceding. Ver. 7 is an absolute clause: “as regards the whole people, those.” מְּבִנֵּיהֶם (ver. 8) is not partitive: some of their sons; but is only placed before the אֲשֶׁר: those of their sons (*i.e.* of the descendants of the whole Canaanite people) who had remained in the land, whom the Israelites had not exterminated; Solomon made a levy of these for statute labourers. The מְּ is wanting in 1 Kings, but is not to be struck out here on that account. Much more surprising is the אֲשֶׁר after מְּבִנֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל, ver. 9, which is likewise not found in 1 Kings, since the following verb לֹא נָתַן is not to be taken relatively, but contains the predicate of the subject contained in the words מְּבִנֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל. This אֲשֶׁר cannot be otherwise justified than by supposing that it is placed after מְּבִנֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל, as in Ps. lxxix. 27 it is placed after the subject of the relative clause, and so stands for אֲשֶׁר מְּבִנֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל: those who were of the sons of Israel (*i.e.* Israelites) Solomon did not make . . . The preplacing of מְּבִנֵּיהֶם in ver. 8 would naturally suggest that מְּבִנֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל should also precede, in order to bring out sharply the contrast between the sons of the Canaanites and the sons of Israel.—Ver. 9. וְשָׂרֵי שְׁלִישֵׁי should be altered into שְׂרָיו as in 1 Kings ix. 22, for שְׁלִישִׁים are not chariot combatants, but royal adjutants; see on Ex. xiv. 7 and 2 Sam. xxiii. 8. Over the statute labourers 250 upper overseers were placed. שְׂרֵי נְצִיבִים, chief of the superiors, *i.e.* chief overseer. The Keth. נְצִיבִים, *præfecti*, is the true reading; cf. 1 Chron. xviii. 13, 2 Chron. xvii. 2. The Keri has arisen out of 1 Kings ix. 23. These overseers were Israelites, while in the number 550 (1 Kings ix. 23) the Israelite and Canaanite upper overseers are both included; see on ii. 17. בָּעָם refers to בְּלֹהֶעָם, ver. 7, and denotes the Canaanite people who remained.

Ver. 11. The remark that Solomon caused Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married (1 Kings iii. 1), to remove from the city of David into the house which he had built her, *i.e.* into that part of his newly-built palace which was appointed for the queen, is introduced here, as in 1 Kings ix. 24, because it belongs to the history of Solomon's buildings, although in the Chronicle it comes in very abruptly, the author not having mentioned Solomon's marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings

iii. 1). The reason given for this change of residence on the part of the Egyptian princess is, that Solomon could not allow her, an Egyptian, to dwell in the palace of King David, which had been sanctified by the reception of the ark, and consequently assigned to her a dwelling in the city of David until he should have finished the building of his palace, in which she might dwell along with him. הַמֶּלֶךְ is, as neuter, used instead of the singular; cf. Ew. § 318, *b*. See also on 1 Kings iii. 1 and ix. 24.

Vers. 12–16. *The sacrificial service in the new temple.* Cf. 1 Kings ix. 25, where it is merely briefly recorded that Solomon offered sacrifices three times a year on the altar built by him to the Lord. In our verses we have a detailed account of it. אֵזָרָה, at that time, *scil.* when the temple building had been finished and the temple dedicated (cf. ver. 1), Solomon offered burnt-offerings upon the altar which he had built before the porch of the temple. He no longer now sacrifices upon the altar of the tabernacle at Gibeon, as in the beginning of his reign (i. 3 ff.).—Ver. 13. “Even sacrificing at the daily rate, according to the direction of Moses.” These words give a supplementary and closer definition of the sacrificing in the form of an explanatory subordinate clause, which is interpolated in the principal sentence. For the following words לְשַׁבְּתוֹת וְגו' belong to the principal sentence (ver. 12): he offered sacrifices . . . on the sabbaths, the new moons, etc. The ו before בְּיָדָהּ is explicative, and that = *viz.*; and the infin. לְהַעֲלֹת, according to the later usage, instead of infin. absol.; cf. Ew. § 280, *d*. The preposition בְּ (before יָדָהּ) is the so-called *ב* *essentiae*: consisting in the daily (rate) to sacrifice (this); cf. Ew. § 299, *b*. The daily rate, *i.e.* that which was prescribed in the law of Moses for each day, cf. Lev. xxiii. 37. לְמוֹעֲדוֹת is further explained by the succeeding clause: on the three chief festivals of the year.—Ver. 14 ff. He ordered the temple service, also, entirely according to the arrangement introduced by David as to the service of the priests and Levites. He appointed, according to the ordinance of David his father, *i.e.* according to the ordinance established by David, the classes of the priests (see on 1 Chron. xxiv.) to that service, and the Levites to their stations (מִשְׁמֵרוֹת as in vii. 6), to praise (cf. 1 Chron. xxv.), and to serve before the priests (1 Chron. xxiii. 28 ff.), according to that which was appointed for every day, and the doorkeepers according to their courses, etc. (see 1 Chron. xxvi. 1–19). With the last words cf. Neh. xii. 24.—Ver. 15. This arrangement was



faithfully observed by the priests and Levites. The verb סור is here construed *c. accus.* in the signification to transgress a command (cf. Ew. § 282, *a*), and it is therefore not necessary to alter מצות into ממצות. ממצות על-הכהנים depends upon מצות: the king's command concerning the priests and the Levites, *i.e.* that which David commanded them. לְכָל-דָּבָר וְגו', in regard to all things, and especially also in regard to the treasures; cf. 1 Chron. xxvi. 20-28.—With ver. 16 the account of what Solomon did for the public worship is concluded: "Now all the work of Solomon was prepared until the (this) day, the foundation of the house of Jahve until its completion; the house of Jahve was finished." מלאכת is explained by מוסר היום. היום is the day on which, after the consecration of the completed temple, the regular public worship was commenced in it, which doubtless was done immediately after the dedication of the temple. Only when the regular worship according to the law of Moses, and with the arrangements as to the service of the priests and Levites established by David, had been commenced, was Solomon's work in connection with the temple completed, and the house of God שָׁלֵם, *integer*, perfect in all its parts, as it should be. The last clause, שָׁלֵם בית י', is connected rhetorically with what precedes without the conjunction, and is not to be regarded as a subscription, "with which the historian concludes the whole narrative commencing with chap. i. 18" (Berth.); for שָׁלֵם does not signify "ended," or to be at an end, but to be set thoroughly (perfectly) in order.

Vers. 17 and 18. *Voyage to Ophir*. Cf. 1 Kings ix. 26-28, and the commentary on that passage, where we have discussed the divergences of our narrative, and have also come to the conclusion that Ophir is not to be sought in India, but in Southern Arabia. By וְאֵז the date of this voyage is made to fall in the period after the building of the temple and the palace, *i.e.* in the second half of Solomon's reign.

CHAP. IX.—VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA. SOLOMON'S RICHES, AND ROYAL POWER AND GLORY; HIS DEATH. CF. 1 KINGS X. AND XI. 41-43.

Vers. 1-12. *The visit of the queen of Sheba*. Cf. 1 Kings x. 1-13.—This event is narrated as a practical proof of Solomon's extraordinary wisdom. The narrative agrees so exactly in both texts, with the exception of some few quite unimportant differ-

ences, that we must regard them as literal extracts from an original document which they have used in common. For the commentary on this section, see on 1 Kings x. 1-13.

Vers. 13-21. Solomon's revenue in gold, and the use he made of it. Cf. 1 Kings x. 14-22, and the commentary there on this section, which is identical in both narratives, with the exception of some trifling differences. Before **וְהַפְּחָרִים מְבִיאִים** the relative pronoun is to be supplied: "and what the merchants brought." As to the derivation of the word **פָּחָה**, which comes from the Aramaic form **פָּחָה**, governor (ver. 14), see on Hagg. i. 1. — **אֲנִיּוֹת הַלִּבְנוֹת תַּרְשִׁישִׁי**, in ver. 21, ships going to Tarshish, is an erroneous paraphrase of **אֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישִׁי**, Tarshish-ships, *i.e.* ships built for long sea voyages; for the fleet did not go to Tartessus in Spain, but to Ophir in Southern Arabia (see on 1 Kings ix. 26 ff.). All the rest has been explained in the commentary on 1 Kings x.

In vers. 22-28, all that remained to be said of Solomon's royal glory, his riches, his wisdom, and his revenues, is in conclusion briefly summed up, as in 1 Kings x. 23-29. From ver. 25 onwards, the account given in the Chronicle diverges from that in 1 Kings x. 26 ff., in so far that what is narrated in 1 Kings x. 26-28 concerning Solomon's chariots and horses, and his trade with Egypt in horses, is here partly replaced by statements similar in import to those in 1 Kings v., because the former matters had been already treated of in Chron. i. 14-17. — Ver. 25 does not correspond to the passage 1 Kings x. 26, but in contents and language agrees with 1 Kings v. 6, and ver. 26 with 1 Kings v. 1. Only the general estimate of Solomon's riches in gold and silver, in ver. 27, repeated from chap. i. 15, corresponds to 1 Kings x. 27. Finally, in ver. 28 the whole description is rounded off; all that has already been said in chap. i. 16 and 17 as to the trade in horses with Egypt (1 Kings x. 28, 29) being drawn together into one general statement.

Vers. 29-31. Conclusion of Solomon's history.—Ver. 29. Sources; see the introduction, p. 28 f.—Ver. 30 f. The length of his reign, his death and burial, and his successor, as in 1 Kings xi. 42 f.



## IV.—THE HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH UNTIL ITS FALL.—CHAP. X.—XXXVI.

After giving an account of the revolt of the ten tribes of Israel from the divinely chosen royal house of David (chap. x.), the author of the Chronicle narrates the history of the kingdom of Judah—to which he confines himself, to the exclusion of the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes—at much greater length than the author of the books of Kings has done. This latter portrays the development of both kingdoms, but treats only very briefly of the history of the kingdom of Judah, especially under its first rulers, and characterizes the attitude of the kings and people of Judah to the kingdom of Israel and to the Lord only in the most general way. The author of the Chronicle, on the other hand, depicts the development of Judah under Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, and Jehoshaphat much more thoroughly, by communicating a considerable number of events which are omitted in the book of Kings. As we have already proved (p. 19), the purpose of the chronicler was to show, according to the varying attitude of the kings of the house of David to the Lord and to His law, how, on the one hand, God rewarded the fidelity of the kings and of the people to His covenant with prosperity and blessing, and furnished to the kingdom of Judah, in war with its enemies, power which secured the victory; and how, on the other, He took vengeance for every revolt of the kings and people, and for every fall into idolatry and superstition, by humiliations and awful judgments. And more especially from the times of the godless kings Ahaz and Manasseh does our author do this, pointing out how God suffered the people to fall ever deeper into feebleness, and dependence upon the heathen world powers, until finally, when the efforts of the pious kings Hezekiah and Josiah to bring back the people, sunk as they were in idolatry and moral corruption, to the God of their fathers and to His service failed to bring about any permanent repentance and reformation, He cast forth Judah also from His presence, and gave over Jerusalem and the temple to destruction by the Chaldeans, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah to be led away into exile to Babylon.

CHAP. X.—REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES FROM REHOBAM AND  
THE HOUSE OF DAVID. CF. 1 KINGS XII. 1-19.

This event is narrated in our chapter, except in so far as a few unessential differences in form are concerned, exactly as we have it in 1 Kings xii. 1-19; so that we may refer for the exposition of it to the commentary on 1 Kings xii., where we have both treated the contents of this chapter, and have also discussed the deeper and more latent causes of this event, so important in its consequences.

CHAP. XI. AND XII.—REHOBAM'S REIGN.

When the ten tribes had renounced their allegiance to Rehobam the son of Solomon, and had made Jeroboam their king (1 Kings xii. 20), Rehobam wished to compel them by force of arms again to submit to him, and made for this purpose a levy of all the men capable of bearing arms in Judah and Benjamin. But the prophet Shemaiah commanded him, in the name of the Lord, to desist from making war upon the Israelites, they being brethren, and Rehobam abandoned his purpose (vers. 1-4, cf. 1 Kings xii. 21-24), and began to establish his dominion over Judah and Benjamin. His kingdom, moreover, was increased in power by the immigration of the priests and Levites, whom Jeroboam had expelled from the priesthood, and also of many God-fearing Israelites out of the ten tribes, to Judah (vers. 13-17). Rehobam also set his family affairs in order, by nominating from among his many sons, whom his wives had borne to him, Abijah to be his successor on the throne, and making provision for the others in different parts of the country (vers. 18-23). But when he had established his royal authority, he forsook the law of Jahve, and was punished for it by the inroad of the Egyptian king Shishak, who marched through his land with a numerous host, took Jerusalem, and plundered the palace and the temple (chap. xii. 1-11), but without wholly ruining Judah; and Rehobam was king until his death, and his son succeeded him on the throne (vers. 12-16).

The order in which these events are narrated is not chronological; they are rather grouped together according to their similarities. As Rehobam began even in the third year of his reign to forsake the law of God, and King Shishak made war



upon Judah as early as in his fifth year, the building of the fortresses may have been begun in the first three or four years, but cannot have been ended then; still less can the sons of Rehoboam have been provided for in the time before Shishak's inroad.

Chap. xi. 1-4.—*Rehoboam's attitude to the ten rebel tribes.* Cf. 1 Kings xii. 21-24.—Rehoboam's purpose, to subdue these tribes by force of arms, and bring them again under his dominion, and the abandonment of this purpose in consequence of the command of the prophet Shemaiah, belong in a certain measure to the history of the revolt of the ten tribes from the house of David; for the revolt only became an accomplished fact when the prophet Shemaiah proclaimed in the name of the Lord that the matter was from the Lord. Ver. 3 f. Of Jahve was the thing done; He had ordained the revolt as a chastisement of the seed of David for walking no more in His ways. Solomon had, by allowing himself to be seduced by his many foreign wives into departing from the Lord, exposed himself to the divine displeasure, and his successor Rehoboam increased the guilt by his impolitic treatment of the tribes dissatisfied with Solomon's rule, and had, if not brought about the revolt, yet hastened it; but yet the conduct of these tribes was not thereby justified. Their demand that the burdens laid upon them by Solomon should be lightened, flowed from impure and godless motives, and at bottom had its root in discontent with the theocratic rule of the house of David (see on 1 Kings xii. 21 ff.). The expression, "to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin," is deeper than "the whole house of Judah and Benjamin and the remnant of the people," *i.e.* those belonging to the other tribes who were dwelling in the tribal domains of Judah and Benjamin (1 Kings xii. 23); for it characterizes all who had remained true to the house of David as Israel, *i.e.* those who walked in the footsteps of their progenitor Israel (Jacob).

Vers. 5-12.—*Rehoboam's measures for the fortifying of his kingdom.*—To defend his kingdom against hostile attacks, Rehoboam built cities for defence in Judah. The sing. לְמִצּוֹר is used, because the building of cities served for the defence of the kingdom. Judah is the name of the kingdom, for the fifteen fenced cities enumerated in the following verses were situated in the tribal domains of both Benjamin and Judah.—Ver. 6. In Judah lay Bethlehem, a small city mentioned as early as in Jacob's time

(Gen. xxxv. 19), two hours south of Jerusalem, the birthplace of David and of Christ (Mic. v. 1; Matt. ii. 5, 11), now Beit-Lahm; see on Josh. xv. 59. Etam is not the place bearing the same name which is spoken of in 1 Chron. iv. 32 and Judg. xv. 8, and mentioned in the Talmud as the place where, near Solomon's Pools, the aqueduct which supplied Jerusalem with water commenced (cf. Robins. *Pal. sub voce*; Tobler, *Topogr. v. Jerus.* ii. S. 84 ff., 855 ff.);<sup>1</sup> nor is it to be looked for, as Robins. *loc. cit.*, and *New Bibl. Researches*, maintains, in the present village Urtâs (Artâs), for it has been identified by Tobl., *dritte Wand.* S. 89, with Ain Attân, a valley south-west from Artâs. Not only does the name Attân correspond more than Artâs with Etam, but from it the water is conducted to Jerusalem, while according to Tobler's thorough conviction it could not have been brought from Artâs. Tekoa, now Tekua, on the summit of a hill covered with ancient ruins, two hours south of Bethlehem; see on Josh. xv. 59.—Ver. 7. Beth-zur was situated where the ruin Beth-Sur now stands, midway between Urtâs and Hebron; see on Josh. xv. 58. Shoko, the present Shuweike in Wady Sumt,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours south-west from Jerusalem; see on Josh. xv. 35. Adullam, in Josh. xv. 35 included among the cities of the hill country, reckoned part of the lowland (Shephelah), *i.e.* the slope of the hills, has not yet been discovered. Tobler, *dritte Wand.* S. 151, conjectures that it is identical with the present Dula, about eight miles to the east of Beit-Jibrin; but this can hardly be correct (see against it, Arnold in Herzog's *Realenc.* xiv. S. 723). It is much more probable that its site was that of the present Deir Dubban, two hours to the north of Beit-Jibrin; see on Josh. xii. 15.—Ver. 8. Gath, a royal city of the Philistines, which was first made subject to the Israelites by David (1 Chron. xviii. 1), and was under Solomon the seat of its own king, who was subject to the Israelite king (1 Kings ii. 39), has not yet been certainly discovered; see on Josh. xiii. 3.<sup>2</sup> Mareshah, the city Marissa, on the road from Hebron to the

<sup>1</sup> For further information as to the commencement of this aqueduct, see the masterly dissertation of Dr. Herm. Zschokke, "Die versiegelte Quelle Salomo's," in the *Tübinger Theol. Quartalschr.* 1867, H. 3, S. 426 ff.

<sup>2</sup> C. Schick, *Reise in das Philisterland* (in "Ausland" 1867, Nr. 7, S. 162), identifies Gath with the present Tel Safieh, "an isolated conical hill in the plain, like a sentinel of a watchtower or fortress, and on that account there was so much struggling for its possession." On the other hand, Konr. Furrer,



land of the Philistines, was at a later time very important, and is not represented by the ruin Marash, twenty-four minutes to the south of Beit-Jibrin (Eleutheropolis); see on Josh. xv. 44, and Tobl. *dritte Wand.* S. 129, 142 f. Ziph is probably the Ziph mentioned in Josh. xv. 55, in the hill country of Judah, of which ruins yet remain on the hill Ziph, about an hour and a quarter south-east of Hebron; see on Josh. xv. 55. C. v. Raumer thinks, on the contrary, *Pal.* S. 222, Anm. 249, that our Ziph, as it is mentioned along with Mareshah and other cities of the lowland, cannot be identified with either of the Ziphs mentioned in Josh. xv. 24 and 55, but is probably Achzib in the lowland mentioned along with Mareshah, Josh. xv. 44; but this is very improbable.—Ver. 9. Adoraim (Ἀδωραΐμ in Joseph. *Antt.* viii. 10. 1), met with in 1 Macc. xiii. 20 as an Idumean city, Ἀδωρα, and so also frequently in Josephus, was taken by Hyrcanus, and rebuilt by Gabinius (Jos. *Antt.* xiii. 15. 4, and xiv. 5. 3) under the name Ἀῶρα, and often spoken of along with Marissa (s. Reland, *Palæst.* p. 547). Robinson (*Pal. sub voce*) has identified it with the present Dûra, a village about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the westward of Hebron. Lachish, situated in the lowland of Judah, as we learn from Josh. xv. 39, is probably the present Um Lakis, on the road from Gaza to Beit-Jibrin and Hebron, to the left hand, seven hours to the west of Beit-Jibrin, on a circular height covered with ancient walls and marble fragments, and overgrown with thistles and bushes; see on Josh. x. 3, and Pressel in Herz.'s *Realenc.* viii. S. 157 f. Azekah, situated in the neighbourhood of Shoco (ver. 7), and, according to 1 Sam. xvii. 1, in an oblique direction near Ephes-Dammim, i.e. Damûm, one hour east to the south of Beit-Nettif,<sup>1</sup> has not been re-discovered; see on Josh. x. 10.—Ver. 10. Zorah, Samson's birthplace, is represented by the ruin Sura, at the south-west end of the ridge, which encloses the Wady es Surar on the north; see on Josh. xv. 33. To the north of that again lay Ajalon, now the village Jâlo, on the verge of the plain *Merj ibn Omeir*, four leagues to the west of Gibeon; see on

*Wanderungen durch Palästina*, Zürich 1865, thinks, S. 133, that he has found the true situation of Gath in the Wady el Gat, northward of the ruins of Askalon.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the interesting note of Breytenbach (*Reybb. des heil. Landes*, i. 134) in Tobler, *dritte Wand.* S. 463: "Thence (from Azekah) three miles is the city Zochot-Jude, not far from Nobah, where David slew Goliath."

Josh. x. 12 and xix. 42. Finally, Hebron, the ancient city of the patriarchs, now called el Khalil (The friend of God, *i.e.* Abraham); see on Gen. xxiii. 2. All these fenced cities lay in the tribal domain of Judah, with the exception of Zorah and Ajalon, which were assigned to the tribe of Dan (Josh. xix. 41 f.). These two were probably afterwards, in the time of the judges, when a part of the Danites emigrated from Zorah and Eshtaol to the north of Palestine (Judg. xviii. 1), taken possession of by Benjamites, and were afterwards reckoned to the land of Benjamin, and are here named as cities which Rehoboam fortified in Benjamin. If we glance for a moment at the geographical position of the whole fifteen cities, we see that they lay partly to the south of Jerusalem, on the road which went by Hebron to Beersheba and Egypt, partly on the western slopes of the hill country of Judah, on the road by Beit-Jibrin to Gaza, while only a few lay to the north of this road towards the Philistine plain, and there were none to the north to defend the kingdom against invasions from that side. "Rehoboam seems, therefore, to have had much more apprehension of an attack from the south and west, *i.e.* from the Egyptians, than of a war with the northern kingdom" (Berth.). Hence we may conclude that Rehoboam fortified these cities only after the inroad of the Egyptian king Shishak.—Ver. 11 f. "And he made strong the fortresses, and put captains in them," etc.; *i.e.* he increased their strength by placing them in a thoroughly efficient condition to defend themselves against attacks, appointing commandants (נְיָדִים), provisioning them, and (ver. 12) laying up stores of all kinds of arms. In this way he made them exceedingly strong. The last clause, ver. 12, "And there were to him Judah and Benjamin," corresponds to the statement, x. 19, that Israel revolted from the house of David, and forms the conclusion of the account (vers. 1–17a) of that which Rehoboam did to establish his power and consolidate his kingdom. There follows hereupon, in

Vers. 13–17, the account of the internal spiritual strengthening of the kingdom of Judah by the *migration of the priests and Levites, and many pious worshippers of Jahve out of all the tribes, to the kingdom of Judah.*—Ver. 13. The priests and Levites in all Israel went over to him out of their whole domain. הִתְיַצַּב עַל, to present oneself before any one, to await his commands, cf. Zech. vi. 5, Job i. 6, ii. 1; here in the signification to place oneself at another's disposal, *i.e.* to go over to one. The suffix in נִבְלָם refers



to "all Israel." For—this was the motive of their migration, ver. 14—the Levites (in the wider signification of the word, including the priests) forsook their territory and their possessions, *i.e.* the cities assigned to them, with the pasture lands for their cattle (Num. xxxv. 1-8), *scil.* in the domain of the ten tribes; "for Jeroboam and his sons had driven them out from the priesthood of Jahve." To prevent his subjects from visiting the temple at Jerusalem, which he feared might ultimately cause the people to return to the house of David, Jeroboam had erected his own places of worship for his kingdom in Bethel and Dan, where Jahve was worshipped in the ox images (the golden calves), and had appointed, not the Levites, but men from the body of the people, to be priests in these so-called sanctuaries (1 Kings xii. 26-31), consecrated by himself. By these innovations not only the priests and Levites, who would not recognise this unlawful image-worship, were compelled to migrate to Judah and Jerusalem, but also the pious worshippers of the Lord, who would not renounce the temple worship which had been consecrated by God Himself. All Jeroboam's successors held firmly by this calf-worship introduced by him, and consequently the driving out of the priests and Levites is here said to have been the act of Jeroboam and his sons. By his sons are meant Jeroboam's successors on the throne, without respect to the fact that of Jeroboam's own sons only Nadab reached the throne, and that his dynasty terminated with him; for in this matter all the kings of Israel walked in the footsteps of Jeroboam.—Ver. 15. And had ordained him priests for the high places. **וַיַּעֲמֵד לוֹ** is a continuation of **בִּי הַזֵּנוּחַם**, ver. 14. **בָּמֹת** are the places of worship which were erected by Jeroboam for the image-worship, called in 1 Kings xii. 31 **בֵּית בָּמֹת**; see on that passage. The gods worshipped in these houses in high places the author of the Chronicle calls **שְׁעִירִים** from their nature, and **עֲגֻלִּים** from their form. The word **שְׁעִירִים** is taken from Lev. xvii. 7, and signifies demons, so named from the Egyptian idolatry, in which the worship of goats, of Pan (Mendes), who was always represented in the form of a goat, occupied a prominent place; see on Lev. xvii. 7. For further details as to the **עֲגֻלִּים**, see on 1 Kings xii. 28.—Ver. 16. **אַחֲרֵיהֶם**, after them, *i.e.* following after the priests and Levites. With **הַנֹּתְנִים אֶת־לִבָּם**, who turned their hearts thereto, cf. 1 Chron. xxii. 19. They went to Jerusalem to sacrifice there; *i.e.*, as we learn from the context, not merely to offer sacrifices, but also to

remain in the kingdom of Judah.—Ver. 17. These immigrants—priests, Levites, and pious worshippers of Jahve—made the kingdom of Judah strong, by strengthening the religious foundation on which the kingdom was founded, and made Rehoboam strong three years, so that they (king and people) walked in the way of David and Solomon. The strengthening lasted only three years—only while the opposition to Jeroboam's action in the matter of religion was kept alive by the emigration of the pious people from the ten tribes. What occurred after these three years is narrated only in chap. xii.—Here there follows, in

Vers. 18–23, information as to *Rehoboam's family relationships*.—Ver. 18. Instead of כִּנָּן we must read, with the Keri, many mss., LXX., and Vulg., בַּת: Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth, the son of David. Among the sons of David (1 Chron. iii. 1–8) no Jerimoth is found. If this name be not another form of יִרְמְיָהּ, 1 Chron. iii. 3, Jerimoth must have been a son of one of David's concubines. Before the name אֲבִיהַי, must have been dropped out, and is to be supplied; so that Mahalath's father and mother are both named: the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David, and Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse, *i.e.* David's eldest brother (1 Chron. ii. 13; 1 Sam. xvii. 13). For Abihail cannot be held to be a second wife of Rehoboam, because ver. 19, "and she bore," and ver. 20, "and after her," show that in ver. 18 only one wife is named. She bare him three sons, whose names occur only here (ver. 19).—Ver. 20. Maachah the daughter, *i.e.* the granddaughter, of Absalom; for she cannot have been Absalom's daughter, because Absalom, according to 2 Sam. xiv. 27, had only one daughter, Tamar by name, who must have been fifty years old at Solomon's death. According to 2 Sam. xviii. 18, Absalom left no son; Maachah therefore can only be a daughter of Tamar, who, according to 2 Chron. xiii. 2, was married to Uriel of Gibeah: see on 1 Kings xv. 2. Abijah, the oldest son of Maachah, whom his father nominated his successor (ver. 22 and xii. 16), is called in the book of Kings constantly Abijam, the original form of the name, which was afterwards weakened into Abijah.—Ver. 21 f. Only these wives with their children are mentioned by name, though besides these Rehoboam had a number of wives, 18 wives and 60 (according to Josephus, 30) concubines, who bore him twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. Rehoboam trod in his father's footsteps in this not quite praiseworthy point. The eldest son of Maachah he made head (לְרֹאשׁ),



*i.e.* prince, among his brethren; **בִּי לְהַמְלִיכוֹ**, for to make him king, *scil.* was his intention. The infin. with **לְ** is here used in the swiftness of speech in loose connection to state with what further purpose he had appointed him **נָגִיד**; cf. *Ew.* § 351, *c*, at the end.—Ver. 23. And he did wisely, and dispersed of all his sons in all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, *i.e.* dispersed all his sons so, that they were placed in all parts of Judah and Benjamin in the fenced cities, and he gave them victual in abundance, and he sought (for them) a multitude of wives. **שָׁאַל**, to ask for, for the father brought about the marriage of his sons. He therefore took care that his sons, by being thus scattered in the fenced cities of the country as their governors, were separated from each other, but also that they received the necessary means for living in a way befitting their princely rank, in the shape of an abundant maintenance and a considerable number of wives. They were thus kept in a state of contentment, so that they might not make any attempt to gain the crown, which he had reserved for Abijah; and in this lay the wisdom of his conduct.

Chap. xii. *Rehoboam's defection from the Lord, and his humiliation by the Egyptian king Shishak.*—Ver. 1. The infinitive **בְּהִכְנִי**, "at the time of the establishing," with an indefinite subject, may be expressed in English by the passive: when Rehoboam's royal power was established. The words refer back to xi. 17. **בְּהִזְקָתוֹ**, "when he had become strong" (**הִזְקָה** is a *nomen verbale*: the becoming strong; cf. xxvi. 16, Dan. xi. 2), he forsook the Lord, and all Israel with him. The inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah are here called Israel, to hint at the contrast between the actual conduct of the people in their defection from the Lord, and the destiny of Israel, the people of God. The forsaking of the law of Jahve is in substance the fall into idolatry, as we find it stated more definitely in 1 Kings xiv. 22 ff.—Ver. 2. In punishment of this defection (**בִּי מֵעַל בִּי**, because they had acted faithlessly to Jahve), Shishak, the king of Egypt, marched with a great host against Jerusalem. This hostile invasion is also briefly narrated in 1 Kings xiv. 25–28. Shishak (Sisak) is, as we have remarked on 1 Kings xiv., Sesonchis or Sechonchosis, the first king of the 22d dynasty, who has celebrated his victory in a relief at Karnak. In this sculpture the names of the cities captured are recorded on shields, and a considerable number have been deciphered with some certainty, and by them our account is completely confirmed. According to

ver. 3, Shishak's host consisted of 1200 chariots, 60,000 horsemen—numbers which, of course, are founded only upon a rough estimate—and an innumerable multitude of footmen, among whom were לִיבִיִּים, Libyans, probably the Libyægyptii of the ancients (see on Gen. x. 13); פְּתִיִּים, according to the LXX. and Vulg. Troglodytes, probably the Ethiopian Troglodytes, who dwelt in the mountains on the west coast of the Arabian Gulf; and Cushites, *i.e.* Ethiopians. The Libyans and Cushites are mentioned in Nahum iii. 9 also as auxiliaries of the Egyptians.—Ver. 4. After the capture of the fenced cities of Judah, he marched against Jerusalem.—Ver. 5. Then the prophet Shemaiah announced to the king and the princes, who had retired to Jerusalem before Shishak, that the Lord had given them into the power of Shishak because they had forsaken Him. עָזַב בְּיָד, forsaken and given over into the hand of Shishak. When the king and the priests immediately humbled themselves before God, acknowledging the righteousness of the Lord, the prophet announced to them further that the Lord would not destroy them since they had humbled themselves, but would give them deliverance in a little space. בְּקִמְעָה, according to a little, *i.e.* in a short time. פָּלִיטָה is accusative after וַיִּתְּנֵהּ. My anger shall not pour itself out upon Jerusalem. The pouring out of anger is the designation of an exterminating judgment; cf. xxxiv. 25.—Ver. 8. But (וְ) after a negative clause) they shall be his servants, *sc.* for a short time (see ver. 7), “that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries” (cf. 1 Chron. xxix. 30); *i.e.* that they may learn to know by experience the difference between the rule of God and that of the heathen kings, and that God's rule was not so oppressive as that of the rulers of the world.

With ver. 9 the account of the war is taken up again and continued by the repetition of the words, “Then marched Shishak . . . against Jerusalem” (ver. 4). Shishak plundered the treasures of the temple and the palace; he had consequently captured Jerusalem. The golden shields also which had been placed in the house of the forest of Lebanon, *i.e.* the palace built by Solomon in Jerusalem, which Solomon had caused to be made (cf. ix. 16), Shishak took away, and in their place Rehoboam caused brazen shields to be prepared; see on 1 Kings xiv. 26–28.—In ver. 12 the author of the Chronicle concludes the account of this event with the didactic remark, “Because he



(Rehoboam) humbled himself, the anger of Jahve was turned away from him." וְלֹא לְהַשְׁחִית, and it was not to extermination utterly (לְבָלֵה), properly to destruction, *i.e.* completely; cf. Ezek. xiii. 13). And also in Judah were good things. This is the other motive which caused the Lord to turn away His wrath. Good things are proofs of piety and fear of God, cf. xix. 3.—Ver. 13 f. The length of Rehoboam's reign, his mother, and the judgment about him. Cf. 1 Kings xiv. 21 and 22*a*. וַיִּתְחַנֵּן here, as in xiii. 21, can, in its connection with what precedes, be only understood to mean that Rehoboam, after his humiliation at the hands of Shishak, by which his kingdom was utterly weakened and almost destroyed, again gained strength and power. Cf. also i. 1, where וַיִּתְחַנֵּן is used of Solomon in the beginning of his reign, after he overcame Adonijah, the pretender to the crown, and his party.—As to the age of Rehoboam, etc., see on 1 Kings xiv. 21. וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע, ver. 14, is defined by the addition, "for he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord." For the expression cf. xix. 3, xxx. 19, Ezra vii. 10.—Vers. 15 and 16. Close of his reign. On the authorities, see the Introduction, p. 34; and in reference to the other statements, the commentary on 1 Kings xiv. 29–31. מִלְחָמוֹת, wars, *i.e.* a state of hostility, was between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all days, can only be understood of the hostile attitude of the two rulers to each other, like מִלְחָמָה in Kings; for we have no narrative of wars between them after Rehoboam had abandoned, at the instance of the prophet, his proposed war with the Israelites at the commencement of his reign.

CHAP. XIII.—THE REIGN OF ABIJAH. CF. 1 KINGS XV. 1–8.

In the book of Kings it is merely remarked in general, that the hostile relationship between Jeroboam and Rehoboam continued during his whole life, and that between Abijah and Jeroboam there was war (vers. 6 and 7); but not one of his enterprises is recounted, and only his attitude towards the Lord is exactly characterized. In our chapter, on the contrary, we have a vivid and circumstantial narrative of the commencement, course, and results of a great war against Jeroboam, in which Abijah, with the help of the Lord, inflicted a crushing defeat on the great army of the Israelites, and conquered several cities.

Vers. 1 and 2. The commencement and duration of the reign, as in 1 Kings xv. 1, 2. Abijah's mother is here (ver. 2)

called Michaiah instead of Maachah, as in xi. 20 and 1 Kings xv. 2, but it can hardly be a second name which Maachah had received for some unknown reason; probably מִיכִיָּהוּ is a mere orthographical error for מַעֲכָה. She is here called, not the daughter = granddaughter of Abishalom, but after her father, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah; see on xi. 20.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 2b-21. *The War between Abijah and Jeroboam.*—מִלְחָמָה הָיְתָה, war arose, broke out.—Ver. 3. Abijah began the war with an army of 400,000 valiant warriors. אִישׁ בָּחֹר, chosen men. 'אָסַר אֶת מ', to bind on war, i.e. to open the war. Jeroboam

<sup>1</sup> Against this Bertheau remarks, after the example of Thenius: "When we consider that the wife of Abijah and mother of Asa was also called Maachah, 1 Kings xv. 13, 2 Chron. xv. 16, and that in 1 Kings xv. 2 this Maachah is again called the daughter of Abishalom, and that this latter statement is not met with in the Chronicle, we are led to conjecture that Maachah, the mother of Abijah, the daughter of Abishalom, has been confounded with Maachah the mother of Asa, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah, and that in our passage Asa's mother is erroneously named instead of the mother of Abijah." This conjecture is a strange fabric of perverted facts and inconsequential reasoning. In 1 Kings xv. 2 Abijah's mother is called Maachah the daughter of Abishalom, exactly as in 2 Chron. xi. 20 and 21; and in 1 Kings xv. 13, in perfect agreement with 2 Chron. xv. 16, it is stated that Asa removed Maachah from the dignity of Gebira because she had made herself a statue of Asherah. This Maachah, deposed by Asa, is called in 1 Kings xv. 10 the daughter of Abishalom, and only this latter remark is omitted from the Chronicle. How from these statements we must conclude that the mother of Abijah, Maachah the daughter of Abishalom, has been confounded with Maachah the mother of Asa, the daughter of Uriel, we cannot see. The author of the book of Kings knows only one Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom, whom in xv. 2 he calls mother, i.e. נִבְיָרָה, i.e. Sultana Walide of Abijah, and in xv. 10 makes to stand in the same relationship of mother to Asa. From this, however, the only natural and logically sound conclusion which can be drawn is that Abijah's mother, Rehoboam's wife, occupied the position of queen-mother, not merely during the three years' reign of Abijah, but also during the first years of the reign of his son Asa, as his grandmother, until Asa had deprived her of this dignity because of her idolatry. It is nowhere said in Scripture that this woman was Abijah's wife, but that is a conclusion drawn by Thenius and Bertheau only from her being called אִמִּי, his (Asa's) mother, as if אִמִּי could denote merely the actual mother, and not the grandmother. Finally, the omission in the Chronicle of the statement in 1 Kings xv. 10, "The name of his mother was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom," does not favour in the very least the conjecture that Asa's mother has been confounded with the mother of Abijah; for it is easily explained by the fact that at the accession of Asa no change was made in reference to the dignity of queen-mother, Abijah's mother still holding that position even under Asa.



prepared for the war with 800,000 warriors. The number of Jeroboam's warriors is exactly that which Joab returned as the result, as to Israel, of the numbering of the people commanded by David, while that of Abijah's army is less by 100,000 men than Joab numbered in Judah (2 Sam. xxiv. 9).—Ver. 4 ff. When the two armies lay over against each other, ready for the combat, Abijah addressed the enemy, King Jeroboam and all Israel, in a speech from Mount Zemaraim. The mountain צְמַרַיִם is met with only here; but a city of this name is mentioned in Josh. xviii. 22, whence we would incline to the conclusion that the mountain near or upon which this city lay was intended. But if this city was situated to the east, not only of Bethel, but also of Jerusalem, on the road to Jericho (see on Josh. xviii. 22), as we may conclude from its enumeration between Beth-Arabah and Bethel in Josh. *loc. cit.*, it will not suit our passage, at least if Zemaraim be really represented by the ruin el Sumra to the east of Khan Hadur on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho. Robinson (*Phys. Geog.* S. 38) conjectures Mount Zemaraim to the east of Bethel, near the border of the two kingdoms, to which Mount Ephraim also extends. Abijah represented first of all (vers. 5-7) to Jeroboam and the Israelites that their kingdom was the result of a revolt against Jahve, who had given the kingship over Israel to David and his sons for ever.—Ver. 5. "Is it not to you to know?" *i.e.* can it be unknown to you? בְּרִית מָלַח, accus. of nearer definition: after the fashion of a covenant of salt, *i.e.* of an irrevocable covenant; cf. on Lev. ii. 13 and Num. xviii. 19. "And Jeroboam, the servant of Solomon the son of David (cf. 1 Kings xi. 11), rebelled against his lord," with the help of frivolous, worthless men (רָקִים as in Judg. ix. 4, xi. 3; בְּנֵי בָלִיעַל as in 1 Kings xxi. 10, 13,—not recurring elsewhere in the Chronicle), who gathered around him, and rose against Rehoboam with power. הִתְאָמַן עַל, to show oneself powerful, to show power against any one. Against this rising Rehoboam showed himself not strong enough, because he was an inexperienced man and soft of heart. נֶעַר denotes not "a boy," for Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he entered upon his reign, but "an inexperienced young man," as in 1 Chron. xxix. 1. רַךְ לֵב, soft of heart, *i.e.* faint-hearted, inclined to give way, without energy to make a stand against those rising insolently against him. וְלֹא הִתְחַזַּק לָפָנֵיהֶם, and showed himself not strong before them, proved to be too weak in opposition to them. This representation does not

conform to the state of the case as narrated in chap. x. Rehoboam did not appear soft-hearted and compliant in the negotiation with the rebellious tribes at Sichem; on the contrary, he was hard and defiant, and showed himself youthfully inconsiderate only in throwing to the winds the wise advice of the older men and in pursuance of the rash counsel of the young men who had grown up with him, brought about the rupture by his domineering manner. But Abijah wishes to justify his father as much as possible in his speech, and shifts all the guilt of the rebellion of the ten tribes from the house of David on to Jeroboam and his worthless following.—Vers. 8 and 9. Abijah then points out to his opponents the vanity of their trust in the great multitude of their warriors and their gods, while yet they had driven out the priests of Jahve. “And now ye say,” *scil.* in your heart, *i.e.* you think to show yourself strong before the kingdom of Jahve in the hands of the sons of David, *i.e.* against the kingdom of Jahve ruled over by the sons of David, by raising a great army in order to make war upon and to destroy this kingdom. וְאַתֶּם הָמוֹן רַב and truly ye are a great multitude, and with you are the golden calves, which Jeroboam hath made to you for gods; but trust not unto them, for Jahve, the true God, have ye not for you as a helper.—Ver. 9. “Yea, ye have cast out the priests of Jahve, the sons of Aaron, and made you priests after the manner of the nations of the lands. Every one who has come, to fill his hand with a young bullock and . . . . he has become a priest to the no-god.” מָלֵא יָדוֹ, to fill his hand, denotes, in the language of the law, to invest one with the priesthood, and connected with לִיהוָה it signifies to provide oneself with that which is to be offered to Jahve. To fill his hand with a young bullock, etc., therefore denotes to come with sacrificial beasts, to cause oneself to be consecrated priest. The animals mentioned also, a young bullock and seven rams, point to the consecration to the priesthood. In Ex. xxix. a young bullock as a sin-offering, a ram as a burnt-offering, and a ram as a consecratory-offering, are prescribed for this purpose. These sacrifices were to be repeated during seven days, so that in all seven rams were required for consecratory-sacrifices. Abijah mentions only one young bullock along with these, because it was not of any importance for him to enumerate perfectly the sacrifices which were necessary. But by offering these sacrifices no one becomes a priest of Jahve, and consequently the priests of Jeroboam also are only priests for



Not-Elohim, *i.e.* only for the golden calves made Elohim by Jeroboam, to whom the attributes of the Godhead did not belong.—Vers. 10 and 11. While, therefore, the Israelites have no-gods in their golden calves, Judah has Jahve for its God, whom it worships in His temple in the manner prescribed by Moses. “But in Jahve is our God, and we have not forsaken Him,” in so far, *viz.*, as they observed the legal Jahve-worship. So Abijah himself explains his words, “as priests serve Him the sons of Aaron (who were chosen by Jahve), and the Levites are בְּמִלְאָכָה, in service,” *i.e.* performing the service prescribed to them. As essential parts of that service of God, the offering of the daily burnt-offering and the daily incense-offering (Ex. xxix. 38 ff., xxx. 7), the laying out of the shew-bread (Ex. xxv. 30; Lev. xxiv. 5 ff.), the lighting of the lamps of the golden candlesticks (Ex. xxv. 37, xxvii. 20 f.), are mentioned. In this respect they keep the מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה (cf. Lev. viii. 35).—Ver. 12. Abijah draws from all this the conclusion: “Behold, with us at our head are (not the two calves of gold, but) God (הָאֱלֹהִים with the article, the true God) and His priests, and the alarm-trumpets to sound against you.” He mentions the trumpets as being the divinely appointed pledges that God would remember them in war, and would deliver them from their enemies, Num. x. 9. Then he closes with a warning to the Israelites not to strive with Jahve, the God of their fathers.

Vers. 13-17. The war; Judah's victory, and the defeat of Jeroboam and the Israelites.—Ver. 13. Jeroboam caused the ambush (the troops appointed to be an ambush) to go round about, so as to come upon their rear (*i.e.* of the men of Judah); and so they (the main division of Jeroboam's troops) were before Judah, and the ambush in their rear (*i.e.* of the men of Judah); and the men of Judah, when they turned themselves (*scil.* to attack), saw war before and behind them, *i.e.* perceived that they were attacked in front and rear. In this dangerous position the men of Judah cried to the Lord, and the priests blew the trumpets (ver. 15); and as they raised this war-cry, God smote their enemies so that they took to flight. In יִרְיָעַ and בְּהִרְיָעַ the loud shout of the warriors and the clangour of the trumpets in the hands of the priests are comprehended; and הִרְיָעַ is neither to be taken to refer only to the war-cry raised by the warriors in making the attack, nor, with Bertheau, to be referred only to the blowing of the trumpets.—Ver. 16 f. So Abijah and his people

inflicted a great blow (defeat) on the Israelites, so that 500,000 of them, *i.e.* more than the half of Jeroboam's whole army, fell.

Ver. 18 f. The results of this victory. The Israelites were bowed down, their power weakened; the men of Judah became strong, mighty, because they relied upon Jahve their God. Following up his victory, Abijah took from Jeroboam several cities with their surrounding domains: Bethel, the present Beitin, see on Josh. vii. 2; Jeshanah, occurring only here, and the position of which has not yet been ascertained; and Ephron (עֶפְרוֹן, Keth.; the Keri, on the contrary, עֶפְרָיִם). This city cannot well be identified with Mount Ephron, Josh. xv. 9; for that mountain was situated on the southern frontier of Benjamin, not far from Jerusalem, while the city Ephron is to be sought much farther north, in the neighbourhood of Bethel. C. v. Raumer and others identify Ephron or Ephraim both with Ophrah of Benjamin, which, it is conjectured, was situated near or in Tayibeh, to the east of Bethel, and with the *Ἐφραῖμ*, John xi. 54, whither Jesus withdrew into the wilderness, which, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 9. 9, lay in the neighbourhood of Bethel. See on Josh. xviii. 23.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 20. Jeroboam could not afterwards gain power

<sup>1</sup> The account of this war, which is peculiar to the Chronicle, and which de Wette declared, on utterly insufficient grounds, to be an invention of the chronicler (cf. against him my *apol. Vers. über die Chron.* S. 444 ff.), is thus regarded by Ewald (*Gesch. Isr.* iii. S. 466, der 2 Aufl.): "The chronicler must certainly have found among his ancient authorities an account of this conclusion of the war, and we cannot but believe that we have here, in so far, authentic tradition;" and only the details of the description are the results of free expansion by the chronicler, but in the speech vers. 4-13 every word and every thought is marked by the peculiar colouring of the Chronicle. But this last assertion is contradicted by Ewald's own remark, i. S. 203, that "in 2 Chron. xiii. 4-7, 19-21, an antiquated manner of speech and representation appears, while in the other verses, on the contrary, those usual with the chronicler are found,"—in support of which he adduces the words בְּנֵי בְלִיעֵל, ver. 7, and בְּרִית מֶלֶךְ, ver. 5. According to this view, Abijah's speech cannot have been freely draughted by the chronicler, but must have been derived, at least so far as the fundamental thoughts are concerned, from an ancient authority, doubtless the Midrash of the prophet Iddo, cited in ver. 22. But Ewald's further remark (iii. S. 466), that the author of the Chronicle, because he regarded the heathenized Samaria of his time as the true representative of the old kingdom of the ten tribes, seized this opportunity to put into King Abijah's mouth a long denunciatory and didactic speech, addressed at the commencement of the battle to the enemy as rebels not merely against the house of David, but also against the true religion, is founded upon the unscriptural idea that the calf-worship of the Israelites was merely a some-



(עָצַר בָּיֹחַ, as in 1 Chron. xxix. 14): "And Jahve smote him, and he died." The meaning of this remark is not clear, since we know nothing further of the end of Jeroboam's life than that he died two years after Abijah. וַיָּנִיחָהוּ can hardly refer to the unfortunate result of the war (ver. 15 ff.), for Jeroboam outlived the war by several years. We would be more inclined to understand it of the blow mentioned in 1 Kings xiv. 1-8, when God announced to him by Ahijah the extermination of his house, and took away his son Abijah, who was mourned by all Israel.

Vers. 21-23. *Wives and children of Abijah. His death.*—Ver. 21. While Jeroboam was not able to recover from the defeat he had suffered, Abijah established himself in his kingdom (יָתְחִיק, cf. xii. 13), and took to himself fourteen wives. The taking of these wives is not to be regarded as later in time than his establishment of his rule after the victory over Jeroboam. Since Abijah reigned only three years, he must have already had the greater number of his wives and children when he ascended the throne, as we may gather also from chap. xi. 21-23. The ׀ consec. with אֲשֶׁר serves only to connect logically the information as to his

what sensuous form of the true Jahve-worship, and was fundamentally distinct from the heathen idolatry, and also from the idolatry of the later Samaritans. In the judgment of all the prophets, not only of Hosea and Amos, but also of the prophetic author of the book of Kings, the calf-worship was a defection from Jahve, the God of the fathers,—a forsaking of the commands of Jahve, and a serving of the Baals; cf. e.g. 1 Kings xiii., 2 Kings xvii. 7-23. What Abijah says of the calf-worship of the Israelites, and of Judah's attitude to Jahve and His worship in the temple, is founded on the truth, and is also reconcilable with the statement in 1 Kings xv. 3, that Abijah's heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord, like David's heart. Abijah had promoted the legal temple-worship even by consecratory gifts (1 Kings xv. 15), and could consequently quite well bring forward the worship of God in Judah as the true worship, in contrast to the Israelitic calf-worship, for the discouragement of his enemies, and for the encouragement of his own army; and we may consequently regard the kernel, or the essential contents of the speech, as being historically well-founded. The account of the war, moreover, is also shown to be historical by the exact statement as to the conquered cities in ver. 19, which evidently has been derived from ancient authorities. Only in the statements about the number of warriors, and of the slain Israelites, the numbers are not to be estimated according to the literal value of the figures; for they are, as has been already hinted in the commentary, only an expression in figures of the opinion of contemporaries of the war, that both kings had made a levy of all the men in their respective kingdoms capable of bearing arms, and that Jeroboam was defeated with such slaughter that he lost more than the half of his warriors.

wives and children with the preceding, as the great increase of his family was a sign of Abijah's increase in strength, while Jeroboam's dynasty was soon extirpated.—Ver. 22. As to the מִדְּרָשׁ of the prophet Iddo, see the Introduction, p. 34.—Ver. 23. Under his son and successor Asa the land had a ten-years' rest. This is remarked here, because this rest was also a result of Abijah's great victory over Jeroboam.

#### CHAP. XIV.—XVI.—ASA'S REIGN.

In 1 Kings xv. 9–24 it is merely recorded of Asa, that he reigned forty-one years, did that which was right as David did, removed from the land all the idols which his fathers had made, and, although the high places were not removed, was devoted to the Lord during his whole life, and laid up in the temple treasury all that had been consecrated by his father and himself. Then it is related that when Baasha marched against him, and began to fortify Ramah, he induced the Syrian king Benhadad, by sending to him the treasures of the temple and of his palace, to break faith with Baasha, and to make an inroad upon and smite the northern portion of the land; that Baasha was thereby compelled to abandon the building of Ramah, and to fall back to Tirzah, and that thereupon Asa caused the fortifications of Ramah to be pulled down, and the cities Geba in Benjamin and Mizpah to be fortified with the materials; and, finally, it is recorded that Asa in his old age became diseased in his feet, and died. The Chronicle also characterizes Asa as a pious king, who did that which was right, and removed the high places and sun-pillars in the land; but gives, as to other matters, a much more detailed account of his reign of forty-one years. It states that in the first years, as the land had rest, he built fortified cities in Judah, and had an army fit for war (xiv. 1–7); that thereupon he marched against the Cushite Zerah, who was then advancing upon Judah with an innumerable host, prayed for help to the Lord, who then smote the Cushites, so that they fled; and that Asa pursued them to Gerar, and returned with great booty (vers. 8–14). Then we learn that the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, came to meet him, who, pointing to the victory which the Lord had granted them, called upon the king and the people to remain steadfast in their fidelity to the Lord; that Asa thereupon took courage, extirpated all the still remaining idola-



trous abominations from the land, and in the fifteenth year of his reign held with the people a great sacrificial feast in Jerusalem, renewed the covenant with the Lord, crushed out all the remains of former idolatry, although the high places were not destroyed, and also deposited in the temple treasury all that had been consecrated by his father and himself (chap. xv.). Thereafter Baasha's inroad upon Judah and the alliance with Benhadad of Syria are narrated (xvi. 1-6), as in the book of Kings; but it is also added that the prophet Hanani censured his seeking help from the king of Syria, and was thereupon put into the prison-house by Asa (vers. 7-10); and then we have an account of the end of his reign, in which several additions to the account in 1 Kings are communicated (vers. 11-14).

Chap. xiv. 1-7.—*Asa's efforts for the abolition of idolatry and the establishment of the kingdom.*—Vers. 1-4. The good and right in God's eyes which Asa did is further defined in vers. 2-4. He abolished all the objects of the idolatrous worship. The "altars of the strangers" are altars consecrated to foreign gods; from them the *בָּמֹת*, high places, are distinguished,—these latter being illegal places of sacrifice connected with the worship of Jahve (see on 1 Kings xv. 14). The *מַצֵּבֹת* are the statues or monumental columns consecrated to Baal, and *אֲשֵׁרִים* the wooden idols, tree-trunks, or trees, which were consecrated to Astarte (see on 1 Kings xiv. 23 and Deut. xvi. 21). Asa at the same time commanded the people to worship Jahve, the God of the fathers, and to follow the law.—Ver. 4. He removed from all the cities of Judah the altars of the high places, and the *חֲמָנִים*, sun-pillars, pillars or statues consecrated to Baal as sun-god, which were erected near or upon the altars of Baal (2 Chron. xxxiv. 4; see on Lev. xxvi. 30). In consequence of this the kingdom had rest *לִפְנֵי*, before him, *i.e.* under his oversight (cf. Num. viii. 22). This ten-years' quiet (xiii. 23) which God granted him, Asa employed in building fortresses in Judah (ver. 5). "We will build these cities, and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bolts." It is not said what the cities were, but they were at any rate others than Geba and Mizpah, which he caused to be built after the war with Baasha (xvi. 6). "The land is still before us," *i.e.* open, free from enemies, so that we may freely move about, and build therein according to our pleasure. For the phraseology, cf. Gen. xiii. 9. The repetition of *בְּרִשְׁנֵי*, ver. 6, is impassioned speech. "They built and had

success ;" they built with effect, without meeting with any hindrances.—Ver. 7. Asa had also a well-equipped, well-armed army. The men of Judah were armed with a large shield and lance (cf. 1 Chron. xii. 24), the Benjamites with a small shield and bow (cf. 1 Chron. viii. 40). The numbers are great ; of Judah 300,000, of Benjamin 280,000 men. Since in these numbers the whole population capable of bearing arms is included, 300,000 men does not appear too large for Judah, but 280,000 is a very large number for Benjamin, and is founded probably on an overestimate.

Vers. 8–14. *The victory over the Cushite Zerah.*—Ver. 8. "And there went forth against them Zerah." זֶרַח for אֱלִיָּהָם refers to Asa's warriors mentioned in ver. 7. The number of the men in Judah capable of bearing arms is mentioned only to show that Asa set his hope of victory over the innumerable host of the Cushites not on the strength of his army, but on the all-powerful help of the Lord (ver. 10). The Cushite זֶרַח is usually identified with the second king of the 22d (Bubastitic) dynasty, Osorchon I.; while Brugsch, *hist. de l'Eg.* i. p. 298, on the contrary, has raised objections, and holds Zerah to be an Ethiopian and not an Egyptian prince, who in the reign of Takeloth I., about 944 B.C., probably marched through Egypt as a conqueror (cf. G. Röscher in Herz's *Realenc.* xviii. S. 460). The statement as to Zerah's army, that it numbered 1,000,000 warriors and 300 war-chariots, rests upon a rough estimate, in which 1000 times 1000 expresses the idea of the greatest possible number. The Cushites pressed forward to Mareshah, i.e. Marissa, between Hebron and Ashdod (see on xi. 8).—Ver. 9. Thither Asa marched to meet them, and drew up his army in battle array in the valley Zephathah, near Mareshah. The valley Zephathah is not, as Robins., *Pal. sub voce*, thinks, to be identified with Tel es Safieh, but must lie nearer Mareshah, to the west or north-west of Marâsch.—Ver. 10. Then he called upon the Lord his God for help. אִין עִמָּךְ נוֹ we translate, with Berth., "None is with Thee (on עִמָּךְ, cf. xx. 6, Ps. lxxiii. 25) to help between a mighty one and a weak," i.e. no other than Thou can help in an unequal battle, i.e. help the weaker side ; while the Vulg., on the contrary, after the analogy of 1 Sam. xiv. 6, translates, "*non est apud te ulla distantia, utrum in paucis auxili-eris an in pluribus;*" and the older commentators (Schmidt, Ramb.) give the meaning thus: "*perinde est tibi potentiori vel imbecilliori*



*opem ferre.*" But in 1 Sam. xiv. 16 the wording is different, so that that passage cannot be a standard for us here. "In Thy name (*i.e.* trusting in Thy help) are we come against this multitude" (not "have we fallen upon this multitude"). אֵל יַעֲזֹר וְנִוּ, "Let not a mortal retain strength with Thee" (עֲזָרָה = כֹּחַ, xiii. 20, 1 Chron. xxix. 14), *i.e.* let not weak men accomplish anything with Thee, show Thy power or omnipotence over weak men.—Ver. 11. God heard this prayer. Jahve drove the Cushites into flight before Asa, *scil.* by His mighty help.—Ver. 12. Asa, with his people, pursued to Gerar, the old ancient Philistine city, whose ruins Rowlands has discovered in the Khirbet el Gerar, in the Wady Jorf el Gerar (the torrent of Gerar), three leagues south-south-east of Gaza (see on Gen. xx. 1). "And there fell of the Cushites, so that to them was not revival," *i.e.* so many that they could not make a stand and again collect themselves, *ut eis vivificatio i. e. copias restaurandi ratio non esset*, as older commentators, in *Annot. uberior. ad h. l.*, have already rightly interpreted it. The words are expressions for complete defeat. Berth. translates incorrectly: "until to them was nothing living;" for לֹא־יִחְיֶה does not stand for עַד לֹא־יִחְיֶה, but לֹא serves to subordinate the clause, "so that no one," where in the older language יִחְיֶה alone would have been sufficient, as in xx. 25, 1 Chron. xxii. 4, cf. Ew. § 315, c; and מַחְיָה denotes, not "a living thing," but only "preservation of life, vivification, revival, maintenance." For they were broken before Jahve and before His host. מַחְיָהוּ, *i.e.* Asa's army is called Jahve's, because Jahve fought in and with it against the enemy. There is no reason to suppose, with some older commentators, that there is any reference to an angelic host or heavenly camp (Gen. xxxii. 2 f.). And they (Asa and his people) brought back very much booty.—Ver. 13. "They smote all the cities round about Gerar," which, as we must conclude from this, had made common cause with the Cushites, being inhabited by Philistines; for the fear of Jahve had fallen upon them. פֶּחַד יְהוָה here, and in xvii. 10, xx. 29, as in 1 Sam. xi. 7, the fear of the omnipotence displayed by Jahve in the annihilation of the innumerable hostile army. In these cities Judah found much booty.—Ver. 14. They also smote the tents of the herds of the wandering tribes of that district, and carried away many sheep and camels as booty.

Chap. xv. *The prophet Azariah's exhortation to faithful cleaving to the Lord, and the solemn renewal of the covenant.—*

Vers. 1-7. The prophet's speech. The prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, is mentioned only here. The conjecture of some of the older theologians, that עֲזַרְיָה was the same person as עֲדִי (xii. 15, ix. 29), has no tenable foundation. Azariah went to meet the king and people returning from the war (וַיֵּצֵא לִפְנֵי), he went forth in the presence of Asa, *i.e.* coming before him; cf. xxviii. 9, 1 Chron. xii. 17, xiv. 8). "Jahve was with you (has given you the victory), because ye were with Him (held to Him)." Hence the general lesson is drawn: If ye seek Him, He will be found of you (cf. Jer. xxix. 13); and if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you (cf. xxiv. 20, xii. 5). To impress the people deeply with this truth, Azariah draws a powerful picture of the times when a people is forsaken by God, when peace and security in social intercourse disappear, and the terrors of civil war prevail. Opinions as to the reference intended in this portrayal of the dreadful results of defection from God have been from antiquity very much divided. Tremell. and Grot., following the Targ., take the words to refer to the condition of the kingdom of the ten tribes at that time; others think they refer to the past, either to the immediately preceding period of the kingdom of Judah, to the times of the defection under Rehoboam and Abijah, before Asa had suppressed idolatry (Syr., Arab., Raschi), or to the more distant past, the anarchic period of the judges, from Joshua's death, and that of the high priest Phinehas, until Eli and Samuel's reformation (so especially Vitringa, *de synag. vet.* p. 335 sqq.). Finally, still others (Luther, Clericus, Budd., etc.) interpret the words as prophetic, as descriptive of the future, and make them refer either to the unquiet times under the later idolatrous kings, to the times of the Assyrian or Chaldean exile (Kimchi), or to the condition of the Jews since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans up till the present day. Of these three views, the first, that which takes the reference to be to the present, *i.e.* the state of the kingdom of the ten tribes at that time, is decidedly erroneous; for during the first thirty years of the existence of that kingdom no such anarchic state of things existed as is portrayed in vers. 5 and 6, and still less could a return of the ten tribes to the Lord at that time be spoken of (ver. 4). It is more difficult to decide between the two other main views. The grounds which Vitringa, Ramb., Berth. adduce in support of the reference to the times of the judges are not convincing; for the contents and form (ver. 4) do not prove



that here something is asserted which has been confirmed by history, and still less is it manifest (ver. 5) that past times are pointed to. Whether the statement about the return to Jahve in the times of trouble (ver. 4) refers to the past or to the future, depends upon whether the past or future is spoken of in ver. 3. But the unquiet condition of things portrayed in ver. 5 corresponds partly to various times in the period of the judges; and if, with Vittr., we compare the general characteristics of the religious condition of the times of the judges (Judg. ii. 10 ff.), we might certainly say that Israel in those times was without אֱלֹהֵי אֲשֶׁת, as it again and again forsook Jahve and served the Baals. And moreover, several examples of the oppression of Israel portrayed in vers. 5 and 6 may be adduced from the time of the judges. Yet the words in ver. 6, even when their rhetorical character is taken into account, are too strong for the anarchic state of things during the period of the judges, and the internal struggles of that time (Judg. xii. 1-6 and chap. xx. f.). And consequently, although Vittr. and Ramb. think that a reference to experiences already past, and oppressions already lived through, would have made a much deeper impression than pointing forward to future periods of oppression, yet Ramb. himself remarks, *nihilominus tamen in sæculis Asæ imperium antegressis vix ullum tempus post ingressum in terram Canaan et constitutam rempubl. Israel. posse ostendi, cui omnia criteria hujus orationis propheticae omni ex parte et secundum omnia pondera verbis insita convenient.* But, without doubt, the omission of any definite statement of the time in ver. 3 is decisive against the exclusive reference of this speech to the past, and to the period of the judges. The verse contains no verb, so that the words may just as well refer to the past as to the future. The prophet has not stated the time definitely, because he was giving utterance to truths which have force at all times,<sup>1</sup> and which Israel had had experience of already in the time of the judges, but would have much deeper experience of in the future.

We must take the words in this general sense, and supply neither a preterite nor a future in ver. 3, neither *fuert* nor *erunt*, but must express the first clause by the present in English:

<sup>1</sup> As Ramb. therefore rightly remarks, "*Vatem videri consulto abstinuisse a determinatione temporis, ut vela sensui quam amplissime panderentur, verbaque omnibus temporum periodis adplicari possent, in quibus criteria hic recensita adpareant.*"

“Many days are for Israel (*i.e.* Israel lives many days) without the true God, and without teaching priests, and without law.”  $\text{יָמִים רַבִּים}$  is not accus. of time (Berth.), but the subject of the sentence; and  $\text{לֹא אֱלֹהִים}$  is not subject—“during many days there was to the people Israel no true God” (Berth.)—but predicate, while  $\text{לֵ$  expresses the condition into which anything comes, and  $\text{לֹא}$  forms part of the following noun: Days for Israel for having not a true God.  $\text{לֹא}$  differs from  $\text{בְּלֹא}$ , “without,” just as  $\text{לֵ$  differs from  $\text{בְּ}$ ; the latter expressing the being in a condition, the former the coming into it. On  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי אֲמֶת}$ , cf. Jer. x. 10.  $\text{בְּיָהוּ מוֹרֶה}$  is not to be limited to the high priest, for it refers to the priests in general, whose office it was to teach the people law and justice (Lev. x. 10; Deut. xxxiii. 10). The accent is upon the predicates  $\text{אֲמֶת}$  and  $\text{מוֹרֶה}$ . Israel had indeed Elohim, but not the true God, and also priests, but not priests who attended to their office, who watched over the fulfilment of the law; and so they had no  $\text{תּוֹרָה}$ , notwithstanding the book of the law composed by Moses.—Ver. 5. “And in these times is no peace to those going out or to those coming in.” Free peaceful intercommunication is interfered with (cf. Judg. v. 6, vi. 2), but great terrors upon all inhabitants of the lands ( $\text{הָאֲרָצוֹת}$  are, according to the usage of the chronicler, the various districts of the land of Israel).—Ver. 6. “And one people is dashed in pieces by the other, and one city by the other; for God confounds them by all manner of adversity.”  $\text{הִמָּם}$  denotes confusion, which God brings about in order to destroy His enemies (Ex. xiv. 24; Josh. x. 10; Judg. iv. 15). Days when they were without the true God, without teaching prophets, and without law, Israel had already experienced in the times of defection after Joshua (cf. Judg. ii. 11 ff.), but will experience them in the future still oftener and more enduringly under the idolatrous kings in the Assyrian and Babylonian exile, and still even now in its dispersion among all nations. That this saying refers to the future is also suggested by the fact that Hosea (chap. iii. and iv.) utters, with a manifest reference to ver. 3 of our speech, a threat that the ten tribes will be brought into a similar condition (cf. Hos. ix. 3, 4); and even Moses proclaimed to the people that the punishment of defection from the Lord would be dispersion among the heathen, where Israel would be compelled to serve idols of wood and stone (Deut. iv. 27 ff., xxviii. 36, 64), *i.e.* would be without the true God. That Israel would, in such oppression, turn to its God, would seek Him, and



that the Lord would be found of them, is a thought also expressed by Moses, the truth of which Israel had not only had repeated experience of during the time of the judges, but also would again often experience in the future (cf. Hos. iii. 5; Jer. xxxi. 1; Ezek. xxxvi. 24 ff.; Rom. xi. 25 ff.). **בְּצַר-לִי** refers back to Deut. iv. 30; the expression in ver. 4b is founded upon Deut. iv. 29 (cf. Isa. lv. 6).—Of the oppression in the times of defection portrayed in ver. 5 f., Israel had also had in the time of the judges repeated experience (cf. Judg. v. 6), most of all under the Midianite yoke (Judg. vi. 2); but such times often returned, as the employment of the very words of the first hemistich of ver. 5 in Zech. viii. 10, in reference to the events of the post-exilic time, shows; and not only the prophet Amos (iii. 9) sees **מְהוּמוֹת רַבּוֹת**, great confusions, where all is in an indistinguishable whirl in the Samaria of his time, but they repeated themselves at all times when the defection prevailed, and godlessness degenerated into revolution and civil war. Azariah portrays the terrors of such times in strong colours (ver. 6): “Dashed to pieces is people by people, and city by city.” The war of the tribes of Israel against Benjamin (Judg. xx. f.), and the struggle of the Gileadites under Jephthah with Ephraim (Judg. xii. 4 ff.), were civil wars; but they were only mild preludes of the *bellum omnium contra omnes* depicted by Azariah, which only commenced with the dissolution of both kingdoms, and was announced by the later prophets as the beginning of the judgment upon rebellious Israel (e.g. Isa. ix. 17-20), and upon all peoples and kingdoms hostile to God (Zech. xiv. 13; Matt. xxiv. 7). With **כִּי אֱלֹהִים** cf. **הַמָּמָם** cf. **רַבָּה**, **מְהוּמָה**, Zech. xiv. 13. To this portrayal of the dread results of defection from the Lord, Azariah adds (ver. 7) the exhortation, “Be ye strong (vigorous), and show yourselves not slack, languid” (cf. Zeph. iii. 16; Neh. vi. 9); i.e., in this connection, proceed courageously and vigorously to keep yourselves true to the Lord, to exterminate all idolatry; then you shall obtain a great reward: cf. on these words, Jer. xxxi. 16.

Vers. 8-18. *Completion of the reform in worship, and the renewal of the covenant.*—Ver. 8. The speech and prophecy of the prophet strengthened the king to carry out the work he had begun, viz. the extirpation of idolatry from the whole land. In ver. 8 the words **עֲדָר הַנְּבִיא** are surprising, not only because the prophet is called in ver. 1, not Oded, but Azariah the son of Oded, but also on account of the preceding **הַנְּבִיאָה** in the absolute state, which

cannot stand, without more ado, for the *stat. constr.* נְבוֹאָה (cf. ix. 29). The view of Cler. and Ew., that by an orthographical error עֲזַרְיָהּ בֶּן has been dropped out, does not remove the difficulty, for it leaves the *stat. absol.* הַנְּבוֹאָה unexplained. This is also the case with the attempt to explain the name Oded in ver. 8 by transposing the words Azariah ben Oded, ver. 1, so as to obtain Oded ben Azariah (Movers); and there seems to be no other solution of the difficulty than to strike out the words Oded the prophet from the text as a gloss which has crept into it (Berth.), or to suppose that there is a considerable hiatus in the text caused by the dropping out of the words אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר עֲזַרְיָהּ בֶּן.<sup>1</sup> הַתְּחִיָּק corresponds to הִזְקִי. Asa complied with the exhortation, and removed (וַיַּעֲבֵר, as in 1 Kings xv. 12) all abominations (idols) from the whole land, and from the cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim: these are the cities which Asa's father Abijah had conquered, xiii. 19. "And he renewed the altar before the porch," *i.e.* the altar of burnt-offering, which might stand in need of repairs sixty years after the building of the temple. The Vulg. is incorrect in translating *dedicavit*, and Berth. in supposing that the renovation refers only to a purification of it from defilement by idolatry. הָרַשׁ is everywhere to renew, repair, *restaurare*; cf. xxiv. 4.—But in order to give internal stability to the reform he had begun, Asa prepared a great sacrificial festival, to which he invited the people out of all the kingdom, and induced them to renew the covenant with the Lord. Ver. 9. He gathered together the whole of Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers out of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, who dwelt among them. Strangers, *i.e.* Israelites from the ten tribes, had come over as early as Rehoboam's reign to the kingdom of Judah (xi. 16); these immigrations increased under Asa when it was seen that Jahve was with him, and had given him a great victory over the Cushites. It is surprising that Simeon should be mentioned among the tribes from which Israelites went over to the kingdom of Judah, since Simeon had received his heritage in the southern district of the tribal domain of Judah, so that at the division of the kingdom it could not well separate itself from

<sup>1</sup> C. P. Caspari, *der Syrisch-ephraimitische Krieg*, Christian. 1849, S. 51, explains the *absol.* הַנְּבוֹאָה by an ellipse, as in Isa. iii. 14, viii. 11, "the prophecy (that) of Oded," but answers the question why Oded is used in ver. 8 instead of Azarjahu ben Oded by various conjectures, none of which can be looked upon as probable.



Judah, and join with the tribes who had revolted from the house of David. The grouping together of Simeon, Ephraim, and Manasseh, both in our verse and in xxxiv. 6, can consequently scarcely be otherwise explained than by the supposition, either that a part of the Simeonites had in course of time emigrated from the cities assigned to them under Joshua into districts in the northern kingdom (Berth.), or that the Simeonites, though politically united with Judah, yet in religious matters were not so, but abstained from taking part in the Jahve-worship in Jerusalem, and had set up in Beersheba a worship of their own similar to that in Bethel and Dan. In such a case, the more earnest and thoughtful people from Simeon, as well as from Ephraim and Manasseh, may have gone to Jerusalem to the sacrificial festival prepared by Asa. In favour of this last supposition we may adduce the fact that the prophet Amos, chap. v. 5, iv. 4, viii. 14, mentions Beersheba, along with Bethel and Gilgal, as a place to which pilgrimages were made by the idolatrous Israelites.—Ver. 10 f. At this festival, which was held on the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign, they offered of the booty, *i.e.* of the cattle captured in the war against the Cushites (xiv. 14), 700 oxen and 7000 sheep. מִן־הַשָּׁלָל הֵבִיאוּ defines the יִזְבְּחֵהוּ more closely: they sacrificed, viz. from the booty they offered. From this it seems to follow that the sacrificial festival was held soon after the return from the war against the Cushites. The attack of the Cushite Zerah upon Judah can only have occurred in the eleventh year of Asa, according to xiii. 23; but it is not stated how long the war lasted, nor when Asa returned to Jerusalem (xiv. 14) after conquering the enemy and plundering the towns of the south land. But Asa may quite well have remained longer in the south after the Cushites had been driven back, in order again firmly to establish his rule there; and on his return to Jerusalem, in consequence of the exhortation of the prophet Azariah, may have straightway determined to hold a sacrificial festival at which the whole people should renew the covenant with the Lord, and have set apart and reserved a portion of the captured cattle for this purpose.—Ver. 12. And they entered into the covenant, *i.e.* they renewed the covenant, bound themselves by a promise on oath (שָׁבְעוּהָ, ver. 14) to hold the covenant, viz. to worship Jahve the God of the fathers with their whole heart and soul; cf. Deut. iv. 29. With בָּבְרִית, cf. Jer. xxxiv. 10.—Ver. 13 f. To attest the sincerity of their return to the Lord, they determined at the

same time to punish defection from Jahve on the part of any one, without respect to age or sex, with death, according to the command in Deut. xvii. 2-6. **לֹא דָרַשׁ לַיהוָה**, not to worship Jahve, is substantially the same as to serve other gods, Deut. xvii. 3. This they swore aloud and solemnly, **בְּתִרְעָה**, with joyful shouting and the sound of trumpets and horns.—Ver. 15. This return to the Lord brought joy to all Judah, *i.e.* to the whole kingdom, because they had sworn with all their heart, and sought the Lord **בְּכָל־רִצּוֹנָם**, with perfect willingness and alacrity. Therefore Jahve was found of them, and gave them rest round about.—In vers. 16-18, in conclusion, everything which still remained to be said of Asa's efforts to promote the Jahve-worship is gathered up. Even the queen-mother Maachah was deposed by him from the dignity of ruler because she had made herself an image of Asherah; yet he did not succeed in wholly removing the altars on the high places from the land, etc. These statements are also to be found in 1 Kings xv. 13-16, and are commented upon at that place. Only in the Chronicle we have **אִם אֶסָּא** instead of **אִמּוֹ** (Kings), because there Maachah had just been named (ver. 10); and to the statement as to the abolition of idolatry, **יִדָּק**, crushed, is added, and in ver. 17 **מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל**; while, on the other hand, after **עַם יְהוָה שָׁלֵם** is omitted, as not being necessary to the expression of the meaning.

Ver. 19 is different from 1 Kings xv. 16. In the latter passage it is said: war was between Asa and Baasha the king of Israel **כָּל־יְמֵיהֶם**, *i.e.* so long as both reigned contemporaneously; while in the Chronicle it is said: war was not until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign. This discrepancy is partly got rid of by taking **מִלְחָמָה** in the book of Kings to denote the latent hostility or inimical attitude of the two kingdoms towards each other, and in the Chronicle to denote a war openly declared. The date, until the thirty-fifth year, causes a greater difficulty; but this has been explained in chap. xvi. 1 by the supposition that in the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign war broke out between Asa and Baasha, when the meaning of our 16th verse would be: It did not come to war with Baasha until the thirty-sixth year of Asa's rule. For further remarks on this, see on xvi. 1.

Chap. xvi. *War with Baasha, and the weakness of Asa's faith. The end of his reign.*—Vers. 1-6. Baasha's invasion of Judah, and Asa's prayer for help to the king of Syria. The statement, "In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha the king of Israel came up against Judah," is inaccurate, or rather cannot possibly



be correct; for, according to 1 Kings xvi. 8, 10, Baasha died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa's reign, and his successor Elah was murdered by Zimri in the second year of his reign, *i.e.* in the twenty-seventh year of Asa. The older commentators, for the most part, accepted the conjecture that the thirty-fifth year (in xv. 19) is to be reckoned from the commencement of the kingdom of Judah; and consequently, since Asa became king in the twentieth year of the kingdom of Judah, that Baasha's invasion occurred in the sixteenth year of his reign, and that the land had enjoyed peace till his fifteenth year; cf. Ramb. *ad h. l.*; des Vignoles, *Chronol.* i. p. 299. This is in substance correct; but the statement, "in the thirty-sixth year of Asa's kingship," cannot be reconciled with it. For even if we suppose that the author of the Chronicle derived his information from an authority which reckoned from the rise of the kingdom of Judah, yet it could not have been said on that authority, לְמַלְכוּת אָסָא. This only the author of the Chronicle can have written; but then he cannot also have taken over the statement, "in the thirty-sixth year," unaltered from his authority into his book. There remains therefore no alternative but to regard the text as erroneous,—the letters ל (30) and י (10), which are somewhat similar in the ancient Hebrew characters, having been interchanged by a copyist; and hence the numbers 35 and 36 have arisen out of the original 15 and 16. By this alteration all difficulties are removed, and all the statements of the Chronicle as to Asa's reign are harmonized. During the first ten years there was peace (xiii. 23); thereafter, in the eleventh year, the inroad of the Cushites; and after the victory over them there was the continuation of the Cultus reform, and rest until the fifteenth year, in which the renewal of the covenant took place (xv. 19, cf. with ver. 10); and in the sixteenth year the war with Baasha arose.<sup>1</sup> The account of this war in vers. 1-6 agrees with that in 1 Kings xv. 17-22 almost literally, and has been commented upon in the remarks on 1 Kings xv. In ver. 2 the author of the Chronicle has mentioned only the main things. Abel-Maim, *i.e.* Abel in the Water (ver. 4), is only another name for Abel-Beth-Maachah (Kings); see on 2 Sam. xx. 14. In the same verse

<sup>1</sup> Movers, S. 255 ff., and Then. on 1 Kings xv., launch out into arbitrary hypotheses, founded in both cases upon the erroneous presumption that the author of the Chronicle copied our canonical books of Kings—they being his authority—partly misunderstanding and partly altering them.

יָאֵת בְּלִבְנֹתָיִם עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ נַפְתָּלִי is surprising, "and all magazines (or stores) of the cities of Naphtali," instead of בְּלִבְנֹתָיִם עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ נַפְתָּלִי, "all Kinneroth, together with all the land of Naphtali" (Kings). Then. and Berth. think מַסְכְּנוֹת עַרִי has arisen out of אֶרֶץ and בְּנֹתָיִם by a misconception of the reading; while Gesen., Dietr. in *Lex. sub voce* בְּנֹתָיִם, conjecture that in 1 Kings xv. 20 מַסְכְּנוֹת should be read instead of בְּנֹתָיִם. Should the difference actually be the result only of a misconception, then the latter conjecture would have much more in its favour than the first. But it is a more probable solution of the difficulty that the text of the Chronicle is a translation of the unusual and, especially on account of the עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ נַפְתָּלִי, scarcely intelligible בְּלִבְנֹתָיִם. בְּנֹתָיִם is the designation of the very fertile district on the west side of the Sea of Kinnereth, *i.e.* Gennesaret, after which a city also was called בְּנֹתָיִם (see on Josh. xix. 35), and which, on account of its fertility, might be called the granary of the tribal domain of Naphtali. But the smiting of a district can only be a devastation of it,—a plundering and destruction of its produce, both in stores and elsewhere. With this idea the author of the Chronicle, instead of the district Kinnereth, the name of which had perhaps become obsolete in his time, speaks of the מַסְכְּנוֹת, the magazines or stores, of the cities of Naphtali. In ver. 5, too, we cannot hold the addition וַיִּשְׁבֶּת אֶת־מְלָאכְתּוֹ, "he caused his work to rest," as Berth. does, for an interpretation of the original reading, וַיִּשְׁבֶּת בְּתַרְצָה (Kings), it having become illegible: it is rather a free rendering of the thought that Baasha abandoned his attempt upon Judah.—Ver. 6. In regard to the building of Mizpah, it is casually remarked in Jer. xli. 9 that Asa had there built a cistern.

Vers. 7–10. *The rebuke of the prophet Hanani, and Asa's crime.*—Ver. 7. The prophet Hanani is met with only here. Jehu, the son of Hanani, who announced to Baasha the ruin of his house (1 Kings xvi. 1), and who reappears under Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xix. 2), was without doubt his son. Hanani said to King Asa, "Because thou hast relied on the king of Aram, and not upon Jahve thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Aram escaped out of thy hand." Berth. has correctly given the meaning thus: "that Asa, if he had relied upon God, would have conquered not only the host of Baasha, but also the host of the king of Damascus, if he had, as was to be feared, in accordance with his league with Baasha (ver. 3), in common with Israel,



made an attack upon the kingdom of Judah." To confirm this statement, the prophet points to the victory over the great army of the Cushites, which Asa had won by his trust in God the Lord. With the Cushites Hanani names also לִיְבָיִם, Libyans (cf. xii. 3), and besides רֶכֶב, the war-chariots, also פָּרָשִׁים, horsemen, in order to portray the enemy rhetorically, while in the historical narrative only the immense number of warriors and the multitude of the chariots is spoken of.—Ver. 9. "For Jahve, His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong with those whose heart is devoted to Him;" *i.e.*, for Jahve, who looks forth over all the earth, uses every opportunity wonderfully to succour those who are piously devoted to Him. הִתְחַזֵּק עִם, to help mightily, as in 1 Chron. xi. 10. עִם-לִבְבָם שָׁלַם אֱלֹהֵי is a relative sentence without the relative אֲשֶׁר with עִם; cf. 1 Chron. xv. 12. "Thou hast done foolishly, therefore," *scil.* because thou hast set thy trust upon men instead of upon Jahve, "for from henceforth there shall be wars to thee" (thou shalt have war). In these words the prophet does not announce to Asa definite wars, but only expresses the general idea that Asa by his godless policy would bring only wars (מִלְחָמוֹת in indefinite universality), not peace, to the kingdom. History confirms the truth of this announcement, although we have no record of any other wars which broke out under Asa.—Ver. 10. This sharp speech so angered the king, that he caused the seer to be set in the stock-house. בֵּית הַמַּהֲפָכָה, properly, house of stocks. מַהֲפָכָה, twisting, is an instrument of torture, a stock, by which the body was forced into an unnatural twisted position, the victim perhaps being bent double, with the hands and feet fastened together: cf. Jer. xx. 2, xxix. 26; and Acts xvi. 24, ἔβαλεν εἰς τὴν φυλακὴν καὶ τοὺς πόδας ἡσφαλίσατο αὐτῶν εἰς τὸ ξύλον. "For in wrath against him (*scil.* he did it) because of this thing, and Asa crushed some of the people at this time." Clearly Hanani's speech, and still more Asa's harsh treatment of the seer, caused great discontent among the people, at least in the upper classes, so that the king felt himself compelled to use force against them. רָצַץ, to break or crush, is frequently used along with עָשָׂה (Deut. xxviii. 33; 1 Sam. xii. 3, etc.), and signifies to suppress with violence. Asa had indeed well deserved the censure, Thou hast dealt foolishly. His folly consisted in this, that in order to get help against Baasha's attack, he had had recourse to a means which must become dangerous to him and to his kingdom; for

it was not difficult to foresee that the Syrian king Benhadad would turn the superiority to Israel which he had gained against Judah itself. But in order to estimate rightly Asa's conduct we must consider that it was perhaps an easier thing, in human estimation, to conquer the innumerable multitudes of the Ethiopian hordes than the united forces of the kings of Israel and Syria; and that, notwithstanding the victory over the Ethiopians, yet Asa's army may have been very considerably weakened by that war. But these circumstances are not sufficient to justify Asa. Since he had so manifestly had the help of the Lord in the war against the Cushites, it was at bottom mainly weakness of faith, or want of full trust in the omnipotence of the Lord, which caused him to seek the help of the enemy of God's people, the king of Syria, instead of that of the Almighty God, and to make flesh his arm; and for this he was justly censured by the prophet.

Vers. 11-14. *The end of Asa's reign*; cf. 1 Kings xv. 23, 24.—On ver. 11, cf. the Introduction.—Ver. 12. In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet, and that in a high degree. The words עַרְלִמְעָלָה חָלִיו are a circumstantial clause to a high degree was his sickness. "And also in his sickness (as in the war against Baasha) he sought not Jahve, but turned to the physicians." רָרַשׁ is primarily construed with the accus., and usually in connection with יהוה or אלהים, to seek God, to come before Him with prayer and supplication; then with ב, as usually of an oracle, or seeking help of idols (cf. 1 Sam. xxviii. 7; 1 Kings i. 2 ff.; 1 Chron. x. 14), and so here of superstitious trust in the physicians. Consequently it is not the mere inquiring of the physicians which is here censured, but only the godless manner in which Asa trusted in the physicians.—Ver. 14. The Chronicle gives a more exact account of Asa's burial than 1 Kings xv. 24. He was buried in the city of David; not in the general tomb of the kings, however, but in a tomb which he had caused to be prepared for himself in that place. And they laid him upon the bed, which had been filled with spices (בְּשָׂמִים, see Ex. xxx. 23), and those of various kinds, mixed for an anointing mixture, prepared. זָנִים from זָן, kind, species; זָנִים, *et variorum quidem*. מִרְקָח in Piel only here, properly spiced, from רָקַח, to spice, usually to compound an unguent of various spices. מִרְקָח the compounding of ointment; so also 1 Chron. ix. 30, where it is usually translated by unguent. מַעֲשֵׂה, work, manufacture, is



shortened *terminus technicus* for מַעֲשֵׂה רוֹקֵחַ, manufacture of the ointment-compounder (cf. Ex. xxx. 25, 35), and the conjecture that רוֹקֵחַ has been dropped out of the text by mistake is unnecessary. “And they kindled for him a great, very great burning,” cf. xxi. 19 and Jer. xxxiv. 5, whence we gather that the kindling of a burning, *i.e.* the burning of odorous spices, was customary at the burials of kings. Here it is only remarked that at Asa’s funeral an extraordinary quantity of spices was burnt. A burning of the corpse, or of the bed or clothes of the dead, is not to be thought of here: the Israelites were in the habit of burying their dead, not of burning them. That occurred only in extraordinary circumstances,—as, for example, in the case of the bodies of Saul and his sons; see on 1 Sam. xxxi. 12. The kindling and burning of spices at the solemn funerals of persons of princely rank, on the other hand, occurred also among other nations, *e.g.* among the Romans; cf. Plinii *hist. nat.* xii. 18, and M. Geier, *de luctu Hebr.* c. 6.

## CHAP. XVII.—XX.—JEHOSHAPHAT’S REIGN.

Jehoshaphat laboured to strengthen the kingdom both within and without. Not only did he place soldiers in the fenced cities, and removed the high places and the Astartes, but sought also to diffuse the knowledge of the law among the people, and by building castles and the possession of a well-equipped army, firmly to establish his power (chap. xvii.). In the course of years he married into the family of Ahab king of Israel, and, while on a visit in Samaria, allowed himself to be persuaded by Ahab to enter upon a joint war against the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead, in which he all but lost his life, while King Ahab was mortally wounded in the battle (chap. xviii.). Censured on his return to Jerusalem by the prophet Jehu for this alliance with the godless Ahab, he sought still more earnestly to lead back his people to Jahve, the God of their fathers, bestirring himself to bring the administration of justice into a form in accordance with the law of God, and establishing a supreme tribunal in Jerusalem (chap. xix.). Thereafter, when the Moabites and Ammonites, with the Edomites and other desert tribes, made an inroad into Judah, the Lord gave him a wonderful victory over these enemies. At a later time he yet again allied himself with the Israelitish king Ahaziah for the restoration of the commerce

with Ophir; but the ships built for this purpose were broken in the harbour, so that the voyage was abandoned (chap. xx.). Of all these enterprises of Jehoshaphat, none are mentioned in the book of Kings except the campaign entered upon with Ahab against Ramoth in Gilead, which is found in the history of Ahab, 1 Kings xxii. 2-35. Jehoshaphat's reign itself is only characterized generally, but in such a way as to agree with the account in the Chronicle; and, in conclusion, the alliance with Ahaz for the purpose of making the voyage to Ophir is shortly narrated in 1 Kings xxii. 41-57, but in a form which differs considerably from that in which it is communicated in the Chronicle.

Chap. xvii. *Jehoshaphat's efforts to strengthen the kingdom, internally and externally.*—Ver. 1, or rather the first half of this verse, belongs properly to the preceding chapter, since, when the son immediately follows the father on the throne, the successor is mentioned immediately: cf. ix. 31, xii. 16, xxiv. 27, xxvii. 9, etc. Here, however, the account of the accession to the throne is combined with a general remark on the reign of the successor, and therefore it is placed at the commencement of the account of the reign; while in the case of Asa (chap. xiii. 23) both come in immediately at the conclusion of the reign of his predecessor. Asa had shown himself weak against Israel, as he had sought help against Baasha's attack from the Syrians (xvi. 1 ff.), but it was otherwise with Jehoshaphat. He indeed put the fenced cities of his kingdom in a thoroughly good condition for defence, to protect his kingdom against hostile attacks from without (ver. 2); but he walked at the same time in the ways of the Lord, so that the Lord made his kingdom strong and mighty (vers. 3-5). This general characterization of his reign is in ver. 6 illustrated by facts: first by the communication of what Jehoshaphat did for the inner spiritual strengthening of the kingdom, by raising the standard of religion and morals among the people (vers. 6-11), and then by what he did for the external increase of his power (vers. 12-19).

Vers. 2-5. He placed forces (חֵיל) in all the fenced cities of Judah, and garrisons (נִצְיָבִים, military posts; cf. 1 Chron. xi. 16) in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which his father Asa had taken; cf. xv. 8. God blessed these undertakings. Jahve was with him, because he walked in the ways of David his ancestor, the former ways, and sought not the Baals. The *former* ways of David are his ways in the earlier years of his reign, in contrast to the later years, in which his adultery with



Bathsheba (2 Sam. xi. ff.) and the sin of numbering the people (1 Chron. xxi.) fall. הַבְּעָלִים are all false gods, in contrast to Jahve, the one God of Israel; and here the word designates not only the Baal-worship properly so called, but also the worship of Jahve by means of images, by which Jahve is brought down to the level of the Baals; cf. Judg. ii. 11. The ל before בְּעָלִים stands, according to the later usage, as a sign of the accusative. In the last clause of ver. 4, "and not after the doings of Israel" (of the ten tribes), הָלַךְ, "he walked," is to be repeated. The doing of Israel is the worship of Jahve through the images of the golden calves, which the author of the Chronicle includes in the לְבָעָלִים.—Ver. 5. Therefore Jahve established the kingdom in his hand, *i.e.* under his rule; cf. 2 Kings xiv. 5. All Judah brought him presents. מִנְחָה, often used of tribute of subject peoples, *e.g.* in ver. 11 of the Philistines, cannot here have that signification; nor can it denote the regular imposts of subjects, for these are not called מִנְחָה; but must denote voluntary gifts which his subjects brought him as a token of their reverence and love. The last clause, "and there was to him (he attained) riches and honour in abundance," which is repeated xviii. 1, recalls 1 Chron. xxix. 28, 2 Chron. i. 12, and signifies that Jehoshaphat, like his ancestors David and Solomon, was blessed for walking in the pious ways of these his forefathers.

Vers. 6-9. This blessing encouraged Jehoshaphat to extirpate from the land all idolatrous worship, and to teach the people the law of the Lord. גָּבַה לֵב, usually *sensu malo*, to be haughty, proud, cf. *e.g.* xxvi. 16, xxxii. 25; here *sensu bono*, of rising courage to advance in ways pleasing to God: and he removed the high places also, etc. עוֹר points back to ver. 3: not only did he himself keep far from the Baals, but he removed, besides, all memorials of the Baal-worship from Judah. On בָּמוֹת and אֲשֵׁרִים, see on xiv. 2.—Ver. 7 ff. In the third year of his reign he sent five princes, *i.e.* laymen of high position, with nine Levites and two priests, into the cities of Judah, with the book of the law, to teach the law everywhere to the people. בֶּן־חֵלִי is *nom. prop.*, like בֶּן־חֶסֶד, 1 Kings iv. 10, בֶּן־דָּקָר, 1 Kings iv. 9, and is not to be translated as an adjective, as in LXX. and Syr., partly on account of the ל *præf.*, and still more on account of the singular, for the plural בְּנֵי חֵלִי must be used when it is in apposition to לְשָׂרֵי. Nothing further is known of the men named; the designation of them as שָׂרִים suggests the idea that they were heads of

families or fathers'-houses. טוב אֲדֹנֵיהָ, too (ver. 8), is one name. The "book of the law of Jahve" is the Pentateuch, not merely a collection of Mosaic laws, since in Jehoshaphat's time the Mosaic book of the law (the Pentateuch) had been long in existence. סָבַב בְּעָרֵי יְהוּדָה signifies to go through the cities of Judah in different directions; לְמַד בָּעָם, to teach among the people (not the people). The mission of these men is called by the older theologians a solemn *ecclesiarum visitatio*, *quam Josaphat laudabili exemplo per universum regnum suum instituit*, and they differ in opinion only as to the part played by the princes in it. Vitringa, *de synagoga vet.* p. 389, in agreement with Rashi, thinks that only the Levites and priests were deputed *ut docerent*; the princes, *ut auctoritate imperioque suo populum erudiendum in officio continerent eumque de seria regis voluntate certiores facerent*; while others, e.g. Buddæus, refer to ver. 9, *ubi principes pariter ac Levitæ populum docuisse dicuntur*, or believe with Grotius, *docere et explicare legem non tantum sacerdotum erat et Levitarum, sed omnium eruditorum*. Both views contain elements of truth, and do not mutually exclude each other, but may be harmonized. We can hardly confine לְמַד to religious teaching. The Mosaic law contains a number of merely civil precepts, as to which laymen learned in the law might impart instruction; and consequently the teaching probably consisted not merely in making the people acquainted with the contents of the law, but at the same time of direction and guidance in keeping the law, and generally in restoring and confirming the authority of the law among the people. In connection with this there were many abuses and illegalities which had to be broken down and removed; so that in this respect the task of the commission sent round the country by Jehoshaphat may be compared to a church inspection, if only we understand thereby not an inspection of churches in the Christian sense of the words, but an inspection of the religious and moral life of the communities of Israel under the old covenant.

Vers. 10 and 11. This attempt of Jehoshaphat brought him this blessing, that the terror of Jahve fell upon all the surrounding kingdoms; and not only did none of the neighbouring peoples venture to make war upon him, but also various tribes did homage to him by presents. Ramb. has already so understood the connection of these verses (*erat hoc præmium pietatis Josaphati, quod vicini satisque potentes hostes non auderent adversus*



*ipsum hiscere*); while Berth. fails to apprehend it, saying that Jehoshaphat had time to care for the instruction of his people, because at that time the neighbouring peoples did not venture to undertake war against Judah. The words "terror of Jahve," cf. xiv. 13, xx. 29, and "all the kingdoms of the lands," cf. xii. 8, 1 Chron. xxix. 30, are expressions peculiar to the author of the Chronicle, which show that by these remarks he is preparing the way for a transition to a more detailed portrayal of Jehoshaphat's political power. מִן־פְּלִשְׁתִּים is subject, מִן partitive: some of the Philistines brought him presents (for מִנְחָה see on ver. 5), "and silver a burden," i.e. in great quantity. מִשָּׁא does not signify tribute, *vectigal argento* (Vulg.), for the word has not that signification, but denotes burden, that which can be carried, as in לֵאיוֹן מִשָּׁא, xx. 25.—עֲרֵבִיָּים or עֲרֵבִיִּים, xxvi. 7, and more usually עֲרֵבִים, xxi. 16, xxii. 1, are Arabian nomadic tribes (Bedâwin), perhaps those whom Asa, after his victory over the Cushite Zerah, had brought under the kingdom of Judah, xiv. 14. These paid their tribute in small cattle, rams, and he-goats. (תִּישִׁים, Gen. xxx. 35, xxxii. 15, Prov. xxx. 31.)

Vers. 12-19. *Description of Jehoshaphat's power.*—Ver. 12. And Jehoshaphat became ever greater, *sc.* in power. The partic. הוֹלֵךְ expresses the continuous advance in greatness, cf. *EW.* § 280, *b*, as the *infin. absol.* does elsewhere, *e.g.* Gen. viii. 3. עַד לְמַעְלָה as in xvi. 12.—He built castles in Judah. בִּירְנֵיֹת, only here and in xxvii. 4, from בִּירְנִית, derivative formed from בִּירָה by the Syriac termination נִית, *fem.* of בִּירָה: castle, fortress. On עָרֵי מִסְכְּנֹת cf. viii. 4.—Ver. 13. וּמִלְאָכָה רַבָּה וְגו' is rightly translated by Luther, "und hatte viel Vorraths" (and had much store). מִלְאָכָה denotes here, as in Ex. xxii. 7-10, property, that which has been gained by work or business. The signification, much work, *opera magna* (Vulg., Cler., etc.), as also Bertheau's translation, "the works for equipping and provisioning the fortresses," correspond neither to the context nor to the parallel (synonymous) second member of the verse. The work and trouble necessary to equip the cities of Judah does not correspond to "the valiant warriors in Jerusalem;" the only parallel is the goods and property which were in these cities, the provision of victuals and war material there stored up.—Vers. 14-19. The men fit for war passed in review according to their fathers'-houses. The male population of Judah fell into three divisions, that of Benjamin into two. The prince Adnah held the first place among the generals, with 300,000 men of

Judah. עַל יָדוֹ, at his hand, *i.e.* with and under him, Jehohanan had the command of 280,000 men, and Amasiah over 200,000. הַיָּשָׁר is a contraction for יָשָׁר אֲלֵפִים. For what special reason it is so honourably recorded of Amasiah that he had willingly offered himself to the Lord (cf. for הִתְנַדֵּב, Judg. v. 9) has not been communicated.—Ver. 17 f. The Benjamites fell into two detachments: archers with shields (cf. 1 Chron. viii. 40) 200,000 men, under the chief command of Eliada, and “equipped of the army,” *i.e.* not heavy armed (Berth.), but provided with the usual weapons, sword, spear, and shield (cf. 1 Chron. xii. 24), 180,000 under the command of Jehozabad. According to this statement, Judah had 780,000 warriors capable of bearing arms. These numbers are clearly too large, and bear no proportion to the result of the numbering of the people capable of bearing arms under David, when there were in Judah only 500,000 or 470,000 men (cf. 1 Chron. xxi. 5 with 2 Sam. xxiv. 5); yet the sums of the single divisions appear duly proportioned,—a fact which renders it more difficult to believe that these exaggerated numbers are the result of orthographical errors.—Ver. 19. These were serving the king. אֵלֶּה refers not to the above-mentioned men capable of bearing arms, for שָׂרֵת is not used of service in war, but to the commanders whom he had placed in the fortified cities of all Judah, “in which probably bodies of the above-mentioned troops lay as garrisons” (Berth.).

Chap. xviii. *Jehoshaphat's marriage alliance with Ahab, and his campaign with Ahab against the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead.*—Ver. 1. Jehoshaphat came into connection by marriage with Ahab through his son Joram taking Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab, to wife (xxi. 6); an event which did not take place on the visit made by Jehoshaphat to Ahab in his palace at Samaria, and recorded in ver. 2, but which had preceded that by about nine years. That visit falls in the beginning of the year in which Ahab was mortally wounded at Ramoth, and died, *i.e.* the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat's reign. But at that time Ahaziah, the son of Joram and Athaliah, was already from eight to nine years old, since thirteen years later he became king at the age of twenty-two; 2 Kings viii. 26, cf. with the chronol. table to 1 Kings xii. The marriage connection is mentioned in order to account for Jehoshaphat's visit to Samaria (ver. 2), and his alliance with Ahab in the war against the Syrians; but it is also introduced by a reference to Jehoshaphat's riches and his



royal splendour, repeated from chap. xvii. 5. In the opinion of many commentators, this is stated to account for Ahab's willingness to connect his family by marriage with that of Jehoshaphat. This opinion might be tenable were it Ahab's entering upon a marriage connection with Jehoshaphat which is spoken of; but for Jehoshaphat, of whom it is related that he entered into a marriage connection with Ahab, his own great wealth could not be a motive for his action in that matter. If we consider, first, that this marriage connection was very hurtful to the kingdom of Judah and the royal house of David, since Athaliah not only introduced the Phœnician idolatry into the kingdom, but also at the death of Ahaziah extirpated all the royal seed of the house of David, only the infant Joash of all the royal children being saved by the princess, a sister of Ahaziah, who was married to the high priest Jehoiada (xxii. 10-12); and, second, that Jehoshaphat was sharply censured by the prophet for his alliance with the criminal Ahab (xix. 2 ff.), and had, moreover, all but forfeited his life in the war (xviii. 34 f.),—we see that the author of the Chronicle can only have regarded the marriage connection between Jehoshaphat and Ahab as a mistake. By introducing this account of it by a second reference to Jehoshaphat's riches and power, he must therefore have intended to hint that Jehoshaphat had no need to enter into this relationship with the idolatrous house of Ahab, but had acted very inconsiderately in doing so. Schmidt has correctly stated the contents of the verse thus: *Josaphatus cetera dives et gloriosus infelicem adfinitatem cum Achabo, rege Israelis, contrahit.* With which side the proposals for thus connecting the two royal houses originated we are not anywhere informed. Even if the conjecture of Ramb., that Ahab proposed it to Jehoshaphat, be not well founded, yet so much is beyond doubt, namely, that Ahab not only desired the alliance, but also promoted it by every means in his power, since it must have been of great importance to him to gain in Jehoshaphat a strong ally against the hostile pressure of the Syrians. Jehoshaphat probably entered upon the alliance *bono animo et spe firmandæ inter duo regna pacis* (Ramb.), without much thought of the dangers which a connection of this sort with the idolatrous Ahab and with Jezebel might bring upon his kingdom.

Vers. 2-34. *The campaign undertaken along with Ahab against the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead, with its origin, course, and results for Ahab, is narrated in 1 Kings xxii. (in the history of*

Ahab) in agreement with our narrative, only the introduction to the war being different here. In 1 Kings xxii. 1-3 it is remarked, in connection with the preceding wars of Ahab with the Syrians, that after there had been no war for three years between Aram and Israel, in the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah came up to the king of Israel; and the latter, when he and his servants had determined to snatch away from the Syrians the city Ramoth in Gilead, which belonged to Israel, called upon Jehoshaphat to march with him to the war against Ramoth. In the Chronicle the more exact statement, "in the third year," which is intelligible only in connection with the earlier history of Ahab, is exchanged for the indefinite *לְאַחַד שָׁנִים*, "at the end of years;" and mention is made of the festal entertainment which Ahab bestowed upon his guest and his train (*הָעָם אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ*), to show the pains which Ahab took to induce King Jehoshaphat to take part in the proposed campaign. He killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, *וַיְסִיחֵהוּ*, and enticed, seduced him to go up with him to Ramoth. *הִסִּיתוּ*, to incite, entice to anything (Judg. i. 14), frequently to evil; cf. Deut. xiii. 7, etc. *עָלָה*, to advance upon a land or a city in a warlike sense. The account which follows of the preparations for the campaign by inquiring of prophets, and of the war itself, vers. 4-34, is in almost verbal agreement with 1 Kings xxii. 5-35. Referring to 1 Kings xxii. for the commentary on the substance of the narrative, we will here only group together briefly the divergences. Instead of 400 men who were prophets, ver. 5, in 1 Kings xxii. 6 we have about 400 men. It is a statement in round numbers, founded not upon exact enumeration, but upon an approximate estimate. Instead of *אִם אֶחָדָם* . . . *הַנִּלְךָ*, ver. 5, in Kings, ver. 6, we have *אִם אֶחָדָם* . . . *הַנִּלְךָ*, both verbs being in the same number; and so too in ver. 14, where in Kings, ver. 15, both verbs stand in the plural, notwithstanding that the answer which follows, *עָלָה וְהָעָלָה*, is addressed to Ahab alone, not to both the kings, while in the Chronicle the answer is given in the plural to both the kings, *עָלֵינוּ וְהָעָלֵינוּ*. In ver. 7a, "he prophesies me nothing good, but all his days (*i.e.* so long as he has been a prophet) evil," the meaning is intensified by the *בְּלִי-יָמָיו*, which is not found in 1 Kings ver. 8. In ver. 9, the *וַיֹּשְׁבִים*, which is introduced before the *בִּגְדָן*, "and sitting upon the threshing-floor," is due to difference of style, for it is quite superfluous for the signification. In ver. 14, the ambiguous words of Micah, "and Jahve will give into the hand of



the king" (Kings, ver. 15), are given in a more definite form: "and they (the enemy) shall be given into your hand." In ver. 19, in the first  $\text{וְהָאֵמֶר בְּכָה}$ , the  $\text{אֵמֶר}$  after the preceding  $\text{וַיֹּאמֶר}$  is not only superfluous, but improper, and has probably come into the text by a copyist's error. We should therefore read only  $\text{וְהָ בְכָה}$ , corresponding to the  $\text{וְהָ בְכָה}$  of Kings, ver. 20: "Then spake one after this manner, and the other spake after another manner." In ver. 23, the indefinite  $\text{אִי־יָדָה}$  of Kings, ver. 24, is elucidated by  $\text{אִי־יָדָה הִרְרָה}$ , "is that the manner" (cf. 1 Kings xiii. 12; 2 Kings iii. 8), and the *verb.*  $\text{עָבַר}$  follows without the relative pronoun, as in the passages cited. In ver. 30, only  $\text{שְׂרֵי הָרִכָּב}$  of the king are mentioned, without any statement of the number, which is given in Kings, ver. 31, with a backward reference to the former war (1 Kings xx. 24). In ver. 31, after the words, "and Jehoshaphat cried out," the higher cause of Jehoshaphat's rescue is pointed out in the words, "and Jahve helped him, and God drove them from him," which are not found in Kings, ver. 32; but by this religious reflection the actual course of the event is in no way altered. Bertheau's remark, therefore, that "the words disturb the clear connection of the events," is quite unwarrantable. Finally, in ver. 34,  $\text{הָיָה מַעֲמִיד}$ , he was holding his position, *i.e.* he held himself standing upright, the Hiph. is more expressive than the Hoph.  $\text{מַעֲמִיד}$  (Kings, ver. 35), since it expresses more definitely the fact that he held himself upright by his own strength. With Ahab's death, which took place in the evening at the time of the going down of the sun, the author of the Chronicle concludes his account of this war, and proceeds in chap. xix. to narrate the further course of Jehoshaphat's reign. In 1 Kings xxii. 36-39, the return of the defeated army, and the details as to Ahab's death and burial, are recorded; but these did not fit into the plan of the Chronicle.

Chap. xix. *The prophet Jehu's declaration as to Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab, and Jehoshaphat's further efforts to promote the fear of God and the administration of justice in Judah.*—Vers. 1-3. Jehu's declaration. Jehoshaphat returned from the war in which Ahab had lost his life,  $\text{בְּשָׁלוֹם}$ , *i.e.* safe, uninjured, to his house in Jerusalem; so that the promise of Micah in xviii. 16b was fulfilled also as regards him. But on his return, the seer Jehu, the son of Hanani, who had been thrown into the stocks by Asa (xvi. 7 ff.), met him with the reproving word, "Should one help the wicked, and lovest thou the haters

of Jahve!" (the inf. with לָ, as in 1 Chron. v. 1, ix. 25, etc.). Of these sins Jehoshaphat had been guilty. "And therefore is anger from Jahve upon thee" (קִנְיָה עָלַי as in 1 Chron. xxvii. 24). Jehoshaphat had already had experience of this wrath, when in the battle of Ramoth the enemy pressed upon him (xviii. 31), and was at a later time to have still further experience of it, partly during his own life, when the enemy invaded his land (chap. xx.), and when he attempted to re-establish the sea trade with Ophir (xx. 35 ff.), partly after his death in his family (chap. xxi. and xxii.). "But," continues Jehu, to console him, "yet there are good things found in thee (cf. xii. 12), for thou hast destroyed the Asheroth . . ." אֲשֵׁרִים = אֲשֵׁרֹת, xvii. 6. On these last words, comp. xii. 14 and xvii. 4.

Vers. 4-11.—*Jehoshaphat's further arrangements for the revival of the Jahve-worship, and the establishment of a proper administration of justice.*—The first two clauses in ver. 4 are logically connected thus: When Jehoshaphat (after his return from the war) sat (dwelt) in Jerusalem, he again went forth (וַיֵּצֵא וַיָּשָׁב are to be taken together) among the people, from Beersheba, the southern frontier (see 1 Chron. xxi. 2), to Mount Ephraim, the northern frontier of the kingdom of Judah, and brought them back to Jahve, the God of the fathers. The "again" (וַיָּשָׁב) can refer only to the former provision for the instruction of the people, recorded in chap. xvii. 7 ff.; all that was effected by the commission which Jehoshaphat had sent throughout the land being regarded as his work. The instruction of the people in the law was intended to lead them back to the Lord. Jehoshaphat now again took up his work of reformation, in order to complete the work he had begun, by ordering and improving the administration of justice.—Ver. 5 ff. He set judges in the land, in all the fenced cities of Judah; they, as larger cities, being centres of communication for their respective neighbourhoods, and so best suited to be the seats of judges. לָעִיר וָעִיר, in reference to every city, as the law (Deut. xvi. 18) prescribed. He laid it upon the consciences of these judges to administer justice conscientiously. "Not for men are ye to judge, but for Jahve;" i.e. not on the appointment and according to the will of men, but in the name and according to the will of the Lord (cf. Prov. xvi. 11). In the last clause of ver. 6, Jahve is to be supplied from the preceding context: "and Jahve is with you in judgment," i.e. in giving your decisions (cf. the conclusion



of ver. 11); whence this clause, of course, only serves to strengthen the foregoing, only contains the thoughts already expressed in the law, that judgment belongs to God (cf. Deut. i. 17 with Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 7 f.). Therefore the fear of the Lord should keep the judges from unrighteousness, so that they should neither allow themselves to be influenced by respect of persons, nor to be bribed by gifts, against which Deut. xvi. 19 and i. 17 also warns. שִׁמְרוּ וַעֲשׂוּ is rightly paraphrased by the Vulgate, *cum diligentia cuncta facite*. The clause, "With God there is no respect of persons," etc., recalls Deut. x. 17.—Vers. 8-11. Besides this, Jehoshaphat established at Jerusalem a supreme tribunal for the decision of difficult cases, which the judges of the individual cities could not decide. Ver. 8. "Moreover, in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set certain of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chiefs of the fathers'-houses of Israel, for the judgment of the Lord, and for controversies (לְרִיב)." From this clause Berth. correctly draws the conclusion, that as in Jerusalem, so also in the fenced cities (ver. 5), it was Levites, priests, and heads of the fathers'-houses who were made judges. This conclusion is not inconsistent with the fact that David appointed 6000 of the Levites to be shoterim and judges; for it does not follow from that that none but Levites were appointed judges, but only that the Levites were to perform an essential part in the administration of the law. The foundation of the judicial body in Israel was the appointment of judges chosen from the elders of the people (Ex. xviii. 21 ff.; Deut. i. 15 ff.) by Moses, at Jethro's instigation, and under the divine sanction. David had no intention, by his appointment of some thousands of Levites to be officials (writers) and judges, to set aside the Mosaic arrangement; on the contrary, he thereby gave it the expansion which the advanced development of the kingdom required. For the simple relationships of the Mosaic time, the appointment of elders to be judges might have been sufficient; but when in the course of time, especially after the introduction of the kingship, the social and political relations became more complicated, it is probable that the need of appointing men with special skill in law, to co-operate with the judges chosen from among the elders, in order that justice might be administered in a right way, and in a manner corresponding to the law, made itself increasingly felt; that consequently David had felt himself called upon to appoint a greater number of Levites to this office,

and that from that time forward the courts in the larger cities were composed of Levites and elders. The supreme court which Jehoshaphat set up in Jerusalem was established on a similar basis. For לְכָל דְּבַר-יְהוָה לְמִשְׁפַּט יְהוָה we have in ver. 11, לְכָל דְּבַר-יְהוָה, *i.e.* for all matters connected with religion and the worship; and instead of קָרִיב we have לְכָל דְּבַר הַמֶּלֶךְ, for every matter of the king, *i.e.* for all civil causes. The last clause, ver. 8, וַיָּשֻׁבוּ יְרוּשָׁלַם, cannot signify that the men called to this supreme tribunal went to Jerusalem to dwell there thenceforth (Ramb., etc.), or that the suitors went thither; for שׁוֹב does not denote to betake oneself to a place, but to return, which cannot be said of the persons above named, since it is not said that they had left Jerusalem. With Kimchi and others, we must refer the words to the previous statement in ver. 4, וַיָּצֵא בָּעָם וְגו', and understand them as a supplementary statement, that Jehoshaphat and those who had gone forth with him among the people returned to Jerusalem, which would have come in more fittingly at the close of ver. 7, and is to be rendered: "when they had returned to Jerusalem." The bringing in of this remark at so late a stage of the narrative, only after the establishment of the supreme tribunal has been mentioned, is explained by supposing that the historian was induced by the essential connection between the institution of the supreme court and the arrangement of the judicatories in the provincial cities, to leave out of consideration the order of time in describing the arrangements made by Jehoshaphat.—Ver. 9 f. To the members of the superior tribunal also, Jehoshaphat gave orders to exercise their office in the fear of the Lord, with fidelity and with upright heart (בְּלֵבב שְׁלֵם, *corde s. animo integro*, cf. xv. 17, xvi. 9). כֹּה תַעֲשֶׂן, thus shall ye do; what they are to do being stated only in ver. 10. The ו before כָּל-רִיב is explicative, namely, and is omitted by the LXX. and Vulg. as superfluous. "Every cause which comes to you from your brethren who dwell in their cities" (and bring causes before the superior court in the following cases): between blood and blood (בֵּין with לְ following, as in Gen. i. 6, etc.), *i.e.* in criminal cases of murder and manslaughter, and between law and between command, statutes, and judgments, *i.e.* in cases where the matter concerns the interpretation and application of the law, and its individual commands, statutes, and judgments, to particular crimes; wherever, in short, there is any doubt by what particular provision of the law the case in hand should be decided. With וְהִתְרֵם the



apodosis commences, but it is an anacolouthon. Instead of "ye shall give them instruction therein," we have, "ye shall teach them (those who bring the cause before you), that they incur not guilt, and an anger (*i.e.* God's anger and punishment) come upon you and your brethren" (cf. ver. 2). הָאֵלֹהִים, properly to illuminate, metaphorically to teach, with the additional idea of exhortation or warning. The word is taken from Ex. xviii. 20, and there is construed *c. accus. pers. et rei.* This construction is here also the underlying one, since the object which precedes in the absolute is to be taken as *accus.*: thus, and as regards every cause, ye shall teach them concerning it. After the enumeration of the matters falling within the jurisdiction of this court, כֹּה תַעֲשֶׂה is repeated, and this precept is then pressed home upon the judges by the words, "that ye incur not guilt." Thereafter (in ver. 11) Jehoshaphat nominates the spiritual and civil presidents of this tribunal: for spiritual causes the high priest Amariah, who is not the same as the Amariah mentioned after Zadok as the fifth high priest (1 Chron. v. 37) (see p. 116 and 120); in civil causes Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the prince of the house of Judah, *i.e.* tribal prince of Judah. These shall be עֲלֵיכֶם over you, *i.e.* presidents of the judges; and שֹׁטְרִים, writers, shall the Levites be לְפָנֶיכֶם, before you, *i.e.* as your assistants and servants. Jehoshaphat concludes the nomination of the judicial staff with the encouraging words, "Be strong (courageous) and do," *i.e.* go to work with good heart, "and the Lord be with the good," *i.e.* with him who discharges the duties of his office well.

The establishment of this superior court was in form, indeed, the commencement of a new institution; but in reality it was only the expansion or firmer organization of a court of final appeal already provided by Moses, the duties of which had been until then performed partly by the high priest, partly by the existing civil heads of the people (the judges and kings). When Moses, at Horeb, set judges over the people, he commanded them to bring to him the matters which were too difficult for them to decide, that he might settle them according to decisions obtained of God (Ex. xviii. 26 and 19). At a later time he ordained (Deut. xvii. 8 ff.) that for the future the judges in the various districts and cities should bring the more difficult cases to the Levitic priests and the judge at the place where the central sanctuary was, and let them be decided by them. In

thus arranging, he presupposes that Israel would have at all times not only a high priest who might ascertain the will of God by means of the Urim and Thummim, but also a supreme director of its civil affairs at the place of the central sanctuary, who, in common with the priests, *i.e.* the high priest, would give decisions in cases of final appeal (see the commentary on Deut. xvii. 8-13). On the basis of these Mosaic arrangements, Jehoshaphat set up a supreme court in Jerusalem, with the high priest and a lay president at its head, for the decision of causes which up till that time the king, either alone or with the co-operation of the high priest, had decided. For further information as to this supreme court, see in my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. S. 250 f.

Chap. xx. *Jehoshaphat's victory over the Moabites, Ammonites, and other nations; and the remaining items of information as to his reign.*—Vers. 1-30. The victory over the hostile peoples who invaded Judah. In the succeeding time, the Moabites and Ammonites, in alliance with other tribes of Mount Seir, invaded Judah with the purpose of driving the people of God out of their country, and extirpating them (ver. 1). On being informed of this invasion, Jehoshaphat sought help of the Lord, while he proclaimed a fast in the land, and in the temple before the assembled people prayed God for His help (vers. 2-12); and received by the mouth of the prophet Jahaziel the promise that God would fight for Judah, and that king and people would next day behold the help the Lord would give (vers. 13-18). And so it happened. On the following day, when the Judæan army, with the Levitic singers and players at their head, came into the wilderness Jeruel, their enemies had by the dispensation of God mutually destroyed each other (vers. 19-24), so that Jehoshaphat and his people found the proposed battle-field full of corpses, and gathered spoil for three days, and then on the fourth day, in the Valley of Blessing, they praised the Lord for the wonderful deliverance; thereafter returning to Jerusalem with joy, again to thank the Lord in the house of God for His help (vers. 25-30).

Ver. 1 f. By *אַחֲרֵי־כֵן*, *postea*, the war which follows is made to fall in the latter part of Jehoshaphat's reign, but certainly not in the last year in which he reigned alone, two years before his death, but only somewhat later than the events in chap. xviii. and xix., which occurred six or seven years before his death. Along with the Moabites and Ammonites there marched against Jehoshaphat



also מִהַעֲמוֹנִים. This statement is obscure. Since מֵן has unquestionably a partitive or local signification, we might take the word to signify, enemies who dwelt aside from the Ammonites (מֵן as in 1 Sam. xx. 22, 37), which might possibly be the designation of tribes in the Syro-Arabic desert bordering upon the country of the Ammonites on the north and east; and מִצָּרִים in ver. 2 would seem to favour this idea. But vers. 10 and 22 f. are scarcely reconcilable with this interpretation, since there, besides or along with the sons of Ammon and Moab, inhabitants of Mount Seir are named as enemies who had invaded Judah. Now the Edomites dwelt on Mount Seir; but had the Edomites only been allies of the Ammonites and Moabites, we should expect simply בְּנֵי אֲדָם or אֲדָוִים, or בְּנֵי שַׁעִיר (cf. xxv. 11, 14). Nor can it be denied that the interpretation which makes מִהַעֲמוֹנִים to denote peoples dwelling beyond the Ammonites is somewhat artificial and far-fetched. Under these circumstances, the alteration proposed by Hiller in *Onomast.* p. 285 commends itself, viz. the change of מִהַעֲמוֹנִים into מִהַמְּעֹנִים, Maunites or Maonites,—a tribe whose headquarters were the city Maan in the neighbourhood of Petra, to the east of the Wady Musa; see on 1 Chron. iv. 41. Maan lay upon Mount Seir, i.e. in the mountainous district to the west of the Arabah, which stretches upwards from the head of the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf, now called Jebâl (Gabalene) in its northern part, and es-Sherah in the south. The Maunites were consequently inhabitants of Mount Seir, and are here mentioned instead of the Edomites, as being a people dwelling on the southern side of the mountain, and probably of non-Edomitic origin, in order to express the idea that not merely the Edomites took part in the campaign of the Ammonites and Moabites, but also tribes from all parts of Mount Seir. In chap. xxvi. 7 the מְעֹנִים are mentioned along with Arabs and Philistines as enemies of Israel, who had been conquered by Uzziah. These circumstances favour the proposed alteration; while, on the contrary, the fact that the LXX. have here ἐκ τῶν Μιναιῶν for מִהַעֲמוֹנִים proves little, since these translators have rendered הָעֲמוֹנִים in xxvi. 8 also by οἱ Μινῆοι, there erroneously making the Ammonites Minaiites.—Ver. 2. Then they came and announced to Jehoshaphat, sc. messengers or fugitives; the subject is indefinite, and is to be supplied from the context. “Against thee there cometh a great multitude from beyond the (Dead) sea.” מִצָּרִים also has no suitable sense here, since in the whole narrative nothing is said of enemies coming

out of Syria; we should read מֵאֶדֶם with Calmet and others. As the enemy made their attack from the south end of the Dead Sea, the messengers announce that they were come from Edom. "Behold, they are in Hazazon-Tamar," *i.e.* Engedi, the present Ain Jidy, midway along the west coast of the Dead Sea (see on Josh. xv. 62 and Gen. xiv. 7), about fifteen hours from Jerusalem.

Vers. 3-13. This report filled Jehoshaphat with fear, and he resolved to seek help of the Lord. שׁוּם פ' = נָתַן פָּנָיו, cf. 2 Kings xii. 18, Jer. xlii. 15, to direct the face to anything, *i.e.* to purpose something, come to a determination. He proclaimed a fast in all Judah, that the people might bow themselves before God, and supplicate His help, as was wont to be done in great misfortunes; cf. Judg. xx. 26, 1 Sam. vii. 6, Isa. ii. 15. In consequence of the royal appeal, Judah came together to seek of the Lord, *i.e.* to pray for help, by fasting and prayer in the temple; and it was not only the inhabitants of Jerusalem who thus assembled, for they came out of all the cities of the kingdom. בָּקַשׁ מִיְהוָה, to seek of the Lord, *sc.* help, is expressed in the last clause by בָּקַשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה, to seek the Lord.—Ver. 5. When the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem had assembled themselves in the house of God, Jehoshaphat came forth before the new court and made supplication in fervent prayer to the Lord. The new court is the outer or great court of the temple, which Solomon had built (iv. 9). It is here called the *new* court, probably because it had been restored or extended under Jehoshaphat or Asa. This court was the place where the congregation assembled before God in the sanctuary. Jehoshaphat placed himself before it, *i.e.* at the entrance into the court of the priests, so that the congregation stood opposite to him.—Ver. 6 ff. The prayer which Jehoshaphat directed to Jahve the God of the fathers, as the almighty Ruler over all kingdoms, consists of a short representation of the circumstances of the case. Jahve had given the land to His people Israel for an everlasting possession, and Israel had built a sanctuary to His name therein (vers. 7 and 8); but they had in no way provoked the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites to fall upon them, and to drive them out of their land (vers. 10 and 11). On these two facts Jehoshaphat founds his prayer for help, in a twofold manner: in respect to the first, calling to mind the divine promise to hear the prayers offered up to God in the temple (ver. 9); and in reference to the second, laying emphasis upon the inability



of Israel to fight against so numerous an enemy (ver. 12). In his manner of addressing Jahve, "God of our fathers," there is contained a reason why God should protect His people in their present distress. Upon Him, who had given the land to the fathers for a possession, it was incumbent to maintain the children in the enjoyment of it, if they had not forfeited it by their sins. Now Jahve as a covenant God was bound to do this, and also as God and ruler of heaven and earth He had the requisite power and might; cf. Ps. cxv. 3. **אֵין עֹמֵד לְהִתְיַצֵּב**, there is none with Thee who could set himself, *i.e.* could withstand Thee: cf. the similar phrase, xiv. 10; and for the thought, see 1 Chron. xxix. 12.—On ver. 7*a*, cf. Josh. xxiii. 9, xxiv. 12, Ex. xxiii. 20 ff., etc.; on 7*b*, cf. Gen. xiii. 15 f., xv. 18, etc.; on **אֶהְיֶה**, Isa. xli. 8.—Ver. 8. In this land they dwelt, and built Thee therein a sanctuary for Thy name; cf. vi. 5, 8. **לְאֵמֹר**, saying, *i.e.* at the consecration of this house, having expressed the confident hope contained in the following words (ver. 9). In this verse, the cases enumerated in Solomon's dedicatory prayer, in which supplication is made that God would hear in the temple, are briefly summed up. By referring to that prayer, Jehoshaphat presupposes that Jahve had promised that He would answer prayer offered there, since He had filled the temple with His glory; see vii. 1-3. The name **שְׁפוֹט**, which occurs only here, between **דָּבַר** and **חָרַב**, denotes in this connection a punitive judgment.—Ver. 10. **וְעַתָּה**, *and now*, the contrary of this has occurred. Peoples into whose midst (**לְבוֹא בְּהֵם** . . . **אֲשֶׁר**) Thou didst not allow Israel to come, *i.e.* into whose land Thou didst not allow Israel to enter when they came out of the land of Egypt, for they (the Israelites under Moses) turned from them and destroyed them not (cf. as to the fact, Num. xx. 14 ff.; Deut. ii. 4, ix. 19); behold, these peoples recompense us by coming to cast us out of our possession which Thou hast given us (**הוֹרִישׁ**, to give as a possession, as in Judg. xi. 24). There follows hereupon in ver. 12 the prayer: "Our God, wilt Thou not judge," *i.e.* do right upon them, for we have not strength before (to withstand) this multitude? We know not what to do, *sc.* against so many enemies; but our eyes are turned to Thee, *i.e.* to Thee we look for help; cf. Ps. cxliii. 2, cxli. 8.—Ver. 13. Thus all Judah, with their king, stood praying before the Lord. They had, moreover, brought with them their little ones, their wives, and their sons, to pray for deliverance for them from the enemy; cf. Judith iv. 9.

Vers. 14–19. The Lord's answer by the prophet Jahaziel.—Ver. 14. In the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, and promised miraculous assistance to king and people. Jahaziel's descent is traced back for five generations to the Levite Mattaniah of the sons of Asaph. This Mattaniah is not the same person as the Mattaniah in 1 Chron. xxv. 4, 16, who lived in David's time, for he belonged to the sons of Heman; but perhaps (as Movers conjectures, S. 112) he is identical with the Asaphite Nethaniah, 1 Chron. xxv. 2, 12, since נ and י might easily be confounded.—Ver. 15. Jahaziel announced to the king and people that they need not fear before the great multitude of their foes; “for the war is not yours, but Jahve's,” *i.e.* you have not to make war upon them, for the Lord will do it; cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 47.—Ver. 16. “To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the height Hazziz; and ye will find them at the end of the valley, before the desert Jeruel.” The wilderness Jeruel was, without doubt, the name of a part of the great stretch of flat country, bounded on the south by the Wady el Ghâr, and extending from the Dead Sea to the neighbourhood of Tekoa, which is now called el Hasasah, after a wady on its northern side. The whole country along the west side of the Dead Sea, “where it does not consist of mountain ridges or deep valleys, is a high table-land, sloping gradually towards the east, wholly waste, merely covered here and there with a few bushes, and without the slightest trace of having ever been cultivated” (Robinson's *Pal. sub voce*). The name מַעְלֵה הַצִּיּוֹן, ascent or height of Hazziz, has perhaps remained attached to the Wady el Hasasah. LXX. have rendered צִיּוֹן by Ἀσσεῖς; Josephus (*Antt.* ix. 1. 2) has ἀναβάσεως λεγομένης ἐξοχῆς, in accordance with which Robinson (*loc. cit.*) takes the way “upwards from Ziz” to be the pass which at present leads from Ain Jidy to the table-land. Yet it is described by him as a “fearful pass,”<sup>1</sup> and it can hardly be thought of here, even if the enemy, like the Bedouins now when on their forays, may be

<sup>1</sup> He remarks: “The path winds up in zig-zags, often at the steepest gradient which horses could ascend, and runs partly along projecting walls of rock on the perpendicular face of the cliff, and then down the heaps of *débris*, which are almost as steep. When one looks back at this part from below, it seems quite impossible that there could be any pathway; but by skilful windings the path has been carried down without any unconquerable difficulties, so that even loaded camels often go up and down.”



supposed to have marched along the shore of the sea, and ascended to the table-land only at Engedi; for the Israelites did not meet the enemy in this ascent, but above upon the table-land. Josephus' translation of הַצִּי"ן by ἐξοχή is also very questionable, for it is not necessary that the ה should be the article (Ew. *Gesch.* iii. S. 475, der 2 Aufl.).—Ver. 17. Ye have not to fight therein (בְּזוֹאת); only come hither, stand and see the help of the Lord (who is) with you. You need do nothing more, and therefore need not fear.—Ver. 18. For this comforting assurance the king and people thanked the Lord, falling down in worship before Him, whereupon the Levites stood up to praise God with a loud voice. Levites "of the sons of Kohath, yea, of the Korahites," for they were descended from Kohath (1 Chron. vi. 22).

Vers. 20-30. The fulfilment of the divine promise.—Ver. 20. On the next morning the assembled men of Judah marched, in accordance with the words of the prophet, to the wilderness of Tekoa. As they marched forth, Jehoshaphat stood, probably in the gate of Jerusalem, where those about to march forth were assembled, and called upon them to trust firmly in the Lord and His prophets (הַאֲמִנִי and הַאֲמִנִי, as in Isa. vii. 9). After he had thus counselled the people (יַעֲזֵן אֵל, shown himself a counsellor; cf. 2 Kings vi. 8), he ordered them to march, not for battle, but to assure themselves of the wonderful help of the Lord. He placed singers of the Lord (לְ before יהוה as a periphrasis for the genitive), singing praise in holy ornaments, in the marching forth before the army, and saying; *i.e.* he commanded the Levitic singers to march out before the army, singing and playing in holy ornaments (לְהַדְרִיתִּק, clad in holy ornaments, = בְּהַדְרִית in 1 Chron. xvi. 29; cf. Ew. § 217, a), to praise the Lord for the help He had vouchsafed.—Ver. 22. And at the time when they (having come into the neighbourhood of the hostile camp) began with singing and praising, Jahve directed liers in wait against the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were come against Judah, and they were smitten. מְאָרְבִּים denotes liers in wait, men hidden in ambush and lying in wait (Judg. ix. 25). Who are here meant cannot be ascertained with certainty. Some of the older commentators, Ew. and Berth., think it refers to powers, angels sent by God, who are called *insidiatores*, because of the work they had to do in the army of the hostile peoples. But the passages where the interposition of heavenly powers is spoken of are different (cf. 2 Kings vi. 17, xix. 35), and it is not

probable that heavenly powers would be called **מִאֲרָבִים**. Most probably earthly liers in wait are meant, who unexpectedly rushed forth from their ambush upon the hostile army, and raised a panic terror among them; so that, as is narrated in ver. 23 f., the Ammonites and Moabites first turned their weapons against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, and after they had exterminated them, began to exterminate each other. But the ambush cannot have been composed of men of Judah, because they were, according to vers. 15 and 17, not to fight, but only to behold the deliverance wrought by the Lord. Probably it was liers in wait of the Seirites, greedy of spoil, who from an ambush made an attack upon the Ammonites and Moabites, and by the divine leading put the attacked in such fear and confusion, that they turned furiously upon the inhabitants of Mount Seir, who marched with them, and then fell to fighting with each other; just as, in Judg. vii. 22 f., the Midianites were, under divine influence, so terrified by the unexpected attack of the small band led by Gideon, that they turned their swords against and mutually destroyed each other. **וַיִּכְבְּלוּתָם בַּיּוֹשֶׁבִי שׁ**, and when they had come to an end (were finished) among the inhabitants of Seir, when they had massacred these, they helped the one against the other to destruction (**מִשְׁחִית** is a substantive, as xxii. 4, Ezek. v. 16, etc.).—Ver. 24. Now, when Judah came to the height in the wilderness (**מִצְפֶּה**, *specula*, watch-tower, here a height in the wilderness of Tekoa, whence one might look out over the wilderness Jeruel, ver. 16), and turned, or was about to turn, against the multitude of the enemy (**הָהָמוֹן** referring back to ver. 12), behold, they saw “corpses lying upon the earth, and none had escaped,” *i.e.* they saw corpses in such multitude lying there, that to all appearance none had escaped.—Ver. 25. So Jehoshaphat, with his people, came (as Jahaziel had announced, not to fight, but only to make booty) and found among them (**בָּהֶם**, among or by the fallen) in abundance both wealth and corpses and precious vessels. The mention of **בְּגָדִים** as part of the booty, between **רְכוּשׁ** and the precious vessels, is somewhat surprising. Some Codd. (4 Kennic. and 3 de Rossi) and various ancient editions (Complut., the Brixenian used by Luther, the Bomberg. of date 1518 and 21, and the Münster) have, instead of it, **בְּגָדִים**; but it is very questionable if the LXX. and Vulg. have it (cf. de Rossi *variae lectt. ad h. l.*). **בְּגָדִים**, garments, along with **רְכוּשׁ**, moveable property (cattle, tents, etc.), seems to suit better, and is



therefore held by Dathe and Berth. to be the correct and original reading. Yet the proofs of this are not decisive, for פגרים is much better attested, and we need not necessarily take רכוש to mean living and dead cattle; but just as רכוש denotes property of any kind, which, among nomadic tribes, consists principally in cattle, we may also take פגרים in the signification of slain men and beasts—the clothes of the men and the accoutrements and ornaments of the beasts (cf. Judg. viii. 26) being a by no means worthless booty. Garments as such are not elsewhere met with in enumerations of things taken as booty, in Judg. viii. 26 only the purple robes of the Midianite princes being spoken of; and to the remark that the before-mentioned פגרים has given rise to the changing of פגרים into פגרים, we may oppose the equally well-supported conjecture, that the apparently unsuitable meaning of the word פגרים may have given rise to the alteration of it into פגרים. פגלי חמדות are probably in the main gold and silver ornaments, such as are enumerated in Judg. viii. 25 f. And they spoiled for themselves לאין משא, “there was not carrying,” i.e. in such abundance that it could not be carried away, removed, and plundered in three days, because the booty was so great. The unusually large quantity of booty is accounted for by the fact that these peoples had gone forth with all their property to drive the Israelites out of their inheritance, and to take possession of their land for themselves; so that this invasion of Judah was a kind of migration of the peoples, such as those which, at a later time, have been repeated on a gigantic scale, and have poured forth from Central Asia over the whole of Europe. In this, the purpose of the hostile hordes, we must seek the reason for their destruction by a miracle wrought of God. Because they intended to drive the people of Israel out of the land given them by God, and to destroy them, the Lord was compelled to come to the help of His people, and to destroy their enemies.—Ver. 26. On the fourth day the men of Judah gathered themselves together, to give thanks to God the Lord for this blessing, in a valley which thence received the name עמק ברכה (valley of blessing), and which cannot have been far from the battle-field. Thence they joyfully returned, with Jehoshaphat at their head, to Jerusalem, and went up, the Levites and priests performing solemn music, to the house of God, to render further thanks to the Lord for His wondrous help (ver. 27 f.). The ancient name ברכה still exists in the Wady Bereikut, to the west of Tekoa, near

the road which leads from Hebron to Jerusalem. "A wide, open valley, and upon its west side, on a small rising ground, are the ruins of Bereikut, which cover from three to four acres" (Robinson's *New Biblical Researches*, and *Phys. Geogr.* S. 106; cf. v. de Velde, *Memoir*, p. 292). Jerome makes mention of the place in *Vita Paulæ*, where he narrates that Paula, standing in *supercilio Caphar baruca*, looked out thence upon the wide desert, and the former land of Sodom and Gomorrah (cf. Reland, *Pal. illustr.* pp. 356 and 685). There is no ground, on the other hand, for the identification of the valley of blessing with the upper part of the valley of Kidron, which, according to Joel iv. 2, 12, received the name of Valley of Jehoshaphat (see on Joel iv. 2).—On ver. 27*b*, cf. Ezra vi. 22, Neh. xii. 43.—Ver. 29. The fame of this victory of the Lord over the enemies of Israel caused the terror of God to be spread abroad over all the kingdoms of the surrounding lands, in consequence of which the kingdom of Judah had rest (cf. xvii. 10). On the last clause of ver. 30, cf. xv. 15. This wonderful act of the Lord is made the subject of praise to God in the Korahite Psalms, xlv., xlvii., and xlviii., and perhaps also in Ps. lxxxiii., composed by an Asaphite, perhaps Jahaziel (see Del. Introduction to these Psalms).

Vers. 31–37. Concluding notes on Jehoshaphat's reign, which are found also in 1 Kings xxii. 41–51, where they, supplemented by some notes (vers. 45, 48, and 49) which are wanting in the Chronicle, form the whole account of his reign. In the statements as to Jehoshaphat's age at his accession, and the length and character of his reign, both accounts agree, except that the author of the Chronicle has, instead of the stereotyped formula, "and the people still sacrificed and offered incense upon the high places," a remark more significant of the state of affairs: "and the people had not yet determinedly turned their heart to the God of their fathers" (ver. 33). The notice that Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel (Kings, ver. 45) is not found in the Chronicle, because that would, as a matter of course, follow from Jehoshaphat's having joined affinity with the royal house of Ahab, and had been already sufficiently attested by the narrative in chap. xviii., and is so still further by the undertaking spoken of in ver. 35 ff. For the same reason, the clause introduced in 1 Kings xxii. 46 about the valiant acts and the wars of Jehoshaphat is omitted in the Chronicle, as these acts have been



specially narrated here. As to Jehu's speeches, which were put into the book of Kings, see the Introduction, p. 34. Further, the remark on the driving out of the remaining Sodomites (שְׂדֵמִי) from the land, 1 Kings xxii. 47, which refers back to 1 Kings xv. 12, is wanting here, because this speciality is not mentioned in the case of Asa. Finally, the remark that Edom had no king, but only a viceroy or deputy, serves in 1 Kings xxii. 48 only as an introduction to the succeeding account of Jehoshaphat's attempt to open up anew the sea traffic with Ophir. But on that subject the author of the Chronicle only recounts in vers. 35-37 that Jehoshaphat allied himself with the godless Ahaziah the king of Israel to build in Ezion-gaber ships to go to Tarshish, was censured for it by the prophet Eliezer, who announced to him that Jahve would destroy his work, and that thereupon the ships were broken, doubtless by a storm, and so could not go upon the voyage. אֶת־יָרֵבֶן does not definitely fix the time (cf. xx. 1), but only states that the alliance with Ahaziah took place after the victory over the Ammonites and Moabites. Ahaziah ascended the throne in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and reigned scarcely two years, and the enterprise under discussion falls in that period. אֶת־חֲזַבְרִי is an Aramaic form for הֶתְחַבֵּר. The last clause of ver. 38, "he did wickedly," Bertheau refers to Jehoshaphat: he did wrong; because the context shows that these words are intended to contain a censure on Jehoshaphat for his connection with the king of the northern kingdom. But this remark, though substantially correct, by no means proves that הוּא refers to Jehoshaphat. The words contain a censure on Jehoshaphat on account of his alliance with Ahaziah, even if they describe Ahaziah's conduct. We must, with the older commentators, take the words to refer to Ahaziah, for הִרְשִׁיעַ is much too strong a word for Jehoshaphat's fault in the matter. The author of the Chronicle does indeed use the word הִרְשִׁיעַ of Jehoshaphat's grandson Ahaziah, xxii. 3, in the clause, "his mother, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, was for הִרְשִׁיעַ his counsellor," but only that he may characterize the acts of the Ahabic house. Jehoshaphat allied himself with the wicked Ahaziah to build ships לִלְבֹּת תַּרְשִׁישׁ, to go to Tarshish; and they built ships at Ezion-gaber, i.e. on the Red Sea. Instead of this, we have in 1 Kings xxii. 49: Jehoshaphat built Tarshish ships to go to Ophir for gold. Hence it is manifest that in both passages the same undertaking is spoken of, and the expression

"Tarshish ships" is paraphrased in the Chronicle by "ships to go to Tarshish." This periphrasis is, however, a mistake; for Tarshish ships are merely ships which, like those going to Tarshish, were built for long sea voyages, for Jehoshaphat merely desired to renew the voyages to Ophir. With the exception of this erroneous interpretation of the words, Tarshish ships, the two narratives agree, if we only keep in mind the fact that both are incomplete extracts from a more detailed account of this enterprise. The Chronicle supplies us with an explanatory commentary on the short account in 1 Kings xxii. 49, both in the statement that Jehoshaphat allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel for the preparation of the ships, and also in communicating the word of the prophet Eliezer as to the enterprise, which makes clear to us the reason for the destruction of the ships; while in 1 Kings xxii. 49 merely the fact of their destruction is recorded. Of the prophet Eliezer nothing further is known than the saying here communicated. His father's name, Dodavahu, is analogous in form to Hodavya, Joshavya (see on 1 Chron. iii. 24), so that there is no good ground to alter it into *דודיהו*, friend of Jahve, after the *Δωδία* of the LXX. As to Mareshah, see on xi. 8. The perfect *פָּרַץ* is prophetic: Jahve will rend thy work asunder. The words which follow record the fulfilment. *עָצַר* as in xiii. 20, xiv. 10. With this the chronicler's account of this enterprise concludes; while in 1 Kings xxii. 50 it is further stated that, after the destruction of the ships first built, Ahaziah called upon Jehoshaphat still to undertake the Ophir voyage in common with him, and to build new ships for the purpose, but Jehoshaphat would not. The ground of his refusal may easily be gathered from ver. 37 of the Chronicle.

CHAP. XXI.—JEHOSHAPHAT'S DEATH, AND THE REIGN OF HIS SON JORAM.

The account of the death and burial of Jehoshaphat is carried over to chap. xxi., because Joram's first act after Jehoshaphat's death, ver. 2 ff., stands in essential connection with that event, since Joram began his reign with the murder of all his brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat (vers. 2-4). The further account of Joram (vers. 5-10) agrees almost verbally with the account in 2 Kings viii. 17-22; then in vers. 12-19 there follows further information as to the divine chastisements inflicted upon Joram



for his crime, which is not found in 2 Kings; and in ver. 20 we have remarks on his end, which correspond to the statements in 2 Kings viii. 24.

Vers. 1-4. *Jehoshaphat's death, and the slaughter of his sons by Joram.*—Vers. 2, 3. Joram had six brothers, whom their father had plentifully supplied with means of subsistence—presents in silver, gold, and precious things—"in the fenced cities of Judah;" *i.e.* he had made them, as Rehoboam also had made his sons, commandants of fortresses, with ample revenues; but the kingdom he gave to Joram as the first-born. Among the six names two Azariahs occur,—the one written Azarjah, the other Azarjahu. Jehoshaphat is called king of Israel instead of king of Judah, because he as king walked in the footsteps of Israel, Jacob the wrestler with God, and was a true king of God's people.—Ver. 4. Now when Joram ascended (raised himself to) the throne of his father, and attained to power (יָתַח as in i. 1), he slew all his brethren with the sword, and also some of the princes of Israel, *i.e.* the tribal princes of his kingdom. It could hardly be from avarice that he slew his brothers, merely to get possession of their property; probably it was because they did not sympathize with the political course which he was entering upon, and disapproved of the idolatrous conduct of Joram and his wife Athaliah. This may be gathered from the fact that in ver. 13 they are called better than Joram. The princes probably drew down upon themselves the wrath of Joram, or of his heathen consort, by disapproving of the slaughter of the royal princes, or by giving other signs of discontent with the spirit of their reign.

Vers. 5-10. *Duration and spirit of Joram's reign.*—These verses agree with 2 Kings viii. 17-22, with the exception of some immaterial divergences, and have been commented upon in the remarks on that passage.—In ver. 7 the thought is somewhat otherwise expressed than in ver. 19 (Kings): "Jahve would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that He had made with David;" instead of, "He would not destroy Judah because of David His servant, as He had said." Instead of לָחֵת לוֹ נֵיר וּלְבָנָיו we have in the Chronicle לָחֵת לוֹ נֵיר לְבָנָיו, to give him a lamp, and that in respect of his sons, ו being inserted before לְבָנָיו to bring the idea more prominently forward. In regard to עַם שָׂרָיו, ver. 9, instead of צָעִירָה, Kings ver. 21, see on 2 Kings *loc. cit.* At the end of ver. 9 the words, "and the people fled to their

tents" (ver. 21, Kings), whereby the notice of Joram's attempt to bring Edom again under his sway, which is in itself obscure enough, becomes yet more obscure.—Ver. 10 f. The chronicler concludes the account of the revolt of Edom and of the city of Libnah against Judah's dominion with the reflection: "For he (Joram) had forsaken Jahve the God of the fathers," and consequently had brought this revolt upon himself, the Lord punishing him thereby for his sin. "Yea, even high places did he make." The **בָּמֹת** placed at the beginning may be connected with **בָּמֹת** (cf. Isa. xxx. 33), while the subject is emphasized by **הוּא**: The same who had forsaken the God of the fathers, made also high places, which Asa and Jehoshaphat had removed, xiv. 2, 4, xvii. 6. "And he caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication," *i.e.* seduced them into the idolatrous worship of Baal. That the Hiph. **וַיִּזְנֶה** is to be understood of the spiritual whoredom of Baal-worship we learn from ver. 13: "as the house of Ahab caused to commit fornication." **וַיִּזְנֶה**, "and misled Judah," *i.e.* drew them away by violence from the right way. **וַיִּזְנֶה** is to be interpreted in accordance with Deut. xiii. 6, 11.

Vers. 12–19. The prophet Elijah's letter against Joram, and the infliction of the punishments as announced.—Ver. 12. There came to him a writing from the prophet Elijah to this effect: "Thus saith Jahve, the God of thy father David, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat, . . . but hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, . . . and also hast slain thy brethren, the house of thy father, who were better than thyself; behold, Jahve will send a great plague upon thy people, and upon thy sons, and thy wives, and upon all thy goods; and thou shalt have great sickness, by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day." **מִכְתָּב**, writing, is a written prophetic threatening, in which his sins are pointed out to Joram, and the divine punishment for them announced. In regard to this statement, we need not be surprised that nothing is elsewhere told us of any written prophecies of Elijah; for we have no circumstantial accounts of his prophetic activity, by which we might estimate the circumstances which may have induced him in this particular instance to commit his prophecy to writing. But, on the other hand, it is very questionable if Elijah was still alive in the reign of Joram of Judah. His translation to heaven is narrated in 2 Kings ii., between the reign of Ahaziah and Joram of Israel, but the year of the event



is nowhere stated in Scripture. In the Jewish Chronicle *Seder olam*, chap. xvii. 45, it is indeed placed in the second year of Ahaziah of Israel; but this statement is not founded upon historical tradition, but is a mere deduction from the fact that his translation is narrated in 2 Kings ii. immediately after Ahaziah's death; and the last act of Elijah of which we have any record (2 Kings i.) falls in the second year of that king. Lightfoot, indeed (*Opp.* i. p. 85), Ramb., and Dereser have concluded from 2 Kings iii. 11 that Elijah was taken away from the earth in the reign of Jehoshaphat, because according to that passage, in the campaign against the Moabites, undertaken in company with Joram of Israel, Jehoshaphat inquired for a prophet, and received the answer that Elisha was there, who had poured water upon the hands of Elijah. But the only conclusion to be drawn from that is, that in the camp, or near it, was Elisha, Elijah's servant, not that Elijah was no longer upon earth. The perfect *אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא* seems indeed to imply this; but it is questionable if we may so press the perfect, *i.e.* whether the speaker made use of it, or whether it was employed only by the later historian. The words are merely a periphrasis to express the relationship of master and servant in which Elijah stood to Elisha, and tell us only that the latter was Elijah's attendant. But Elisha had entered upon this relationship to Elijah long before Elijah's departure from the earth (1 Kings xix. 19 ff.). Elijah may therefore have still been alive under Joram of Judah; and Berth. accordingly thinks it "antecedently probable that he spoke of Joram's sins, and threatened him with punishment. But the letter," so he further says, "is couched in quite general terms, and gives, moreover, merely a prophetic explanation of the misfortunes with which Joram was visited;" whence we may conclude that in its present form it is the work of a historian living at a later time, who describes the relation of Elijah to Joram in few words, and according to his conception of it as a whole. This judgment rests on dogmatic grounds, and flows from a principle which refuses to recognise any supernatural prediction in the prophetic utterances. The contents of the letter can be regarded as a prophetic exposition of the misfortunes which broke in, as it were, upon Joram, only by those who deny *à priori* that there is any special prediction in the speeches of the prophets, and hold all prophecies which contain such to be *raticinia post eventum*. Somewhat more weighty is the objection raised against the

view that Elijah was still upon earth, to the effect that the divine threatenings would make a much deeper impression upon Joram by the very fact that the letter came from a prophet who was no longer in life, and would thus more easily bring him to the knowledge that the Lord is the living God, who had in His hand his breath and all his ways, and who knew all his acts. Thus the writing would smite the conscience of Joram like a voice from the other world (Düchsel). But this whole remark is founded only upon subjective conjectures and presumptions, for which actual analogies are wanting. For the same reason we cannot regard the remark of Menken as very much to the point, when he says: "If a man like Elias were to speak again upon earth, after he had been taken from it, he must do it from the clouds: this would harmonize with the whole splendour of his course in life; and, in my opinion, that is what actually occurred." For although we do not venture "to mark the limits to which the power and sphere of activity of the perfected saints is extended," yet we are not only justified, but also bound in duty, to judge of those facts of revelation which are susceptible of different interpretations, according to the analogy of the whole Scripture. But the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments know nothing of any communications by writing between the perfected saints in heaven and men; indeed, they rather teach the contrary in the parable of the rich man<sup>1</sup> (Luke xvi. 31). There are consequently no sufficient grounds for believing that the glorified Elijah either sent a letter to Joram from heaven by an angel, or commissioned any living person to write the letter. The statement of the narrative, "there came to him a writing from Elijah the prophet," cannot well be understood to mean anything else than that Elijah wrote the threatening prophecy which follows; but we have no certain proof that Elijah was then no longer alive, but had been already received into heaven. The time of his translation cannot be exactly fixed. He was still alive in the second year of Ahaziah of Israel; for he an-

<sup>1</sup> "*Neque enim,*" says Ramb., "*ulla ratione credibile est, Deum in gratiam impii regis ejusmodi quid fecisse, cujus nullum alias exemplum exstat; immo quod nec necessarium erat, quum plures aliæ essent rationes, quibus Deus voluntatem suam ei manifestare poterat; coll. Luc. xvi. 27, 29.*" And, still more conclusively, Calov. declares: "*Non enim triumphantium in cælis est erudire aut ad penitentiam revocare mortales in terra. Habent Mosen et prophetas, si illos non audiant, neque si quis ex mortuis resurrexerit, nedum si quis ex cælis literas perscripserit, credent Luc. xvi. 31.*"



nounced to this king upon his sick-bed that he would die of his fall (2 Kings i.). Most probably he was still alive also at the commencement of the reign of Joram of Israel, who ascended the throne twenty-three years after Ahab. Jehoshaphat died six or seven years later; and after his death, his successor Joram slew his brothers, the other sons of Jehoshaphat. Elijah may have lived to see the perpetration of this crime, and may consequently also have sent the threatening prophecy which is under discussion to Joram. As he first appeared under Ahab, on the above supposition, he would have filled the office of prophet for about thirty years; while his servant Elisha, whom he chose to be his successor as early as in the reign of Ahab (1 Kings xix. 16), died only under Joash of Israel (2 Kings xiii. 14 f.), who became king fifty-seven years after Ahab's death, and must consequently have discharged the prophetic functions for at least sixty years. But even if we suppose that Elijah had been taken away from the earth before Jehoshaphat's death, we may, with Buddæus, Ramb., and other commentators, accept this explanation: that the Lord had revealed to him Joram's wickedness before his translation, and had commissioned him to announce to Joram in writing the divine punishment which would follow, and to send this writing to him at the proper time. This would entirely harmonize with the mode of action of this great man of God. To him God had revealed the elevation of Jehu to the throne of Israel, and the extirpation of the house of Ahab by him, together with the accession of Hazael, and the great oppressions which he would inflict upon Israel,—all events which took place only after the death of Joram of Judah. Him, too, God had commissioned even under Ahab to anoint Jehu to be king over Israel (1 Kings xix. 16), which Elisha caused to be accomplished by a prophetic scholar fourteen years later (2 Kings ix. 1 ff.); and to him the Lord may also have revealed the iniquity of Joram, Jehoshaphat's successor, even as early as the second year of Ahaziah of Israel, when he announced to this king his death seven years before Jehoshaphat's death, and may have then commissioned him to announce the divine punishment of his sin. But if Elijah committed the anointing of both Hazael and Jehu to his servant Elisha, why may he not also have committed to him the delivery of this threatening prophecy which he had drawn up in writing? Without bringing forward in support of this such hypotheses as that the contents of the letter would have all the

greater effect, since it would seem as if the man of God were speaking to him from beyond the grave (O. v. Gerlach), we have yet a perfect right to suppose that a written word from the terrible man whom the Lord had accredited as His prophet by fire from heaven, in his struggle against Baal-worship under Ahab and Ahaziah, would be much better fitted to make an impression upon Joram and his consort Athaliah, who was walking in the footsteps of her mother Jezebel, than a word of Elisha, or any other prophet who was not endowed with the spirit and power of Elijah.

Elijah's writing pointed out to Joram two great transgressions: (1) his forsaking the Lord for the idolatrous worship of the house of Ahab, and also his seducing the people into this sin; and (2) the murder of his brothers. For the punishment of the first transgression he announced to him a great smiting which God would inflict upon his people, his family, and his property; for the second crime he foretold heavy bodily chastisements, by a dreadful disease which would terminate fatally. יָמִים עַל יָמִים, ver. 15, is *accus.* of duration: days on days, *i.e.* continuing for days added to days; cf. כָּפוּ שָׁנָה עַל שָׁנָה, Isa. xxix. 1. יָמִים Berth. takes to mean a period of a year, so that by this statement of time a period of two years is fixed for the duration of the disease before death. But the words in themselves cannot have this signification; it can only be a deduction from ver. 18. These two threats of punishment were fulfilled. The fulfilment of the first is recorded in ver. 16 f. God stirred up the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabians (הָעִיר אֶת רִיחַ, as in 1 Chron. v. 26), so that they came up against Judah, and broke it, *i.e.* violently pressed into the land as conquerors (בָּקַע, to split, then to conquer cities by breaking through their walls; cf. 2 Kings xxv. 4, etc.), and carried away all the goods that were found in the king's house, with the wives and sons of Joram, except Jehoahaz the youngest (xxii. 1). Movers (*Chron.* S. 122), Credner, Hitz., and others on Joel iv. 5, Berth., etc., conclude from this that these enemies captured Jerusalem and plundered it. But this can hardly be the case; for although Jerusalem belonged to Judah, and might be included in בִּיהוּדָה, yet as a rule Jerusalem is specially named along with Judah as being the chief city; and neither the conquest of Judah, nor the carrying away of the goods from the king's house, and of the king's elder sons, with certainty involves the capture of the capital. The opinion



that by the "substance which was found in the king's house" we are to understand the treasures of the royal palace, is certainly incorrect. רְכוּשׁ denotes property of any sort; and what the property of the king or of the king's house might include, we may gather from the catalogue of the אוֹצְרוֹת of David, in the country, in the cities, villages, and castles, 1 Chron. xxvii. 25 ff., where they consist in vineyards, forests, and herds of cattle, and together with the אוֹצְרוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ formed the property (הַרְכוּשׁ) of King David. All this property the conquering Philistines and Arabians who had pressed into Judah might carry away without having captured Jerusalem. But בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ denotes here, not the royal palace, but the king's family; for הַנִּמְצָא לְבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ does not denote what was found in the palace, but what of the possessions of the king's house they found. נִמְצָא with לְ is not synonymous with נִמְצָא בְּ, but denotes to be attained, possessed by; cf. Josh. xvii. 16 and Deut. xxi. 17. Had Jerusalem been plundered, the treasures of the palace and of the temple would also have been mentioned: 2 Chron. xxv. 24, xii. 9; 2 Kings xiv. 13 f. and 1 Kings xiv. 26; cf. Kuhlmeier, *alttestl. Studien in der Luther. Ztschr.* 1844, iii. S. 82 ff. Nor does the carrying away of the wives and children of King Joram presuppose the capture of Jerusalem, as we learn from the more exact account of the matter in xxii. 1.—Ver. 18 f. The second punishment fell upon the body and life of the king. The Lord smote him in his bowels to (with) disease, for which there was no healing. לֹאִין מְרַפָּא is in apposition to לֹאִין לְחַיִּי, literally, "to not being healing."—Ver. 19. And it came to pass in days after days (*i.e.* when a number of days had passed), and that at the time (וּבְעֵת) of the expiration of the end in two days, then his bowels went out during his sickness, and he died in sore pains (תַּחֲלָאִים), phenomena of disease, *i.e.* pains). The words וּבְעֵת צֵאת הַקֶּץ לַיָּמִים שְׁנַיִם are generally translated as if לַיָּמִים שְׁנַיִם were a mere periphrasis of the *stat. constr.* Vatabl. and Cler., for example, translate: *et secundum tempus egrediendi finis annorum duorum*, *i.e.* *postquam advenit finis a. d.*, or *cum exacti essent duo anni*; similarly Berth.: "at the time of the approach of the end of two times." But against this we have not only the circumstance that no satisfactory reason for the use of this periphrasis for the genitive can be perceived, and that no analogies can be found for the expression הַקֶּץ לַיָּמִים שְׁנַיִם, the end of two years, instead of קֶץ הַיָּמִים שְׁנַיִם; but also the more decisive linguistic reason that צֵאת הַקֶּץ cannot denote the approach of the

end, but only the expiry, the running out of the end; and finally, that the supposition that יָמִים here and in ver. 15 denotes a year is without foundation. Schmidt and Ramb. have already given a better explanation: *quumque esset tempus, quo exiit finis s. quum exiret ac compleretur terminus ille, in epistola Eliæ v. 15 præfixus*; but in this case also we should expect קֵץ הַיָּמִים, since יָמִים עַל יָמִים should point back to יָמִים, and contain a more exact definition of the terms employed in ver. 15, which are not definite enough. We therefore take צֵאת הַקֵּץ by itself, and translate: At the time of the end, i.e. when the end, sc. of life or of the disease, had come about two days, i.e. about two days before the issue of the end of the disease, then the bowels went out of the body—they flowed out from the body as devoured by the disease. עַם חָלִיו, in, during the sickness, consequently before the decease (cf. for עַם in this signification, Ps. lxxii. 5, Dan. iii. 33). Trusen (*Sitten, Gebr. und Krankh. der alten Hebräer*, S. 212 f.) holds this disease to have been a violent dysentery (diarrhœa), “being an inflammation of the nervous tissue (*Nervenhaut*) of the whole great intestine, which causes the overlying mucous membrane to decay and peel off, which then falls out often in tube-shape, so that the intestines appear to fall from the body.” His people did not make a burning for him like the burning of his fathers, cf. xvi. 14; that is, denied him the honours usual at burial, because of their discontent with his evil reign.—Ver. 20. The repetition of his age and the length of his reign (cf. ver. 6) is accounted for by the fact that the last section of this chapter is derived from a special source, wherein these notes likewise were contained. The peculiarity of the language and the want of the current expressions of our historian also favour the idea that some special authority has been used here. “And he departed, mourned by none.” Luther erroneously translates, “and walked in a way which was not right” (*und wandelt das nicht fein war*), after the “*ambulavit non recte*” of the Vulg.; for חָמְדָה denotes, not a good walk, but *desiderium*, בְּלֹא חָמְדָה, *sine desiderio*, i.e. *a nemine desideratus*. הָלַךְ, to depart, i.e. die, as Gen. xv. 2. Moreover, though he was buried in the city of David, yet he was not laid in the graves of the kings, by which act also a judgment was pronounced upon his reign; cf. xxiv. 25 and xxvi. 23.



CHAP. XXII.—THE REIGNS OF AHAZIAH AND THE IMPIOUS  
ATHALIAH.

Vers. 1-9. *Ahaziah's reign of a year, and his death.*—The account of Ahaziah in 2 Kings viii. 26-29 agrees with our narrative, except that there the reflections of the chronicler on the spirit of his government are wanting; but, on the contrary, the account of his death is very brief in the Chronicle (vers. 6-9), while in 2 Kings ix. and x. the extirpation of the Ahabic house by Jehu, in the course of which Ahaziah was slain with his relatives, is narrated at length.—Ver. 1. Instead of the short stereotyped notice, “and Ahaziah his son was king in his stead,” with which 2 Kings viii. 24 concludes the history of Joram, the Chronicle gives more exact information as to Ahaziah’s accession: “The inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son (who is called in xxi. 17 Jehoahaz), king in his stead; for all the elder (sons), the band which had come among the Arabs to the camp had slain.” In יְמָלִכּוּ we have a hint that Ahaziah’s succession was disputed or doubtful; for where the son follows the father on the throne without opposition, it is simply said in the Chronicle also, “and his son was king in his stead.” But the only person who could contest the throne with Ahaziah, since all the other sons of Joram who would have had claims upon it were not then alive, was his mother Athaliah, who usurped the throne after his death. All the elder sons (הָרֵאשִׁינִים, the earlier born) were slain by the troop which had come among (with) the Arabians (see xxi. 16 f.) into the camp,—not of the Philistines (Cler.), but of the men of Judah; that is, they were slain by a reconnoitring party, which, in the invasion of Judah by the Philistines and Arabs, surprised the camp of the men of Judah, and slew the elder sons of Joram, who had marched to the war. Probably they did not cut them down on the spot, but (according to xxi. 17) took them prisoners and slew them afterwards.—Ver. 2. The number 42 is an orthographical error for 22 (כ having been changed into מ), 2 Kings viii. 26. As Joram was thirty-two years of age at his accession, and reigned eight years (xxi. 20 and 5), at his death his youngest son could not be older than twenty-one or twenty-two years of age, and even then Joram must have begotten him in his eighteenth or nineteenth year. It is quite consistent with this that Joram had yet older sons; for in the East marriages are entered upon at a very early

age, and the royal princes were wont to have several wives, or, besides their proper wives, concubines also. Certainly, had Ahaziah had forty-two older brothers, as Berth. and other critics conclude from 2 Kings x. 13 f., then he could not possibly have been begotten, or been born, in his father's eighteenth year. But that idea rests merely upon an erroneous interpretation of the passage quoted; see on ver. 8. Ahaziah's mother Athaliah is called the daughter, *i.e.* granddaughter, of Omri, as in 2 Kings viii. 26, because he was the founder of the idolatrous dynasty of the kingdom of the ten tribes.—Ver. 3. He also (like his father Joram, xxi. 6) walked in the ways of the house of Ahab. This statement is accounted for by the clause: for his mother (a daughter of Ahab and the godless Jezebel) was his counsellor to do evil, *i.e.* led him to give himself up to the idolatry of the house of Ahab.—Ver. 4. The further remark also, "he did that which was displeasing in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab," is similarly explained; for they (the members of the house of Ahab related to him through his mother) were counsellors to him after the death of his father to his destruction, cf. xx. 23; while in 2 Kings viii. 27, the relationship alone is spoken of as the reason of his evil-doing. How far this counsel led to his destruction is narrated in ver. 5 and onwards, and the narrative is introduced by the words, "He walked also in their counsel;" whence it is clear beyond all doubt, that Ahaziah entered along with Joram, Ahab's son, upon the war which was to bring about the destruction of Ahab's house, and to cost him his life, on the advice of Ahab's relations. There is no doubt that Joram, Ahab's son, had called upon Ahaziah to take part in the war against the Syrians at Ramoth Gilead (see on xviii. 28), and that Athaliah with her party supported his proposal, so that Ahaziah complied. In the war the Aramæans (Syrians) smote Joram; *i.e.*, according to ver. 6, they wounded him (הַרְמִים is a contraction for הַצָּרִימִים, 2 Kings viii. 28). In consequence of this Joram returned to Jezreel, the summer residence of the Ahabic royal house (1 Kings xviii. 45), the present Zerin; see on Josh. xix. 18. כִּי הַמָּכִים has no meaning, and is merely an error for מִן הַמָּכִים, 2 Kings viii. 29, which indeed is the reading of several Codd.: to let himself be cured of his strokes (wounds). וַעֲזָרְהוּ, too, is an orthographical error for וַאֲחִיזְרְהוּ: and Ahaziah went down to visit the wounded Joram, his brother-in-law. Whether he went from Jerusalem or from the loftily-situated Ramah cannot



be with certainty determined, for we have no special account of the course of the war, and from 2 Kings ix. 14 f. we only learn that the Israelite army remained in Ramoth after the return of the wounded Joram. It is therefore probable that Ahaziah went direct from Ramoth to visit Joram, but it is not ascertained; for there is nothing opposed to the supposition that, after Joram had been wounded in the battle, and while the Israelite host remained to hold the city against the Syrian king Hazael, Ahaziah had returned to his capital, and thence went after some time to visit the wounded Joram in Jezreel.

Vers. 7-9. Without touching upon the conspiracy against Joram, narrated in 2 Kings ix., at the head of which was Jehu, the captain of the host, whom God caused to be anointed king over Israel by a scholar of the prophets deputed by Elisha, and whom he called upon to extirpate the idolatrous family of Ahab, since it did not belong to the plan of the Chronicle to narrate the history of Israel, our historian only briefly records the slaughter of Ahaziah and his brother's sons by Jehu as being the result of a divine dispensation.—Ver. 7. “And of God was (came) the destruction (הַבְּוֹסָה), a being trodden down, a formation which occurs here only) of Ahaziah, that he went to Joram;” *i.e.* under divine leading had Ahaziah come to Joram, there to find his death. וַיָּבֵאֵהוּ וְגו', And when he was come, he went out with Joram against Jehu (instead of אֶל-יְהוּא, we have in 2 Kings ix. 21 the more distinct לְקִרְאֵת יְהוּא, towards Jehu) the son of Nimshi, whom God had anointed to extirpate the house of Ahab (2 Kings ix. 1-10).—Ver. 8. When Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab (נִשְׁפָּט usually construed with אֵת, to be at law with any one, to administer justice; cf. Isa. lxvi. 16, Ezek. xxxviii. 22), he found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brothers of Ahaziah, serving Ahaziah, and slew them. מִשְׁרָתָם, *i.e.* in the train of King Ahaziah as his servants. As to when and where Jehu met the brothers' sons of Ahaziah and slew them, we have no further statement, as the author of the Chronicle mentions that fact only as a proof of the divinely directed extirpation of all the members of the idolatrous royal house. In 2 Kings x. 12-14 we read that Jehu, after he had extirpated the whole Israelite royal house—Joram and Jezebel, and the seventy sons of Ahab—went to Samaria, there to eradicate the Baal-worship, and upon his way thither met the brothers of Ahaziah the king of Judah, and caused them to be taken

alive, and then slain, to the number of forty-two. These אֲחִיזַחִי, forty-two men, cannot have been actual brothers of Ahaziah, since all Ahaziah's brethren had, according to ver. 1 and xxi. 17, been slain in the reign of Joram, in the invasion of the Philistines and Arabians. They must be brothers only in the wider sense, *i.e.* cousins and nephews of Ahaziah, as Movers (S. 258) and Ewald recognise, along with the older commentators. The Chronicle, therefore, is quite correct in saying, "sons of the brethren of Ahaziah," and along with these princes of Judah, who, according to the context, can only be princes who held offices at court, especially such as were entrusted with the education and guardianship of the royal princes. Perhaps these are included in the number forty-two (Kings). But even if this be not the case, we need not suppose that there were forty-two brothers' sons, or nephews of Ahaziah, since אֲחִיזַחִי includes cousins also, and in the text of the Chronicle no number is stated, although forty-two nephews would not be an unheard-of number; and we do not know how many elder brothers Ahaziah had. Certainly the nephews or brothers' sons of Ahaziah cannot have been very old, since Ahaziah's father Joram died at the age of forty, and Ahaziah, who became king in his twenty-second year, reigned only one year. But from the early development of posterity in southern lands, and the polygamy practised by the royal princes, Joram might easily have had in his fortieth year a considerable number of grandsons from five to eight years old, and boys of from six to nine years might quite well make a journey with their tutors to Jezreel to visit their relations. In this way the divergent statements as to the slaughter of the brothers and brothers' sons of Ahaziah, contained in 2 Kings ix. and in our 8th verse, may be reconciled, without our being compelled, as Berth. thinks we are, to suppose that there were two different traditions on this subject.—Ver. 9. And he (Jehu) sought Ahaziah, and they (Jehu's body-guard or his warriors) caught him while he was hiding in Samaria, and brought him to Jehu, and slew him. Then they (his servants, 2 Kings ix. 27) buried him, for they said: He is a son of Jehoshaphat, who sought Jahve with all his heart. We find more exact information as to Ahaziah's death in 2 Kings ix. 27 f., according to which Ahaziah, overtaken by Jehu near Jibleam in his flight before him, and smitten, *i.e.* wounded, fled to Megiddo, and there died, and was brought by his servants to Jerusalem, and buried with his fathers in the city of David. For



the reconciliation of these statements, see on 2 Kings ix. 27 f. The circumstance that in our account first the slaughter of the brothers' sons, then that of Ahaziah is mentioned, while according to 2 Kings ix. and x. the slaughter of Ahaziah would seem to have preceded, does not make any essential difference; for the short account in the Chronicle is not arranged chronologically, but according to the subject, and the death of Ahaziah is mentioned last only in order that it might be connected with the further events which occurred in Judah. The last clause of ver. 9, "and there was not to the house of Ahab one who would have possessed power for the kingdom," *i.e.* there was no successor on the throne to whom the government might straightway be transferred, forms a transition to the succeeding account of Athaliah's usurpation.

Vers. 10-12. *The six years' tyranny of Athaliah.*—In regard to her, all that is stated is, that after Ahaziah's death she ascended the throne, and caused all the royal seed of the house of Judah, *i.e.* all the male members of the royal house, to be murdered. From this slaughter only Joash the son of Ahaziah, an infant a year old, was rescued, together with his nurse, by the princess Jehoshabeath, who was married to the high priest Jehoiada. He was hidden for six years, and during that time Athaliah reigned. The same narrative, for the most part in the same words, is found in 2 Kings xi. 1-3, and has been already commented upon there.

#### CHAP. XXIII. AND XXIV.—THE FALL OF ATHALIAH, AND THE CORONATION AND REIGN OF JOASH.

After Joash had been kept in hiding for six years, the high priest Jehoiada came to the resolution to make an end of the tyranny of Athaliah, and to raise the young prince to the throne. The carrying out of this resolution is narrated in chap. xxiii., and thereafter in chap. xxiv. All that is important as to the reign of Joash is communicated.

Chap. xxiii. *Joash raised to the throne, and Athaliah slain.*—In 2 Kings xi. 4-20 we have another account of these events, in which the matter is in several points more briefly narrated, and apparently differently represented. According to both narratives, the thing was undertaken and carried out by the high

priest Jehoiada; but according to 2 Kings xi., the high priest would appear to have mainly availed himself of the co-operation of the royal body-guard in the execution of his plan, while according to the Chronicle it is the Levites and the heads of the fathers'-houses who are made use of. Thereupon De Wette, Movers, Thenius, and Bertheau consequently maintain that the author of the Chronicle, proceeding on the view that the high priest, the chief of so many priests and Levites, would not have recourse to the assistance of the royal body-guard, has altered the statements in the second book of Kings accordingly, and wishes to represent the matter in a different way. But this assertion can be made with an appearance of truth only on the presupposition, already repeatedly shown to be erroneous, that the author of the Chronicle has made the account in 2 Kings xi. the basis of his narrative, and designedly altered it, and can scarcely be upheld even by the incorrect interpretation of various words. That 2 Kings xi. is not the source from which our account has been derived, nor the basis on which it is founded, is manifest from the very first verses of the chronicler's narrative, where the names of the five princes over hundreds, with whose co-operation Jehoiada elaborated his plan and carried it into execution, are individually enumerated; while in 2 Kings xi., where the preparations for the accomplishment of the work are very briefly treated of, they will be sought for in vain. But if, on the contrary, the two accounts be recognised to be extracts confining themselves to the main points, excerpted from a more detailed narrative of the event from different points of view, the discrepancies may be at once reconciled. Instead of the short statement, 2 Kings xi. 4, that the high priest Jehoiada ordered the centurions of the royal body-guard to come to him in the temple (יְהוֹיָדָה . . . יָקָח), made a covenant with them, caused them to swear, and showed them the king's son, we read in the Chronicle (vers. 1-3), that the high priest Jehoiada took five centurions, whose names are stated with historical exactitude, into covenant with him, *i.e.* sent for them and made a covenant with them, and that these men then went throughout Judah, and summoned the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the heads of the fathers'-houses of Israel, to Jerusalem; whereupon Jehoiada with the whole assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God, and Jehoiada said to the people, "The king's son shall be king, as Jahve hath said of the sons of David." That this more



expanded narrative can without difficulty be reconciled with the summary statement in 2 Kings xi. 4, is perfectly manifest. By various devices, however, Berth. tries to bring out some discrepancies. In the first place, in the words, "Jehoiada sent and brought the princes of hundreds" (Kings, ver. 4), he presses the שְׁלָח, which is not found in the Chronicle, translates it by "he sent out," and interprets it with ver. 2 of the Chronicle; in the second, he takes כָּל-הַקָּהָל in ver. 3 of the Chronicle to mean "the whole congregation," whereas it denotes only the assembly of the men named in vers. 1 and 2; and, thirdly, he opposes the expression, "they made a covenant with the king" (ver. 3, Chron.), to the statement (ver. 2, Kings) that Jehoiada made a covenant to the princes, by making this latter statement mean that Jehoiada made a covenant *with* the princes, but not with the king, as if this covenant concerning the coronation of Joash as king might not be called, by a shorter mode of expression, a covenant with the king, especially when the declaration, "the son of the king shall reign," follows immediately.—Vers. 4–7. The case is similar with the contradictions in the account of the carrying out of the arrangements agreed upon. In Bertheau's view, this is the state of the case: According to 2 Kings xi. 5–8, the one part of the body-guard, which on Sabbath mounted guard in the royal palace, were to divide themselves into three bands: one third was to keep the guard of the royal house, which was certainly in the neighbourhood of the main entrance; the second third was to stand at the gate Sur, probably a side-gate of the palace; the third was to stand behind the door of the runners. The other part of the body-guard, on the other hand—all those who were relieved on the Sabbath—were to occupy the temple, so as to defend the young king. But according to the representation of the Chronicle, (1) the priests and the Levites were to divide themselves into three parts: the first third, those of the priests and Levites, who entered upon their duties on the Sabbath, were to be watchers of the thresholds (cf. on 1 Chron. ix. 19 f.), *i.e.* were to mount guard in the temple as usual; the second third was to be in the house of the king (*i.e.* where the first third was to keep watch, according to 2 Kings); the third was to be at the gate Jesod. Then (2) the whole people were to stand in the courts of the temple, and, according to ver. 6, were to observe the ordinance of Jahve (chap. xiii. 11), by which they were forbidden to enter the

temple. From this Bertheau then concludes: "The guarding of the house of Jahve for the protection of the king (2 Kings xi. 7) has here become a *משמרת יהוה*." But in opposition to this, we have to remark that in 2 Kings xi. 5-8 it is not said that the royal body-guard was to be posted as guards in the royal palace and in the temple; that is only a conclusion from the fact that Jehoiada conferred on the matter with the *שְׂרֵי הַמִּצֹּחֹת* of the executioners and runners, *i.e.* of the royal satellites, and instructed these centurions, that those entering upon the service on Sabbath were to keep watch in three divisions, and those retiring from the service in two divisions, in the following places, which are then more accurately designated. The one division of those entering upon the service were to stand, according to 2 Kings, by the gate Sur; according to the Chronicle, by the gate Jesod. The second, according to 2 Kings, was to keep the guard of the king's house; according to the Chronicle, it was to be in or by the king's house. The third was, according to 2 Kings, to be by (in) the gate behind the runners, and to keep the guard of the house Massach; according to the Chronicle, they were to serve as watchers of the thresholds. If, as is acknowledged by all, the gate *סור* is identical with the gate *הַסֹּר*,—although it can neither be ascertained whether the difference in name has resulted merely from an orthographical error, or rests upon a double designation of one gate; nor yet can it be pointed out what the position of this gate, which is nowhere else mentioned, was,—then the Chronicle and 2 Kings agree as to the posts which were to occupy this door. The position also of the third part, *בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ* (Chron.), will not be different from that of the third part, to which was committed the guarding of the king's house (Kings). The place where this third part took up its position is not exactly pointed out in either narrative, yet the statement, "to keep the watch of the house (temple) for warding off" (Kings), agrees with the appointment "to be guards of the thresholds" (Chron.), since the guarding of the thresholds has no other aim than to prevent unauthorized persons from entering. Now, since the young king, not merely according to the Chron., but also according to 2 Kings xi. 4,—where we are told that Jehoiada showed the son of the king to the chief men whom he had summoned to the house of Jahve,—was in the temple, and only after his coronation and Athaliah's death was led solemnly into the royal palace, we might take the king's house, the guard



of which the one third of those entering upon the service were to keep (Kings, ver. 7), to be the temple building in which the young king was, and interpret **בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ** in accordance with that idea. In that case, there would be no reference to the settling of guards in the palace; and that view would seem to be favoured by the circumstance that the other third part of those entering upon their service on the Sabbath were to post themselves at the gate, behind the runners, and keep the guard of the house **מִפֶּתַח**. That **מִפֶּתַח** is not a *nom. propr.*, but *appellat.*, from **נָסַח**, to ward off, signifying warding off, is unanimously acknowledged by modern commentators; only Thenius would alter **מִפֶּתַח** into **וַיִּנָּסֶח**, “and shall ward off.” Gesenius, on the contrary, in his *Thesaurus*, takes the word to be a substantive, *cum מִשְׁמַרְתָּ per appositionem conjunctum*, in the signification, the guard for warding off, and translates, *et vos agetis custodiam templi ad depellendum sc. populum* (to ward off). If this interpretation be correct, then these words also do not treat of a palace guard; and to take **בְּבֵית** to signify the temple is so evidently suggested by the context, according to which the high priest conducted the whole transaction in the temple, that we must have better grounds for referring the words to the royal palace than the mere presumption that, because the high priest discussed the plan with the captains of the royal body-guard, it must be the occupation of the royal palace which is spoken of. But quite apart from the Chronicle, even the further account of the matter in 2 Kings xi. is unfavourable to the placing of guards in the royal palace. According to ver. 9, the captains did exactly as Jehoiada commanded. They took each of them their men—those coming on the Sabbath, and those departing—and went to the priest Jehoiada, who gave them David’s weapons out of the house of God (ver. 10), and the satellites stationed themselves in the court of the temple, and there the king was crowned. The unambiguous statement, ver. 9, that the captains, each with his men—*i.e.* those coming on Sabbath (entering upon the service), and those departing—came to the high priest in the temple, and there took up their position in the court, decisively excludes the idea that “those coming on the Sabbath” had occupied the guard-posts in the royal palace, and demands that the divisions mentioned in vers. 5 and 6 should be posted at different parts and gates of the temple. That one third part had assigned to it a place behind the gate of the runners is not at all inconsistent with the

above idea; for even if the gate behind the runners be identical with the gate of the runners (Kings, ver. 19), it by no means follows from that that it was a gate of the palace, and not of the outer court of the temple. In accordance with this view, then, vers. 5 and 6 (Kings) do not treat of an occupation of the royal palace, but of a provision for the security of the temple by the posting of guards. It is, moreover, against the supposition that the entrances to the palace were occupied by guards, that Athaliah, when she heard from her palace the noise of the people in the temple, came immediately into the temple, and was dragged forth and slain by the captains there in command. For what purpose can they have placed guards by the palace gates, if they did not desire to put any hindrance in the way of the queen's going forth into the temple? The hypotheses of Thenius, that it was done to keep away those who were devoted to Athaliah, to make themselves masters of the palace, and to hinder Athaliah from taking any measures in opposition to them, and to guard the place of the throne, are nothing but expedients resulting from embarrassment. If there was no intention to put any hindrance in the way of the queen leaving the palace, there could have been none to prevent her taking opposing measures. For the rest, the result obtained by careful consideration of the account in 2 Kings xi., that in vers. 5 and 6 an occupation by guards, not of the royal palace, but of the temple, is spoken of, does not stand or fall with the supposition that *בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ* was the dwelling of the young king in the temple building, and not the palace. The expression *שָׁמַר מִשְׁמֶרֶת בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ*, to guard the guard of the king's house, *i.e.* to have regard to whatever is to be regarded in reference to the king's house, is so indefinite and elastic, that it may have been used of a post which watched from the outer court of the temple what was going on in the palace, which was over against the temple. With this also the corresponding *בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ*, in the short account of the distribution of the guards given by the chronicler (ver. 5), may be reconciled, if we translate it "at the house of the king," and call to mind that, according to 2 Kings xvi. 18 and 1 Kings x. 5, there was a special approach from the palace to the temple for the king, which this division may have had to guard. But notwithstanding the guarding of this way, Athaliah could come from the palace into the court of the temple by another way, or perhaps the guards were less



watchful at their posts during the solemnity of the young king's coronation.

And not less groundless is the assertion that the priest Jehoiada availed himself in the execution of his plan, according to 2 Kings xi., mainly of the co-operation of the royal body-guard, according to the Chronicle mainly of that of the Levites; or that the chronicler, as Thenius expresses it, "has made the body-guards of 2 Kings into Levites, in order to divert to the priesthood the honour which belonged to the Prætorians." The *שָׂרֵי הַמִּצֹּחַ*, mentioned by name in the Chronicle, with whom Jehoiada discussed his plan, and who had command of the guards when it was carried out, are not called Levites, and may consequently have been captains of the executioners and runners, i.e. of the royal body-guard, as they are designated in 2 Kings xi. 4. But the men who occupied the various posts are called in both texts *בְּנֵי הַשָּׁבֶת* (Kings, ver. 5; Chron. ver. 4): in 2 Kings, vers. 7 and 9, the corresponding *בְּנֵי הַשָּׁבֶת* is added; while in the Chronicle the *בְּנֵי הַשָּׁבֶת* are expressly called Levites, the words *לְכַהֲנִים וְלִלְוִיִּם* being added. But we know from Luke i. 5, compared with 1 Chron. xxiv. (see above, p. 263), that the priests and Levites performed the service in the temple in courses from one Sabbath to another, while we have no record of any such arrangement as to the service of the Prætorians; so that we must understand the words "coming on the Sabbath" (entering upon the service), and "going on the Sabbath" (those relieved from it), of the Levites in the first place. Had it been intended that by these words in 2 Kings xi. we should understand Prætorians, it must necessarily have been clearly said. From the words spoken to the centurions of the body-guard, "the third part of you," etc., it does not follow at all as a matter of course that they were so, any more than from the fact that in Kings, ver. 11, the posts set are called *הַרְצִיִּים*, the runners = satellites. If we suppose that in this extraordinary case the Levitic temple servants were placed under the command of centurions of the royal body-guard, who were in league with the high priest, the designation of the men they commanded by the name *רָצִיִּים*, satellites, is fully explained; the men having been previously more accurately described as those who were entering upon and being relieved from service on the Sabbath. In this way I have explained the matter in my *apologet. Versuch über die Chron.* S. 362 ff., but this explanation of it has neither been regarded

nor confuted by Thenius and Bertheau. Even the mention of *כָּרִי* and *רָצִים* along with the captains and the whole people, in Kings, ver. 19, is not inconsistent with it; for we may without difficulty suppose, as has been said in my commentary on that verse, that the royal body-guard, immediately after the slaughter of Athaliah, went over to the young king just crowned, in order that they, along with the remainder of the people who were assembled in the court, might lead him thence to the royal palace. There is only one statement in the two texts which can scarcely be reconciled with this conjecture,—namely, the mention of the *רָצִים* and of the people in the temple before Athaliah was slain (ver. 12 Chron. and ver. 13 Kings), since it follows from that that runners or satellites belonging to the body-guard were either posted, or had assembled with the others, in the court of the temple. To meet this statement, we must suppose that the centurions of the body-guard employed not merely the Levitic temple guard, but also some of the royal satellites, upon whose fidelity they could rely, to occupy the posts mentioned in vers. 5–7 (Kings) and vers. 4 and 5 (Chron.); so that the company under the command of the centurions who occupied the various posts in the temple consisted partly of Levitic temple guards, and partly of royal body-guards. But even on this view, the suspicion that the chronicler has mentioned the Levites instead of the body-guard is shown to be groundless and unjust, since the *רָצִים* also are mentioned in the Chronicle.

According to this exposition, the true relation between the account in the Chronicle and that in the book of Kings would seem to be something like this: Both accounts mention merely the main points of the proceedings,—the author of the book of Kings emphasizing the part played in the affair by the royal body-guard; the author of the Chronicle, on the other hand, emphasizing that played by the Levites: so that both accounts mutually supplement each other, and only when taken together give a full view of the circumstances. We have still to make the following remarks on the narrative of the Chronicle in detail. The statement (Kings, ver. 5) that all those relieved on the Sabbath were to keep guard of the house of Jahve, in reference to the king, in two divisions, is in Chronicles, ver. 5, thus generalized: “all the people were in the courts of the house of Jahve.” *כָּל-הָעָם* is all the people except the before-mentioned bodies of men with their captains, and comprehends not only



the remainder of the people mentioned in 2 Kings xi. 13 and 19, who came to the temple without any special invitation, but also the body of guards who were relieved from service on Sabbath. This is clear from ver. 8 of the Chronicle, where we have the supplementary remark, that those departing on the Sabbath also, as well as those coming, did what Jehoiada commanded. In addition to this, in ver. 6 this further command of Jehoiada is communicated: Let no one enter the house of Jahve (בֵּית יְהוָה) is the temple building, *i.e.* the holy place and the most holy, as distinguished from the courts), save the priests, and they that minister of the Levites, *i.e.* of those Levites who perform the service, who are consecrated thereto; but all the people shall keep the watch of the Lord, *i.e.* keep what is to be observed in reference to Jahve, *i.e.* here, to keep without the limits appointed in the law to the people in drawing near to the sanctuaries. The whole verse, therefore, contains only an elucidation of the command that all the people were to remain in the courts, and not to press farther into the sanctuary.—Ver. 7. “And the Levites shall compass the king round about, each with his weapons in his hand.” The Levites are the bodies of guards mentioned in vers. 4, 5. If we keep that in view, then the following words, “every one who cometh into the house shall be put to death,” say the same as the words, “every one who cometh within the ranks” (Kings, ver. 8). A contradiction arises only if we misinterpret הָקִיפוּ, and understand it of the forming of a circle around the king; whereas הָקִיפוּ, like הִקְפִּיתֶם (Kings), is to be understood, according to the context, of the setting of the guards both at the temple gate and in the courts, so that whoever entered the court of the temple came within the ranks of the guards thus placed.—Vers. 8–10. The account of the occupation of the temple thus arranged agrees with vers. 9–11, Kings. Instead of שְׂרֵי הַמִּצֹּחַ (Kings), in ver. 8 are very fittingly named “the Levites (as in ver. 5) and all Judah,” *viz.* in its chiefs, since the high priest had assured himself of the support of the heads of the fathers’-houses of Israel (ver. 2). Further, to the statement that those who were departing from the service also took part in the affair, it is added, “for Jehoiada had not dismissed the courses.” הַמְחִלֻקֹּת are the divisions which, according to the arrangement made by David (1 Chron. xxiv.–xxvi.), had charge of the temple service at that time. To the captains Jehoiada gave the spears and shields which had been presented

to the temple by David as offerings, because they had come into the temple without weapons ; see on 2 Kings xi. 10. וַיַּעֲמֵד, “and he caused the whole people to take position,” is connected formally with וַיִּתֵּן, ver. 9 ; while in Kings, ver. 11, we have simply וַיַּעֲמֵד.—Ver. 11. The coronation of Joash, as in ver. 12 (Kings). The subject of וַיּוֹצִיאוּ and וַיִּתְּנוּ is those present, while in וַיּוֹצִיא and וַיִּתֵּן (Kings), Jehoiada as leader of the whole is referred to. In the Chronicle, Jehoiada and his sons, *i.e.* the high priest with the priests assisting him, are expressly named as subject to יָמְלִיכוּ and וַיִּמְשְׁחוּהוּ, where in Kings also the plural is used ; while, on the contrary, “the clapping of the hands” as a sign of joyful acclamation (Kings) is omitted, as being unimportant.—Vers. 12–15. Slaughter of Athaliah, as in 2 Kings xi. 13–16. In ver. 13 of the Chronicle, the statement that the assembled people played on instruments is expanded by the addition, “and singing with instruments of song, and proclaiming aloud to praise,” *i.e.* and praising. וַיּוֹצִא, ver. 14, is an orthographical error for וַיִּצֹא (Kings).

Vers. 16–21. *The renewal of the covenant, extirpation of Baal-worship, and the solemn entry of the king into his palace*, as in 2 Kings xi. 17–20, and already commented on in that place. The remark as to the renewal of the covenant is in ver. 16 (Chron.) somewhat more brief than in Kings, ver. 17 ; and בֵּינֵנו, between himself, the same as between himself, the high priest, as representative of Jehovah. In Kings, ver. 17, the matter is more clearly expressed. In ver. 18 f., the statement, “the priest set overseers over the house of Jahve” (Kings), is expanded by the addition of the words, “by means of the Levitic priests whom David had distributed for the house of Jahve to offer sacrifices ; . . . and he placed doorkeepers at the doors of the house of Jahve,” etc. The meaning is: Jehoiada again introduced the old arrangement of the public worship in the temple as David had settled it, it having either fallen into decay or wholly ceased under the rule of the idolatrous Athaliah. As to the remainder, see on 2 Kings xi. 19 and 30.

Chap. xxiv. *The reign of Joash* ; cf. 2 Kings xii.—In both accounts only two main events in Joash’s reign of forty years are narrated at any length,—the repair of the temple, and the campaign of the Syrian king Hazael against Jerusalem. Besides this, at the beginning, we have a statement as to the duration and spirit of his reign ; and in conclusion, the murder



of Joash in consequence of a conspiracy is mentioned. Both accounts agree in all essential points, but are shown to be extracts containing the most important part of a more complete history of Joash, by the fact that, on the one hand, in 2 Kings xii. single circumstances are communicated in a more detailed and more exact form than that in which the Chronicle states them; while, on the other hand, the account of the Chronicle supplements the account in 2 Kings xii. in many respects. To these latter belong the account of the marriage of Joash, and his many children, the account of the death of Jehoiada at the age of 130 years, and his honourable burial with the kings, etc.; see on ver. 15.

Vers. 4-14. As to the *repair of the temple*, see the commentary on 2 Kings xii. 5-17, where both the formal divergences and the essential agreement of the two narratives are pointed out.—Ver. 11. *וַיְהִי בַעַת יְבִיא וְגו'*, translate: It came to pass at the time when they brought the chest to the guard of the king by the Levites, *i.e.* to the board of oversight appointed by the king from among the Levites. *עַת* *stat. constr.* before a sentence following. *לְיוֹם בְּיוֹם* does not denote every day, but every time when there was much money in the chest.—Ver. 13. *וַתַּעַל אֲרוֹכָה*, and there was a band laid upon the work, *i.e.* the restoration of the house of God was furthered; cf. for this symbolical expression, Neh. iv. 1, Jer. viii. 7.—Ver. 14. *וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ בָלִים*, therefrom (the king) caused to be made (prepared) vessels for the house of Jahve, (namely) vessels of the service, *i.e.*, according to Num. iv. 12, in the holy place, and for the offering of burnt-offering, *i.e.* altar vessels, and (besides) bowls, and (other) vessels of gold and silver. The last clause of ver. 14 leads on to the following: "They (king and people) offered burnt-offering continually so long as Jehoiada lived."

Vers. 15-22. *Jehoiada's death: the fall of the people into idolatry: the protest of the prophet Zechariah against it, and the stoning of him.*—This section is not found in 2 Kings xii., but is important for the understanding of the later history of Joash (ver. 23 ff.). With the death of the grey-haired high priest came a turning-point in the reign of Joash. Jehoiada had saved the life and throne of Joash, preserved to the kingdom the royal house of David, to which the promises belonged, and had put an end to the idolatry which had been transplanted into Judah by Joram's marriage into the royal house of Ahab, restoring the Jahve-worship. For this he was honoured at his death, his body

being laid in the city of David among the kings: "For he had done good in Israel, and towards God and His house" (the temple). According to 2 Kings xii. 7, he still took an active part in the repair of the temple in the twenty-third year of Joash, and according to ver. 14 he lived for some time after the completion of that work. But after his death the people soon forgot the benefits they owed him.—Ver. 17 f. The princes of Judah besought the king to allow them to worship the Astartes and idols, and the king hearkened to them, did not venture to deny their request. *יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַפְּסִלִּים*, they bowed themselves before the king, *i.e.* they besought him. What they thus beseechingly requested is not stated, but may be gathered from what they did, according to ver. 18. They forsook Jahve the God of their fathers, etc. There came wrath upon Judah because of this their trespass. *קֶצֶף*, a wrathful judgment of the Lord, cf. xxix. 8, viz. the invasion of the land by Hazael, ver. 23 ff. On the construction *אֲשַׁמְתֶּם זֹאת*, cf. Ew. § 293, c, S. 740. Against this defection prophets whom the Lord sent did indeed lift up their testimony, but they would not hearken to them. Of these prophets, one, Zechariah the son of the high priest Jehoiada, is mentioned by name in ver. 20 ff., who, seized by the Spirit of the Lord, announced to the people divine punishment for their defection, and was thereupon, at the king's command, stoned in the court of the temple. With *רוּחַ הַיְּהוָה לְבִישָׁה* cf. 1 Chron. xii. 18, and the commentary on Judg. vi. 34. *מַעַל לָעָם*, above the people, viz., as we learn from ver. 21, in the inner, higher-lying court, so that he was above the people who were in the outer court. "Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, and (why) will ye not prosper?" Fidelity to the Lord is the condition of prosperity. If Israel forsake the Lord, the Lord will also forsake it; cf. xii. 5, xv. 2.—Ver. 21. And they (the princes and the people) conspired against him, and stoned him, at the command of the king, in the court of the temple. This *זִכְרְיָה* is the *Zacharias* whose slaughter is mentioned by Christ in Matt. xxiii. 36 and Luke xi. 51 as the last prophet-murder narrated in the Old Testament, whose blood would come upon the people, although Matthew calls him *υἱὸς Βαπαχίου*. According to these passages, he was slain between the temple and the altar of burnt-offering, consequently in the most sacred part of the court of the priests. That the king, Joash, could give the command for this murder, shows how his compliance with the princes'



demands (ver. 17) had made him the slave of sin. Probably the idolatrous princes accused the witness for God of being a seditious person and a rebel against the majesty of the crown, and thereby extorted from the weak king the command for his death. For it is not said that Joash himself worshipped the idols; and even in ver. 22 it is only the base ingratitude of which Joash had been guilty, in the slaughter of the son of his benefactor, which is adduced against him. But Zechariah at his death said, "May the Lord look upon it, and take vengeance" (דָּרַשׁ, to seek or require a crime, *i.e.* punish it). This word became a prophecy, which soon began to be fulfilled, ver. 23 ff.

Vers. 23-26. The punishment comes upon them. *Joash afflicted by the invasion of Judah by Hazael the Syrian; and his death in consequence of a conspiracy against him.*—These two events are narrated in 2 Kings xii. 18-22 also, the progress of Hazael's invasion being more exactly traced; see the commentary on 2 Kings xii. 18 f. The author of the Chronicle brings forward only those parts of it which show how God punished Joash for his defection from Him.—Ver. 23. "At the revolution of a year," *i.e.* scarcely a year after the murder of the prophet Zechariah, a Syrian army invaded Judah and advanced upon Jerusalem; "and they destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people," *i.e.* they smote the army of Joash in a battle, in which the princes (the chief and leaders) were destroyed, *i.e.* partly slain, partly wounded. This punishment came upon the princes as the originators of the defection from the Lord, ver. 17. "And they sent all their booty to the king (Hazael) to Damascus." In this booty the treasures which Joash gave to the Syrians (2 Kings xii. 19) to buy their withdrawal are also included. In order to show that this invasion of the Syrians was a divine judgment, it is remarked in ver. 24 that the Syrians, with a small army, gained a victory over the very large army of Judah, and executed judgment upon Joash. עָשָׂה שְׁפָטִים, as in Ex. xii. 12, Num. xxxiii. 4, frequently in Ezekiel, usually construed with בָּ, here with אֵת, analogous to the עָשָׂה טוֹב אֵת, *e.g.* 1 Sam. xxiv. 19. These words refer to the wounding of Joash, and its results, ver. 25 f. In the war Joash was badly wounded; the Syrians on their withdrawal had left him behind in many wounds (מִחַלְיָם only met with here, synonymous with תַּחֲלָאִים, xxi. 19). Then his own servants, the court officials named in ver. 26, conspired against him, and smote him

upon his bed. In 2 Kings xii. 21, the place where the king, lying sick upon his bed, was slain is stated. He met with his end thus, "because of the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest" which had been shed. The plural בְּנֵי is perhaps only an orthographical error for בָּנָי, occasioned by the preceding דְּמֵי (Berth.); but more probably it is, like בְּנֵי, xxviii. 3 and xxxiii. 6, a rhetorical plural, which says nothing as to the number, but only brings out that Joash had brought blood-guiltiness upon himself in respect of the children of his benefactor Jehoiada; see on xxviii. 3. Upon the murdered king, moreover, the honour of being buried in the graves of the kings was not bestowed; cf. xxi. 20. On the names of the two conspirators, ver. 26, see on 2 Kings xii. 21. In ver. 27 it is doubtful how וְרַב is to be read. The Keri demands יֶרֶב, which Berth. understands thus: And as regards his sons, may the utterance concerning him increase; which might signify, "May the wish of the dying Zechariah, ver. 22, be fulfilled on them in a still greater degree than on their father." But that is hardly the meaning of the Keri. The older theologians took יֶרֶב relatively: *et quam creverit s. multiplicatum fuerit*. Without doubt, the Keth. וְרַב or יֶרֶב is the correct reading. הַמִּשָּׁא, too, is variously interpreted. Vulg., Luther, and others take it to be synonymous with מִשְׁאֵת, vers. 6, 9, and understand it of the money derived from Moses' tax; but to that עָלָיו is by no means suitable. Others (as Then.) think of the tribute laid upon him, 2 Kings xii. 19, but very arbitrarily. On the other hand, Clericus and others rightly understand it of prophetic threatenings against him, corresponding to the statement in ver. 19, that God sent prophets against him. As to the Midrash of the book of Kings, see the Introduction, p. 31 f.

CHAP. XXV.—THE REIGN OF AMAZIAH. CF. 2 KINGS XIV. 1-20.

Vers. 1-4. The statement as to the duration and spirit of the reign agrees with 2 Kings xiv. 1-6, except that in ver. 2 the estimation of the spirit of the reign according to the standard of David, "only not as his ancestor David, but altogether as his father Joash did," which we find in the book of Kings, is replaced by "only not with a perfect heart;" and the standing formula, "only the high places were not removed," etc., is omitted.

The succeeding section, vers. 5-16, enlarges upon Amaziah's



preparations for war with Edom, which had revolted under Joram of Judah, 2 Kings viii. 22; upon the victory over the Edomites in the Valley of Salt, and on the results of this war;—on all which we have in 2 Kings xiv. 7 only this short note: “he smote Edom in the valley of Salt 10,000 men, and took Selah in war, and called its name Joktheel unto this day.” But the more exact statements of the Chronicle as to the preparations and the results of this war and victory are important for Amaziah’s later war with King Joash of Israel, which is narrated in ver. 17 ff. of our chapter, because in them lie the causes of that war, so fatal to Amaziah; so that the history of Amaziah is essentially supplemented by those statements of the Chronicle which are not found in 2 Kings.

Vers. 5-13. *The preparations for the war against Edom, and the victory over the Edomites in the Valley of Salt.*—Ver. 5. Amaziah assembled Judah, *i.e.* the men in his kingdom capable of bearing arms, and set them up (ordered them) according to the princes of thousands and hundreds, of all Judah and Benjamin, and passed them in review, *i.e.* caused a census to be taken of the men liable to military service from twenty years old and upward. They found 300,000 warriors “bearing spear and target” (cf. xiv. 7); a relatively small number, not merely in comparison with the numbers under Jehoshaphat, chap. xvii. 14 ff., which are manifestly too large, but also with the numberings made by other kings, *e.g.* Asa, chap. xiv. 7. By Joram’s unfortunate wars, chap. xxi. 17, those of Ahaziah, and especially by the defeat which Joash sustained from the Syrians, xxiv. 43, the number of men in Judah fit for war may have been very much reduced. Amaziah accordingly sought to strengthen his army against the Edomites, according to ver. 6, by having an auxiliary corps of 100,000 men from Israel (of the ten tribes) for 100 talents of silver, *i.e.* he took them into his pay. But a prophet advised him not to take the Israelitish host with him, because Jahve was not with Israel, *viz.* on account of their defection from Jahve by the introduction of the calf-worship. To Israel there is added, (with) all the sons of Ephraim, to guard against any misunderstanding.—Ver. 8. Amaziah is to go alone, and show himself valiant in war, and the Lord will help him to conquer. This is without doubt the thought in ver. 8, which, however, does not seem to be contained in the traditional Masoretic text. יִכְשִׁילָךְ הָאֵל can hardly, after the preceding imperatives—do, be strong for battle—be other-

wise translated than by, "and God will cause thee to stumble before the enemy." But this is quite unsuitable. Clericus, therefore, would take the words ironically: *sin minus, tu vadito*, etc.; i.e. if thou dost not follow my advice, and takest the Israelites with thee to the war, go, show thyself strong for the war, God will soon cause thee to stumble. But **כִּי אֵם** can never signify *sin minus*. Others, as Schmidt and Ramb., translate: Rather do thou go alone (without the Israelitish auxiliaries), and be valiant, *alioquin enim, si illos tecum duxeris, corruere te faciet Deus*; or, May God make thee fall before the enemy (De Wette). But the supplying of *alioquin*, which is only hidden by De Wette's translation, cannot be grammatically justified. This interpretation of the **יִבְשִׁילָךְ** would be possible only if the negation **לֹא אֵם כִּי** stood in the preceding clause and **יִבְשִׁילָךְ** was joined to it by **וְ**. The traditional text is clearly erroneous, and we must, with Ewald and Berth., supply a **לֹא** or **לֹא־** before **יִבְשִׁילָךְ**: Go thou (alone), do, be valiant for battle, and God will not let thee come to ruin.<sup>1</sup> After this we have very fittingly the reason assigned: "for with God there is power to help, and to cause to fall."—Ver. 9. Amaziah had regard to this exhortation of the prophet, and asked him only what he should do for the 100 talents of silver which he had paid the Israelite auxiliary corps; to which the prophet answered that Jahve could give him more than that sum. Amaziah thereupon dismissed the hired Ephraimite mercenaries. **יִבְדִּילֵם**, he separated them (*sc.* from his army prepared for battle), viz. the band, that they might go to their place, i.e. might return home. The **לְ** before **הַגִּדְדִּיר** is *nota accus.*, and **לְהַגְדִּיר** is in apposition to the suffix in **יִבְדִּילֵם**. But the auxiliaries thus dismissed returned home full of wrath against Judah, and afterwards fell upon the border cities of Judah, wasting and plundering (ver. 13). Their anger probably arose from the fact that by their dismissal the opportunity of making a rich booty in war was taken away.—Ver. 11 f. But Amaziah courageously led his people into the Valley of Salt, and smote the Edomites. **הַתְּחֹקֶק**, as in xv. 8, refers back to **הָיָה**, ver. 8: he showed himself strong, according to the word of the prophet. As to the Valley of Salt, see on 2 Sam.

<sup>1</sup> Even the old translators could make nothing of the present text, and expressed the first clause of the verse as they thought best. LXX., *ὅτι ἐὰν ὑπολάβῃς κατασχεῖν ἐν τοῖς; Vulg., quod si putes in robore exercitus bella consistere*; after which Luth., "denn so du komest das du eine künheit beweisest im streit, wird Gott dich fallen lassen für deinen Feinden."



viii. 13 and 1 Chron. xviii. 12. Besides the 10,000 slain in the battle, the men of Judah took 10,000 other Edomites prisoners, whom they cast from the top of a rock. This statement is wanting in 2 Kings xiv. 7, where, instead of it, the capture of the city Sela (Petra) is mentioned. The conjecture of Thenius, that this last statement of the Chronicle has been derived from a text of the Kings which had become illegible at this place, has already been rejected as untenable by Bertheau. Except the word סֵלָע, the two texts have nothing in common with each other; but it does suggest itself that רֹאשׁ הַסֵּלָע, the top of the rock (which has become famous by this event), is to be looked for in the neighbourhood of the city Selah, as the war was ended only by the capture of Selah. Besides the battle in the Valley of Salt there were still further battles; and in the numbers 10,000, manifestly the whole of the prisoners taken in the war are comprehended, who, as irreconcilable enemies of Judah, were not made slaves, but were slain by being thrown down from a perpendicular rock.—Ver. 13. The Ephraimite host dismissed by Amaziah fell plundering upon the cities of Judah, and smote of them (the inhabitants of these cities) 3000, and carried away great booty. They would seem to have made this devastating attack on their way home; but to this idea, which at first suggests itself, the more definite designation of the plundered cities, “from Samaria to Bethhoron,” does not correspond, for these words can scarcely be otherwise understood than as denoting that Samaria was the starting-point of the foray, and not the limit up to which the plundered cities reached. For this reason Berth. thinks that this attack upon the northern cities of Judah was probably carried out only at a later period, when Amaziah and his army were in Edom. The latter is certainly the more probable supposition; but the course of events can hardly have been, that the Ephraimite auxiliary corps, after Amaziah had dismissed it, returned home to Samaria, and then later, when Amaziah had marched into the Valley of Salt, made this attack upon the cities of Judah, starting from Samaria. It is more probable that the dismissal of this auxiliary corps, which Amaziah had certainly obtained on hire from King Joash, happened after they had been gathered together in Samaria, and had advanced to the frontier of Judah. Then, roused to anger by their dismissal, they did not at once separate and return home; but, Amaziah having meanwhile taken the field against the Edomites with his army, made an attack upon the

northern frontier cities of Judah as far as Bethhoron, plundering as they went, and only after this plundering did they return home. As to Bethhoron, now Beit-Ur, see on 1 Chron. vii. 24.

Vers. 14-16. *Amaziah's idolatry*.—Ver. 14. On his return from smiting the Edomites, *i.e.* from the war in which he had smitten the Edomites, Amaziah brought the gods (images) of the sons of Seir (the inhabitants of Mount Seir) with him, and set them up as gods, giving them religious adoration.<sup>1</sup> In order to turn him away from this sin, which would certainly kindle Jahve's wrath, a prophet said to Amaziah, "Why dost thou seek the gods of the people, who have not delivered their people out of your hand?" The prophet keeps in view the motive which had induced the king to set up and worship the Edomite idols, *viz.* the belief of all polytheists, that in order to make a people subject, one must seek to win over their gods (*cf.* on this belief the remarks on Num. xxii. 17), and exposes the folly of this belief by pointing out the impotence of the Edomite idols, which Amaziah himself had learnt to know.—Ver. 16. The king, however, in his blindness puts aside this earnest warning with proud words: "Have we made thee a counsellor of the king? Forbear, why should they smite thee?" נִתְּנָה is spoken collectively: We, the king, and the members of the council. And the prophet ceased, only answering the king thus: "I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this (introduced Edomite idols), and hast not hearkened unto my counsel." The prophet calls his warning "counsel," referring to the king's word, that he was not appointed a counsellor to the king.

<sup>1</sup> This statement, which is not found in 2 Kings xiv., may, in the opinion of Berth., perhaps not rest upon a definite tradition, but be merely the application of a principle which generally was found to act in the history of Israel to a particular case; *i.e.*, it may be a clothing in historical garments of the principle that divine punishment came upon the idolatrous king, because it does not agree with the statement of 2 Kings xiv. 3. In that passage it is said of Amaziah: He did what was right in the eyes of Jahve, only not as David; altogether as his father Joash had done, did he. But Joash allowed his princes, after Jehoiada's death, to worship idols and Asheras, and had caused the prophet Zechariah, who reproved this idolatry, to be stoned. These are facts which, it is true, are narrated only in the Chronicle, but which are admitted by Bertheau himself to be historical. Now if Amaziah did altogether the same as his father Joash, who allowed idolatry, etc., it is hard indeed to see wherein the inconsistency of our account of Amaziah's idolatry with the character assigned to this king in 2 Kings xiv. 3 consists. Bertheau has omitted to give us any more definite information on this point.



Vers. 17-24. *The war with Joash, king of Israel.*—Instead of following the counsel of the prophet, Amaziah consulted (*sc.* with his public officials or courtiers), and challenged King Joash of Israel to war. The challenge, and the war which followed, are also narrated in 2 Kings xiv. 8-14 in agreement with our account, and have been already commented upon at that place, where we have also considered the occasion of this war, so fatal to Amaziah and the kingdom of Judah, an account of which has been handed down to us only in the supplementary narrative of the Chronicle. לָךְ in ver. 17 for לָכָה, come, as in Num. xxiii. 13 and Judg. xix. 13.—In ver. 20 the chronicler explains Amaziah's refusal to hear the warning of Joash before the war with him, by a reference to the divine determination: "For it (came) of God (that Amaziah still went to war), that He might deliver them (the men of Judah) into the hand, because they had sought the gods of Edom." נָתַן בְּיָד, to give into the power of the enemy.—In ver. 23, שַׁעַר הַפִּנִּיָּה is a manifest error for הַפִּנִּיָּה (Kings, ver. 13). Were הַפִּנִּיָּה, the gate that turns itself, faces (in some direction), correct, the direction would have to be given towards which it turned, *e.g.* Ezek. viii. 3.—וְכָל-הַזָּהָב וְגו', ver. 24, still depends upon תִּפֹּשׁ, ver. 23: and (took away) all the gold, etc. In Kings, ver. 14, וְלָקַח is supplied.

Vers. 25-28. *The end of Amaziah's reign*; cf. 2 Kings xiv. 17-20.—Although conquered and taken prisoner by Joash, Amaziah did not lose the throne. For Joash, contented with the carrying away of the treasures of the temple and of the palace, and the taking of hostages, set him again at liberty, so that he continued to reign, and outlived Joash by about fifteen years.—Ver. 26. On the book of the kings of Judah and Israel, see the Introduction, p. 30 f.—Ver. 27. On the conspiracy against Amaziah, his death, etc., see the commentary on 2 Kings xiv. 17 f. בְּעִיר יְהוּדָה, in the city of Judah, is surprising, since everywhere else "the city of David" is mentioned as the burial-place, and even in our passage all the ancient versions have "in the city of David." יְהוּדָה would therefore seem to be an orthographical error for יְהוּדָה, occasioned by the immediately following יְהוּדָה.

#### CHAP. XXVI.—THE REIGN OF UZZIAH (AZARIAH).

CF. 2 KINGS XIV. 21, 22, AND XV. 1-7.

Vers. 1-5. The statements as to Uzziah's attainment of dominion, the building of the seaport town Elath on the Red

Sea, the length and character of his reign (vers. 1-4), agree entirely with 2 Kings xiv. 21, 22, and xv. 2, 3; see the commentary on these passages. Uzziah (עֶזְרִיָּה) is called in 1 Chron. iii. 12 and in 2 Kings (generally) Azariah (עֶזְרִיָּה); cf., on the use of the two names, the commentary on 2 Kings xiv. 21.—In ver. 5, instead of the standing formula, “only the high places were not removed,” etc. (Kings), Uzziah’s attitude towards the Lord is more exactly defined thus: “He was seeking God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God; and in the days when he sought Jahve, God gave him success.” In יְיָ לְרַשׁ the infinitive with לְ is subordinated to הָיָה, to express the duration of his seeking, for which the participle is elsewhere used. Nothing further is known of the Zechariah here mentioned: the commentators hold him to have been an important prophet; for had he been a priest, or the high priest, probably הַכֹּהֵן would have been used. The reading בְּרֹאוֹת הָאֱלֹהִים (Keth.) is surprising. הַמֵּבִין ב’ ה’ can only denote, who had insight into (or understanding for the) seeing of God; cf. Dan. i. 17. But Kimchi’s idea, which other old commentators share, that this is a periphrasis to denote the prophetic endowment or activity of the man, is opposed by this, that “the seeing of God” which was granted to the elders of Israel at the making of the covenant, Ex. xxiv. 10, cannot be regarded as a thing within the sphere of human action or practice, while the prophetic beholding in vision is essentially different from the seeing of God, and is, moreover, never so called. בְּרֹאוֹת would therefore seem to be an orthographical error for בִּירְאוֹת, some mss. having בִּירְאוֹת or בִּירְאוֹת (cf. de Rossi, *variae lectt.*); and the LXX., Syr., Targ., Arab., Raschi, Kimchi, and others giving the reading הַמֵּבִין בִּירְאוֹת ה’, who was a teacher (instructor) in the fear of God, in favour of which also Vitringa, *proll. in Jes.* p. 4, has decided.

Vers. 6-13. *Wars, buildings, and army of Uzziah.*—Of the successful undertakings by which Uzziah raised the kingdom of Judah to greater worldly power and prosperity, nothing is said in the book of Kings; but the fact itself is placed beyond all doubt, for it is confirmed by the portrayal of the might and greatness of Judah in the prophecies of Isaiah (chap. ii.-iv.), which date from the times of Uzziah and Jotham.—Ver. 6. After Uzziah had, in the very beginning of his reign, completed the subjection of the Edomites commenced by his father by the capture and fortification of the seaport Elath (ver. 2), he took the field to chastise the



Philistines and Arabians, who had under Joram made an inroad upon Judah and plundered Jerusalem (xxi. 16 f.). In the war against the Philistines he broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod (*i.e.* after capturing these cities), and built cities in Ashdod, *i.e.* in the domain of Ashdod, and בְּפִלְשְׁתִּים, *i.e.* in other domains of the Philistines, whence we gather that he had wholly subdued Philistia. The city of Gath had been already taken from the Philistines by David; see 1 Chron. xviii. 1; and as to situation, see on xi. 8. Jabneh, here named for the first time, but probably occurring in Josh. xv. 11 under the name Jabneel, is often mentioned under the name Jamnia in the books of the Maccabees and in Josephus. It is now a considerable village, Jebnah, four hours south of Joppa, and one and a half hours from the sea; see on Josh. xv. 11. Ashdod is now a village called Esdud; see on Josh. xiii. 3.—Ver. 7. As against the Philistines, so also against the Arabians, who dwelt in Gur-Baal, God helped him, and against the Maanites, so that he overcame them and made them tributary. Gur-Baal occurs only here, and its position is unknown. According to the Targum, the city Gerar is supposed to be intended; LXX. translate ἐπὶ τῆς Πέτρας, having probably had the capital city of the Edomites, Petra, in their thoughts. The מְעִינִים are the inhabitants of Maan; see on 1 Chron. iv. 41.—Ver. 8. And the Ammonites also paid him tribute (מִנְחָה), and his name spread abroad even to the neighbourhood of Egypt; *i.e.*, in this connection, not merely that his fame spread abroad to that distance, but that the report of his victorious power reached so far, he having extended his rule to near the frontiers of Egypt, for he was exceedingly powerful. הִחֲזִיק, to show power, as in Dan. xi. 7.—Ver. 9. In order enduringly to establish the power of his kingdom, he still more strongly fortified Jerusalem by building towers at the gates, and the wall of the citadel. At the corner gate, *i.e.* at the north-west corner of the city (see on xxv. 23 and 2 Kings xiv. 13), and at the valley gate, *i.e.* on the west side, where the Jaffa gate now is. From these sides Jerusalem was most open to attack. הַמִּקְצוּץ, at the corner, *i.e.*, according to Neh. iii. 19 f., 24 f., on the east side of Zion, at the place where the wall of Zion crossed over at an angle to the Ophel, and joined itself to the south wall of the temple hill, so that the tower at this corner defended both Zion and the temple hill against attacks from the valley to the south-east. וַיַּחֲזִקם, he made them (thereby) strong

or firm; not, he put them in a condition of defence (Berth.), although the making strong was for that end.—Ver. 10. Moreover, Uzziah took measures for the defence of his herds, which formed one main part of his revenues and wealth. He built towers in the wilderness, in the steppe-lands on the west side of the Dead Sea, so well fitted for cattle-breeding (*i.e.* in the wilderness of Judah), to protect the herds against the attacks of the robber peoples of Edom and Arabia. And he dug many wells to water the cattle; “for he had much cattle” in the wilderness just mentioned, and “in the lowland” (Shephelah) on the Mediterranean Sea (see 1 Chron. xxvii. 28), and “in the plain” (מִישׁוֹר), *i.e.* the flat land on the east side of the Dead Sea, extending from Arnon to near Heshbon in the north, and to the north-east as far as Rabbath Ammon (see on Deut. iii. 10), *i.e.* the tribal land of Reuben, which accordingly at that time belonged to Judah. Probably it had been taken from the Israelites by the Moabites and Ammonites, and reconquered from them by Uzziah, and incorporated with his kingdom; for, according to ver. 8, he had made the Ammonites tributary; cf. on 1 Chron. v. 17. Husbandmen and vine-dressers had he in the mountains and upon Carmel, for he loved husbandry. After הָיָה לוֹ אֲפָרִים וְגו' is to be supplied. אֲדָמָה, the land, which is cultivated, stands here for agriculture. As to Carmel, see on Josh. xix. 26.—Vers. 11–14. His army. He had a host of fighting men that went out to war by bands (לְגִיּוֹן, in bands), “in the number of their muster by Jeiel the scribe, and Maaseiah the steward (שֹׁטֵר), under Hananiah, one of the king’s captains.” The meaning is: that the mustering by which the host was arranged in bands or detachments for war service, was undertaken by (בְּיָד) two officials practised in writing and the making up of lists, who were given as assistants to Hananiah, one of the princes of the kingdom (עַל יָד), or placed at his disposal.—Ver. 12. The total number of the heads of the fathers’-houses in valiant heroes (לְגִבּוֹרִים with לְ of subordination) was 2600, and under these (עַל יָדָם, to their hand, *i.e.* subordinate to them) an army of 307,500 warriors with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. The army was consequently divided according to the fathers’-houses, so that probably each father’s-house formed a detachment (יְגִדֹן) led by the most valiant among them.—Ver. 14. Uzziah supplied this force with the necessary weapons,—shield, lance, helmet, and coat of mail, bows and sling-stones. לָהֶם is more closely defined



by לְכָל.—Ver. 15. Besides this, he provided Jerusalem with machines for defence on the towers and battlements. הַשְּׁבָנוֹת from הִשְׁבָּן, literally *excogitata*, i.e. *machinæ*, with the addition “invention of the artificers,” are ingenious machines, and as we learn from the following לִירוֹא וְגו', slinging machines, similar or corresponding to the *catapultæ* and *ballistæ* of the Romans, by which arrows were shot and great stones propelled. Thus his name spread far abroad (cf. ver. 8), for he was marvellously helped till he was strong.

Vers. 16-22. *Uzziah's pride, and chastisement by leprosy. His death and burial.*—The fact that the Lord smote Uzziah with leprosy, which continued until his death, so that he was compelled to dwell in a hospital, and to allow his son Jotham to conduct the government, is narrated also in 2 Kings xv. 5; but the cause of this punishment inflicted on him by God is stated only in our verses.—Ver. 16. “When Uzziah had become mighty (בְּחֹזְקוֹ as in xii. 1), his heart was lifted up (in pride) unto destructive deeds.” He transgressed against Jahve his God, and came into the sanctuary of Jahve to offer incense upon the altar of incense. With a lofty feeling of his power, Uzziah wished to make himself high priest of his kingdom, like the kings of Egypt and of other nations, whose kings were also *summi pontifices*, and to unite all power in his person, like Moses, who consecrated Aaron and his sons to be priests. Then, and Ewald, indeed, think that the powerful Uzziah wished merely to restore the high-priesthood exercised by David and Solomon; but though both these kings did indeed arrange and conduct religious festal solemnities, yet they never interfered in any way with the official duties reserved for the priests by the law. The arrangement of a religious solemnity, the dedicatory prayer at the dedication of the temple, and the offering of sacrifices, are not specifically priestly functions, as the service by the altars, and the entering into the holy place of the temple, and other sacrificial acts were.—Ver. 17 ff. The king's purpose was consequently opposed by the high priest Azariah and eighty priests, valiant men, who had the courage to represent to him that to burn incense to the Lord did not appertain to the king, but only to the sanctified Aaronite priests; but the king, with the censer in his hand, was angry, and the leprosy suddenly broke out upon his forehead. When the priests saw the leprosy, they removed the king immediately from the holy place; and Uzziah himself also hurried to go forth, because Jahve had

smitten him; for he recognised in the sudden breaking out of the leprosy a punishment from God. Azariah is called *כֹּהֵן הָרֹאשׁ*, *i.e.* a high priest, and is in all probability the same person as the high priest mentioned in 1 Chron. v. 36 (see on the passage). *לֹא לְךָ לְכָבוֹד*, "It (the offering of incense) is not for thine honour before Jahve." *וַיִּצְעַק*, to foam up in anger. *וַיִּבְעַצֵּפוּ*, and while he foamed against the priests, *i.e.* was hot against them, the leprosy had broken out. *מֵעַל-לְמִזְבִּיחַ*, from by = near, the altar. Thus was Uzziah visited with the same punishment, for his haughty disregard of the divinely appointed privileges of the priesthood, as was once inflicted upon Miriam for her rebellion against the prerogatives assigned to Moses by God (Num. xii. 10).—Ver. 21. But Uzziah had to bear his punishment until his death, and dwelt the rest of his life in a separate house, while his son conducted the government for him. This is also recorded in 2 Kings xv. 5 (cf. for *בֵּית הַחֲפָשִׁית* the commentary on that passage). The reason of the separation of the king from intercourse with others, by his dwelling in the hospital, is given in the Chronicle in the words: "for he was cut off (shut out) from the house of Jahve." This reason can only mean, that because he, as a leper, was shut out from the house of the Lord, he could not live in fellowship with the people of God, but must dwell in a separate house. For the rest, we cannot exactly say how long Uzziah continued to live under the leprosy; but from the fact that his son Jotham, who at Uzziah's death was twenty-five years old, conducted the government for him, so much is clear, viz. that it can only have lasted a year or two.—Ver. 22. The history of his reign was written by the prophet Isaiah (see the Introduction, p. 34).—Ver. 23. At his death, Uzziah, having died in leprosy, was not buried in the graves of the kings, but only in the neighbourhood of them, in the burial-field which belonged to the kings, that his body might not defile the royal graves.

CHAP. XXVII.—THE REIGN OF JOTHAM. CF. 2 KINGS XV. 32–38.

Vers. 1–4. Jotham having ascended the throne at the age of twenty-five, reigned altogether in the spirit and power of his father, with the single limitation that he did not go into the sanctuary of Jahve (cf. xxvi. 16 ff.). This remark is not found in 2 Kings xv., because there Uzziah's intrusion into the temple



is also omitted. The people still did corruptly (cf. xxvi. 16). This refers, indeed, to the continuation of the worship in the high places, but hints also at the deep moral corruption which the prophets of that time censure (cf. especially Isa. ii. 5 f., v. 7 ff.; Mic. i. 5, ii. 1 ff.).—Ver. 3 f. He built the upper gate of the house of Jahve, *i.e.* the northern gate of the inner or upper court (see on 2 Kings xv. 35); the only work of his reign which is mentioned in the book of Kings. But besides this, he continued the fortifying of Jerusalem, which his father had commenced; building much at the wall of the Ophel. **הַעֲפֹל** was the name of the southern slope of the temple mountain (see on xxxiii. 14); the wall of Ophel is consequently the wall connecting Zion with the temple mountain, at which Uzziah had already built (see on xxvi. 9). He likewise carried on his father's buildings for the protection of the herds (xxvi. 10), building cities in the mountains of Judah, and castles (**בִּירְנִיּוֹת**, xvii. 12) and towers in the forests of the mountains of Judah (**תְּרָשִׁים** from **תְּרֵשֶׁת**, a thicket).

Vers. 5-9. He made war upon the king of the Ammonites, and overcame them. The Ammonites had before paid tribute to Uzziah. After his death they would seem to have refused to pay this tribute; and Jotham made them again tributary by force of arms. They were compelled to pay him after their defeat, in that same year, 100 talents of silver, 10,000 cor of wheat, and a similar quantity of barley, as tribute. **זֹאת יָבִיאוּ לוֹ**: this they brought to him again, *i.e.* they paid him the same amount as tribute in the second and third years of their subjection also. After three years, consequently, they would seem to have again become independent, or refused the tribute, probably in the last years of Jotham, in which, according to 2 Kings xv. 37, the Syrian king Rezin and Pekah of Israel began to make attacks upon Judah.—Ver. 6. By all these undertakings Jotham strengthened himself, *sc.* in the kingdom, *i.e.* he attained to greater power, because he made his ways firm before Jahve, *i.e.* walked steadfastly before Jahve; did not incur guilt by falling away into idolatry, or by faithless infringement of the rights of the Lord (as Uzziah did by his interference with the rights of the priesthood). From the **כָּל-מַלְחָמָתִי** in the concluding remark (ver. 7) we learn that he had waged still other successful wars. The older commentators reckon among these wars, the war against Rezin and Pekah, which kings the Lord began in his days to send against Judah (see 2 Kings xv. 37), but hardly with

justice. The position of this note, which is altogether omitted in the Chronicle, at the end of the account of Jotham in 2 Kings xv. 37, appears to hint that this war broke out only towards the end of Jotham's reign, so that he could not undertake anything important against this foe.—Ver. 8. The repetition of the chronological statement already given in ver. 1 is probably to be explained by supposing that two authorities, each of which contained this remark, were used.

CHAP. XXVIII.—THE REIGN OF AHAZ. CF. 2 KINGS XVI.

In the general statements as to the king's age, and the duration and the spirit of his reign, both accounts (Chron. vers. 1-4; Kings, vers. 1-4) agree entirely, with the exception of some unessential divergences; see the commentary on 2 Kings xvi. 1-4. From ver. 5 onwards both historians go their own ways, so that they coincide only in mentioning the most important events of the reign of this quite untheocratic king. The author of the book of Kings, in accordance with his plan, records only very briefly the advance of the allied kings Rezin and Pekah against Jerusalem, the capture of the seaport Elath by the Syrians, the recourse which the hard-pressed Ahaz had to the help of Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria, whom he induced, by sending him the temple and palace treasures of gold and silver, to advance upon Damascus, to capture that city, to destroy the Syrian kingdom, to lead the inhabitants away captive to Kir, and to slay King Rezin (vers. 5-9). Then he records how Ahaz, on a visit which he paid the Assyrian king in Damascus, saw an altar which so delighted him, that he sent a pattern of it to the priest Urijah, with the command to build a similar altar for the temple of the Lord, on which Ahaz on his return not only sacrificed himself, but also commanded that all the sacrifices of the congregation should be offered. And finally, he recounts how he laid violent hands on the brazen vessels of the court, and caused the outer covered sabbath way to be removed into the temple because of the king of Assyria (vers. 10-18); and then the history of Ahaz is concluded by the standing formulæ (vers. 19, 20). The author of the Chronicle, on the contrary, depicts in holy indignation against the crimes of the godless Ahaz, how God punished him for his sins. 1. He tells us how God gave Ahaz into the hand of the king of Syria, who smote him and led away many prisoners to Damascus,



and into the hand of King Pekah of Israel, who inflicted on him a dreadful defeat, slew 120,000 men, together with a royal prince and two of the highest officials of the court, and carried away 200,000 prisoners—women and children—with a great booty (vers. 5-8); and how the Israelites yet, at the exhortation of the prophet Oded, and of some of the heads of the people who supported the prophet, again freed the prisoners, provided them with food and clothing, and conducted them back to Jericho (vers. 9-15). 2. He records that Ahaz turned to the king of Assyria for help (ver. 16), but that God still further humbled Israel by an invasion of the land by the Edomites, who carried prisoners away (ver. 17); by an attack of the Philistines, who deprived Judah of a great number of cities (ver. 18); and finally also by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser, who, although Ahaz had sent him the gold and silver of the temple and of the palaces of the kings and princes, yet did not help him, but rather oppressed him (ver. 20 f.). 3. Then he recounts how, notwithstanding all this, Ahaz sinned still more against Jahve by sacrificing to the idols of the Syrians, cutting up the vessels of the house of God, closing the doors of the temple, and erecting altars and high places in all corners of Jerusalem, and in all the cities of Judah, for the purpose of sacrificing to idols (vers. 22-25). This whole description is planned and wrought out rhetorically; cf. C. P. Caspari, *der syrisch-ephraimitische Krieg*, S. 42 ff. Out of the historical materials, those facts which show how Ahaz, notwithstanding the heavy blows which Jahve inflicted upon him, always sinned more deeply against the Lord his God, are chosen, and oratorically so presented as not only to bring before us the increasing obduracy of Ahaz, but also, by the representation of the conduct of the citizens and warriors of the kingdom of Israel towards the people of Judah who were prisoners, the deep fall of that kingdom.

Vers. 5-8. *The war with the Kings Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel.*—On the events of this war, so far as they can be ascertained by uniting the statements of our chapter with the summary account in 2 Kings xvi., see the commentary on 2 Kings xvi. 5 ff. The author of the Chronicle brings the two main battles prominently forward as illustrations of the way in which Jahve gave Ahaz into the power of his enemies because of his defection from Him. Into the power of the king of Aram. They (אֲרָמִי), and they, the Arameans) smote בּוֹ, in him, i.e. they

inflicted on his army a great defeat. Just so also *מִפְּנֵי* signifies of his army. *שְׁבִיָּה גְדוֹלָה*, a great imprisonment, *i.e.* a great number of prisoners. And into the power of the king of Israel, Pekah, who inflicted on him a still greater defeat. He slew in (among) Judah 120,000 men "in one day," *i.e.* in a great decisive battle. Judah suffered these defeats because they (the men of Judah) had forsaken Jahve the God of their fathers. Judah's defection from the Lord is not, indeed, expressly mentioned in the first verses of the chapter, but may be inferred as a matter of course from the remark as to the people under Jotham, xxvii. 2. If under that king, who did that which was right in the eyes of Jahve, and stedfastly walked before the Lord (xxvii. 6), they did corruptly, they must naturally have departed much further from the God of the fathers, and been sunk much deeper in the worship of idols, and the worship on high places, under Ahaz, who served the Baals and other idols.—Ver. 7. In this battle, Zichri, an Ephraimite hero, slew three men who were closely connected with the king: Maaseiah, the king's son, *i.e.* not a son of Ahaz, for in the first years of his reign, in which this war arose, he cannot have had an adult son capable of bearing arms, but a royal prince, a cousin or uncle of Ahaz, as in xviii. 25, xxii. 11, etc. (cf. Caspari, *loc. cit.* S. 45 ff.); Azrikam, a prince of the house, probably not of the house of God (xxxi. 13; 1 Chron. ix. 11), but a high official in the royal palace; and Elkanah, the second from the king, *i.e.* his first minister; cf. Esth. x. 3, 1 Sam. xxiii. 17.—Ver. 8. The Israelites, moreover, carried away 200,000—women, sons, and daughters—from their brethren, and a great quantity of spoil, and brought the booty (prisoners and goods; cf. for *שָׁלַל* of men, Judg. v. 30) to Samaria. *אֶחָיוֹתָם*, the brethren of the Israelites, is the name given, with emphasis, to the inhabitants of Judah, here and in ver. 11, in order to point out the cruelty of the Israelites in not scrupling to carry away captive the defenceless women and children of their brethren.

The modern critics have taken offence at the large numbers, 120,000 slain and 200,000 women and children taken prisoners, and have declared them to be exaggerations of the wonder-loving chronicler (Gesen. on Isa., De Wette, Winer, etc.). But in this they are mistaken; for if we consider the war more closely, we learn from Isa. vii. 6 that the allied kings purposed to annihilate the kingdom of Judah. And, moreover, the Ephraimites acted always with extreme cruelty in war (cf. 2 Kings xv. 16);



but more especially cherished the fiercest hatred against the men of Judah, because these regarded them as having fallen away from the service of the true God (2 Chron. xxv. 6-10, xiii. 4 ff.). But in a war for the existence of the kingdom, Ahaz must certainly have called out the whole male population capable of bearing arms, which is estimated in the time of Amaziah at 300,000 men, and in that of Uzziah at 307,500 (xxv. 5, xxvi. 13),—numbers which appear thoroughly credible, considering the size and populousness of Judah. If we suppose the army of Ahaz to have been as large, in a decisive battle fought with all possible energy nearly 120,000 men may have fallen, especially if the Ephraimites, in their exasperation, unsparingly butchered their enemies, as the narrative would seem to hint both by the word *הָרַג* in ver. 6, which signifies to murder, massacre, butcher, and by the saying of the prophet, ver. 9, “Ye massacred among them with a rage which reached to heaven.” By the character of the war, which resembled a civil or even a religious war, and by the cruelty of the Israelites, the great number of those carried captive is accounted for; for after the great defeat of the men of Judah the whole land fell into the hands of the enemy, so that they could sate their hatred and anger to their heart’s content by carrying off the defenceless women and children to make them slaves. And finally, we must also consider that the numbers of the slain and of the prisoners are not founded upon exact enumeration, but upon a mere general estimate. The immense loss which was sustained in the battle was estimated on the side of Judah at 120,000 men; and the number of captive women and children was so immense, that they were, or might be, estimated at 200,000 souls, it being impossible to give an exact statement of their number. These numbers were consequently recorded in the annals of the kingdom, whence the author of the Chronicle has taken them; cf. Caspari, S. 37 ff.

Vers. 9-15. *The liberation of the prisoners.*—In Samaria there was a prophet of the Lord (i.e. not of the Jahve there worshipped in the calf images, but of the true God, like Hosea, who also at that time laboured in the kingdom of the ten tribes), Oded by name. He went forth to meet the army returning with the prisoners and the booty, as Azariah-ben-Oded (xv. 2) once went to meet Asa; pointed out to the warriors the cruelty of their treatment of their brethren, and the guilt, calling to Heaven for vengeance, which they thereby incurred; and exhorted them to turn

away the anger of God which was upon them, by sending back the prisoners. To soften the hearts of the rude warriors, and to gain them for his purpose, he tells them (ver. 9), "Because the Lord God of your fathers was wroth, He gave them (the men of Judah) into your hand:" your victory over them is consequently not the fruit of your power and valour, but the work of the God of your fathers, whose wrath Judah has drawn upon itself by its defection from Him. This you should have considered, and so have had pity upon those smitten by the wrath of God; "but ye have slaughtered among them with a rage which reacheth up to heaven," *i.e.* not merely with a rage beyond all measure, but a rage which calls to God for vengeance; cf. Ezra ix. 6.—Ver. 10. "And now the sons of Judah and Jerusalem ye purpose to subject to yourselves for bondmen and bondwomen!" בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה is *accus.*, and precedes as being emphatic; *i.e.*, your brethren, whom the wrath of God has smitten, you purpose to keep in subjection. אֲנִי also is emphatically placed, and then is again emphasized at the end of the sentence by the suffix in לָכֶם: "Are there not, only concerning you, with you, sins with Jahve your God?" *i.e.*, Have you, to regard only you, not also burdened yourselves with many sins against the Lord? The question הֲלֹא is a lively way of expressing assurance as to a matter which is not at all doubtful.—Ver. 11. After thus quickening the conscience, he calls upon them to send back the prisoners which they had carried away from among their brethren, because the anger of Jahve was upon them. Already in their pitiless butchery of their brethren they had committed a sin which cried to heaven, which challenged God's anger and His punishments; but by the carrying away of the women and children from their brethren they had filled up the measure of their sin, so that God's anger and rage must fall upon them.—Ver. 12. This speech made a deep impression. Four of the heads of the Ephraimites, here mentioned by name,—according to ver. 12, four princes at the head of the assembled people,—came before those coming from the army (קִיּוֹם עַל, to come forward before one, to meet one), and said, ver. 13, "Bring not the captives hither; for in order that a sin of Jahve come upon us, do you purpose (do you intend) to add to our sins and to our guilt?" *i.e.* to increase our sins and our guilt by making these prisoners slaves; "for great is our guilt, and fierce wrath upon Israel."—Ver. 14. Then the armed men (הַחֲלָיִין, cf. 1 Chron. xii. 23) who had escorted the prisoners



to Samaria left the prisoners and the booty before the princes and the whole assembly.—Ver. 15. “And the men which were specified by name stood up.” *אֲשֶׁר נִקְּבוּ בְּשֵׁמוֹת* does not signify those before mentioned (ver. 12), but the men specified by name, distinguished or famous men (see on 1 Chron. xii. 31), among whom, without doubt, those mentioned in ver. 12 are included, but not these alone; other prominent men are also meant. These received the prisoners and the booty, clothed all the naked, providing them with clothes and shoes (sandals) from the booty, gave them to eat and to drink, anointed them, and set all the feeble upon asses, and brought them to Jericho to their brethren (countrymen). The description is picturesque, portraying with satisfaction the loving pity for the miserable. *בְּעָרְפִּים*, nakedness, *abstr. pro concr.*, the naked. *לְכָל-בּוֹשֵׁל* is accus., and a nearer definition of the suffix in *יָבִיאוּם*: they brought them, (not all, but only) all the stumbling, who could not, owing to their fatigue, make the journey on foot. Jericho, the city of palm trees, as in Judg. iii. 13, in the tribe of Benjamin, belonged to the kingdom of Judah; see Josh. xviii. 21. Arrived there, the prisoners were with their brethren.

The speech of the prophet Oded is reckoned by Gesenius, on Isaiah, S. 269, among the speeches invented by the chronicler; but very erroneously so: cf. against him, Caspari, *loc cit.* i. S. 49 ff. The speech cannot be separated from the fact of the liberation of the prisoners carried away from Judah, which it brought about; and that is shown to be a historical fact by the names of the tribal princes of Ephraim, who, in consequence of the warning of the prophet, took his part and accomplished the sending of them back; they being names which are not elsewhere met with (ver. 12). The spontaneous interference of these tribal chiefs would not be in itself impossible, but yet it is very improbable, and becomes perfectly comprehensible only by the statement that these men were roused and encouraged thereto by the word of a prophet. We must consequently regard the speech of the prophet as a fact which is as well established as that narrated in vers. 12-15. “If that which is narrated in ver. 12 ff. be not invented, it would betray the greatest levity to hold that which is recorded in vers. 9-11 to be incredible” (Casp.). And, moreover, the speech of the prophet does not contain the thoughts and phrases current with the author of the Chronicle, but is quite suitable to the circumstances, and so fully corre-

sponds to what we should expect to hear from a prophet on such an occasion, that there is not the slightest reason to doubt the authenticity of its contents. Finally, the whole transaction is exactly parallel to the interference of the prophet Shemaiah in 1 Kings xii. 22-24 (2 Chron. xi. 1-4), who exhorted the army of Judah, fully determined upon war with the ten tribes which had just revolted from the house of David, not to make war upon their brethren the Israelites, as the revolt had been brought about by God. "That fact at the beginning of the history of the two separated kingdoms, and this at the end of it, finely correspond to each other. In the one place it is a Judæan prophet who exhorts the men of Judah, in the other an Ephraimite prophet who exhorts the Ephraimites, to show a conciliatory spirit to the related people; and in both cases they are successful. If we do not doubt the truth of the event narrated in 1 Kings xii. 22-24, why should that recorded in 2 Chron. xxviii. 9-11 be invented?" (Casp. S. 50.)

Vers. 16-21. *The further chastisements inflicted upon King Ahaz and the kingdom of Judah.*—Ver. 16. At this time, when the kings Rezin and Pekah had so smitten Ahaz, the latter sent to the king of Assyria praying him for help. The time when Ahaz sought the help of the king of Assyria is neither exactly stated in 2 Kings xvi. 7-9, nor can we conclude, as Bertheau thinks we can, from Isa. vii. f. that it happened soon after the invasion of Judah by the allied kings. The plural מְלָכֵי אַשּׁוּר is rhetorical, like the plur. בָּנָי, ver. 3. For, that Ahaz applied only to one king, in the opinion of the chronicler also, we learn from vers. 20, 21. By the plural the thought is expressed that Ahaz, instead of seeking the help of Jahve his God, which the prophet had promised him (Isa. vii. 4 ff.), turned to the kings of the world-power, so hostile to the kingdom of God, from whom he naturally could obtain no real help. Even here the thought which is expressed only in vers. 20, 21, is present to the mind of the author of the Chronicle. For before he narrates the issue of the help thus sought from the Assyrian world-power in vers. 17-19, he ranges all the other afflictions which Judah suffered by its enemies, viz. the devastating inroads of the Edomites and Philistines, in a series of circumstantial clauses, as they preceded in time the oppression of Tiglath-pileser.—Ver. 17 is to be translated, "And besides, the Edomites had come, and had inflicted a defeat upon Judah, and carried away captives." עוד, yet besides, *præterea*,



as in Gen. xliii. 6, Isa. i. 5. The Edomites had been made subject to the kingdom of Judah only by Amaziah and Uzziah (xxv. 11 ff., xxvi. 2); but freed by Rezin from this (cf. 2 Kings xvi. 6), they immediately seized the opportunity to make an inroad upon Judah, and take vengeance on the inhabitants.—Ver. 18. And the Philistines whom Uzziah had subdued (xxvi. 6) made use of the pressure of the Syrians and Ephraimites upon Judah, not only to shake off the yoke imposed upon them, but also to fall plundering upon the cities of the lowland and the south of Judah, and to extend their territory by the capture of several cities of Judah. They took Beth-shemesh, the present Ain Shems; and Ajalon, the present village Jâlo (see on 1 Chron. vi. 44 and 54); Gederoth in the lowland (Josh. xv. 41), not yet discovered, for there are not sufficient grounds for identifying it with Gederâ (Josh. xv. 36), which v. de Velde has pointed out south-eastward from Jabneh (see on 1 Chron. xii. 4); Shocho, the present Shuweike, which Rehoboam had fortified (xi. 7); Timnah, on the frontier of the tribal domain of Judah, the present Tibneh, three-quarters of an hour to the west of Ain Shems (see on Josh. xv. 10); and Gimzo, now Jimsû, a large village about two miles south-east of Lydda (Lud) on the way to Jerusalem (Rob. *sub voce*). The three last-named cities, with their daughters, *i.e.* the small villages dependent upon them.—Ver. 19. Judah suffered this defeat, because God humbled them on account of Ahaz. Ahaz is called king of Israel, not because he walked in the ways of the kings of the kingdom of the ten tribes (ver. 2), but ironically, because his government was the bitterest satire upon the name of the king of Israel, *i.e.* of the people of God (Casp.); so that Israel here, and in ver. 27, as in xxi. 2, xii. 6, is used with reference to the pregnant signification of the word. כִּי הִפְרִיעַ, for (Ahaz) had acted wantonly in Judah; not: made Judah wanton, for הִפְרִיעַ is construed with ב, not with *accus. obj.*, as in Ex. v. 4.

After this episode the narrator comes back upon the help which Ahaz sought of the Assyrians. The Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser (on the name, see on 1 Chron. v. 6) did indeed come, but עָלָיו, against him (Ahaz), and oppressed him, but strengthened him not. וַיִּצַּר לוֹ וְלֹא הִזְקָו Thenius and Bertheau translate: he oppressed him, that is, besieged him, yet did not overcome him; adducing in support of this, that הִזְקָו *c. accus.* cannot be shown to occur in the signification to strengthen one,

and according to Jer. xx. 7, 1 Kings xvi. 22, is to be translated, to overcome. But this translation does not at all suit the reason given in the following clause: "for Ahaz had plundered the house of Jahve, . . . and given it to the king of Asshur; but it did not result in help to him." The sending away of the temple and palace treasures to the Assyrian king, to obtain his help, cannot possibly be stated as the reason why Tiglath-pileser besieged Ahaz, but did not overcome him, but only as a reason why he did not give Ahaz the expected help, and so did not strengthen him. **וְלֹא חֲזַק** corresponds to the **וְלֹא לָעֲזָרָה לוֹ**, ver. 21, and both clauses refer back to **לָעֲזֹר לוֹ**, ver. 16. That which Ahaz wished to buy from Tiglath-pileser, by sending him the treasures of the palace and the temple,—namely, help against his enemies,—he did not thereby obtain, but the opposite, viz. that Tiglath-pileser came against him and oppressed him. When, on the contrary, Thenius takes the matter thus, that the subjection of Ahaz under Tiglath-pileser was indeed prevented by the treasures given, but the support desired was not purchased by them, he has ungrammatically taken **חֲזַק** as imperfect, and violently torn away the **וְלֹא לָעֲזָרָה לוֹ** from what precedes. If we connect these words, as the adversative **וְלֹא** requires, with **וַיִּתֵּן וְנָו**, then the expression, "Ahaz gave the Assyrian king the treasures of the temple, . . . but it did not result in help to him," gives no support to the idea that Tiglath-pileser besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. The context therefore necessarily demands that **חֲזַק** should have the active signification, to strengthen, notwithstanding that **חֲזַק** in Kal is mainly used as intransitive. Moreover, **וַיַּצֵּר לוֹ** also does not denote he besieged, as **וַיַּצֵּר אֵלָיו** or **עָלָיו**, 2 Sam. xx. 15, 1 Sam. xxiii. 8; but only, he oppressed him, and cannot here be translated otherwise than the **הָצִיר לוֹ**, ver. 22, which corresponds to it, where Bertheau also has decided in favour of the signification *oppress*. It is not stated wherein the oppression consisted; but without doubt it was that Tiglath-pileser, after he had both slain Rezin and conquered his kingdom, and also taken away many cities in Galilee and the land of Naphtali from Pekah, carrying away the inhabitants to Assyria (2 Kings xvi. 9 and xv. 29), advanced against Ahaz himself, to make him a tributary. The verbs **הִלָּק** and **וַיִּתֵּן** (ver. 21) are pluperfects: "for Ahaz had plundered," etc. Not when Tiglath-pileser oppressed him, but when he besought help of that king, Ahaz had sent him the treasures of the temple and the palace as **שָׁחַר**, 2 Kings xvi. 7, 8. **הִלָּק** denotes to plunder,



like חֶלֶק, a share of booty, Num. xxxi. 36, and booty, Job xvii. 5. The selection of this word for the taking away of the treasures of silver and gold out of the temple and palace arises from the impassioned nature of the language. The taking away of these treasures was, in fact, a plundering of the temple and of the palace. Had Ahaz trusted in the Lord his God, he would not have required to lay violent hands on these treasures. וְהַשָּׂרִים is added to בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ, to signify that Ahaz laid hands upon the precious things belonging to the high officials who dwelt in the palace, and delivered them over to the Assyrian king (Berth.).

Although the author of the Chronicle makes the further remark, that the giving of these treasures over did not result in help to Ahaz, yet it cannot be at all doubtful that he had the fact recorded in 2 Kings xvi. 7-9 before his eyes, and says nothing inconsistent with that account. According to 2 Kings xvi. 9, Tiglath-pileser, in consequence of the present sent him, took the field, conquered and destroyed the kingdom of Rezin, and also took possession of the northern part of the kingdom of Israel, as is narrated in 2 Kings xv. 29. The author of the Chronicle has not mentioned these events, because Ahaz was not thereby really helped. Although the kings Rezin and Pekah were compelled to abandon their plan of capturing Jerusalem and subduing the kingdom of Judah, by the inroad of the Assyrians into their land, yet this help was to be regarded as nothing, seeing that Tiglath-pileser not only retained the conquered territories and cities for himself, but also undertook the whole campaign, not to strengthen Ahaz, but for the extension of his own (the Assyrian) power, and so made use of it, and, as we are told in ver. 20 of the Chronicle, oppressed Ahaz. This oppression is, it is true, not expressly mentioned in 2 Kings xvi., but is hinted in 2 Kings xvi. 18, and placed beyond doubt by 2 Kings xviii. 7, 14, 20; cf. Isa. xxxvi. 5. In 2 Kings xvi. 18 it is recorded that Ahaz removed the covered sabbath portico which had been built to the house of God, and the external entrance of the king into the house of the Lord, because of (מִפְּנֵי) the king of Assyria. Manifestly Ahaz feared, as J. D. Mich. has already rightly concluded from this, that the king of Assyria, whom he had summoned to his assistance, might at some time desire to take possession of the city, and that in such a case this covered sabbath porch and an external entrance into the temple might be of use to him in the siege. This note, therefore, notwithstanding its

obscurity, yet gives sufficiently clear testimony in favour of the statement in the Chronicle, that the king of Assyria, who had been called upon by Ahaz for help, oppressed him, upon which doubt has been cast by Gesen. *Isa.* i. S. 269, etc. Tiglath-pileser must have in some way shown a desire to possess Jerusalem, and Ahaz have consequently feared that he might wish to take it by force. But from 2 Kings xviii. 7, 14, 20, cf. *Isa.* xxxvi. 5, it is quite certain Ahaz had become tributary to the Assyrian king, and the kingdom dependent upon the Assyrians. It is true, indeed, that in these passages, strictly interpreted, this subjection of Judah is only said to exist immediately before the invasion of Sennacherib; but since Assyria made no war upon Judah between the campaign of Tiglath-pileser against Damascus and Samaria and Sennacherib's attack, the subjection of Judah to Assyria, which Hezekiah brought to an end, can only have dated from the time of Ahaz, and can only have commenced when Ahaz had called in Tiglath-pileser to aid him against his enemies. Certainly the exact means by which Tiglath-pileser compelled Ahaz to submit and to pay tribute cannot be recognised under, and ascertained from, the rhetorical mode of expression: Tiglath-pileser came against him, and oppressed him. Neither *וַיָּבֹא עָלָיו* nor *וַיִּצַּר לוֹ* require us to suppose that Tiglath-pileser advanced against Jerusalem with an army, although it is not impossible that Tiglath-pileser, after having conquered the Israelite cities in Galilee and the land of Naphtali, and carried away their inhabitants to Assyria (2 Kings xv. 29), may have made a further advance, and demanded of Ahaz tribute and submission, ordering a detachment of his troops to march into Judah to enforce his demand. But the words quoted do not necessarily mean more than that Tiglath made the demand on Ahaz for tribute from Galilee, with the threat that, if he should refuse it, he would march into and conquer Judah; and that Ahaz, feeling himself unable to cope successfully with so powerful a king, promised to pay the tribute without going to war. Even in this last case the author of the Chronicle might say that the king who had been summoned by Ahaz to his assistance came against him and oppressed him, and helped him not. Cf. also the elaborate defence of the account in the Chronicle, in Caspari, S. 56 ff.

Vers. 22–25. *Increase of Ahaz' transgressions against the Lord.*  
 —Ver. 22. After this proof that Ahaz only brought greater oppression upon himself by seeking help from the king of



Assyria (vers. 16-21), there follows (ver. 22 f.) an account of how he, in his trouble, continued to sin more and more against God the Lord, and hardened himself more and more in idolatry. *וּבָעֵת הַזֶּה לֹא* corresponds to the *בְּעֵת הַהִיא*, ver. 16. "At the time when they oppressed him, he trespassed yet more against the Lord, he King Ahaz." In the last words the rhetorical emphasizing of the subject comes clearly out. The sentence contains a general estimation of the attitude of the godless king under the divine chastisement, which is then illustrated by facts (vers. 23-25).—Ver. 23. He sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, which smote him, saying, *i.e.* thinking, The gods of the kings of Aram which helped them, to them will I sacrifice, and they will help me. *כִּי* serves to introduce the saying, and both *הֵם* and *לָהֶם* are rhetorical. Berth. incorrectly translates the participle *הַמִּכִּים* by the pluperfect: who had smitten him. It was not after the Syrians had smitten him that Ahaz sought to gain by sacrifice the help of their gods, but while the Syrians were inflicting defeats upon him; not after the conclusion of the Syrian war, but during its course. The ungrammatical translation of the participle by the pluperfect arises from the view that the contents of our verse, the statement that Ahaz sacrificed to the Syrian gods, is an unhistorical misinterpretation of the statement in 2 Kings xvi. 10 ff., about the altar which Ahaz saw when he went to meet the Assyrian king in Damascus, and a copy of which he caused to be made in Jerusalem, and set up in the temple court, in the place of the copper altar of burnt-offering. But we have already rejected that view as unfounded, in the exposition of 2 Kings xvi. 10. Since Ahaz had cast and erected statues to the Baals, and even sacrificed his son to Moloch, he naturally would not scruple to sacrifice to the Assyrian gods to secure their help. But they (these gods) brought ruin to him and to all Israel. *לְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל* is in the accusative, and co-ordinate with the suffix in *הַכְּשִׁילֹו*.—Ver. 24 f. Not content with thus worshipping strange gods, Ahaz laid violent hands upon the temple vessels and suppressed the temple worship. He collected all the vessels of the house of God together, and broke them in pieces. These words also are rhetorical, so that neither the *וַאֲסַף*, which depicts the matter vividly, nor the *כָּל*, is to be pressed. The *קִצְצָן* of the vessels consisted, according to 2 Kings xvi. 17, in this, that he mutilated the artistically wrought vessels of the court, and cut out the panels from the bases, and took

away the lavers from them, and took down the brazen sea from the oxen on which it stood, and set it upon a pavement of stones. "And he closed the doors of the house of Jahve," in order to put an end to the Jahve-worship in the temple, which he regarded as superfluous, since he had erected altars at the corners of all the streets in Jerusalem, and in all the cities of Judah. The statement as to the closing of the temple doors, to which reference is made in chap. xxix. 3, 7, is said by Berth. not to rest upon good historical recollection, because the book of Kings not only does not say anything of it, but also clearly gives us to understand that Ahaz allowed the Jahve-worship to continue, 2 Kings xvi. 15 f. That the book of Kings (ii. 16) makes no mention of this circumstance does not prove much, it being an *argumentum e silentio*; for the book of Kings is not a complete history, it contains only a short excerpt from the history of the kings; while the intimation given us in 2 Kings xvi. 15 f. as to the continuation of the worship of Jahve, may without difficulty be reconciled with the closing of the temple doors. The *דלתות* *בית יהוה* are not the gates of the court of the temple, but, according to the clear explanation of the Chronicle, chap. xxix. 7, the doors of the porch, which in xxix. 3 are also called doors of the house of Jahve; the "house of Jahve" signifying here not the whole group of temple buildings, but, in the narrower sense of the words, denoting only the main body of the temple (the Holy Place and the Most Holy, wherein Jahve was enthroned). By the closing of the doors of the porch the worship of Jahve in the Holy Place and the Most Holy was indeed suspended, but the worship at the altar in the court was not thereby necessarily interfered with: it might still continue. Now it is the worship at the altar of burnt-offering alone of which it is said in 2 Kings xvi. 15 that Ahaz allowed it to continue to this extent, that he ordered the priest Urijah to offer all the burnt-offerings and sacrifices, meat-offerings and drink-offerings, which were offered morning and evening by both king and people, not upon the copper sacrificial altar (Solomon's), but on the altar built after the pattern of that which he had seen at Damascus. The cessation of worship at this altar is also left unmentioned by the Chronicle, and in xxix. 7. Hezekiah, when he again opened the doors of the house of Jahve, only says to the priests and Levites, "Our fathers have forsaken Jahve, and turned their backs on His sanctuary; yea, have shut the doors of the porch, put out the lamps, and have



not burnt incense nor offered burnt-offerings in the Holy Place *unto the God of Israel.*" Sacrificing upon an altar built after a heathen model was not sacrificing to the God of Israel. There is therefore no ground to doubt the historical truth of the statement in our verse. The description of the idolatrous conduct of Ahaz concludes with the remark, ver. 25, that Ahaz thereby provoked Jahve, the God of his fathers, to anger.

Vers. 26 and 27. *The end of his reign.*—Ver. 27. Ahaz indeed both died and was buried in the city, in Jerusalem (as 2 Kings xvi. 20), but was not laid in the graves of the kings, because he had not ruled like a king of the people of God, the true Israel. Since the name Israel is used in a pregnant sense, as in ver. 19, the terms in which the place where he died is designated, "in the city, in Jerusalem," would seem to have been purposely selected to intimate that Ahaz, because he had not walked during life like his ancestor David, was not buried along with David when he died.

#### CHAP. XXIX.—XXXII.—THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH.

##### CF. 2 KINGS XVIII.—XX.

Hezekiah, the pious son of the godless Ahaz, recognised that it was to be the business of his reign to bring the kingdom out of the utterly ruinous condition into which Ahaz had brought it by his idolatry and his heathen policy, and to elevate the state again, both in respect to religion and morals, and also in political affairs. He consequently endeavoured, in the first place, to do away with the idolatry, and to restore the Jahve-worship according to the law, and then to throw off the yoke of subjection to the Assyrian. These two undertakings, on the success of which God bestowed His blessing, form the contents of the history of his reign both in the books of Kings and in the Chronicle; but they are differently treated by the authors of these books. In the book of Kings, the extirpation of idolatry, and Hezekiah's faithfulness in cleaving to the Lord his God, are very briefly recorded (2 Kings xvii. 3–7); while the throwing off of the Assyrian yoke, which brought on Sennacherib's invasion, and ended with the destruction of the Assyrian army before Jerusalem, and the further results of that memorable event (the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, the arrival of a Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem, and Hezekiah's reception of them), are very fully narrated in 2 Kings xviii. 8–

xx. 19. The author of the Chronicle, on the contrary, enlarges upon Hezekiah's reform of the cultus, the purification of the temple from all idolatrous abominations, the restoration of the Jahve-worship, and a solemn celebration of the passover, to which the king invited not only his own subjects, but also the remainder of the ten tribes (chap. xxix.—xxx.). and gives merely a brief summary of the chief points in Sennacherib's invasion, and the events connected with it (chap. xxxii.).

Chap. xxix. *The beginning of his reign* (vers. 1, 2). *Purification and consecration of the temple* (vers. 3–36).—Vers. 1 and 2. Age of Hezekiah, duration and spirit of his reign, as in 2 Kings xviii. 1–3. With ver. 3 the account of the restoration of the Jahve-worship begins. In the first year of his reign, in the first month, Hezekiah caused the temple doors to be opened, and the priests and Levites to assemble, in order that he might rouse them by an energetic address to purify the house of God from all the uncleannesses of idolatry (vers. 3–11). They, vigorously commencing the work, completed the purification of the temple with its courts and vessels in sixteen days, and reported to the king what had been done (vers. 12–19); and then the king and the chiefs of the city offered a great sacrifice to consecrate the purified sanctuary, upon which followed burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and thankofferings of the whole assembly (vers. 20–36).

Vers. 3–19. *The purification of the temple by the priests and Levites*.—Ver. 3. In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he caused the doors of the house of Jahve to be opened and repaired (חָדַשׁ as in xxiv. 12, where it alternates with חָדָשׁ). Cf. herewith the remark in 2 Kings xviii. 16, that Hezekiah caused the doors of the הֵיכָל to be covered with leaf-gold. The date, *in the first month*, in the first year of his reign, is variously interpreted. As the Levites, according to ver. 17, began the purification on the first day of the first month, in eight days had reached the porch, and on the sixteenth day of the first month had completed the work, while the king had, according to ver. 4, before called upon the priests and Levites to sanctify themselves for the work, and those summoned then assembled their brethren for this purpose, and after they had consecrated themselves, began the cleansing (ver. 15), it would seem as if the summons of the king and the calling together of the remaining Levites had occurred before the first day of the first month, when they began the purification of the house of God. On that



account Caspari (*Beiträge z. Einleit. in d. B. Jesaiah*, S. 111) thinks that the first month (ver. 3) is not the first month of the year (Nisan), but the first month of the reign of Hezekiah, who probably became king shortly before Nisan, towards the end of the year. But it is not at all likely that *הַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן* is used in a different sense in ver. 3 from that in which it is used in ver. 17. We therefore hold, with Berth. and others, the first month, both in ver. 3 and in ver. 17, to be the first month of the ecclesiastical year Nisan, without, however, accepting the supposition of Gumpach and Bertheau that the years of Hezekiah's reign began with the first of Tishri, for for that way of reckoning there are no certain data in the historical books of the Old Testament. The statement, "in the first year of his reign, in the first month" (not in the first year, in the first month of his reign), is sufficiently explained if Hezekiah ascended the throne in one of the last months of the calendar year, which began with Nisan. In that case, on the first of Nisan of the new year, so few months, or perhaps only weeks, would have elapsed since his accession, that what he did in Nisan could not rightly have been dated otherwise than "in the first year of his reign." The other difficulty, that the purification of the temple began on the first day of the first month (ver. 7), while the preparations for it which preceded were yet, according to ver. 3, made also in the first month, is removed if we take ver. 3 to be a comprehensive summary of what is described in the following verses, and regard the connection between vers. 3 and 4 ff. as only logical, not chronological, the *ו* consec. (*וַיִּבְנֶה*) expressing, not succession in time, but connection in thought. The opening of the doors of the house of God, and the repairing of them (ver. 3), did not precede in time the summons to the priests (ver. 4), but is placed at the commencement of the account of the reopening and restoration of the temple as a contrast to the closing and devastation of the sanctuary by Ahaz. Hezekiah commenced this work in the first year of his reign, in the first month of the calendar year, and accomplished it as is described in vers. 4-17. If we take ver. 3 as a statement of the contents of the succeeding section,—as are *e.g.* (1 Kings vi. 14, vii. 1) the statements, "he built the house, and completed it," where in both passages the completion of the building is described only in the succeeding verses,—we need not confine the preparations spoken of in vers. 4-15 to the first day of the first month, but may quite well suppose that these pre-

parations preceded the first day of the month, and that only the accomplishment of that which had been resolved upon and commanded by the king fell in the first month, as is more accurately stated in ver. 17.—Ver. 4. Hezekiah gathered the priests and Levites together “into the open space of the east,” *i.e.* in the eastern open space before the temple, not “in the inner court” (Berth.),—see on Ezra x. 9,—and called upon them (ver. 5) to sanctify themselves, and then to sanctify the house of the Lord. To purify the temple they must first sanctify themselves (cf. ver. 15), in order to proceed to the work of sanctifying the house of God in a state of Levitical purity. The work was to remove all that was unclean from the sanctuary. הַנִּזְהָה is Levitical uncleanness, for which in ver. 16 we have הַטְּמֵאָה; here the abominations of idolatry. The king gave the reason of his summons in a reference to the devastation which Ahaz and his contemporaries had wrought in the house of God (vers. 6, 7), and to the wrath of God which had on that account come upon them (vers. 8, 9). “Our fathers” (ver. 6), that is, Ahaz and his contemporaries, for only these had been guilty of displeasing God in the ways mentioned in vers. 6 and 7, “have turned away their face from the dwelling of Jahve, and turned their back (upon it).” These words are a symbolical expression for: they have ceased to worship Jahve in His temple, and exchanged it for idolatry.—Ver. 7. Even (וְגַם) the doors of the porch have they shut, and caused the service in the sanctuary, the lighting of the lamps, and the sacrifices of incense, to cease; see on xxviii. 24. The words, “and they brought not burnt-offerings in the sanctuary to the God of Israel,” do not imply the complete cessation of the legal sacrificial worship, but only that no burnt-offerings were brought to the God of Israel. Sacrifices offered upon the altar of burnt-offering built after a heathen pattern by Ahaz were not, in the eyes of the author of the Chronicle, sacrifices which were offered to the God of Israel; and it is also possible that even this sacrificial worship may have more and more decayed. קִדְּשׁ, ver. 7, is the whole sanctuary, with the court of the priests.—Ver. 8 f. Wherefore the wrath of the Lord came upon Judah and Jerusalem. Cf. for the expression, xxiv. 18, xxxii. 25; on ver. 8b, cf. Deut. xxviii. 25, 37, Jer. xxiv. 9, xxv. 9, etc. “As ye see with your eyes.” The shameful defeats which Judah had sustained under Ahaz from the Syrians, Ephraimites, Philistines, and Edomites, and the oppression by the Syrian king (xxviii. 5 ff.,



vers. 17-21), are here referred to, as we learn from ver. 9.—Ver. 10. To turn away this anger of God, Hezekiah wishes to make a covenant with the Lord, *i.e.* to renew the covenant with Jahve by restoring His worship (עִם לְבָבִי) as in vi. 7, ix. 1, 1 Chron. xxviii. 2, etc.), and therefore calls upon the Levites not to neglect the performance of their duty. בְּנֵי he calls the Levites, addressing them in kindly language; cf. Prov. i. 8, etc. הִשְׁלִי in Niph. occurs only here, and denotes to avoid a thing from carelessness or laziness,—from שָׁלַח, to draw forth; Job xxvii. 8. On ver. 11b, cf. Deut. x. 8, 1 Chron. xxiii. 13.

Vers. 12-19. This address was heard with gladness. The Levites present assembled their brethren, and set to work, after they had all sanctified themselves, to purify the temple. In vers. 12-14 fourteen names are mentioned as those of the audience, viz.: two Levites of each of the great families of Kohath, Merari, and Gershon; two of the family of Elizaphan, *i.e.* Elzaphan the son of Uzziel, the son of Kohath, Ex. vi. 18, who in the time of Moses was prince of the family of Kohath, Num. iii. 30; and then two Levites of the descendants of Asaph (of the family of Gershon); two of Heman's descendants (of the family of Kohath); and two of Jeduthun's (of the family of Merari): see on 1 Chron. vi. 18-32. Of these names, Mahath, Eden, and Jehiel occur again in chap. xxxi. 13-15; several others, Joah ben Zimmah and Kish ben Abdi, have occurred already in the genealogy, 1 Chron. vi. 5 f. and ver. 29, for in the various families the same name often repeats itself.—Ver. 15. These fourteen heads of the various families and branches of Levi assembled their brethren (the other Levites who dwelt in Jerusalem); then they all sanctified themselves, and went forward, according to the command of the king, with the work of cleansing the temple. בְּמִצְוַת הַמֶּלֶךְ belongs to בְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה, according to the command of the king, which was founded upon the words of Jahve, *i.e.* upon the commands of Moses' law; cf. xxx. 12.—Ver. 16. The priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord (into the holy place, probably also into the most holy place) to cleanse it, and removed all the uncleanness which was there into the court, whence the Levites carried it out into the valley of the brook Kidron (הַיַּרְדֵּן, out of the precincts of the temple). The Levites were forbidden by the law to enter the holy place, and this command was strictly observed. Of what nature the uncleannesses were which the priests found in the holy place

(הִיכָל) cannot be accurately ascertained. Owing to the prevalence of idolatry under Ahaz, vessels, *e.g.* sacrificial bowls, which were used in the worship, may have come into the holy place; and besides, all vessels of the holy place would require to be cleaned, and their filth removed. The closing of the temple doors (xxviii. 24) occurred only in the last year of Ahaz, while idolatry had been practised from the beginning of his reign. On the Kidron, see on 2 Kings xxiii. 4.—Ver. 17. The duration of the purification. On the first day of the first month they commenced with the purification of the courts; on the eighth day of the same month they came to the porch of Jahve, and with it began the purification of the temple building. This lasted eight days more, so that the work was finished on the sixteenth day of the first month.—Ver. 18 f. At the end of this business they made their report to the king. “All the vessels which King Ahaz had thrown away, *i.e.* made worthy of rejection,” are the copper altar of burnt-offering, the brazen sea, and the lavers upon the bases (2 Kings xvi. 14, 17). הִכֹּנִי, we have prepared, is a shorter form of הִכְנִינוּ; cf. Gesen. *Gramm.* § 72. 5, and J. Olshausen, *hebr. Grammat.* S. 565. The altar of Jahve is the altar of burnt-offering; cf. ver. 21.

Vers. 20–30. *The re-dedication of the temple by offering sacrifices.*—Ver. 20. Probably on the very next morning Hezekiah went with the princes (heads) of the city into the house of the Lord, and brought seven bullocks, seven rams, and seven lambs for a burnt-offering, and seven he-goats for a sin-offering, “for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and for Judah,” *i.e.* as expiation for and consecration of the kingdom, sanctuary, and people. These sacrifices were offered by the priests according to the prescription of the law of Moses, vers. 22–24. The burnt-offerings are first named, as in the sacrificial Torah in Lev. i.–vi., although the offering of the sin-offering preceded that of the burnt-offering. The laying on of hands, too, is mentioned only with the sin-offering, ver. 23, although according to Lev. i. 4 the same ceremony was gone through with the burnt-offerings; but that is not because a confession of sin was probably made during the laying on of hands, as Bertheau conjectures, adducing Lev. xvi. 21, for from that passage no such conclusion can be drawn. The ceremony is mentioned only in the one case to emphasize the fact that the king and the assembly (the latter, of course, by their representatives) laid their hands upon the sacri-



ficial beasts, because the atonement was, according to the king's words, to be for all Israel. "All Israel" are probably not only all the inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah, but Israelites in general (the twelve tribes), for whom the temple in Jerusalem was the only lawful sanctuary. **הָטָא אֶת דָּם** signifies to bring the blood to the altar for an atonement, in the manner prescribed in Lev. iv. 30, 34.—Ver. 25. Hezekiah, moreover, restored again the music with which the Levites were wont to accompany the sacrificial act, and which David, with the prophets Gad and Nathan, had arranged. The *v. consec.* with **וַיַּעֲמֵד** expresses the secution of thought, and ver. 25 corresponds to the 21st verse. First, the beasts to be sacrificed were prepared for the sacrifice, and then to the Levites was committed the performance of instrumental and vocal music during the sacrificial act. In reference to the musical instruments, see on 1 Chron. xv. 16. The Levites were appointed to sing, "according to the command of David;" but this command was **בְּיָד**, by interposition of Jahve, viz. given by His prophets. David had consequently made this arrangement at the divine suggestion, coming to him through the prophets. With **הָיוּ הַמִּלֶּחֶם** cf. 1 Chron. xxi. 9. **בְּיָד נְבִיאָיו** is in explanatory apposition to **בְּיָד יְהוָה**, and **נְבִיאָיו** is not to be referred to David, although David is called in viii. 14 "man of God."—Ver. 26. **כָּלֵי דָוִיד** are the musical instruments the use of which David introduced into the public worship; see 1 Chron. xxiii. 5.—The first clause, ver. 27, "And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar," is repeated from ver. 21 to form a connection for what follows: "At the time when the sacrificial act began, the song of Jahve commenced," i.e. the praising of Jahve by song and instrumental music (**שִׁיר יְהוָה** = **שִׁיר לַיהוָה**, 1 Chron. xxv. 7), and (the blowing) of trumpets, "and that under the leading (**עַל יְדֵי**) of the instruments of David." This is to be understood as denoting that the blowing of the trumpets regulated itself by the playing of the stringed instruments,—suited itself to the song and the music of the stringed instruments.—Ver. 28. During the offering of the burnt-offering, until it was ended, the whole congregation stood worshipping; and the song of the Levites, accompanied by the music of the stringed instruments and the trumpet-blowing of the priests, continued. **הַשִּׁיר מְשֻׁנָּה**, "the song was singing," stands for "the body of singers sang;" and the trumpets also stand for the trumpeters.—Ver. 29. At the conclusion of the sacrificial act

(לְהַעֲלוֹת is a contraction for לְהַעֲלוֹת הָעוֹלָה, ver. 27) the king and all who were present knelt and worshipped.—Ver. 30. The king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words (psalms) of David and of Asaph; and they sang praise with joy, and bowed themselves and worshipped. This verse does not mean that the Levites began to sing psalms at the king's command only after the sacrificial act and the instrumental music (ver. 27 f.) had been finished, but it forms a comprehensive conclusion of the description of the sacrificial solemnities. The author of the Chronicle considered it necessary to make express mention of the praising of God in psalms, already *implicite* involved in the הַשִּׁיר מִשׁוֹרֵר, ver. 28, and to remark that the Levites also, at the conclusion of the song of praise, knelt and worshipped. Asaph is here called חִיָּה, as Jeduthun (Ethan) is in chap. xxxv. 15, and Heman, 1 Chron. xxv. 5.

Vers. 31–36. *The sacrifice of thank-offerings and praise-offerings and voluntary burnt-offerings.*—Hezekiah introduces this, the concluding act of this religious festival, with the words, “Now have ye filled your hand to the Lord,” *i.e.* you have again consecrated yourselves to the service of the Lord (cf. Ex. xxxii. 39 and the commentary on Lev. vii. 37 f.); “come near, and bring sacrifices and thank-offerings into the house of the Lord.” The words “Now have ye filled” are regarded by the commentators (Clericus, Ramb., Bertheau, etc.) as addressed to the priests; while the following נִשְׂאוּ וְנָתַתּוּ are supposed to be directed to the congregation, and Clericus and Ramb. consequently supply before נִשְׂאוּ, *vos vero, Israelitæ*. The summons וְנָתַתּוּ can certainly only be addressed to the congregation, as is shown by the words וְנִבְיָאֵי הַקְּהָל, and the congregation brought, which correspond to the summons. But the supplying of *vos vero* before נִשְׂאוּ is quite arbitrary. If in נִשְׂאוּ other persons are addressed than those to whom the king formerly said, “Now have ye filled your hands,” the change in the persons addressed would have been intimated by mention of the person, or at least by וְאַתֶּם, “but ye.” As the two clauses at present stand, they must be spoken to the same persons, viz. the whole assembled congregation, including the priests and Levites. We must therefore suppose that the phrase מִלֵּא יָד לִי, which in its narrower sense denotes only the consecration of the priests for service at the altar (see on Lev. vii. 37), is here used in a wider sense, and transferred to the whole con-



gregation. They, by their participation in the consecratory offerings, by laying on of hands and worship during the sacrificial act, had consecrated themselves anew to the service of the Lord as their God, and had anew made a covenant with the Lord (ver. 10); so that only the sacrificial meal was wanting to the completion of this celebration of the covenant, and for this the offering of sacrifices was requisite. The collocation זְבָחִים וְתֹרֹת is strange. זְבָחִים are שְׁלָמִים, sacrifices of peace-offering, also called briefly שְׁלָמִים. Of these, in the law, three species—praise-offerings (תֹּרֹת), vowed offerings, and voluntary offerings—are distinguished (Lev. vii. 11, 16). תֹּרֹת therefore denotes a species of the sacrifices or peace-offerings, the praise or thank-offerings in the stricter sense; and וְתֹרֹת must be taken as explicative: sacrifices, and that (or namely) praise-offerings. וְכָל-נָדִיב לֵב, and every one who was heartily willing, (brought) burnt-offerings; i.e., all who felt inwardly impelled to do so, brought of their own accord burnt-offerings.—Ver. 32. The number of the burnt-offerings brought spontaneously by the congregation was very large: 70 bullocks, 100 rams, and 200 lambs.—Ver. 33. וְהַקִּדָּשִׁים, and the consecrated, i.e. the beasts brought as thank-offering (cf. xxxv. 13, Neh. x. 34), were 600 bullocks and 3000 small cattle (sheep and goats).—In vers. 34-36 the account closes with some remarks upon these sacrifices and the festal solemnity. Ver. 34. But there were too few priests, and they were not able (so that they were not able) to flay all the burnt-offerings; and their brethren the Levites helped them till the work was ended (i.e. the flaying), and until the priests had sanctified themselves. In the case of private burnt-offerings the flaying of the beast was the business of the sacrificer (Lev. i. 6); while in the case of those offered on solemn occasions in the name of the congregation it was the priest's duty, and in it, as the work was not of a specifically priestly character, the Levites might assist. The burnt-offerings which are spoken of in ver. 34 are not merely those voluntarily offered (ver. 34), but also the consecratory burnt-offerings (vers. 22, 27). Only ver. 35 refers to the voluntary offerings alone. "For the Levites had been more upright to sanctify themselves than the priests." יִשְׂרֵי לֵב, *rectiores animo*, had endeavoured more honestly. Perhaps the priests had taken more part in the idolatrous worship of Ahaz than the Levites, which would be quite accounted for, as Kueper, *das Priesterth. des A. Bundes* (1870), S. 216, remarks, by their relation to the

court of the king, and their dependence upon it. They consequently showed themselves more slack even in the purification than the Levites, who *forte etiam idololatricis sacris minus contaminati et impediti erant* (Ramb.).—Ver. 35 gives yet another reason why the Levites had to help the priests: “And also the burnt-offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace-offerings, and the drink-offerings for every burnt-offering.” The priests could not accomplish the flaying for this reason also, that they had, besides, to see to the proper altar service (sprinkling of the blood, and burning of the sacrifices upon the altar), which taxed their strength, since, besides the consecratory burnt-offerings, there were the voluntary burnt-offerings (ver. 31), which were offered along with the thank-offerings and the drink-offerings, which belonged to the burnt-offerings of Num. xv. 1-15. Thus the service of the house of Jahve was arranged. עֲבוֹדָה is not the purification and dedication of the temple (Berth.), but only the sacrificial service, or rather all that concerned the regular temple worship, which had decayed under Ahaz, and had at length wholly ceased.—Ver. 36. Hezekiah and the whole people rejoiced because of it. עַל הַהֵבֵן, over that which God had prepared for the people (by the purification of the temple and the restoration of the Jahve-worship), not “because God had made the people ready” (Ramb., Berth.). The article with הֵבֵן represents the relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר; see on 1 Chron. xxvi. 28. The joy was heightened by the fact that the thing was done suddenly.

Chap. xxx. *The celebration of the passover*.—Vers. 1-12. The preparations for this celebration.—Ver. 1. Hezekiah invited all Israel and Judah to it; “and he also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh,” the two chief tribes of the northern kingdom, which here, as is manifest from vers. 5, 10, are named *instar omnium*. But the whole sentence serves only to elucidate יִשְׁלַח עַל כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל. To all Israel (of the ten tribes) he sent the invitation, and this he did by letters. The verse contains a general statement as to the matter, which is further described in what follows.—Ver. 2. The king consulted with his princes and the whole assembly in Jerusalem, i.e. with the community of the capital assembled in their representatives for this purpose, as to keeping the passover in the second month. This was (Num. ix. 6-13) allowed to those who, by uncleanness or by absence on a distant journey, were prevented from holding the feast at the lawful time, the 14th of the first



month. Both these reasons existed in this case (ver. 3): the priests had not sufficiently sanctified themselves, and the people had not assembled in Jerusalem, *sc.* at the legal time in the first month. לְמַדִּי, contracted from מִהֲרִי, that which is sufficient, is usually interpreted, "not in sufficient number" (Rashi, Vulg., Berth., etc.); but the reference of the word to the number cannot be defended. לְמַדִּי denotes only *ad sufficientiam*, and means not merely that the priests had not sanctified themselves in such numbers as were required for the slaughtering and offering of the paschal lambs, but that the priesthood in general was not yet sufficiently consecrated, many priests not having at that time wholly renounced idolatry and consecrated themselves anew. Nor does the passage signify, as Bertheau says it does, "that although the purification of the temple was completed only on the sixteenth day of the first month (xxix. 17), the passover would yet have been celebrated in the first month, though perhaps not on the legal fourteenth day, had not a further postponement become necessary for the reasons here given;" for there is nothing said in the text of a "further postponement." That is just as arbitrarily dragged into the narrative as the idea that Hezekiah ever intended to hold the passover on another day than the legal fourteenth day of the month, which is destitute of all support, and even of probability. The postponement of the passover until the second month in special circumstances was provided for by the law, but the transfer of the celebration to another day of the month was not. Such a transfer would have been an illegal and arbitrary innovation, which we cannot suppose Hezekiah capable of. Rather it is clear from the consultation, that the king and his princes and the congregations were persuaded that the passover could be held only on the fourteenth day of the month; for they did not consult as to the day, but only as to the month, upon the basis of the law: if not in the first, then at any rate in the second month. The day was, for those consulting, so definitely fixed that it was never discussed, and is not mentioned at all in the record. If this were so, then the consultation must have taken place in the first month before the fourteenth day, at a time when the lawful day for the celebration was not yet past. This is implied in the words, "for they could not hold it at that time." בֶּעֶת הַחֹדֶשׁ is the first month, in contrast to "in the second month;" not this or that day of the month. Now, since the reason given for their not being able to

hold it in the first month is that the priests had not sufficiently purified themselves, and the people had not assembled themselves in Jerusalem, we learn with certainty from these reasons that it is not a celebration of the passover in the *first* year of Hezekiah's reign which is here treated of, as almost all commentators think.<sup>1</sup> In the whole narrative there is nothing to favour such a supposition, except (1) the circumstance that the account of this celebration is connected by *ו consec.* (in וַיִּשְׁלַח) with the preceding purification of the temple and restoration of the Jahve-worship which took place in the first year of Hezekiah's reign; and (2) the statement that the priests had not sufficiently sanctified themselves, ver. 3, which, when compared with that in chap. xxix. 34, that the number of priests who had sanctified themselves was not sufficient to flay the beasts for sacrifice, makes it appear as if the passover had been celebrated immediately after the consecration of the temple; and (3) the mention of the second month in ver. 2, which, taken in connection with the mention of the first month in xxix. 3, 17, seems to imply that the second month of the first year of Hezekiah's reign is meant. But of these three apparent reasons none is convincing.

The use of *ו consec.* to connect the account of the celebration of the passover with the preceding, without the slightest hint that the celebration took place in another (later) year, is fully accounted for by the fact that in no case is the year in which any event of Hezekiah's twenty-nine years' reign occurred stated in the Chronicle. In chap. xxxii. 1, Sennacherib's invasion of Judah is introduced only by the indefinite formula, "and after these events," though it happened in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah; while the arrangements as to the public worship made by this king, and recorded in chap. xxxi., belong to the first years of his reign. Only in the case of the restoration of the Jahve-worship is it remarked, xxix. 3, that Hezekiah commenced it in the very first year of his reign, because that was important in forming an estimate of the spirit of his reign; but the statement of the year in which his other acts were done had not much bearing upon the practical aim of the chronicler. Nor does the reason given for the transfer of the celebration of the passover to the second month, viz. that the priests had not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the elaborate discussion of this question in Caspari, *Beitr. zur Einl. in das B. Jesaja*, S. 109 ff.



sufficiently sanctified themselves, prove that the celebration took place in the first year of Hezekiah. During the sixteen years' reign of the idolater Ahaz, the priesthood had beyond doubt fallen very low,—become morally sunk, so that the majority of them would not immediately make haste to sanctify themselves for the Jahve-worship. Finally, the retrospective reference to xxix. 3, 17, would certainly incline us to take בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי to mean the second month of the first year; but yet it cannot be at once taken in that sense, unless the reasons given for the transfer of the celebration of the passover to the second month point to the first year. But these reasons, so far from doing so, are rather irreconcilable with that view. The whole narrative, chap. xxix. and xxx., gives us the impression that Hezekiah had not formed the resolution to hold a passover to which the whole of Israel and Judah, all the Israelites of the ten tribes as well as the citizens of his kingdom, should be invited before or during the purification of the temple; at least he did not consult with his princes and the heads of Jerusalem at that time. According to xxix. 20, the king assembled the princes of the city only after the report had been made to him, on the completion of the purification of the temple on the sixteenth day of the first month, when he summoned them to the dedication of the purified temple by solemn sacrifice. But this consecratory solemnity occupied several days. The great number of burnt-offerings,—first seven bullocks, seven rams, and seven lambs, besides the sin-offering for the consecration of the temple (xxix. 21); then, after the completion of these, the voluntary burnt-offering of the congregation, consisting of 70 bullocks, 100 rams, and 200 lambs, together with and exclusive of the thank-offerings (xxix. 32),—could not possibly be burnt on *one* day on *one* altar of burnt-offering, and consequently the sacrificial meal could not well be held on the same day. If, then, the king consulted with the princes and the assembly about the passover after the conclusion of or during celebration,—say in the time between the seventeenth and the twentieth day,—it could not be said that the reason of the postponement of the passover was that the priests had not yet sufficiently sanctified themselves, and the people were not assembled in Jerusalem: it would only have been said that the fourteenth day of the first month was already past. Caspari has therefore rightly regarded this as decisive. But besides that, the invitation to all Israel (of the ten tribes) to this passover is more easily ex-

plained, if the celebration of it took place after the breaking up of the kingdom of the ten tribes by the Assyrians, than if it was before that catastrophe, in the time of Hosea, the last king of that kingdom. Though King Hosea may not have been so evil as some of his predecessors, yet it is said of him also, "he did that which was evil in the sight of Jahve" (2 Kings xvii. 2). Would Hezekiah have ventured, so long as Hosea reigned, to invite his subjects to a passover at Jerusalem? and would Hosea have permitted the invitation, and not rather have repelled it as an interference with his kingdom? Further, in the invitation, the captivity of the greater part of the ten tribes is far too strongly presupposed to allow us to imagine that the captivity there referred to is the carrying away of several tribes by Tiglath-pileser. The words, "the escaped who are left to you from the hand of the king of Assyria" (ver. 6), presuppose more than the captivity of the two and a half trans-Jordanic tribes and the Naphtalites; not merely because of the plural, the "kings of Assur," but also because the remaining five and a half tribes were not at all affected by Tiglath-pileser's deportation, while there is no mention made of any being carried away by King Pul, nor is it a probable thing in itself; see on 1 Chron. v. 26. Finally, according to chap. xxxi. 1, the Israelites who had been assembled in Jerusalem for the passover immediately afterwards destroyed the pillars, Astartes, high places, and altars, not merely in all Judah and Benjamin, but also in Ephraim and Manasseh (consequently even in the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes), "unto completion," *i.e.* completely, leaving nothing of them remaining. Is it likely that King Hosea, and the other inhabitants of the kingdom of the ten tribes who had not gone to the passover, but had laughed at and mocked the messengers of Hezekiah (ver. 10), would have quietly looked on and permitted this? All these things are incomprehensible if the passover was held in the first year of Hezekiah, and make it impossible to accept that view.

Moreover, even the preparation for this passover demanded more time than from the seventeenth day of the first month to the fourteenth day of the second. The calling of the whole people together, "from Dan to Beersheba" (ver. 5), could not be accomplished in three weeks. Even if Hezekiah's messengers may have gone throughout the land and returned home again in that time, we yet cannot suppose that those invited, especially those



of the ten tribes, could at once commence their journey, so as to appear in Jerusalem at the time of the feast. In consequence of all these things, we must still remain stedfastly of the opinion already expressed in the *Commentary on the Books of Kings* (vol. ii. p. 81 ff.), that this passover was not held in the first year of Hezekiah, only a week or two after the restoration of the Jahve-worship according to the law had been celebrated. But if it was not held in the first year, then it cannot have been held before the ruin of the kingdom of the ten tribes, in the sixth year of Hezekiah. In the third year of Hezekiah, Shalmaneser marched upon Samaria, and besieged the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes. But during the occupation of that kingdom by the Assyrians, Hezekiah could not think of inviting its inhabitants to a passover in Jerusalem. He can have resolved upon that only after the Assyrians had again left the country, Samaria having been conquered, and the Israelites carried away. "But after an end had been thoroughly made of the kingdom of the house of Israel, Hezekiah might regard himself as the king of all Israel, and in this character might invite the remnant of the ten tribes, as his subjects, to the passover (cf. Jer. xl. 1); and he might cherish the hope, as the Israelitish people had been just smitten down by this last frightful catastrophe, that its remaining members would humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, which had been laid on them solemnly, and turning to Him, would comply with the invitation; while before the ruin of the Israelitish kingdom, in inviting the Israelites of the ten tribes, he would have been addressing the subjects of a foreign king" (Caspari, S. 125). And with this view, the statement, xxx. 10, that the messengers of Hezekiah were laughed at by the majority of the Israelites, in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh unto Zebulun, may be easily reconciled. "If we only look," as Caspari pertinently says in answer to this objection, "at the conduct of those who remained in Judea after the destruction of Jerusalem, and who soon afterwards fled to Egypt to Jeremiah (Jer. xlii. 44), we will understand how the majority of the people of the kingdom of the ten tribes, who remained behind after the deportation by Shalmaneser, could be hardened and blinded enough to laugh at and mock the messengers of Hezekiah."

But if Hezekiah formed the resolution of holding such a passover festival only after the destruction of the kingdom of

Israel, it may perhaps be asked why he did not take the matter into consideration early enough to allow of the festival being held at the legal time, *i.e.* in the first month? To this we certainly cannot give an assured answer, because, from the reasons given for the delay of the passover to the second month (ver. 3), we can only gather that, when the king consulted with the princes in the matter, there was no longer sufficient time to carry out the celebration in the manner proposed at the legal time. But it is quite possible that Hezekiah resolved to invite the remnant of the ten tribes to the next passover, only in the beginning of the year, when the Assyrians had withdrawn from the land, and that in the consultation about the matter the two circumstances mentioned in ver. 3 were decisive for the postponement of the feast to the second month. It became clear, on the one hand, that the whole priesthood was not yet sufficiently prepared for it; and on the other, that the summoning of the people could not be accomplished before the 14th Nisan, so as to allow of the feast being held in the way proposed at the legal time; and accordingly it was decided, in order to avoid the postponement of the matter for a whole year, to take advantage of the expedient suggested by the law, and to hold the feast in the second month. From ver. 14 and chap. xxxi. 1 we gather that at that time there were still standing in Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah and Benjamin, Mazzeboth, Asherim, Bamoth, and altars; consequently, that the Baal-worship had not yet been extirpated. The continuance of the Baal-worship, and that on the high places in Jerusalem and Judah, until the sixth or seventh year of Hezekiah's reign, will not much astonish us, if we consider that even before Ahaz the most pious kings had not succeeded in quite suppressing worship on the high places on the part of the people. The reopening of the temple, and of the Jahve-worship in it, Hezekiah might undertake and carry out in the beginning of his reign, because he had all those of the people who were well inclined upon his side. But it was otherwise with the altars on the high places, to which the people from ancient times had been firmly attached. These could not be immediately destroyed, and may have been again restored here and there after they had been destroyed, even in the corners of the capital. Many Levitic priests had, to a certainty, taken part in this worship on high places, since, as a rule, it was not heathen idols, but Jahve, to whom sacrifice was offered upon



the high places, though it was done in an illegal way. Such Levitic priests of the high places could not, even if they had not practised idolatry, straightway take part in a passover to be celebrated to Jahve according to the precepts of the law. They must first sanctify themselves by abandoning the worship on the high places, and earnestly turning to the Lord and to His law. Now, if the passover was to be a general one, the time necessary for this sanctification of themselves must be granted to these priests. For the sanctification of these priests, and for the invitation of all Israel to the festival, the time up to the fourteenth of the second month was sufficient, and the king's proposal was consequently approved of by the whole assembly.—Ver. 5. They established the matter (יַעֲמִידוּ דָבָר, Vulg. rightly, according to the sense, *decreverunt*), to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan (cf. Judg. xx. 1), that they should come to keep the passover. בִּי לֹא לָרֹב, for not in multitude had they celebrated it, as it is written. These words were interpreted as early as by Rashi thus: they had not celebrated it for a long time according to the precepts of the law, and were referred to the time of the division of the kingdom. But to this Berth. has rightly objected that the use of לָרֹב of time is unusual, and has correctly referred the words to the Israelites: they had not celebrated it in multitude, *i.e.* in the assembly of the whole people, as the law required. The words consequently tell us nothing as to the length of time during which it had not been celebrated in multitude: as to that, see ver. 26. Still less does it follow from the words that under Hezekiah, after the restoration of the temple worship, the passover had not been yearly held.—Ver. 6. “The runners (whether soldiers of the royal body-guard, cf. xii. 10, or other royal couriers, as Esth. iii. 13, 15, cannot be determined) went with letters from the hand of the king, . . . and according to the commandment of the king to say.” To the written invitation of the king and his princes they were to add words of exhortation: “Turn again to Jahve, . . . that He may return (turn Himself) to the remnant which remains to you from the hand of the kings of Assyria,” *i.e.* of Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser.—Ver. 7. Be not like your fathers, your brethren, *i.e.* those carried away by Tiglath and Shalmaneser. On יִתְּנוּם לַעֲמָה cf. xxix. 8.—Ver. 8. Be not stiff-necked; cf. 2 Kings xvii. 14. “Give the hand to the Lord,” *i.e.* here, not submit yourselves, as 1 Chron. xxix. 24, construed with תָּתַת; it denotes the giving of

the hand as a pledge of fidelity, as in 2 Kings x. 15, Ezra x. 19, Ezek. xvii. 18.—Ver. 9. If ye return to the Lord, your brethren and your sons (who are in exile) shall be for mercy, *i.e.* shall find mercy of them who carried them away, and for returning, *i.e.* and they shall return into this land. כִּי חֲנֹן וְנָתַן, cf. Ex. xxxiv. 6. —Ver. 10. The couriers went about from city to city in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun; but the people laughed to scorn and mocked at the summons to return, and the invitation to the passover festival. The words “from city to city” are not inconsistent with the view that the kingdom of Israel had already been ruined. The Assyrians had not blotted out all the cities from the face of the land, nor carried away every one of the inhabitants to the last man, but had been satisfied with the capture of the fortresses and their partial or complete demolition, and carried only the flower of the inhabitants away. No doubt also many had saved themselves from deportation by flight to inaccessible places, who then settled again and built in the cities and villages which had not been completely destroyed, or perhaps had been completely spared, after the enemy had withdrawn. From the statement, moreover, that the couriers passed through the land of Ephraim and Manasseh unto Zebulun, no proof can be derived that the messengers did not touch upon the domain of the tribes led away captive by Tiglath-pileser (Naphtali and the trans-Jordanic land), but only visited those districts of the country which formed the kingdom of Israel as it continued to exist after Tiglath-pileser. If that were so, it would follow that the kingdom had not then been destroyed. But the enumeration is not complete, as is manifest from the fact that, according to vers. 11 and 18, men of the tribes of Asher and Issachar came to Jerusalem in compliance with the invitation; and the domain of Asher extended to the northern frontier of Canaan. If we further take it into consideration, that, according to the resolution of the king and his princes, all Israel, from Beersheba on the southern frontier to Dan on the northern, were to be invited, it is not to be doubted that the couriers went through the whole land.—Ver. 12. Also upon Judah came the hand of God, to give them one heart, to do . . . The phrase יָד יְהוָה הָיְתָה בָּם has usually a punitive signification (cf. Ex. ix. 3; Deut. ii. 15, etc.), but here it is the helping hand of God. God wrought powerfully upon Judah to make them of one mind. בְּרַבֵּר יְהוָה as in xxix. 15.

Vers. 13–22. *The celebration of the passover.*—Ver. 13. The



assembly of the people at Jerusalem to celebrate the feast became a great congregation.—Ver. 14. Before the slaying of the passover, in order to purify and sanctify the city for the feast, they removed the (illegal) altars and places for offering incense which had been erected under Ahaz (xxviii. 24), and threw them into the Kidron (xxix. 16). מִקְטָרוֹת is here a substantive: places for incense-offerings (cf. Ew. § 160, *e*), and denotes altars intended for the offering of the קֶטֶר.—Ver. 15. When they slaughtered the passover on the 14th, the Levites and priests also were ashamed, *i.e.* had sanctified themselves under the influence of a feeling of shame, and offered the sacrifice in the house of the Lord; *i.e.* they performed the sacrificial functions incumbent upon them at the passover in the temple, as is stated more in detail in ver. 16. The clause וַיִּכְהָנוּ יְהוָה is a circumstantial clause, and the statement points back to ver. 3. The mention of Levites along with the priests here is worthy of remark, since in xxix. 34 it is said that at the celebration of the dedication of the temple the Levites had sanctified themselves more zealously than the priests. But these two statements do not contradict each other. In chap. xxix. 34 it is the Levites and priests then present in or dwelling in Jerusalem who are spoken of; here, on the contrary, it is the priests and the Levites of the whole kingdom of Judah. Even though, at the former period, the Levites were more zealous in sanctifying themselves for the dedication of the temple, yet there must certainly have been many Levites in Judah, who, like many of the priests, did not immediately purify themselves from their defilement by the worship in the high places, and were only impelled and driven to sanctify themselves for the service of the Lord by the zeal of the people who had come to Jerusalem to hold the passover.—Ver. 16. Standing in their place, according to their right, *i.e.* according to the prescribed arrangement (see on 1 Chron. vi. 17), the priests sprinkled the blood (of the paschal lambs) from the hand of the Levites, they handing it to them. This was not the rule: in the case of the paschal lamb, the father of the family who slew the lamb had to hand the blood to the priest, that it might be sprinkled upon the altar; here the Levites did it for the reasons given in ver. 17. Because many in the assembly had not sanctified themselves, the Levites presided over the slaying of the paschal lambs for every one who was unclean, to sanctify (the lambs) to the Lord (see also on xxxv. 6, 11). רָבִית, *stat. constr.* before the

noun with a preposition, stands as neuter substantively : there was a multitude in the assembly who . . . רַבַּת in ver. 18 is to be taken in a similar manner, not as an adverb (Berth.). רַבַּת מֵאַפְרַיִם 'וגו' is in apposition to מִרְבֵּית הָעָם, a multitude of people, viz.: Many of Ephraim . . . had not purified themselves, but ate the pass-over in an illegal fashion, not according to the precept (cf. Num. ix. 6). This clause explains how it happened that the Levites presided at the slaying of the passover for those who had not sanctified themselves, *i.e.* they caught the blood and gave it to the priests. Had this been done by persons levitically unclean, the expiatory sacrificial blood would have been defiled. The eating of the paschal lamb or the participation in the pass-over meal was indeed allowed only to the clean ; but yet it was not so holy an act, *i.e.* did not bring the people into such immediate contact with God, who was present at His altar, that those who were not clean might not, under some circumstances, be admitted to it. Here it was allowed, for Hezekiah had prayed for them that God might forgive the transgression of the law.—Ver. 18 ends, according to the Masoretic verse-division, with the preposition בְּעֵר ; but that division seems merely to have arisen from ignorance of the construction כִּלְ-לִבּוֹ הָיָן, of the fact that בְּעֵר stands before a relative sentence without אֲשֶׁר, like אֵל in 1 Chron. xv. 12, and is certainly wrong. If we separate בְּעֵר from what follows, we must, with Aben Ezra, supply אֵלָה, and make הָיָן (ver. 19) refer to Hezekiah, both being equally inadmissible. Rightly, therefore, the LXX., Vulg., and also Kimchi, with the majority of commentators, have given up this division of the verses as incorrect, and connected the words in this way : May the good Jahve atone, *i.e.* forgive every one who has fixed his heart (cf. xii. 14) to seek God, Jahve, the God of his fathers, but not in accordance with the purity of the sanctuary. This intercession of Hezekiah's is worthy of remark, not only because it expresses the conviction that upright seeking of the Lord, which proceeds from the heart, is to be more highly estimated than strict observance of the letter of the law, but also because Hezekiah presumes that those who had come out of Ephraim, etc., to the passover had fixed their heart to seek Jahve, the God of their fathers, but had not been in a position to comply with the precept of the law, *i.e.* to purify themselves up to the day appointed for the passover.—Ver. 20. God heard this intercession, and healed the people. רָפָא, *sanare*, is not to be explained



by supposing, with Bertheau, that first sickness, and then even death, were to be expected as the results of transgression of the law, according to Lev. xv. 31, and that the people might be already regarded as sick, as being on the point of becoming so. The use of the word is explained by the fact that sin was regarded as a spiritual disease, so that רפא is to be understood of healing the soul (as Ps. xli. 5), or the transgression (Hos. xiv. 5; Jer. iii. 22).—Ver. 21. And the Israelites that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness; and the Levites and priests praised the Lord day by day, singing to the Lord בְּכֵלֵי עֹז לַיהוָה, “with instruments of power to the Lord,” *i.e.* with which they ascribed power to the Lord; or, to express it more clearly, which they played to the praise of the power of the Lord. The stringed instruments played by the Levites, and the trumpets blown by the priests, to accompany the psalm-singing, are meant. The singing of praise in connection with the sacrificial service took place on the seventh day of the feast.—Ver. 22. Hezekiah spoke to the heart of all the Levites, *i.e.* spoke encouraging words of acknowledgment to all the Levites, “who showed good understanding in regard to Jahve,” *i.e.* not *qui erant rerum divinarum peritiores aliosque instruere poterant*, but, as Clericus has already said, those who had distinguished themselves by intelligent playing to the honour of the Lord. “And they ate”—not merely the Levites and priests, but all who took part in the festival—the festal sacrifices, seven days. The expression אָכַל אֶת-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, to hold the festal sacrificial meal, is formed after אָכַל אֶת-הַפֶּסַח, to eat the passover = the passover meal. This we gather from the following participial clause, “offering peace-offerings,” of which the sacrificial meals were prepared. וַיִּתְּנוּ, and acknowledged the Lord, the God of their fathers. הִתְּוָה denotes here neither “to make confession of sin,” nor “to approach with thank-offerings” (Berth.), but simply to acknowledge the Lord with heart and mouth, word and deed, or by prayer, praise, thanks, and offering of sacrifice.

Vers. 23-27. *Prolongation of the festival for seven days more, and the conclusion of it.*—Ver. 23 f. Since the king and the princes had given a very large number of beasts for sacrifice as thank-offerings, it was resolved to keep joy for other seven days, *i.e.* to keep them festally, with sacrificial meals. The expression עָשָׂה יָמִים, to hold or celebrate days, is similar to עָשָׂה פֶּסַח, to hold the passover. שִׂמְחָה is an adverbial accusative: in joy. For this

resolution two reasons are given in ver. 24: 1. Hezekiah had given to the assembly 1000 bullocks and 7000 head of small cattle, and the princes had given 1000 bullocks and 10,000 head of small cattle besides; so that there was more than they could use during the seven days of the Mazzoth feast. Bertheau incorrectly supposes that these were "rich gifts for further sacrificial feasts." The gifts were bestowed for the Mazzoth festival, but were so plentiful that they sufficed for another festival of seven days. **הָרִים**, like **תָּרַמָה**, denotes to bestow, *i.e.* to present beasts, etc., with the design that they should be used as sacrifices; cf. xxxv. 7. 2. The second reason: "priests also had sanctified themselves in multitude," so as to be able to carry on the service at the altar, even with such numerous sacrifices, refers back to vers. 15 and 3.—Vers. 25–27. Concluding remarks on this festival. There took part in it (1) the whole congregation of Judah, and the priests and Levites; (2) the whole congregation of those who had come out of Israel (the ten tribes); (3) the strangers, both those who came out of the land of Israel and those dwelling in Judah.—Ver. 26. The joy was great, for there had not been the like in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon. "The meaning is, that this feast could be compared only with the feast at the dedication of the temple in the time of Solomon, chap. vii. 1–10, in respect to its length, the richness of the sacrificial gifts, the multitude of those who participated, and the joyous feeling it caused" (Berth.). The feast at the dedication of the temple had been a festival of fourteen days; for the feast of tabernacles, which lasted seven days, came immediately after the proper dedicatory feast, and since the time of Solomon all the tribes had never been united at a feast in Jerusalem.—Ver. 27. At the end the Levitic priests dismissed the people with the blessing (the **!** before **הָלְלִים** in some MSS., and which the LXX., Vulg., and Syr. also have, is a copyist's gloss brought from ver. 25; cf. against it, chap. xxiii. 18), and the historian adds, "Their voice was heard, and their prayer came to His holy dwelling-place, to heaven." This conclusion he draws from the divine blessing having been upon the festival; traceable partly in the zeal which the people afterwards showed for the public worship in the temple (chap. xxxi.), partly in the deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem from the attack of the Assyrian Sennacherib (chap. xxxii.).

Chap. xxxi. *Destruction of the idols and the altars of the high places. Provisions for the ordering and maintenance of the temple*



worship, and the attendants upon it.—Ver. 1. At the conclusion of the festival, all the Israelites who had been present at the feast (כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּמְצְאִים) to be understood as in xxx. 21) went into the cities of Judah, and destroyed all the idols, high places, and altars not only in Judah and Benjamin (the southern kingdom), but also in Ephraim and Manasseh (the domain of the ten tribes), utterly (עַד-לְבַלָּה), cf. xxiv. 10), and only then returned each to his home; cf. 2 Kings xviii. 4.

Vers. 2-21. *Restoration of order in the public worship, and of the temple revenues and those of the priests.*—Ver. 2. Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and Levites according to their courses, each according to the measure of his service (cf. Num. vii. 5, 7), viz. the priests and Levites (לְכָה' וְלֵל') are subordinated to אֵשׁ in apposition by לְ), for burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, to serve (to wait upon the worship), and to praise and thank (by song and instrumental music) in the gates of the camp of Jahve, i.e. in the temple and court of the priests; see on 1 Chron. ix. 18 f.—Ver. 3. And the portion of the king from his possession was for the burnt-offerings, etc.; that is, the material for the burnt-offerings which are commanded in Num. xxviii. and xxix. the king gave from his possessions, which are enumerated in chap. xxxii. 27-29.—Vers. 4-8. The priests and Levites received their maintenance from the first-fruits (Ex. xxiii. 19; Num. xviii. 12; Deut. xxvi. 2) and the tithes, which the people had to pay from the produce of their cattle-breeding and their agriculture (Lev. xxvii. 30-33, cf. with Num. xviii. 21-24). Hezekiah commanded the people, viz. the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to give this portion to the Levites and priests, that they might hold themselves firmly to the law of Jahve, i.e. might devote themselves to the duties laid upon them by the law, the attendance upon the worship, without being compelled to labour for their subsistence; cf. Neh. xiii. 10 ff.—Ver. 5. When the word (the royal command) went forth (spread abroad), the Israelites brought in abundance the first-fruits which had been assigned to the priests (xviii. 12 f.), and the tithes, which were paid to the whole tribe of Levi (Num. xviii. 21-24). בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, ver. 6, are not the inhabitants of the northern kingdom, but the Israelites who had emigrated from that kingdom into Judah (as xxx. 25, xi. 16, x. 17). מַעֲשֵׂר קֳדָשִׁים, the tenth from the holy gifts which were consecrated to Jahve, is surprising, since in the law, Num. xviii. 8 ff., it is not the tenth of the consecrated gifts

which is spoken of, but only תְּרוֹמוֹת הַקֹּדְשִׁים (Num. xviii. 19). Proceeding upon the assumption that all קֹדְשִׁים which were consecrated to Jahve were given over to the tribe of Levi, Bertheau finds no correspondence between the law and the statement of our verse, that the tenth of the holy things was given, and points out that the LXX. seem to have read וְעָזוּ וְהִקְדִּישׁוּ instead of וּמַעֲשֵׂה קֹדְשִׁים, without, however, himself deciding in favour of that reading. But the LXX. have rendered the words וּמַעֲשֵׂה קֹדְשִׁים וּמִקְדָּשִׁים by ἐπιδέκασθαι αἰγῶν, καὶ ἡγιάσαν, and consequently cannot have read וְעָזוּ for וּמַעֲשֵׂה, since in their translation ἐπιδέκασθαι corresponds to וּמַעֲשֵׂה. But the deviation of the statement in our verse from the law, Num. xviii., arises partly from an incorrect or inexact interpretation of the provisions of the law, Num. xviii. 8 ff. In the law, קֹדְשִׁים as such were not assigned to the tribe of Levi, or more correctly to the priests (Aaron and his sons), but only the תְּרוֹמוֹת לְכָל-קֹדְשִׁים, the heave-offerings of all the holy gifts of the sons of Israel, *i.e.* the pieces or parts of the sacrificial gifts of the Israelites which were not burnt upon the altar, consequently the greater part of the meal, and oil, and flesh of the oblations, the sin-offerings, the trespass-offerings, and of the peace-offerings, the wave-breast and wave-thigh, and whatever else was waved in wave-offerings; see on Num. xviii. 8 ff. These Therumoth of the consecrated gifts are in our verse designated וּמַעֲשֵׂה קֹדְשִׁים, because they were only a fragment of that which was consecrated to the Lord, just as the tenth was a fragment of the whole herd, and of the field produce. The statement of our verse, therefore, differs only in expression from the prescription of the law, but in substance it completely agrees with it. וַיִּתְּנוּ עֲרֻמוֹת עֵר, and they made many heaps, *i.e.* they brought the first-fruits and tithes in heaps.—Ver. 7. In the third month, consequently immediately at the end of the grain harvest, they commenced to found the heaps (to lay the foundation of the heaps); and in the seventh month, *i.e.* at the end of the fruit and wine harvest, they completed them (the heaps). In the third month fell pentecost, or the harvest feast; in the seventh, the feast of tabernacles, after the gathering in of all the fruits. לִישׁוֹר has Daghesth in ס, because this verb in the imperf. assimilates its י like נ to the second radical, and the infinitive is formed after the imperf.; cf. Ew. § 245, *a.*—Ver. 8. When Hezekiah and the priests saw these heaps, they praised the Lord and His people Israel.



The employment and storing of these gifts, vers. 9-19.—Ver. 9 f. Hezekiah questioned (יִדְרֹשׁ) the priests and Levites concerning the heaps, *i.e.* not as to whether they were sufficient for the support of the priests and Levites, but as to how it happened that such masses had been heaped up. Thereupon Azariah the high priest (hardly the Azariah mentioned xxvi. 17, who forty years before tried to prevent Uzziah from pressing into the holy place), of the house of Zadok, answered him: Since they began to bring (לָבִיא for לְהָבִיא) the heave-offerings into the house of the Lord, we have eaten and satisfied ourselves, and have left in plenty. The *infin. absoll.* יֵשְׂבוּעַ וְהוֹתֵר stand in animated speech instead of the first pers. plur. perf. From the same animation arises the construction of אֶת־הַהֶמְכֶּמֶן with הֵנוֹתֵר; for “that which is left” signifies, and we have left this quantity here.—Ver. 11 f. Then the king commanded to prepare cells in the house of God for the storing of the provisions. Whether new cells were built, or cells already existing were prepared for this purpose, cannot be decided, since הֵכָל may signify either. Into these cells they brought the תְּרוּמָה, which here denotes the first-fruits (cf. ver. 5), the tithes, and the dedicated things, בְּאֵמֻנָה, with fidelity, cf. xix. 9. עָלֵיהֶם, over them (the first-fruits, etc.) the Levite Cononiah was set as ruler (inspector), and his brother Shimei as second ruler (מִשְׁנֵה).—Ver. 13. To them at their hand, *i.e.* as subordinate overseers, were given ten Levites, who are enumerated by name. Of the names, Jehiel and Mahath occur in xxix. 12 and 14. בְּמִפְקֵד is translated by the Vulg. *ex imperio*, better *ex mandato Hizkiae*. Azariah, the prince of the house of God, is the high priest mentioned in ver. 10.—To the fourteen Levites named in vers. 13 and 14 was committed the oversight and storing of the first-fruits, tithes, and consecrated gifts. Besides these, there were special officers appointed for the distribution of them.—In vers. 14-19 these are treated of; ver. 14 dealing with the distribution of the voluntary gifts of God, *i.e.* all which was offered to God of spontaneous impulse (Lev. xxiii. 38; Deut. xii. 17), to which the first-fruits and tithes did not belong, they being assessments prescribed by the law. Over the freewill offerings the Levite Kore, the doorkeeper towards the east (see on 1 Chron. ix. 18), was set. His duty was to give (distribute) “the heave-offerings of Jahve,” *i.e.* that portion of the thank-offerings which properly belonged to Jahve, and which was transferred by Him to the priests (Lev. vii. 14, xxxii. 10,

14 f.; Num. v. 9), and the "most holy," *i.e.* that part of the sin and trespass offerings (Lev. vi. 10, 22, vii. 6) and of the oblations (Lev. ii. 3, 10) which was to be eaten by the priests in the holy place.—Ver. 15. At his hand (עַל יָדוֹ = מִיָּד, ver. 13), *i.e.* under his superintendence, there were six Levites, enumerated by name, in the priests' cities, with fidelity, "to give to their brethren in their courses, as well to the great as to the small" (*i.e.* to the older and to the younger), *sc.* the portion of the gifts received which fell to each. By the brethren in their courses we are to understand not merely the Levites dwelling in the priests' cities, who on account of their youth or old age could not come into the temple, but also those who at the time were not on duty, since the Levites' courses performed it by turns, only some courses being on duty in the temple, while the others were at home in the priests' cities. The object to לָחֵת, ver. 15, is not to be taken straightway from the objects mentioned with לָחֵת in ver. 14. For the most holy gifts could not be sent to the priests' cities, but were consumed in the holy place, *i.e.* in the temple. Nor can we confine לָחֵת to the נִדְבוֹת הָאֱלֹהִים; for since the gifts of the people, laid up in the cells, consisted in first-fruits, tithes, and consecrated gifts (ver. 11), and special officers were appointed for the storing and distribution of them, the business of distribution could not consist merely in the giving out of freewill offerings, but must have extended to all the offerings of the people. When, therefore, it is said of the Levite Kore, in ver. 14, that he was appointed over the freewill offerings, to distribute the heave-offerings and the most holy, only his chief function is there mentioned, and the functions of the officials associated with and subordinated to him in the priests' cities are not to be confined to that. The object to לָחֵת, ver. 15, is consequently to be determined by the whole context, and the arrangements which are assumed as known from the law; *i.e.* we must embrace under that word the distribution of the first-fruits, tithes, and consecrated gifts, of which the Levites in the priests' cities were to receive their portion according to the law.—In ver. 16, the אֲחֵיהֶם בְּמַחֲלָקוֹת of ver. 15 is more closely defined by an exception: "Besides their catalogue of the men (*i.e.* exclusive of those of the male sex catalogued by them) from three years old and upward, namely, of all those who came into the house of Jahve to the daily portion, for their service in their offices according to their courses." בְּיָוֶמוֹ signifies, in this connection, the portion of the holy gifts coming to them



for every day; cf. Neh. xi. 23. The meaning of the verse is: From those dwelling in the priests' cities were excluded those who had come to perform service in the temple; and, indeed, not merely those performing the service, but also their male children, who were catalogued along with them if they were three years old and upward. Thence it is clear that those entering upon their service took their sons with them when they were three years old. These children ate in the place of the sanctuary of the portion coming to their parents.—Ver. 17 contains a parenthetic remark as to the catalogues. וְאֵת, as *nota accus.*, serves here to emphasize the statement which is added as an elucidation (cf. Ew. § 277, *d*): “But concerning the catalogue of the priests, it was (taken, prepared) according to the fathers’-houses; and the Levites, they were from twenty years old and upwards in their offices in their courses.” All the duties were discharged by several courses. On the age fixed on, see 1 Chron. xxiii. 27.—Ver. 18. The connection and interpretation of this verse is doubtful. If we take וְלִהְיֵיהֶם as a continuation of וְאֵת־הַתְּחִינִשׁ, ver. 17, it gives us no suitable sense. The addition, “and also to every priest and Levite was a larger or smaller portion given according to the catalogue” (Ramb., etc.), is arbitrary, and does not fully express the בְּ before כָּל־טַפָּם. Berth., on the other hand, correctly remarks, “After the parentheses in vers. 16 and 17, וְלִהְיֵיהֶם may be taken as a continuation of לָתֵת in ver. 16;” but the word itself he translates wrongly thus: The men were in the priests’ cities, also to register their children, etc., disregarding the construction of הַתְּחִינִשׁ with בְּ.—From ver. 19, where the same construction recurs, we learn how to interpret הַתְּחִינִשׁ בְּכָל־ט: the catalogue = those registered in (of) all their children. According to this view, וְלִהְיֵיהֶם corresponds to the לְאֶחָיהֶם, ver. 15: to give to their brethren, . . . and to the registered of all their children, their wives, and their sons and daughters, viz. to the whole multitude (*sc.* of the wives, sons, and daughters), *i.e.* as many of them as there were. This interpretation of the לְכָל־קָהָל seems simpler than with Schmidt and Ramb. to understand קָהָל to denote the corporation of priests. There was therefore no one forgotten or overlooked; “for according to their fidelity (ver. 15) did they show themselves holy in regard to the holy,” *i.e.* they acted in a holy manner with the holy gifts, distributed them disinterestedly and impartially to all who had any claim to them.—Ver. 19. And for the sons of Aaron, the priests, in the field of the districts

of their cities (cf. Lev. xxv. 34; Num. xxxv. 5), in each city were men (appointed) famous (אֲשֶׁר נִקְבּוּ בִשְׁמוֹת, as in xxviii. 15; see on 1 Chron. xii. 31), to give portions to each male among the priests, and to all that were registered among the Levites. As for the inhabitants of the priests' cities (ver. 15), so also for the priests and Levites dwelling in the pasture grounds of the priests' cities, were special officers appointed to distribute the priestly revenues.

Vers. 20, 21. The conclusion of this account. Thus did Hezekiah in all Judah, and wrought in general that which was good and right and הִיאָמַת before the Lord his God; and in every work that he commenced for the service of the house of God, and for the law and the commandment (*i.e.* for the restoration of the law and its commands), to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.

Chap. xxxii. *Sennacherib's campaign against Judah and Israel: Hezekiah's sickness, the remainder of his reign, and his death.* Cf. 2 Kings xviii. 13–xx. 21, and Isa. xxxvi.–xxxix.—Vers. 1–13. Sennacherib's campaign against Judah and Jerusalem, and the annihilation of his whole army by the angel of the Lord. In 2 Kings xviii. and xix., and Isa. xxxvi. and xxxvii., we have two minute parallel accounts of this war, which threatened the existence of the kingdom of Judah, in both of which the course of this attack by the Assyrian world-power upon the kingdom of God is circumstantially narrated. The author of the Chronicle gives only a short narrative of the main events of the struggle; but, notwithstanding its brevity, supplies us with several not unessential additions to these detailed accounts. After stating that Sennacherib invaded Judah with the design of conquering the kingdom for himself (ver. 1), the author of the Chronicle describes the preparations which Hezekiah made for the defence of the capital in case it should be besieged (vers. 2–8). Then we have an account of Sennacherib's attempts to get Jerusalem into his power, by sending his generals, who sought to induce the people to submit by boastful speeches, and by writing threatening letters to Hezekiah (vers. 9–19); and, finally, of Hezekiah's prayer to God for help, and the answer to his prayer—the wonderful annihilation of the Assyrian army (vers. 20–23). The purpose of the chronicler in narrating these events was a didactic one: he wishes to show how God the Lord helped the pious King Hezekiah in this danger to his



kingdom, and humbled the presumption of Sennacherib confiding in the might of his powerful army. For this purpose, a brief rhetorical summary of the main events of the struggle and its issues was sufficient. As to the facts, see the commentary on 2 Kings xviii. f. and Isa. xxxvi. f.

Ver. 1. The didactic and rhetorical character of the narrative is manifest in the very form of the introductory statement. Instead of the chronological statement of 2 Kings xviii. 13, we find the loose formula of connection: After these events and this fidelity (cf. xxxi. 20), Sennacherib came (בָּא) and entered into Judah (וַיָּבֹא בִיהוּדָה), and besieged the fenced cities, and thought (וַיֵּאמֶר) to break (conquer) them for himself. He had already taken a number of them, and had advanced as far as Lachish in the south-west of Judah, when he made the attempt to get Jerusalem into his power; cf. 2 Kings xviii. 13 f.

Vers. 2-8. *Preparations of Hezekiah for the strengthening and defending of Jerusalem.*—We find an account of this neither in 2 Kings xviii. nor in Isa. xxxvi.; but the fact is confirmed both by Isa. xxii. 8-11, and by the remark 2 Kings xx. 20 (cf. ver. 30 of our chapter).—Ver. 2 ff. When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib advanced, and his face was to war against Jerusalem, *i.e.* that he purposed to capture Jerusalem, he consulted with his princes and his valiant men to cover the waters of the springs which were outside the city; and they helped him, brought much people together, and covered all the springs, and the brook which ran through the midst of the land. סָתַם does not denote to obstruct, but only to hide by covering and conducting the water into subterranean channels. The brook which flowed through the midst of the land is the Gihon, which was formed by the waters flowing from the springs, and was dried up by these springs being covered and the water diverted. For further information, see on ver. 30. The object of this measure is stated in the words which follow: Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water? *i.e.*, why should we provide them with much water, when they advance against the city and besiege it? The plural, kings of Assyria, is rhetorical, as in xxviii. 16.—Ver. 5. The fortification of Jerusalem. יִתְחַזַּק, he showed himself strong, courageous, as in xv. 8, xxiii. 1. And he built the whole wall which was broken, *i.e.* he strengthened it by building up the breaches and defective places; cf. Isa. xxii. 9 f. The words וַיַּעַל עַל-הַמְּגִלּוֹת are obscure, since the translation

“he mounted on the towers” has no meaning. But if *על* be taken as a Hiph., “he caused to ascend upon the towers,” the object is wanting; and if we supply walls, it is arbitrary, for we might just as well suppose it to be machines which he caused to be carried to the top of the towers for defence against the enemy (xxvi. 15). The LXX. have wholly omitted the words, and the translation of the Vulg., *et extruxit turres desuper*, appears to be only a guess, but is yet perhaps correct, and presupposes the reading *וַיַּעַל עָלֶיהָ מִגְדָּלוֹת*, “and brought up upon it towers,” in favour of which Ewald also decides. This conjecture is in any case simpler than Bertheau’s, that *על* is a false transcription of *וַיַּעַל*: “he built the whole wall, and towers upon it, and outside was the other wall,” and is therefore to be preferred to it. The “other wall” enclosed the lower city (Acra). This, too, was not first built by Hezekiah; he only fortified it anew, for Isa. xxii. 11 already speaks of two walls, between which a body of water had been introduced: see on ver. 30. He fortified also the Millo of the city of David (see on 1 Chron. xi. 8), and supplied the fortifications with weapons (*שִׁלָּח*, a weapon of defence; see on Joel ii. 8) in multitude, and with shields; cf. xxvi. 14.—Ver. 6. And, moreover, he set captains of war over the people, *i.e.* the populace of Jerusalem, assembled them in the open space at the city gate (which gate is not stated; cf. Neh. viii. 1, 16), and addressed them in encouraging words; cf. xxx. 22. On ver. 7a, cf. xx. 15, Deut. xxxi. 6, etc. “For with us is more than with him.” *כִּי*, quite general, the closer definition following in ver. 8: “With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is Jahve, our God, to help us.” An arm of flesh = frail human power; cf. Isa. xxi. 3: their (the Egyptians’) horses are flesh, not spirit; Jer. xvii. 5, Ps. lvi. 5. “And the people leaned themselves on (*i.e.* trusted in) the words of Hezekiah.” These statements are not inconsistent with the account in 2 Kings xviii. 14–16, that Hezekiah began to negotiate with the Assyrian king Sennacherib when he had begun to take the fenced cities of the land unto Lachish, promised to pay him tribute, and actually paid the sum demanded, employing for that purpose even the sheet gold on the temple doors. These negotiations are passed over, not only in our narrative, but also in Isa. xxxvi., because they had no influence upon the after course and the issue of the war. Sennacherib was not induced to withdraw by the payment of the sum demanded, and soon after the receipt of it he sent a detach-



ment from Lachish against Jerusalem, to summon the city to surrender. The fortification of Jerusalem which the Chronicle records began before these negotiations, and was continued while they were in progress.

Vers. 9-19. *The advance of an Assyrian army against Jerusalem*, and the attempts of Sennacherib's generals to induce the population of the capital to submit by persuasive and threatening speeches, are very briefly narrated, in comparison with 2 Kings xviii. 17-36. In ver. 9, neither the names of the Assyrian generals, nor the names of Hezekiah's ambassadors with whom they treated, are given; nor is the place where the negotiation was carried on mentioned. עֲבָדָיו, his servants, Sennacherib's generals. וְהוּא עַל-לֵכ', while he himself lay near (or against) Lachish, and all the army of his kingdom with him. מִמְּשָׁלָתוֹ, his dominion, i.e. army of his kingdom; cf. Jer. xxxiv. 1.—Ver. 10 ff. Only the main ideas contained in the speech of these generals are reported; in vers. 10-12 we have the attempt to shake the trust of the people in Hezekiah and in God (Kings, vers. 19-22). וַיִּשְׁבּוּ is a continuation of the question, In what do ye trust, and why sit ye in the distress, in Jerusalem? מִפֶּיךָ as in 2 Kings xviii. 32: Hezekiah seduces you, to give you over to death by hunger and thirst. This thought is much more coarsely expressed in 2 Kings xviii. 27.—On ver. 12, cf. 2 Kings xviii. 22: מִזְבֵּחַ אֶחָד is the one altar of burnt-offering in the temple.—Ver. 13 f. The description of Sennacherib's all-conquering power: cf. 2 Kings xviii. 35; Isa. xxxvi. 20, and xxxvii. 11-13. "Who is there among all the gods of these peoples, whom my fathers utterly destroyed, who could have delivered his people out of my hand, that your God should save you?" The idea is, that since the gods of the other peoples, which were mightier than your God, have not been able to save their peoples, how should your God be in a position to rescue you from my power? This idea is again repeated in ver. 15, as a foundation for the exhortation not to let themselves be deceived and misled by Hezekiah, and not to believe his words, and that in an assertative form: "for not one god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people, . . . much less then (אִם כִּי) your gods: they will not save you;" and this is done in order to emphasize strongly the blasphemy of the Assyrian generals against the Almighty God of Israel. To communicate more of these blasphemous speeches would in the chronicler's view be useless, and he there-

fore only remarks, in ver. 16, "And yet more spake his (Sennacherib's) servants against God Jahve, and against His servant Hezekiah;" and then, in ver. 17, that Sennacherib also wrote a letter of similar purport, and (ver. 18) that his servants called with a loud voice in the Jews' speech to the people of Jerusalem upon the wall, to throw them into fear and terrify them, that they might take the city. What they called to the people is not stated, but by the infinit. **לִירְאָם וּלְבַהֵלֵם** it is hinted, and thence we may gather that it was to the same effect as the blasphemous speeches above quoted (**יִרְאָם**, inf. Pi., as in Neh. vi. 19).—On comparing 2 Kings xviii. and xix., it is clear that Sennacherib only sent the letter to Hezekiah after his general Rabshakeh had informed him of the fruitlessness of his efforts to induce the people of Jerusalem to submit by speeches, and the news of the advance of the Cushite king Tirhakah had arrived; while the calling aloud in the Jews' language to the people standing on the wall, on the part of his generals, took place in the first negotiation with the ambassadors of Hezekiah. The author of the Chronicle has arranged his narrative rhetorically, so as to make the various events form a climax: first, the speeches of the servants of Sennacherib; then the king's letter to Hezekiah to induce him and his counsellors to submit; and finally, the attempt to terrify the people in language intelligible to them. The conclusion is the statement, ver. 19: "They spake of the God of Jerusalem as of the gods of the peoples of the earth, the work of the hands of man;" cf. 2 Kings xix. 18.

Vers. 20–23. *Prayer of King Hezekiah and of the prophet Isaiah for the help of the Lord.*—Ver. 20. The main contents of Hezekiah's prayer are communicated in 2 Kings xix. 14–19 and Isa. xxxvii. 15–19. There it is not expressly said that Isaiah also prayed, but it may be inferred from the statement in 2 Kings xix. 2 ff. and Isa. xxxvii. 2 ff. that Hezekiah sent a deputation to the prophet with the request that he would pray for the people. In answer Isaiah promised the ambassadors deliverance, as the word of the Lord. **עַל זֹאת**, on account of this, *i.e.* on account of the contempt shown for the God of Israel, which was emphatically dwelt upon both in the prayer of Hezekiah (2 Kings xix. 16) and in the word of Isaiah, ver. 22 ff.—Ver. 21. The deliverance: cf. 2 Kings xix. 35 ff.; Isa. xxxvii. 36 ff. The number of Assyrians smitten by the angel of the Lord is not stated, as it was not of importance, the main fact being that the



whole Assyrian host was annihilated, so that Sennacherib had to return with disgrace into his own land. This is what is signified by the rhetorical phrase: The angel of Jahve destroyed all the valiant warriors, and the leaders and princes of the king of Assyria, and he returned with shame of face (cf. Ezra ix. 7; Ps. xliv. 16) to his land, where his sons slew him in the temple. In regard to the facts, see on 2 Kings xix. 37 and Isa. xxxvii. 38. The Keth. מִצִּיאֵי is an orthographical error for מִצִּיאֵי, a contraction of מִן and יִצִּיאֵי from יָצָא, a passive formation with intransitive signification: some of those who went forth from his own bowels, *i.e.* some of his sons; cf. the similar formation מִלִּידֵי, 1 Chron. xx. 4.—Ver. 22. Conclusion of this event. So the Lord helped, etc., מִיַּד-כָּל, and out of the hand of all, *sc.* his enemies; but we need not on that account, with some manuscripts, bring אֶיבָיו into the text. וַיִּנְהֲלֵם, and protected them round about. נָהַל, to lead, guide, with the additional idea of care and protection (Ps. xxxi. 4; Isa. xlix. 10, li. 18); and consequently here, protect, defend. There is therefore no need of the conjecture וַיִּנְהַל לָהֶם, which Berth. holds to be the original reading, without considering that, though וַיִּנְהַל מִסָּבִיב is a current phrase with the chronicler (cf. xiv. 6, xv. 15, xx. 30; 1 Chron. xxii. 18), the supposition that these words became וַיִּנְהֲלֵם מֵם by an orthographical error is not at all probable.—Ver. 23. Many brought gifts to the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to King Hezekiah. רַבִּים is not to be restricted to Israelites, but probably denotes chiefly neighbouring peoples, who by the destruction of the Assyrian army were also freed from this dreaded enemy. They, too, might feel impelled to show their reverence for the God of Israel, who had so wonderfully delivered His people by their gifts.

Vers. 24-26. *Hezekiah's sickness and recovery; his pride and his humiliation.*—Ver. 24. As to the sickness of Hezekiah, and the miraculous sign by which the prophet Isaiah assured him of recovery, see the account in 2 Kings xx. 1-11 and Isa. xxxviii. The Chronicle has only given us hints on this matter. וַיֵּאמֶר and נָתַן refer to the same subject—God. Hezekiah prayed, and in consequence of his prayer God spake to him, *sc.* by the mouth of the prophet, and gave him a miraculous sign.—Ver. 25. "But Hezekiah rendered not according to the benefit unto him, for his heart was proud." In his sickness he had promised to walk in humility all his days (Isa. xxxviii. 15): yet he became proud after his recovery; and his pride showed itself especially

in his showing all his treasures to the Babylonian embassy, in idle trust in them and in the resources at his command (cf. 2 Kings xx. 12–15; Isa. xxxix. 1–4). “And there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem,” which participated in the king’s sentiments (cf. xix. 10; 1 Chron. xxvii. 24). Isaiah proclaimed this wrath to him in the prophecy that all the treasures of the king would be carried away to Babylon, and that some of his sons should become courtiers of the king of Babylon (2 Kings xx. 16–18; Isa. xxxix. 5–7), to which we should perhaps also reckon the threatening prophecy in Mic. iii. 12.—Ver. 26. Then Hezekiah humbled himself in his pride, and the wrath came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah (cf. Isa. xxxix. 8). The threatened judgment was postponed because of this humiliation, and broke over the royal house and the whole kingdom only at a later time in the Chaldean invasion.

Vers. 27–33. *Hezekiah’s riches; concluding estimate of his reign; his death and burial.*—Ver. 27. Like Jehoshaphat (xvii. 5, xviii. 1), Solomon (i. 12), and David (1 Chron. xxix. 28), Hezekiah attained to riches and glory, and made unto himself treasure-chambers for silver, gold, precious stones, and spices, shields, and all manner of splendid furniture. The מִנִּים are named instead of weapons in general. The collection of them brings to recollection the בֵּית פֶּלִי (2 Kings xx. 13 and Isa. xxxix. 2).—Ver. 28. Storehouses also (magazines) for the agricultural produce, and stalls for all manner of cattle, and stalls for the herds, like David (1 Chron. xxvii. 25 ff.) and Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 10). מִסְכְּנוֹת is a transposition of מִכְנָסוֹת, storehouses, from כָּנַס, to heap up. “Cattle and cattle” = all kinds of cattle. אֲרוֹת, synonymous with אֲרִיֹּת (ix. 5), stables or stalls for cattle. The word אֲרוֹת, which occurs only here, must have the same signification, and be held to be a transposed form of that word.—Ver. 29. And cities (?) made (procured) he for himself. עָרִים cannot in this connection denote the usual cities; it must mean either watch-towers (from עָר, to watch) or dwelling-places for herds and cattle, since עִיר, according to 2 Kings xvii. 9, is used of any enclosed place, from a watch-tower to a fenced city. רֶכֶשׁ, as in xxxi. 3, of possessions in herds.—Ver. 30. The same Hezekiah covered the upper outlet of the water Gihon, and brought it down westwards to the city of David, i.e. by a subterranean channel into the city of David (see on ver. 3). The form וַיִּשְׁרַם is Piel וַיִּשְׁרַם; the Keri is the same conjug., only contracted into וַיִּשְׁרַם, as וַיִּבֶשׁ for



וַיִּבֶשׁ, the ו of the third person having amalgamated with the first radical, under the influence of the ו consec. With the last clause in ver. 30 cf. xxxi. 21, 1 Chron. xxix. 23.—Ver. 31. “And so (*i.e.* accordingly) in the case of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, . . . God left him.” וַיִּזַּק does not denote *attamen*; it never has an adversative meaning. Bertheau rightly translates, “and accordingly,” with the further remark, that by וַיִּזַּק the account of Hezekiah’s treatment of the Babylonian ambassadors, which could not be reckoned among his fortunate deeds, is brought into harmony with the remark that he prospered in all his undertakings. It was permitted by God that Hezekiah should on this occasion be lifted up, and should commit an iniquity which could not but bring misfortune with it; not in order that He might plunge him into misfortune, but to try him, and to humble him (cf. ver. 26).—Ver. 32. הַסְּדִיִּם, pious deeds, as in vi. 42. סֵפֶר יִשְׁיָאָה is the book of Isaiah’s prophecies; see the Introduction, p. 30.—Ver. 33. Hezekiah was buried “on the height of the graves of the sons of David,” perhaps because there was no longer room in the hereditary burying-place of the kings; so that for Hezekiah and the succeeding kings special graves had to be prepared in a higher place of the graves of the kings. “They did him honour in his death,” by the burning of many spices, as we may conjecture (cf. xvi. 14, xxi. 19).

## CHAP. XXXIII.—THE REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON.

## CF. 2 KINGS XXI.

Vers. 1-20. *The reign of Manasseh*; cf. 2 Kings xxi. 1-18.—The characteristics of this king’s reign, and of the idolatry which he again introduced, and increased in a measure surpassing all his predecessors (vers. 1-9), agrees almost verbally with 2 Kings xxi. 1-9. Here and there an expression is rhetorically generalized and intensified, *e.g.* by the plurals לְבַעֲלִים and אֱשֵׁרוֹת (ver. 3) instead of the sing. לְבַעַל and אֱשֵׁרָה (Kings), and בָּנָיו (ver. 6) instead of בֶּן (see on xxviii. 3); by the addition of וּבִשְׁפָה to עֹנֵן וְנִחַשׁ, and of the name the Vale of Hinnom, ver. 6 (see on Josh. xv. 18, גֵּי for נֵי); by heaping up words for the law and its commandments (ver. 8); and other small deviations, of which פָּסַל הַבְּמֹל (ver. 7) instead of פָּסַל הָאֱשֵׁרָה (Kings) is the most important. The word סִמָּל, sculpture or statue, is derived from Deut. iv. 16, but has perhaps been taken by the author of the

Chronicle from Ezek. viii. 3, where סֶמֶל probably denotes the statue of Asherah. The form עִלִּים for עֹלָם (ver. 7) is not elsewhere met with.—At ver. 10, the account in the Chronicle diverges from that in 2 Kings. In 2 Kings xxi. 10–16 it is related how the Lord caused it to be proclaimed by the prophets, that in punishment of Manasseh's sins Jerusalem would be destroyed, and the people given into the power of their enemies, and how Manasseh filled Jerusalem with the shedding of innocent blood. Instead of this, in ver. 10 of the Chronicle it is only briefly said that the Lord spake to Manasseh and to his people, but they would not hearken; and then in vers. 11–17 it is narrated that Manasseh was led away to Babylon by the king of Assyria's captains of the host; in his trouble turned to the Lord his God, and prayed; was thereupon brought by God back to Jerusalem; after his return, fortified Jerusalem with a new wall; set commanders over all the fenced cities of Judah; abolished the idolatry in the temple and the city, and restored the worship of Jahve.—Ver. 11. As Manasseh would not hear the words of the prophets, the Lord brought upon him the captains of the host of the king of Assyria. These “took him with hooks, and bound him with double chains of brass, and brought him to Babylon.” יִלְכְּדוּ בַחֲוִים signifies neither, they took him prisoner in thorns (hid in the thorns), nor in a place called Chochim (which is not elsewhere found), but they took him with hooks. חֹךְ denotes the hook or ring which was drawn through the gills of large fish when taken (Job xl. 26), and is synonymous with חָת (2 Kings xix. 28; Ezek. xix. 4), a ring which was passed through the noses of wild beasts to subdue and lead them. The expression is figurative, as in the passages quoted from the prophets. Manasseh is represented as an unmanageable beast, which the Assyrian generals took and subdued by a ring in the nose. The figurative expression is explained by the succeeding clause: they bound him with double chains. נְחֹשֶׁתִּים are double fetters of brass, with which the feet of prisoners were bound (2 Sam. iii. 34; Judg. xvi. 21; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, etc.).—Ver. 12. וַיִּפְּחוּ לֹו = וַיִּפְּחוּ לֹו, xxviii. 22. In this his affliction he bowed himself before the Lord God of his fathers, and besought Him; and the Lord was entreated of him, and brought him again to Jerusalem, into his kingdom. The prayer which Manasseh prayed in his need was contained, according to ver. 18 f., in the histories of the kings of Israel, and in the



sayings of the prophet Hozai, but has not come down to our day. The "prayer of Manasseh" given by the LXX. is an apocryphal production, composed in Greek; cf. my *Introduction to the Old Testament*, § 247.—Ver. 14. After his return, Manasseh took measures to secure his kingdom, and especially the capital, against hostile attacks. "He built an outer wall of the city of David westward towards Gihon in the valley, and in the direction of the fish-gate; and he surrounded the Ophel, and made it very high." The words חוֹמָה הַיְצוֹנָה (without the article) point to the building of a new wall. But since it has been already recorded of Hezekiah, in xxxii. 5, that he built "the other wall without," all modern expositors, even Arnold in Herz.'s *Realenc.* xviii. S. 634, assume the identity of the two walls, and understand יִבְנֶה of the completion and heightening of that "other wall" of which it is said וַיִּבְנֶיהָ מֵאֵד, and which shut in Zion from the lower city to the north. In that case, of course, we must make the correction הַחוֹמָה. The words "westward towards Gihon in the valley, and לְבֹאֵ ב' in the direction to (towards) the fish-gate," are then to be taken as describing the course of this wall from its centre, first towards the west, and then towards the east. For the valley of Gihon lay, in all probability, outside of the western city gate, which occupied the place of the present Jaffa gate. But the fish-gate was, according to Neh. iii. 3, at the east end of this wall, at no great distance from the tower on the north-east corner. The valley (הַיְצוֹנָה) is a hollow between the upper city (Zion) and the lower (Acra), probably the beginning of the valley, which at its south-eastern opening, between Zion and Moriah, is called Tyropoion in Josephus. The words, "he surrounded the Ophel," *sc.* with a wall, are not to be connected with the preceding clauses, as Berth. connects them, translating, "he carried the wall from the north-east corner farther to the south, and then round the Ophel;" for "between the north-east corner and the Ophel wall lay the whole east wall of the city, as far as to the south-east corner of the temple area, which yet cannot be regarded as a continuation of the wall to the Ophel wall" (Arnold, *loc. cit.*). Jotham had already built a great deal at the Ophel wall (xxvii. 3). Manasseh must therefore only have strengthened it, and increased its height. On the words וַיִּשְׁמָשׁ, cf. xxxii. 6 and xvii. 2.—Vers. 15-17. And he also removed the idols and the statues from the house of the Lord, *i.e.* out of the two courts of the temple (ver. 5), and caused the idolatrous altars which he had built upon the

temple hill and in Jerusalem to be cast forth from the city. In ver. 16, instead of the Keth. וִיבֶן, he built (restored) the altar of Jahve, many manuscripts and ancient editions read וִיכֶן, he prepared the altar of Jahve. This variation has perhaps originated in an orthographical error, and it is difficult to decide which reading is the original. The Vulg. translates יִבֶן *restauravit*. That Manasseh first removed the altar of Jahve from the court, and then restored it, as Ewald thinks, is not very probable; for in that case its removal would certainly have been mentioned in ver. 3 ff. Upon the altar thus restored Manasseh then offered thank-offerings and peace-offerings, and also commanded his subjects to worship Jahve the God of Israel. But the people still sacrificed on the high places, yet unto Jahve their God.

"As to the carrying away of Manasseh," says Bertheau, "we have no further information in the Old Testament, which is not surprising, seeing that in the books of Kings there is only a very short notice as to the long period embraced by Manasseh's reign and that of Amon." He therefore, with Ew., Mov., Then., and others, does not scruple to recognise this fact as historical, and to place his captivity in the time of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon. He however believes, with Ew. and Mov., that the statements as to the removal of idols and altars from the temple and Jerusalem (ver. 15) is inconsistent with the older account in 2 Kings xxiii. 6 and 12, the clear statements of which, moreover, our historian does not communicate in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3 f. For even if the Astarte removed by Josiah need not have been the אֲשֶׁת־אֱמֹרַיִם of our chapter, yet it is expressly said that only by Josiah were the altars built by Manasseh broken down; yet we would scarcely be justified in supposing that Manasseh removed them, perhaps only laid them aside, that Amon again set them up in the courts, and that Josiah at length destroyed them. It does not thence follow, of course, that the narrative of the repentance and conversion of Manasseh rests upon no historic foundation; rather it is just such a narrative as would be supplemented by accounts of the destruction of the idolatrous altars and the statue of Astarte: for that might be regarded as the necessary result of the conversion, without any definite statement being made.<sup>1</sup> Against this we have the

<sup>1</sup> From this supposed contradiction, R. H. Graf, "die Gefangenschaft u. Bekehrung Manasse's, 2 Chron. xxxiii.," in the *Theol. Studien u. Kritiken*, 1859, iii. S. 467 ff., and in the book, *die geschichtl. Literatur A. Test.* 1866, 2 Abhdl., following Gramberg, and with the concurrence of H. Nöldeke,



following objections to make: Can we well imagine repentance and conversion on Manasseh's part without the removal of the abominations of idolatry, at least from the temple of the Lord? And why should we not suppose that Manasseh removed the idol altars from the temple and Jerusalem, but that Amon, who did evil as did his father Manasseh, and sacrificed to all the images which he had made (2 Kings xxi. 21 f.; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 22), again set them up in the courts of the temple, and placed the statue again in the temple, and that only by Josiah were they destroyed? In 2 Kings xxiii. 6 it is indeed said, Josiah removed the Asherah from the house of Jahve, took it forth from Jerusalem, and burnt it, and ground it to dust in the valley of Kidron; and in ver. 12, that Josiah beat down and brake the altars which Manasseh had made in both courts of the house of Jahve, and threw the dust of them into Kidron. But where do we find it written in the Chronicle that Manasseh, after his return from Babylon, beat down, and brake, and ground to powder the כָּמֹל in the house of Jahve, and the altars on the temple mount and in Jerusalem? In 2 Chron. xxxiii. 15 we only find it stated that he cast these things forth from the city (וַיִּשְׁלֹךְ חוּצָה לְעִיר). Is casting out of the city identical with breaking down and crushing, as Bertheau and others assume? The author of the Chronicle, at least, can distinguish between removing (הִסִּיר) and breaking down and crushing. Cf. xv. 16, where הִסִּיר is sharply distinguished from פָּרַת and הָרַק; further, chap. xxxi. 1 and xxxiv. 4, where the verbs שָׁבַר, נָדַע, and הָרַק are used of the breaking in pieces and destroying of images and altars by Hezekiah and Josiah. He uses none of these verbs of the removal of the images and altars by Manasseh, but only וַיִּסֶּר and וַיִּשְׁלֹךְ חוּצָה לְעִיר (ver. 15). If we take the words exactly as they stand in the text of the Bible, every appearance of contradiction disappears.<sup>1</sup> From what is said in the Chronicle

*die alttestl. Literatur in einer Reihe von Aufsätzen dargestellt* (1868), S. 59 f., has drawn the conclusion that the accounts given in the Chronicle, not only of Manasseh's conversion, but also of his being led captive to Babylon, are merely fictions, or inventions—poetical popular myths. On the other hand, E. Gerlach, in the *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1861, iii. S. 503 ff., has shown the superficiality of Graf's essay, and defended effectively the historical character of both narratives.

<sup>1</sup> In this matter Movers too has gone very superficially to work, remarking in support of the contradiction (*bibl. Chron.* S. 328): "If Manasseh was so zealous a penitent, it may be asked, Would he not have destroyed all

of Manasseh's deeds, we cannot conclude that he was fully converted to the Lord. That Manasseh prayed to Jahve in his imprisonment, and by his deliverance from it and his restoration to Jerusalem came to see that Jahve was God (האלהים), who must be worshipped in His temple at Jerusalem, and that he consequently removed the images and the idolatrous altars from the temple and the city, and cast them forth,—these facts do not prove a thorough conversion, much less “that he made amends for his sin by repentance and improvement” (Mov.), but merely attest the restoration of the Jahve-worship in the temple, which had previously been completely suspended. But the idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah was not thereby extirpated; it was only in so far repressed that it could not longer be publicly practised in the temple. Still less was idolatry rooted out of the hearts of the people by the command that the people were to worship Jahve, the God of Israel. There is not a single word of Manasseh's conversion to Jahve, the God of the fathers, with all his heart (בְּלֵב שָׁלֵם). Can it then surprise us, that after Manasseh's death, under his son Amon, walking as he did in the sins of his father, these external barriers fell straightway, and idolatry again publicly appeared in all its proportions and extent, and that the images and altars of the idols which had been cast out of Jerusalem were again set up in the temple and its courts? If even the pious Josiah, with all his efforts for the extirpation of idolatry and the revivification of the legal worship, could not accomplish more than the restoration, during his reign, of the temple service according to the law, while after his death idolatry again prevailed under Jehoiakim, what could Manasseh's half-measures effect? If this be the true state of the case in regard

idolatrous images, according to the Mosaic law, as the Chronicle itself, xxxiii. 15 (cf. 2 Chron. xxix. 17, xv. 16; 2 Kings xxiii. 12), sufficiently shows? Had idolatry ceased *in all Judah* in the last year of Manasseh's reign, as is stated in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 17, could it, during the two years' reign of his son Amon, have spread abroad in a manner hitherto unheard of in Jewish history, as it is portrayed under Josiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 4 ff.<sup>21</sup> But where is it stated in the Chronicle that Manasseh was so zealous a penitent as to have destroyed the images according to the Mosaic law? Not even the restoration of the Jahve-worship according to the provisions of the law is once spoken of, as it is in the case of Hezekiah and of Josiah (cf. 2 Chron. xxx. 5 and 16, xxxiv. 21, xxxv. 26); and does it follow from the fact that Judah, in consequence of Manasseh's command to serve Jahve, still sacrificed in the high places, yet to Jahve, that under Manasseh idolatry ceased *throughout Judah*?



to Manasseh's conversion, the passages 2 Kings xxiv. 3, xxiii. 26, Jer. xv. 4, where it is said that the Lord had cast out Judah from His presence because of the sins of Manasseh, cease to give any support to the opposite view. Manasseh is here named as the person who by his godlessness made the punishment of Judah and Jerusalem unavoidable, because he so corrupted Judah by his sins, that it could not now thoroughly turn to the Lord, but always fell back into the sins of Manasseh. Similarly, in 2 Kings xvii. 21 and 22, it is said of the ten tribes that the Lord cast them out from His presence because they walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, and departed not from them.

With the removal of the supposed inconsistency between the statement in the Chronicle as to Manasseh's change of sentiment, and the account of his godlessness in 2 Kings xxi., every reason for suspecting the account of Manasseh's removal to Babylon as a prisoner disappears; for even Graf admits that the mere silence of the book of Kings can prove nothing, since the books of Kings do not record many other events which are recorded in the Chronicle and are proved to be historical. This statement, however, is thoroughly confirmed, both by its own contents and by its connection with other well-attested historical facts. According to ver. 14, Manasseh fortified Jerusalem still more strongly after his return to the throne by building a new wall. This statement, which has as yet been called in question by no judicious critic, is so intimately connected with the statements in the Chronicle as to his being taken prisoner, and the removal of the images from the temple, that by it these latter are attested as historical. From this we learn that the author of the Chronicle had at his command authorities which contained more information as to Manasseh's reign than is to be found in our books of Kings, and so the references to these special authorities which follow in vers. 18 and 19 are corroborated. Moreover, the fortifying of Jerusalem after his return from his imprisonment presupposes that he had had such an experience as impelled him to take measures to secure himself against a repetition of hostile surprises. To this we must add the statement that Manasseh was led away by the generals of the *Assyrian* king to *Babylon*. The Assyrian kings Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser (or Sargon) did not carry away the Israelites to Babylon, but to Assyria; and the arrival of ambassadors from the Babylonian king Merodach-Baladan in Jerusalem, in the

time of Hezekiah (2 Kings xx. 12; Isa. xxxix. 1), shows that at that time Babylon was independent of Assyria. The poetic popular legend would without doubt have made Manasseh also to be carried away to Assyria by the troops of the Assyrian king, not to Babylon. The statement that he was carried away to Babylon by Assyrian warriors rests upon the certainty that Babylon was then a province of the Assyrian empire; and this is corroborated by history. According to the accounts of Abydenus and Alexander Polyhistor, borrowed from Berosus, which have been preserved in Euseb. *Chron. arm.* i. p. 42 f., Sennacherib brought Babylon, the government of which had been usurped by Belibus, again into subjection, and made his son Esarhaddon king over it, as his representative. The subjection of the Babylonians is confirmed by the Assyrian monuments, which state that Sennacherib had to march against the rebels in Babylon at the very beginning of his reign; and then again, in the fourth year of it, that he subdued them, and set over them a new viceroy (see M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterth.* i. S. 697 f. and 707 f. and ii. S. 592 f., der 3 Aufl.). Afterwards, when Sennacherib met his death at the hand of his sons (2 Kings xix. 37; Isa. xxxvii. 38), his oldest son Esarhaddon, the viceroy of Babylon, advanced with his army, pursued the flying paricides, and after slaying them ascended the throne of Assyria, 680 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Of Esarhaddon, who reigned thirteen years (from 680 to 667), we learn from Ezra iv. 2, col. with 2 Kings xxiv. 17, that he brought colonists to Samaria from Babylon, Cutha, and other districts of his kingdom; and Abydenus relates of him, according to Berosus (in Euseb. *Chron.* i. p. 54), that Axerdis (*i.e.* without doubt Esarhaddon) subdued Lower Syria, *i.e.* the districts of Syria bordering on the sea, to himself anew. From these we

<sup>1</sup> So Jul. Oppert, "die biblische Chronologie festgestellt nach den Assyrischen Keilschriften," in *d. Ztschr. der deutsch. morgenl. Gesellsch.* (xxiii. S. 134), 1869, S. 144; while Duncker, *loc. cit.* i. S. 709, on the ground of the divergent statement of Berosus as to the reign of Esarhaddon, and according to other chronological combinations, gives the year 693 B.C.,—a date which harmonizes neither with Sennacherib's inscriptions, so far as these have yet been deciphered, nor with the statements of the *Kanon Ptol.*, nor with biblical chronology. It, moreover, makes it necessary to shorten the fifty-five years of Manasseh's reign to thirty-five, which is all the more arbitrary as the chronological data of the *Kanon Ptol.* harmonize with the biblical chronology and establish their accuracy, as I have already pointed out in my *apolog. Vers. über die Chron.* S. 429 f.



may, I think, conclude that not only the transporting of the colonists into the depopulated kingdom of the ten tribes is connected with this expedition against Syria, but that on this occasion also Assyrian generals took King Manasseh prisoner, and carried him away to Babylon, as Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. S. 678), and Duncker, S. 715, with older chronologists and expositors (Usher, des Vignoles, Calmet, Ramb., J. D. Mich., and others), suppose. The transport of Babylonian colonists to Samaria is said in *Seder Olam rab.* p. 67, ed. Meyer, and by D. Kimchi, according to Talmudic tradition, to have taken place in the twenty-second year of Manasseh's reign; and this statement gains confirmation from the fact—as was remarked by Jac. Cappell. and Usher—that the period of sixty-five years after which, according to the prophecy in Isa. vii. 8, Ephraim was to be destroyed so that it should no more be a people, came to an end with the twenty-second year of Manasseh, and Ephraim, *i.e.* Israel of the ten tribes, did indeed cease to be a people only with the immigration of heathen colonists into its land (cf. Del. on Isa. vii. 8). But the twenty-second year of Manasseh corresponds to the year 776 B.C. and the fourth year of Esarhaddon.

By this agreement with extra-biblical narratives in its statement of facts and in its chronology, the narrative in the Chronicle of Manasseh's captivity in Babylon is raised above every doubt, and is corroborated even by the Assyrian monuments. "We now know," remarks Duncker (ii. S. 92) in this connection, "that Esarhaddon says in his inscriptions that twenty-two kings of Syria hearkened to him: he numbers among them Minasi (Manasseh of Judah) and the kings of Cyprus." As to the details both of his capture and his liberation, we cannot make even probable conjectures, since we have only a few bare notices of Esarhaddon's reign; and even his building works, which might have given us some further information, were under the influence of a peculiarly unlucky star, for the palace built by him at Kalah or Nimrod remained unfinished, and was then destroyed by a great fire (cf. Spiegel in Herz.'s *Realencykl.* xx. S. 225). Yet, from the fact that in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1, as in 2 Kings xxi. 1, the duration of Manasseh's reign is stated to have been fifty-five years, without any mention being made of an interruption, we may probably draw this conclusion at least, that the captivity did not last long, and that he received his liberty upon a promise to pay tribute, although he appears not to have kept this promise, or only for a

short period. For that, in the period between Hezekiah and Josiah, Judah must have come into a certain position of dependence upon Assyria, cannot be concluded from 2 Kings xxiii. 19 (cf. ver. 15 with xvii. 28) and chap. xxiii. 29, as E. Gerlach thinks.

Vers. 18–20. Conclusion of Manasseh's history. His other acts, his prayer, and words of the prophets of the Lord against him, were recorded in the history of the kings of Israel; while special accounts of his prayer, and how it was heard (הִשְׁמַעְתָּ לִּי, the letting Himself be entreated, *i.e.* how God heard him), of his sons, and the high places, altars, and images which he erected before his humiliation, were contained in the sayings of Hozai (see the Introduction, p. 30 f.).—Ver. 20. Manasseh was buried in his house, or, according to the more exact statement in 2 Kings xxi. 18, in the garden of his house—in the garden of Uzza; see on that passage.

Vers. 21–25. *The reign of Amon.* Cf. 2 Kings xxi. 19–26.—Both accounts agree; only in the Chronicle, as is also the case with Manasseh and Ahaz, the name of his mother is omitted, and the description of his godless deeds is somewhat more brief than in Kings, while the remark is added that he did not humble himself like Manasseh, but increased the guilt. In the account of his death there is nothing said of his funeral, nor is there any reference to the sources of his history. See the commentary on 2 Kings xxi. 19 ff.

CHAP. XXXIV. AND XXXV.—REIGN OF JOSIAH. CF. 2 KINGS  
XXII. AND XXIII. 1–30.

The account of Josiah in the Chronicle agrees in all essential points with the representation in 2 Kings xxii. and xxiii., but is chronologically more exact, and in many parts more complete than that. In the second book of Kings, the whole reform of the cultus carried out by Josiah is viewed in its connection with the discovery of the book of the law, on the occasion of the temple being repaired; and the narrative comprehends not only the repair of the temple, the discovery, the reading of the book of the law before the assembled people, and the renewal of the covenant, but also the extirpation of idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah and in all the cities of Israel, and the celebration of the passover in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign; see the intro-



ductory remarks to 2 Kings xxii. In the Chronicle, on the contrary, these events are more kept apart, and described according to their order in time. As early as in the eighth year of his reign, Josiah, still a youth, began to seek the God of his ancestor David, and in his twelfth year to purge Jerusalem and Judah of idolatry (xxxiv. 3). In the eighteenth year the book of the law was discovered in the temple, brought to the king, and read before him (vers. 8-18); whereupon he, deeply moved by the contents of the book which had been read, and by the answer of the prophetess Huldah when inquired of concerning it (vers. 19-28), went into the temple with the elders of the people, caused the law to be read to the whole people, and made a covenant before the Lord to obey the law (vers. 29-32). He then caused all the idolatrous abominations which were still to be found in the land of Israel to be removed (ver. 33), and prepared to hold the passover, as it had not been held since the days of Solomon (chap. xxxv. 1-19). In other respects the main difference between the two accounts is, that in 2 Kings the suppression of idolatry is narrated with greater minuteness; the passover, on the contrary, being only briefly noticed;—while in the Chronicle the purification of Jerusalem, Judah, and the kingdom of Israel is shortly summarized (xxxiv. 3-7), but the celebration of the passover is minutely described on its ceremonial side (xxxv. 1-19).

Chap. xxxiv.—Vers. 1 and 2. *Duration and spirit of Josiah's reign*; agreeing with 2 Kings xxii. 1 and 2, only the note as to Josiah's mother being here omitted.—Vers. 3-7. *Extirpation of idolatry*. In the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet a youth, being then only sixteen years old, Josiah began to seek the God of his ancestor David, and in the twelfth year of his reign he commenced to purify Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, Asherim, etc. The cleansing of the land of Judah from the numerous objects of idolatry is summarily described in vers. 4 and 5; and thereupon there follows (vers. 6 and 7) the destruction of the idolatrous altars and images in the land of Israel,—all that it seemed necessary to say on that subject being thus mentioned at once. For that all this was not accomplished in the twelfth year is clear from the *הָתַל לְטָהֵר*, “he commenced to cleanse,” and is moreover attested by ver. 33. The description of this destruction of the various objects of idolatry is rhetorically expressed, only carved and cast images being mentioned, besides the

altars of the high places and the Asherim, without the enumeration of the different kinds of idolatry which we find in 2 Kings xxiii. 4–20.—On ver. 4, cf. xxxi. 1. יִנְתְּצוּ, they pulled down before him, *i.e.* under his eye, or his oversight, the altars of the Baals (these are the בָּמוֹת, ver. 3); and the sun-pillars (cf. xiv. 4) which stood upwards, *i.e.* above, upon the altars, he caused to be hewn away from them (מִעֲלֵיהֶם); the Asherim (pillars and trees of Asherah) and the carved and molten images to be broken and ground (הָרַק, cf. xv. 16), and (the dust of them) to be strewn upon the graves (of those) who had sacrificed to them. הַזִּבְחִים is connected directly with הַקְּבָרִים, so that the actions of those buried in them are poetically attributed to the graves. In 2 Kings xxiii. 6 this is said only of the ashes of the Asherah statue which was burnt, while here it is rhetorically generalized.—Ver. 5. And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, *i.e.* he caused the bones of the idolatrous priests to be taken from their graves and burnt on the spot where the destroyed altars had stood, that he might defile the place with the ashes of the dead. In these words is summarized what is stated in 2 Kings xxiii. 13 and 14 as to the defilement of the places of sacrifice built upon the Mount of Olives by the bones of the dead, and in vers. 16–20 as to the burning of the bones of the high priests of Bethel, after they had been taken from their graves, upon their own altars. מִזְבְּחוֹתֵי is an orthographical error for מִזְבְּחֹתָם.—Vers. 6 and 7 form a connected sentence: And in the cities of Manasseh . . . , in their ruins round about, there he pulled down the altars, etc. The tribe of Simeon is here, as in xv. 9, reckoned among the tribes of the kingdom of Israel, because the Simeonites, although they belonged geographically to the kingdom of Judah, yet in religion remained attached to the worship on the high places practised by the ten tribes; see on xv. 9. “And unto Naphtali” is added, to designate the kingdom of Israel in its whole extent to the northern frontier of Canaan. The form בְּתֵיָהֶם (in the Keth. divided into two words) gives no suitable sense. R. Sal. explains, *timentes in planitie habitare, sed fixerunt in monte domicilia*, rendering it “in their mountain-dwellings.” This the words cannot mean.<sup>1</sup> The Keri בְּהִרְבֵּיתָהֶם, “with their swords,” is suggested by Ezek. xxvi. 9, and is accepted by D. Kimchi, Abu Melech, and

<sup>1</sup> The LXX. translate ἐν τοῖς τόποις αὐτῶν, expressing merely the בְּתֵיָהֶם. The Targ. has בְּבֵית צְרִיזָתָהוֹן, in domo (s. loco) desolationis eorum.



others, and understood to denote instruments with which the altars, groves, and images were cut down. But this interpretation also is certainly incorrect. The word is rather to be pointed **בְּחִרְבֵּיהֶם**, in their wastes (ruins) (cf. Ps. cix. 10), and to be taken as an explanatory apposition to **בְּעָרָי**: in the cities of Manasseh . . . , namely, in their ruins round about; for the land had been deserted since the times of Shalmaneser, and its cities were in great part in ruins. The statement as to the locality precedes in the form of an absolute sentence, and that which is predicated of it follows in the form of an apodosis with **ו** *consec.* (**וַיִּנְתֵּן**). **בָּתַת לְהִרֵק**, he dashed to pieces to crush; the form **הִרֵק** is not a perfect after **ל**, but an infinitive which has retained the vowel of the perfect; cf. Ew. § 238, *d*.

Vers. 8-18. *The cleansing and repairing of the temple, and the finding of the book of the law.* Cf. 2 Kings xxii. 3-10.—In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he was purging the land and the house (of God), he sent. **אַחֲרָי** does not indeed signify “after the purging” (De Wette, with the older expositors), but still less is it a statement of the object, “to purge” (Berth.); for that is decisively disposed of both by its position at the beginning of the sentence, where no statement of the object would stand, but still more by the fact that a statement of the object follows, **לְחִנּוֹק וְגו'**. **ל** used of time denotes “about,” and so with the *inf.*, e.g. Jer. xli. 13: at (his) coming = when he came. Shaphan was **סוֹפֵר**, state secretary, according to 2 Kings xxii. 3. With him the king sent the governor of the city Maaseiah, and the chancellor Joah. These two are not mentioned in 2 Kings xxii. 3, but have not been arbitrarily added by the chronicler, or invented by him, as Then. groundlessly supposes. “To repair the house of Jahve.” What these high royal officials had to do with it we learn from what follows.—Ver. 9 f. They, together with the high priest, gave the money which had been received for the repair of the temple to the overseers of the building, who then gave it to workmen to procure building materials and for wages, just as was done when the temple was repaired by Joash, chap. xxiv. 11-13. The **וַיִּשְׁבּוּ** is a correction resulting from a misinterpretation of the **וַיִּשְׁבּוּ**, “and of the dwellers in Jerusalem.” The enumeration, “from the hand of Manasseh, Ephraim,” etc., is rhetorical. In **וַיִּתְּנוּ**, ver. 10, the verb of ver. 9 is again taken up: they handed it to the overseers of the building, and they to the workmen. **עֲשֵׂהָ הֵמָּנָה** is a rare form of the

plur. עֲשֵׂי; see on 1 Chron. xxiii. 24. The overseers of the building (עֲשֵׂי—הַמְּבַקְרִים) are the subject of the second וַיָּתֵנוּ; and before the following עֲשֵׂי, לְ, which stands in 2 Kings, is to be supplied. בְּרוֹק is a *denom.* from בָּרַק, and signifies to repair what has been damaged. The statement of ver. 10 is made more definite by ver. 11: they gave it, namely, to the workers in stone and wood, and to the builders to buy hewn stones and timber for couplings, and for the beams of the houses (לְקִירוֹת, to provide with beams; הַבָּתִּים are the various buildings of the temple and its courts), which the kings of Judah had allowed to decay (הִשְׁחִית, not of designed destroying, but of ruining by neglect).—In ver. 12 we have still the remark that the people did the work with fidelity, and the money could consequently be given to them without reckoning, cf. 2 Kings xxii. 7; and then the names of the building inspectors follow. Two Levites of the family of Merari, and two of the family of Kohath, were overseers; לְנִצָּח, *i.e.* to lead in the building, to preside over it as upper overseers; and besides them, the Levites, all who were skilled in instruments of song (cf. 1 Chron. xxv. 6 ff.). As men who by their office and their art occupied a conspicuous place among the Levites, the oversight of the workmen in the temple was committed to them, not “that they might incite and cheer the workmen by music and song” (Berth.).—Ver. 13a is probably to be taken, along with ver. 12b, in the signification, “All the Levites who were skilled in music were over the bearers of burdens, and were overseers of all the workmen in reference to every work.” The ו before עַל הַסְּבָלִים appears certainly to go against this interpretation, and Berth. would consequently erase it to connect עַל הַסְּבָלִים with the preceding verse, and begin a new sentence with וַיִּמְנְצֵהוּם: “and they led all the workmen.” But if we separate וַיִּמְנְצֵהוּם from עַל הַסְּבָלִים, this mention of the bearers of burdens (סְבָלִים) comes awkwardly in between the subject and the predicate, or the statement as to the subject. We hold the text to be correct, and make the ו before עַל הַסְּבָלִים correspond to the ו before וַיִּמְנְצֵהוּם, in the signification, *et—et*. The Levites, all who were skilled in instruments of song, were both over the bearers of burdens, and overseeing the workmen, or leading the workmen. Besides, of the Levites were, *i.e.* still other Levites were, scribes and officers and porters, *i.e.* were busied about the temple in the discharge of these functions.—Ver. 14. In bringing out the money that had been brought into the house of the Lord, the high priest found



the book of Moses' law. It is not clearly implied in the words, that he found it in the place where the money was laid up. The book of the law which was found is merely characterized as the book of the Mosaic law by the words *בִּיַד-מֹשֶׁה*, not necessarily as Moses' autograph. The communication of this discovery by the high priest to the state secretary Shaphan, and by him to the king, is narrated in vers. 15-18, just as in 2 Kings xxii. 8-10. The statement, ver. 16, "and Shaphan brought the book to the king," instead of the words, "and Shaphan the *סֹפֵר* came (went) to the king," involves no difference as to the facts; it rather makes the matter clear. For since in 2 Kings xxii. 10, immediately after the statement that Hilkipah gave him the book, it is said that Shaphan read from it to the king, he must have brought it to the king. With this elucidation, both the omission of *וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ* (2 Kings xxii. 8), and the insertion of *עֹד* after *וַיֵּשֶׁב*, ver. 16, is connected. The main thing, that which it concerned the author of the Chronicle to notice, was the fact that the book of the law which had been discovered was immediately brought and read to the king; while the circumstance that Shaphan, when the book was given him, also opened it and read in it, is omitted, as it had no further results. But since Shaphan did not go to the king merely to bring him the book, but rather, in the first place, to report upon the performance of the commission entrusted to him in respect of the money, this report required to be brought prominently forward by the *עֹד*: He brought the book to the king, and besides, made his report to the king. All that has been committed to thy servants (*נָתַן בְּיָד*), that they do; they have poured out the money, etc. The *עֲבָדִים* are not Shaphan and the others mentioned in ver. 8, but in general those who were entrusted with the oversight of the repair of the temple, among whom, indeed, the chief royal officials were not included. After this report there follows in ver. 18 an account of the book which Shaphan had brought, and which, as we were informed in ver. 16, in anticipation of the event, he gave to the king.

Vers. 19-28. *The dismay of the king at the contents of the book which was read to him, and his inquiry of the prophetess Huldah as to the judgments threatened in the law.*—Compare with this the parallel account in 2 Kings xxii. 11-20, with the commentary there given, as both accounts agree with the exception of some unimportant variations in expression. Instead of Abdon ben Micah (ver. 20) we find in 2 Kings Achbor ben Micayahu,

perhaps the correct reading. In ver. 21, the expression, "and for those that are left in Israel and Judah," *i.e.* for the remainder of the people who were left in Israel after the destruction of the kingdom, and in Judah after the divine chastisements inflicted, mainly by the Assyrians under Hezekiah and Manasseh, is clearer and more significant than that in 2 Kings xxii. 13, "and for the people, and for all Judah." נִתְּכָה, to pour itself forth (of anger), is quite as suitable as נִצְתָה, inflame, kindle itself, in Kings, ver. 13. In ver. 22, those sent with the high priest Hilkiah are briefly designated by the words וַאֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ, and whom the king, *scil.* had sent; in 2 Kings xxii. 14, on the contrary, the individual names are recorded (Ewald, *Gramm.* § 292, *b*, would supply אָמַר, after the LXX.). The names of the ancestors of the prophetess Huldah also are somewhat different. בְּזוֹת, as the king had said to him, is omitted in 2 Kings.—In ver. 24, בְּלִי-הָאֱלֹהִים, all the curses, is more significant than בְּלִי-דְבָרִי, 2 Kings xxii. 16. וַתִּתֵּן (ver. 25) is a statement of the result of the עֲזָבוֹנִי: Because they have forsaken me, my anger pours itself forth. In ver. 27, the rhetorical expansion of the words which God had spoken of Jerusalem in the law, לְהִיּוֹת לְשִׁמָּה וְגו', inserted in 2 Kings xxii. 19 as an elucidation, are omitted. After the preceding designation of these words as "the curses written in the law," any further elucidation was superfluous. On the contents of the saying of the prophetess Huldah, see the commentary on 2 Kings xxii. 16 ff.

Vers. 29–33. *The reading of the book of the law in the temple, and the solemn renewal of the covenant*, to which the king assembled the elders of Judah and Jerusalem, with all the people, after the saying of the prophetess Huldah had been reported to him, are recorded in 2 Kings xxiii. 1–3 as they are in the Chronicle, and have been commented upon at the former passage. Only ver. 32, the contents of which correspond to the words, "And the whole people entered into the covenant" (2 Kings xxiii. 3), will need explanation. וַיַּעֲמֵד is usually translated, "he caused the people to enter into the covenant" (after 2 Kings). This is in substance correct, but exegetically cannot be defended, since בְּבִרְיָה does not precede, so as to allow of its here being supplied from the context. וַיַּעֲמֵד only signifies, he caused all who were in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand, and they did according to the covenant of God; whence we can easily supply in the first clause, "and to do according to the covenant." The collocation, "in Jerusalem and in Benjamin," is an abbre-



violation of the complete formula, "in Jerusalem and Judah and Benjamin;" then in the following clause only the inhabitants of Jerusalem are named as representatives of the inhabitants of the whole kingdom.—Ver. 33. But not only his own subjects did Josiah induce to act towards God in accordance with the covenant; in all the districts of the sons of Israel he removed the idolatrous abominations, and compelled every one in Israel to serve Jahve. The "sons of Israel," as distinguished from the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Benjamin (ver. 32), are the remnant of the ten tribes in their land, where Josiah, according to ver. 6 f., had also destroyed the idolatrous places of worship and the images. The statement in our verse, with which the account of Josiah's cultus reform is concluded, refers to that. וַיַּעֲבֹד לַיהוָה, he made to serve, compelled them to serve. By the abolition of idolatry he compelled them to worship Jahve. The last words of the verse are accordingly to be interpreted as signifying that Josiah, so long as he lived, allowed no open idolatry, but externally maintained the worship of Jahve. These measures could not effect a real, heartfelt conversion to God, and so the people fell again into open idolatry immediately after Josiah's death; and Jeremiah continually complains of the defection and corruption of Judah and Israel: cf. chap. xi., xiii., xxv., etc.

Chap. xxxv.—Vers. 1-19. *The solemnization of the passover.*—To ratify the renewal of the covenant, and to confirm the people in the communion with the Lord into which it had entered by the making of the covenant, Josiah, immediately after the finding of the book of the law and the renewal of the covenant, appointed a solemn passover to be held at the legal time, which is only briefly mentioned in 2 Kings xxiii. 21-23, but in the Chronicle is minutely described.—Ver. 1 contains the superscription-like statement, that Josiah held a passover to the Lord; and they held the passover in the 14th day of the first month, consequently at the time fixed in the law. It happened otherwise under Hezekiah (xxx. 2, 13, and 15). With ver. 2 commences the description of the festival: and first we have the preparations, the appointment of the priests and Levites to perform the various services connected with the festival (vers. 2-6), and the procuring of the necessary beasts for sacrifice (vers. 10-15); then the offering of the sacrifices and the preparation of the meals (vers. 10-15); and finally the characterization of the whole festival (vers. 16-19).—Ver. 2. He appointed the priests according to

their guards or posts, *i.e.* according to the service incumbent upon each division, and "he strengthened them for the service of the house of Jahve," namely, by encouraging speech, and by teaching as to the duties devolving upon them, according to the provisions of the law. Cf. the summons of Hezekiah, xxix. 5 ff.; and as to the *יֹחֵק*, Neh. ii. 18.—Ver. 3. The Levites are designated "those teaching all Israel, those holy to the Lord," in reference to what is commanded them in the succeeding verses. The Keth. *מְבֹנִים* does not elsewhere occur, and must be regarded as a substantive: the teachers; but it is probably only an orthographical error for *מְבִינִים* (Neh. viii. 7), as the Keri demands here also. As to the fact, cf. xvii. 8 f. The Levites had to teach the people in the law. Josiah said to them, "Set the ark in the house which Solomon did build; not is to you to bear upon the shoulder;" *i.e.*, ye have not any longer to bear it on your shoulders, as formerly on the journey through the wilderness, and indeed till the building of the temple, when the ark and the tabernacle had not yet any fixed resting-place (1 Chron. xvii. 5). The summons *הִנֵּנִי אֶת־אֲרוֹן וְגו'* is variously interpreted. Several Rabbins regard it as a command to remove the ark from its place in the most holy place into some subterranean chamber of the temple, so as to secure its safety in the event of the threatened destruction of the temple taking place. But this hypothesis needs no refutation, since it in no way corresponds to the words used. Most ancient and modern commentators, on the other hand, suppose that the holy ark had, during the reigns of the godless Manasseh and Amon, either been removed by them from its place, or taken away from the most holy place, from a desire to protect it from profanation, and hidden somewhere; and that Josiah calls upon the Levites to bring it back again to its place. Certainly this idea is favoured by the circumstance that, just as the book of the law, which should have been preserved in the ark of the covenant, had been lost, and was only recovered when the temple was being repaired, so the ark also may have been removed from its place. But even in that case the sacred ark would have been brought back to its place, according to the law, at the completion of the purification of the temple, before the king and people made the covenant with Jahve, after the law had been read to them in the temple, and could not have remained in its hiding-place until the passover. Still less probable is Bertheau's conjecture, "that the Levites bore the just reconsecrated ark upon their shoulders



at the celebration of the passover, under the idea that they were bound by the law to do so; but Josiah taught them that the temple built by Solomon had caused an alteration in that respect. They were no longer bearers of the ark; they might set it in its place, and undertake other duties." For the idea that the Levites bore the ark at the celebration of the passover is utterly inconsistent with the context, since vers. 3-6 do not treat of what was done at the passover, but merely of that which was to be done. But even if we were to alter "they bare" into "they wished to bear," yet there is no historic ground for the idea attributed by Bertheau to the Levites, that at the celebration of the passover the ark was to be brought forth from the most holy place, and carried in procession in the temple courts or elsewhere. Finally, the reasons stated for the call, *הָנִי וְגו'*, cannot be made to harmonize with the two views above mentioned. If it was only the bringing back of the ark to its ancient place in the most holy place which is here spoken of, why are the words "which Solomon built" added after *בְּבֵית*; and why is the command based upon the statement, "Ye have not to carry it any more upon your shoulders, but are to serve the Lord your God and His people in another way"? Both the additional clause and these reasons for the command show clearly that Josiah, in the words *הָנִי וְגו'*, did not command something which they were to do at the approaching passover, but merely introduces therewith the summons: "Serve now the Lord," etc. R. Sal. saw this, and has given the sense of the verse thus: *quum non occupemini amplius ullo labore vasa sacra portandi, Deo servite et populo ejus mactando et excoriando agnos paschales ver. 4 sqq.* It therefore only remains to ascertain how this signification is consistent with the words *הָנִי אֶת־אָרוֹן הַק' בְּבֵית*. The exhortation, "Set the ark in the house," must certainly not be understood to mean, "Leave it in the place where it has hitherto stood," nor, "Bring the sacred ark back into the house;" for *נָתַן* with *בְּ* does not mean to bring back, but only to place anywhere, set; and is here used not of material placing, but of mental. "Set the ark in the house" is equivalent to, "Overlook, leave it in the temple; you have not any longer, since Solomon built a house for it, to bear it upon your shoulders;" i.e., Think not on that which formerly, before the building of the temple, belonged to your service, but serve the Lord and His people now in the manner described in ver. 4 ff. The interpretation of the words as denot-

ing a material setting or removing of the ark, is completely excluded by the facts, (1) that in the description of what the Levites did at the passover, "according to the command of the king," which follows (vers. 10-15), not a word is said of the ark; and (2) that the bearing of the ark into the most holy place was not the duty of the Levites, but of the priests. The duty of the Levites was merely to bear the ark when it had to be transported for great distances, after the priests had previously wrapped it up in the prescribed manner. In vers. 4-6 the matters in which they are to serve the Lord in the preparation of the passover are more fully stated. The Keth. הכונו is *imper.* Niphal, הכונו, Make yourselves ready according to your fathers'-houses, in your divisions, according to the writing of David. כ in בכחב, as in במצות, xxix. 25; but כחב does not = מצות, but is to be understood of writings, in which the arrangements made by David and Solomon in reference to the service of the Levites were recorded.—Ver. 5. "Stand in the sanctuary for the divisions of the fathers'-houses of your brethren, the people of the nation, and indeed a part of a father's-house of the Levites;" *i.e.*, Serve your brethren the laymen, according to their fathers'-houses, in the court of the temple, in such fashion that a division of the Levites shall fall to each father's-house of the laymen; cf. 12. So Bertheau correctly; but he would erase the ו before הלכת without sufficient reason. Older commentators have supplied the preposition ל before הלכת: Stand, according to the divisions of the fathers'-houses, and according to the division of a father's-house of the Levites; which gives the same sense, but can hardly be justified grammatically.—Ver. 6. Kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare it (the passover) for your brethren (the laymen), doing according to the word of the Lord by Moses (*i.e.* according to the law of Moses). The sanctification mentioned between the killing and the preparation of the passover probably consisted only in this, that the Levites, after they had slain the lamb, had to wash themselves before they gave the blood to the priest to sprinkle upon the altar (cf. ver. 11 and xxx. 16). As to the slaying of the lamb by the Levites, cf. the remarks on xxx. 16.

Vers. 7-9. The bestowal of beasts for sacrifice on the part of the king and his princes.—Ver. 7. The king gave (ירם as in xxx. 24) to the sons of the people small cattle, viz. lambs and young goats, all for the passover-offerings, for all that



were present, to the number of 30,000 (head), and 3000 bullocks from the possession of the king (cf. xxxi. 3, xxxii. 29). כָּל־הַגִּמְצָא is all the people who were present, who had come to the feast from Jerusalem and the rest of Judah without having brought lambs for sacrifice.—Ver. 8. And his princes (the king's princes, *i.e.* the princes of the kingdom) presented for a free-will offering to the people, the priests, and the Levites. לְנִדְבָה is not to be taken adverbially, as Berth. thinks: according to goodwill, but corresponds to the לְפָסְחִים, *i.e.* for free-will offerings, Lev. vii. 16. The number of these gifts is not stated. From the princes of the king we must distinguish the prefects of the house of God and the princes of the Levites, who are mentioned by name in vers. 8b and 9. Of these the first presented sheep and cattle for passover-sacrifices to the priests, the latter to the Levites. Of the three נְיָדִים of the house of God named in ver. 8b, Hilkiyah is the high priest (xxxiv. 9), Zechariah perhaps the next to him (בֶּהוּן מִשְׁנֶה, 2 Kings xxv. 18, Jer. lii. 24), and Jehiel is probably, as Berth. conjectures, the chief of the line of Ithamar, which continued to exist even after the exile (Ezra viii. 2). Of the Levite princes (ver. 9) six names are mentioned, three of which, Conaniah, Shemaiah, and Jozabad, are met with under Hezekiah in xxxi. 12-15, since in the priestly and Levitic families the same names recur in different generations. The Conaniah in Hezekiah's time was chief overseer of the temple revenues; the two others were under overseers. Besides the פָּסְחִים for which the king and the princes of the priests and of the Levites gave צֹאן, *i.e.* lambs and young goats, בָּקָר, oxen, in considerable numbers, are mentioned as presents; 3000 from the king, 300 from the princes of the priests, and 500 from the princes of the Levites. Nothing is said as to the purpose of these, but from ver. 13 we learn that the flesh of them was cooked in pots and caldrons, and consequently that they were intended for the sacrificial meals during the seven days of the Mazzoth-feast; see on vers. 12 and 13.

Vers. 10-15. The preparation of the paschal sacrifice and the paschal meals.—Ver. 10 leads on to the carrying out of the arrangements. "So the service was prepared;" the preparation for the festival mentioned in vers. 3-9 was carried out. The priests stood at their posts (cf. xxx. 16), and the Levites according to their courses, according to the command of the king (in vers. 4 and 5).—Ver. 11. And they (the Levites, cf. ver. 6)

slew the passover (the lambs and young goats presented for the passover meal), and the priests sprinkled (the blood of the paschal lambs) from their hand (*i.e.* which the Levites gave them), while the Levites flayed them; as also under Hezekiah, xxx. 17.—Ver. 12. “And they took away the burnt-offerings, to give them to the divisions of the fathers’-houses of the sons of the people, to offer unto the Lord, as it is written in the book of Moses; and so also in regard to the oxen.” הָסִיר signifies the taking off or separating of the pieces intended to be burnt upon the altar from the beasts slain for sacrifice, as in Lev. iii. 9 f., iv. 31. הָעֵלָה, in this connection, can only signify the parts of the paschal lamb which were to be burnt upon the altar, viz. the same parts which were separated from sheep and goats when they were brought as thank-offerings and burnt upon the altar (Lev. iii. 6–16). These pieces are here called הָעֵלָה, because they not only were wholly burnt like the burnt-offering, but also were burnt upon the flesh of the evening burnt-offering to God, for a savour of good pleasure; cf. Lev. iii. 11, 16, with Lev. i. 13. They cannot have been special burnt-offerings, which were burnt along with or at the same time with the fat of the paschal lambs; for there were no special festal burnt-offerings, besides the daily evening sacrifice, prescribed for the passover on the evening of the 14th Nisan; and the oxen given by the king and the princes for the passover are specially mentioned in the concluding clause of the verse, וַיִּבְנוּ לַבָּקָר, so that they cannot have been included in הָעֵלָה. The suffix in לְהִתָּתֵם might be referred to הַפֶּסַח: to give the paschal lambs, after the עֵלָה had been separated from them, to the divisions of the people. But the following לְהַקְרִיב לַיהוָה does not harmonize with that interpretation; and the statement in ver. 13, that the Levites gave the roasted and boiled flesh to the sons of the people, is still more inconsistent with it. We must consequently refer לְהִתָּתֵם to the immediately preceding noun, הָעֵלָה: to give the parts separated from the paschal lambs to be burnt upon the altar to the divisions of the people, that they might offer them to the Lord. This can only mean that each division of the fathers’-houses of the people approached the altar in turn to give the portions set apart for the עֵלָה to the priests, who then offered them on the fire of the altar to the Lord. On פָּתְחוּ בָם Gusset. has already rightly remarked: *Lex Mosis hic allegatur non quasi omnia illa quæ præcedunt, exprimerentur in ipsa, sed respective seu respectu eorum quæ mandata erant; quibus salvis*



*adjungi potuerunt quidam modi agendi innocui et commodi ad legis jussa exsequenda.* וְכֵן לִבְקָר, and so was it done also with the oxen, which consequently were not offered as burnt-offerings, but as thank-offerings, only the fat being burnt upon the altar, and the flesh being used for sacrificial meals.—Ver. 13. The passover, *i.e.* the flesh of the paschal lamb, they roasted (בָּשֵׁל בְּאֵשׁ, to make ready upon the fire, *i.e.* roast; see on Ex. xii. 9), according to the ordinance (as the law appointed); and “the sanctified (as they called the slaughtered oxen, cf. xxix. 33) they sod (בָּשִׁלוּ, *sc.* בְּמִיִּם, cf. Ex. xii. 9) in pots, caldrons, and pans, and brought it speedily to the sons of the people,” *i.e.* the laymen. From this Bertheau draws the conclusion, “that with the paschal lambs the oxen were also offered as thank-offerings; and the sacrificial meal consisted not merely of the paschal lamb, but also of the flesh of the thank-offerings: for these must have been consumed on the same day as they were offered, though the eating of them on the following day was not strictly forbidden, Lev. vii. 15-18.” But this conclusion is shown to be incorrect even by this fact, that there is no word to hint that the roasting of the paschal lambs and the cooking of the flesh of the oxen which were offered as thank-offerings took place simultaneously on the evening of the 14th Nisan. This is implied neither in the וְכֵן לִבְקָר, nor in the statement in ver. 14, that the priests were busied until night in offering the עֹלָה and the חֲלָבִים. According to ver. 17, the Israelites held on that day, not only the passover, but also the Mazzoth-feast, seven days. The description of the offering and preparation of the sacrifices, partly for the altar and partly for the meal, vers. 13-15, refers, therefore, not only to the passover in its more restricted sense, but also to the seven days’ Mazzoth festival, without its being expressly stated; because both from the law and from the practice it was sufficiently well known that at the פֶּסַח meal only צֹאן (lambs or goats) were roasted and eaten; while on the seven following days of the Mazzoth, besides the daily burnt-offering, thank-offerings were brought and sacrificial meals were held; see on Deut. xvi. 1-8. The connecting, or rather the mingling, of the sacrificial meal prepared from the roasted lambs with the eating of the sodden flesh of oxen, would have been too great an offence against the legal prescriptions for the paschal meal, to be attributed either to King Josiah, to the priesthood, or to the author of the Chronicle, since the latter expressly remarks that the celebration was carried

out according to the prescription of the law of Moses, and according to the "right."—Ver. 14. And afterwards (אַחֲרַי, *postea*, after the passover had been prepared for the laymen in the way described) the Levites prepared it for themselves and for the priests; for the latter, however, only because they were busied with the offering of the עֹלָה and the חֲלָבִים till night. Most expositors understand by עֹלָה the fat of the paschal lambs, which was burnt upon the altar, as in ver. 12; and חֲלָבִים, the fat of oxen, which was likewise burnt upon the altar, "but was not, as it seems, designated by the expression הָעֹלָה" (Berth.). This interpretation certainly at first sight seems likely; only one cannot see why only the fat of the oxen, and not that of the paschal lambs also, should be called חֲלָבִים, since in the law the parts of all thank-offerings (oxen, sheep, and goats) which were burnt upon the altar are called חֲלָבִים. We will therefore be more correct if we take וְהַחֲלָבִים to be a more exact definition of הָעֹלָה: the burnt-offering, viz. the fat which was offered as a burnt-offering; or we may take הָעֹלָה here to denote the evening burnt-offering, and הַחֲלָבִים the fat of the paschal lambs. But even if the first-mentioned interpretation were the only correct one, yet it could not thence be concluded that on the passover evening (the 14th Nisan) the fat not only of the 37,600 lambs and goats, but also of the 3800 oxen, were offered upon the altar; the words, that the priests were busied until night with the offering of the עֹלָה and the חֲלָבִים, are rather used of the sacrificing generally during the whole of the seven days' festival. For the compressed character of the description appears in ver. 15, where it is remarked that neither the singers nor the porters needed to leave their posts, because their brethren the Levites prepared (the meal) for them. With the words, "according to the command of David," etc., cf. 1 Chron. xxv. 1 and 6.

Vers. 16–19. The character of the passover and Mazzoth festivals.—Ver. 16. "So all the service of the Lord was prepared the same day, in regard to the preparing of the passover, and the offering of the burnt-offerings upon the altar, according to the command of the king." This statement, like that in ver. 10, summarizes all that precedes, and forms the transition to the concluding remarks on the whole festival. בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא is not to be limited to the one afternoon and evening of the fourteenth day of the month, but refers to the whole time of the festival, just as יוֹם in Gen. ii. 4 embraces the seven days of crea-



tion. “עֲלֹת are the עֲלֵה and the תִּלְבִּים (ver. 14)” (Berth.); but it by no means follows from that, that “at the passover, besides the regular burnt-offering (Num. xxviii. 4), no burnt-offering would seem to have been offered,” but rather that the words have a more general signification, and denote the sacrifices at the passover and Mazzoth festivals.—Ver. 17. The duration of the festival. The Israelites who had come kept the passover “at that time (that is, according to ver. 1, on the fourteenth day of the first month), and the Mazzoth seven days,” *i.e.* from the 15th to the 21st of the same month.—Ver. 18 contains the remark that the Israelites had not held such a passover since the days of the prophet Samuel and all the kings; cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 22, where, instead of the days of Samuel, the days of the judges are mentioned. On the points which distinguished this passover above others, see the remarks on 2 Kings xxiii. 22. In the concluding clause we have a rhetorical enumeration of those who participated in the festival, beginning with the king and ending with the inhabitants of Jerusalem. שְׂרָאֵל הַנִּמְצָא are the remnant of the kingdom of the ten tribes who had come to the festival; cf. xxxiv. 33.—In ver. 19 the year of this passover is mentioned in conclusion. The statement, “in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah,” refers back to the same date at the beginning of the account of the cultus reform (xxxiv. 8 and 2 Kings xxii. 3), and indicates that Josiah’s cultus reform culminated in this passover. Now since the passover fell in the middle of the first month of the year, and, according to chap. xxxiv. and 2 Kings xxii., the book of the law was also found in the eighteenth year of Josiah’s reign, many commentators have imagined that the eighteenth year of the king is dated from the autumn; so that all that is narrated in 2 Chronicles, from xxxiv. 8—xxxv. 19, happened within a period of six months and a half. This might possibly be the case; since the purification and repair of the temple may have been near their completion when the book of the law was found, so that they might hold the passover six months afterwards. But our passage does not require that the years of the king’s reign should be dated from the autumn, and there are not sufficient grounds for believing that such was the case. Neither in our narrative, nor in 2 Kings xxii. and xxiii., is it said that the passover was resolved upon or arranged in consequence of the finding of the book of the law. Josiah may therefore have thought of closing and ratifying the

restoration of the Jahve-worship by a solemn passover festival, even before the finding of the book; and the two events need not be widely separated from each other. But from the way in which the account in 2 Kings xxii. and xxiii. is arranged, it is not improbable that the finding of the book of the law may have occurred before the beginning of the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, and that date may have been placed at the beginning and end of the narrative, because the cultus reform was completed with the celebration of the passover in his eighteenth year.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 20–27. *The end of Josiah's reign; his death in battle against Pharaoh Necho.* Cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 25–30.—The catastrophe in which the pious king found his death is in 2 Kings introduced by the remark, that although Josiah returned unto the Lord with all his heart and all his soul and all his strength, and walked altogether according to the law, so that there was no king before him, and none arose after him, who was like him, yet the Lord did not turn away from the fierceness of His great wrath against Judah, and resolved to remove Judah also out of His sight, because of the sins of Manasseh. This didactic connecting of the tragical end of the pious king with the task of his reign, which he followed out so zealously, viz. to lead his people back to the Lord, and so turn away the threatened destruction, is not found in the Chronicle. Here the war with Necho, in which Josiah fell, is introduced by the simple formula: After all this, that Josiah had prepared the house, i.e. had restored and ordered the temple worship, Necho the king of Egypt came up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him. For further information as to Necho and his campaign, see on 2 Kings xxiii. 29.—Ver. 21. Then he (Pharaoh Necho) sent messengers to him, saying, “What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? Not against thee, thee, (do I come) to-day (now), but against my hereditary enemy; and God has said that I must make haste: cease from God, who is with me, that I destroy thee not.” מִה־לִּי וְלָךְ, see Judg. xi. 12, 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

<sup>1</sup> The addition of the LXX. to 2 Kings xxii. 3, “in the eighth month,” to which Thenius and Berth. attach some weight, as a proof that the years of Josiah's reign are dated from autumn, is utterly useless for that purpose. For even were that addition more than a worthless gloss, it would only prove the contrary, since the eighth month of the civil year, which is reckoned from autumn, corresponds to the second month of the ecclesiastical year, and would consequently carry us beyond the time of the passover.



אָתָּה is an emphatic repetition of the pronominal suffix; cf. Gesen. *Gr.* § 121. 3. הַיּוֹם, this day, that is, at present. בֵּית מִלְחָמָתִי does not signify, my warlike house, but, the house of my war, *i.e.* the family with which I wage war, equivalent to “my natural enemy in war, my hereditary enemy.” This signification is clear from 1 Chron. xviii. 10 and 2 Sam. viii. 10, where “man of the war of Tou” denotes, the man who waged war with Tou.<sup>1</sup> The God who had commanded Pharaoh to make haste, and whom Josiah was not to go against, is not an Egyptian god, as the Targ. and many commentators think, referring to Herod. ii. 158, but the true God, as is clear from ver. 22. Yet we need not suppose, with the older commentators, that God had *sive per somnium sive per prophetam aliquem ad ipsum e Judæa missum* spoken to Pharaoh, and commanded him to advance quickly to the Euphrates. For even had Pharaoh said so in so many words, we could not here think of a divine message made known to him by a prophet, because God is neither called יהוה nor האֱלֹהִים, but merely אֱלֹהִים, and so it is only the Godhead in general which is spoken of; and Pharaoh only characterizes his resolution as coming from God, or only says: It was God’s will that Josiah should not hinder him, and strive against him. This Pharaoh might say without having received any special divine revelation, and after the warning had been confirmed by the unfortunate result for Josiah of his war against Necho; the biblical historian also might represent Necho’s words as come from God, or “from the mouth of God.”—Ver. 22. But Josiah turned not his face from him, *i.e.* did not abandon his design, “but to make war against him he disguised himself.” הִתְחַפֵּשׂ denotes elsewhere to disguise by clothing, to clothe oneself falsely (xviii. 29; 1 Kings xx. 38, xxii. 30),

<sup>1</sup> When Bertheau, on the contrary, denies this signification, referring to 1 Chron. xviii. 10 for support, he would seem not to have looked narrowly at the passage cited; and the conjecture, based upon 3 Esr. i. 25, which he, following O. F. Fritzsche, brings forward, אֶל-פֶּרֶת מִלְחָמָתִי, “on the Euphrates is my war,” gains no support from the passage quoted. For the author of this apocryphal book, which was written on the model of the LXX., has not translated the text he uses, but only paraphrased it: οὐχὶ πρὸς σὲ ἐξαπέσταλμαι, ὑπὸ κυρίου τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐπὶ γὰρ τοῦ Εὐφράτου ὁ πόλεμος μου ἐστὶ, καὶ κύριος μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἐπισπεύδων ἐστίν. Neither the LXX. nor Vulg. have read and translated פָּרַת in their original text; for they run as follows: οὐκ ἐπὶ σὲ ἦκαω (taking אָתָּה for אֵתָּה) σήμερον πόλεμον ποιῆσαι, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς εἶπεν κατασπεῦσαι με. Vulg.: *Non adversus te hodie venio, sed contra aliam pugno domum, ad quam me Deus festinato ire præcepit.*

and to disfigure oneself (Job xxx. 18). This signification is suitable here also, where the word is transferred to the mental domain: to disfigure oneself, *i.e.* to undertake anything which contradicts one's character. During his whole reign, Josiah had endeavoured to carry out the will of God; while in his action against Pharaoh, on the contrary, he had acted in a different way, going into battle against the will of God.<sup>1</sup> As to the motive which induced Josiah, notwithstanding Necho's warning, to oppose him by force of arms, see the remark on 2 Kings xxiii. 29 f. The author of the Chronicle judges the matter from the religious point of view, from which the undertaking is seen to have been against the will of God, and therefore to have ended in Josiah's destruction, and does not further reflect on the working of divine providence, exhibited in the fact that the pious king was taken away before the judgment, the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, broke over the sinful people. For further information as to the Valley of Megiddo, the place where the battle was fought, and on the death of Josiah, see 2 Kings xxiii. 29 f. The *הַעֲבִירוּנִי*, bring me forth (ver. 23), is explained in ver. 24: his servants took him, mortally wounded by an arrow, from the war-chariot, and placed him in a second chariot which belonged to him, and probably was more comfortable for a wounded man.—Ver. 25. The death of the pious king was deeply lamented by his people. The prophet Jeremiah composed a lamentation for Josiah; "and all the singing-men and singing-women spake in their lamentations of Josiah unto this day;" *i.e.*, in the lamentation which they were wont to sing on certain fixed days, they sung also the lamentation for Josiah. "And they made them (these lamentations) an ordinance (a standing custom) in Israel, and they are written in the lamentations," *i.e.* in a collection of lamentations, in which, among others, that composed by Jeremiah on the death of Josiah was contained. This collection is, however, not to be identified with the Lamenta-

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau would alter *הַתְּחַזֵּק* into *הַתְּחַפֵּז*, because the LXX., and probably also the Vulg., Syr., 3 Esr. i. 16, and perhaps also Josephus, have so read. But only the LXX. have *ἐπαραϊώθη*, Vulg. *præparavit*, 3 Esr. *ἐπεχείρει*; so that for *הַתְּחַזֵּק* only the LXX. remain, whose translation gives no sufficient ground for an alteration of the text. *הַתְּחַזֵּק*, to show oneself strong, or courageous, is not at all suitable; for the author of the Chronicle is not wont to regard enterprises undertaken against God's will, and unfortunate in their results, as proofs of physical or spiritual strength.



tions of Jeremiah over the destruction of Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah, contained in our canon.—On ver. 26 f. cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 28. הַסְדִּי as in xxxii. 32. בְּכָתוּב בַּת', according to that which is written in the law of Moses, cf. xxxi. 3. יִדְבְּרִי is the continuation of יֵתֶר דִּבְרֵי (ver. 26).

CHAP. XXXVI.—THE LAST KINGS OF JUDAH; THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM; JUDAH LED AWAY CAPTIVE; AND THE BABYLONIAN EXILE.

As the kingdom of Judah after Josiah's death advanced with swift steps to its destruction by the Chaldeans, so the author of the Chronicle goes quickly over the reigns of the last kings of Judah, who by their godless conduct hastened the ruin of the kingdom. As to the four kings who reigned between Josiah's death and the destruction of Jerusalem, he gives, besides their ages at their respective accessions, only a short characterization of their conduct towards God, and a statement of the main events which step by step brought about the ruin of the king and the burning of Jerusalem and the temple.

Vers. 1-4. *The reign of Jehoahaz.* Cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 30b-35.—After Josiah's death, the people of the land raised his son Jehoahaz (Joahaz), who was then twenty-three years old, to the throne; but he had been king in Jerusalem only three months when the Egyptian king (Necho) deposed him, imposed upon the land a fine of 100 talents of silver and one talent of gold, made his brother Eliakim king under the name Jehoiakim, and carried Jehoahaz, who had been taken prisoner, away captive to Egypt. For further information as to the capture and carrying away of Jehoahaz, and the appointment of Eliakim to be king, see on 2 Kings xxiii. 31-35.

Vers. 5-8. *The reign of Jehoiakim.* Cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 36-xxiv. 7.—Jehoiakim was at his accession twenty-five years of age, reigned eleven years, and did that which was evil in the eyes of Jahve his God.—Ver. 6 f. "Against him came Nebuchadnezzar (in inscriptions, Nabucudurriusur, *i.e.* *Nebo coronam servat*; see on Dan. S. 56) the king of Babylon, and bound him with brazen double fetters to carry him to Babylon." This campaign, Nebuchadnezzar's first against Judah, is spoken of also in 2 Kings xxiv. and Dan. i. 1, 2. The capture of Jerusalem, at which Jehoiakim was put in fetters, occurred, as we

learn from Dan. i. 1, *col. c.* Jer. xlv. 2 and xxxvi. 7, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, *i.e.* in the year 606 B.C.; and with it commence the seventy years of the Chaldean servitude of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar did not carry out his purpose of deporting the captured king Jehoiakim to Babylon, but allowed him to continue to reign at Jerusalem as his servant (vassal). To alter the infin. לְהוֹלִיכוֹ into the perf., or to translate as the perf., is quite arbitrary, as is also the supplying of the words, "and he carried him away to Babylon." That the author of the Chronicle does not mention the actual carrying away, but rather assumes the contrary, namely, that Jehoiakim continued to reign in Jerusalem until his death, as well known, is manifest from the way in which, in ver. 8, he records his son's accession to the throne. He uses the same formula which he has used in the case of all the kings whom at their death their sons succeeded, according to established custom. Had Nebuchadnezzar dethroned Jehoiakim, as Necho deposed Jehoahaz, the author of the Chronicle would not have left the installation of Jehoiachin by the Chaldean king unmentioned. For the defence of this view against opposing opinions, see the commentary on 2 Kings xxiv. 1 and Dan. i. 1; and in regard to ver. 7, see on Dan. i. 2. The Chronicle narrates nothing further as to Jehoiakim's reign, but refers, ver. 8, for his other deeds, and especially his abominations, to the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, whence the most important things have been excerpted and incorporated in 2 Kings xxiv. 1–4. תוֹעֲבוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה Bertheau interprets of images which he caused to be prepared, and הִנְמָצָא עָלָיו of his evil deeds; but in both he is incorrect. The passages which Bertheau cites for his interpretation of the first words, Jer. vii. 9 f. and Ezek. viii. 17, prove the contrary; for Jeremiah mentions as תוֹעֲבוֹת of the people, murder, adultery, false swearing, offering incense to Baal, and going after other gods; and Ezekiel, *loc. cit.*, uses עֲשׂוֹת תוֹעֲבוֹת of the idolatry of the people indeed, but not of the making of images—only of the worship of idols, the practice of idol-worship. The abominations, consequently, which Jehoiakim committed are both his evil deeds and crimes, *e.g.* the shedding of innocent blood (2 Kings xxiv. 4), as well as the idolatry which he had practised. הִנְמָצָא עָלָיו, "what was found upon him," is a comprehensive designation of his whole moral and religious conduct and attitude; cf. xix. 3. Jehoiakim's revolt from Nebuchadnezzar after three years' servitude (2 Kings



xxiv. 1) is passed over by the author of the Chronicle, because the punishment of this crime influenced the fate of the kingdom of Judah only after his death. The punishment fell upon Jehoiachin; for the detachments of Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites, which were sent by Nebuchadnezzar to punish the rebels, did not accomplish much.

Vers. 9 and 10. *The reign of Jehoiachin.* Cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 8-17.—Jehoiachin's age at his accession is here given as eight years, while in 2 Kings xxiv. 8 it is eighteen. It is so also in the LXX. and Vulg.; but a few Hebr. codd., Syr., and Arab., and many manuscripts of the LXX., have eighteen years in the Chronicle also. The number eight is clearly an orthographical error, as Thenius also acknowledges. Bertheau, on the contrary, regards the eight of our text as the original, and the number eighteen in 2 Kings as an alteration occasioned by the idea that eighteen years appeared a more fitting age for a king than eight years, and gives as his reason, "that the king's mother is named along with him, and manifestly with design, 2 Kings xxiv. 12, 15, and Jer. xxii. 26, whence we must conclude that she had the guardianship of the young king." A perfectly worthless reason. In the books of Kings the name of the mother is given in the case of all the kings after their accession has been mentioned, without any reference to the age of the kings, because the queen-mother occupied a conspicuous position in the kingdom. It is so in the case of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiii. 36 and xxiv. 8. On account of her high position, the queen-mother is mentioned in 2 Kings xxiv. 12 and 15, and in Jeremiah, among those who submitted to Nebuchadnezzar and were carried away to Babylon. The correctness of the number eighteen is, however, placed beyond doubt by Ezek. xix. 5-9, where the prophet portrays Jehoiachin as a young lion, which devoured men, and knew widows, and wasted cities. The knowing of widows cannot apply to a boy of eight, but might well be said of a young man of eighteen. Jehoiachin ruled only three months and ten days in Jerusalem, and did evil in the eyes of Jahve. At the turn of the year, *i.e.* in spring, when campaigns were usually opened (cf. 1 Kings xx. 22; 2 Sam. xi. 1), Nebuchadnezzar sent his generals (2 Kings xxiv. 10), and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of Jahve, and made his (father's) brother Zedekiah king in Judah. In these few words the end of Jehoiachin's short reign is recorded.

From 2 Kings xxiv. 10–16 we learn more as to this second campaign of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem, and its issues for Judah; see the commentary on that passage. Zidkiyah (Zedekiah) was, according to 2 Kings xxiv. 17, not a brother, but דוד, uncle or father's brother, of Jehoiachin, and was called Mattaniah, a son of Josiah and Hamutal, like Jehoahaz (2 Kings xxiv. 18, cf. xxiii. 31), and is consequently *his* full brother, and a step-brother of Jehoiakim. At his appointment to the kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar he received the name Zidkiyah (Zedekiah). זדקיה, in ver. 10, is accordingly to be taken in its wider signification of blood-relation.

Vers. 11–21. *The reign of Zedekiah; the destruction of Jerusalem, and Judah carried away into exile.* Cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 18–xxv. 21.—Zedekiah, made king at the age of twenty-one years, reigned eleven years, and filled up the measure of sins, so that the Lord was compelled to give the kingdom of Judah up to destruction by the Chaldeans. To that Zedekiah brought it by the two main sins of his evil reign,—namely, by not humbling himself before the prophet Jeremiah, from the mouth of Jahve (ver. 12); and by rebelling against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had caused him to swear by God, and by so hardening his neck (being stiff-necked), and making stout his heart, that he did not return to Jahve the God of Israel. Zedekiah's stiffness of neck and hardness of heart showed itself in his refusing to hearken to the words which Jeremiah spoke to him from the mouth of God, and his breaking the oath he had sworn to Nebuchadnezzar by God. The words, "he humbled himself not before Jeremiah," recall Jer. xxxvii. 2, and the events narrated in Jer. xxxvii. and xxxviii., and xxi. 4–xxii. 9, which show how the chief of the people ill-treated the prophet because of his prophecies, while Zedekiah was too weak and languid to protect him against them. The rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, to whom he had sworn a vassal's oath of fidelity, is mentioned in 2 Kings xxiv. 30, and Ezek. xvii. 13 ff. also, as a great crime on the part of Zedekiah and the chief of the people; see the commentary on both passages. In consequence of this rebellion, Nebuchadnezzar marched against Judah with a powerful army; and after the capture of the fenced cities of the land, he advanced to the siege of Jerusalem, which ended in its capture and destruction, 2 Kings xxv. 1–10. Without further noticing these results of this breach of faith, the author of the Chronicle proceeds to



depict the sins of the king and of the people. In the first place, he again brings forward, in ver. 13*b*, the stiffness of neck and obduracy of the king, which manifested itself in the acts just mentioned: he made hard his neck, etc. Bertheau would interpret the words 'וַיִּקְשׁ וְגו', according to Deut. ii. 30, thus: "Then did God make him stiff-necked and hardened his heart; so that he did not return to Jahve the God of Israel, notwithstanding the exhortations of the prophets." But although hardening is not seldom represented as inflicted by God, there is here no ground for supposing that with וַיִּקְשׁ the subject is changed, while the bringing forward of the hardening as an act of God does not at all suit the context. And, moreover, הִקְשָׁה עֲרֹף, making hard the neck, is nowhere ascribed to God, it is only said of men; cf. 2 Kings xvii. 14, Deut. x. 16, Jer. xix. 15, etc. To God only הִקְשָׁה אֶת־לֵב or אֶת־רוּחַ is attributed, Ex. vii. 3, Deut. ii. 30.—Ver. 14. "And all princes of the priests and the people increased faithless transgressions, like to all the abominations of the heathen, and defiled the house of the Lord which He had consecrated in Jerusalem." Bertheau would refer this censure of their idolatry and the profanation of the temple to the guilt incurred by the whole people, especially in the time of Manasseh, because, from all we know from the book of Jeremiah, the reproach of idolatry did not at all, or at least did not specially, attach to the princes of the priests and the people in the time of Zedekiah. But this reason is neither tenable nor correct; for from Ezek. viii. it is perfectly manifest that under Zedekiah, not only the people, but also the priesthood, were deeply sunk in idolatry, and that even the courts of the temple were defiled by it. And even though that idolatry did not take its rise under Zedekiah, but had been much practised under Jehoiakim, and was merely a revival and continuation of the idolatrous conduct of Manasseh and Amon, yet the reference of our verse to the time of Manasseh is excluded by the context; for here only that which was done under Zedekiah is spoken of, without any reference to earlier times.

Meanwhile God did not leave them without exhortation, warning, and threatening.—Ver. 15 f. Jahve sent to them by His messengers, from early morning onwards continually, for He spared His people and His dwelling-place; but they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets. שְׁלַח בֵּיר, to send a message by any one, to make a

sending. The object is to be supplied from the verb. **הִשָּׁבֵם וְשָׁלוּחַ** exactly as in Jer. xxvi. 5, xxix. 19. For He spared His people, etc., viz. by this, that He, in long-suffering, again and again called upon the people by prophets to repent and return, and was not willing at once to destroy His people and His holy place. **מְלָאָכִים** is ἀπ. λεγ., in Syr. it signifies *subsannavit*; the Hithp. also, **מִתְעַתְּעִים** (from תַּעַע), occurs only here as an intensive: to launch out in mockery. The distinction drawn between **מְלָאָכִים** (messengers) and **נְבִיאִים** (prophets) is rhetorical, for by the messengers of God it is chiefly prophets who are meant; but the expression is not to be confined to prophets in the narrower sense of the word, for it embraces all the men of God who, by word and deed, censured and punished the godless conduct of the idolaters. The statement in these two verses is certainly so very general, that it may apply to all the times of gradually increasing defection of the people from the Lord their God; but the author of the Chronicle had primarily in view only the time of Zedekiah, in which the defection reached its highest point. It should scarcely be objected that in the time of Zedekiah only Jeremiah is known as a prophet of the Lord, since Ezekiel lived and wrought among the exiles. For, in the first place, it does not hence certainly follow that Jeremiah and Ezekiel were the only prophets of that time; then, secondly, Jeremiah does not speak as an individual prophet, but holds up to the people the witness of all the earlier prophets (cf. e.g. xxvi. 4, 5), so that by him all the former prophets of God spoke to the people; and consequently the plural, His messengers, His prophets, is perfectly true even for the time of Zedekiah, if we always keep in mind the rhetorical character of the style. **עַד עֲלֹת וְגו'**, until the anger of Jahve rose upon His people, so that there was no healing (deliverance) more.

Ver. 17 ff. When the moral corruption had reached this height, judgment broke upon the incorrigible race. As in vers. 12–16 the transgressions of the king and people are not described according to their historical progression, but are portrayed in rhetorical gradation; so, too, in vers. 17–21 the judgment upon the sinful people and kingdom is not represented in its historical details, but only rhetorically in its great general outlines. “Then brought He upon them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword in their sanctuary, and spared not the youth and the maiden, the old man



and the grey-headed ; he gave everything into his hand." Prophetic utterances form the basis of this description of the fearful judgment, *e.g.* Jer. xv. 1-9, xxxii. 3 f., Ezek. ix. 6 ; and these, again, rest upon Deut. xxxii. 25. The subject in the first and last clause of the verse is Jahve. Bertheau therefore assumes that He is also the subject of the intermediate sentence : "and God slew their young men in the sanctuary ;" but this can hardly be correct. As in the expansion of the last clause, "he gave everything into his hand," which follows in ver. 18, not Jahve but the king of Babylon is the subject ; so also in the expansion of the first clause, which וַיְהִיג וגו' introduces, the king of the Chaldeans is the subject, as most commentators have rightly recognised. By בְּבֵית מִקְדָּשָׁם the judgment is brought into definite relationship to the crime : because they had profaned the sanctuary by idolatry (ver. 14), they themselves were slain in the sanctuary. On הַכֹּל יָתַן ב' cf. Jer. xxvii. 6, xxxii. 3, 4. הַכֹּל includes things and persons, and is specialized in vers. 18-20.—Ver. 18. All the vessels of the house of God, the treasures of the temple, and of the palace of the king and of the princes, all he brought to Babylon.—Ver. 19. They burnt the house of God ; they pulled down the walls of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces of the city with fire, and all the costly vessels were devoted to destruction. On לְהַשְׁחִית cf. xii. 12.—Ver. 20. He who remained from the sword, *i.e.* who had not been slain by the sword, had not fallen and died in war, Nebuchadnezzar carried away to Babylon into captivity ; so that they became servants to him and to his sons, as Jeremiah (xxvii. 7) prophesied, until the rise of the kingdom of the Persians. These last words also are an historical interpretation of the prophecy, Jer. xxvii. 7. All this was done (ver. 21) to fulfil מְלָא instead of מִלָּא, as in 1 Chron. xxix. 5), that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, he having prophesied (xxv. 11 f., xxix. 10) the seventy years' duration of Judah's desolation and the Babylonian captivity, while the king and people had not regarded his words (ver. 12). This period, which according to ver. 20 came to an end with the rise of the kingdom of the Persians, is characterized by the clause עַד רִצְתָהּ וגו' as a time of expiation of the wrong which had been done the land by the non-observance of the sabbath-years, upon the basis of the threatening (Lev. xxvi. 34), in which the wasting of the land during the dispersion of the unrepentant

people among the heathen was represented as a compensation for the neglected sabbaths. From this passage in the law the words are taken, to show how the Lord had inflicted the punishment with which the disobedient people had been threatened as early as in the time of Moses. עַד רֵצְתָהּ is not to be translated, "until the land had made up its years of rest;" that signification רֵצָה has not; but, "until the land had enjoyed its sabbath-years," *i.e.* until it had enjoyed the rest of which it had been deprived by the non-observance of the sabbaths and the sabbath-years, contrary to the will of its Creator; see on Lev. xxvi. 34. That this is the thought is placed beyond doubt by the succeeding circumstantial clause, taken word for word from Lev. xxvi. 34: "all days (*i.e.* the whole time) of its desolation did it hold it" (שָׁבַתָהּ, it kept sabbath). "To make full the seventy years;" which Jeremiah, *ll. cc.*, had prophesied.

This connecting of Jeremiah's prophecy with the declaration in Lev. xxvi. 34 does not justify us in supposing that the celebration of the sabbath-year had been neglected seventy times, or that for a period of 490 years the sabbath-year had not been observed. Bertheau, holding this view, fixes upon 1000 B.C., *i.e.* the time of Solomon, or, as we cannot expect any very great chronological exactitude, the beginning of the kingly government in Israel, as the period after which the rest-years ceased to be regarded. He is further of opinion that chap. xxxv. 18 harmonizes with this view; according to which passage the pass-over was not celebrated in accordance with the prescription of the law until the end of the period of the judges. According to this chronological calculation, the beginning of this neglect of the observance of the sabbath-year would fall in the beginning of the judgeship of Samuel.<sup>1</sup> But this is itself unlikely; and still more unlikely is it, that in the time of the judges the sabbath-year had been regularly observed until Samuel; and that during the reigns of the kings David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, this celebration remained wholly in abeyance. But even apart from that, the words, that the land, to make full the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah, kept the

<sup>1</sup> The seventy years' exile began in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, *i.e.* in the year 606 B.C., or 369 years after the division of the kingdom; see the Chronol. Tables at 1 Kings xii. (ii. 3, S. 141), to which the eighty years of the reigns of David and Solomon, and the times of Saul and Samuel, must be added to make up the 490 years (see the comment. on Judges).



whole time of the desolation holy, or enjoyed a sabbath rest such as Moses had proclaimed in Lev. xxvi. 34, do not necessarily involve that the land had been deprived of its sabbath rest seventy times in succession, or during a period of 490 years, by the sin of the people. The connection between the prophecy of Jeremiah and the provision of the law is to be understood theologically, and does not purport to be calculated chronologically. The thought is this: By the infliction of the punishment threatened against the transgressors of the law by the carrying of the people away captive into Babylon, the land will obtain the rest which the sinful people had deprived it of by their neglect of the sabbath observance commanded them. By causing it to remain uncultivated for seventy years, God gave to the land a time of rest and refreshment, which its inhabitants, so long as they possessed it, had not given it. But that does not mean that the time for which this rest was granted corresponded to the number of the sabbath-years which had not been observed. From these theological reflections we cannot calculate how often in the course of the centuries, from the time of Joshua onwards till the exile, the sabbath-year had not been observed; and still less the time after which the observation of the sabbath-year was continuously neglected. The passage xxxv. 8 has no bearing on this question, because it neither states that the passover had been held according to the precepts of the law till towards the end of the time of the judges, nor that it was no longer celebrated in accordance with the precept from that time until Josiah; it only contains the thought that such a passover as that in Josiah's reign had not been held since the time of the judges: see on the passage.

Vers. 22 and 23. To point out still further how exactly God had fulfilled His word by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah, it is in conclusion briefly mentioned that God, in the first year of Coresh king of Persia, stirred up the spirit of this king to cause a command to go forth in all his kingdom, that Jahve, the God of heaven, who had given him all the kingdoms of the earth, had commanded him to build again His temple in Jerusalem, and that whoever belonged to the people of God might go up to Jerusalem. With this comforting prospect for the future, the author of the Chronicle closes his consideration of the præ-exilic history of the people of God without completely communicating the contents of the royal edict of Cyrus, since he purposed to

narrate the history of the restoration of Judah to their own land in a separate work. This we have in the book of Ezra, which commences by giving us the whole of the edict of Cyrus the king of the Persians (Ezra i. 1-3), and then narrates the return of a great part of the people to Jerusalem and Judah, the rebuilding of the temple, and the re-settlement in the land of their fathers of those who had returned.

THE END.









BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT

BY

C. F. KEIL, D.D., AND F. DELITZSCH, D.D.,

THE BOOKS OF EZRA, NEHEMIAH, AND ESTHER,

BY

C. F. KEIL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

SOPHIA TAYLOR.





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# THE BOOK OF EZRA

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## INTRODUCTION.

### § 1. NAME AND CONTENTS, OBJECT AND PLAN OF THE BOOK OF EZRA.



THE book of Ezra derives its name of עֶזְרָא in the Hebrew Bible, of *Ἑσδρας* in the Septuagint, and of *Liber Esdræ* in the Vulgate, from Ezra, עֶזְרָא, the priest and scribe who, in chap. vii.–x., narrates his return from captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem, and the particulars of his ministry in the latter city. For the sake of making the number of the books contained in their canon of Scripture correspond with the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, the Jews had from of old reckoned the books of Ezra and Nehemiah as *one*; whilst an apocryphal book of Ezra, composed of passages from the second book of Chronicles, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and certain popular legends, had long been current among the Hellenistic Jews together with the canonical book of Ezra. Hence our book of Ezra is called, in the catalogues of the Old Testament writings handed down to us by the Fathers (see the statements of Origen, of the Council of Laodicea, Can. 60, of Cyril, Jerome, and others, in the *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, § 216, Not. 11, 13), *Ἑσδρας πρῶτος* (α), and the book of Nehemiah *Ἑσδρας δεύτερος* (β), and consequently separated as I. Ezra from the book of Nehemiah as II. Ezra; while the Greek book of Ezra is called III. Ezra, to which was subsequently added the falsely so-called book of Ezra as

iv. Ezra. In the Septuagint, the *Vet. Itala*, and the Syriac, on the contrary (comp. *Libri V. T. apocryphi syriace e recogn. de Lagarde*), we find the Greek book of Ezra placed as *Ἑσδρας πρῶτον* before the canonical book, and the latter designated *Ἑσδρας δεύτερον*.

The book of Ezra consists of two parts. The first part, comprising a period anterior to Ezra, begins with the edict of Coresh (Cyrus), king of Persia, permitting the return to their native land of such Jews as were exiles in Babylon, and prescribing the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem (i. 1-4); and relates that when the heads of the nation, the priests and Levites, and many of the people, made preparations for returning, Cyrus had the sacred vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem brought forth and delivered to Sheshbazzar (Zerubbabel), prince of Judah (i. 5-11). Next follows a list of the names of those who returned from captivity (chap. ii.), and the account of the building of the altar of burnt-offerings, the restoration of divine worship, and the laying of the foundation of the temple (chap. iii.). Then the manner in which the rebuilding of the temple was hindered by the Samaritans is narrated; and mention made of the written accusation sent by the adversaries of the Jews to the kings Ahashverosh and Artachshasta (iv. 1-7): the letter sent to the latter monarch, and his answer thereto, in consequence of which the rebuilding of the temple ceased till the second year of Darius, being inserted in the Chaldee original (iv. 24). It is then related (also in Chaldee) that Zerubbabel and Joshua, undertaking, in consequence of the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, the rebuilding of the temple, were immediately interrogated by Tatnai the Persian governor and his companions as to who had commanded such rebuilding; that the reply of the Jewish rulers was reported in writing to the king, whereupon the latter caused search to be made for the edict of Cyrus, and gave command for the continuance and furtherance of the building in compliance therewith (v. 1-vi. 13); that hence the Jews were enabled to complete the work, solemnly to dedicate their



now finished temple (vi. 14-18), and (as further related, vers. 19-22, in the Hebrew tongue) to celebrate their pass-over with rejoicing. In the second part (vii.-x.), the return of Ezra the priest and scribe, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, from Babylon to Jerusalem, with a number of priests, Levites, and Israelites, is related; and (vii. 1-10) a copy of the royal decree, in virtue of which Ezra was entrusted with the ordering of divine worship, and of the administration of justice as prescribed in the law, given in the Chaldee original (vii. 11-26), with a postscript by Ezra (ver. 27 sq.). Then follows a list of those who went up with Ezra (viii. 1-14); and particulars given by Ezra himself concerning his journey, his arrival at Jerusalem (viii. 14-36), and the energetic proceedings by which he effected the separation of the heathen women from the congregation (ix. 1-x. 17); the book concluding with a list of those who were forced to put away their heathen wives (x. 18-44).

The first year of the rule of Cyrus king of Persia corresponding with the year 536 B.C., and the seventh year of Artaxerxes (Longimanus) with 458 B.C., it follows that this book comprises a period of at least eighty years. An interval of fifty-six years, extending from the seventh year of Darius Hystaspis, in which the passover was celebrated after the dedication of the new temple (vi. 19-22), to the seventh of Artaxerxes, in which Ezra went up from Babylon (vii. 6), separates the events of the first part from those of the second. The narrative of the return of Ezra from Babylon in vii. 1 is nevertheless connected with the celebration of the passover under Darius by the usual formula of transition, "Now after these things," without further comment, because nothing had occurred in the intervening period which the author of the book felt it necessary, in conformity with the plan of his work, to communicate.

Even this cursory notice of its contents shows that the *object* of Ezra was not to give a history of the re-settlement in Judah and Jerusalem of the Jews liberated by Cyrus from the Babylonian captivity, nor to relate all the memorable events which took place from the departure and the arrival

in Judah of those who returned with Zerubbabel and Joshua, until his own return and his ministry in Jerusalem. For he tells us nothing at all of the journey of the first band of returning exiles, and so little concerning their arrival in Jerusalem and Judah, that this has merely a passing notice in the superscription of the list of their names; while at the close of this list he only mentions the voluntary gifts which they brought with them for the temple service, and then just remarks that they—the priests, Levites, people, etc.—dwelt in their cities (ii. 70). The following chapters (iii.–vi.), moreover, treat exclusively of the building of the altar of burnt-offering and the temple, the hindrances by which this building was delayed for years, and of the final removal of these hindrances, the continuation and completion of the building, and the dedication of the new temple, by means of which the tribe of Judah was enabled to carry on the worship of God according to the law, and to celebrate the festivals in the house of the Lord. In the second part, indeed, after giving the decree he had obtained from Artaxerxes, he speaks in a comparatively circumstantial manner of the preparations he made for his journey, of the journey itself, and of his arrival at Jerusalem; while he relates but a single incident of his proceedings there,—an incident, indeed, of the utmost importance with respect to the preservation of the returned community as a covenant people, viz. the dissolution of the marriages with Canaanites and other Gentile women, forbidden by the law, but contracted in the period immediately following his arrival at Jerusalem. Of his subsequent proceedings there we learn nothing further from his own writings, although the king had given him authority, “after the wisdom of his God, to set magistrates and judges” (vii. 25); while the book of Nehemiah testifies that he continued his ministry there for some years in conjunction with Nehemiah, who did not arrive till thirteen years later: comp. Neh. viii.–x. and xii. 36, 38.

Such being the nature of the contents of this book, it is evident that the *object* and *plan* of its author must have been



to collect only such facts and documents as might show the manner in which the Lord God, after the lapse of the seventy years of exile, fulfilled His promise announced by the prophets, by the deliverance of His people from Babylon, the building of the temple at Jerusalem, and the restoration of the temple worship according to the law, and preserved the re-assembled community from fresh relapses into heathen customs and idolatrous worship by the dissolution of the marriages with Gentile women. Moreover, the restoration of the temple and of the legal temple worship, and the separation of the heathen from the newly settled community, were necessary and indispensable conditions for the gathering out of the people of God from among the heathen, and for the maintenance and continued existence of the nation of Israel, to which and through which God might at His own time fulfil and realize His promises made to their forefathers, to make their seed a blessing to all the families of the earth, in a manner consistent both with His dealings with this people hitherto, and with the further development of His promises made through the prophets. The significance of the book of Ezra in sacred history lies in the fact that it enables us to perceive how the Lord, on the one hand, so disposed the hearts of the kings of Persia, the then rulers of the world, that in spite of all the machinations of the enemies of God's people, they promoted the building of His temple in Jerusalem, and the maintenance of His worship therein; and on the other, raised up for His people, when delivered from Babylon, men like Zerubbabel their governor, Joshua the high priest, and Ezra the scribe, who, supported by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, undertook the work to which they were called, with hearty resolution, and carried it out with a powerful hand.

## § 2. UNITY AND COMPOSITION OF THE BOOK OF EZRA.

Several modern critics (Zunz, Ewald, Bertheau, and others) have raised objections both to the single authorship and to the independent character of this book, and declared

it to be but a fragment of a larger work, comprising not only the book of Nehemiah, but that of Chronicles also. The section of this work which forms our canonical book of Ezra is said to have been composed and edited by some unknown author about 200 years after Ezra, partly from an older Chaldee history of the building of the temple and of the walls of Jerusalem, partly from a record drawn up by Ezra himself of his agency in Jerusalem, and from certain other public documents. The evidence in favour of this hypothesis is derived, first, from the fact that not only the official letters to the Persian kings, and their decrees (iv. 8-22, v. 6-17, vi. 6-12, vii. 12-26), but also a still longer section on the building of the temple (v. 23-vi. 18), are written in the Chaldee, and the remaining portions in the Hebrew language; next, from the diversity of its style, its lack of internal unity, and its want of finish; and, finally, from the circumstance that the book of Ezra had from of old been combined with that of Nehemiah as one book. These reasons, however, upon closer consideration, prove too weak to confirm this view. For, to begin with the historical testimony, Nägelsbach, in *Herzog's Realencycl.* iv. p. 166, justly finds it "incomprehensible" that Bertheau should appeal to the testimony of the Talmud, the Masora, the most ancient catalogues of Old Testament books in the Christian church, the Cod. Alexandr., the Cod. Friderico Aug., and the LXX., because the comprehension of the two books in one in these authorities is entirely owing to the Jewish mode of computing the books of the Old Testament. Even Josephus (*c. Ap.* i. 8) reckons twenty-two books, which he arranges, in a manner peculiar to himself, into five books of Moses, thirteen of the prophets, and four containing hymns to God and moral precepts for man; and Jerome says, in *Prol. Gal.*, that the Hebrews reckon twenty-two canonical books, whose names he cites, after the number of the letters of their alphabet, but then adds that some reckoned Ruth and Lamentations separately, thus making twenty-four, because the Rabbis distinguished between װ and ױ, and received a double Jod (װ) into the alphabet for the sake of including in



it the name יהוה, which when abbreviated is written י. The number twenty-four is also found in *Baba bathr.* fol. 14. Hence we also find these numbers and computations in the Fathers and in the resolutions of the councils, but with the express distinction of I. and II. Ezra. This distinction is not indeed mentioned in the Talmud; and *Baba bathr.*, l.c., says: *Esra scripsit librum suum et genealogias librorum Chron. usque ad sua tempora.* But what authority can there be in such testimony, which also declares Moses to have been the author not only of the Pentateuch, but also of the book of Job, and Samuel the author of the books of Judges, Ruth, and Samuel? The authority, too, of Cod. Alex. and Cod. Frid. Aug. is opposed to that of Cod. Vatic. and of the LXX., in which the books Ezra and Nehemiah are separated, as they likewise are in the Masoretic text, although the Masoretes regarded and reckoned both as forming but one book.<sup>1</sup> This mode of computation, however, affords no ground for the supposition that the books of Ezra and Nehemiah originally formed one work. For in this case we should be obliged to regard the books of the twelve minor prophets as the work of one author. If the number of books was to be reduced to twenty-two or twenty-four, it was necessary to combine smaller works of similar character. The single authorship of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah is most decidedly negatived, not only by the superscription of the latter book, דְּבַרֵי נְחֻמְיָה בֶּן־חַבְלָיָה, there being in the entire Old Testament no other instance of a single portion or section of a longer work being distinguished from its other portions by a similar superscription, with the name of the author; but also by the fact already brought forward in the introduction to Chronicles, p. 23, that no reason or motive whatever can

<sup>1</sup> Though Zunz and Ewald appeal also to the Greek book of Ezra, in which portions of Chronicles and of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are comprised, it is not really to be understood how any critical importance can be attributed to this apocryphal compilation. Besides, even if it possessed such importance, the circumstance that only the two last chapters of Chronicles, and only vii. 73–viii. 13 of Nehemiah, are comprised in it, says more against than in favour of the assumed single authorship of the three canonical books.

be perceived for a subsequent division of the historical work in question into three separate books, on account of its reception into the canon.

The contents, too, and the form of this book, present us with nothing incompatible either with its single authorship or independence. The use of the Chaldee tongue for the official documents of the Persian kings and their subordinates cannot surprise us, this being the official language in the provinces of the Persian empire west of the Euphrates, and as current with the returning Jews as their Hebrew mother tongue. It is true that the use of the Chaldee language is not in this book confined merely to official documents, but continued, iv. 8-22, in the narrative of the building of the temple down to the dedication of the rebuilt temple, iv. 23-vi. 18; and that the Hebrew is not employed again till from vi. 19 to the conclusion of the book, with the exception of vii. 12-26, where the commission given by Artaxerxes to Ezra is inserted in the Chaldee original. We also meet, however, with the two languages in the book of Daniel, chap. ii., where the Magi are introduced, ver. 4, as answering the king in Aramaic, and where not only their conversation with the monarch, but also the whole course of the event, is given in this dialect, which is again used chap. iii.-vii. Hence it has been attempted to account for the use of the Chaldee in the narrative portions of the book of Ezra, by the assertion that the historian, after quoting Chaldee documents, found it convenient to use this language in the narrative combined therewith, and especially because during its course he had to communicate other Chaldee documents (chap. v. 6-17 and vi. 3-12) in the original. But this explanation is not sufficient to solve the problem. Both here and in the book of Daniel, the use of the two languages has a really deeper reason; see § 14 sq. on Daniel. With respect to the book in question, this view is, moreover, insufficient; because, in the first place, the use of the Chaldee tongue does not begin with the communication of the Chaldee documents (iv. 11), but is used, ver. 8, in the paragraph which introduces them. And then, too, the narrator of the



Chaldee historical section, chap. v. 4, gives us to understand, by his use of the first person, "Then said *we* unto them," that he was a participator in the work of rebuilding the temple under Darius; and this, Ezra, who returned to Jerusalem at a much later period, and who relates his return (chap. vii. 27) in the first person, could not himself have been. These two circumstances show that the Chaldee section, iv. 8-vi. 18, was composed by an eye-witness of the occurrences it relates; that it came into the hands of Ezra when composing his own work, who, finding it adapted to his purpose as a record by one who was contemporary with the events he related, and a sharer in the building of the temple, included it in his own book with very slight alteration. The mention of Artachshasta, besides Coresh and Darjaves, in vi. 14, seems opposed to this view. But since neither Ezra, nor a later author of this book, contemporary with Darius Hystaspis, could cite the name of Artaxerxes as contributing towards the *building* of the temple, while the position of the name of Artaxerxes after that of Darius, as well as its very mention, contradicts the notion of a predecessor of King Darius, the insertion of this name in vi. 14 may be a later addition made by Ezra, in grateful retrospect of the splendid gifts devoted by Artaxerxes to the temple, for the purpose of associating him with the two monarchs whose favour rendered the rebuilding of the temple possible (see on vi. 14). In this case, the mention of Artaxerxes in the passage just cited, offers no argument against the above-mentioned view of the origin of the Chaldee section. Neither is any doubt cast upon the single authorship of the whole book by the notion that Ezra inserted in his book not only an authentic list of the returned families, chap. ii., but also a narrative of the building of the temple, composed in the Chaldee tongue by an eye-witness.

All the other arguments brought forward against the unity of this book are quite unimportant. The variations and discrepancies which Schrader, in his treatise on the duration of the second temple, in the *Theol. Studien u. Kritiken*, 1867, p. 460 sq., and in De Wette's *Einleitung*, 8th

edit. § 235, supposes he has discovered in the Chaldee section, first between chap. iv. 8-23 and v. 1-6, 14<sup>a</sup>, 15, on the one hand, and chap. iv. 24 on the other, and then between these passages and the remaining chapters of the first part, chap. i., iii., iv. 1, vii. 24, and chap. vi. 14<sup>b</sup>, 16-18, 19-22, can have no force of argument except for a criticism which confines its operations to the words and letters of the text of Scripture, because incapable of entering into its spiritual meaning. If the two public documents iv. 8-23 differ from what precedes and follows them, by the fact that they speak not of the building of the temple but of the building of the walls of Jerusalem, the reason may be either that the adversaries of the Jews brought a false accusation before King Artachshashta, and for the sake of more surely gaining their own ends, represented the building of the temple as a building of the fortifications, or that the complaint of their enemies and the royal decree really relate to the building of the walls, and that section iv. 8-23 is erroneously referred by expositors to the building of the temple. In either case there is no such discrepancy between these public documents and what precedes and follows them as to annul the single authorship of this Chaldee section; see the explanation of the passage. Still less does the circumstance that the narrative of the continuation and completion of the temple-building, v. 1-vi. 15, is in a simply historical style, and not interspersed with reflections or devotional remarks, offer any proof that the notice, iv. 24, "Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem, so it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia," and the information, vi. 16-18, that the Jews brought offerings at the dedication of the temple, and appointed priests and Levites in their courses for the service of God, cannot proceed from the same historian, who at the *building* of the temple says nothing of the offerings and ministrations of the priests and Levites. Still weaker, if possible, is the argument for different authorship derived from characteristic expressions, viz. that in iv. 8, 11, 23, v. 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 17, and vi. 1, 3, 12, 13, the Persian kings are simply called "the



king," and not "king of Persia," as they are designated by the historian in iv. 7, 24, and elsewhere. For a thoughtful reader will scarcely need to be reminded that, in a letter to the king, the designation king of Persia would be not only superfluous, but inappropriate, while the king in his answer would have still less occasion to call himself king of Persia, and that even the historian has in several places — *e.g.* v. 5, 6, vi. 1 and 13—omitted the addition "of Persia" when naming the king. Nor is there any force in the remark that in v. 13 Coresh is called king of Babylon. This epithet, *רִי בָבֶל*, would only be objected to by critics who either do not know or do not consider that Coresh was king of Persia twenty years before he became king of Babylon, or obtained dominion over the Babylonian empire. The title king of Persia would here be misleading, and the mere designation king inexact,—Cyrus having issued the decree for the rebuilding of the temple not in the first year of his reign or rule over Persia, but in the first year of his sway over Babylon.

In Part II. (chap. vii.–x.), which is connected with Part I. by the formula of transition *אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה*, it is not indeed found "striking" that the historian should commence his narrative concerning Ezra by simply relating his doings (vii. 1–10), his object being first to make the reader acquainted with the person of Ezra. It is also said to be easy to understand, that when the subsequent royal epistles are given, Ezra should be spoken of in the third person; that the transition to the first person should not be made until the thanksgiving to God (vii. 27); and that Ezra should then narrate his journey to and arrival at Jerusalem, and his energetic proceedings against the unlawful marriages, in his own words (chap. viii. and ix.). But it is said to be "striking," that in the account of this circumstance Ezra is, from ch. x. 1 onwards, again spoken of in the third person. This change of the person speaking is said to show that the second part of the book was not composed by Ezra himself, but that some other historian merely made use of a record by Ezra, giving it verbally in chap. viii. and ix., and in chap. vii. and x.

relating Ezra's return from Babylon, and the conclusion of the transaction concerning the unlawful marriages, in his own words, but with careful employment of the said record. This view, however, does not satisfactorily explain the transition from the first to the third person in the narrative. For what could have induced the historian, after giving Ezra's record verbally in chap. viii. and ix., to break off in the midst of Ezra's account of his proceedings against the unlawful marriages, and, instead of continuing the record, to relate the end of the transaction in his own words? Bertheau's solution of this question, that the author did this for the sake of brevity, is of no force; for chap. x. shows no trace of brevity, but, on the contrary, the progress and conclusion of the affair are related with the same circumstantiality and attention to details exhibited in its commencement in viii. and ix. To this must be added, that in other historical portions of the Old Testament, in which the view of different authorship is impossible, the narrator, as a person participating in the transaction, frequently makes the transition from the first to the third person, and *vice versa*. Compare, *e.g.*, Isa. vii. 1 sq. ("Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth," etc.) with viii. 1 ("Moreover, the Lord said unto me, Take thee a great roll," etc.); Jer. xx. 1-6, where Jeremiah relates of himself in the third person, that he had been smitten by Pashur, and had prophesied against him, with ver. 7 sq., where, without further explanation, he thus continues: "O Lord, Thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded;" or Jer. xxviii. 1 ("Hananiah . . . spake unto me . . . the Lord said to me") with ver. 5 ("Then the prophet Jeremiah said to the prophet Hananiah"), and also ver. 6; while in the verse (7) immediately following, Jeremiah writes, "Hear thou now this word which I speak in thine ears." As Jeremiah, when here narrating circumstances of his own ministry, suddenly passes from the third to the first person, and then immediately returns to the third; so, too, might Ezra, after speaking (vii. 1-10) of his return to Jerusalem in the third person, proceed with a subsequent more circumstantial description of his journey to and arrival



at Jerusalem, and narrate his acts and proceedings there in the first person (chap. viii. and ix.), and then, after giving his prayer concerning the iniquity of his people (chap. ix.), take up the objective form of speech in his account of what took place in consequence of this prayer; and instead of writing, "Now when I had prayed," etc., continue, "Now when Ezra had prayed," and maintain this objective form of statement to the end of chap. x. Thus a change of author cannot be proved by a transition in the narrative from the first to the third person. As little can this be inferred from the remark (vii. 6) that "Ezra was a ready scribe in the law of Moses," by which his vocation, and the import of his return to Jerusalem, are alluded to immediately after the statement of his genealogy.

The reasons, then, just discussed are not of such a nature as to cast any real doubt upon the single authorship of this book; and modern criticism has been unable to adduce any others. Neither is its independence impeached by the circumstance that it breaks off "unexpectedly" at chap. x., without relating Ezra's subsequent proceedings at Jerusalem, although at chap. vii. 10 it is said not only that "Ezra had prepared his heart . . . to teach in Israel statutes and judgments," but also that Artaxerxes in his edict (vii. 12-26) commissioned him to uphold the authority of the law of God as the rule of action; nor by the fact that in Neh. viii.-x. we find Ezra still a teacher of the law, and that these very chapters form the necessary complement of the notices concerning Ezra in the book of Ezra (Bertheau). For though the narrative in Neh. viii.-x. actually does complete the history of Ezra's ministry, it by no means follows that the book of Ezra is incomplete, and no independent work at all, but only a portion of a larger book, because it does not contain this narrative. For what justifies the assumption that "Ezra purposed to give an account of all that he effected at Jerusalem?" The whole book may be sought through in vain for a single peg on which to hang such a theory. To impute such an intention to Ezra, and to infer that, because his ministry is spoken of in the book of Nehemiah also, the

book of Ezra is but a fragment, we should need far more weighty arguments in proof of the single authorship of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah than the defenders of this hypothesis are able to bring forward. In respect of diction, nothing further has been adduced than that the expression *בְּיַד אֱלֹהֵי עָלִי*, so frequently recurring in Ezra (Ezra vii. 28; compare vii. 6, 9, viii. 18, 22, 31), is also once found in Nehemiah (ii. 8). But the single occurrence of this one expression, common to himself and Ezra, in the midst of the very peculiar diction and style of Nehemiah, is not the slightest proof of the original combination of the two books; and Neh. ii. 8 simply shows that Nehemiah appropriated words which, in his intercourse with Ezra, he had heard from his lips.—With respect to other instances in which the diction and matter are common to the books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, we have already shown, in the introduction to Chronicles, that they are too trifling to establish an identity of authorship in the case of these three books; and at the same time remarked that the agreement between the closing verses of Chronicles and the beginning of Ezra does but render it probable that Ezra may have been the author of the former book also.

### § 3. COMPOSITION AND HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF THE BOOK OF EZRA.

If this book is a single one, *i.e.* the work of one author, there can be no reasonable doubt that that author was Ezra, the priest and scribe, who in chap. vii.—x. narrates his return from Babylon to Jerusalem, and the circumstances of his ministry there, neither its language nor contents exhibiting any traces of a later date. Its historical character, too, was universally admitted until Schrader, in his before-named treatise, p. 399, undertook to dispute it with respect to the first part of this book. The proofs he adduced were, first, that the statement made by the author, who lived 200 years after the building of the temple, in this book, *i.e.* in the chronicle of the foundation of the temple in the second



year after the return from Babylon, concerning the cessation of the building till the second year of Darius, and its resumption in that year, is unhistorical, and rests only upon the insufficiently confirmed assumption that the exiles, penetrated as they were with ardent love for their hereditary religion, full of joy that their deliverance from Babylon was at last effected, and of heartfelt gratitude to God, should have suffered fifteen years to elapse before they set to work to raise the national sanctuary from its ruins; secondly, that the accounts both of the rearing of the altar, iii. 2 and 3, and of the proceedings at laying the foundations of the temple, together with the names, dates, and other seemingly special details found in chap. iii., iv. 1-5, 24, vi. 14, are not derived from ancient historical narratives, but are manifestly due to the imagination of the chronicler drawing upon the documents given in the book of Ezra, upon other books of the Old Testament, and upon his own combinations thereof. This whole argument, however, rests upon the assertion, that neither in Ezra v. 2 and 16, in Hagg. i. 2, 4, 8, 14, ii. 12, nor in Zech. i. 16, iv. 9, vi. 12, 13, viii. 9, is the resumption of the temple building in the second year of the reign of Darius spoken of, but that, on the contrary, the laying of its foundations in the said year of Darius is in some of these passages assumed, in others distinctly stated. Such a conclusion can, however, only be arrived at by a misconception of the passages in question. When it is said, Ezra v. 2, "Then (*i.e.* when the prophets Haggai and Zechariah prophesied) rose up Zerubbabel and Jeshua . . . and began to build the house of God" (שָׂרְיָו לְמִבְנֵיָא), there is no need to insist that בָּנָא often signifies to rebuild, but the word may be understood strictly of beginning to build. And this accords with the fact, that while in chap. iii. and iv. nothing is related concerning the building of the temple, whose foundations were laid in the second year of the return, it is said that immediately after the foundations were laid the Samaritans came and desired to take part in the building of the temple, and that when their request was refused, they weakened the hands of the people, and deterred them from

building (iv. 1-5). Schrader can only establish a discrepancy between v. 2 and chap. iii. and iv. by confounding building with foundation-laying, two terms which neither in Hebrew nor German have the same signification. Still less can it be inferred from the statement of the Jewish elders (Ezra v. 16), when questioned by Tatnai and his companions as to who had commanded them to build the temple, "Then came the same Sheshbazzar and laid the foundation of the house of God, which is in Jerusalem, *and since that time even until now hath it been in building*," that the building of the temple proceeded *without intermission* from the laying of its foundations under Cyrus till the second year of Darius. For can we be justified in the supposition that the Jewish elders would furnish Tatnai with a detailed statement of matters for the purpose of informing him what had been done year by year, and, by thus enumerating the hindrances which had for an interval put a stop to the building, afford the Persian officials an excuse for consequently declaring the question of resuming the building non-suited? For Tatnai made no inquiry as to the length of time the temple had been in building, or whether this had been going on uninterruptedly, but only who had authorized them to build; and the Jewish elders replied that King Cyrus had commanded the building of the temple, and delivered to Sheshbazzar, whom he made governor, the sacred vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away to Babylon, whereupon Sheshbazzar had begun the work of building which had been going on from then till now. Moreover, Schrader himself seems to have felt that not much could be proved from Ezra v. 2 and 16. Hence he seeks to construct the chief support of his theory from the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah. In this attempt, however, he shows so little comprehension of prophetic diction, that he expounds Haggai's reproofs of the indifference of the people in building the temple, Hagg. i. 2, 4, 8, as stating that as yet nothing had been done, not even the foundations laid; transforms the words, Hagg. i. 14, "they came and did work in the house of the Lord" (יָעֲשׂוּ מִלְאָכָה בְּב'), into "they began to build;"



makes Hagg. ii. 18, by a tautological view of the words לָמָן הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִסָּד, mean that the foundations of the temple were not laid till the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of the second year of Darius (see the true meaning of the passage in the commentary on Haggai); and finally, explains the prophecies of Zechariah (i. 16, iv. 9, vi. 12, viii. 9) concerning the rearing of a spiritual temple by Messiah as applying to the temple of wood and stone actually erected by Zerubbabel. By such means he arrives at the result that "neither does the Chaldee section of Ezra (chap. v.), including the official documents, say anything of a foundation of the temple in the second year after the return from Babylon; nor do the contemporary prophets Haggai and Zechariah make any mention of this earlier foundation in their writings, but, on the contrary, place the foundation in the second year of Darius: that, consequently, the view advocated by the author of the book of Ezra, that the building of the temple began in the days of Cyrus, and immediately after the return of the exiles, is wholly without documentary proof." This result he seeks further to establish by collecting all the words, expressions, and matters (such as sacrifices, Levites, priests, etc.) in Ezra iii. and iv. and vi. 16-22, to which parallels may be found in the books of Chronicles, for the sake of drawing from them the further conclusion that "the chronicler," though he did not indeed invent the facts related in Ezra iii. 1-4, v., and vi. 16-22, combined them from the remaining chapters of the book of Ezra, and from other books of the Old Testament,—a conclusion in which the chief stress is placed upon the supposed fact that the chronicler was sufficiently known to have been a compiler and maker up of history. Such handling of Scripture can, however, in our days no longer assume the guise of "scientific criticism;" this kind of critical produce, by which De Wette and his follower Gramberg endeavoured to gain notoriety sixty years ago, having long been condemned by theological science. Nor can the historical character of this book be shaken by such frivolous objections. Three events of fundamental importance to the restoration and continuance of Israel as a separate

people among the other nations of the earth are contained in it, viz.: (1) The release of the Jews and Israelites from the Babylonian captivity by Cyrus; (2) The re-settlement in Judah and Jerusalem, with the rebuilding of the temple; (3) The ordering of the re-settled flock according to the law of Moses, by Ezra. The actual occurrence of these three events is raised above all doubt by the subsequent historical development of the Jews in their own land; and the narrative of the manner in which this development was rendered possible and brought to pass, possesses as complete documentary authentication, in virtue of the communication of the official acts of the Persian kings Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes,—acts of which the whole contents are given after the manner, so to speak, of State papers,—as any fact of ancient history. The historical narrative, in fact, does but furnish a brief explanation of the documents and edicts which are thus handed down.

For the exegetical literature, see *Lehrb. der Einleitung*, p. 455; to which must be added, E. Bertheau, *die Bücher Esra, Nehemia, und Ester erkl.*, Lpz. (being the seventeenth number of the *kurzgef. exeget. Handbuchs zum A. T.*).



## EXPOSITION

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### I.—THE RETURN OF THE JEWS FROM BABYLON UNDER CYRUS. RESTORATION OF THE TEMPLE AND OF THE WORSHIP OF GOD AT JERUSALEM.—CHAP. I.—VI.



WHEN the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity had elapsed, King Cyrus, by an edict published in the first year of his rule over Babylon, gave permission to all the Jews in his whole realm to return to their native land, and called upon them to rebuild the temple of God at Jerusalem. The execution of this royal and gracious decree by the Jews forms the subject of the first part of this book,—chap. i. and ii. treating of the return of a considerable number of families of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, under the conduct of Zerubbabel the prince and Joshua the high priest, to Jerusalem and Judæa; the remaining chapters, iii.—vi., of the restoration of the worship of God, and of the rebuilding of the temple.

#### CHAP. I.—THE EDICT OF CYRUS, THE DEPARTURE FROM BABYLON, THE RESTITUTION OF THE SACRED VESSELS.

In the first year of his rule over Babylon, Cyrus king of Persia proclaimed throughout his whole kingdom, both by voice and writing, that the God of heaven had commanded him to build His temple at Jerusalem, and called upon the Jews living in exile to return to Jerusalem, and to build there the house of the God of Israel. At the same time, he exhorted all his subjects to facilitate by gifts the journey of

the Jews dwelling in their midst, and to assist by free-will offerings the building of the temple (1-4). In consequence of this royal decree, those Jews whose spirit God had raised up prepared for their return, and received from their neighbours gifts and free-will offerings (5 and 6). Cyrus, moreover, delivered to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah, the vessels of the temple which Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Vers. 1-4. *The edict of Cyrus.*—Ver. 1. The opening word, “*And in the first year,*” etc., is to be explained by the circumstance that what is here recorded forms also, in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22 and 23, the conclusion of the history of the kingdom of Judah at its destruction by the Chaldeans, and is transferred thence to the beginning of the history of the restoration of the Jews by Cyrus. כּוֹרֶשׁ is the Hebraized form of the ancient Persian Kurus, as *Kûpos*, Cyrus, is called upon the monuments, and is perhaps connected with the Indian title Kuru; see Delitzsch on Isa. xlv. 28. The first year of Cyrus is the first year of his rule over Babylon and the Babylonian empire.<sup>1</sup> פָּרַם—in the better editions, such as that of Norzi and J. H. Mich., with Pathach under ר, and only pointed פָּרַם with a graver pause, as with Silluk, iv. 3, in the cuneiform inscriptions Pâraça—signifies in biblical phraseology the Persian empire; comp. Dan. v. 28, vi. 9, etc. לְבָלוֹת, that the word of Jahve might come to an end. בָּלָה, to be completed, 2 Chron. xxix. 34. The word of the Lord is completed when its fulfilment takes place; hence in the Vulg. *ut compleretur*, i.e. לְמַלְאוֹת, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. Here, however, בָּלוֹת is more appropriate, because the notion of the lapse or termination of the seventy years predominates. The statement of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. xxv. 11, etc., xxix. 10; comp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21) concerning the desolation and servitude of Judah is here intended. These seventy years commenced with the first taking of Jerusalem by

<sup>1</sup> *Duplex fuit initium, Cyri Persarum regis; prius Persicum, idque antiquius, posterius Babylonicum. de quo Hesdras; quia dum Cyrus in Perside tantum regnaret, regnum ejus ad Judæos, qui in Babylonia erant, nihil adtinuit.*—Cleric. ad Esr. i. 1.



Nebuchadnezzar, when Daniel and other youths of the seed-royal were carried to Babylon (Dan. i. 1, 2) in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim; see the explanation of Dan. i. 1. This year was the year 606 B.C.; hence the seventy years terminate in 536 B.C., the first year of the sole rule of Cyrus over the Babylonian empire. Then "Jahve stirred up the spirit of Coresh," *i.e.* moved him, made him willing; comp. with this expression, 1 Chron. v. 26 and Hagg. i. 14. וַיַּעֲבֵר קוֹל, "he caused a voice to go forth," *i.e.* he proclaimed by heralds; comp. Ex. xxxvi. 6, 2 Chron. xxx. 5, etc. With this is zeugmatically combined the subsequent וַיִּבְרָא, so that the general notion of proclaiming has to be taken from וַיַּעֲבֵר קוֹל, and supplied before these words. The sense is: he proclaimed throughout his whole realm by heralds, and also by written edicts.

Ver. 2. The proclamation—"Jahve the God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah"—corresponds with the edicts of the great kings of Persia preserved in the cuneiform inscriptions, inasmuch as these, too, usually begin with the acknowledgment that they owe their power to the god Ahuramazdâ (Ormuzd), the creator of heaven and earth.<sup>1</sup> In this edict, however, Cyrus expressly calls the God of heaven by His Israelitish name Jahve, and speaks of a commission from this God to build Him a temple at Jerusalem. Hence it is manifest that Cyrus consciously entered into the purposes of Jahve, and sought, as far as he was concerned, to fulfil them. Bertheau thinks, on the contrary, that it is impossible to dismiss the conjecture that our historian, guided by an uncertain tradition, and induced by his own historical prepossessions,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. *e.g.* the inscription of Elvend in three languages, explained in Joach. Ménant, *Exposé des éléments de la grammaire assyrienne*, Paris 1868, p. 302, whose Aryan text begins thus: *Deus magnus Auramazdâ, qui maximus deorum, qui hanc terram creavit, qui hoc cælum creavit, qui homines creavit, qui potentiam (?) dedit hominibus, qui Xerxem regem fecit*, etc. An inscription of Xerxes begins in a similar manner, according to Lassen, in *Die altpersischen Keilinschriften*, Bonn 1836, p. 172.

remodelled the edict of Cyrus. There is, however, no sufficient foundation for such a conjecture. If the first part of the book of Ezra is founded upon contemporary records of the events, this forbids an *à priori* assertion that the matter of the proclamation of Cyrus rests upon an uncertain tradition, and, on the contrary, presupposes that the historian had accurate knowledge of its contents. Hence, even if the thoroughly Israelitish stamp presented by these verses can afford no support to the view that they faithfully report the contents of the royal edict, it certainly offers as little proof for the opinion that the Israelite historian remodelled the edict of Cyrus after an uncertain tradition, and from historical prepossessions. Even Bertheau finds the fact that Cyrus should have publicly made known by a written edict the permission given to the Jews to depart, probable in itself, and corroborated by the reference to such an edict in chap. v. 17 and vi. 3. This edict of Cyrus, which was deposited in the house of the rolls in the fortress of Achmetha, and still existed there in the reign of Darius Hystaspis, contained, however, not merely the permission for the return of the Jews to their native land, but, according to vi. 3, the command of Cyrus to build the house of God at Jerusalem; and Bertheau himself remarks on chap. vi. 3, etc.: "There is no reason to doubt the correctness of the statement that Cyrus, at the time he gave permission for the re-settlement of the community, also commanded the expenses of rebuilding the temple to be defrayed from the public treasury." To say this, however, is to admit the historical accuracy of the actual contents of the edict, since it is hence manifest that Cyrus, of his own free will, not only granted to the Jews permission to return to the land of their fathers, but also commanded the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem. Although, then, this edict was composed, not in Hebrew, but in the current language of the realm, and is reproduced in this book only in a Hebrew translation, and although the occurrence of the name Jahve therein is not corroborated by chap. vi. 3, yet these two circumstances by no means justify Bertheau's conclusion, that "if Cyrus in this edict called



the universal dominion of which he boasted a gift of the god whom he worshipped as the creator of heaven and earth, the Israelite translator, who could not designate this god by his Persian name, and who was persuaded that the God of Israel had given the kingdom to Cyrus, must have bestowed upon the supreme God, whom Cyrus mocked, the name of Jahve, the God of heaven. When, then, it might further have been said in the document, that Cyrus had resolved, not without the consent of the supreme God, to provide for the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem,—and such a reference to the supreme God might well occur in the announcement of a royal resolution in a decree of Cyrus,—the Israelite translator could not again but conclude that Cyrus referred to Jahve, and that Jahve had commanded him to provide for the building of the temple.” For if Cyrus found himself impelled to the resolution of building a temple to the God of heaven in Jerusalem, *i.e.* of causing the temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar to be rebuilt, he must have been acquainted with this God, have conceived a high respect for Him, and have honoured Him as the God of heaven. It was not possible that he should arrive at such a resolution by faith in Ahuramazdâ, but only by means of facts which had inspired him with reverence for the God of Israel. It is this consideration which bestows upon the statement of Josephus, *Antt.* xi. 1. 1,—that Cyrus was, by means of the predictions of Isaiah, chap. xli. 25 sq., xlv. 28, xlv. 1 sq., who had prophesied of him by name 200 years before, brought to the conviction that the God of the Jews was the Most High God, and was on this account impelled to this resolution,—so high a degree of probability that we cannot but esteem its essence as historical. For when we consider the position held by Daniel at the court of Darius the Mede, the father-in-law of Cyrus,—that he was there elevated to the rank of one of the three presidents set over the 120 satraps of the realm, placed in the closest relation with the king, and highly esteemed by him (*Dan.* vi.),—we are perfectly justified in adopting the opinion that Cyrus had been made acquainted with the God of the Jews, and with the prophecies of Isaiah

concerning Coresh, by Daniel.<sup>1</sup> Granting, then, that the edict of Cyrus may have been composed in the current language of the realm, and not rendered word for word in Hebrew by the biblical author of the present narrative, its essential contents are nevertheless faithfully reproduced; and there are not sufficient grounds even for the view that the God who had inspired Cyrus with this resolution was in the royal edict designated only as the God of heaven, and not expressly called Jahve. Why may not Cyrus have designated the God of heaven, to whom as the God of the Jews he had resolved to build a temple in Jerusalem, also by His name Jahve? According to polytheistic notions, the worship of this God might be combined with the worship of Ahuramazdâ as the supreme God of the Persians. — On 'פָּקַד עָלַי וְגו', J. H. Mich. well remarks: *Mandavit mihi, nimirum dudum ante per Jesajam xliv. 24–28, xlv. 1–13, forte etiam per Danielelem, qui annum hunc Cyri primum vivendo attigit* (Dan. i. 21, vi. 29) *et Susis in Perside vixit chap. viii. 2* (in saying which, he only infers too much from the last passage; see on Dan. viii. 2).

Ver. 3. In conformity with the command of God, Cyrus not only invites the Jews to return to Jerusalem, and to rebuild the temple, but also requires all his subjects to assist the returning Jews, and to give free-will offerings for the

<sup>1</sup> Hence not only ancient expositors, but also in very recent times Pressel (*Herzog's Realencycl.* iii. p. 232), and A. Koehler, *Haggai*, p. 9, etc., defend the statement of Josephus, *l.c.*, ταῦτ' (viz. the previously quoted prophecy, Isa. xlv. 28) οὐκ ἀναγνόντα καὶ θαυμάσαντα τὸ θεῖον ὁρμήτις ἔλαβε καὶ φιλοτιμία ποιῆσαι τὰ γεγραμμένα, as historically authentic. Pressel remarks, "that Holy Scripture shows what it was that made so favourable an impression upon Cyrus, by relating the rôle played by Daniel at the overthrow of the Babylonian monarchy, Dan. v. 28, 30. What wonder was it that the fulfiller of this prediction should have felt himself attracted towards the prophet who uttered it, and should willingly restore the vessels which Belshazzar had that night committed the sin of polluting?" etc. The remark of Bertheau, on the contrary, "that history knows of no Cyrus who consciously and voluntarily honours Jahve the God of Israel, and consciously and voluntarily receives and executes the commands of this God," is one of the arbitrary dicta of neological criticism.



temple. **מִי בְכֶם**, who among you of all his people, refers to all those subjects of his realm to whom the decree was to be made known; and all the people of Jahve is the whole nation of Israel, and not Judah only, although, according to ver. 5, it was mainly those only who belonged to Judah that availed themselves of this royal permission. **יְהִי אֱלֹהֵי עָמִי**, his God be with him, is a wish for a blessing: comp. Josh. i. 17; 1 Esdras ii. 5, ἔστω; while in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23 we find, on the other hand, **יְהוָה** for **יְהִי**. This wish is followed by the summons to go up to Jerusalem and to build the temple, the reason for which is then expressed by the sentence, “He is the God which is in Jerusalem.”

Ver. 4. **וְכָל-הַנְּשָׂאָר וְגו'** are all belonging to the people of God in the provinces of Babylon, all the captives still living: comp. Neh. i. 2 sq.; Hagg. ii. 3. These words stand first in an absolute sense, and **מִכָּל-הַמְּקוֹמוֹת וְגו'** belongs to what follows: In all places where he (*i.e.* each man) sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with gold, etc. The men of his place are the non-Israelite inhabitants of the place. **נִשְׂאָ**, to assist, like 1 Kings ix. 1. **רְכוּשׁ** specified, besides gold, silver, and cattle, means moveable, various kinds. **עִם-הַנְּדָבָה**, with, besides the free-will offering, *i.e.* as well as the same, and is therefore supplied in ver. 6 by **לְבָר עַל**. Free-will offerings for the temple might also be gold, silver, and vessels: comp. viii. 28; Ex. xxxv. 21.

Vers. 5 and 6. In consequence of this royal summons, the heads of the houses of Judah and Benjamin, of the priests and Levites,—in short, all whose spirit God stirred up,—rose to go up to build the house of God. The **לְ** in **לְבָר** serves to comprise the remaining persons, and may therefore be rendered by, in short, or namely; comp. Ewald, § 310, *a*. The relative sentence then depends upon **כָּל** without **אִשָּׁר**. The thought is: All the Jews were called upon to return, but those only obeyed the call whom God made willing to build the temple at Jerusalem, *i.e.* whom the religious craving of their hearts impelled thereto. For, as Josephus says, *Antt.* xi. 1: πολλοὶ κατέμειναν ἐν τῇ Βαβυλῶνι, τὰ κτήματα καταλιπεῖν οὐ θέλοντες.—Ver. 6. All their surrounders assisted them with

gifts. The surrounders are the people of the places where Jews were making preparations for returning; chiefly, therefore, their heathen neighbours (ver. 4), but also those Jews who remained in Babylon. **הָיוּקוּ בְיָדֵיהֶם** is not identical in meaning with **יָרָהוּק**, to strengthen, *e.g.* Jer. xxiii. 14, Neh. ii. 18; but with **הִחְזִיק בְּיָד**, the Piel here standing instead of the elsewhere usual Hiphil: to grasp by the hand, *i.e.* to assist; comp. Lev. xxv. 34. **לִבְדָּ עַל**, separated to, besides; elsewhere joined with **מֵן**, Ex. xii. 37, etc. **הִתְנַיֵּב** connected with **כָּל** without **אֲשֶׁר**, as the *verbum fin.* in ver. 5, 1 Chron. xxix. 3, and elsewhere. **לְבֵית הָאֱלֹהִים** must, according to ver. 4, be supplied mentally; comp. ii. 68, iii. 5, 1 Chron. xxix. 9, 17.

Vers. 7–10. King Cyrus, moreover, caused those sacred vessels of the temple which had been carried away by Nebuchadnezzar to be brought forth, and delivered them by the hand of his treasurer to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah, for the use of the house of God which was about to be built. **הוֹצִיא**, to fetch out from the royal treasury. The “vessels of the house of Jahve” are the gold and silver vessels of the temple which Nebuchadnezzar, at the first taking of Jerusalem in the reign of Jehoiakim, carried away to Babylon, and lodged in the treasure-house of his god (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7 and Dan. i. 2). For those which he took at its second conquest were broken up (2 Kings xxiv. 13); and the other gold and silver goods which, as well as the large brazen implements, were taken at the third conquest, and the destruction of the temple (2 Kings xxv. 14 sq.; Jer. lii. 18 sq.), would hardly have been preserved by the Chaldeans, but rather made use of as valuable booty. —Ver. 8. Cyrus delivered these vessels **עַל יָד**, into the hand of the treasurer, to whose care they were entrusted; *i.e.* placed them under his inspection, that they might be faithfully restored. **מִתְרַדָּת** is Mithridates. **נֹזֶבֶר**, answering to the Zend *gazabara*, means treasurer (see com. on Dan. p. 45, note 1). This officer counted them out to the prince of Judah Sheshbazzar, undoubtedly the Chaldee name of Zerubbabel. For, according to v. 14, 16, **שֵׁשֶׁבַצַּר** was the governor (**פָּחָה**) placed



by Cyrus over the new community in Judah and Jerusalem, and who, according to ver. 11 of the present chapter, returned to Jerusalem at the head of those who departed from Babylon; while we are informed (chap. ii. 2, iii. 1, 8, and iv. 3, v. 2) that Zerubbabel was not only at the head of the returning Jews, but also presided as secular ruler over the settlement of the community in Judah and Jerusalem. The identity of Sheshbazzar with Zerubbabel, which has been objected to by Schrader and Nöldeke, is placed beyond a doubt by a comparison of v. 16 with iii. 8, etc., v. 2: for in v. 16 Sheshbazzar is named as he who laid the foundation of the new temple in Jerusalem; and this, according to v. 2 and iii. 8, was done by Zerubbabel. The view, too, that Zerubbabel, besides this his Hebrew name, had, as the official of the Persian king, also a Chaldee name, is in complete analogy with the case of Daniel and his three companions, who, on being taken into the service of the Babylonian king, received Chaldee names (Dan. i. 7). Zerubbabel, moreover, seems, even before his appointment of פֶּהָה to the Jewish community in Judah, to have held some office in either the Babylonian or Persian Court or State; for Cyrus would hardly have entrusted this office to any private individual among the Jews. The meaning of the word שֶׁשְׁבַצָּר is not yet ascertained: in the LXX. it is written Σασαβασάρ, Σαβαχασάρ, and Σαναβύσσαρος; 1 Esdras has Σαμανασσάρ, or, according to better mss., Σαναβασσάρ; and Josephus, *l.c.*, Ἀβασσάρ.—Vers. 9-11. The enumeration of the vessels: 1. אֲנִרְטָלִים of gold 30, and of silver 1000. The word occurs only here, and is translated in the Septuagint ψυκτῆρες; in 1 Esdr. ii. 11, σπονδεῖα. The Talmudic explanation of Aben Ezra, “vessels for collecting the blood of the sacrificed lambs,” is derived from אָנַר, to collect, and טֶלֶה, a lamb, but is certainly untenable. אֲנִרְטָלִים is probably connected with <sup>אֲנִרְטָלִים</sup>قُرْطَالَة, the rabbinical קֶרְטַל, the Syriac ܩܪܬܐܠܐ, the Greek κάρταλλος or κάρταλος, a basket (according to Suidas), κάρταλος having no etymology in Greek; but can hardly be derived, as by Meier, *hebr. Wurzelwörterbuch*, p. 683, from the Syriac

נִדְּבָה, *nudavit*, to make bare, the Arabic عَرَّطَ, to make empty, to hollow, with the sense of hollow basins. 2. מַחֲלָפִים 29. This word also occurs only here. The Sept. has παραλλαγμένα (interpreting etymologically after חָלַף), 1 Esdr. θύσσαι, the Vulg. *cultri*, sacrificial knives, according to the rabbinical interpretation, which is based upon חָלַף, in the sense of to pierce, to cut through (Judg. v. 26; Job xx. 24). This meaning is, however, certainly incorrect, being based linguistically upon a mere conjecture, and not even offering an appropriate sense, since we do not expect to find knives between vessels and dishes. Ewald (*Gesch.* iv. p. 88), from the analogy of מַחֲלָפֹת (Judg. xvi. 13, 19), plaits, supposes vessels ornamented with plaited or net work; and Bertheau, vessels bored after the manner of a grating for censuring, closed fire-pans with holes and slits. All is, however, uncertain. 3. כַּפֹּרִים, goblets (goblets with covers; comp. 1 Chron. xv. 18) of gold, 30; and of silver, 410. The word מִשְׁנֵים is obscure; connected with כַּפֹּרִי כֶסֶף it can only mean goblets of a second order (comp. 1 Chron. xv. 18). Such an addition appears, however, superfluous; the notion of a second order or class being already involved in their being of silver, when compared with the golden goblets. Hence Bertheau supposes מִשְׁנֵים to be a numeral corrupted by a false reading; and the more so, because the sum-total given in ver. 11 seems to require a larger number than 410. These reasons, however, are not insuperable. The notion of a second order of vessels need not lie in their being composed of a less valuable metal, but may also be used to define the sort of implement; and the difference between the separate numbers and the sum-total is not perfectly reconciled by altering מִשְׁנֵים into אֲלָפִים, 2000. 4. 1000 other vessels or implements.

Ver. 11. "All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred." But only 30 + 1000 אֲנִרְטָלִים, 29 מַחֲלָפִים, 30 + 410 covered goblets, and 1000 other vessels are enumerated, making together 2499. The same numbers are found in the LXX. Ancient interpreters reconciled



the difference by the supposition that in the separate statements only the larger and more valuable vessels are specified, while in the sum-total the greater and lesser are reckoned together. This reconciliation of the discrepancy is, however, evidently arbitrary, and cannot be justified by a reference to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18, where the taking away of the greater and lesser vessels of the temple at the destruction of Jerusalem is spoken of. In ver. 11 it is indisputably intended to give the sum-total according to the enumeration of the separate numbers. The difference between the two statements has certainly arisen from errors in the numbers, for the correction of which the means are indeed wanting. The error may be supposed to exist in the sum-total, where, instead of 5400, perhaps 2500 should be read, which sum may have been named in round numbers instead of 2499.<sup>1</sup> עַם הָעֵלֹת הַנּוֹלָה, at the bringing up of the carried away, *i.e.* when they were brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem. The infinitive Niphal הָעֵלֹת, with a passive signification, occurs also Jer. xxxvii. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Ewald (*Gesch.* iv. p. 88) and Bertheau think they find in 1 Esdr. ii. 12, 13, a basis for ascertaining the correct number. In this passage 1000 golden and 1000 silver σπονδεῖα, 29 silver θυσίαι, 30 golden and 2410 silver φιάλαι, and 1000 other vessels, are enumerated ( $1000 + 1000 + 29 + 30 + 2410 + 1000 = 5469$ ); while the total is said to be 5469. But 1000 golden σπονδεῖα bear no proportion to 1000 silver, still less do 30 golden φιάλαι to 2410 silver. Hence Bertheau is of opinion that the more definite statement 30, of the Hebrew text, is to be regarded as original, instead of the first 1000; that, on the other hand, instead of the 30 golden כַּפֹּרִים, 1000 originally stood in the text, making the total 5469. Ewald thinks that we must read 1030 instead of 1000 golden אֲנִרְטָלִים (σπονδεῖα), and make the total 5499. In opposition to these conjectures, we prefer abiding by the Hebrew text; for the numbers of 1 Esdras are evidently the result of an artificial, yet unskillful reconciliation of the discrepancy. It cannot be inferred, from the fact that Ezra subsequently, at his return to Jerusalem, brought with him 20 golden כַּפֹּרִים, that the number of 30 such כַּפֹּרִים given in this passage is too small.

CHAP. II.—LIST OF THOSE WHO RETURNED FROM BABYLON  
WITH ZERUBBABEL AND JOSHUA.

The title (vers. 1 and 2) announces that the list which follows it (vers. 3-67) contains the number of the men of the people of Israel who returned to Jerusalem and Judah from the captivity in Babylon, under the conduct of Zerubbabel, Joshua, and other leaders. It is composed of separate lists: of the families of the people, 3-35; of the priests and Levites, 36-42; of the Nethinims and servants of Solomon, 43-58; of families who could not prove their Israelite descent, and of certain priests whose genealogy could not be found, 59-63; and it closes with the sum-total of the persons, and of their beasts of burden, 64-67. This is followed by an enumeration of the gifts which they brought with them for the temple (vers. 68 and 69), and by a final statement with regard to the entire list (ver. 70). Nehemiah also, when he desired to give a list of the members of the community at Jerusalem, met with the same document, and incorporated it in the book which bears his name (chap. vii. 6-73). It is also contained in 1 Esdr. v. 7-45. The three texts, however, exhibit in the names, and still more so in the numbers, such variations as involuntarily arise in transcribing long lists of names and figures. The sum-total of 42,360 men and 7337 servants and maids is alike in all three texts; but the addition of the separate numbers in the Hebrew text of Ezra gives only 29,818, those in Nehemiah 31,089, and those in the Greek Esdras 30,143 men. In our elucidation of the list, we shall chiefly have respect to the differences between the texts of Ezra and Nehemiah, and only notice the variations in 1 Esdras so far as they may appear to conduce to a better understanding of the matter of our text.

Vers. 1 and 2. *The title.*—"These are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of the carrying away (*i.e.* of those which had been carried away), whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, every



one to his city." In Neh. vii. 6 לְבָבֶל is omitted, through an error of transcription caused by the preceding בָּבֶל; and וְלִיהוּדָה stands instead of וְלִיהוּדָה, which does not, however, affect the sense. הַמְּדִינָה is the province whose capital was Jerusalem (Neh. xi. 3), *i.e.* the province of Judæa as a district of the Persian empire; so v. 8, Neh. i. 2. The *Chethiv* נְבוּכַדְרֶזֶז is similar to the form Nebucadrezor, Jer. xlix. 28, and is nearer to the Babylonian form of this name than the usual biblical forms *Nebucadnezzar* or *Nebucadrezzar*. For further remarks on the various forms of this name, see on Dan. i. 1. They returned "each to his city," *i.e.* to the city in which he or his ancestors had dwelt before the captivity. Bertheau, on the contrary, thinks that, "though in the allotment of dwelling-places some respect would certainly be had to the former abode of tribes and families, yet the meaning cannot be that every one returned to the locality where his forefathers had dwelt: first, because it is certain (?) that all memorial of the connection of tribes and families was frequently obliterated, comp. below, v. 59–63; and then, because a small portion only of the former southern kingdom being assigned to the returned community, the descendants of dwellers in those towns which lay without the boundaries of the new state could not return to the cities of their ancestors." True, however, as this may be, the city of each man cannot mean that "which the authorities, in arranging the affairs of the community, assigned to individuals as their domicile, and of which they were reckoned inhabitants in the lists then drawn up for the sake of levying taxes," etc. (Bertheau). This would by no means be expressed by the words, "*they returned each to his own city.*" We may, on the contrary, correctly say that the words hold good *à potiori*, *i.e.* they are used without regard to exceptions induced by the above-named circumstance. אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ, ver. 2, corresponds with the הָעָלִים of ver. 1; hence in Neh. vii. 7 we find also the participle בָּאִים. They came with Zerubbabel, etc., that is, under their conduct and leadership. Zerubbabel (*Zoroβάβελ*, זְרֻבָבֶל or זְרוּבָבֶל, probably abbreviated from זְרֻעַ בָּבֶל, *in Babylonia satus seu genitus*) the son of Shealtiel was a descendant of the captive king Jehoia-

chin (see on 1 Chron. iii. 17), and was probably on account of this descent made leader of the expedition, and royal governor of the new settlement, by Cyrus. Jeshua (יֵשׁוּעַ), the subsequently abbreviated form of the name Jehoshua or Joshua, which is used Neh. viii. 17 also for Joshua the son of Nun, the contemporary of Moses) the son of Josedech (Hagg. i. 1), and the grandson of Seraiah the high priest, who was put to death by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, was the first high priest of the restored community; see on 1 Chron. v. 41. Besides those of Zerubbabel and Joshua, nine (or in Nehemiah more correctly ten) names, probably of heads of families, but of whom nothing further is known, are placed here. 1. Nehemiah, to be distinguished from the well-known Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah, Neh. i. 1; 2. Seraiah, instead of which we have in Neh. vii. 7 Azariah; 3. Reeliah, in Nehemiah Raamiah; 4. Nahamani in Nehemiah, *Εὐηνέος* in Esdras v. 8, omitted in the text of Ezra; 5. Mordecai, not the Mordecai of the book of Esther (ii. 5 sq.); 6. Bilshan; 7. Mispar, in Nehemiah Mispereth; 8. Bigvai; 9. Rehum, in 1 Esdras *Ροῖμος*; 10. Baanah. These ten, or reckoning Zerubbabel and Joshua, twelve men, are evidently intended, as leaders of the returning nation, to represent the new community as the successor of the twelve tribes of Israel. This is also unmistakably shown by the designation, the people of Israel, in the special title, and by the offering of twelve sin-offerings, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, at the dedication of the new temple, vii. 16. The genealogical relation, however, of these twelve representatives to the twelve tribes cannot be ascertained, inasmuch as we are told nothing of the descent of the last ten. Of these ten names, one meets indeed with that of Seraiah, Neh. x. 3; of Bigvai, in the mention of the sons of Bigvai, ver. 14, and viii. 14; of Rehum, Neh. iii. 17, xii. 3; and of Baanah, Neh. x. 28; but there is nothing to make the identity of these persons probable. Even in case they were all of them descended from members of the former kingdom of Judah, this is no certain proof that they all belonged also to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, since even in the reign of Reho-



boam pious Israelites of the ten tribes emigrated thither, and both at and after the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, many Israelites might have taken refuge and settled in Judah. The last words, ver. 2, "The number of the men of the people of Israel," contain the special title of the first division of the following list, with which the titles in vers. 36, 40, 43, and 55 correspond. They are called the people of *Israel*, not the people of Judah, because those who returned represented the entire covenant people.

Vers. 3-35. *List of the houses and families of the people.* Comp. Neh. vii. 8-38.—To show the variations in names and numbers between the two texts, we here place them side by side, the names in Nehemiah being inserted in parentheses.

EZRA II.			EZRA II.	NEH. VII.
1.	The sons of Parosh,	. . .	2172	2172
2.	„ „ Shephatiah,	. . .	372	372
3.	„ „ Arah,	. . .	775	652
4.	„ „ Pabath Moab, of the sons of Joshua and Joab,	. . .	2812	2818
5.	„ „ Elam,	. . .	1254	1254
6.	„ „ Zattu,	. . .	945	845
7.	„ „ Zaccai,	. . .	760	760
8.	„ „ Bani (Binnui),	. . .	642	648
9.	„ „ Bebai,	. . .	623	628
10.	„ „ Azgad,	. . .	1222	2322
11.	„ „ Adonikam,	. . .	666	667
12.	„ „ Bigvai,	. . .	2056	2067
13.	„ „ Adin,	. . .	454	655
14.	„ „ Ater of Hezekiah,	. . .	98	98
15.	„ „ Bezai,	. . .	323	324
16.	„ „ Jorah (Harif),	. . .	112	112
17.	„ „ Hashum,	. . .	223	328
18.	„ „ Gibbar (Gibeon),	. . .	95	95
19.	„ „ Bethlehem,	. . .	123	188
20.	The men of Netophah,	. . .	56	
21.	„ „ Anathoth,	. . .	128	128
22.	The sons of Azmaveth (men of Beth- Azmaveth),	. . .	42	42
23.	„ „ Kirjath-arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth,	. . .	743	743
24.	„ „ Ramah and Gaba,	. . .	621	621
25.	The men of Michmas,	. . .	122	122

EZRA II.			EZRA II.	NEH. VII.
26.	The men of Bethel and Ai,	. . .	223	123
27.	The sons of Nebo (Acher),	. . .	52	52
28.	„ „ Magbish,	. . .	156	wanting.
29.	„ „ the other Elam,	. . .	1254	1254
30.	„ „ Harim,	. . .	320	320
31.	„ „ Lod, Hadid, and Ono,	. . .	725	721
32.	„ „ Jericho,	. . .	345	345
33.	„ „ Senaah,	. . .	3630	3930
Total,			24,144	25,406

The differences in the names are unimportant. In ver. 6 the ו copulative inserted between the names יִשָּׁע and יִזָּבֶבֶד, both in Nehemiah and 1 Esdras, is wanting; the name בְּנֵי (ver. 10) is written בְּנֵי in Nehemiah (ver. 15); for יֹרָה (ver. 18), Neh. vii. 24 has חֲרִיף, evidently another name for the same person, Jorah having a similarity of sound with יֹרָה, harvest-rain, and חֲרִיף with חֲרֵף, harvest; for גִּבְרָה (ver. 20), Neh. vii. 25 more correctly reads גִּבְעֹן, the name of the town; and for קְרִית עֲרִים (ver. 25), Neh. vii. 29 has the more correct form קְרִית יַעֲרִים: the sons of Azmaveth (ver. 24) stands in Nehemiah as the men of Beth-Azmaveth; while, on the other hand, for the sons of Nebo (ver. 29), we have in Nehemiah (ver. 33) the men of Nebo Acher, where אַחֵר seems to have been inserted inadvertently, Elam Acher so soon following.<sup>1</sup> The names Bezai, Jorah, and Hashum (vers. 17–19) are transposed in Nehemiah (vers. 22–24) thus, Hashum, Bezai, and Harif; as are also Lod, etc., and Jericho, (vers. 33, 34) into Jericho and Lod, etc. (Nehemiah, vers. 36, 37). Lastly, the sons of Magbish (ver. 30) are omitted in Nehemiah; and the sons of Bethlehem and the men of Netophah (vers. 21 and 22) are in Nehemiah (ver. 26) reckoned together, and stated to be 188 instead of 123 + 56 = 179. A glance at the names undoubtedly shows that those numbered 1–17 are names of races or houses: those from 18–27, and from 31–33, are as certainly names of

<sup>1</sup> This view is more probable than the notion of Dietrich, in A. Merx, *Archiv für wissenschaft. Forschung des A. T.*, No. 3, p. 345, that by the addition אַחֵר in Nehemiah, the Nebo in Judah is distinguished from the Nebo in Reuben.



towns; here, therefore, inhabitants of towns are named. This series is, however, interrupted by Nos. 28-30; Harim being undoubtedly, and Magbish very probably, names not of places, but of persons; while the equality of the number of the other, Elam 1254, with that of Elam (No. 6), seems somewhat strange. To this must be added, that Magbish is wanting both in Nehemiah and 2 Esdras, and the other Elam in 1 Esdras; while, in place of the sons of Harim 320, we have in 1 Esdr. v. 16, in a more appropriate position, *υἱοὶ Ἀρομ* 32. Hence Bertheau infers that Nos. 28 and 29, sons of Magbish and sons of Elam Acher (vers. 30 and 31), are spurious, and that Harim should be written *Ἀρόμ*, and inserted higher up. The reasons for considering these three statements doubtful have certainly some weight; but considering the great untrustworthiness of the statements in the first book of Esdras, and the other differences in the three lists arising, as they evidently do, merely from clerical errors, we could not venture to call them decisive.

Of the names of houses or races (Nos. 1-17 and 30), we meet with many in other lists of the time of Ezra and Nehemiah;<sup>1</sup> whence we perceive, (1) that of many houses only a portion returned with Zerubbabel and Joshua, the remaining portion following with Ezra; (2) that heads of houses are entered not by their personal names, but by that of the house. The names, for the most part, descend undoubtedly from the time anterior to the captivity, although we do not meet with them in the historical books of that epoch, because those books give only the genealogies of those more important

<sup>1</sup> In the list of those who went up with Ezra (chap. viii.), the sons of Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Adin, Elam, Shephatiah, Joab, Bebai, Azgad, Adonikam, Bigvai, and, according to the original text (Ezra viii. 8, 10), also the sons of Zattu and Bani. In the lists of those who had taken strange wives (chap. x.) we meet with individuals of the sons of Parosh, Elam, Zattu, Bebai, Bani, Pahath-Moab, Harim, Hashum, and of the sons of Nebo. Finally, in the lists of the heads of the people in the time of Nehemiah (Neh. x. 15 sq.) appear the names of Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, Azgad, Bebai, Bigvai, Adin, Ater, Hashum, Bezai, Harif, Harim, Anathoth, together with others which do not occur in the list we are now treating of.

personages who make a figure in history. Besides this, the genealogies in Chronicles are very incomplete, enumerating for the most part only the families of the more ancient times. Most, if not all, of these races or houses must be regarded as former inhabitants of Jerusalem. Nor can the circumstance that the names given in the present list are not found in the lists of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (1 Chron. ix. and Neh. xi.) be held as any valid objection; for in those lists only the heads of the great races of Judah and Benjamin are named, and not the houses which those races comprised. The names of cities, on the other hand (Nos. 18-33), are for the most part found in the older books of the Old Testament: Gibeon in Josh. ix. 3; Bethlehem in Ruth i. 2, Mic. v. 1; Netophah, 2 Sam. xxiii. 28 — see comm. on 1 Chron. ii. 54; Anathoth in Josh. xxi. 18, Jer. i. 1; Kirjath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, as cities of the Gibeonites, in Josh. ix. 17; Ramah and Geba, which often occur in the histories of Samuel and Saul, also in Josh. xviii. 24, 25; Michmash in 1 Sam. xiii. 2, 5, Isa. x. 28; Bethel and Ai in Josh. vii. 2; and Jericho in Josh. v. 13, and elsewhere. All these places were situate in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and were probably taken possession of by former inhabitants or their children immediately after the return. Azmaveth or Beth-Azmaveth (Neh. vii. 28) does not occur in the earlier history, nor is it mentioned out of this list, except in Neh. xii. 29, according to which it must be sought for in the neighbourhood of Geba. It has not, however, been as yet discovered; for the conjecture of Ritter, *Erdk.* xvi. p. 519, that it may be el-Hizme, near Anâta, is unfounded. Nor can the position of Nebo be certainly determined, the mountain of that name (Num. xxxii. 3) being out of the question. Nob or Nobe (1 Sam. xxi. 2) has been thought to be this town. Its situation is suitable; and this view is supported by the fact that in Neh. xi. 31 sq., Nob, and not Nebo, is mentioned, together with many of the places here named; in Ezra x. 43, however, the sons of Nebo are again specified. As far as situation is concerned, Nuba, or Beit-Nuba (Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, p. 189),



may, as Bertheau thinks, correspond with this town. Magbish was by many older expositors regarded as the name of a place, but is certainly that of a person; and no place of such a name is known. The localities Lod, Hadid, and Ono (ver. 33) first occur in the later books of the Old Testament. On Lod and Ono, see comm. on 1 Chron. viii. 12. הָרִיר is certainly *'Αδιδά* (1 Macc. xii. 38, xiii. 13), not far from Lydda, where there is still a place called el-Hadithe, الحديثة (Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, p. 186).

סִנְאָה, ver. 35, is identified by older expositors with *Σεννά*, *ἡ Μαγδαλσεννά*, which Jerome describes as *terminus Judæ, in septimo lapide Jerichus contra septentrionalem plagam* (*Onom. ed. Lars. et Parth.* p. 332 sq.); in opposition to which, Robinson, in his above-cited work, identifies Magdal-Senna with a place called Mejdol, situate on the summit of a high hill about eighteen miles north of Jericho. The situation, however, of this town does not agree with the distance mentioned by Eusebius and Jerome, and the name Mejdol, *i.e.* tower, is not of itself sufficient to identify it with Magdal-Senna. The situation of the Senaah in question is not as yet determined; it must be sought for, however, at no great distance from Jericho. Of the towns mentioned in the present list, we find that the men of Jericho, Senaah, and Gibeon, as well as the inhabitants of Tekoa, Zanoah, Beth-haccerem, Mizpah, Beth-zur, and Keilah, assisted at the building of the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah (Neh. iii. 2, 3, 7). A larger number of towns of Judah and Benjamin is specified in the list in Neh. xi. 25-35, whence we perceive that in process of time a greater multitude of Jews returned from captivity and settled in the land of their fathers.

Vers. 36-39. The list of the priests is identical, both in names and numbers, with that of Neh. vii. 39-42. These are :

The sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, .	973
„ „ Immer, . . . .	1052
„ „ Pashur, . . . .	1247
„ „ Harim, . . . .	1017
Total,	4289

Jedaiah is the head of the second order of priests in 1 Chron. xxiv. 7. If, then, Jedaiah here represents this order, the words "of the house of Jeshua" must not be applied to Jeshua the high priest; the second order belonging in all probability to the line of Ithamar, and the high-priestly race, on the contrary, to that of Eleazar. We also meet the name Jeshua in other priestly families, *e.g.* as the name of the ninth order of priests in 1 Chron. xxiv. 11, so that it may be the old name of another priestly house. Since, however, it is unlikely that no priest of the order from which the high priest descended should return, the view that by Joshua the high priest is intended, and that the sons of Jedaiah were a portion of the house to which Joshua the high priest belonged, is the more probable one. In this case Jedaiah is not the name of the second order of priests, but of the head of a family of the high-priestly race. Immer is the name of the sixteenth order of priests, 1 Chron. xxiv. 14. Pashur does not occur among the orders of priests in 1 Chron. xxiv.; but we find the name, 1 Chron. ix. 12, and Neh. xi. 12, among the ancestors of Adaiah, a priest of the order of Malchijah; the Pashur of Jer. xx. and xxi. being, on the contrary, called the son of Immer, *i.e.* a member of the order of Immer. Hence Bertheau considers Pashur to have been the name of a priestly race, which first became extensive, and took the place of an older and perhaps extinct order, after the time of David. Gershom of the sons of Phinehas, and Daniel of the sons of Ithamar, are said, viii. 2, to have gone up to Jerusalem with Ezra, while the order to which they belonged is not specified. Among the priests who had married strange wives (x. 18-22) are named, sons of Jeshua, Immer, Harim, Pashur; whence it has been inferred "that, till the time of Ezra, only the four divisions of priests here enumerated had the charge of divine worship in the new congregation" (Bertheau). On the relation of the names in vers. 36-39 to those in Neh. x. 3-9 and xii. 1-22, see remarks on these passages.

Vers. 40-58. *Levites, Nethinim, and Solomon's servants.*  
Comp. Neh. vii. 43-60.



	EZRA.	NEH.
Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodaviah, . . . . .	74	74
Singers: sons of Asaph, . . . . .	128	148
Sons of the door-keepers; sons of Shallum, Ater, etc.,	139	138
Nethinim and servants of Solomon, in all, . . . . .	392	392
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total,	733	752

The Levites are divided into three classes: Levites in the stricter sense of the word, *i.e.* assistants of the priests in divine worship, singers, and door-keepers; comp. 1 Chron. xxiv. 20-31, xxv., and xxvi. 1-19. Of Levites in the stricter sense are specified the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel of the sons of Hodaviah (וְקַדְמִיָּאל and הוֹדָיָה of our text are evidently correct readings; and לְקַדְמִיָּאל and הוֹדָיָה, Keri לְהוֹדָיָה, Neh. vii. 43, errors of transcription). The addition, "of the sons of Hodaviah," belongs to Kadmiel, to distinguish him from other Levites of similar name. Jeshua and Kadmiel were, according to iii. 9, chiefs of two orders of Levites in the times of Zerubbabel and Joshua. These names recur as names of orders of Levites in Neh. x. 10. We do not find the sons of Hodaviah in the lists of Levites in Chronicles.—Ver. 41. Of singers, only the sons of Asaph, *i.e.* members of the choir of Asaph, returned. In Neh. xi. 17 three orders are named, Bakbukiah evidently representing the order of Heman.—Ver. 42. Of door-keepers, six orders or divisions returned, among which those of Shallum, Talmon, and Akkub dwelt, according to 1 Chron. ix. 17, at Jerusalem before the captivity. Of the sons of Ater, Hatita and Shobai, nothing further is known.—Ver. 43. The Nethinim, *i.e.* temple-bondsmen, and the servants of Solomon, are reckoned together, thirty-five families of Nethinim and ten of the servants of Solomon being specified. The sum-total of these amounting only to 392, each family could only have averaged from eight to nine individuals. The sons of Akkub, Hagab and Asnah (vers. 45, 46, and 50), are omitted in Nehemiah; the name Shamlai (ver. 46) is in Neh. vii. 48 written Salmai; and for נְפִישִׁים, ver. 50, Neh. vii. 52 has נְפִישִׁים, a form combined from נְפִישִׁים and נְפִישִׁים. All other variations relate only to differ-

ences of form. Because Ziha (זִיחָי, ver. 43) again occurs in Neh. xi. 21 as one of the chiefs of the Nethinim, and the names following seem to stand in the same series with it, Bertheau insists on regarding these names as those of divisions. This cannot, however, be correct; for Ziha is in Neh. xi. 21 the name of an individual, and in the present list also the proper names are those of individuals, and only the sons of Ziha, Hasupha, etc., can be called families or divisions. Plural words alone, Mehunim and Nephisim, are names of races or nations; hence the sons of the Mehunim signify individuals belonging to the Mehunim, who, perhaps, after the victory of King Uzziah over that people, were as prisoners of war made vassals for the service of the sanctuary. So likewise may the sons of the Nephisim have been prisoners of war of the Ishmaelite race נִפְיִשׁ. Most of the families here named may, however, have been descendants of the Gibeonites (Josh. ix. 21, 27). The servants of Solomon must not be identified with the Canaanite bond-servants mentioned 1 Kings ix. 20 sq., 2 Chron. viii. 7 sq., but were probably prisoners of war of some other nation, whom Solomon sentenced to perform, as bondsmen, similar services to those imposed upon the Gibeonites. The sons of these servants are again mentioned in Neh. xi. 3. In other passages they are comprised under the general term Nethinim, with whom they are here computed. Among the names, that of פִּכְרֵת הַצִּבְּיִים (ver. 57), *i.e.* catcher of gazelles, is a singular one; the last name, אֶמֶי, is in Neh. vii. 59 אֶמֶן.

Vers. 59 and 60. Those who went up with, but could not prove that they pertained to, the nation of Israel. Comp. Neh. vii. 61 and 62.—Three such families are named, consisting of 652, or according to Nehemiah of 642, persons. These went up, with those who returned, from Tel-melah (Salthill) and Tel-harsa (Thicket or Forest Hill), names of Babylonian districts or regions, the situations of which cannot be ascertained. The words also which follow, כְּרוּב אֶדֶן אֶמֶר, are obscure, but are certainly not the names of individuals, the persons who went up not being specified till ver. 60. The words are names of places, but it is uncertain whether



the three are used to express one or three places. In favour of the notion that they designate but one locality, may be alleged that in ver. 60 only three races are named, which would then correspond with the districts named in ver. 59: Tel-melah, Tel-harsa, and Cherub-Addan-Immer; a race from each district joining those who went up to Jerusalem. The three last words, however, may also designate three places in close proximity, in which one of the races of ver. 60 might be dwelling. These could not show their father's house and their seed, *i.e.* genealogy, whether they were of Israel. הֵם, as well as the suffixes of זְרַעֲם and בֵּית-אֲבוֹתָם, refers to the persons named in ver. 60. They could not show that the houses of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda, after which they were called, belonged to Israel, nor that they themselves were of Israelitish origin. Cler. well remarks: *Judaicam religionem dudum sequebantur, quam ob rem se Judæos censebant; quamvis non possent genealogicas ullas tabulas ostendere, ex quibus constaret, ex Hebræis oriundos esse.* One of these names, Nekoda, ver. 48, occurring among those of the Nethinim, Bertheau conjectures that while the sons of Nekoda here spoken of claimed to belong to Israel, the objection was made that they might belong to the sons of Nekoda mentioned ver. 48, and ought therefore to be reckoned among the Nethinim. Similar objections may have been made to the two other houses. Although they could not prove their Israelite origin, they were permitted to go up to Jerusalem with the rest, the rights of citizenship alone being for the present withheld. Hence we meet with none of these names either in the enumeration of the heads and houses of the people, Neh. x. 15-28, or in the list Ezra x. 25-43.

Vers. 61-63. *Priests* who could not prove themselves members of the priesthood. Comp. Neh. vii. 63-65.—Three such families are named: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai. These could not discover their family registers, and were excluded from the exercise of priestly functions. Of these three names, that of Hakkoz occurs as the seventh order of priests; but the names

alone did not suffice to prove their priesthood, this being also borne by other persons. Comp. Neh. iii. 4. The sons of Barzillai were the descendants of a priest who had married a daughter, probably an heiress (Num. xxxvi.), of Barzillai the Gileadite, so well known in the history of David (2 Sam. xvii. 27, xix. 32–39; 1 Kings ii. 7), and had taken her name for the sake of taking possession of her inheritance (the suffix שָׁמָם refers to בָּנוֹת; see on Num. xxvii. 1–11). That by contracting this marriage he had not renounced for himself and his descendants his priestly privileges, is evident from the fact, that when his posterity returned from captivity, they laid claim to these privileges. The assumption, however, of the name of Barzillai might have cast such a doubt upon their priestly origin as to make it necessary that this should be proved from the genealogical registers, and a search in these did not lead to the desired discovery. בְּתָבָם is their סֵפֶר יֵחַשׁ, Neh. vii. 5, the book or record in which their genealogy was registered. The title of this record was הַמְתִּיחִשִּׁים, the Enregistered: the word is in apposition to בְּתָבָם, and the plural נִמְצְאוּ agrees with it, while in Neh. vii. 64 the singular נִמְצָא agrees with כְּתָבָם. They were declared to be polluted from the priesthood, *i.e.* they were excluded from the priesthood as polluted or unclean. The construction of the Pual יִנְאָלוּ with מֶן is significant.—Ver. 63. The Tirshatha, the secular governor of the community, *i.e.*, as is obvious from a comparison of Neh. vii. 65 with ver. 70, Zerubbabel, called Hagg. i. 1 פֶּתַח יְהוּדָה. תִּרְשָׁתָא, always used with the article, is undoubtedly the Persian designation of the governor or viceroy. Nehemiah is also so called in Neh. viii. 9 and x. 2, and likewise הַפֶּתַח, Neh. xii. 26. The meaning of the word is still matter of dispute. Some derive it from the Persian ترسیدن, to fear, and ترس, fear = the feared or respected one (Meier, *Wurzelb.* p. 714); others from ترش, *acer, auster*, the strict ruler; others, again (with Benfey, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 196), from the Zend. *thvôrestar* (nom. *thvôresta*), *i.e.* *præfectus, penes quem est imperium*: comp. Gesenius, *thes.* p. 1521. The Tirshatha decided that



they were not to eat of the most holy things till there should arise a priest with Urim and Thummim, *i.e.* to give a final decision by means of Urim and Thummim. *עֶמֶד*, according to the later usage of the language, is equivalent to קֹדֶשׁ; comp. Dan. viii. 83, xi. 2, and other places. The prohibition to eat of the most holy things (comp. on Lev. ii. 3) involved the prohibition to approach the most holy objects, *e.g.* the altar of burnt-offering (Ex. xxix. 37, xxx. 10), and to enter the most holy place, and thus excludes from specific priestly acts: without, however, denying a general inclusion among the priestly order, or abolishing a claim to the priestly revenues, so far as these were not directly connected with priestly functions. On Urim and Thummim, see on Ex. xxviii. 30. From the words, "till a priest shall arise," etc., it is evident that the then high priest was not in a position to entreat, and to pronounce, the divine decision by Urim and Thummim. The reason of this, however, need not be sought in the personality of Joshua (Ewald, *Gesch.* iv. 95), nor supposed to exist in such a fact as that he might not perhaps have been the eldest son of his father, and therefore not have had full right to the priesthood. This conjecture rests upon utterly erroneous notions of the Urim and Thummim, upon a subjectivistic view, which utterly evaporates the objective reality of the grace with which the high priest was in virtue of his office endowed. The obtainment of the divine decision by Urim and Thummim presupposes the gracious presence of Jahve in the midst of His people Israel. And this had been connected by the Lord Himself with the ark of the covenant, and with its cherubim-overshadowed mercy-seat, from above which He communed with His people (Ex. xxv. 22). The high priest, bearing upon his breast the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim, was to appear before Jahve, and, bringing before Him the judgment of Israel, to entreat the divine decision (Ex. xxviii. 30; Num. xxvii. 21). The ark of the covenant with the mercy-seat was thus, in virtue of the divine promise, the place of judgment, where the high priest was to inquire of the Lord by means of the Urim and Thummim. This ark, however, was

no longer in existence, having been destroyed when Solomon's temple was burned by the Chaldeans. Those who returned with Zerubbabel were without the ark, and at first without a temple. In such a state of affairs the high priest could not appear before Jahve with the breastplate and the Urim and Thummim to entreat His decision. The books of Samuel, indeed, relate cases in which the divine will was consulted by Urim and Thummim, when the ark of the covenant was not present for the high priest to appear before (comp. 1 Sam. xxiii. 4, 6, 9, etc., xiv. 18); whence it appears that the external or local presence of the ark was not absolutely requisite for this purpose. Still these cases occurred at a time when the congregation of Israel as yet possessed the ark with the Lord's cherubim-covered mercy-seat, though this was temporarily separated from the holy of holies of the tabernacle. Matters were in a different state at the return from the captivity. Then, not only were they without either ark or temple, but the Lord had not as yet re-manifested His gracious presence in the congregation; and till this should take place, the high priest could not inquire of the Lord by Urim and Thummim. In the hope that with the restoration of the altar and temple the Lord would again vouchsafe His presence to the returned congregation, Zerubbabel expected that a high priest would arise with Urim and Thummim to pronounce a final decision with regard to those priests who could not prove their descent from Aaron's posterity. This expectation, however, was unfulfilled. Zerubbabel's temple remained unconsecrated by any visible token of Jahve's presence, as the place where His name should dwell. The ark of the covenant with the cherubim, and the Shechinah in the cloud over the cherubim, were wanting in the holy of holies of this temple. Hence, too, we find no single notice of any declaration of the divine will or the divine decision by Urim and Thummim in the period subsequent to the captivity; but have, on the contrary, the unanimous testimony of the Rabbis, that after the Babylonian exile God no longer manifested His will by Urim and Thummim, this kind of divine revelation being reckoned by



them among the five things which were wanting in the second temple. Comp. Buxtorf, *exercitat. ad historiam Urim et Thummim*, c. 5; and Vitringa, *observat. ss. Lib. vi. c. 6*, p. 324 sq.

Vers. 64-67. The whole number of those who returned, their servants, maids, and beasts of burden. Comp. Neh. vii. 66-69.—The sum-total of the congregation (כָּנָסָם, as one, *i.e.* reckoned together; comp. iii. 9, vi. 20) is the same in both texts, as also in 1 Esdras, viz. 42,360; the sums of the separate statements being in all three different, and indeed amounting in each to less than the given total. The separate statements are as follow:—

	According to Ezra.	According to Nehemiah.	According to 1 Esdras.
Men of Israel, . . . .	24,144	25,406	26,390
Priests, . . . .	4,289	4,289	2,388
Levites, . . . .	341	360	341
Nethinim and servants of Solomon,	392	392	372
Those who could not prove their Israelitish origin, . . .	652	642	652
Total,	29,818	31,089	30,143

These differences are undoubtedly owing to mere clerical errors, and attempts to reconcile them in other ways cannot be justified. Many older expositors, both Jewish and Christian (Seder olam, Raschi, Ussher, J. H. Mich., and others), were of opinion that only Jews and Benjamites are enumerated in the separate statements, while the sum-total includes also those Israelites of the ten tribes who returned with them. In opposing this notion, it cannot, indeed, be alleged that no regard at all is had to members of the other tribes (Bertheau); for the several families of the men of Israel are not designated according to their tribes, but merely as those whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken away to Babylon; and among these would certainly be included, as Ussher expressly affirms, many belonging to the other tribes who had settled in the kingdom of Judah. But the very circumstances, that neither in the separate statements nor in the sum-total is any allusion made to tribal relations,

and that even in the case of those families who could not prove their Israelitish origin the only question was as to whether they were of the houses and of the seed of Israel, exclude all distinction of tribes, and the sum-total is evidently intended to be the joint sum of the separate numbers. Nor can it be inferred, as J. D. Mich. conjectures, that because the parallel verse to ver. 64 of our present chapter, viz. 1 Esdr. v. 41, reads thus, "And all of Israel from twelve years old and upwards, besides the servants and maids, were 42,360," the separate statements are therefore the numbers only of those of twenty years old and upwards, while the sum-total includes those also from twelve to twenty years of age. The addition "from twelve years and upwards" is devoid of critical value; because, if it had been genuine, the particular "from twenty years old and upwards" must have been added to the separate statements. Hence it is not even probable that the author of the 1st book of Esdras contemplated a reconciliation of the difference by this addition. In transcribing such a multitude of names and figures, errors could scarcely be avoided, whether through false readings of numbers or the omission of single items. The sum-total being alike in all three texts, we are obliged to assume its correctness.

Ver. 65, etc. "Besides these, their servants and their maids, 7337." אֲלֵהָּ is, by the accent, connected with the preceding words. The further statement, "And there were to them (*i.e.* they had) 200 singing men and singing women," is striking. The remark of Bertheau, that by לָהֶם the property of the community is intended to be expressed, is incorrect; לָהֶם denotes merely computation among, and does not necessarily imply proprietorship. J. D. Mich., adopting the latter meaning, thought that oxen and cows originally stood in the text, and were changed by transcribers into singing men and singing women, "for both words closely resemble each other in appearance in the Hebrew." Berth., on the contrary, remarks that שְׁוֹרִים, oxen, might easily be exchanged for שָׂרִים or מִשְׁרִים, but that שֹׁר has no feminine form for the plural, and that פָּרוֹת, cows, is very



different from משררות; that hence we are obliged to admit that in the original text שוּרִים stood alone, and that after this word had been exchanged for משררים, משררות was added as its appropriate complement. Such fanciful notions can need no serious refutation. Had animals been spoken of as property, לָהֶם would not have been used, but a suffix, as in the enumeration of the animals in ver. 66. Besides, oxen and cows are not beasts of burden used in journeys, like the horses, mules, camels, and asses enumerated in ver. 66, and hence are here out of place. מְשֻׁרְרִים וּמְשֻׁרְרוֹת are singing men and singing women, in 1 Esdras ψάλλται καὶ ψαλτωδοί, who, as the Rabbis already supposed, were found among the followers of the returning Jews, *ut lætior esset Israelitarum reditus*. The Israelites had from of old employed singing men and singing women not merely for the purpose of enhancing the cheerfulness of festivities, but also for the singing of lamentations on sorrowful occasions; comp. Eccles. ii. 8, 2 Chron. xxxv. 25: these, because they sang and played for hire, are named along with the servants and maids, and distinguished from the Levitical singers and players. Instead of 200, we find both in Nehemiah and 1 Esdras the number 245, which probably crept into the text from the transcriber fixing his eye upon the 245 of the following verse.—Ver. 66. The numbers of the beasts, whether for riding or baggage: horses, 736; mules, 245; camels, 435; and asses, 6720. The numbers are identical in Neh. vii. 68. In 1 Esdr. v. 42 the camels are the first named, and the numbers are partially different, viz., horses, 7036, and asses, 5525.

Vers. 68-70. *Contributions towards the rebuilding of the temple, and concluding remarks.* Comp. Neh. vii. 70-73.—Some of the heads of houses, when they came to the house of Jahve, *i.e.* arrived at the site of the temple, brought free-will offerings (הִתְנַחֲבוּ; comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 5) to set it up in its place (הִעֲמִידוּ, to set up, *i.e.* to rebuild; identical in meaning both here and ix. 9 with הִקִּים). After their ability (בְּכֹחָם; comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 2) they gave unto the treasure of the work, *i.e.* of restoring the temple and its services,

61,000 darics of gold = £68,625, and 5000 mina of silver, above £30,000, and 100 priests' garments. The account of these contributions is more accurately given in Neh. vii. 70-72, according to which some of the heads of houses gave unto the work (מְקַצֵּת as Dan. i. 2 and elsewhere); the Tirshatha gave to the treasure 1000 darics of gold, 50 sacrificial vessels (see on Ex. xxvii. 3), 30 priests' garments, and 500 . . . This last statement is defective; for the two numbers 30 and 500 must not be combined into 530, as in this case the hundreds would have stood first. The objects enumerated were named before 500, and are omitted through a clerical error, וְכֶסֶף מֵנִים, "and silver (500) mina." And some of the heads of houses (others than the Tirshatha) gave of gold 20,000 darics, of silver, 2200 mina; and that which the rest of the people gave was—gold, 20,000 darics, silver, 2000 mina, and 67 priests' garments. According to this statement, the Tirshatha, the heads of houses, and the rest of the people, gave together 41,000 darics in gold, 4200 mina in silver, 97 priests' garments, and 30 golden vessels. In Ezra the vessels are omitted; and instead of the  $30 + 67 = 97$  priests' garments, they are stated in round numbers to have been 100. The two other differences have arisen from textual errors. Instead of 61,000 darics, it is evident that we must read with Nehemiah, 41,000 ( $1000 + 20,000 + 20,000$ ); and in addition to the 2200 and 2000 mina, reckon, according to Neh. vii. 70, 500 more, in all 4700, for which in the text of Ezra we have the round sum of 5000. The account of the return of the first band of exiles concludes at ver. 70, and the narrative proceeds to the subsequent final statement: "So the priests, etc. . . . dwelt in their cities." וַיָּשְׁבוּ הָעָם, those of the people, are the men of the people of Israel of ver. 2, the laity as distinguished from the priests, Levites, etc. In Nehemiah the words are transposed, so that הָעָם stand after the Levitical door-keepers and singers. Bertheau thinks this position more appropriate; but we cannot but judge otherwise. The placing of the people, *i.e.* the laity of Israel, between the consecrated servants of the temple (the



priests and their Levitical assistants in the sacrificial service) and the singers and door-keepers, seems to us quite consistent; while, on the other hand, the naming of the שוֹעֲרִים before the מְשָׁרְרִים in Nehemiah seems inappropriate, because the performance of the choral service of the temple was a higher office than the guardianship of the doors. Neither can we regard Bertheau's view, that בְּעֶרְיָהם, which in the present verse follows וְהַנְּתִינִים, should be erased, as a correct one. The word forms a perfectly appropriate close to the sentence beginning with וַיָּשְׁבוּ; and the sentence following, "And all Israel were in their cities," forms a well-rounded close to the account; while, on the contrary, the summing up of the different divisions by the words כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל in Nehemiah, after the enumeration of those divisions, has a rather heavy effect.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. III. — THE ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERING ERECTED,  
THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES CELEBRATED, AND THE  
FOUNDATIONS OF THE TEMPLE LAID.

On the approach of the seventh month, the people assembled in Jerusalem to restore the altar of burnt-offering and the sacrificial worship, and to keep the feast of tabernacles (vers. 1-7); and in the second month of the following year the foundations of the new temple were laid with due solemnity (vers. 8-13). Comp. 1 Esdr. v. 46-62.

Vers. 1-7. *The building of the altar, the restoration of the daily sacrifice, and the celebration of the feast of tabernacles.*

—Ver. 1. When the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. The year is not stated, but *the* year in which they returned from Babylon is intended, as appears from ver. 8, which tells us that the

<sup>1</sup> In 1 Esdr. v. 46, this verse, freely carrying out the texts of Ezra and Nehemiah, with regard also to Neh. xii. 27-30, runs thus: "And so dwelt the priests, and the Levites, and the people, in Jerusalem and in the country, the singers also and the porters, and all Israel in their villages."

foundations of the temple were laid in the second month of the second year of their return. The words, "and the children of Israel were in the cities," are a circumstantial clause referring to ii. 70, and serving to elucidate what follows. From the cities, in which each had settled in his own (ii. 1), the people came to Jerusalem as one man, *i.e.* not entirely (Bertheau), but unanimously (*ὁμοθυμαδόν*, 1 Esdr. v. 46); comp. Neh. viii. 1, Judg. xx. 1.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 2. Then the two leaders of the people, Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the prince (see on ii. 2), with their brethren, *i.e.* the priests and the men of Israel (the laity), arose and built the altar, to offer upon it burnt-offerings, as prescribed by the law of Moses, *i.e.* to restore the legal sacrifices. According to ver. 6, the offering of burnt-offerings began on the first day of the seventh month; hence the altar was by this day already completed. This agrees with the statement, "When the seventh month approached" (ver. 1), therefore before the first day of this month.—Ver. 3. They reared the altar *עַל-מִבְנֵיהָ*, upon its (former) place; not, upon its bases. The feminine *מִבְנֵיהָ* has here a like signification with the masculine form *מִבְנוֹ*, ii. 68, and *מִבְנֶיהָ*, Zech. v. 11. The Keri *מִבְנֵיהָ* is an incorrect revision. "For fear was upon them, because of the people of those countries." The *בְּ* prefixed to *אֵימָה* is the so-called *בְּ essentialia*, expressing the being in a condition; properly, a being in fear had come or lay upon them. Comp. on *בְּ essentialia*, Ewald, § 217, *f*, and 299, *b*, though in § 295, *f*, he seeks to interpret this passage differently. The "people of those countries" are the people dwelling in the neighbourhood of the new community; comp. ix. 1, x. 2. The notion is: They erected the altar and restored the worship of Jahve, for the purpose of securing the divine protection, because fear of the surrounding heathen population had fallen upon them. J. II. Mich. had already a correct notion of the verse when

<sup>1</sup> The more precise statement of 1 Esdr. v. 46, *εἰς τὸ εὐρύχωρον τοῦ πρώτου πυλῶνος τοῦ πρὸς τῇ ἀνατολῇ*, according to which Bertheau insists upon correcting the text of Ezra, is an arbitrary addition on the part of the author of this apocryphal book, and derived from Neh. viii. 1.



he wrote : *ut ita periculi metus eos ad Dei opem quærendam impulerit.*<sup>1</sup> Comp. the similar case in 2 Kings xvii. 25 sq., when the heathen colonists settled in the deserted cities of Samaria entreated the king of Assyria to send them a priest to teach them the manner of worshipping the God of the land, that thus they might be protected from the lions which infested it. The Chethiv ויעל must be taken impersonally : “one (they) offered;” but is perhaps only an error of transcription, and should be read ויעלו. On the morning and evening sacrifices, see on Ex. xxviii. 38 sq., Num. xxviii. 3 sq.—Ver. 4. They kept the feast of tabernacles as prescribed in the law, Lev. xxiii. 34 sq. “The burnt-offering day by day, according to number,” means the burnt-offerings commanded for the several days of this festival, viz. on the first day thirteen oxen, on the second twelve, etc.; comp. Num. xxix. 13-34, where the words בַּמִּסְפָּר בְּמִשְׁפָּט, vers. 18, 21, 24, etc., occur, which are written in our present verse בַּמִּסְפָּר כְּמִ, by number, i.e. counted; comp. 1 Chron. ix. 28, xxiii. 31, etc.—Ver. 5. And afterward, i.e. after the feast of tabernacles, they offered the continual, i.e. the daily, burnt-offering, and (the offerings) for the new moon, and all the festivals of the Lord (the annual feasts). עלות must be inserted from the context before לַחֲדָשִׁים to complete the sense. “And for every one that willingly offered a free-will offering to the Lord.” נָדְבָה is a burnt-offering which was offered from free inclination. Such offerings might be brought on any day, but were chiefly presented at the annual festivals after the sacrifices prescribed by the law; comp. Num. xxix. 39.—In ver. 6 follows the supplementary remark, that the sacrificial worship began from the first day of the seventh month, but that the foundation of the temple of the Lord

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau, on the contrary, cannot understand the meaning of this sentence, and endeavours, by an alteration of the text after 1 Esdras, to make it signify that some of the people of the countries came with the purpose of obstructing the building of the altar, but that the Israelites were able to effect the erection because a fear of God came upon the neighbouring nations, and rendered them incapable of hostile interference.

was not yet laid. This forms a transition to what follows.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 7. Preparations were also made for the rebuilding of the temple; money was given to hewers of wood and to masons, and meat and drink (*i.e.* corn and wine) and oil to the Sidonians and Tyrians (*i.e.* the Phœnicians; comp. 1 Chron. xxii. 4), to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa (*i.e.* to the coast of Joppa), as was formerly done by Solomon, 1 Kings v. 20 sq., 2 Chron. ii. 7 sq. בְּרִשְׁיוֹן, according to the grant of Cyrus to them, *i.e.* according to the permission given them by Cyrus, *sc.* to rebuild the temple. For nothing is said of any special grant from Cyrus with respect to wood for building. רִשְׁיוֹן is in

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau, comparing ver. 6 with ver. 5, incorrectly interprets it as meaning: "From the first day of the seventh month the offering of *thank-offerings* began (comp. ver. 2); then, from the fifteenth day of the second month, during the feast of tabernacles, the burnt-offerings prescribed by the law (ver. 4); but the daily burnt-offerings were not recommenced till after the feast of tabernacles, etc. Hence it was not from the first day of the seventh month, but subsequently to the feast of tabernacles, that the worship of God, so far as this consisted in burnt-offerings, was fully restored." The words of the cursive manuscript, however, do not stand in the text, but their opposite. In ver. 2, not thank-offerings (תְּחִלִּים or זְבָחִים), but burnt-offerings (עֹלֹת), are spoken of, and indeed those prescribed in the law, among which the daily morning and evening burnt-offering, expressly named in ver. 3, held the first place. With this, ver. 5, "After the feast of tabernacles they offered the continual burnt-offering, and the burnt-offerings for the new moon," etc., fully harmonizes. The offering of the continual, *i.e.* of the daily, burnt-offerings, besides the new moon, the feast-days, and the free-will offerings, is named again merely for the sake of completeness. The right order is, on the contrary, as follows: The altar service, with the daily morning and evening sacrifice, began on the first day of the seventh month; this daily sacrifice was regularly offered, according to the law, from then till the fifteenth day of the second month, *i.e.* till the beginning of the feast of tabernacles; all the offerings commanded in the law for the separate days of this feast were then offered according to the numbers prescribed; and after this festival the sacrifices ordered at the new moon and the other holy days of the year were offered, as well as the daily burnt-offerings,—none but these, neither the sacrifice on the new moon (the first day of the seventh month) nor the sin-offering on the tenth day of the same month, *i.e.* the day of atonement, having been offered before this feast of tabernacles.



the O. T. ἀπ. λεγ. ; in Chaldee and rabbinical Hebrew, רָשָׁא and רָשָׁי mean *facultatem habere* ; and רָשָׁי power, permission.

Vers. 8-13. *The foundation of the temple laid.*—Ver. 8. In the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, *i.e.* after their arrival at Jerusalem on their return from Babylon, in the second month, began Zerubbabel and Joshua to appoint the Levites from twenty years old and upwards to the oversight of the work (the building) of the house of the LORD. That is to say, the work of building was taken in hand. Whether this second year of the return coincides with the second year of the rule of Cyrus, so that the foundations of the temple were laid, as *Theophil. Antioch. ad Autolic.* lib. 3, according to Berosus, relates, in the second year of Cyrus, cannot be determined. For nothing more is said in this book than that Cyrus, in the first year of his reign, issued the decree concerning the return of the Jews from Babylon, whereupon those named in the list, chap. ii., set out and returned, without any further notice as to whether this also took place in the first year of Cyrus, or whether the many necessary preparations delayed the departure of the first band till the following year. The former view is certainly a possible though not a very probable one, since it is obvious from ii. 1 that they arrived at Jerusalem and betook themselves to their cities as early as the seventh month of the year. Now the period between the beginning of the year and the seventh month, *i.e.* at most six months, seems too short for the publication of the edict, the departure, and the arrival at Jerusalem, even supposing that the first year of Cyrus entirely coincided with a year of the Jewish calendar. The second view, however, would not make the difference between the year of the rule of Cyrus and the year of the return to Jerusalem a great one, since it would scarcely amount to half a year. וַיַּעֲמִדוּ . . . הָחֵל, they began and appointed, etc., they began to appoint, *i.e.* they began the work of building the temple by appointing. Those enumerated are—1. Zerubbabel and Joshua, the two rulers : 2. The remnant of their brethren = their other brethren, viz. *a*, the priests and

Levites as brethren of Joshua; *b*, all who had come out of captivity, *i.e.* the men of Israel, as brethren of Zerubbabel. These together formed the community who appointed the Levites to preside over, *i.e.* to conduct the building of the temple. For the expression, comp. 1 Chron. xxiii. 4-24. —Ver. 9. The Levites undertook this appointment, and executed the commission. The singular וַיַּעֲמֵד stands before a plural subject, as is frequently the case when the verb precedes its subject. Three classes or orders of Levites are named: 1. Jeshua with his sons and brethren; 2. Kadmiel with his sons, the sons of Hodaviah; 3. The sons of Henadad, their sons and brethren. Jeshua and Kadmiel are the two heads of orders of Levites already named (ii. 40). From a comparison of these passages, we perceive that בְּנֵי יְהוֹדָה is a clerical error for הוֹדָיָה (or הוֹדָה). This more precise designation is not “a comprehensive appellation for all hitherto enumerated” (Bertheau), but, as is undoubtedly obvious from ii. 40, only a more precise designation of the sons of Kadmiel. כְּאֶחָד, as one, *i.e.* all, without exception. The third class, the sons of Henadad, are not expressly named in ii. 40 among those who returned from Babylon; but a son of Henadad appears, Neh. iii. 24 and x. 10, as head of an order of Levites. The naming of this order after the predicate, in the form of a supplementary notice, and unconnected by a ו cop., is striking. Bertheau infers therefrom that the construction of the sentence is incorrect, and desires to alter it according to 1 Esdr. v. 56, where indeed this class is named immediately after the two first, but בְּנֵי יְהוֹדָה is separated from what precedes; and of these בְּנֵי יְהוֹדָה is made a fourth class, *νιοὶ Ἰωδᾶ τοῦ Ἡλιαδούδ*. All this sufficiently shows that this text cannot be regarded as authoritative. The striking position or supplementary enumeration of the sons of Henadad may be explained by the fact to which the placing of כְּאֶחָד after בְּנֵי יְהוֹדָה points, viz. that the two classes, Jeshua with his sons and brethren, and Kadmiel with his sons, were more closely connected with each other than with the sons of Henadad, who formed a third class. The הַלְוִיִּם



at the end of the enumeration offers no argument for the transposition of the words, though this addition pertains not only to the sons of Henadad, but also to the two first classes. עֲשֵׂה הֵם is plural, and only an unusual reading for עָשָׂה; see on 1 Chron. xxiii. 24.—Ver. 10. When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they (Zerubbabel and Joshua, the heads of the community) set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD after the ordinance of David. The perf. וַיִּסְרוּ, followed by an imperf. connected by a *Vav* consecutive, must be construed: When they laid the foundations, then. מִלְּבָשִׁים, clothed, *sc.* in their robes of office; comp. 2 Chron. v. 12, xx. 21. עַל יָדֵי as 1 Chron. xxv. 2. On ver. 11, comp. remarks on 1 Chron. xvi. 34, 41, 2 Chron. v. 13, vii. 3, and elsewhere. Older expositors (Clericus, J. H. Mich.), referring to Ex. xv. 21, understand וַיַּעֲנֵי בְּהִלָּל of the alternative singing of two choirs, one of which sang, "Praise the Lord, for He is good;" and the other responded, "And His mercy endureth for ever." In the present passage, however, there is no decided allusion to responsive singing; hence (with Bertheau) we take יַעֲנֵי in the sense of, "They sang to the Lord with hymns of thanksgiving." Probably they sang such songs as Ps. cvi., cvii., or cxviii., which commence with an invitation to praise the Lord because He is good, etc. All the people, moreover, raised a loud shout of joy. תְּרוּעָה גְדוֹלָה is repeated in ver. 13 by תְּרוּעַת הַשְּׂמֵחָה. עַל הוֹסֵר, on account of the founding, of the foundation-laying, of the house of the Lord. הוֹסֵר as in 2 Chron. iii. 3.—Ver. 12. But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the people, the old men who had seen (also) the former temple, at the foundation of this house before their eyes (*i.e.* when they saw the foundation of this house laid), wept with a loud voice. Solomon's temple was destroyed B.C. 588, and the foundation of the subsequent temple laid B.C. 535 or 534: hence the older men among those present at the latter event might possibly have seen the former house; indeed, some (according to Hagg. ii. 2) were still living in the second year of Darius

Hystaspis who had beheld the glory of the earlier building. Upon these aged men, the miserable circumstances under which the foundations of the new temple were laid produced so overwhelming an impression, that they broke into loud weeping. **בִּיסָרוֹ** is connected by its accents with the words preceding: the former temple in its foundation, *i.e.* in its stability. But this can scarcely be correct. For not only does no noun **יָסַר**, foundation, occur further on; but even the following words, “of this house before their eyes,” if severed from **בִּיסָרוֹ**, have no meaning. Hence (with Aben Ezra, Cler., Berth., and others) we connect **בִּיסָרוֹ** with the parenthetical sentence following, “when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes;” and then the suffix of the infinitive **יָסַרְוֹ** expressly refers to the object following, as is sometimes the case in Hebrew, *e.g.* 2 Chron. xxvi. 14, Ezra ix. 1, and mostly in Chaldee; comp. Ew. § 209, *c*, “But many were in rejoicing and joy to raise their voices,” *i.e.* many so joyed and rejoiced that they shouted aloud.—Ver. 13. And the people could not discern (distinguish) the loud cry of joy in the midst of (beside) the loud weeping of the people; for the people rejoiced with loud rejoicings, and the sound was heard afar off. The meaning is not, that the people could not hear the loud weeping of the older priests, Levites, and heads of the people, because it was overpowered by the loud rejoicings of the multitude. The verse, on the contrary, contains a statement that among the people also (the assembly exclusive of priests, Levites, and chiefs) a shout of joy and a voice of weeping arose; but that the shouting for joy of the multitude was so loud, that the sounds of rejoicing and weeping could not be distinguished from each other. **הִבִּיר**, with the acc. and **לְ**, to perceive something in the presence of (along with) another, *i.e.* to distinguish one thing from another. “The people could not discern” means: Among the multitude the cry of joy could not be distinguished from the noise of weeping. **עַד לְמַרְחֹק** as 2 Chron. xxvi. 15.



CHAP. IV.—HINDRANCES TO BUILDING THE TEMPLE.  
ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE JEWS CONCERNING THE  
BUILDING OF THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

Vers. 1-5. The adversaries of the Jews prevent the building of the temple till the reign of Darius (vers. 1, 2). When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the community which had returned from captivity were beginning to rebuild the temple, they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chiefs of the people, and desired to take part in this work, because they also sacrificed to the God of Israel. These adversaries were, according to ver. 2, the people whom Esarhaddon king of Assyria had settled in the neighbourhood of Benjamin and Judah. If we compare with this verse the information (2 Kings xvii. 24) that the kings of Assyria brought men from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria, and that they took possession of the depopulated kingdom of the ten tribes, and dwelt therein; then these adversaries of Judah and Benjamin are the inhabitants of the former kingdom of Israel, who were called Samaritans after the central-point of their settlement. בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה, sons of the captivity (vi. 19, etc., viii. 35, x. 7, 16), also shortly into הַגּוֹלָה, *e.g.* i. 11, are the Israelites returned from the Babylonian captivity, who composed the new community in Judah and Jerusalem. Those who returned with Zerubbabel, and took possession of the dwelling-places of their ancestors, being, exclusive of priests and Levites, chiefly members of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, are called, especially when named in distinction from the other inhabitants of the land, Judah and Benjamin. The adversaries give the reason of their request to share in the building of the temple in the words: "For we seek your God as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, which brought us up hither." The words וְלֹא אֲנַחְנוּ זִבְחִים are variously explained. Older expositors take the Chethiv וְלֹא as a negative, and make זִבְחִים to mean the offering of sacrifices to idols, both because

לֹא is a negative, and also because the assertion that they had sacrificed to Jahve would not have pleased the Jews, *quia deficiente templo non debuerint sacrificare*; and sacrifices not offered in Jerusalem were regarded as equivalent to sacrifices to idols. They might, moreover, fitly strengthen their case by the remark: "Since the days of Esarhaddon we offer no sacrifices to idols." On the other hand, however, it is arbitrary to understand לֹא, without any further definition, of sacrificing to idols; and the statement, "We already sacrifice to the God of Israel," contains undoubtedly a far stronger reason for granting their request than the circumstance that they do not sacrifice to idols. Hence we incline, with older translators (LXX., Syr., Vulg., 1 Esdras), to regard לֹא as an unusual form of לוֹ, occurring in several places (see on Ex. xxi. 8), the latter being also substituted in the present instance as Keri. The position also of לֹא before אֶנְחֵנוּ points the same way, for the negative would certainly have stood with the verb. On Esarhaddon, see remarks on 2 Kings xix. 37 and Isa. xxxvii. 38.—Ver. 3. Zerubbabel and the other chiefs of Israel answer, "It is not for you and for us to build a house to our God;" *i.e.*, You and we cannot together build a house to the God who is our God; "but we alone will build it to Jahve the God of Israel, as King Cyrus commanded us." אֶנְחֵנוּ יַחַד, we together, *i.e.* we alone (without your assistance). By the emphasis placed upon "our God" and "Jahve the God of Israel," the assertion of the adversaries, "We seek your God as ye do," is indirectly refuted. If Jahve is the God of Israel, He is not the God of those whom Esarhaddon brought into the land. The appeal to the decree of Cyrus (i. 3, comp. iii. 6, etc.) forms a strong argument for the sole agency of Jews in building the temple, inasmuch as Cyrus had invited those only who were of His (Jahve's) people (i. 3). Hence the leaders of the new community were legally justified in rejecting the proposal of the colonists brought in by Esarhaddon. For the latter were neither members of the people of Jahve, nor Israelites, nor genuine worshippers of Jahve. They were non-Israelites, and designated themselves



as those whom the king of Assyria had brought into the land. According to 2 Kings xvii. 24, the king of Assyria brought colonists from Babylon, Cuthah, and other places, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel. Now we cannot suppose that every Israelite, to the very last man, was carried away by the Assyrians; such a deportation of a conquered people being unusual, and indeed impossible. Apart, then, from the passage, 2 Chron. xxx. 6, etc., which many expositors refer to the time of the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, we find that in the time of King Josiah (2 Chron. xxxiv. 9), when the foreign colonists had been for a considerable period in the country, there were still remnants of Manasseh, of Ephraim, and of all Israel, who gave contributions for the house of God at Jerusalem; and also that in 2 Kings xxiii. 15-20 and 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, a remnant of the Israelite inhabitants still existed in the former territory of the ten tribes. The eighty men, too, who (Jer. xli. 5, etc.) came, after the destruction of the temple, from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria, mourning, and bringing offerings and incense to Jerusalem, to the place of the house of God, which was still a holy place to them, were certainly Israelites of the ten tribes still left in the land, and who had probably from the days of Josiah adhered to the temple worship. These remnants, however, of the Israelite inhabitants in the territories of the former kingdom of the ten tribes, are not taken into account in the present discussion concerning the erection of the temple; because, however considerable their numbers might be, they formed no community independent of the colonists, but were dispersed among them, and without political influence. It is not indeed impossible "that the colonists were induced through the influence exercised upon them by the Israelites living in their midst to prefer to the Jews the request, 'Let us build with you;' still those who made the proposal were not Israelites, but the foreign colonists" (Bertheau). These were neither members of the chosen people nor worshippers of the God of Israel. At their first settlement (2 Kings xvii. 24, etc.) they evidently

feared not the Lord, nor did they learn to do so till the king of Assyria, at their request, sent them one of the priests who had been carried away to teach them the manner of worshipping the God of the land. This priest, being a priest of the Israelitish calf-worship, took up his abode at Bethel, and taught them to worship Jahve under the image of a golden calf. Hence arose a worship which is thus described, 2 Kings xvii. 29-33: Every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans, *i.e.* the former inhabitants of the kingdom of the ten tribes, had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And besides their idols Nergal, Asima, Nibhaz, Tartak, they feared Jahve; they sacrificed to all these gods as well as to Him. A mixed worship which the prophet-historian (2 Kings xvii. 34) thus condemns: "They fear not the Lord, and do after their statutes and ordinances, not after the law and commandment which the Lord commanded to the sons of Jacob." And so, it is finally said (ver. 41), do also their children and children's children unto this day, *i.e.* about the middle of the Babylonian captivity; nor was it till a subsequent period that the Samaritans renounced gross idolatry. The rulers and heads of Judah could not acknowledge *that* Jahve whom the colonists worshipped as a local god, together with other gods, in the houses of the high places at Bethel and elsewhere, to be the God of Israel, to whom they were building a temple at Jerusalem. For the question was not whether they would permit Israelites who earnestly sought Jahve to participate in His worship at Jerusalem,—a permission which they certainly would have refused to none who sincerely desired to turn to the Lord God,—but whether they would acknowledge a mixed population of Gentiles and Israelites, whose worship was more heathen than Israelite, and who nevertheless claimed on its account to belong to the people of God.<sup>1</sup> To such, the

<sup>1</sup> The opinion of Knobel, that those who preferred the request were not the heathen colonists placed in the cities of Samaria by the Assyrian king (2 Kings xvii. 24), but the priests sent by the Assyrian king to Samaria (2 Kings xvii. 27), has been rejected as utterly unfounded by



rulers of Judah could not, without unfaithfulness to the Lord their God, permit a participation in the building of the Lord's house.

Ver. 4. In consequence of this refusal, the adversaries of Judah sought to weaken the hands of the people, and to deter them from building. עַם הָאָרֶץ, the people of the land, *i.e.* the inhabitants of the country, the colonists dwelling in the land, the same who in ver. 1 are called the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin. וַיְהִי followed by the participle expresses the continuance of the inimical attempts. To weaken the hands of any one, means to deprive him of strength and courage for action; comp. Jer. xxxviii. 4. עַם יְהוּדָה are the inhabitants of the realm of Judah, who, including the Benjamites, had returned from captivity, Judah being now used to designate the whole territory of the new community, as before the captivity the entire southern kingdom; comp. ver. 6. Instead of the Chethiv מְבַלְהִים, the Keri offers מְבַהֲלִים, from בָּהַל, *Piel*, to terrify, to alarm, 2 Chron. xxxii. 18, Job xxi. 6, because the verb בָּלָה nowhere else occurs; but the noun בְּלָהָה, fear, being not uncommon, and presupposing the existence of a verb בָּלָה, the correctness of the Chethiv cannot be impugned.—Ver. 5. And they hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose (of building the temple). וְסֹכְרִים still depends on the וַיְהִי of ver. 4. סָכַר is a later orthography of שָׂכַר, to hire, to bribe. Whether by the hiring of יוֹעֲצִיִּים we are to understand the corruption of royal counsellors or ministers, or the appointment of legal agents to act against the Jewish community at the Persian court, and to endeavour to obtain an inhibition against the erection of the temple, does not appear. Thus much only is evident from the text, that the adversaries succeeded in frustrating the continuance of the building “all the days of Koresh,” *i.e.* the yet remaining five years of Cyrus, who was for the space of seven years sole ruler of Babylon; while the machinations against the building, begun immediately after the laying of Bertheau, who at the same time demonstrates, against Fritzsche on 1 Esdr. v. 65, the identity of the unnamed king of Assyria (2 Kings xvii. 24) with Esarhaddon.

its foundations in the second year of the return, had the effect, in the beginning of the third year of Cyrus (judging from Dan. x. 2), of putting a stop to the work until the reign of Darius, —in all, fourteen years, viz. five years of Cyrus, seven and a half of Cambyses, seven months of the Pseudo-Smerdis, and one year of Darius (till the second year of his reign).

Vers. 6–23. *Complaints against the Jews to Kings Ahashverosh and Artachshasta.*—The right understanding of this section depends upon the question, What kings of Persia are meant by Ahashverosh and Artachshasta? while the answer to this question is, in part at least, determined by the contents of the letter, 8–16, sent by the enemies of the Jews to the latter monarch.—Ver. 6. And in the reign of Ahashverosh, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. שְׁטִנָּה, not to mention the name of the well, Gen. xxvi. 21, occurs here only, and means, according to its derivation from שָׁטַן, to bear enmity, the enmity; hence here, the accusation. שְׁטִנָּה עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל belongs to שְׁטִנָּה, not to בְּתָבִי; the letter was sent, not to the inhabitants of Judah, but to the king against the Jews. The contents of this letter are not given, but may be inferred from the designation שְׁטִנָּה. The letter to Artachshasta then follows, 7–16. In his days, *i.e.* during his reign, wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions. בְּנוֹתָיו, for which the Keri offers the ordinary form בְּנוֹתָיו, occurs only here in the Hebrew sections, but more frequently in the Chaldee (comp. iv. 9, 17, 23, v. 3, and elsewhere), in the sense of companions or fellow-citizens; according to Gesenius, it means those who bear the same surname (Kunje) together with another, though Ewald is of a different opinion; see § 117, *b*, note. The singular would be written בֶּנִּית (Ewald, § 187, *d*). And the writing of the letter was written in Aramæan (*i.e.* with Aramæan characters), and interpreted in (*i.e.* translated into) Aramæan. נִשְׁתָּרְךְ is of Aryan origin, and connected with the modern Persian نوشتن *nuwishten*, to write together; it signifies in Hebrew and Chaldee a letter: comp. ver. 18, where נִשְׁתָּרְךְ



is used for אֲנִירָא of ver. 11. Bertheau translates כְּתָב הַנִּשְׁתָּן, copy of the letter, and regards it as quite identical with the Chaldee פִּרְשָׁן אֲנִירָא, ver. 11; he can hardly, however, be in the right. כְּתָב does not mean a transcript or copy, but only a writing (comp. Esth. iv. 8). This, too, does away with the inference "that the writer of this statement had before him only an Aramæan translation of the letter contained in the state-papers or chronicles which he made use of." It is not כְּתָב, the copy or writing, but הַנִּשְׁתָּן, the letter, that is the subject of מְתַרְגֵּם אֲרָמִית, interpreted in Aramæan. This was translated into the Aramæan or Syrian tongue. The passage is not to be understood as stating that the letter was drawn up in the Hebrew or Samaritan tongue, and then translated into Aramæan, but simply that the letter was not composed in the native language of the writers, but in Aramæan. Thus Gesenius rightly asserts, in his *Thes.* p. 1264, *et lingua aramæa scripta erat*; in saying which תַּרְגֹּם does not receive the meaning *concepit, expressit*, but retains its own signification, to interpret, to translate into another language. The writers of the letter were Samaritans, who, having sprung from the intermingling of the Babylonian settlers brought in by Esarhaddon and the remnants of the Israelitish population, spoke a language more nearly akin to Hebrew than to Aramæan, which was spoken at the Babylonian court, and was the official language of the Persian kings and the Persian authorities in Western Asia. This Aramæan tongue had also its own characters, differing from those of the Hebrew and Samaritan. This is stated by the words כְּתוּב אֲרָמִית, whence Bertheau erroneously infers that this Aramæan writing was written in other than the ordinary Aramæan, and perhaps in Hebrew characters. This letter, too, of Bishlam and his companions seems to be omitted. There follows, indeed, in ver. 8, etc., a letter to King Artachshasta, of which a copy is given in vers. 11-16; but the names of the writers are different from those mentioned in ver. 7. The three names, Bishlam, Mithredath, and Tabeel (ver. 7), cannot be identified with the two names Rehum and Shimshai (ver. 8).

When we consider, however, that the writers named in ver. 8 were high officials of the Persian king, sending to the monarch a written accusation against the Jews in their own and their associates' names, it requires but little stretch of the imagination to suppose that these personages were acting at the instance of the adversaries named in ver. 7, the Samaritans Bishlam, Mithredath, and Tabeel, and merely inditing the complaints raised by these opponents against the Jews. This view, which is not opposed by the כְּתָב of ver. 7,—this word not necessarily implying an autograph,—commends itself to our acceptance, first, because the notion that the contents of this letter are not given finds no analogy in ver. 6, where the contents of the letter to Ahashverosh are sufficiently hinted at by the word שְׁטָנָה; while, with regard to the letter of ver. 7, we should have not a notion of its purport in case it were not the same which is given in ver. 8, etc.<sup>1</sup> Besides, the statement concerning the Aramæan composition of this letter would have been utterly purposeless if the Aramæan letter following in ver. 8 had been an entirely different one. The information concerning the language in which the letter was written has obviously no other motive than to introduce its transcription in the original Aramæan. This conjecture becomes a certainty through the fact that the Aramæan letter follows in ver. 8 without a copula of any kind. If any other had been intended, the copulative would no more have been omitted here than in ver. 7. The letter itself, indeed, does not begin till ver. 9,

<sup>1</sup> The weight of this argument is indirectly admitted by Ewald (*Gesch.* iv. p. 119) and Bertheau, inasmuch as both suppose that there is a long gap in the narrative, and regard the Aramæan letter mentioned in ver. 7 to have been a petition, on the part of persons of consideration in the community at Jerusalem, to the new king,—two notions which immediately betray themselves to be the expedients of perplexity. The supposed "long gaps, which the chronicler might well leave even in transcribing from his documents" (Ew.), do not explain the abrupt commencement of ver. 8. If a petition from the Jewish community to the king were spoken of in ver. 7, the accusation against the Jews in ver. 8 would certainly have been alluded to by at least a adversative, or some other adversative particle.



while ver. 8 contains yet another announcement of it. This circumstance, however, is explained by the fact that the writers of the letters are other individuals than those named in ver. 7, but chiefly by the consideration that the letter, together with the king's answer, being derived from an Aramæan account of the building of the temple, the introduction to the letter found therein was also transcribed.

Ver. 8, etc. The writers of the letter are designated by titles which show them to have been among the higher functionaries of Artachshasta. Rehum is called *בַּעַל טַעַם*, *dominus consilii v. decreti*, by others *consiliarius*, royal counsellor, probably the title of the Persian civil governor (erroneously taken for a proper name in LXX., Syr., Arab.); Shimshai, *סִפְרָא*, the Hebrew *סוֹפֵר*, scribe, secretary. *בִּנְיָמָא* is interpreted by Rashi and Aben Ezra by *בְּאִשְׁרֵי נְאֻמֵּי*, as we shall say; *נְאֻמָּא* is in the Talmud frequently an abbreviation of *נְאֻמֵּי* or *נִימֵי*, of like signification with *לְאֻמֵּי*: as follows. —Ver. 9. After this introduction we naturally look for the letter itself in ver. 9, instead of which we have (9 and 10) a full statement of who were the senders; and then, after a parenthetical interpolation, "This is the copy of the letter," etc., the letter itself in ver. 11. The statement is rather a clumsy one, the construction especially exhibiting a want of sequence. The verb *אֲרָן* is wanting; this follows in ver. 11, but as an anacoluthon, after an enumeration of the names in 9 and 10 with *שְׁלָחֵי*. The sentence ought properly to run thus: "Then (*i.e.* in the days of Artachshasta) Rehum, etc., sent a letter to King Artachshasta, of which the following is a copy: Thy servants, the men on this side the river," etc. The names enumerated in vers. 9 and 10 were undoubtedly all inserted in the superscription or preamble of the letter, to give weight to the accusation brought against the Jews. The author of the Chaldee section of the narrative, however, has placed them first, and made the copy of the letter itself begin only with the words, "Thy servants," etc. First come the names of the superior officials, Rehum and Shimshai, and the rest of their companions. The latter are then separately enumerated: the Dinaïtes,

LXX. *Δειναῖοι*,—so named, according to the conjecture of Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 676), from the Median city long afterwards called Deinaver (Abulf. *Géogr.* ed. Paris, p. 414); the Apharsathchites, probably the Pharathiakites of Strabo (xv. 3. 12) (*Παρητακηνοί*, Herod. i. 101), on the borders of Persia and Media, described as being, together with the Elymaites, a predatory people relying on their mountain fastnesses; the Tarpelites, whom Junius already connects with the *Τάπουροι* dwelling east of Elymais (Ptol. vi. 2. 6); the Apharsites, probably the Persians (פרסיא with א prosthetic); the Archevites, probably so called from the city אַרְכָּה, Gen. x. 10, upon inscriptions Uruk, the modern Warka; the בְּבֶלְיָא, Babylonians, inhabitants of Babylon; the Shushanchites, *i.e.* the Susanites, inhabitants of the city of Susa; שֻשַׁנַּיָּא, in the Keri שֻשַׁנַּיָּא, the Dehavites, the Grecians (*Δάοι*, Herod. i. 125); and lastly, the Elamites, the people of Elam or Elymais. Full as this enumeration may seem, yet the motive being to name as many races as possible, the addition, “and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnapper brought over and set in the city of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river,” etc., is made for the sake of enhancing the statement. Prominence being given both here and ver. 17 to the city of Samaria as the city in which Osnapper had settled the colonists here named, the “nations brought in by Osnapper” must be identical with those who, according to ver. 2, and 2 Kings xvii. 24, had been placed in the cities of Samaria by King Esarhaddon. Hence Osnapper would seem to be merely another name for Esarhaddon. But the names Osnapper (LXX. Ἀσσεναφάρ) and Asarhaddon (LXX. Ἀσαραδάν) being too different to be identified, and the notion that Osnapper was a second name of Asarhaddon having but little probability, together with the circumstance that Osnapper is not called king, as Asarhaddon is ver. 2, but only “the great and noble,” it is more likely that he was some high functionary of Asarhaddon, who presided over the settlement of eastern races in Samaria and the lands west of the Euphrates. “In the cities,” or at least the preposition בְּ, must be supplied from the preceding בְּקָרְיָה.



before עֵבֶר נְהָרָה: and in the rest of the territory, or in the cities of the rest of the territory, on this side of Euphrates. עֵבֶר, *trans*, is to be understood of the countries west of Euphrates; matters being regarded from the point of view of the settlers, who had been transported from the territories east, to those west of Euphrates. וּבְעֵתָהּ means “and so forth,” and hints that the statement is not complete.

On comparing the names of the nations here mentioned with the names of the cities from which, according to 2 Kings xvii. 24, colonists were brought to Samaria, we find the inhabitants of most of the cities there named—Babylon, Cuthah, and Ava—here comprised under the name of the country as בְּבִלְיָא, Babylonians; while the people of Hamath and Sepharvaim may fitly be included among “the rest of the nations,” since certainly but few colonists would have been transported from the Syrian Hamath to Samaria. The main divergence between the two passages arises from the mention in our present verse, not only of the nations planted in the cities of Samaria, but of all the nations in the great region on this side of Euphrates (עֵבֶר נְהָרָה). All these tribes had similar interests to defend in opposing the Jewish community, and they desired by united action to give greater force to their representation to the Persian monarch, and thus to hinder the people of Jerusalem from becoming powerful. And certainly they had some grounds for uneasiness lest the remnant of the Israelites in Palestine, and in other regions on this side the Euphrates, should combine with the Jerusalem community, and the thus united Israelites should become sufficiently powerful to oppose an effectual resistance to their heathen adversaries. On the anacoluthistic connection of ver. 11, see remarks above, p. 65. פְּרִשְׁתָּן, vers. 11, 23, ch. v. 6, vii. 11, and frequently in the Targums and the Syriac, written פְּרִשְׁתָּן Esth. iii. 14 and iv. 8, is derived from the Zendish *paiti* (Sanscr. *prati*) and *çenghana* (in Old-Persian *thanhana*), and signifies properly a counterword, *i.e.* counterpart, copy. The form with ר is either a corruption, or formed from a compound with *fra*; comp. Gildemeister in the *Zeitschr. für die Kunde des Morgenl.* iv. p. 210, and Haug in Ewald's

*bibl. Jahrb.* v. p. 163, etc.—The copy of the letter begins with עֲבָדֶיךָ, thy servants, the men, etc. The Chethib עֲבָדֶיךָ is the original form, shortened in the Keri into עֲבָדֶיךָ. Both forms occur elsewhere; comp. Dan. ii. 29, iii. 12, and other passages. The וּבְעֵנָת, etc., here stands for the full enumeration of the writers already given in ver. 9, and also for the customary form of salutation.—Vers. 12–16. The letter. Ver. 12. “Be it known unto the king.” On the form לַחֲוָה for יְהוָה, peculiar to biblical Chaldee, see remarks on Dan. ii. 20. “Which are come up from thee,” *i.e.* from the territory where thou art tarrying; in other words, from the country beyond Euphrates. This by no means leads to the inference, as Schrader supposes, that these Jews had been transported from Babylon to Jerusalem by King Artachshasta. מְלַק answers to the Hebrew עָלָה, and is used like this of the journey to Jerusalem. “Are come to us, to Jerusalem.” עֲלֵינוּ, to us, that is, into the parts where we dwell, is more precisely defined by the words “to Jerusalem.” “They are building the rebellious and bad city, and are setting up its walls and digging its foundations.” Instead of מְרֻדָּתָא (with Kamets and Metheg under ר) the edition of J. H. Mich. has מְרֻדָּתָא, answering to the *stat. abs.* מְרֻדָּא, ver. 15; on the other hand, the edition of Norzi and several codices read מְרֻדָּתָא, the feminine of מְרֻד. For בְּאִישָׁתָא Norzi has בְּאִישָׁתָא, from בְּאִישׁ, a contraction of בְּאִישׁ. For שׁוּרֵי אֲשַׁבְּלֵנוּ must be read, according to the Keri, שׁוּרֵי אֲשַׁבְּלֵנוּ. The *Shaphel* שְׁבֻל, from כָּלַל, means to complete, to finish. אֲשֵׁן, bases, foundations. יְחִיטוּ may be the imperf. Aphel of חָטַט, formed after the example of יָקִים for יִקְּים, omitting the reduplication, יְחִיט. חָטַט means to sew, to sew together, and may, like רָפָא, be understood of repairing walls or foundations. But it is more likely to be the imperf. Aphel of חָטַט, in Syriac ܚܬܬ, and in the Talmud, to dig, to dig out, *fodit, excavavit*—to dig out the foundations for the purpose of erecting new buildings.—Ver. 13. “Now be it known unto the king, that if this city be built up and . . . they will not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and it (the city) will at last bring damage to the king.” The three



words **מִנְדָּה בְּלוּ וְהִלָּךְ** occur again, ver. 20 and vii. 24, in this combination as designating the different kinds of imposts. **מִנְדָּה**, with resolved *Dagesh forte*, for **מִדָּה** (ver. 20), signifies measure, then tax or custom measured to every one. **בְּלוּ**, probably a duty on consumption, excise; **וְהִלָּךְ**, a toll paid upon roads by travellers and their goods. The word **אֶפְתָּחֶם**, which occurs only here, and has not been expressed by old translators, depends upon the Pehlevi word **אודום**: it is connected with the Sanscrit *apa*, in the superl. *apama*, and signifies at last, or in the future; comp. Haug, p. 156. **מִלְכִּים**, a Hebraized form for **מִלְכָּז**, ver. 15, is perhaps only an error of transcription.—Ver. 14. “Now, because we eat the salt of the palace, and it does not become us to see the damage of the king, we send (this letter) and make known to the king.” **מֶלֶח מֶלֶח**, to salt salt = to eat salt. To eat the salt of the palace is a figurative expression for: to be in the king’s pay. See this interpretation vindicated from the Syriac and Persian in Gesen. *thes.* p. 790.<sup>1</sup> **עֲרִיָה**, deprivation, emptying, here injury to the royal power or revenue. **אֶרִיךְ**, participle of **אָרַךְ**, answering to the Hebrew **עָרַךְ**, means fitting, becoming.—Ver. 15. “That search may be made in the book of the chronicles of thy fathers, so shalt thou find in the book of the Chronicles that this city has been a rebellious city, and hurtful to kings and countries, and that they have from of old stirred up sedition within it, on which account this city was (also) destroyed.” **יִבְקֹר** is used impersonally: let one seek, let search be made. **סֵפֶר דְּכִרְוֵיָא**, book of records, is the public royal chronicle in which the chief events of the history of the realm were recorded, called Esth. vi. 1 the book of the records of daily events. *Thy* fathers are the predecessors of the king, *i.e.* his predecessors in government; therefore not merely the Median and Persian, but the Chaldean and Assyrian kings, to whose dominions the Persian monarchs had succeeded. **אִשְׁתַּדִּיר**, a verbal noun from the

<sup>1</sup> Luther, in translating “all we who destroyed the temple,” follows the Rabbis, who, from the custom of scattering salt upon destroyed places, Judg. ix. 45, understood these words as an expression figurative of destruction, and **הַיְכָלָא** as the temple.

Ithpeal of שָׁדַר, rebellion. מִן יוֹמָא עֲלָמָא, from the days of eternity, *i.e.* from time immemorial. יוֹמָא is in the constructive state, plural, formed from the singular יוֹמָא. This form occurs only here and ver. 19, but is analogous with the Hebrew poetical form יָמוֹת for יָמִים.—Ver. 16. After thus casting suspicion upon the Jews as a seditious people, their adversaries bring the accusation, already raised at the beginning of the letter, to a climax, by saying that if Jerusalem is rebuilt and fortified, the king will lose his supremacy over the lands on this side the river. לְקַבֵּל דְּנָה, on this account, for this reason, that the present inhabitants of the fortified city Jerusalem are like its former inhabitants, thou wilt have no portion west of Euphrates, *i.e.* thou wilt have nothing more to do with the countries on this side the river—wilt forfeit thy sway over these districts.

Vers. 17–22. The royal answer to this letter. פִּתְנָמָא—a word which has also passed into the Hebrew, Eccles. viii. 11, Esth. i. 20—is the Zend. *patigama*, properly that which is to take place, the decree, the sentence; see on Dan. iii. 16. וְשָׂאָר עִבְרֵי נִ still depends upon בָּ: those dwelling in Samaria and the other towns on this side the river. The royal letter begins with שְׁלָם וְכֶעֱת, “Peace,” and so forth. כֶּעֱת is abbreviated from כְּעֶנֶת.—Ver. 18. “The letter which you sent to us has been plainly read before me.” מְפָרֵשׁ, part. pass. Pael, corresponds with the Hebrew part. Piel מְפָרֵשׁ, made plain, adverbially, plainly, and does not signify “translated into Persian.”—Ver. 19. “And by me a command has been given, and search has been made; and it has been found that this city from of old hath lifted itself (risen) up against kings,” etc. מִתְנַשֵּׂא, lifted itself up rebelliously, as (in Hebrew) in 1 Kings i. 5.—Ver. 20. “There have been powerful kings in Jerusalem, and (rulers) exercising dominion over the whole region beyond the river” (westward of Euphrates). This applies in its full extent only to David and Solomon, and in a less degree to subsequent kings of Israel and Judah. On ver. 20b, comp. ver. 13.—Ver. 21. “Give ye now commandment to hinder these people (to keep them from the work), that this city be not built until



command (*sc.* to build) be given from me.” יִתְּשֶׁם, Ithpeal of שָׁם.—Ver. 22. “And be warned from committing an oversight in this respect,” *i.e.* take heed to overlook nothing in this matter (וְהִירָ, instructed, warned). “Why should the damage become great (*i.e.* grow), to bring injury to kings?” —Ver. 23. The result of this royal command. As soon as the copy of the letter was read before Rehum and his associates, they went up in haste to Jerusalem to the Jews, and hindered them by violence and force. אֶדְרָע with א prosthetic only here, elsewhere דָּרַע (= וְרָע), arm, violence. Bertheau translates, “with forces and a host;” but the rendering of אֶדְרָע or וְרָע by “force” can neither be shown to be correct from Ezek. xvii. 9 and Dan. xi. 15, 31, nor justified by the translation of the LXX., ἐν ἰπποῖς καὶ δυνάμει.

Ver. 24. “Then ceased the work of the house of God at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of Darius king of Persia.” With this statement the narrator returns to the notice in ver. 5, that the adversaries of Judah succeeded in delaying the building of the temple till the reign of King Darius, which he takes up, and now adds the more precise information that it ceased till the *second year* of King Darius. The intervening section, vers. 6–23, gives a more detailed account of those accusations against the Jews made by their adversaries to kings Ahashverosh and Artachshasta. If we read vers. 23 and 24 as successive, we get an impression that the discontinuation to build mentioned in ver. 24 was the effect and consequence of the prohibition obtained from King Artachshasta, through the complaints brought against the Jews by his officials on this side the river; the בְּאַרְיָן of ver. 24 seeming to refer to the אֶרֶץ of ver. 23. Under this impression, older expositors have without hesitation referred the contents of vers. 6–23 to the interruption to the building of the temple during the period from Cyrus to Darius, and understood the two names Ahashverosh and Artachshasta as belonging to Cambyses and (Pseudo) Smerdis, the monarchs who reigned between Cyrus and Darius. Grave objections to this view have, however, been raised by Kleinert (in the *Beiträgen der Dorpater Prof. d.*

*Theol.* 1832, vol. i.) and J. W. Schultz (*Cyrus der Grosse*, in *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1853, p. 624, etc.), who have sought to prove that none but the Persian kings Xerxes and Artaxerxes can be meant by Ahashverosh and Artachshasta, and that the section vers. 6-23 relates not to the building of the temple, but to the building of the walls of Jerusalem, and forms an interpolation or episode, in which the historian makes the efforts of the adversaries of Judah to prevent the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem under Xerxes and Artaxerxes follow immediately after his statement of their attempt to hinder the building of the temple, for the sake of presenting at one glance a view of all their machinations against the Jews. This view has been advocated not only by Vaihinger, "On the Elucidation of the History of Israel after the Captivity," in the *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1857, p. 87, etc., and Bertheau in his Commentary on this passage, but also by Hengstenberg, *Christol.* iii. p. 143, Auberlen, and others, and opposed by Ewald in the 2d edition of his *Gesch. Israels*, iv. p. 118, where he embraces the older explanation of these verses, and A. Koehler on Haggai, p. 20. On reviewing the arguments advanced in favour of the more modern view, we can lay no weight at all upon the circumstance that in 6-23 the building of the temple is not spoken of. The contents of the letter sent to Ahashverosh (ver. 6) are not stated; in that to Artachshasta (vers. 11-16) the writers certainly accuse the Jews of building the rebellious and bad city (Jerusalem), of setting up its walls and digging out its foundations (ver. 12); but the whole document is so evidently the result of ardent hatred and malevolent suspicion, that well-founded objections to the truthfulness of these accusations may reasonably be entertained. Such adversaries might, for the sake of more surely attaining their end of obstructing the work of the Jews, easily represent the act of laying the foundations and building the walls of the temple as a rebuilding of the town walls. The answer of the king, too (vers. 17-22), would naturally treat only of such matters as the accusers had mentioned. The argument derived from the names of the kings is of far more importance.



The name אֲחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ (in ver. 6) occurs also in the book of Esther, where, as is now universally acknowledged, the Persian king Xerxes is meant; and in Dan. ix. 1, as the name of the Median king Kyaxares. In the cuneiform inscriptions the name is in Old-Persian *Ksaryarsa*, in Assyrian *Hisiarsi*, in which it is easy to recognise both the Hebrew form Ahashverosh, and the Greek forms *Ξέρξης* and *Κυαξάρης*. On the other hand, the name Cambyses (Old-Persian *Kambudshja*) offers no single point of identity; the words are radically different, whilst nothing is known of Cambyses having ever borne a second name or surname similar in sound to the Hebrew Ahashverosh. The name Artachshasta, moreover, both in Esth. vii. and viii., and in the book of Nehemiah, undoubtedly denotes the monarch known as *Artaxerxes* (*Longimanus*). It is, indeed, in both these books written אֲרַתַחֲשֶׁשְׁתָּא with ס, and in the present section, and in vi. 14, אֲרַתַחֲשֶׁשְׁתָּא; but this slight difference of orthography is no argument for difference of person, אֲרַתַחֲשֶׁשְׁתָּא seeming to be a mode of spelling the word peculiar to the author of the Chaldee section, Ezra iv.–vi. Two other names, indeed, of Smerdis, the successor of *Cambyses*, have been handed down to us. According to Xenophon, *Cyrop.* viii. 7, and Ktesias, *Pers. fr.* 8–13, he is said to have been called *Tanyoxares*, and according to *Justin* *hist.* i. 9, *Oropastes*; and Ewald is of opinion that the latter name is properly *Ortosastes*, which might answer to Artachshasta. It is also not improbable that Smerdis may, as king, have assumed the name of Artachshasta, *Ἀρταξέρξης*, which Herodotus (vi. 98) explains by μέγας ἀρχῆος. But neither this possibility, nor the opinion of Ewald, that *Ortosastes* is the correct reading for *Oropastes* in *Just. hist.* i. 9, can lay any claim to probability, unless other grounds also exist for the identification of Artachshasta with Smerdis. Such grounds, however, are wanting; while, on the other hand, it is *à priori* improbable that Ps. Smerdis, who reigned but about seven months, should in this short period have pronounced such a decision concerning the matter of building the temple of Jerusalem, as we read in the letter of Artachshasta, 17–22, even if the adversaries of the Jews

should, though residing in Palestine, have laid their complaints before him, immediately after his accession to the throne. When we consider also the great improbability of Ahashverosh being a surname of Cambyses, we feel constrained to embrace the view that the section 6-23 is an episode inserted by the historian, on the occasion of narrating the interruption to the building of the temple, brought about by the enemies of the Jews, and for the sake of giving a short and comprehensive view of all the hostile acts against the Jewish community on the part of the Samaritans and surrounding nations.

The contents and position of ver. 24 may easily be reconciled with this view, which also refutes as unfounded the assertion of Herzfeld, *Gesch. des Volkes Israel*, i. p. 303, and Schrader, p. 469, that the author of the book of Ezra himself erroneously refers the document given, vers. 6-23, to the erection of the temple, instead of to the subsequent building of the walls of Jerusalem. For, to say nothing of the contents of vers. 6-23, although it may seem natural to refer the וְהָיָה of ver. 24 to ver. 23, it cannot be affirmed that this reference is either necessary or the only one allowable. The assertion that וְהָיָה is “*always* connected with that which *immediately* precedes,” cannot be strengthened by an appeal to v. 2, vi. 1, Dan. ii. 14, 46, iii. 3, and other passages. וְהָיָה, then (= at that time), in contradistinction to וְהָיָה, thereupon, only refers a narrative, in a general manner, to the time spoken of in that which precedes it. When, then, it is said, then, or at that time, the work of the house of God ceased (ver. 24), the then can only refer to what was before related concerning the building of the house of God, *i.e.* to the narrative vers. 1-5. This reference of ver. 24 to vers. 1-5 is raised above all doubt, by the fact that the contents of ver. 24 are but a recapitulation of ver. 5; it being said in both, that the cessation from building the temple lasted till the reign, or, as it is more precisely stated in ver. 24, till the second year of the reign, of Darius king of Persia. With this recapitulation of the contents of ver. 5, the narrative, ver. 24, returns to the point which it had



reached at ver. 5. What lies between is thereby characterized as an illustrative episode, the relation of which to that which precedes and follows it, is to be perceived and determined solely by its contents. If, then, in this episode, we find not only that the building of the temple is not spoken of, but that letters are given addressed to the Kings Ahashverosh and Artachshasta, who, as all Ezra's contemporaries would know, reigned not before but after Darius, the very introduction of the first letter with the words, "*And in the reign of Ahashverosh*" (ver. 6), after the preceding statement, "*until the reign of Darius king of Persia*" (ver. 5), would be sufficient to obviate the misconception that letters addressed to Ahashverosh and Artachshasta related to matters which happened in the period between Cyrus and Darius Hystaspis. Concerning another objection to this view of vers. 6-23, viz. that it would be strange that King Artaxerxes, who is described to us in Ezra vii. and in Nehemiah as very favourable to the Jews, should have been for a time so prejudiced against them as to forbid the building of the town and walls of Jerusalem, we shall have an opportunity of speaking in our explanations of Neh. i.—Ver. 24, so far, then, as its matter is concerned, belongs to the following chapter, to which it forms an introduction.

CHAP. V.—THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE CONTINUED,  
AND NOTICE THEREOF SENT TO KING DARIUS.

In the second year of Darius Hystaspis (Darajavus Viçtaçpa) the prophets Zechariah and Haggai arose, and exhorted the people by words, both of reproof and encouragement, to assist in the work of rebuilding the house of God. In consequence of these prophetic admonitions, the rulers of the community resumed the work (vers. 1, 2); and the royal governor on this side the Euphrates allowed them, when in answer to his inquiries they appealed to the decree of Cyrus, to proceed with their building until the arrival of

a decision from King Darius, to whom he addressed a written report of the matter (3-17).

Vers. 1 and 2. "The prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel upon them." הַתְּנָבִי without א, which this word occasionally loses in Hebrew also, comp. 1 Sam. x. 6, 13, Jer. xxvi. 9. The epithet נְבִיאָה added to the name of Haggai serves to distinguish him from others of the same name, and as well as הַתְּנָבִי, Hagg. i. 1, 3, 12, and elsewhere, is used instead of the name of his father; hence, after Zechariah is named, the prophets, as designating the position of both, can follow. עַל־הַיְּהוּדִים, they prophesied to (not against) the Jews; עַל as in Ezek. xxxvii. 4, = אֵל, Ezek. xxxvii. 9, xxxvi. 1. The Jews in Judah and Jerusalem, in contradistinction to Jews dwelling elsewhere, especially to those who had remained in Babylon. עַל־הֶהָיוֹן belongs to אֱלֹהֵי בְשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵי, in the name of God, who was upon them, who was come upon them, had manifested Himself to them. Comp. Jer. xv. 16.—Ver. 2. "Then rose up Zerubbabel . . . and Joshua . . . and began to build the house of God at Jerusalem, and with them the prophets of God helping them." The beginning to build is (iii. 6, etc.) the commencement of the building properly so called, upon the foundations laid, iii. 10; for what was done after this foundation-laying till a stop was put to the work, was so unimportant that no further notice is taken of it. The "prophets of God" are those mentioned ver. 1, viz. Haggai, and Zechariah the son, *i.e.* grandson, of Iddo, for his father's name was Berechiah (see Introd. to Zechariah). Haggai entered upon his work on the first day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius; and his first address made such an impression, that Zerubbabel and Joshua with the people set about the intermitted work of building as early as the twenty-fourth day of the same month (comp. Hagg. i. 1 and 14 sq.). Two months later, viz. in the eighth month of the same year, Zechariah began to exhort the people to turn sincerely to the Lord their God, and not to relapse into the sins of their fathers.



Vers. 3-5. When the building was recommenced, the governor on this side Euphrates, and other royal officials, evidently informed of the undertaking by the adversaries of the Jews, made their appearance for the purpose of investigating matters on the spot. **אַתָּה עָלֶיהֶן**, came to them, to the two above-named rulers of the community at Jerusalem. Tatnai (LXX. *Θαυθαυαί*) was **פָּחָה**, viceroy, in the provinces west of Euphrates, *i.e.*, as correctly expanded in 1 Esdras, of Syria and Phœnicia, to which Judæa with its *Pecha* Zerubbabel was subordinate. With him came Shethar-Boznai, perhaps his secretary, and their companions, their subordinates. The royal officials inquired: "Who has commanded you to build this house, and to finish this wall?" The form **לְבִנָּה** here and ver. 13 is remarkable, the infinitive in Chaldee being not **בָּנָה**, but **מְבִנָּה**; compare vers. 2, 17, and vi. 8. Norzi has both times **לְבִנָּה**, as though the Dagesh *forte* were compensating for an omitted **מ**. **אַשְׁרָנָה**, which occurs only here and ver. 9, is variously explained. The Vulgate, the Syriac, and also the Rabbins, translate: these walls. This meaning best answers to the context, and is also linguistically the most correct. It can hardly, however, be derived (Gesenius) from **אַשָּׁר**, but rather from **אַשָּׁן**, in Chaldee **אַשָּׁן**, firm, strong—walls as the strength or firmness of the building. The form **אַשְׁרָנָה** has arisen from **אַשְׁנָה**, and is analogous to the form **בְּשִׁנָּה**.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 4. Then told we them after this manner (**בְּנִמָּה**, iv. 8), what were the names of the men who were building this building. From **אַמְרָנָה**, we said, it is obvious that the author of this account was an eye-witness of, and sharer in, the work of building. There is not a shadow of reason for altering **אַמְרָנָה** into **אַמְרוּ**, or into the participle **אַמְרִין** (Ew., Berth., and others); the *εἶπσαν* of the LXX. being no critical authority for so doing. The answer in ver. 4 seems not to correspond with

<sup>1</sup> The interpretations of the LXX., *τὴν χορηγίαν ταύτην*, meaning these building materials, and of 1 Esdr. vi. 4, *τὴν στέγην ταύτην καὶ τὰ ἄλλα πάντα*, this roof and all besides, for which Bertheau decides, without considering that **שְׁכַלְלָהּ** may mean to complete, and not to prepare for anything, are but conjectures.

the question in ver. 3. The royal officials asked, Who had commanded them to build? The Jews told them the names of those who had undertaken and were conducting the building. But this incongruity between question and answer is merely caused by the fact that the discussion is reported only by a short extract restricted to the principal subjects. We learn that this is the case from the contents of the letter sent by the officials to the king. According to these, the royal functionary inquired not merely concerning the author of the command to build, but asked also the names of those who were undertaking the work (comp. vers. 9 and 10); while the rulers of the Jews gave a circumstantial answer to both questions (vers. 11–15).—Ver. 5. Tatnai and Shethar-Boznai had power to prohibit them from proceeding; they allowed them, however, to go on with their work till the arrival of an answer from the king, to whom they had furnished a written report of the matter. In these dealings, the historian sees a proof of the divine protection which was watching over the building. “The eye of their God was over the elders of the Jews, that they should not restrain them (from building) till the matter came to Darius; and they should then receive a letter concerning this matter.” Bertheau incorrectly translates עַד-טַעֲמָא לִרְיָהּ: until the command of King Darius should arrive. לְ is only used as a paraphrase of the genitive in statements of time; otherwise the genitive, if not expressed by the *status construc.*, is designated by וְ or וּ. יְהִי, fut. Peal of הָלַךְ, formed by the rejection of ל, construed with לְ, signifies to go to a place (comp. vii. 13), or to come to a person. טַעֲמָא (טַעַם) does not here mean commandment, but the matter, *causa*, which the king is to decide; just as פְּתוּנָם vi. 11, means thing, *res*. The clause וְאַדְרִינִי יְהִיבִין still depends upon עַר: and till they (the royal officials) then receive a letter, *i.e.* obtain a decision.

In vers. 6–17 follows the letter which the royal officials sent to the king. Vers. 6 and 7a form the introduction to this document, and correspond with vers. 8–11 in chap. iv. Copy of the letter (comp. iv. 11) which Tatnai, etc., sent.



The senders of the letter are, besides Tatnai, Shethar-Boznai and his companions the Apharsachites, the same called iv. 9 the Apharsathchites, who perhaps, as a race specially devoted to the Persian king, took a prominent position among the settlers in Syria, and may have formed the royal garrison. After this general announcement of the letter, follows the more precise statement: They sent the matter to him; and in it was written, To King Darius, much peace. **פִּתְּנָם** here is not command, but matter; see above. **כָּלָא**, its totality, is unconnected with, yet dependent on **שְׁלָמָא**: peace in all things, in every respect. The letter itself begins with a simple representation of the state of affairs (ver. 8): "We went into the province of Judæa, to the house of the great God (for so might Persian officials speak of the God of Israel, after what they had learned from the elders of Judah of the edict of Cyrus), and it is being built with freestone, and timber is laid in the walls; and this work is being diligently carried on, and is prospering under their hands." The placing of wood in the walls refers to building beams into the wall for flooring; for the building was not so far advanced as to make it possible that this should be said of covering the walls with wainscoting. The word **אֲסַפְּרָנָא** here, and vi. 8, 12, 13, vii. 17, 21, 26, is of Aryan origin, and is explained by Haug in *Ew. Janro.* v. p. 154, from the Old-Persian *us-parna*, to mean: carefully or exactly finished,—a meaning which suits all these passages.—Ver. 9. Hereupon the royal officials asked the elders of the Jews who had commanded them to build, and inquired concerning their names, that they might write to the king the names of the leading men (see the remark on 3 and 41). **דִּי בְּרָאִישָׁהֶם** does not mean, who are at the head of them: but, who act in the capacity of heads.—Ver. 11. The answer of the elders of the Jews. They returned us answer in the following manner (**לֵאמֹר = לְמַמַּר**): "We are His, the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house which was built many years ago; and a great king of Israel built and completed it." **מִקִּדְמַת דִּנָּה**, of before this, *i.e.* before the present; to which is added the more precise de-

finition: many years (accusative of time), *i.e.* many years before the present time.—Ver. 12. For this reason (לָכֵן), because (מִן־דֵּי = מֵאִשֶּׁר, *e.g.* Isa. xliii. 4) our fathers provoked the God of heaven, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, and he (Nebuch.) destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon. For כִּסְדָּיָא the Keri requires כִּסְדָּאָה, the ordinary form of the *absolute state* of the noun in *ai*. סִתֵּר, Pael, in the sense of destroy, appears only here in biblical Chaldee, but more frequently in the Targums. עָמָה, its people, would refer to the town of Jerusalem; but Norzi and J. H. Mich. have עָמָה, and the Masora expressly says that the word is to be written without Mappik, and is therefore the *stat. emphat.* for עָמָה.—Vers. 13, 14. In the first year, however, of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus made a decree, etc.; comp. i. 3. The infin. לְבִנָּא like ver. 3.—On vers. 14 and 15, comp. i. 7–11. וַיְהִיבּוּ, præter. pass. of Peal: they were given to one Sheshbazzar (*is*) his name, *i.e.* to one of the name of Sheshbazzar, whom he had made pechah. Zerubbabel is also called פְּחָה, Hagg. i. 1, 14, and elsewhere.—Ver. 15. Take these vessels, go forth, place them in the temple. For אֵלֶּה the Keri reads אֵל, according to 1 Chron. xx. 8. אֶחָת is imperat. Aphel of נָחַת. The three imperatives succeed each other without any copula in this rapid form of expression. The last sentence, “and let the house of God be built in its place,” *i.e.* be rebuilt in its former place, gives the reason for the command to deposit the vessels in the temple at Jerusalem, *i.e.* in the house of God, which is to be rebuilt in its former place.—Ver. 16. In virtue of this command of Cyrus, this Sheshbazzar came (from Babylon to Jerusalem), and laid then the foundations of the house of God, and from that time till now it has been building, and is not (yet) finished. שָׁלִים, part. pass. of שָׁלַם, often used in the Targums and in Syriac for the Hebrew תָּמַם; hence in Dan. v. 26 the Aphel, in the meaning of to finish, and Ezek. vii. 19, to restore. This statement does not exclude the cessation from building from the last year of Cyrus to the second of Darius,



narrated iv. to v. 24, as Bertheau and others suppose, but only leaves the unmentioned circumstance which had been the cause of the delay. If the section iv. 6-23 does not refer to the building of the temple, then neither is a "forcible interruption" of the building spoken of in chap. iv.; but it is only said that the adversaries frustrated the purpose of the Jews to rebuild the temple till the time of Darius, and weakened the hands of the people, so that the work of the house of God ceased.—Ver. 17. After thus representing the state of affairs, the royal officials request Darius to cause a search to be made among the archives of the kingdom, as to whether a decree made by Cyrus for the erection of the temple at Jerusalem was to be found therein, and then to communicate to them his decision concerning the matter. "And if it seem good to the king, let search be made in the king's treasure-house there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king." הֵן טֹב עַל, like the Hebrew אִם טוֹב עַל, Esth. i. 19, for which in older Hebrew לֹטוֹב, Deut. xxiii. 17, or טוֹב בְּעֵינַיִם, Gen. xix. 8, Judg. x. 15, and elsewhere, is used. בֵּית הַמָּוֶזֶא, house of the treasure, more definitely called, vi. 1, house of the rolls, where also the royal treasures were deposited. Hence it is obvious that important documents and writings were preserved in the royal treasury. תַּפְזָה, there, is explained by "which at Babylon." רְעוּת, chald. *voluntas*, comp. vii. 18. Concerning the behaviour of these officials Brentius well remarks: *vides differentiam inter calumniatores et bonos ac probos viros. Una eademque causa erat ædificii templi, unus idemque populus Judæorum; attamen hujus populi causa aliter refertur ab impiis calumniatoribus, aliter a bonis viris.*

CHAP. VI.—THE ROYAL DECREE, THE COMPLETION AND DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE, AND THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER.

Vers. 1-12. *The decision of Darius.*—Vers. 1-5. At the command of Darius, search was made in the archives of the

royal treasury; and in the fortress of Achmetha in Media, was found the roll in which was recorded the edict published by Cyrus, concerning the building of the temple at Jerusalem.—Ver. 1. Search was made in the house of the books where also the treasures were deposited in Babylon. מִתְּחִתָּיו, partic. Aphel of נָחַת; see v. 15.—Ver. 2. “And there was found at Achmetha, in the fortress that is in the land of Media, a roll; and thus was it recorded therein.” In Babylon itself the document sought for was not found; though, probably, the search there made, led to the discovery of a statement that documents pertaining to the time of Cyrus were preserved in the fortress of Achmetha, where the record in question was subsequently discovered. אֶחְמֶתָא, the capital of Great Media—τὰ Ἐκβάτανα, Judith i. 1, 14, or Ἀγβάτανα (Herod. i. 98)—built by Dejokes, was the summer residence of the Persian and Parthian kings, and situate in the neighbourhood of the modern Hamadan. Achmetha is probably the Old-Median or Old-Persian pronunciation of the name, the letters אַחַמ on Sassanidian coins being explained as denoting this city (Mordtmann in the *Zeitschrift der deutsch morgenl. Gesellschaft*, viii. p. 14). The citadel of Ecbatana probably contained also the royal palace and the official buildings. For בְּנִיָּה is found in some mss. and editions בְּנִיָּה; but Norzi and J. H. Mich. have Pathach under ו as the better authorized reading. דְּבָרָוֶנָּה, *stat. emph.* of דְּבָרֶוֶן, *memorandum*, ὑπόμνημα, a record of anything memorable. The contents of this document follow, vers. 3–5. First, the proclamation of King Cyrus in the first year of his reign: “The house of God at Jerusalem, let this house be built as a place where sacrifices are offered.” The meaning of the words following is doubtful. We translate וַאֲשֻׁרֵי מְסוּבָלָן: and let them raise up its foundations, *i.e.* its foundations are to be again raised up, restored. אֲשֻׁן, foundations (iv. 12); מְסוּבָלָן, part. Poel of סָבַל, to carry, to raise (not to be raised). סָבַל often stands for the Hebrew נָשָׂא, to carry, to raise up, to erect; compare the Samaritan translation of Gen. xiii. 10: וסבל את עיניו, he lifted up his eyes. קוּמַם מוֹסְרֵי ד’ is analogous with וַאֲשֻׁרֵי מְסוּבָלָן, Isa. lviii. 12, and signifies to erect buildings upon the foun-



datations.<sup>1</sup> Expositors are divided as to the dimensions of the new temple, "its height 60 cubits, and its breadth 60 cubits," which are so given also in LXX., *Esdr. gr.*, and *Joseph. Antiq.* xi. 4. 6; while Solomon's temple was but 30 cubits high, and, without the side-buildings, only 20 cubits broad. We nevertheless consider the statements correct, and the text incorrupt, and explain the absence of the measure of length simply by the fact that, as far as length was concerned, the old and new temples were of equal dimensions. Solomon's temple, measured externally, inclusive of the porch and the additional building at the hinder part, was about 100 cubits long (see the ground plan in my *bibl. Archaeol.* Table II. fig. 1). To correspond with this length, the new temple was, according to the desire of Cyrus, to be both higher and broader, viz. 60 cubits high, and as many wide,—measurements which certainly apply to external dimensions. Zerubbabel's temple, concerning the structure of which we have no further particulars, was externally of this height and breadth. This may be inferred from the speech of King Herod in *Joseph. Ant.* xv. 11. 1, in which this tyrant, who desired to be famous for the magnificence of his buildings, endeavoured to gain the favour of the people for the rebuilding of the temple, which he was contemplating, by the remark that the temple built by their forefathers, on their return from the Babylonian captivity, was 60 cubits too low,—Solomon's temple having been double that height (*sc.*, according to the height given in 2 Chron. iii. 4, 120 cubits),—and from the fact that Herod made his temple 100 or 120 cubits high. Hence the temple of Zerubbabel, measured externally, must have been 60 cubits high; and consequently we need not diminish the breadth of 60 cubits,

<sup>1</sup> The Vulgate, following a rabbinical explanation, has *ponant fundamenta supportantia*, which is here unsuitable. The conjecture of Bertheau, who labours, by all sorts of critical combinations of the letters in the words *וַאֲשׁוּרֵי מִסּוּבָּלַיִן*, to produce the text *וַאֲשׁוּרֵי אֶמְצַן מֵאָה תַּמְנִין*, "its foundation length 180 cubits," is as needless as it is mistaken. The interpretation of the words in the LXX., *καὶ ἔθηκεν ἑπαρμα*, and Pseudo-Ezra vi., *διὰ πύρος ἐνδελεχούς*, are nothing else than unmeaning suppositions.

also given in this verse, by alterations of the text, because Herod's temple was likewise of this width, but must understand the given dimensions to relate to external height and breadth. For in Herod's temple the holy places were but 60 cubits high and 20 wide; the holy place, 40 cubits long, 20 wide, and 60 high; the holy of holies, 20 cubits long, 20 wide, and 60 high. And we may assume that the dimensions of Zerubbabel's temple preserved the same proportions, with perhaps the modification, that the internal height did not amount to 60 cubits,—an upper storey being placed above the holy place and the holy of holies, as in Herod's temple; which would make the internal height of these places amount to only about 30 or 40 cubits.<sup>1</sup> In like manner must the 60 cubits of breadth be so divided, that the 5 cubits internal breadth of the side-buildings of Solomon's temple must be enlarged to 10, which, allowing 5 cubits of thickness for the walls, would make the entire building 60 cubits wide ( $5 + 10 + 5 + 20 + 5 + 10 + 5$ ).<sup>2</sup> The statement in ver. 4, "three layers of great stones, and a layer of new timber," is obscure. שְׁלֹשָׁה קִרְבָּיִם means row, layer, and stands in the Targums for the Hebrew טוֹר, "used of a layer of bricks;" see Gesen. *Thes.* p. 311, and Levy, *chald.*

<sup>1</sup> While we acknowledge it possible that the holy and most holy places, measured within, may have been only 40 cubits high, we cannot admit the objection of H. Merz, in *Herzog's Realencycl.* xv. p. 513, that 20 cubits of internal breadth is an inconceivable proportion to 60 cubits, this being the actual proportion in Herod's temple, as Merz himself states, p. 516, without finding it in this instance "inconceivable."

<sup>2</sup> The conjecture of Merz in his above-cited article, and of Bertheau, that the dimensions of Zerubbabel's temple were double those of Solomon's,—viz. the holy and most holy places 40 cubits high and 40 wide, the upper chambers 20 cubits high, the side-chambers each 10 cubits high, and the whole building 120 cubits long,—must be rejected as erroneous, by the consideration that Herod's temple was only the length of Solomon's, viz. 100 cubits, of which the holy of holies took up 20, the holy place 40, the porch 10, the additional building behind 10, and the four walls 20. For Herod would by no means have diminished the length of his building 20, or properly 40 cubits. We also see, from the above-named dimensions, that the 60 cubits broad cannot be understood of internal breadth.



*Wörterbuch*, ii. p. 93. אָבֵן גָּלֵל, stone of rolling, one that is rolled and cannot be carried, *i.e.* a great building stone. חֲדָשׁ, *novus*, as an epithet to אָע, is remarkable, it being self-evident that new wood is generally used for a new building. The LXX. translates εἰς, reading the word חֲדָשׁ (ver. 3). This statement involuntarily recalls the notice, 1 Kings vi. 36, that Solomon built the inner court, שְׁלֹשָׁה טוּרֵי גִזִּית וְטוּר, בְּרֶחֶת אֲרָזִים; hence Merz expresses the supposition that “this is certainly a fragment, forming the conclusion of the whole design of the building, which, like that in 1 Kings vi. 36, ends with the porch and the walls of the fore-court.” Thus much only is certain, that the words are not to be understood, as by Fritzsche on 1 Esdr. vi. 25, as stating that the temple walls were built of “three layers of large stones, upon which was one layer of beams,” and therefore were not massive; such kind of building never being practised in the East in old times. “And let the expenses be given out of the king’s house.” This is more precisely stated in ver. 8 of the royal revenues on this side the river. נִפְקָא, the expense (from נָפַק, Aphel, to expend), therefore the cost of building.—Ver. 5. “And also let the vessels . . . be restored, and brought again to the temple at Jerusalem, to their place, and (thou) shalt place them in the house of God.” On the matter of this verse, comp. i. 7 and v. 14. The sing. יָהָ (comp. v. 5) is distributive: it (each vessel) to its place. וְתַחַת (comp. אָחַת v. 15) cannot, according to the sense, be third pers. fem. (neutr.), but only second pers. imperf. Aphel: thou shalt place. None but Sheshbazzar can be addressed (v. 15), though he is not named in ver. 3. The historian is evidently not giving the contents of the document word for word, but only its essential matter; hence he infers the address to Sheshbazzar from the answer of the Jewish elders (v. 15). Perhaps it was also remarked in the document, that Coresh caused the sacred vessels to be delivered to Sheshbazzar (i. 8).

Vers. 6–12. Acting upon the discovered edict, Darius warned the governor and royal officials on this side the Euphrates, not to hinder the building of the house of God

at Jerusalem. On the contrary, they were to promote it by furnishing what was necessary for the work, and paying the expenses of the building out of the royal revenues to the elders of the Jews (vers. 6–8). They were also to provide for the worship of God in this temple such animals as the priests should require for sacrifice (vers. 9, 10), under pain of severe punishment for transgressing this command as also for any injury done to the temple (vers. 11, 12). This decree was undoubtedly communicated to the governor in the form of a written answer to his inquiries (ver. 13). Without, however, expressly stating this to be the case, as ver. 1 and iv. 17 would lead us to expect, the historian gives us in ver. 6 sq. the actual contents of the royal edict, and that in the form of a direct injunction to the governor and his associates on this side the river: “Now Tatnai, governor, . . . be ye far from thence.” The suffix **וּבְנֵי־הָהוֹן**, and *their* associates, is indeed unsuitable to the form of an address, of which Tatnai and Shethar-Boznai are the subjects; the narrator, however, in using it, had in mind the title or introduction of the royal letter. On its matter, comp. v. 6. **רָחֵק** and **רָחִיק**, to be far from, figuratively to keep from anything, *e.g.* from good, Ps. liii. 2. **מִן־תִּמָּה**, from thence, from Jerusalem; in other words, trouble yourselves no longer, as, according to v. 3, you have done about what is being done there.—Ver. 7. “Let the work of the house of God alone.” **שָׁבַק** with an accusative, to leave anything, to let it go on without hindrance. “Let the Pechah of the Jews (Sheshbazzar, Zerubbabel) and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in its place.” The **לְ** to **לְשָׁבִי** introduces a second subject with special emphasis: And as far as regards the elders of the Jews, *i.e.* the Pechah, and especially the elders.—Ver. 8. “And a decree is (hereby) made by me, what ye shall do to these elders of the Jews, *i.e.* how you shall behave towards them (**עָבַד עִם** = **עָשָׂה עִם**, Gen. xxiv. 12 sq.), to build this house, *i.e.* that this house may be built: namely, (**ו** expl.) of the royal moneys, of the custom (**מִדָּה**, see remarks on iv. 13) on this side the river, let expenses (the cost of building) be punctually given to these men, that there be no hindrance.” **וְיִיָּלֵא לְבִטְלָא**,



that there be no cessation or leisure from work, *i.e.* that the work is not to be discontinued. On the construction of the  $\text{אֲלֵ}$  with the following infinitive, comp. Dan. vi. 9. The Vulgate renders the sense correctly by *ne impediatur opus*.—Ver. 9. “And what is needful, both young bullocks and rams and lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the word of the priests at Jerusalem (*i.e.* as the priests shall require for the service of God), let it be given them day by day without fail.”  $\text{מָה}$  is joined with the plur. fem. of the partic.  $\text{הַשֹּׁחֲטִין}$ , and is defined by the enumeration which follows.  $\text{מִיֶּשֶׁחַ}$ , properly the anointing, then oil as the means of anointing. On  $\text{לִהְיוֹת}$  and  $\text{לִהְיוֹן}$ , see remarks on iv. 12.  $\text{דְּיִלְאָ שְׁלֵוֹ}$ , that there be no failure.—Ver. 10. The end the king had in view in all this follows: “That they (the priests) may offer sacrifices well-pleasing to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and of his sons.”  $\text{נִיחֻוִּין}$  (comp. Dan. ii. 46) are sacrifices agreeable to God,  $\text{רִיחַ נִיחֻחַ}$  (Lev. i. 9, 13, and elsewhere), *i.e.* sacrifices pleasing to God. Cyrus had commanded the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, because he acknowledged the God of Israel to be the God of heaven, who had given him the kingdoms of the earth (i. 2). Darius was treading in his footsteps by also owning the God of the Jews as the God of heaven, and desiring that the blessing of this God might rest upon himself and his dynasty. Such an acknowledgment it was possible for the Persian kings to make without a renunciation of their polytheism. They could honour Jahve as a mighty, nay, as the mightiest God of heaven, without being unfaithful to the gods of their fathers; while the Jews could also, in the interest of their own welfare, pray and offer sacrifices in the temple of the LORD for the life of the king to whom God had caused them to be subject (comp. Jer. xxix. 7). Accordingly we find that in after times sacrifices were regularly offered for the king on appointed days: comp. 1 Macc. vii. 33, xii. 11; 2 Macc. iii. 35, xiii. 23; Joseph. *Antiq.* xii. 2. 5, and elsewhere.—Ver. 11. To inculcate obedience to his command, Darius threatens to punish its transgression with death:

“If any one alters this command, let a beam be torn from his house, and let him be fastened hanging thereon.” To alter a command means to transgress or abolish it. ܝܢܐ, a piece of wood, a beam. ܕܝܢܐ, raised on high, is in Syriac the usual word for crucified, and is to be so understood here. ܕܝܢܐ, to strike, with ܝܢܐ, strike upon, fasten to, nail to. This kind of capital punishment was customary among the Assyrians (Diod. Sic. ii. 1), the ancient Persians, and many other nations, but seems to have been executed in different manners among different people. Among the Assyrians it generally consisted in the impalement of the delinquent upon a sharp strong wooden post; comp. Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 355, and *Nineveh and its Remains*, p. 379, with the illustration fig. 58. According to Herod. iii. 159, Darius impaled as many as 3000 Babylonians after the capture of their city (*ἀνεσκολόπισε*). Crucifixion proper, however, *i.e.* nailing to a cross, also occurred among the Persians; it was, however, practised by nailing the body of the criminal to a cross after decapitation; see the passages from Herodotus in *Brissonii de regio Persarum princip.* l. ii. c. 215. “And let his house be made a dunghill.” See remarks on Dan. ii. 5 and 2 Kings x. 27.—Ver. 12. Finally, Darius adds the threat: “The God who has caused His name to dwell there, destroy every king and (every) people that shall stretch forth the hand to alter (this command), to destroy this house of God at Jerusalem.” The expression, “the God who has caused His name to dwell there,” is indeed specifically Israelitish (comp. Deut. xii. 11, xiv. 23; Jer. vii. 12; Neh. i. 9), and therefore undoubtedly originated with the Jewish historian; but the matter itself, the wish that God Himself would destroy him who should injure His temple, recalls the close of the inscription of Bisitun, wherein the judgments of Ahuramazda are imprecated upon him who should dare to injure the image and inscription, and his blessing invoked upon him who should respect them (Berth.).

Vers. 13–18. *The execution of the royal decree, the completion of the building, and the dedication of the new temple.*—Ver. 13. Tatnai and his associates diligently executed the



commands of Darius. "Because Darius the king sent (*i.e.* despatched to them the letter, whose contents have just been given, 6-12), they speedily acted accordingly in the manner stated" (פִּנְקָא).—Ver. 14. The elders of the Jews, moreover, built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai and Zachariah, who thereby effected the resumption of the work, and promised them success. כִּי is used of the rule by which, or manner in which anything is done. "They built and finished (the building) according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artachshasta, kings of Persia." The naming of Artachshasta presents some difficulty; for since it is impossible to conceive that a predecessor of Darius is intended by a name which follows the name of that monarch, none but Artaxerxes Longimanus can be meant, and he did not reign till long after the completion of the temple. Cleric. and J. H. Mich. explain the mention of his name by the consideration that Artaxerxes, by his edict (vii. 15, 21), contributed to the maintenance, though not to the building, of the temple.<sup>1</sup> It may in this instance be questionable whether the name ארתחששתא was added by the author of the Chaldee section, or by Ezra when he introduced this into his book. We believe the latter to be the correct view, because the Chaldee section, to judge by the אֲמַרְנָא, v. 4, was composed by one who lived contemporaneously with the building of the temple, while from the date of the completion of the temple to the seventh year of Artaxerxes fifty-seven years elapsed.—Ver. 15. And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar (the twelfth month), which is the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. שִׁינָא, according to the Keri שִׁינָא, with the א dropped, is the Shaphel

<sup>1</sup> "Nam etsi," remarks Calovius in J. H. Mich., *adnotatt. uber. ad h. l.*, "non ad structuram templi conduxerit proprie edictum Artaxerxis, quæ Darii secundo anno incepta et sexto absoluta fuit, v. 15 ad ornamenta tamen et additamenta eam spectasse dubium non est: quæ ab ipso, cum rege post Cyrum et Darium erga Judæos Persarum omnium benignissimo, profecta hic celebratur." Similarly but more briefly explained by Clericus.

of שָׁפַל, to bring a thing to an end, to finish it. The form שִׁיעַץ is not a participle pass. formed from the Shaphel (Gesen.), for this would be מְשִׁיעִץ, but a Hebraized passive form of the Shaphel in the meaning of the Targumistic Ishtaphal, like הִתִּיתִי, Dan. iii. 13, and הִתִּיתָ, Dan. vi. 18, with the active הִתִּיתִי, Dan. vi. 17. In the Targums שִׁיעַץ has mostly an active, and only in a few passages the intransitive meaning, to end, to be at the end; comp. Levy, *chald. Wörterbuch*, s.v.<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 16, 17. The sons of Israel, more exactly the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the sons of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy. עָבַר חֲנֻכָּה = the Hebrew חֲנֻכָּה, to celebrate the dedication (2 Chron. vii. 9). בְּחֻדָּה, Hebrew בְּשִׁמְחָה; see Neh. viii. 10. They brought for the dedication a hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs as burnt-offerings, and twelve he-goats for a sin-offering for *all* Israel, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, because the temple was intended for the entire covenant people, whose return to the Lord and to the land of their fathers, according to the predictions of the prophets, was hoped for (comp. e.g. Ezek. xxxvii. 15 sq., Jer. xxxi. 27 sq.), not, as older expositors thought, because certain families of the ten tribes, who had before settled in Judah, were also among those who returned (J. H. Mich. *ad h. l.*).—Ver. 18. At the same time, the priests and Levites were appointed, according to their classes and divisions, to the service of the temple, that they might henceforth fulfil their office, each class in its week (2 Chron. xxiii. 4; 2 Kings xi. 9). וְהַקִּימוֹ corresponds with the Hebrew וַיַּעֲמִידוּ, iii. 8, and elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> Instead of the “*third day*,” which the LXX. also has, in accordance with the Hebrew text, 1 Esdr. vii. 5 gives the three-and-twentieth day of the month Adar,—a statement which Bertheau arbitrarily insists upon regarding as the original reading, because “the view that the compiler altered the third into the twenty-third day, because it seemed to him more fitting to assume an eight days’ celebration of the dedication (comp. 1 Kings viii. 60, 2 Chron. xxix. 18), and to fill up therewith also the eight last days of the year, is rather far-fetched.” Such a view, however, would be entirely consistent with the whole spirit of 1 Esdras.



As Bertheau justly remarks, "The services of public worship, which after the completion of the temple were to be performed by the priests and Levites, according to ancient ordinance, are here spoken of." With these words the Chaldee section closes.

Vers. 19-22. *Celebration of the feast of the passover, and of the feast of unleavened bread*, in the year following the dedication, as an historical testimony to the fact that the worship of God with its festivals was regularly carried on in the new temple.—Ver. 19. The feast of the passover, on the fourteenth day of the first month, took place only a few weeks after the dedication of the temple. The reason given in ver. 20—for the priests and Levites had purified themselves without exception (כִּפְּרוּ, like iii. 9); they were all clean, and they killed the passover for all the sons of the captivity (*i.e.* the laity who had returned from exile), and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves—has in this connection the meaning: Then the congregation celebrated the passover, and they were able to keep and to eat the passover, because the priests had purified themselves that they might be qualified for performing the office incumbent upon them of sprinkling the blood; and the Levites were also clean, that they might be able to kill the lambs for the whole congregation (comp. the remarks on 2 Chron. xxx. 17, etc., and xxxv. 11, 14). From the days of Josiah, it seems to have been customary for the Levites to take the place of the heads of families (Ex. xii. 6, etc.) in slaughtering the passover lambs for the whole community, both priesthood and laity: for the laity, that no person who was unclean might kill the paschal lamb; for the priests, that their labours might be lightened, the sprinkling of blood and the offering of sacrifices occupying them far into the night (2 Chron. xxxv. 11, 14, 15). And this custom was followed at this time also. The priests are called אֲחֵי הַלֵּוִי, brethren of the Levites, as in 2 Chron. xxix. 34, xxxv. 15.—Ver. 21. Thus the sons of Israel who had returned from captivity, and all that had separated themselves unto them from the uncleanness of the heathen of

the country to seek Jahve the God of Israel, could eat the passover. עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ = נֹכְרֵי הָאָרֶץ, x. 2, 11, are the heathen races dwelling in Palestine. The expression is not essentially different from עַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת, ix. 1 sq., iii. 3, and is only distinguishable therefrom, inasmuch as the latter appellation includes not merely the heathen inhabitants of Palestine, but also the heathen of other lands, as the Moabites, Ammonites, Egyptians, etc. (ix. 1 sq.). Those who had separated themselves from the uncleanness of the heathen to them (the Jews) to seek Jahve, are not proselytes from heathenism (Aben Ezra, Rashi, Clericus, and others), but Israelites, who had till now lived in Palestine, and mingled with the heathen inhabitants of the land. They were descended from those Israelites whom the kings of Assyria and Babylon had not carried away from the realms of Israel and Judah, and who with respect to religion had combined heathenism and the worship of Jahve (2 Kings xvii. 32, etc.), and thus defiled themselves with heathen impurity, but who now, after the erection of the temple, joined themselves to the new community, for the purpose of worshipping with them the God of their fathers in His temple, according to the law of Moses. For, as Bertheau rightly remarks, "in the days of Ezra the princes of the new community complain that the laity, the priests, and Levites do not separate from the people of the lands (ix. 1); reference is made to the dangers which threaten the Israelites, because they dwell in the holy land among the unclean (ix. 10). To separate from the uncleanness of the nations means to renounce intermarriage and other connection with them, x. 2, 10. They are Israelites who are summoned, x. 11, to separate from the peoples of the land; the seed of Israel is, in Neh. ix. 2, separated from the sons of the stranger, and in Neh. x. 29 they who separate from them are evidently Israelites, for, when they bind themselves to walk according to the law of God, they are said to join their brethren, *i.e.* their fellow-countrymen." Hence in this passage also we cannot but regard those who separated themselves as Israelites, dissolving their connection



with the heathen for the sake of the God of Israel.—Ver. 22. Hereupon they kept the feast of unleavened bread for seven days with joy; for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned to them (*i.e.* had made them joyful by turning to them) the heart of the king of Assyria. With regard to the expression, comp. 2 Chron. xx. 27, Neh. xii. 43. The king of *Assur* is the Persian king Darius, who as ruler of the former realm of Assyria is thus designated. The turning of this king's heart to them consisted in this, that their hands were strengthened for the work of the house of God, *i.e.* that through the goodwill of the king they were enabled to complete the building of their temple, and to restore the worship of the God of Israel. On חִזַּק בְּיָדֵיהֶם, comp. 1 Sam. xxiii. 19.

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## II.—THE RETURN OF EZRA THE SCRIBE FROM BABYLON TO JERUSALEM, AND HIS ENTRY UPON HIS OFFICIAL DUTIES THERE.—CHAP. VII.-X.

In the seventh year of the reign of King Artaxerxes Longimanus, Ezra the priest and scribe returned with certain priests, Levites, and other Israelites from Babylon to Jerusalem, furnished with a royal commission to provide for the worship of God, and the observance of the law, according to the ordinance of God, by the community, chap. vii. and viii. This mission he began to execute by sending away such heathen women as were married to Israelites.

### CHAP. VII.—EZRA'S RETURN AND COMMISSION.

Vers. 1-10 form the introduction to the narrative which follows of Ezra's return to Jerusalem and his ministry there, and speak in general terms of himself and his arrival at Jerusalem with a band of exiles. They are followed, vers. 11-26, by a copy of the royal commission, and a thanks-

giving, vers. 27, 28, on the part of Ezra, for the mercy of God bestowed upon him.

Vers. 1-6. What follows is slightly combined with the former occurrences by the formula "after these things," without any more exact chronological definition; comp. Gen. xv. 1, xxii. 1, and elsewhere. Between the dedication of the temple in the sixth year of Darius and the arrival of Ezra in Jerusalem, a period of fifty-seven years had elapsed. "In the reign of Artachshasta king of Persia, went up Ezra," etc. The verb of the subject **עָזְרָא** does not follow till ver. 6, where, after the interposition of the long genealogy, vers. 1-5, the distant subject is again taken up in **הָיָא עָזְרָא**. It is all but universally agreed that Artaxerxes Longimanus is intended by **אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׁתָּא**; the explanation of this appellation as Xerxes in Joseph. *Antiq.* xi. 5. 1, for which Fritzsche (on 1 Esdr. viii. 1) has recently decided, being a mere conjecture on the part of that not very critical historian. The fact that the Artachshasta of the book of Nehemiah (i. 1, v. 14, xiii. 6) can be no other than Artaxerxes, is decisive of this point: for in Neh. xiii. 6 the thirty-second year of Artachshasta is mentioned; while according to Neh. viii. 9, xii. 26, 36, Ezra and Nehemiah jointly exercised their respective offices at Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> Ezra is called Ben Seraiah, whose pedigree is traced to Eleazar the son of Aaron; Seraiah the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, was the father of Josedec the high priest carried into captivity (1 Chron. v. 40, etc.), and was himself the high priest whom Nebuchadnezzar slew at Riblah (2 Kings xxv. 18-21). Between the execution of Seraiah in the year 588 and the return of Ezra from Babylon in 458 B.C., there is a period of 130 years. Hence Ezra could have been neither the son nor grandson of Seraiah, but only his great or great-great-grandson. When we consider that Joshua, or Jeshua (ii. 2), the high priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel, was the grandson of Seraiah, we cannot but

<sup>1</sup> Very superficial are the arguments, and indeed the whole pamphlet, *Etude Chronologique des livres d'Esdras et de Néhémie*, Paris 1868, p. 40, etc., by which F. de Sauley tries to show that the Artachshasta of Ezra vii. and of Nehemiah is Artaxerxes II. (Mnemon).



regard Ezra, who returned thence 78 years later, as a great-great-grandson of Seraiah. Moreover, we are justified in inferring from the fact that Ezra is not, like Joshua, designated as Ben Josedech, that he did not descend from *that* line of Seraiah in which the high-priestly dignity was hereditary, but from a younger son, and hence that his immediate ancestors were not (though his forefathers from Seraiah upwards were) of high-priestly descent. Hence the names of Ezra's ancestors from Seraiah up to Aaron (vers. 1-5) agree also with the genealogy of the high-priestly race (1 Chron. v. 30-40), with the *one* deviation that in ver. 3, between Azariah and Meraioth, six members are passed over, as is frequently the case in the longer genealogies, for the sake of shortening the list of names.—In ver. 6 Ezra, for the sake of at once alluding to the nature of his office, is designated 'סופר מִהֵרִי בַת, a scribe skilful in the law of Moses. The word סופר means in older works writer or secretary; but even so early as Jer. viii. 8 the lying pen of the כַּפְּרִים is spoken of, and here therefore סופר has already attained the meaning of one learned in the Scripture, one who has made the written law a subject of investigation. Ezra is, however, the first of whom the predicate הַסּוֹפֵר, ὁ γραμματεὺς, is used as a title. He is so called also in the letter of Artaxerxes (ver. 11), because he is said (ver. 9) to have applied his heart to seek out and to do the law of the LORD, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgment, *i.e.* because he had made the investigation of the law, for the sake of introducing the practice of the same among the congregation, his life-task; and the king granted him all his desire, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him. The peculiar expression בְּיַד יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עָלָיו, which is found only here and in vers 9, 28, viii. 18, Neh. ii. 8, 18, and in a slightly altered guise in Ezra viii. 22, 31, "according to the good hand of his God, which was over him," means: according to the divine favour or divine care arranging for him; for the hand of God is הַטּוֹבָה, the good (ver. 9, and viii. 18), or לְטוֹבָה, viii. 22. בְּקִשָּׁה, the desire, request, demand, occurs only here and in the book of Esther. —Ver. 7. With Ezra went up a number of Israelites, priests,

and Levites. מן partitive: a part of the whole. That they went up with Ezra appears from the context, and is expressly stated both in the royal edict (ver. 13) and in the further description of the expedition (ver. 28, viii. 1). They went up in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, and reached Jerusalem in the fifth month of that year.—In ver. 8 Ezra is again, as in ver. 6, the subject of the sentence; the intervening seventh verse being really only in apposition with ver. 6.—In ver. 9 the time occupied by the journey is more precisely defined; כי is explanatory. Namely, on the first day of the first month, he had appointed the journey from Babylon, etc. The Keri הוא יסר can only mean, *ipsum erat fundamentum protectionis*, as J. H. Mich. after R. Sal. explains it, for יסר is pointed as the construct state. The departure of the expedition from the place of meeting occurred, according to viii. 31, on the twelfth day of the first month. Since, however, they encamped three days there, making the final preparations for their journey, eleven days might easily elapse between the period when the whole caravan had assembled, and the day of actual departure. The Keri offers no appropriate signification; for since הוא can only be taken for the subject, and יסר הם' for the predicate, the sentence would contain an anacoluthon. To translate הוא by *ipsum* cannot be justified by the usages of the language, for there is no such emphasis on יסר as to cause הוא to be regarded as an emphatic reference to the following noun. יסר must be pointed יסר or יסר, as the third pers. perf. Kal or Piel, meaning to arrange, to appoint, and הוא referred to Ezra. On ביד אלהיו הטובה, comp. ver. 6. The hand of his God graciously arranged for him, for he had prepared his heart to seek and to do the law of Jahve, *i.e.* to make the law of God his rule of action. הבין לבבו, like 2 Chron. xii. 14, xix. 3, xxx. 19. To teach in Israel statutes and judgments, as both are prescribed in the law of God.

Vers. 11–28. *The commission given by Artachshasta to Ezra (vers. 11–26), with a short postscript by Ezra (vers. 27 and 28).*—Ver. 11. The introductory title, “This is the copy of the letter.” On פרשן, comp. iv. 11, and on נשתן,



iv. 7. Ezra is here, as also in the letter itself, vers. 12, 21, and in Neh. viii. 9, xii. 26, called only **הַכֹּהֵן הַסּוֹפֵר**, the priest, the scribe; in other places we find merely one title or the other: either the priest, x. 10, 16, Neh. viii. 2; or the scribe, Neh. viii. 4, 13, xii. 36. To designate him according to his rank, as the priest, seems to have subsequently become more customary; hence in the first book of Esdras he is constantly called *ὁ Ἱερεὺς*. **הַסּוֹפֵר** is explained by the addition **סֹפֵר דְּבַרֵּי יְהוָה**, scribe of the words of the law of Jahve and of His statutes to Israel, *i.e.* the scribe, whose investigations referred to the law of God. More briefly in vers. 12 and 21: scribe of the law.—Ver. 12, etc. The letter containing the royal commission is given in the Chaldee original. It is questionable what explanation must be given to **נָמִיר** in the title. If it were the adjective belonging to **סֹפֵר דְּבַרֵּי יְהוָה**, we should expect the emphatic state **נָמִירָא**. Hence Bertheau combines it with the following **וּבְעֵנָת** as an abbreviation, “completeness, etc.,” which would signify that in the royal commission itself this introductory formula would be found fully given, and that all the words here missing are represented by **וּבְעֵנָת**. This would be, at all events, an extremely strange expression. We incline to regard **נָמִיר** as an adverb used adjectively: To the scribe in the law of God perfectly, for the perfect scribe, etc.; corresponding with the translation of the Vulgate, *doctissimo*. The commission begins with an order that those Israelites who desire to go to Jerusalem should depart with Ezra, because the king and his seven counsellors send him to order matters in Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of God, and to carry thither presents and free-will offerings as a contribution towards the sacrifices, and other matters necessary for the worship of God, vers. 13-19. “By me is commandment given,” as in vi. 8. **כָּל־מְתַנַּבֵּב . . . לְמַהֲרָא**: Every one of the people of Israel in my kingdom, who shows himself willing to go up to Jerusalem, let him go up with thee. On **יָקָר** and the infin. **מְהֵרָא**, comp. v. 5.—Ver. 14. “Forasmuch as thou (art) sent by the king and his seven counsellors to inquire (to institute an inquiry) concerning Judah and Jerusalem, accord-

ing to the law of thy God, which is in thy hand," *i.e.* which thou handlest or possessest and understandest. The seven counsellors of the king formed the supreme court of the realm; see remarks on Esth. i. 14. It is obvious from the context that שְׁלִיחַ must be completed by אֶזְרָא, for it is evidently Ezra who is addressed both in what precedes and follows. בִּקְרָה עַל, to inquire concerning (the condition of) Judah, *i.e.* concerning the religious and civil relations of the Jewish community, to arrange them in conformity with the divine law.—Ver. 15, etc. "To carry the silver and gold which the king and his counsellors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose habitation is at Jerusalem, and all the silver and gold which thou shalt obtain in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will offering of the people and the priests, willingly offering for the house of their God at Jerusalem." Three kinds of offerings for the temple are here spoken of: 1st, the gifts of the king and his counsellors for the service of the God of Israel; 2d, the gold and the silver that Ezra should obtain in the province of Babylon, *i.e.* by the collection which he was consequently empowered to make among the non-Israelite population of Babylon; 3d, the free-will offerings of his fellow-countrymen. הַתְּנֻבוֹת is an abstract formed from the infin. Hithpael: the freely given. The participle מִתְּנֻבוֹת (not in the *stat. emph.*, *i.e.* without an article) is but slightly connected, in the sense of, if they, or what they, may freely offer.—Vers. 17–19. The application of these contributions. בְּלִקְבֹּל הֵנָּה, for this very reason, *sc.* because furnished by the king and his counsellors, and by the heathen and Israelite inhabitants of Babylon, thou shalt diligently buy with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat-offerings and their drink-offerings (the meat and drink offerings pertaining by the law, Num. xv. 1, etc., to the sacrifices), and offer them upon the altar . . . The Pael תִּקְרֶב instead of the Aphel, vi. 10, 17. The distribution and collection were thus chiefly destined for the support of public worship, but were larger and more abundant than was necessary for this purpose. Hence the further injunction, ver. 18: "And whatsoever shall seem good to



thee and to thy brethren to do with the rest of the gold and the silver, that do after the will of your God," *i.e.* according to the precept of the law in which the will of God is expressed. "Thy brethren" are the priests, to whom was committed the care of the temple and its worship.—Ver. 19. The gold and silver vessels, moreover, which, according to viii. 25-27, the king and his counsellors, and the princes and all Israel, presented for the service of the house of God, he is to deliver before the God at Jerusalem (an abbreviated expression for the God whose dwelling is at Jerusalem). The noun פִּלְחִין, only here and in the Targums, in the Syriac פִּלְחִין, the service, corresponds with the Hebrew עֲבוֹדָה שְׁלֵם in the Aphel, to complete, to make full, then to deliver entirely, to consign.—Ver. 20. Ezra is to defray the expenses of all other things necessary for the temple from the royal treasury, on which account a royal order is despatched to the treasurer on this side the river. "And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to give" (*i.e.* whatever necessary expenses shall be incurred which cannot be determined beforehand), and for which the gifts and contributions already furnished to Ezra shall not suffice, he is to give, *i.e.* to defray, out of the house of the king's treasures, *i.e.* the royal treasury. For this purpose Artaxerxes commands all the treasurers on this side the river, that whatsoever Ezra shall require of them shall be immediately done. אֲנִי is an emphatic repetition of the pronoun, as in Dan. vii. 15, and frequently in Hebrew.—Ver. 22. Unto one hundred talents of silver, one hundred cors of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescription, *i.e.* as much as is needed. Cor had already become, even in Hebrew, the later word for chomer, *e.g.* 1 Kings v. 2, Ezek. xlv. 14. It was equal to ten ephahs or baths, almost two sheffels; see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 126. The command closes with the injunction, ver. 23: Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, *i.e.* whatever is needful according to the law for the service of God, let it be completely done for the

house of the God of heaven; for why should the wrath of heaven come upon the realm of the king and of his sons? The *ἀπ' αὐτοῦ* *אֶרְוֹרָא* is derived from the Aryan, but is not to be regarded (as by Hitzig and Bertheau) as compounded of *אֶרְוֹר* and *אֹרָא*; but probably (as by Haug in Ewald's *bibl. Jahrb.* v. p. 152) as formed of the Persian *دور*, *dorest*,

with *א* prosthetic, from the Zend root *doreç*, to grow, to flourish, to become firm, in the meaning of perfect in all parts, exact. The motive of the royal order, that the priests may offer acceptable offerings to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and of his sons, recalls vi. 10. On the formula *לָמָּה רַי לָמָּה*, for why should wrath come, comp. iv. 22.—Ver. 24. The priests, the Levites, and all the servants of the temple, are also to be free from all customs and taxes. *וְלָכֶם מְהֻרָּעִין*, we also make known to you (it is made known to you). These words also are addressed to the treasurers, as levyers of taxes on this side the river. That, with regard to all priests, . . . and (other) ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose upon them toll, tribute, or custom. The *פְּלִי בֵּית אֱלֹהִים* are not worshippers in the house of God, but they who do service in the house of God. The expression comprises any servants of the temple who might have been omitted in the classes enumerated. On *מִנְהָה בָּלוּ וְגו'*, comp. iv. 13. *לֹא שְׁלִיט*, (any one) has no right, with an infinitive following: it is allowed to no one to do. *מִרְמָא* from *רָמָא*, Targ. for *שִׁים*. On this matter, compare Josephus, *Ant.* xii. 3. 3, according to which Antiochus the Great freed the priests and Levites from taxation.—Ver. 25, etc. Finally, Ezra is empowered to appoint over his whole people (all the Jews) on this side the river, judges who know the law of God, and to inflict severe penalties upon those who transgress it.—Ver. 25. "Thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God which is in thy hand (*בִּידְךָ* like ver. 14), set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are on this side the river, namely all such as know the laws of thy God, and teach ye them that know them not." The form *מִנִּי* is imper. Pael for



מִי, the A sound probably passing in rapid speech into the flatter E sound. "All the people on this side the river" is limited to Israelites or Jews by the further particulars, "who know the law of thy God," etc. These are to receive from Ezra judges, viz. such as are acquainted with the law, *i.e.* Israelite judges, and thus to be placed under the jurisdiction established at Jerusalem. The sentence, "and they who know it (the law) not, them teach ye, make them acquainted with it," does not refer to the heathen, but to born Israelites or Jews, who, living among the heathen, had not hitherto made the Mosaic law the rule of their lives. Such were the judges to constrain to the observance and obedience of the law.—Ver. 26. But whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let a court be speedily (מִיָּה) held on his account (*i.e.* let him be brought to justice, and punished). This, too, applies chiefly to such as were Israelites born. The law of the king is the present edict, the commission therein entrusted to Ezra: whoever opposes, neglects, or transgresses it, shall be condemned, whether to death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment. הֵן ... הֵן = the Hebrew אֵם ... אֵם = *sive* ... *sive*. שָׁרֵשׁ (Keri שִׁרְשִׁי), rooting out (from שָׁרַשׁ, to root out), *i.e.* banishment, *exilium* (Vulg.), not *παιδεία* (LXX.).

Vers. 27 and 28. This royal commission granted to the Jews all they could possibly desire from the heathen governors of the country, for the establishment and furtherance of their civil and religious polity. By granting these privileges, Artaxerxes was not only treading in the footsteps of Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes, but even going beyond these princes in granting to the Jews a jurisdiction of their own. Without a magistrate who was one of themselves, the Jewish community could not well prosper in their own land; for the social and religious life of Israel were so closely connected, that heathen magistrates, however well-intentioned, were incapable of exercising a beneficial influence upon the welfare of the Jews. Hence Ezra, having thus reported the royal commission, adds a thanksgiving to God for having put such a thing into the king's heart, namely,

to beautify the house of the Lord, and for having granted him favour before the king and his counsellors. The sentence *וְעַל הַטָּה* is a continuation of the preceding infinitive sentence in the *tempus finit*. *לְ* before *בְּלִישְׁרִי* is the *לְ* comprehensive. Ezra names the beautifying of the house of God as the occasion of his thanksgiving, not only because this formed the chief matter of the royal favour, but also because the re-establishment of divine worship was the re-establishment of the moral and religious life of the community. "And I felt myself strengthened, and gathered together (so that I gathered together) the heads of Israel to go up with me (to Jerusalem)." Ezra assembled the heads, *i.e.* of houses, as fellow-travellers, because their decision would be a rule for the families at the head of which they stood. With their heads, the several races and families determined to return to the land of their fathers.

CHAP. VIII.—LIST OF THOSE HEADS OF HOUSES WHO RETURNED WITH EZRA, AND ACCOUNT OF THE JOURNEY.

Vers. 1-14. *A list of those heads of houses who returned with Ezra from Babylon to Jerusalem.* Compare the parallel list, 1 Esdr. viii. 28-40.—Ver. 1. The title: "These are the heads of the houses, and (this is) their genealogy, who went up with me." *רָאשֵׁי בֵּית־אֲבֹתֵיהֶם* for *רָאשֵׁי אֲבֹתֵיהֶם*, as frequently. *וְהִתְיַחֲשָׁם*, "and their genealogy," is added, because in the list following the heads of the different houses are not merely enumerated according to their own names, but the names of the races to which they belonged are also stated.—Ver. 2. Priests and descendants of David. Of priests, Gershom of the sons of Phinehas, and Daniel of the sons of Ithamar. Gershom and Daniel are the names of heads of priestly houses, and "sons of Phinehas and sons of Ithamar" designations of races. Phinehas was the son of the high priest Eleazar, the son of Aaron, and Ithamar a younger son of Aaron, 1 Chron. v. 30 and 29. This does not signify that only the two priests Gershom and Daniel went up with Ezra; for in ver. 24 he chose twelve from



among the chief of the priests, who went up with him, to have charge of the gifts (Bertheau). The meaning is, that Gershom and Daniel, two heads of priestly houses, went up, and that the house of Gershom belonged to the race of Phinehas, and that of Daniel to the race of Ithamar. A Daniel is named among the priests in Neh. x. 7, but whether he is identical with the Daniel in question does not appear. Of the sons (descendants) of David (the king), Hattush, as head of a house. A Hattush, son of Hashabniah, occurs Neh. iii. 10, and a priest of this name Neh. x. 5 and xii. 2. Hattush also holds the first place among the sons of Shemaiah enumerated 1 Chron. iii. 22, who probably were among the descendants of David. It seems strange that the numbers neither of the priests nor of the sons of David who went up with Ezra should be given, since from ver. 3 onwards, in the case of the houses of lay races, the numbers of those who returned to the home of their ancestors is regularly stated.—Vers. 3-14. Twelve lay houses are named both in the present text and in 1 Esdr. viii. 30-40. In ten cases the names of the races, which are uniformly introduced with מִבְּנֵי, are identical in both texts, viz. Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Adin, Elam, Shephatiah, Joab, Bebai, Azgad, Adonikam, and Bigvai. On the other hand, it appears surprising, 1st, that in the first house mentioned, before the name זְבַדְיָה, besides “of the sons of Parosh,” we have also מִבְּנֵי שְׁבַנְיָה (ver. 3), while before all the other names we find only “of the sons of” one individual; 2dly, that in ver. 5, after בְּנֵי שְׁבַנְיָה, instead of a name of the head of a house, only Ben Jahaziel follows; 3dly, that in ver. 10 also, after וּמִבְּנֵי שְׁלֹמֹמִית, we have merely Ben Josiphiah, the names themselves being apparently omitted in these two last cases. This conjecture is corroborated by a comparison with the LXX. and 1 Esdr. viii., which shows, moreover, that it is not the personal name of the head of the house, but the name of the race, which has been lost. For מִבְּנֵי שְׁבַנְיָה בֶן יְחִיָּאל, ver. 5, we find in the LXX. ἀπὸ τῶν υἱῶν Ζαθόης Ζεχενίας υἱὸς Ἀζιήλ, and in 1 Esdr. viii. 32, ἐκ τῶν υἱῶν Ζαθόης Σεχενίας Ἰεζήλου;

and for *וּמִבְנֵי שְׁלֹמִיָּת בֶּן יוֹסֶפֶה*, ver. 10, in the LXX. *καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν υἱῶν Βαανὶ Σελιμουῦθ υἱὸς Ἰωσεφία*, and in 1 Esdr. viii. 36, *ἐκ τῶν υἱῶν Βανίας Σαλιμῶθ Ἰωσαφίου*. In *Ζαθόης* and *Βαανί* (*Βανίας*) we recognise *בְּנֵי* and *וְהָיָה* of Ezra ii. 8 and 10. Hence the text of ver. 5 needs emendation, and should run *וּמִבְנֵי בְנֵי שְׁלֹמִיָּת*, and that of ver. 10, *וּמִבְנֵי בְנֵי שְׁלֹמִיָּת*. It is more difficult to decide concerning *בְּנֵי שְׁלֹמִיָּת* of ver. 3, though undoubtedly we have here too a corruption of the text. For, first, there is no other instance in the whole list of the sons of two men being cited before the proper name of the house; and then, too, the absence of the ו copulative before *בְּנֵי* is opposed to the notion that the house of Zechariah was formed by a union of the sons of Shecaniah and Parosh, since in this case the *and* could not be omitted. It is true that we have in the LXX. *ἀπὸ υἱῶν Σαχαρία καὶ ἀπὸ υἱῶν Φόρος*; but in this case the *καὶ* is certainly derived from the translator, who was thus seeking to make sense of the words. In 1 Esdr. viii. we read *Λαττοὺς τοῦ Σεχευίου*; and *Λαττοὺς* corresponding with *לְטָטִישׁ*, the words *בְּנֵי שְׁכַנְיָה* (or *בֶּן*) are taken into the preceding verse. This treatment of the words Bertheau considers correct, because Hattush in 1 Chron. iii. 22 is reckoned among the descendants of Shecaniah. This conjecture is, however, a very doubtful one. For, first, in 1 Chron. iii. 22 Hattush is said to be of the sons of Shemaiah, and Shemaiah of the sons of Shecaniah; then we should as little expect any further statement in the case of Hattush as in the cases of Daniel and Gershom; and further, if he had been thus more precisely designated by naming his father, we should undoubtedly read *בֶּן שְׁכַנְיָה*, not *בְּנֵי שְׁכַנְיָה*, and thus the Masoretic text would at any rate be incorrect; and finally, 1 Esdras, where it differs from the LXX., is, generally speaking, no critical authority upon which to base safe conclusions. Under these circumstances, we must give up the hope of restoring the original text, and explaining the words *מִבְנֵי שְׁכַנְיָה*. *עִמּוֹ הָיְיָהּ שׁ*, “and with Zechariah, his genealogy of 150 males,” i.e. with him his race, consisting of 150 males, registered in the genealogy of the race. In the



case of the names which follow, the number only is given after the briefer expression עֲמֹ.

A review, then, of the twelve races, according to the restoration of the original text in vers. 5 and 10, presents us with names already occurring in the list of the races who came from Babylon with Zerubbabel, ii. 3-15, with the exception of the sons of Joab, ver. 9, who are wanting in chap. ii., where, on the other hand, several other races are enumerated. Bertheau seeks to identify the sons of Joab, ver. 9, with the sons of Joab who in ii. 6 are reckoned with the sons of Pahath-Moab, and to explain their special enumeration in the present list, by the conjecture that the one house subsequently separated into the two houses of Pahath-Moab and Joab. This is, indeed, possible; but it is quite as probable that only one portion or branch of the sons (descendants) of Joab was combined with the race of the sons of Pahath-Moab, and that the rest of the *bne Joab* formed a separate house, no family of which returned with Zerubbabel. The occurrence of the other races in both lists is to be explained by the circumstance that portions of them returned with Zerubbabel, and that the rest did not follow till Ezra's departure.—Ver. 13. The addition אֲחֵרִימ, last (comp. 2 Sam. xix. 12), is thus explained by J. H. Mich.: *respectu eorum qui primum cum Zorobabele sub Cyro in patriam redierunt c. ii. 13.* Bertheau, however, considers this explanation untenable, because אֲחֵרִימ stands in the present series only with the sons of Adonikam, while it is nevertheless certain, that many families belonging also to other races than this had returned with Zerubbabel, in comparison with whom all who returned with Ezra might be called *last*. This reason, however, is not conclusive; for in ver. 13 the further statement also differs, both in form and matter, from those in the former verses. Here, instead of the name of the head of the house, we read the words "last, and these their names;" whereupon three names are given, and not till then 'תַּעֲמִידָם וְנֹ, "and with them sixty males." Here, then, it is not the head of the house who is named, but in his place three heads of families, amounting together

to sixty males. Now, as these three families did not form a house, these sixty sons of Adonikam who returned with Ezra are, with regard to the six hundred and sixty-six sons of Adonikam who returned with Zerubbabel, designated the last, or last arrived, and thus comprised with them as one house.—Ver. 14. Of the sons of Bigvai also two heads are named, Uthai and Zabbud, and with them seventy males. In 1 Esdr. viii. 40, the names Uthai and Zabbud are corrupted into *Οὐθὶ ὁ τοῦ Ἰσταλκούρου*. The total number of individuals belonging to these twelve races, who returned with Ezra, amounts, according to the Hebrew text, to 1496 males and fifteen heads; according to 1 Esdras, to 1690 males, and the thirteen heads of the twelve races, without reckoning the priests and sons of David, whose numbers are not stated.

Vers. 15–36. *Account of the journey.*—Vers. 15–20. The assembling of the expedition. When the Israelites who were about to return to Jerusalem had assembled, and were ready for starting, Ezra perceived that there were no Levites among them. He then sent for certain chief men among them, and by means of the influence of Iddo, the chief at the place Casiphia, induced a number of Levites and Nethinim to determine on joining the expedition (vers. 15–20). He then proclaimed a fast at the place of meeting, for the purpose of supplicating God to grant them a prosperous journey (vers. 21–23). — Ver. 15. The travellers assembled at the river Ahava, where they encamped three days. In ver. 15 the river is designated *הַפָּא אֶל-אֲהָוָה*, *i.e.* either which comes (flows) towards Ahava, or flows into Ahava; in ver. 21 it is more briefly called *נָהָר אֲהָוָה*, and in ver. 31 *נָהָר אֲהָוָה*, which may mean the river of Ahava, of the region or district called Ahava, or, after the analogy of *נָהָר פָּרָת*, merely the river of the name of Ahava. It is doubtful which of these meanings is correct, the name Ahava being still unexplained. Comp. the various conjectures in A. G. F. Schirmer, *observationes exeg. crit. in libr. Esdræ*, Vratisl. 1820, p. 28 sqq. The connection points to a place or district in the neighbourhood of Babylon;



hence Bertheau is inclined to regard Ahava as a tributary or canal of the Euphrates, flowing through a place, perhaps only a field or open space, of the same name, in the immediate neighbourhood of Babylon; while Ewald supposes it may be the river somewhat to the west or south of Euphrates, called by the Greeks Pallacopas, whose situation would suit the context, and whose name might arise from פלג אהוא, the river Ahwa or Aba. The LXX. gives the name *Eúi*; in 1 Esdr. viii. 40 and 61 we find *Θερά*, evidently a false reading. Josephus says quite generally, εἰς τὸ πέραν τοῦ Εὐφράτου. —When Ezra, during the three days' encampment at this place, directed his attention to the people and the priests (הָבִיןָ, to give heed, Neh. xiii. 7, Dan. ix. 23, and elsewhere), he found no Levites among those who had assembled. Ver. 16. He then sent several chief men to Iddo, the chief man in the place Casiphia, to beg him and his brethren to bring him servants for the house of God. The LXX. translates אֶשְׁלַחָהּ, "I sent to (or for) Eliezer," etc., which would mean to fetch them: "that I might then send them to Iddo." The Vulgate, on the other hand, and many expositors, understand אֶשְׁלַחָהּ as *nota accus.*, like 2 Chron. xvii. 7, which is simpler. Of the nine men here designated as רָאשִׁים, the names of Eliezer, Shemaiah, Jarib, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshulam occur again in x. 15, 18-31, though we cannot certainly infer the identity of those who bear them. The appellation רָאשִׁים does not determine whether they belonged to the priesthood or laity. The two remaining are called מְבַיְנִים, teachers; comp. Neh. viii. 7, 9, 1 Chron. xv. 22, xxv. 8, and elsewhere. Although this word is, in the passages cited, used of Levites, yet we cannot suppose those here named to have been teaching Levites, because, according to ver. 16, there were as yet no Levites amongst the assemblage; hence, too, they could not be teachers properly so called, but only men of wisdom and understanding. The Chethiv וְאֶצְאָה must be read וְאֶצְאָה: I sent them to (עַל, according to later usage, for אֶל); the Keri is וְאֶצְאָה, I despatched, sent them. Both readings suit the sense. The place Casiphia is entirely unknown, but cannot have been far from the river Ahava.

Caspia, the region of the Caspian Sea, is out of the question, being far too remote. "I put words in their mouth to speak to Iddo," *i.e.* I told them exactly what they should say to Iddo; comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 3, 19. The words אֶדְדוֹ אֶחָיו הַנֶּתְחִינִים give no intelligible meaning; for אֶחָיו we must, with the Vulgate, 1 Esdras, and others, read וְאֶחָיו: to Iddo and his brethren, the Nethinim, at the place Casiphia. This would seem to say that Iddo was one of the Nethinim. Such an inference is not, however, a necessary one; for the expression may also, like "Zadok the (high) priest and his brethren, the (ordinary) priests," 1 Chron. xvi. 39, be understood to mean that Iddo, the chief man of that place, was a Levite, and that the Nethinim were, as a lower order of temple servants, called brethren of Iddo the Levite. The circumstance that not only Nethinim, but also Levites, were induced by Iddo to join the expedition (8-20), requires us thus to understand the words. מִשְׁעָרָיו לְבֵית אֱלֹהִים, servants for the house of God, are Levites and Nethinim, the upper and lower orders of temple ministers. From ver. 17 it appears that both Levites and Nethinim had settled in the place Casiphia, and that Iddo, as the chief man of the place, held an influential position among them. No further inferences, however, concerning their settlement and employment can be drawn from this circumstance.—Vers. 18 and 19. The delegates sent to Iddo succeeded, through the gracious assistance of God (בְּיָד אֱלֹהִים, see vii. 6), in inducing forty Levites, and two hundred and twenty Nethinim, by means of Iddo's influence, to join their fellow-countrymen in their journey to Jerusalem. They brought to us . . . אִישׁ שְׂכָל and עֲלָיו refer to Ezra and his fellow-travellers. אִישׁ שְׂכָל, a man of understanding, seems to be a proper name, being joined to Sherebiah, the name following, by a ו copulative. He was one of the descendants of Mahli, the son, *i.e.* grandson, of Levi the son of Israel, *i.e.* Jacob: comp. Ex. vi. 16, 19, 1 Chron. vi. 4. Sherebiah occurs again in ver. 24, and Neh. viii. 7, ix. 4, etc., x. 13, xii. 24. The Levite Hashabiah, ver. 19, is also named again, ver. 24, Neh. x. 2, and xii. 24, while the name of the Levite Jeshaiiah, on the



contrary, is not again met with in the books of either Ezra or Nehemiah.—Ver. 20. With respect to the Nethinim, whom David and the princes (of Israel) had given for the service of the Levites (*i.e.* made servants of the temple, to perform the lowest offices for the Levites), comp. Josh. ix. 21 and Ezra ii. 43. “They all were distinguished by name,” *i.e.* were men of note; comp. remarks on 1 Chron. xii. 31.

Vers. 21-30. The last preparations for the journey.—Ver. 21. When the company of fellow-travellers was thus completed, Ezra proclaimed a fast at the place of meeting at the river Ahava, “that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek of Him a prosperous journey for ourselves, our families, and our goods.” Fasting, as a means of humbling themselves before God, for the purpose of obtaining an answer to their petitions, was an ancient custom with the Israelites: Judg. xx. 26; 1 Sam. vii. 6; Joel i. 14; 2 Chron. xx. 3. *יֵשְׁרָהּ*, a straight way, a way made level by the removal of obstructions, *i.e.* a prosperous journey; comp. Ps. cxii. 7. *בָּנָיָם*, a noun collective, properly the little children, more frequently denoted the entire family, a man’s wives and children; see remarks on Ex. xii. 37. *רְכוּשָׁם*, possessions in cattle and other goods.—Ver. 22. For I was ashamed to request of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against enemies in the way (*i.e.* to protect us from hostile attacks during our journey); for we had said to the king: The hand of our God is over all them that seek him for good (*i.e.* for their good), and His power and His wrath against all them that forsake Him. *עָזָר* in connection with *אֱלֹהֵינוּ* is not His powerful wrath, but His power and might to conquer all enemies, evidencing itself in wrath against the wicked. This confession, which they had uttered before the king, they desired to make good by earnest humble supplication, that God would prove Himself their help and defence against all their enemies. And for this—adds Ezra, looking back on their prosperous journey after it was accomplished—He was entreated of us. Because they had supplicated His assistance by prayer and fasting,

God granted them His protection by the way.—Vers. 24–30. Then Ezra delivered the gold, the silver, and the vessels, which he had received as gifts for the temple, to twelve of the chiefs of the priests, and twelve Levites, that they might take charge of them during the journey, and bring them to Jerusalem. “I separated twelve of the chief of the priests,” *i.e.* from the whole company of priests who were journeying with us. The following לְשֵׁרְבִיָּה does not suit the sense, whether we take the לְ as a sign of the dative (LXX.) or of the accusative (Vulgate, and several expositors). For Sherebiah and Hashabiah were neither priests nor chiefs of priests, but Levites of the race of Merari (ver. 18), and cannot therefore be reckoned among the twelve chiefs of priests. If we take לְשֵׁרְבִיָּה for a dative, and translate, “I separated twelve of the chiefs of the priests for Sherebiah and Hashabiah,” this would place the priests in a servile relation to the Levites, contrary to their true position. For לְשֵׁרְבִיָּה we must read וְשֵׁרְבִיָּה, and accept the reading of 1 Esdras, καὶ Ἑσερβίαν, as correct. Ezra separated twelve chiefs of the priests and twelve Levites, for the purpose of delivering to their custody the gifts of gold, silver, and implements for the temple. Of the chiefs of the priests no names are mentioned; of the Levites, the two names Sherebiah and Hashabiah are given as those of heads of houses, with whom ten other Levites were associated.—Ver. 25, etc. To these chief priests and Levites Ezra weighed the silver and the gold and the vessels; שָׁקַל, to weigh, *i.e.* to deliver by weight. In the Chethiv אֶשְׁקֹלָה the O sound is maintained, and consequently the Keri is pointed קָ. On the other hand, in ver. 26 the i is dropped, and the form pointed with קָ, though many MSS., followed by J. H. Michaelis, have קָ here also. תְּרוּמַת בֵּית אֱלֹהִים is in apposition with the before-named objects: the gold, the silver, and the vessels, the offering for the house of our God, which the king, his councillors . . . had offered; comp. vii. 15, 16, 19. In קִהְרִימוּ the article represents the relative pronoun; see on 1 Chron. xxvi. 28. הַנִּמְצְאִים, all Israelites who were found, met with, in Babylon, and were not going



with them to Jerusalem; comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 17, 2 Chron. v. 11. **עַל יָדָם**, like **עַל יָד**, i. 8, to their hand, *i.e.* handed over to their keeping. The gifts amounted to: six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels one hundred in talents, *i.e.* one hundred talents in value, one hundred talents of gold, and twenty covered basins of gold (comp. i. 10) one thousand dariks in value, and two brazen vessels of fine golden brilliancy, precious as gold. **מִצֶּהָב** is an abstract noun, formed from the participle Hophal of **צָהַב**, to glitter like gold, and constructed as a feminine. The word, with its adjective, either depends upon **נְחֻשֶׁת**, in the *stat. construct.*, or stands in apposition thereto, and is not, as a participle Hophal, used adjectively and combined with **נְחֻשֶׁת**, for then the two adjectives **מִצֶּהָב** and **טוֹבָה** would not be in different genders. **הַמִּדּוֹת**, like **בְּלִי הַמִּדּוֹת**, 2 Chron. xx. 25.—Ver. 28, etc. On delivering these treasures, Ezra adds the admonition: Ye are holy to the Lord, and the vessels are holy, and the gold and the silver are a free-will offering unto the Lord God of your fathers; watch and keep (that which is committed to you). Since they were themselves, as priests and Levites, holy to the Lord, they were also to treat and keep the gifts committed to their charge as holy gifts, until, on their arrival at Jerusalem, they should weigh them (*i.e.* deliver them by weight) before the priests, the Levites, and the princes of Israel, in the chambers of the house of the Lord. The article **הַלְשִׁכוֹה** (*stat. construct.*) is among the incorrectnesses of the later Hebrew.—Ver. 30. Then they took the weight of the silver, . . . *i.e.* received the silver, etc., delivered to them by weight.

Vers. 31-36. The start, the journey, and the arrival at Jerusalem.—Ver. 31. The start from the river Ahava (comp. ver. 15) did not take place till the twelfth day of the first month; while according to vii. 9, the journey from Babylon was appointed for the first day of the month, and according to viii. 15, the bands of travellers who assembled at the river Ahava encamped there three days. These statements may be reconciled as follows: On the first day the company of travellers began to assemble, and during the three days'

encampment at the place of meeting Ezra became aware that no Levites were found among the travellers; upon which he took the measures mentioned, ver. 16, etc., to induce certain Levites and Nethinim to accompany them. When these were afterwards present, Ezra ordained a fast, to supplicate the divine protection for the journey, and committed the sacred gifts to the care of the priests and Levites. Eight days elapsed while these preparations for departure were being made, so that the start from the river Ahava did not take place till the twelfth day. The journey was successfully accomplished, God's gracious protection delivering them from the hands of enemies and marauders; comp. ver. 22.—Vers. 32, 33. They arrived at Jerusalem, as stated vii. 9, on the first day of the fifth month, the journey consequently occupying three months and a half. The particulars of the journey are not communicated; and as we do not even know the locality of the place of meeting at the river Ahava, the length of road to be traversed cannot be determined. After their arrival at Jerusalem, they abode, *i.e.* remained, as Nehemiah subsequently did, quiet and inactive three days, to recover from the fatigues and hardships of the journey, Neh. ii. 11, before they undertook the arrangement of their affairs. On the fourth day, the gifts they had brought with them were delivered in the house of God (נִשְׁקָל, like מִשְׁקָלָהּ, ver. 16) into the hand of Meremoth and Eleazar the priests, and Jozabad and Noadiah, two Levites, who took charge of them, the chiefs of the priests and Levites being, according to ver. 29, also present. Meremoth Ben Uriah reappears in Neh. iii. 4, 21, and is also intended Neh. xii. 3. Eleazar the son of Phinehas, and the Levite Noadiah, are not again met with. Jozabad, of the sons of Jeshua (ii. 40), may be the Levite Jozabad mentioned x. 23. Binnui is named among the Levites, Neh. x. 10 and xii. 8.—Ver. 34. "By number, by weight, as to all," *i.e.* all was delivered by number and weight; and the whole weight was written at that time, *i.e.* an authentic list was made at the delivery which then took place.—Ver. 35. After the delivery of the dedicated gifts, those who had



come up out of captivity (with Ezra), the sons of the captivity, offered burnt-offerings and sin-offerings, out of gratitude for the favour shown by God in the gracious restoration of His people Israel. This is implied in the words: "burnt-offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bullocks *for all Israel*" (the twelve tribes), and twelve he-goats for a sin-offering, as in vi. 17. Ninety-six ( $8 \times 12$ ) lambs and seventy-seven lambs (77, the intensified seven) were likewise brought as a burnt-offering. "All this was a burnt-offering for the LORD," of which, therefore, nothing could be eaten by the offerers. The sin-offering preceded the burnt-offering, as the necessary basis of an acceptable burnt-offering. The sin-offerings availed as an atonement for the sins of all Israel, and the burnt-offerings typified the surrender of the entire nation to the service of the Lord. Thus the fact that these were offered for all Israel was an actual declaration that they who had now returned were henceforth resolved, together with all Israel, to dedicate their lives to the service of the Lord their God.—Ver. 36. Here upon the royal decrees (the commission, vii. 12–26) were delivered to the satraps of the king, and to the governors on this side the river; and they furthered the people and the house of God, as Artaxerxes had commanded in his edict, vii. 20–24. On אֲחֻשְׁדָּרְפָּנִים and פְּחִיּוֹת, see rem. on Dan. iii. 2. The satraps were the military chiefs of the province, the פְּחִיּוֹת, the heads of the civil government. נָשָׂא, to lift up, to support, like i. 4.

CHAP. IX. X.—EZRA'S PROCEEDINGS IN THE SEVERANCE  
OF THE STRANGE WOMEN FROM THE CONGREGATION  
OF ISRAEL.

When Ezra, some time after his arrival, was in the temple at Jerusalem, the princes of the people informed him that the Israelites had mingled themselves by marriage with the people of the lands (ix. 1, 2). Deeply moved by this communication, he sat astonished till the time of the evening sacrifice, while all who feared God's word assembled about

him (vers. 3, 4). At the evening sacrifice he fell upon his knees and prayed, making a touching confession of sin before God, in the name of the congregation (vers. 5-15). During this prayer many were gathered around him weeping, and Shecaniah coming forth from their midst, acknowledged the transgressions of the congregation, and declared that they would make a covenant with God to put away all the strange wives (x. 1-4). After making the princes, the priests, and Levites take an oath that they would do according to the declaration thus made, Ezra left the temple and retired to the chamber of Johanan, to fast and mourn over the transgression of those who had returned from captivity (vers. 5, 6). An assembly at Jerusalem was then proclaimed, and those who should not attend it were threatened with heavy penalties (vers. 7-9). At this assembly Ezra reproved the people for their transgression, and called upon them to separate themselves from the people of the countries, and from the strange wives (vers. 10, 11); upon which the assembly resolved to appoint a commission to investigate and decide upon individual cases. In spite of the opposition of some, this proposal was accepted, and the commission named (vers. 12-17), which held its sittings from the first day of the tenth month, and made an end of its investigations into all cases brought before it by the close of the year. Then follows the list of those who had taken strange wives (vers. 18-44), with which the book concludes.

Chap. ix. *Information given of the intermingling of Israel with the heathen nations of the land by marriage* (vers. 1-4), *and Ezra's prayer and confession* (vers. 5-15).—Vers. 1, 2. "When this was done, the princes came to me, and said, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, do not separate themselves from the people of the lands, according to their abominations, (even) of the Canaanites; . . . for they have taken (wives) of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, and the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of the lands." What now follows is placed in close chronological sequence with what precedes by the formula וַיְכַלּוּת אֵלֶּה, at the time of the completion of these things;



comp. 2 Chron. xxxi. 1, xxix. 29, vii. 1. מִנְחָה are the things related chap. viii. 33-36. Of these the delivery of the gifts took place on the fourth day after Ezra's arrival at Jerusalem, *i.e.* on the fourth or fifth day of the first month (comp. viii. 32, etc., with vii. 9). The sacrifices (viii. 35) would undoubtedly be offered immediately; and the royal orders would be transmitted to the satraps and governors (viii. 36) very soon after. As soon, then, as Ezra received intelligence concerning the illegal marriages, he took the matter in hand, so that all related (ix. 3-10) occurred on one day. The first assemblage of the people with relation to this business was not, however, held till the twentieth day of the ninth month (x. 9); while on the calling of this meeting, appearance thereat was prescribed within three days, thus leaving apparently an interval of nine whole months between chap. viii. and ix. Hence Bertheau conjectures that the first proclamation of this assembly encountered opposition, because certain influential personages were averse to the further prosecution of this matter (x. 15). But though x. 4-7 does not inform us what period elapsed between the adoption of Shecaniah's proposal to Ezra, and the proclamation for assembling the people at Jerusalem, the narrative does not give the impression that this proclamation was delayed for months through the opposition it met with. Besides, Ezra may have received the information concerning the unlawful marriages, not during the month of his arrival at Jerusalem, but some months later. We are not told whether it was given immediately, or soon after the completion of the matters mentioned viii. 33-36. The delivery of the royal commands to the satraps and governors (viii. 36) may have occupied weeks or months, the question being not merely to transmit the king's decrees to the said officials, but to come to such an understanding with them as might secure their favour and goodwill in assisting the newly established community, and supporting the house of God. The last sentence (viii. 36), "And they furthered the people and the house of God," plainly shows that such an understanding with the royal functionaries was effected, by transactions which

must have preceded what is related chap. ix. This matter having been arranged, and Ezra being now about to enter upon the execution of his commission to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of his God (vii. 12), he received information of the illegal marriages. While he was in the temple, the princes (הַשָּׂרִים, the princes, are those who give the information, the article being used *e.g.* like that in הַפָּלִיט, Gen. xiv. 13) came to him, saying: The people (viz. Israel, the priests, and the Levites; the three classes of the Israelite community) do not separate themselves from the people of the lands; comp. vi. 21. בְּתַעֲבֻתֵיהֶם, with respect to their abominations, *i.e.* as Israel should have done with respect to the abominations of these people. The לְּ to לְּכַנְעֲנִי might be regarded as introducing the enumeration of the different nations, and corresponding with מֵעַמִּי; it is, however, more likely that it is used merely as a periphrasis for the genitive, and subordinates the names to תַּעֲבֻתֵיהֶם: their, *i.e.* the Canaanites', etc., abominations, the suffix relating, as *e.g.* at iii. 12 and elsewhere, to the names following. Five Canaanitish races are here named, as in Ex. xiii. 5, with this difference, that the Perizzites are here substituted for the Hivites, while in Ex. iii. 8, xxiii. 23, both are enumerated, making six; to these are added in Deut. vii. 1 the Girgashites, making, generally speaking, seven nations. Ammonites, Moabites, and Egyptians are here cited besides the Canaanitish races. The non-severance of the Israelites from these nations consisted, according to ver. 2, in the fact of their having contracted marriages with them. In the law, indeed (Ex. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3), only marriages with Canaanitish women were forbidden; but the reason of this prohibition, viz. that Israel might not be seduced by them to idolatry, made its extension to Moabites, Ammonites, and Egyptians necessary under existing circumstances, if an effectual check was to be put to the relapse into heathenism of the Israelitish community, now but just gathered out again from among the Gentiles. For during the captivity idolaters of all nations had settled in the depopulated country, and mingled with the remnant of the Israelites left there. By



“the people of the lands,” however, we are not to understand, with J. H. Michaelis, remnants of the races subjugated by Nebuchadnezzar and carried to Babylon,—who were now, after seventy years, returning, as well as the Jews, to their native lands under Cyrus; in support of which view Mich. incorrectly refers to Jer. xxv. 9, etc.,—but those portions, both of the ancient Canaanitish races and of the Moabites and Ammonites, who, escaping the sentence of captivity, remained in the land. נְשִׂאֵי is naturally completed by נְשִׂים from the context; comp. x. 44, 2 Chron. xi. 21, and other passages. The subject of הִתְעַרְבִי is the collective זֶרַע הַקֹּדֶשׁ, the holy seed, *i.e.* the members of the nation called to holiness (Ex. xix. 5). The appellation is taken from Isa. vi. 13, where the remnant of the covenant people, preserved in the midst of judgments, and purified thereby, is called a holy seed. The second part of ver. 2 contains an explanatory accessory clause: and the hand of the princes and rulers hath been first in this unfaithfulness (מַעַל, comp. Lev. v. 15), *i.e.* the princes were the first to transgress; on the figurative expression, comp. Deut. xiii. 10. סִנְיִים is an Old-Persian word naturalized in Hebrew, signifying commander, prefect; but its etymology is not as yet satisfactorily ascertained: see Delitzsch on Isa. xli. 25.—Ver. 3, etc. This information threw Ezra into deep grief and moral consternation. The tearing of the upper and under garments was a sign of heartfelt and grievous affliction (Josh. viii. 6); see remarks on Lev. x. 6. The plucking out of (a portion of) the hair was the expression of violent wrath or moral indignation, comp. Neh. xiii. 25, and is not to be identified with the cutting off of the hair in mourning (Job i. 20). “And sat down stunned;” מְשׁוּמֵם, desolate, rigid, stunned, without motion. While he was sitting thus, there were gathered unto him all who feared the word of God concerning the transgression of those that had been carried away. תָּרַד, trembling, being terrified, generally construed with עַל or אֵל (e.g. Isa. lxvi. 2, 5), but here with בָּ (like verbs of embracing, believing), and meaning to believe with trembling in the word which God had spoken concerning this מַעַל, *i.e.* thinking with terror

of the punishments which such faithless conduct towards a covenant God involved.

Vers. 5–15. *Ezra's prayer and confession for the congregation.*—Ver. 5. And at the time of the evening sacrifice, I rose up from my mortification (תַּעֲנִיַת, humiliation, generally through fasting, here through sitting motionless in deep affliction of soul), and rending my garment and my mantle. These words contribute a second particular to תַּעֲנִיַת, and do not mean that Ezra arose with his garments torn, but state that, on arising, he rent his clothing, and therefore again manifested his sorrow in this manner. He then fell on his knees, and spread out his hands to God (comp. 1 Kings viii. 22), to make a confession of the heavy guilt of the congregation before God, and thus impressively to set their sins before all who heard his prayer.—Ver. 6, etc. The train of thought in this prayer is as follows: I scarcely dare to lift up my face to God, through shame for the greatness of our misdeeds (ver. 6). From the days of our fathers, God has sorely punished us for our sins by delivering us into the power of our enemies; but has now again turned His pity towards us, and revived us in the place of His sanctuary, through the favour of the king of Persia (7–9). But we have again transgressed His commands, with the keeping of which God has connected our possession of the good land given unto us (vers. 10–12). Should we then, after God has spared us more than we through our trespasses have deserved, bring His wrath upon us, till we are wholly consumed? God is just; He has preserved us; but we stand before Him with heavy guilt upon us, such guilt that we cannot endure God's presence (vers. 13–15). Ezra does not pray for the pardon of their sin, for he desires only to bring the congregation to the knowledge of the greatness of their transgression, and so to invite them to do all that in them lies to atone for their guilt, and to appease God's wrath.—Ver. 6. "I am ashamed, and am covered with shame, to lift up my face to Thee, my God." בִּשְׁתִּי וְנִכְלַמְתִּי united, as in Jer. xxxi. 19, comp. Isa. xlv. 16, and other passages. נִכְלַם, to be covered with shame, is stronger



than בּוֹשׁ. "For our iniquities are increased over our head," *i.e.* have grown above our head. לְמַעַל רֹאשׁ, to or over the head. לְמַעַל serves to enhance the meaning of רָבוּ, like 1 Chron. xxiii. 17. "And our guiltiness is great, (reaching) unto the heavens;" comp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 9.—Ver. 7. "Since the days of our fathers, have we, our kings, our priests, been delivered into the hands of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plunder, and to shame of face." The words from בְּחָרֵב onwards serve to explain what is meant by being delivered into the hand of strange kings. On the expression בִּשְׁתַּ פָּנִים, comp. Dan. ix. 7, etc., 2 Chron. xxxii. 21. בְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, as it is this day, as is to-day the case; see remarks on Dan. ix. 7. The thought is: We are still sorely suffering for our sins, by being yet under the yoke of foreign sovereigns.—Ver. 8. "And now for a little moment there has been mercy from the LORD our God, to leave us a rescued remnant, and to give us a nail in His holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage." He calls the short interval between their release from captivity by Cyrus, and the time when he is speaking, בְּמַעַט יָנַע, a little moment (comp. Isa. xxvi. 20), in comparison with the long period of suffering from the times of the Assyrians (comp. Neh. ix. 32) till the reign of Cyrus. פְּלִיטָה, a rescued remnant, is the new community delivered from Babylon, and returned to the land of their fathers. In proportion to the numerous population of former days, it was but a remnant that escaped destruction; but a remnant which, according to the predictions of the prophets, was again to grow into a large nation. A foundation for this hope was given by the fact that God had given them "a nail in the place of His sanctuary." The expression is figurative. יָתֵד is a nail or peg struck into the wall, to hang any kind of domestic utensils upon; comp. Isa. xxii. 23, etc. Such a nail was the place of God's sanctuary, the temple, to the rescued community. This was to them a firm nail, by which they were borne and upheld; and this nail God had given them as a support to which they might cling, and gain new life and vigour. The infinitive clauses

following, לְהַאֲרִי and לְתַתֵּנוּ, are dependent upon the preceding infinitives לְהַשְׁאִיר and לְלַחֵת, and state the purpose for which God has given a nail in His house to this remnant. That our God may enlighten our eyes, *i.e.* may bestow upon us new vitality; comp. Ps. xiii. 4. Suffering and misfortune make the eyes dim, and their light is quenched in death: the enlightened or beaming eye is an image of vital power; comp. 1 Sam. xiv. 27, 29. לְהַתִּיב מִחַיָּה is not to be translated, *ut daret nobis vivificationem*, the suffix to לְתַתֵּנוּ being not dative, but accusative. The literal rendering is: that He may make us a slight reviving. מִחַיָּה, the means of supporting life, restoration to life; see on 2 Chron. xiv. 13. Ezra adds מְעַט; for the life to which the community had attained was but feeble, in comparison with a vigorous social life. Their deliverance from Babylon and return to the land of their fathers was, so to speak, a revival from death; compare the embodiment of this figure in Ezekiel's vision, Ezek. xxxvii. 1-14: they were, however, still in a state of vassalage, and had not yet regained their independence. This thought is further carried out in ver. 9: "For we are bondmen, yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy to us before the kings of Persia; so that they have given us a reviving to build up the house of our God, and to repair its ruins, and have given us a wall about us in Judah and Jerusalem." They who have returned to Jerusalem and Judah are still bondmen, for they are yet under the Persian yoke; but God has disposed the kings of Persia so to favour them as to give them a reviving, to enable them to rebuild the house of God. Cyrus and Darius had not merely permitted and commanded the building of the temple, but had also furnished them with considerable assistance towards the carrying out of this work; comp. i. 3, etc., vi. 7-9. The suffix in חֲרִבְתֵּינוּ alludes to בֵּית אֱלֹהִים. The words of the last sentence are figurative. גֵּר means the wall of a vineyard, the wall or fence built for its protection (Isa. v. 2, 5). Hence the wall, or enclosure, is an image of protection from the incursions and attacks of enemies. Such a wall has been given



them in Judah and Jerusalem by the kings of Persia. "The meaning is not that they possess a place defended by walls (perhaps, therefore, the temple) in Jerusalem and Judah, but that the Persian kings have given to the new community a safe dwelling-place (or the means of existence), because the power of the Persian empire secures to the returned Israelites continued and undisturbed possession of the city and the land." (Bertheau.)

After this statement concerning the divine favour, Ezra next sets himself to describe the conduct of his countrymen with respect to the mercy extended to them. — Ver. 10. "And now, O our God, what can we say after this? That we have forsaken Thy commandments." זָנֵאת, *i.e.* such proofs of the divine compassion as have just been mentioned. The answer which follows commences with כִּי, before which נִאֲמָר is mentally repeated: "we can only say that we have forsaken Thy commandments, requited Thy kindness with sins." — Ver. 11. Namely, the commandments "which Thou hast commanded by Thy servants the prophets, saying, The land unto which ye go to possess it is an unclean land through the uncleanness of the people of the lands, through their abominations, wherewith they have filled it from one end to another through their impurity. And now give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons (for wives), nor seek their peace nor their wealth for ever; that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever." The words of the prophets introduced by לֵאמֹר are found in these terms neither in the prophetic books nor the Pentateuch. They are not, therefore, to be regarded as a verbal quotation, but only as a declaration that the prohibition of intermarriage with the heathen had been inculcated by the prophets. The introduction of this prohibition by the words: the land unto which ye go to possess it, refers to the Mosaic age, and in using it Ezra had chiefly in view Deut. vii. 1-3. He interweaves, however, with this passage other sayings from the Pentateuch, *e.g.* Deut. xxiii. 7, and from the prophetic

writings, without designing to make a verbal quotation. He says quite generally, by His servants the prophets, as the author of the books of Kings does in similar cases, *e.g.* 2 Kings xvii. 23, xxi. 10, xxiv. 2, where the leading idea is, not to give the saying of some one prophet, but to represent the truth in question as one frequently reiterated. The sayings of Moses in Deuteronomy also bear a prophetic character; for in this book he, after the manner of the prophets, seeks to make the people lay to heart the duty of obeying the law. It is true that we do not meet in the other books of Scripture a special prohibition of marriages with Canaanites, though in the prophetic remarks, Judg. iii. 6, such marriages are reprov'd as occasions of seducing the Israelites to idolatry, and in the prophetic descriptions of the whoredoms of Israel with Baalim, and the general animadversions upon apostasy from the Lord, the transgression of this prohibition is implicitly included; thus justifying the general expression, that God had forbidden the Israelites to contract such marriages, by His servants the prophets. Besides, we must here take into consideration the threatening of the prophets, that the Lord would thrust Israel out of the land for their sins, among which intermarriage with the Canaanites was by no means the least. Ezra, moreover, makes use of the general expression, "by the prophets," because he desired to say that God had not merely forbidden these marriages once or twice in the law, but had also repeatedly inculcated this prohibition by the prophets. The law was preached by the prophets when they reiterated what was the will of God as revealed in the law of Moses. In this respect Ezra might well designate the prohibition of the law as the saying of the prophets, and cite it as pronounced according to the circumstances of the Mosaic period.<sup>1</sup> The words: the land into which ye go, etc., recall the introduction of the law in Deut. vii. 1, etc.; but the

<sup>1</sup> It is hence evident that these words of Ezra afford no evidence against the single authorship of the Pentateuch. The inference that a saying of the law, uttered during the wanderings in the wilderness, is here cited as a saying of the prophets, the servants of Jahve, is, accord-



description of the land as a land of uncleanness through the uncleanness of the people, etc., does not read thus either in the Pentateuch or in the prophets. נִדָּה, the uncleanness of women, is first applied to moral impurity by the prophets: comp. Lam. i. 17; Ezek. vii. 20, xxxvi. 17, comp. Isa. lxiv. 5. The expression מִפֶּה אֶל-פֶּה, from edge to edge, *i.e.* from one end to the other, like לִפְּהָא, 2 Kings x. 21, xxi. 16, is taken from vessels filled to their upper rim. וְעַתָּה introduces the consequence: and now, this being the case. The prohibition אַל תִּתְּנוּ וגו' is worded after Deut. vii. 3. The addition: nor seek their peace, etc., is taken almost verbally from Deut. xxiii. 7, where this is said in respect of the Ammonites and Moabites. לִמְעַן תִּחְזְקוּ recalls Deut. xi. 8, and the promise: that ye may eat the good of the land for ever, Isa. i. 19. וְהוֹרִשְׁתֶּם לְבָנֵיכֶם, and leave it for an inheritance to your children, does not occur in this form in the Pentateuch, but only the promise: that they and their children should possess the land for ever. On הוֹרִישׁ in this sense comp. Judg. xi. 24, 2 Chron. xx. 11.—Ver. 13, etc. And after all, continues Ezra, taking up again the אֲחִיר־זֹאת of ver. 10,—“after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass—yea, Thou our God hast spared us more than our iniquity deserved, and hast given us this escaped remnant—can we again break Thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wilt Thou not be angry with us even to extirpation, so that no residue and no escaped remnant should be left?” The premiss in ver. 13a is followed in ver. 14 by the conclusion in the form of a question, while the second clause of ver. 13 is an explanatory parenthesis. Bertheau construes the passage otherwise. He finds the continuation of the sentence: and after all this . . . in the words כִּי אֲתָהּ וגו', which, calmly spoken, would read: Thou, O God, hast not wholly destroyed us, but hast preserved to us an escaped remnant; while instead of such a continuation we have an exclamation of grateful wonder, ing to the just remark of Bertheau, entirely refuted even by the fact that the words cited are nowhere found in the Pentateuch in this exact form, and that hence Ezra did not intend to make a verbal quotation.

emphatically introduced by **כִּי** in the sense of **אֲמֵנָה כִּי**. With this construction of the clauses, however, no advance is made, and Ezra, in this prayer, does but repeat what he had already said, vers. 8 and 9; although the introductory **אֲחֵרִי** leads us to expect a new thought to close the confession. Then, too, the logical connection between the question ver. 14 and what precedes it would be wanting, *i.e.* a foundation of fact for the question ver. 14. Bertheau remarks on ver. 14, that the question: should we return to break (*i.e.* break again) the commands of God? is an antithesis to the exclamation. But neither does this question, to judge by its matter, stand in contrast to the exclamation, nor is any such contrast indicated by its form. The discourse advances in regular progression only when ver. 14a forms the conclusion arrived at from ver. 13a, and the thought in the premiss (13a) is limited by the thought introduced with **כִּי**. What had come upon Israel for their sins was, according to ver. 7, deliverance into the hand of heathen kings, to the sword, to captivity, etc. God had not, however, merely chastened and punished His people for their sins, He had also extended mercy to them, ver. 8, etc. This, therefore, is also mentioned by Ezra in ver. 13b, to justify, or rather to limit, the **כֹּל** in **כָּל-הַבָּא**. The **כִּי** is properly confirmatory: for Thou, our God, hast indeed punished us, but not in such measure as our sins had deserved; and receives through the tenor of the clause the adversative meaning of *imo*, yea (comp. Ewald, § 330, b). **הִשְׁכַּחְתָּ לְמַטָּה מִ'.** Thou hast checked, hast stopped, beneath our iniquities. **הִשְׁכַּח** is not used intransitively, but actively; the missing object must be supplied from the context: Thou hast withheld that, all of which should have come upon us, *i.e.* the punishment we deserved, or, as older expositors completed the sense, *iram tuam*. **לְמַטָּה מִעֲוֲנוֹנֵינוּ**, *infra delicta nostra*, *i.e.* Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserved. For their iniquities they had merited extirpation; but God had given them a rescued remnant. **כְּנוֹצָתָא**, as this, viz. this which exists in the community now returned from Babylon to Judæa. This is the circumstance which justifies



the question: should we, or can we, again (נָשׁוּב is used adverbially) break Thy commandments, and become related by marriage? (עַמִּי הַתְּחַיִּיתִין like Deut. vii. 3.) עַמִּי הַתְּעִבּוֹת, people who live in abominations. The answer to this question is found in the subsequent question: will He not—if, after the sparing mercy we have experienced, we again transgress the commands of God—be angry with us till He have consumed us? עַד בָּלָה (comp. 2 Kings xiii. 17, 19) is strengthened by the addition: so that there will be no remnant and no escaping. The question introduced by הֲלוֹא is an expression of certain assurance: He will most certainly consume us.—Ver. 15. “Jahve, God of Israel, Thou art righteous; for we remain an escaped remnant, as (it is) this day. Behold, we are before Thee in our trespass; for no one can stand before Thy face, because of this.” Ezra appeals to the righteousness of God, not to supplicate pardon, as Neh. ix. 33, for the righteousness of God would impel Him to extirpate the sinful nation, but to rouse the conscience of the community, to point out to them what, after this relapse into their old abominations, they had to expect from the justice of God. כִּי נִשְׁאַרְנִי is confirmatory. God has shown Himself to be just by so sorely punishing this once numerous nation, that only a small remnant which has escaped destruction now exists. And this remnant has again most grievously offended: we lie before Thee in our trespass; what can we expect from Thy justice? Nothing but destruction; for there is no standing before Thee, *i.e.* no one can stand before Thee, עַל-זֹאת, because of this (comp. viii. 23, x. 2), *i.e.* because of the fresh guilt which we have incurred.

Chap. x. *The separation of the strange wives from the congregation.*—Vers. 1-5. While Ezra was making this confession before God, a numerous assemblage gathered around him, and wept aloud. From this point onwards Ezra relates the further course of events in such wise as to cast his own person in the background, and speaks of himself in the third person. The matter of his prayer is more definitely declared by וּבְהִתְוַדָּתוֹ, and his posture in prayer by בָּכָה וּמִתְנַפֵּל, weeping and casting himself down (lying on his knees, ix. 5).

“Before the house of God,” *i.e.* in the court of the temple. The confirmatory clause: for the people wept much (הִרְבֵּה בִּכְּה, a weeping in mass), furnishes the motive of so great a number of men, women, and children gathering around Ezra. Very many were as distressed as he was at the marriages with strange wives, and regarded them as a grievous trespass; hence they assembled weeping around him.—Ver. 2, etc. Then one of the sons of Elam, Shecaniah, the son of Jehiel, stood forth from amidst the assembly, and uttered the confession: “We have been unfaithful towards our God by marrying strange wives, but there is yet hope for Israel concerning this thing. We will now make a covenant with God to put away all the strange wives and their children from the congregation, according to the counsel of the Lord, and of those who fear the commandment of our God, that it may be done according to the law.” Shecaniah, of the sons of Elam (comp. ii. 7, viii. 7), is a different person from the descendant of Zattu, mentioned chap. viii. 5; nor is Jehiel identical with the individual whose name occurs in ver. 26. וְנָשָׂא, and have brought home strange wives. הוֹשִׁיב, to cause to dwell (in one’s house), said in vers. 10, 14, 17, 18, and Neh. xiii. 23, 27, of bringing a wife home. Shecaniah founds his hope for Israel in this trespass upon the circumstance, that they bind themselves by a solemn covenant before God to put away this scandal from the congregation, and to act in conformity with the law. To make a covenant with our God, *i.e.* to bind themselves by an oath with respect to God, comp. 2 Chron. xxix. 10. הוֹצִיא, to put away—the opposite of הוֹשִׁיב. All the wives are, according to the context, all the strange women (ver. 2), and that which is born of them, their children. Instead of בְּעֵצַת אֲדָנִי, according to the counsel of the Lord, De Wette, Bertheau, and others, following the paraphrase in the LXX. and 1 Esdras, read אֲדָנִי, according to the counsel of my lord, *i.e.* of Ezra. But this paraphrase being of no critical authority, there is no sufficient reason for the alteration. For Shecaniah to call Ezra my lord sounds strange, since usually this title was only given by servants to their master, or subjects to their sove-



reign, and Shecaniah afterwards addresses him simply as *thou*. Besides, Ezra had given no advice at all in this matter, and still less had he come to any resolution about it with the God-fearing members of the community. יַעֲשֶׂה after the preceding נִכְרַת-בְּרִית, we will make a covenant, must be taken as hortative: and let it be done according to the law. הָרִירָה, caring for with trembling.—Ver. 4. “Up! for this matter concerns thee (thou art called to carry it out), and we are with thee (will assist thee therein); be strong (courageous) and do it.”—Ver. 5. Then Ezra (who during this speech had continued upon his knees) arose, and made the chiefs of the priests, of the Levites, and of all Israel swear to do according to this word; and they swore. הִדְבֵּר הָיָה is Shecaniah’s proposal to put away the strange wives.—Ver. 6. Hereupon Ezra left the place before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib, to fast and mourn there for the unfaithfulness (transgression) of them that had been carried away (מֵעַל הַנּוֹלָה like ix. 4). Johanan the son of Eliashib cannot actually be Johanan ben Eliashib (Neh. xii. 23) the high priest, however natural it may be to understand by the chamber of Johanan one of the chambers in the out-buildings of the temple, called after the name of some well-known individual. For the high priest Eliashib was a contemporary of Nehemiah, and the high priest Johanan was not the son, but, according to the definite statement, Neh. xii. 10, the grandson, of Eliashib, and the son of Joiada (the correct reading of Neh. xii. 11 being: Joiada begat Johanan and Jonathan). Now a chamber of the temple could not in Ezra’s time have been as yet called after a grandson of Eliashib the contemporary of Nehemiah;<sup>1</sup> and both Johanan and Eliashib being names which frequently occur (comp. vers. 24, 27, 36), and one of the twenty-four

<sup>1</sup> This would not, indeed, be impossible, because, as we shall subsequently show (in our Introduction to the book of Nehemiah, § 2), Eliashib’s grandson Johanan might be already ten years of age at the time of the transaction in question; so that his grandfather, the high priest Eliashib, might have called a chamber of the temple after the name of his grandson. This view is not, however, a very probable one.

orders of priests being called after the latter (1 Chron. xxiv. 12), we, with Ewald (*Gesch.* iv. p. 228), regard the Johanan ben Eliashib here mentioned as an individual of whom nothing further is known,—perhaps a priest descended from the Eliashib of 1 Chron. xxiv. 12, and who possessed in the new temple a chamber called by his name. For there is not the slightest reason to suppose, with Bertheau, that a subsequent name of this chamber is used in this narrative, because the narrator desired to state the locality in a manner which should be intelligible to his contemporaries. Cler. and Berth. desire, after 1 Esdr. ix. 1 (*καὶ ἀνλισθεὶς ἐκεῖ*), to change *וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁם* into *וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁם*: and he passed the night there without eating bread or drinking water. But the LXX. having *καὶ ἐπορεύθη ἐκεῖ*, and the repetition of the same word being, moreover, by no means infrequent, comp. *e.g.* *וַיֵּלֶךְ* in vers. 5, 6, and finally *שָׁם* repeatedly standing for thither, *e.g.* 1 Sam. ii. 14 (*הַבָּתִּים שָׁם*), there are no adequate grounds for an alteration of the text. The paraphrase of 1 Esdr. arises merely from the connection, and is devoid of critical value. To eat no bread, etc., means to fast: comp. Ex. xxxiv. 28, Deut. ix. 9.

Vers. 7–17. The resolution carried into execution.—Vers. 7, 8. A proclamation was sent forth throughout Judah and Jerusalem (*הַעֲבִיר קוֹל*, comp. i. 1) to all the children of the captivity to assemble at Jerusalem under pain of the punishment, that whoever should not come within three days, all his substance should be forfeited and himself excluded from the congregation, according to the decision of the princes and elders, who, as the heads of the community, had taken the matter in hand, and made this announcement. The forfeiture of substance is not its destruction, as prescribed Deut. xiii. 13–17 in the case of a city fallen into idolatry, but its appropriation to the benefit of the temple, after the analogy of Lev. xxvii. 28.—Ver. 9. After three days all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem. This took place on the twentieth day of the ninth month. On this statement of time, see the remark on ix. 1. The assembled multitude sat there on the open space of the house of God,



*i.e.* probably the open space (הַרְחֹב) in front of the water-gate, Neh. viii. 1, 3, 16, at the eastern or south-eastern side, before the temple court; see remarks on Neh. viii. 1. “Trembling” because of this matter, the seriousness of which they might perceive from the heavy penalty attached to their non-appearance within three days, and “because of the rain.” The ninth month, corresponding with our December, is in the cold rainy time of the year (comp. ver. 13), “when the rain usually falls in torrents” (Robinson, *Phys. Geog.* p. 287).—Ver. 10. Ezra then stood up and reproved the assembled multitude, saying: You have brought home (הוֹשִׁיב, comp. ver. 2) strange wives to increase the trespass of Israel (comp. Ezra’s confession, ix. 6-15), and exhorted them to give glory to God and to do His pleasure, (*viz.*) to separate themselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives. On תָּנּוּ תוֹרָה, comp. Josh. vii. 19. Separation from the people of the land consisted, under the circumstances, in the dismissal of the strange wives.—Ver. 12. The whole assembly replied with a loud voice, and therefore with firm resolve: According to thy word it is our duty to do. עֲלֵינוּ must not be drawn to what precedes, as in the Vulgate, *juxta verbum tuum ad nos, sic fiat*, but to what follows, as in ver. 4, Neh. xiii. 13, 2 Sam. xviii. 11. But—they further remark, ver. 13—the people are many,—*i.e.* the assemblage is very large to be able to deal immediately with the several cases; and it is (now) the time of the heavy rains, and there is no power to stand without,—*i.e.* at the present season we are not able to remain in the open air until the business is discharged; neither is this the work of one day, or of two, for we have transgressed much in this matter,—*i.e.* one or two days will not suffice to investigate and decide upon all cases, because very many have broken the law in this respect.—Ver. 14. “Let then our rulers stand for the whole congregation, and let all who in all our cities have brought home strange wives come at appointed times, and with them the elders of each city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God be turned away from us, as long as this matter lasts.” There were so many cases to deal with, that the rulers, as

the judicial authorities, must decide in this matter; and those who in all the cities of the land had transgressed, were to appear before these authorities, and submit their individual cases to their jurisdiction. The choice of the verb **יַעֲמִדוּ**, to stand or set oneself to discharge some business, here therefore to give judgment, is occasioned by the preceding **לַעֲמֹד**. The whole community had assembled according to the proclamation, and was standing there for the purpose of bringing the matter to a close. This they were not, however, able to do, for the reasons stated ver. 13; hence the princes, as rulers of the community, are to remain for the discharge of the business. **לְכָל־הַקָּהָל** is not a genitive dependent on **שָׂרֵינוּ**, and explanatory of the suffix of this word—our, viz. the whole congregation's, princes (Bertheau)—an unnatural and superfluous elucidation; for if the whole congregation say: our princes, it is self-evident that not the princes of a section or portion of the people, but of the whole congregation, must be intended. **לְכָל־הַקָּהָל** is the object of **יַעֲמִדוּ**: let them stand for the whole congregation (**לְ** **עָמַד** like **לְ** **קוּם**, Ps. xciv. 16), not *instead of*, but for the good of the congregation, and transact its business. In our cities, *i.e.* including the capital, for there is here no contrast between Jerusalem and the other cities. The article to **הַהֲשִׁיב** stands, as is often the case, for the relative **אֲשֶׁר**, *e.g.* ver. 17, viii. 25. **עֵתִים מוֹמָנִים**, appointed times, stated terms, used only here and in Neh. x. 35, xiii. 31. **זֶמֶן** is a Chaldaistic expression. With the accused were to come the elders and judges of every city, to furnish the necessary explanations and evidence. **עַד לְהֲשִׁיב**, until the turning away of the fierceness of the wrath (**עַד לְ** according to the later usage of the language instead of **עַד** only, comp. Ewald, § 315, *a*, not instead of **לְ** only, as Bertheau seeks, by incorrectly interpreted passages, to prove). The meaning is: until the fierce wrath of God concerning these marriages shall be turned away, by their dissolution and the dismissal of the strange women from the congregation. The last words, **עַד לְדַבֵּר הָהֵא**, offer some difficulty. De Wette and Bertheau translate them: on account of this matter, which **עַד לְ** can by no means signify. We regard **עַד לְ** = **עַד** of the older



language, in the sense of during, like 2 Kings ix. 22, according to which the meaning is: as long as this thing lasts; but we connect these words, not, as J. H. Michaelis, with the immediately preceding clause: the wrath which is fierce during this matter (*quæ usque, i.e. constanter ardet*), but take them as more exactly defining the leading idea of the verse: the princes are to stand and judge the guilty as long as this matter lasts, so that עַר לְהָשִׁיב הָיָה is co-ordinate with עַר לְהָשִׁיב וְנָתַן.—Ver. 15. Jonathan the son of Asahel, and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah, indeed opposed this proposal on the part of the community, and were supported in their opposition by two Levites, but without being able to carry it out. This statement is introduced by אֲנִי, only, in the form of a qualification to the remark that the *whole* assembly (ver. 12) made this resolution: nevertheless Jonathan . . . stood up against this. For עָמַד עַל, to stand up against, or as elsewhere עָמַד עַל, comp. 1 Chron. xxi. 1, 2 Chron. xx. 23, Dan. viii. 25, xi. 14. Such also is the view of R. Sal. and Lightf., while older expositors understand it as meaning: only Jonathan . . . stood up for this matter, like the *steterunt super hoc* of the Vulgate, or as the decidedly incorrect explanation of J. H. Mich.: *præfecti sunt huic negotio*.—Nothing further is known of the four opponents here named. That they did not succeed in this opposition appears from what follows. Ver. 16. The children of the captivity, *i.e.* the returned exiles, did so; *i.e.* the congregation carried their resolve into execution. And Ezra the priest, and men, heads of houses according to their houses,—*i.e.* so that each house was represented by its head,—were separated, *i.e.* chosen to conduct the investigation. The ו copulative before אֲנָשִׁים has been lost, an asyndeton seeming in this case inadmissible. Bertheau, on the contrary, unnecessarily changes וַיִּבְרְלוּ into לֹא וַיִּבְרְלוּ after 1 Esdras ix. 16. “And they all by names,” comp. viii. 20. וַיִּשְׁבּוּ, and they held a sitting (*i.e.* their first sitting) on the first day of the tenth month, and therefore only ten days after the assembly just spoken of. לְדַרְשׁ הַדָּבָר, to inquire into the matter. It is impossible in Hebrew to form דְּרִישׁ from דָּרַשׁ, and this word can only arise from דְּרוֹשׁ, as Ewald,

§ 239, *a*, note, Olshausen, *Lehrb. d. hebr. Spr.* p. 150, and Böttcher, *ausf. Lehrb. der hebr. Spr.* i. 1, p. 162, note, unanimously agree.—Ver. 17. And they made an end with all, with respect to the men who had brought home strange wives. **בְּכָל** (with the article) cannot be so connected with **אֲנָשִׁים**, from which it is separated by the accentuation of the latter, as to admit of the repetition, as by older expositors, of the preposition **בְּ** before **אֲנָשִׁים**: with all, namely, with the men. Still less can **בְּכָל**, as Bertheau thinks, be taken in the sense of “in every place,” and **אֲנָשִׁים** connected as an accusative with **וַיִּכְלּוּ**: they finished in every place the men (!); for **כָּלָה** with an accusative of the person signifies to annihilate, to make an end of, while **בְּכָלָה** means to finish, to make an end with, comp. Gen. xlv. 12. If, as the accentuation requires, we take **בְּכָל** independently, **אֲנָשִׁים** can only be an accusative of more exact definition: in respect of the men (**אֲנָשִׁים** being without the article, because words which define it follow). As this gives a suitable meaning, it seems unnecessary to alter the punctuation and read **בְּכָל-אֲנָשִׁים**, or with Ewald, § 290, *c*, note 1, to regard **בְּכָל אֲנָשִׁים** as a singular combination.—Till the first day of the first month (of the next year), therefore in three months, their sittings having begun, according to ver. 13, on the first day of the tenth month.—The account of this transaction closes with—

*The list of the men who had taken strange wives*, vers. 18–44; among whom were priests (18–22), Levites (23, 24), and Israelites, *i.e.* laymen (25–43).—Ver. 18, etc. Among the priests there stand first, four names of sons and brethren of the high priest Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel. **אֶחָיו**, his (Jeshua's) brethren. Judging by ii. 36, these were among the descendants of Jedaiah, a section of the house of the high-priestly family (see rem. on ii. 36), and were therefore distant cousins of the high priest. They gave their hands, *i.e.* bound themselves by shaking hands, to put away their wives, *i.e.* to dismiss them, and to sever them from the congregation of Israel, **וְאִשְׁמָיִם**, “and guilty a ram for their trespass,” *i.e.* condemned to bring a ram as a trespass-offer-



ing. וְאִשְׁמִים is to be regarded as the continuation of the infinitive clause לְהוֹצִיא. As elsewhere, infinitive clauses are continued without anything further in the *verb. finit.* (comp. Ewald, § 350); so here also does the adjective אִשְׁמִים follow, requiring that לְהוֹצִיא should be mentally supplied. אֵיל-צֶאֱנָן, a ram of the flock, is, as an accusative of more exact definition, dependent on אִשְׁמִים. This trespass-offering was imposed upon them according to the principle of the law, Lev. v. 14, etc., because they had committed a מַעַל against the Lord, which needed expiation; see on Lev. v. 14.—In what follows, only the names of the individuals, and a statement of the families they belonged to, are given, without repeating that the same obligations, namely, the dismissal of their strange wives, and the bringing of a trespass-offering, were imposed on them also, this being self-evident from the context.—Among the sons of Immer were three, among the sons of Harim five, among the sons of Pashur six offenders; in all, eighteen priests. By comparing ii. 36-39, we perceive that not one of the orders of priests who returned with Zerubbabel was free from participation in this transgression. Some of the names given, 20-22, reappear in the lists in Neh. viii. 4 and x. 2-9, and may belong to the same individuals.—Ver. 23. Of Levites, only six names are given, and that without stating the houses to which they belonged. From ii. 40, however, it appears that they were of the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel there mentioned. “Kelaiah, the same is Kelita;” the latter is the usual name of the person in question, and that which he bears in Neh. viii. 7 and x. 11. Jozabad also reappears in Neh. viii. 7.—Ver. 24, etc. Of singers one, and of porters three names are given; comp. ii. 41, 42. In all, ten Levites.—Ver. 25. Of Israel, as distinguished from priests and Levites, *i.e.* of the laity. Of these latter are given in all eighty-six names, belonging to ten races, 25-43, who returned with Zerubbabel. See Nos. 1, 5, 6, 9, 8, 4, 30, 17, and 27 of the survey of these races, p. 33. יִרְמֹת in ver. 29 should, according to the Chethiv, be read יִרְמֹת.—The twofold naming of sons of Bani in this list (vers. 29 and 34)

is strange, and Bani is evidently in one of these places a mistake for some other name. Bertheau supposes that Bigvai may have stood in the text in one of these places. The error undoubtedly lies in the second mention of Bani (ver. 34), and consists not merely in the wrong transcription of this one name. For, while of every other race four, six, seven, or eight individuals are named, no less than seven and twenty names follow מִבְּנֵי בְנֵי, though all these persons could hardly have belonged to one race, unless the greater number of males therein had married strange wives. Besides, no names of inhabitants of cities of Judah and Benjamin are given in this list (as in ii. 21-28, and 33-35), although it is stated in vers. 7 and 14 that not only the men of Jerusalem, but also dwellers in other cities, had contracted these prohibited marriages, and been summoned to Jerusalem, that judgment might be pronounced in their several cases. These reasons make it probable that the twenty-seven persons enumerated in vers. 34-42 were inhabitants of various localities in Judah, and not merely individuals belonging to a single house. This supposition cannot, however, be further corroborated, since even the LXX. and 1 Esdr. read the name Bani in vers. 27 and 34, nor can any conjecture respecting the correct reading laying claim to probability be ventured on. In the single names, the Greek texts of the Septuagint and 1 Esdras frequently differ from the Hebrew text, but the differences are almost all of a kind to furnish no material for criticism. A considerable number of these names reappear in the lists of names in the book of Nehemiah, but under circumstances which nowhere make the identity of the persons bearing them certain.—Ver. 44 contains the statement with which the account of this transaction closes. The Chethiv נִשְׂאוֹ seems to be an error of transcription for נִשְׂאוֹ (the Keri), which the sense requires. וַיֵּשְׁ מֵהֶם גִּבּוֹר, “and there were among them women who had brought forth sons.” מֵהֶם must be referred to women, notwithstanding the masculine suffix. וַיֵּשְׁ, too, can only be referred to נִשְׂאוֹ, and cannot be explained, as by J. H. Mich.: *unde etiam filios*



*susceperant seu procreaverant*. The gender of the verb is adapted to the form of the word  $\text{סָפְּרָה}$ , an incorrectness which must be attributed to the increasing tendency of the language to use the masculine instead of the feminine, or to renounce a distinction of form between the genders. There are no adequate reasons for such an alteration of the text as Bertheau proposes; for the LXX. already had our text before them, and the *καὶ ἀπέλυσαν αὐτὰς σὺν τέκνοις* of 1 Esdr. ix. 36 is a mere conjecture from the context. The remark itself, that among the women who were sent away were some who had already brought children into the world, is not superfluous, but added for the purpose of showing how thoroughly this matter was carried out. Separation from women who already have children is far more grievous, *ob communium liberorum caritatem*, than parting with childless wives.

Strictly as this separation was carried out, this evil was not thereby done away with for ever, nor even for very long. After the arrival of Nehemiah at Jerusalem, when the building of the wall was concluded, the congregation again bound themselves by an oath, on the occasion of a day of prayer and fasting, to contract no more such illegal marriages (Neh. x. 31). Nevertheless, Nehemiah, on his second return to Jerusalem, some five and twenty to thirty years after the dissolution of these marriages by Ezra, again found Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Moab, and Ammon, and children of these marriages who spoke the tongue of Ashdod, and could not speak the Jews' language, and even one of the sons of the high priest Jehoiada allied to a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite (Neh. xiii. 23, etc.). Such a phenomenon, however strange it may appear on a superficial view of the matter, becomes comprehensible when we consider more closely the circumstances of the times. The nucleus of the Israelite community in Jerusalem and Judah was formed by those exiles who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Ezra; and to this nucleus the remnant of Jewish and Israelite descent which had been left in the land was gradually united, after the rebuilding of the

temple and the restoration of the worship of Jahve. Those who returned from Babylon, as well as those who remained in the land, had now, however, lived seventy, and some of them one hundred and fifty, years (from the captivity of Jehoiachin in 599, to the return of Ezra in 457) among the heathen, and in the midst of heathen surroundings, and had thus become so accustomed to intercourse with them in civil and social transactions, that the consciousness of the barriers placed by the Mosaic law between Israel, the people of Jahve, and the Gentiles, was more and more obliterated. And this would especially be the case when the Gentiles who entered into matrimonial alliance with Israelites did not flagrantly practise idolatrous worship, *i.e.* did not offer sacrifice to heathen deities. Under such circumstances, it must have been extremely difficult to do away entirely with these unlawful unions; although, without a thorough reform in this respect, the successful development of the new community in the land of their fathers was not to be obtained.

Ezra's narrative of his agency in Jerusalem closes with the account of the dissolution of the unlawful marriages then existing. What he subsequently effected for the revival of religion and morality in the re-established community, in conformity with the law of God, was more of an inward and spiritual kind; and was either of such a nature that no striking results ensued, which could furnish matter for historical narrative, or was performed during the period of his joint agency with Nehemiah, of which an account is furnished by the latter in the record he has handed down to us (Neh. viii. 10).



# THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

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# THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

## INTRODUCTION.

### § 1. CONTENTS, DIVISION, AND OBJECT OF THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.



HIS book, according to its title, contains דְּבָרֵי נְחֵמְיָה, and in it Nehemiah relates, almost always in the first person, his journey to Jerusalem, and the work which he there effected. דְּבָרֵי נְחֵמְיָה, used as the title of a work, signifies not narratives, but deeds and experiences, and consequently here the history of Nehemiah. Apart from the contents of the book, this title might, in conformity with the twofold meaning of דְּבָרִים, *verba* and *res*, designate both the words or discourses and the acts or undertakings of Nehemiah. But דְּבָרֵי means words, discourses, only in the titles of prophetic or didactic books, *i.e.* writings of men whose vocation was the announcement of the word: comp. *e.g.* Jer. i. 1, Hos. i. 1, and others. In historical writings, on the contrary, the דְּבָרֵי of the men whose lives and acts are described, are their deeds and experiences: thus דְּבָרֵי דָוִיד, 1 Chron. xxix. 29; דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה, written על סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה 1 Kings xi. 41, comp. 2 Chron. ix. 29,—the history of David, of Solomon; דְּבָרֵי יִרְבֹּעָם, 1 Kings xiv. 19, the acts of Jeroboam, which are more exactly defined by the addition אֲשֶׁר נָלָחַם וְאֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ. So, too, in the case of the other kings, when reference is made to historical works concerning their reigns. It is in this sense that the title of the present book must be understood; and hence both Luther and de Wette have correctly translated it: the history of Nehemiah. Hence the title only testifies to

the fact, that the work at the head of which it stands treats of the things, *i.e.* of the acts, of Nehemiah, and the events that happened to him, without stating anything concerning its author. That Nehemiah was himself the historian of his own deeds, appears only from the circumstance that the narrative is written in the first person.

The *contents* of the book are as follows: Nehemiah, the son of Hachaliah, a Jew, of whom nothing further is known, and cupbearer to the Persian king Artaxerxes Longimanus, is plunged into deep affliction by the account he receives from his brother Hanani, and certain other men from Judah, of the sad condition of those who had returned from Babylon, and especially of the state of the ruined walls and gates of Jerusalem. He entreats with fervent supplications the mercy of God (chap. i.), and shortly after seizes a favourable opportunity to request the king to send him to Judah to build the city of his fathers' sepulchres, and to give him letters to the governors on the other side of Euphrates, that they may provide him with wood for building from the royal forests. This petition being graciously acceded to by the monarch, he travels, accompanied by captains of forces and horsemen, to Jerusalem, and soon after his arrival rides by night round the city, accompanied by some few companions, to ascertain the state of the walls. He then communicates to the rulers of the people his resolution to build and restore the walls, and invites them to undertake this work with him (chap. ii.). Then follows in chap. iii. 1-32 a list of the individuals and families who built the several portions of the wall with their gates; and in chap. iii. 33-vi. 19, an account of the difficulties Nehemiah had to overcome in the prosecution of the work, *viz.*: (1) the attempts of the enemies of the Jews forcibly to oppose and hinder the building, by reason of which the builders were obliged to work with weapons in their hands (iii. 33-iv. 17); (2) the oppression of the poorer members of the community by wealthy usurers, which Nehemiah put a stop to by seriously reproving their injustice, and by his own great unselfishness (chap. v.); and (3) the plots made against his life by his enemies, which he frustrated



by the courageous faith with which he encountered them. Thus the building of the wall was, notwithstanding all these difficulties, brought to a successful termination (chap. vi.).—This work accomplished, Nehemiah directed his efforts towards securing the city against hostile attacks by appointing watches at the gates (vii. 1–3), and increasing the numbers of the dwellers in Jerusalem; in pursuance of which design, he assembled the nobles and people for the purpose of enrolling their names according to their genealogy (vii. 4, 5). While occupied with this matter, he found a list of those houses of Judah that had returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Joshua; and this he gives, vii. 6–73. Then, on the approach of the seventh month of the year, the people assembled at Jerusalem to hear the public reading of the law by Ezra, to keep the new moon and the feast of this month, and, after the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, to observe a day of prayer and fasting, on which occasion the Levites making confession of sin in the name of the congregation, they renewed their covenant with God by entering into an oath to keep the law. This covenant being committed to writing, was sealed by Nehemiah as governor, by the chiefs of the priests, of the Levites, and of the houses of the people, and the contributions for the support of the worship of God and its ministers arranged (viii.–x.). The decision arrived at concerning the increase of the inhabitants of Jerusalem was next carried into execution, one of every ten dwellers in the provinces being chosen by lot to go to Jerusalem and dwell there (xi. 1, 2). Then follow lists, (1) of the houses and races who dwelt in Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah and Benjamin (xi. 3–36); (2) of the priestly and Levitical families who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Joshua, and of the heads of priestly and Levitical families in the days of Joiakim the high priest, Nehemiah, and Ezra (xii. 1–26). These are succeeded by an account of the solemn dedication of the walls (xii. 27–43). Then, finally, after some general remarks on certain institutions of divine worship, and an account of a public reading of the law (xii. 44–xiii. 3), the book concludes with a brief

narration of what Nehemiah effected during his second sojourn there, after his journey to the court in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, and his return for the purpose of putting a stop to certain illegal acts which had prevailed during his absence, such as marriages with heathen women, non-payment of tithes and dues to Levites, desecration of the Sabbath by field-labour, and by buying and selling (xiii. 4-31).

According to what has been stated, this book may be divided into three sections. The first, chaps. i.-vi., treats of the building of the walls and gates of Jerusalem through the instrumentality of Nehemiah; the narrative concerning the occasion of his journey, and the account of the journey itself (i. 1-ii. 10), forming the introduction. The second, chaps. vii.-xii. 43, furnishes a description of the further efforts of Nehemiah to increase and ensure the prosperity of the community in Judah and Jerusalem, first, by securing Jerusalem from hostile attacks; then, by seeking to increase the population of the city; and, lastly, by endeavouring to bring the domestic and civil life of the people into conformity with the precepts of the law, and thus to furnish the necessary moral and religious basis for the due development of the covenant people. The third, chap. xii. 44-xiii. 31, states how Nehemiah, during his second sojourn at Jerusalem, continued these efforts for the purpose of ensuring the permanence of the reform which had been undertaken.

The aim of Nehemiah's proceedings was to place the civil prosperity of the Israelites, now returned from exile to the land of their fathers, on a firm basis. Briefly to describe what he effected, at one time by direct personal effort, at another in conjunction with his contemporary Ezra the priest and scribe, is the *object* of his record. As Nehemiah's efforts for the civil welfare of his people as the congregation of the Lord were but a continuation of those by which Zerubbabel the prince, Joshua the high priest, and Ezra the scribe had effected the foundation of the community of returned exiles, so too does his book form the continuation and completion of that of Ezra, and may in this respect be



regarded as its second part. It is, moreover, not merely similar in kind, to the book of Ezra, especially with regard to the insertion of historical and statistical lists and genealogical registries, but has also the same historical object, viz. to show how the people of Israel, after their return from the Babylonian captivity, were by the instrumentality of Nehemiah fully re-established in the land of promise as the congregation of the Lord.

§ 2. INTEGRITY OF THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH, AND DATE  
OF ITS COMPOSITION.

Nehemiah gives his account of the greater part of his labours for the good of his fellow-countrymen in the first person; and this form of narrative is not only uniformly maintained throughout the first six chapters (from i. 1-vii. 5), but also recurs in chap. xii. 27-43, and from xiii. 6 to the end. The formula too: Think upon me, my God, etc., peculiar to Nehemiah, is repeated v. 19, vi. 14, xiii. 14, 22, 29, 31. Hence not only has the composition of the larger portion of this book been universally admitted to be the work of Nehemiah, but the integrity of its first section (i.-vi.) has been generally acknowledged. On the composition and authorship of the second section, vii. 73*b*-xii. 26, on the contrary, the verdict of modern criticism is almost unanimous in pronouncing it not to have been the work of Nehemiah, but composed from various older documents and records by the compiler of the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah—the so-called chronicler who lived a hundred years later—and by him interpolated in “the record of Nehemiah.” This view has been chiefly based upon the facts, that in chaps. viii.-x. the style is different; that Nehemiah himself is not the prominent person, Ezra occupying the foreground, and Nehemiah being merely the subject of a passing remark (viii. 9 and x. 2); that there is in viii. 14 no reference to Ezra iii. 4 with respect to the feast of tabernacles; and that Ezra iii. 1 is in verbal accordance with Neh. viii. 1 (Bertheau, *Comm.* p. 11, and de Wette-Schrader,

*Einl. in das A. T.* § 236). Of these reasons, the first (the dissimilarity of style) is an assertion arising from a superficial examination of these chapters, and in support of which nothing further is adduced than that, instead of *Elohim*, and especially the God of heaven, elsewhere current with Nehemiah when speaking of God, the names *Jehovah*, *Adonai*, and *Elohim* are in this section used promiscuously. In fact, however, the name *Elohim* is chiefly used even in these chapters, and *Jahve* but seldom; while in the prayer chap. ix. especially, such other appellations of God occur as Nehemiah, with the solemnity befitting the language of supplication, uses also in the prayer in chap. i.<sup>1</sup> The other three reasons are indeed correct, in so far as they are actual facts, but they prove nothing. It is true that in chap. viii.–x. Nehemiah personally occupies a less prominent position than Ezra, but this is because the actions therein related, viz. the public reading of the law, and the direction of the sacred festivals, belonged not to the office of Nehemiah the Tirshatha and royal governor, but to that of Ezra the scribe, and to the priests and Levites. Even here, however, Nehemiah, as the royal Tirshatha, stands at the head of the assembled people, encourages them in conjunction with Ezra and the priests, and is the first, as *præcipuum membrum ecclesiæ* (x. 2), to seal the document of the covenant just concluded. Again, though it is certain that in the description of the feast of tabernacles, viii. 14 sq., there is no express allusion to its former celebration under Zerubbabel and Joshua, Ezra iii. 4, yet such allusions are unusual with biblical writers in general. This is shown, *e.g.*, by a comparison of 2 Chron. xxxv. 1, 18 with 2 Chron. xxx. 1, 13–26; and yet it has never struck any critic that an argument against the single authorship of 2 Chron. might be found in the fact that no allusion to the earlier passover held under Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxx., is made in the description of the passover under Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxv. Finally, the

<sup>1</sup> Compare the exact statement of the case in my *Lehrbuch*, § 149, note 4, which opponents have ignored, because nothing in the way of facts can be brought against it.



verbal coincidence of chap. viii. 1 (properly vii. 73<sup>b</sup> and viii. 1) with Ezra iii. 1 amounts to the statement that "when the seventh month was come, all Israel gathered out of their cities as one man to Jerusalem." All else is totally different; the assembly in Neh. viii. pursues entirely different objects and undertakes entirely different matters from that in Ezra iii. The peculiarities, moreover, of Nehemiah's style could as little appear in what is narrated, chaps. viii.-x., as in his description of the building of the wall, iii. 1-32, or in the list of the families who returned from captivity with Zerubbabel and Joshua, chap. vii.—portions which no one has yet seriously objected to as integral parts of the book of Nehemiah. The same remark applies to the list of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the province, xi. 3-36, which even Bertheau and Schrader admit to have originated from the record of Nehemiah, or to have been composed by Nehemiah. If, however, Nehemiah composed these lists, or incorporated them in his record, why should it not also be himself, and not the "subsequent chronicler," who inserted in his work the lists of priests and Levites, xii. 1-26, when the description of the dedication of the wall which immediately follows them is evidently his own composition?

One reason for maintaining that these lists of priests and Levites are of later origin than the times of Nehemiah is said to be, that they extend to Jaddua the high priest, who was contemporary with Alexander the Great. If this assertion were as certain as it is confidently brought forward, then indeed these lists might well be regarded as a subsequent interpolation in the book of Nehemiah. For Nehemiah, who was at least thirty years of age when he first came to Jerusalem, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, *i.e.* B.C. 445, could hardly have lived to witness the overthrow of the Persian monarchy by Alexander, B.C. 330; or, even if he did attain the age of 145, would not have postponed the writing of his book to the last years of his life. When, however, we consider somewhat more closely the priests and Levites in question, we shall perceive that vers. 1-9 of

chap. xii. contain a list of the chiefs of the priests and Levites who returned from captivity with Zerubbabel and Joshua, which consequently descends from the times before Nehemiah; vers. 12-21, a list of the heads of the priestly houses in the days of the high priest Joiakim, the son of Joshua; and vers. 24 and 25, a list of the heads or chiefs of Levi (of the Levites), with the closing remark, ver. 26: "These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Joshua, and in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra." Now the high priest Joiakim, the son of Joshua, the contemporary of Zerubbabel, was the predecessor and father of the high priest Eliashib, the contemporary of Nehemiah. Consequently both these lists descend from the time previous to Nehemiah's arrival at Jerusalem; and the mention of Ezra and Nehemiah along with Joiakim proves nothing more than that the chiefs of the Levites mentioned in the last list were still living in the days of Nehemiah. Thus these three lists contain absolutely nothing which reaches to a period subsequent to Nehemiah. Between the first and second, however, there stands (vers. 10 and 11) the genealogical notice: Joshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim begat Eliashib, Eliashib begat Jonathan (correct reading, Johanan), and Jonathan begat Jaddua; and between the second and third it is said, ver. 22: With respect to the Levites, in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua, the heads of houses are recorded, and the priests under the reign of Darius the Persian; and ver. 23: With respect to the sons of Levi, the heads of houses are recorded in the book of the Chronicles even to the days of Johanan. From these verses (10, 11, and 22, 23) it is inferred that the lists descend to the time of the high-priesthood of Jaddua, the contemporary of Alexander the Great. To this we reply, that viewing the circumstance that Eliashib was high priest in the time of Nehemiah (iii. 1, xiii. 4, 7), it cannot be an absolute objection that Jaddua was still living in the days of Alexander the Great, since from the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, *i.e.* from B.C. 433, to the destruction of the Persian empire B.C. 330, there are only 103



years, a period for which three high priests, each exercising his office thirty-five years, would suffice. But on the other hand, it is very questionable whether in vers. 11 and 12 Jaddua is mentioned as the officiating high priest, or only as the son of Johanan, and grandson of Joiada the high priest. The former of these views receives no corroboration from ver. 11, for there nothing else is given but the genealogy of the high-priestly line. Nor can it any more be proved from ver. 22 that the words, "in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua, were the Levites recorded or enrolled," are to be understood of four different lists made under four successive high priests. The most natural sense of the words, on the contrary, is that *one* enrolment took place in the days of these four individuals of the high-priestly house. If Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were all alive at the same time, this, the most natural view, must also be the correct one, because in each of the other lists of the same chapter, the times of only one high priest are mentioned, and at the close of the list, ver. 26, it is expressly stated that the (previously enrolled) Levites were chiefs in the days of Joiakim, Ezra, and Nehemiah. It is not, moreover, difficult to prove that Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were living contemporaneously. For Eliashib, whom Nehemiah found high priest at his arrival at Jerusalem (iii. 1), being the grandson of Joshua, who returned from Babylon in the year 536 with Zerubbabel, would in 445 be anything but a young man. Indeed, he must then have been about seventy-five years old. Moreover, it appears from xiii. 4 and 7, that in 433, when Nehemiah returned to Artaxerxes, he was still in office, though on Nehemiah's return he was no longer alive, and that he therefore died soon after 433, at the age of about ninety. If, however, this was his age when he died, his son Joiada might then be already sixty-three, his grandson Johanan thirty-six, his great-grandson Jaddua nine, if each were respectively born in the twenty-seventh year of his father's lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If Jaddua were on the death of his great-great-grandfather (between

The view (of vers. 11, 12, and 22) just stated, is confirmed both by vers. 22*b* and 23, and by chap. xiii. 28. According to 22*b*, the chiefs or heads of the priestly houses were enrolled under the government of Darius the Persian. Now there is no doubt that this Darius is Darius Nothus; the successor of Artaxerxes Longimanus, who reigned from 424 to 404. The notion that Darius Codomanus is intended, rests upon the mistaken view that in ver. 11 Jaddua is mentioned as the high priest already in office. According to ver. 23, the heads of the houses of the Levites were enrolled in the book of the Chronicles even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib. The days of Johanan—that is, the period of his high-priesthood—are here named as the latest date to which the author of this book extends the genealogical lists of the Levites. And this well agrees with the information, chap. xiii. 18, that during Nehemiah's absence at Jerusalem, one of the sons of Joiada the high priest allied himself by marriage with Sanballat the Horonite, *i.e.* married one of his daughters, and was driven away by Nehemiah. If Joiada had even in the days of Nehemiah a married son, Johanan the first-born son of Joiada, the presumptive successor to the high-priesthood, might well have been at that time so long a married man as to have already witnessed the birth of his son Jaddua.

To complete our proof that the contents of chap. xii. do not extend to a period subsequent to Nehemiah, we have still to discuss the question, how long he held office in Judæa, and when he wrote the book in which he relates what he there effected. Both these questions can be answered with sufficient accuracy for our purpose, though the exact year cannot be named. Concerning the time he held office in Jerusalem, he only remarks in his book that he was governor from the

433 and 430 B.C.) about ten years old, he might also live to witness the appearance of Alexander the Great before Jerusalem, 330 B.C. (mentioned by Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8. 4), since he would then have attained the age of 110, which does not seem incredible, when it is considered that Jehoiada, the high priest in the reign of Joash, was 130 when he died (2 Chron. xxiv. 15).



twentieth to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, and that in the thirty-second year of that monarch he again returned to the court, and afterwards, לִקְצֵן יָמִים, came back to Jerusalem (v. 14, and xiii. 6). The term לִקְצֵן יָמִים is very indefinite; but the interpretation, "at the end of the year," is incorrect and unsupported. It is quite evident, from the irregularities and transgressions of the law which occurred in the community during his absence from Jerusalem, that Nehemiah must have remained longer than a year at the court, and, indeed, that he did not return for some years. Besides the withholding of the dues to the Levites (xiii. 10 sq.) and the desecration of the Sabbath (xiii. 15 sq.),—transgressions of the law which might have occurred soon after Nehemiah's departure,—Eliashib had not only the priest fitted up a chamber in the fore-court of the temple as a dwelling for his connection Tobiah (xiii. 4), but Jews had also married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab, and had children by them who spake not the Jews' language, but only that of Ashdod, in the interval (xiii. 23). These facts presuppose an absence of several years on the part of Nehemiah, even if many of these unlawful marriages had been previously contracted, and only came to his knowledge after his return.—Neither are there adequate grounds for the notion that Nehemiah lived but a short time after his return to Jerusalem. The suppression of these infringements of the law, which is narrated chap. xiii. 7-31, might, indeed, have been accomplished in a few months; but we are by no means justified in inferring that this was the last of his labours for the welfare of his fellow-countrymen, and that his own life terminated soon after, because he relates nothing more than his procedure against these transgressions. After the removal of these irregularities, and the re-establishment of legal order in divine worship and social life, he might have lived for a long period at Jerusalem without effecting anything, the record of which it might be important to hand down to posterity. If we suppose him to have been from thirty-five to forty years of age when, being cupbearer to Artaxerxes, he was sent at

his own request, in the twentieth year of that monarch's reign (445 B.C.), as governor to Judah, he might well have exercised his office in Judah and Jerusalem from thirty-five to forty years, including his journey back to the court in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, *i.e.* till 405 B.C. This would make him live till the nineteenth year of Darius Nothus, and not die till he was from seventy-five to eighty years of age. If we further suppose that he composed this book some ten years before his death, *i.e.* thirty years after his first arrival at Jerusalem, when he had, as far as lay in his power, arranged the affairs of Judah, it would then be possible for him to relate and describe all that is contained in the canonical book of Nehemiah. For in the year 415 B.C., *i.e.* in the ninth year of Darius Nothus, genealogical lists of priests and Levites of the time of Joiakim the high priest, reaching down to the days of Johanan the son (grandson) of Eliashib, and of the time of the reign of Darius Nothus, might already be written in the book of the Chronicles, as mentioned xii. 23, compared with 22 and 26. Then, too, the high priest Joiada might already have been dead, his son Johanan have succeeded to the office, and Jaddua, the son of the latter, have already attained the age of twenty-five.—This book would consequently contain no historical information and no single remark which Nehemiah might not himself have written. Hence the contents of the book itself furnish not the slightest opposition to the view that the whole was the work of Nehemiah.

When, however, we turn our attention to its form, that unity of character to which modern criticism attaches so much importance seems to be wanting in the second half. We have, however, already remarked that neither the lack of prominence given to the person of Nehemiah, nor the circumstance that he is in these chapters spoken of in the third person, furnish incontestable arguments against the integrity of this book. For in the section concerning the dedication of the wall, xii. 27-43, Nehemiah's authorship of which no critic has as yet impugned, he only brings himself forward (31 and 38) when mentioning what he had



himself appointed and done, while the rest of the narrative is not in the communicative form of speech: we sought the Levites, we offered, etc., which he employs in the account of the making of a covenant, but in the objective form: they sought the Levites, they offered, etc. (27 and 43). The want of connection between the several sections seems to us far more striking. Chaps. viii.-x. form, indeed, a connected section, the commencement of which (vii. 73*b*) by the circumstantial clause, "when the children of Israel dwelt in their cities," combines it, even by a repetition of the very form of words, with the preceding list; but the commencement of chap. xi. is somewhat abrupt, while between xi. and xii. and between vers. 26 and 27 of chap. xii. there is nothing to mark the connection. This gives the sections, chaps. viii.-x. and xii. 1-26, the appearance of being subsequent interpolations or insertions in Nehemiah's record; and there is thus much of real foundation for this appearance, that this book is not a continuous narrative or description of Nehemiah's proceedings in Judah,—historical, topographical, and genealogical lists, which interrupt the thread of the history, being inserted in it. But it by no means follows, that because such is the nature of the book, the inserted portions must therefore have been the subsequent interpolations of another hand, in the record composed by Nehemiah. This inference of modern criticism is based upon an erroneous conception of the nature and intention of this book, which is first of all regarded, if not as a biography or diary of Nehemiah, yet as a "record," in which he noted down only the most important facts concerning his journey to Jerusalem and his proceedings there. For this preconception, neither the canonical book of Nehemiah, nor a comparison of those sections which are universally admitted to be his, furnish any adequate support. For with regard, first, to these sections, it is obvious from ver. 14, where Nehemiah during the building of the wall reproaches the usurers, saying, "From the time that I was appointed to be governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth to the two-and-thirtieth year of Artaxerxes, that is, twelve years, I and my

brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor," that Nehemiah wrote the account of his labours in Judah from memory after the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes. When we compare with this the manner in which he speaks quite incidentally (xiii. 6 sq.) of his absence from Jerusalem and his journey to the court, in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, and connects the account of the chamber vacated for Tobiah in the fore-court of the temple (xiii. 4) with the previous narrative of the public reading of the law and the severance of the strangers from Israel by the formula וּלְפָנַי מִיָּה, "and before this," making it appear as though this public reading of the law and severance of strangers had followed his return from the court; and further, consider that the public reading of the law mentioned, xiii. 1, is combined with the section, chap. xii. 44, and this section again (xii. 44) with the account of the dedication of the wall by the formula, "at that time;" it is undoubtedly obvious that Nehemiah did not write his whole work till the evening of his days, and after he had accomplished all that was most important in the labours he undertook for Jerusalem and his fellow-countrymen, and that he makes no decided distinction between his labours during his second sojourn at Jerusalem and those of his former stay of twelve years.

If, then, these circumstances indisputably show that the work composed by Nehemiah himself did not bear the form of a diary, the admission into it of the list of those who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Joshua (vii. 6-73) makes it manifest that it was not his intention to give an unbroken narrative of his efforts and their results in Jerusalem. This list, moreover, which he found when occupied with his plan for increasing the population of Jerusalem, is shown by the words, "I found therein written," to have been admitted by himself into his work, and inserted in his account of what God had put it into his heart to do with respect to the peopling of Jerusalem (vii. 5), and of the manner in which he had carried out his resolution (xi. 1, 2), as a valuable document with respect to the history of the community, although the continuous thread of the



narrative was broken by the interpolation. From his admission of this list, we may infer that he also incorporated other not less important documents, such as the lists of the priests and Levites, xii. 1-26, in his book, without troubling himself about the continuous progress of the historical narrative, because it was his purpose not merely to portray his own labours in Jerusalem, but to describe the development and circumstances of the reinstated community under his own and Ezra's leadership.<sup>1</sup> This being the case, there can be no reason whatever for denying Nehemiah's authorship of the account of the religious solemnities in chaps. viii.-x., especially as the communicative form in which the narrative is written, bears witness that one of the leaders of that assembly of the people composed this account of it, and the expression, "we will not forsake the house of our God," with which it closes (x. 40), is a form of speech peculiar to Nehemiah, and repeated by him xiii. 11. Such considerations seem to us to do away with any doubts which may have been raised as to the integrity of the whole book, and the authorship of Nehemiah.

For the exegetical literature, see my *Lehrb.* p. 460. Comp. also Ed. Barde, *Néhémie étude critique et exegetique*, Tübing. 1861, and Bertheau's *Commentary* already quoted, p. 18.

<sup>1</sup> "*Néhémie*," remarks Ed. Barde in his *Etude critique et exegetique*, p. 48, "*n'écrit pas sa biographie: son but est l'histoire de la restauration de Jérusalem et du culte, pour montrer l'accomplissement des promesses de Dieu.*"

## EXPOSITION

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### I.—NEHEMIAH'S JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM, AND THE RESTORATION OF THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.—CHAP. I.—VI.

**N**EHEMIAH, cup-bearer to King Artaxerxes, is plunged into deep affliction by the account which he receives from certain individuals from Judah of the sad condition of his countrymen who had returned to Jerusalem and Judah. He prays with fasting to the Lord for mercy (chap. i.), and on a favourable opportunity entreats the king and queen for permission to make a journey to Jerusalem, and for the necessary authority to repair its ruined walls. His request being granted, he travels as governor to Jerusalem, provided with letters from the king, and escorted by captains of the army and horsemen (ii. 1–10). Soon after his arrival, he surveys the condition of the walls and gates, summons the rulers of the people and the priests to set about building the wall, and in spite of the obstacles he encounters from the enemies of the Jews, accomplishes this work (ii. 11–vi. 19). In describing the manner in which the building of the walls was carried on, he first enumerates in succession (iii. 1–32) the individuals and companies engaged in restoring the walls surrounding the city (iii. 1–32), and then relates the obstacles and difficulties encountered (iii. 33–vi. 19).

#### CHAP. I.—NEHEMIAH'S INTEREST IN AND PRAYER FOR JERUSALEM.

Vers. 1–4. In the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, Nehemiah, being then at Susa, received from one of



his brethren, and other individuals from Judah, information which deeply grieved him, concerning the sad condition of the captives who had returned to the land of their fathers, and the state of Jerusalem. Ver. 1*a* contains the title of the whole book: the History of Nehemiah (see p. 139). By the addition "son of Hachaliah," Nehemiah is distinguished from others of the same name (*e.g.* from Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, iii. 16). Another Nehemiah, too, returned from captivity with Zerubbabel, Ezra ii. 2. Of Hachaliah we know nothing further, his name occurring but once more, x. 2, in conjunction, as here, with that of Nehemiah. Eusebius and Jerome assert that Nehemiah was of the tribe of Judah, —a statement which may be correct, but is unsupported by any evidence from the Old Testament. According to ver. 11, he was cup-bearer to the Persian king, and was, at his own request, appointed for some time Pecha, *i.e.* governor, of Judah. Comp. v. 14, xii. 26, and viii. 9, x. 2. "In the month Chisleu of the twentieth year I was in the citadel of Susa"—such is the manner in which Nehemiah commences the narrative of his labours for Jerusalem. Chisleu is the ninth month of the year, answering to our December. Comp. Zech. vii. 1, 1 Macc. iv. 52. The twentieth year is, according to chap. ii. 1, the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus. On the citadel of Susa, see further details in the remarks on Dan. viii. 2. Susa was the capital of the province Susiana, and its citadel, called by the Greeks Memnoneion, was strongly fortified. The kings of Persia were accustomed to reside here during some months of the year.—Ver. 2. There came to Nehemiah Hanani, one of his brethren, and certain men from Judah. אֶחָד מֵאֶחָי, one of my brethren, might mean merely a relation of Nehemiah, אֶחָי being often used of more distant relations; but since Nehemiah calls Hanani אֶחָי in vii. 10, it is evident that his own brother is meant. "And I asked them concerning the Jews, and concerning Jerusalem." הַיְּהוּדִים is further defined by הַפְּלִיטָה וְגו', who had escaped, who were left from the captivity; those who had returned to Judah are intended, as contrasted with those who still remained in heathen

lands. In the answer, ver. 3, they are more precisely designated as being "there in the province (of Judah)." With respect to *הַמִּדְיָה*, see remarks on Ezra ii. 1. They are said to be "in great affliction (*רָעָה*) and in reproach." Their affliction is more nearly defined by the accessory clause which follows: and the wall = because the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates burned with fire. *מִפְּרִצָהּ*, Pual (the intensive form), broken down, does not necessarily mean that the whole wall was destroyed, but only portions, as appears from the subsequent description of the building of the wall, chap. iii.—Ver. 4. This description of the state of the returned captives plunged Nehemiah into such deep affliction, that he passed some days in mourning, fasting, and prayer. Opinions are divided with respect to the historical relation of the facts mentioned ver. 3. Some older expositors thought that Hanani could not have spoken of the destruction of the walls and gates of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, because this was already sufficiently known to Nehemiah, but of some recent demolition on the part of Samaritans and other hostile neighbours of the Jews; in opposition to which, Rambach simply replies that we are told nothing of a restoration of the wall of Jerusalem by Zerubbabel and Ezra. More recently Ewald (*Geschichte*, iv. p. 137 seq.) has endeavoured to show, from certain psalms which he transposes to post-Babylonian times, the probability of a destruction of the rebuilt wall, but gives a decided negative to the question, whether this took place during the thirteen years between the arrivals of Ezra and Nehemiah (p. 167). "For," says he, "there is not in the whole of Nehemiah's record the most distant hint that the walls had been destroyed only a short time since; but, on the contrary, this destruction was already so remote an event, that its occasion and authors were no longer spoken of." Vaihinger (*Theol. Stud. und Krit.*, 1857, p. 88, comp. 1854, p. 124 sq.) and Bertheau are of opinion that it indisputably follows from Neh. i. 3, 4, as appearances show, that the walls of Jerusalem were actually rebuilt and the gates set up before the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, and



that the destruction of this laborious work, which occasioned the sending of an embassy to the Persian court, was of quite recent occurrence, since otherwise Nehemiah would not have been so painfully affected by it. But even the very opposite opinion held concerning the impression made upon the reader by these verses, shows that appearances are deceitful, and the view that the destruction of the walls and gates was of quite recent occurrence is not implied by the words themselves, but only inserted in them by expositors. There is no kind of historical evidence that the walls of Jerusalem which had been destroyed by the Chaldeans were once more rebuilt before Nehemiah's arrival. The documents given by Ezra chap. iv. 8-22, which are in this instance appealed to, so far from proving the fact, rather bear testimony against it. The counsellor Rehum and the scribe Shimshai, in their letter to Artaxerxes, accuse indeed the Jews of building a rebellious and bad city, of restoring its walls and digging its foundations (Ezra iv. 12); but they only give the king to understand that if this city be built and its walls restored, the king will no longer have a portion on this side the river (ver. 16), and hasten to Jerusalem, as soon as they receive the king's decision, to hinder the Jews by force and power (ver. 23). Now, even if this accusation were quite well founded, nothing further can be inferred from it than that the Jews had begun to restore the walls, but were hindered in the midst of their undertaking. Nothing is said in these documents either of a rebuilding, *i.e.* a complete restoration, of the walls and setting up of the gates, or of breaking down the walls and burning the gates. It cannot be said that to build a wall means the same as pulling down a wall already built. Nor is anything said in vers. 3 and 4 of a recent demolition. The assertion, too, that the destruction of this laborious work was the occasion of the mission of Hanani and certain men of Judah to the Persian court (Vaihinger), is entirely without scriptural support. In vers. 2 and 3 it is merely said that Hanani and his companions came from Judah to Nehemiah, and that Nehemiah questioned them concerning the

condition of the Jews in the province of Judah, and concerning Jerusalem, and that they answered: The Jews there are in great affliction and reproach, for the wall of Jerusalem is broken down (מִפְּרֵצָהּ is a participle expressing the state, not the præter. or perfect, which would be found here if a destruction recently effected were spoken of). Nehemiah, too, in ii. 3 and 17, only says: The city of my fathers' sepulchres (Jerusalem) lieth desolate (חֲרֵבָהּ is an adjective), not: *has been* desolated. Nor can a visit on the part of Jews from Judah to their compatriot and relative, the king's cup-bearer, be called a mission to the Persian court.—With respect also to the deep affliction of Nehemiah, upon which Bertheau lays so much stress, it by no means proves that he had received a terrible account of some fresh calamity which had but just befallen the community at Jerusalem, and whose whole extent was as yet unknown to him. Nehemiah had not as yet been to Jerusalem, and could not from his own experience know the state of affairs in Judah and Jerusalem; hence he questioned the newly arrived visitors, not concerning the latest occurrences, but as to the general condition of the returned captives. The fact of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldees could not, of course, be unknown to him; but neither could he be ignorant that now ninety years since a great number of captives had returned to their homes with Zerubbabel and settled in Judah and Jerusalem, and that seventy years since the temple at Jerusalem had been rebuilt. Judging from these facts, he might not have imagined that the state of affairs in Judah and Jerusalem was so bad as it really was. When, then, he now learnt that those who had returned to Judah were in great affliction, that the walls of the town were still lying in ruins and its gates burned, and that it was therefore exposed defenceless to all the insults of hostile neighbours, even this information might well grieve him. It is also probable that it was through Hanani and his companions that he first learnt of the inimical epistle of the royal officials Rehum and Shimshai to Artaxerxes, and of the answer sent thereto by that



monarch, and thus became for the first time aware of the magnitude of his fellow-countrymen's difficulties. Such intelligence might well be such a shock to him as to cause the amount of distress described ver. 4. For even if he indulged the hope that the king might repeal the decree by which the rebuilding of the wall had been prohibited till further orders, he could not but perceive how difficult it would be effectually to remedy the grievous state in which his countrymen who had returned to the land of their fathers found themselves, while the disposition of their neighbours towards them was thus hostile. This state was indeed sufficiently distressing to cause deep pain to one who had a heart alive to the welfare of his nation, and there is no need for inventing new "calamities," of which history knows nothing, to account for the sorrow of Nehemiah. Finally, the circumstance that the destruction of the walls and burning of the gates are alone mentioned as proofs of the affliction and reproach which the returned exiles were suffering, arises simply from an intention to hint at the remedy about to be described in the narrative which follows, by bringing this special kind of reproach prominently forward.

Vers. 5-11. *Nehemiah's prayer*, as given in these verses, comprises the prayers which he prayed day and night, during the period of his mourning and fasting (ver. 4 comp. ver. 6), to his faithful and covenant God, to obtain mercy for his people, and the divine blessing upon his project for their assistance.—Ver. 5. The invocation of Jahve as: Thou God of heaven, alludes to God's almighty government of the world, and the further predicates of God, to His covenant faithfulness. "Thou great and terrible God" recalls Deut. vii. 21, and "who keepest covenant and mercy," etc., Deut. vii. 9 and Ex. xx. 5, 6.—Ver. 6. "Let Thine ear be attentive, and Thine eyes open," like 2 Chron. vi. 40, vii. 15—לְשִׁמְעַךְ, that Thou mayest hearken to the prayer of Thy servant, which I pray, and how I confess concerning . . . מִתּוֹדָה still depends upon אֲשֶׁר in the sense of: and what I confess concerning the sins. הַיּוֹם does not here

mean to-day, but now, at this time, as the addition "day and night" compared with יָמִים in ver. 4 shows. To strengthen the communicative form הִתְאַנֵּן לֵךְ, and to acknowledge before God how deeply penetrated he was by the feeling of his own sin and guilt, he adds: and I and my father's house have sinned.—Ver. 7. We have dealt very corruptly against Thee. הִבַּל is the *inf. constr.* instead of the *inf. abs.*, which, before the finite verb, and by reason of its close connection therewith, becomes the *inf. constr.*, like הָיִיתָ אֲהִיָּה, Ps. l. 21; comp. Ewald, § 240, c. The dealing corruptly against God consists in not having kept the commandments, statutes, and judgments of the law.—Vers. 8 and 9. With his confession of grievous transgression, Nehemiah combines the petition that the Lord would be mindful of His word declared by Moses, that if His people, whom He had scattered among the heathen for their sins, should turn to Him and keep His commandments, He would gather them from all places where He had scattered them, and bring them back to the place which He had chosen to place His name there. This word (הַדְּבָר) he designates, as that which God had commanded to His servant Moses, inasmuch as it formed a part of that covenant law which was prescribed to the Israelites as their rule of life. The matter of this word is introduced by לֹא־תִסְּרֻן: *ye transgress, I will scatter; i.e. if ye transgress by revolting from me, I will scatter you among the nations,—and ye turn to me and keep my commandments (i.e. if ye turn to me and . . .), if there were of you cast out to the end of heaven (i.e. to the most distant regions where the end of heaven touches the earth), thence will I gather you, etc.* נִגְדָה, *part. Niphal*, with a collective meaning, cast-out ones, like Deut. xxx. 4. These words are no verbal quotation, but a free summary, in which Nehemiah had Deut. xxx. 1–5 chiefly in view, of what God had proclaimed in the law of Moses concerning the dispersion of His people among the heathen if they sinned against Him, and of their return to the land of their fathers if they repented and turned to Him. The clause: if the cast-out ones were at the end of heaven, etc., stands verbally in ver. 4. The last words, ver.



9, "(I will bring them) to the place which I have chosen, that my name may dwell there," are a special application of the general promise of the law to the present case. Jerusalem is meant, where the Lord caused His name to dwell in the temple; comp. Deut. xii. 11. The entreaty to remember this word and to fulfil it, seems ill adapted to existing circumstances, for a portion of the people were already brought back to Jerusalem; and Nehemiah's immediate purpose was to pray, not for the return of those still sojourning among the heathen, but for the removal of the affliction and reproach resting on those who were now at Jerusalem. Still less appropriate seems the citation of the words: If ye transgress, I will scatter you among the nations. It must, however, be remembered that Nehemiah is not so much invoking the divine compassion as the righteousness and faithfulness of a covenant God, the great and terrible God that keepeth covenant and mercy (ver. 5). Now this, God had shown Himself to be, by fulfilling the threats of His law that He would scatter His faithless and transgressing people among the nations. Thus His fulfilment of this one side of the covenant strengthened the hope that God would also keep His other covenant word to His people who turned to Him, viz. that He would bring them again to the land of their fathers, to the place of His gracious presence. Hence the reference to the dispersion of the nation among the heathen, forms the actual substructure for the request that so much of the promise as yet remained unfulfilled might come to pass. Nehemiah, moreover, views this promise in the full depth of its import, as securing to Israel not merely an external return to their native land, but their restoration as a community, in the midst of whom the Lord had His dwelling, and manifested Himself as the defence and refuge of His people. To the re-establishment of this covenant relation very much was still wanting. Those who had returned from captivity had indeed settled in the land of their fathers; and the temple in which they might worship God with sacrifices, according to the law, was rebuilt at Jerusalem. But notwithstanding all this, Jerusalem, with its ruined walls

and burned gates, was still like a city lying waste, and exposed to attacks of all kinds; while the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah were loaded with shame and contempt by their heathen neighbours. In this sense, Jerusalem was not yet restored, and the community dwelling therein not yet brought to the place where the name of the Lord dwelt. In this respect, the promise that Jahve would again manifest Himself to His repentant people as the God of the covenant was still unfulfilled, and the petition that He would gather His people to the place which He had chosen to put His name there, *i.e.* to manifest Himself according to His nature, as testified in His covenant (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7), quite justifiable. In ver. 10 Nehemiah supports his petition by the words: And these (now dwelling in Judah and Jerusalem) are Thy servants and Thy people whom Thou hast redeemed, etc. His servants who worship Him in His temple, His people whom He has redeemed from Egypt by His great power and by His strong arm, God cannot leave in affliction and reproach. The words: "redeemed with great power" . . . are reminiscences from Deut. vii. 8, ix. 26, 29, and other passages in the Pentateuch, and refer to the deliverance from Egypt.—Ver. 11. The prayer closes with the reiterated entreaty that God would hearken to the prayer of His servant (*i.e.* Nehemiah), and to the prayer of His servants who delight to fear His name (יִרְאָה, *infin.* like Deut. iv. 10 and elsewhere), *i.e.* of all Israelites who, like Nehemiah, prayed to God to redeem Israel from all his troubles. For himself in particular, Nehemiah also requests: "Prosper Thy servant to-day (הַיּוֹם like ver. 6; לְעִבְרָךְ may be either the *accusative* of the person, like 2 Chron. xxvi. 5, or the *dative*: Prosper his design unto Thy servant, like ii. 20), and give him to mercy (*i.e.* cause him to find mercy; comp. 1 Kings viii. 50; Ps. cvi. 46) before the face of this man." What man he means is explained by the following supplementary remark, "And I was cup-bearer to the king," without whose favour and permission Nehemiah could not have carried his project into execution (as related in chap. ii.).



CHAP. II.—NEHEMIAH JOURNEYS TO JERUSALEM WITH THE KING'S PERMISSION, AND FURNISHED WITH ROYAL LETTERS. HE MAKES A SURVEY OF THE WALLS, AND RESOLVES TO UNDERTAKE THE WORK OF BUILDING THEM.

Three months after receiving the tidings concerning Jerusalem, Nehemiah perceived a favourable opportunity of making request to the king for leave to undertake a journey to the city of his fathers for the purpose of building it, and obtained the permission he entreated, together with letters to the governors on this side the Euphrates to permit him to pass through their provinces, and to the keeper of the royal forests to supply wood for building the walls and gates, and an escort of captains of the army and horsemen for his protection (vers. 1-9), to the great vexation of Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite (ver. 10). In the third night after his arrival at Jerusalem, Nehemiah rode round the city to survey the walls, and incited the rulers of the people and the priests to undertake the work of rebuilding them (vers. 11-18). Sanballat and other enemies of the Jews expressed their contempt thereat, but Nehemiah encountered their ridicule with serious words (vers. 19, 20).

Vers. 1-3. In the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, Nehemiah as cup-bearer took the wine and handed it to the king. *Nisan* is, according to the Hebrew calendar, the first month of the year; yet here, as in chap. i., the twentieth year of Artaxerxes is named, and the month Chisleu there mentioned (ver. 1), which, after the Hebrew method of computing the year, was the ninth month and preceded Nisan by three months, is placed in the same year. This can only be explained on the grounds that either the twentieth year of Artaxerxes did not coincide with the year of the calendar, but began later, or that Nehemiah here uses the computation of time current in anterior Asia, and also among the Jews after the captivity in civil matters, and which made the new year begin in

autumn. Of these two views we esteem the latter to be correct, since it cannot be shown that the years of the king's reign would be reckoned from the day of his accession. In chronological statements they were reckoned according to the years of the calendar, so that the commencement of a year of a reign coincided with that of the civil year. If, moreover, the beginning of the year is placed in autumn, Tishri is the first, Chisleu the third, and Nisan the seventh month. The circumstances which induced Nehemiah not to apply to the king till three months after his reception of the tidings which so distressed him, are not stated. It is probable that he himself required some time for deliberation before he could come to a decision as to the best means of remedying the distresses of Jerusalem; then, too, he may not have ventured at once to bring his request before the king from fear of meeting with a refusal, and may therefore have waited till an opportunity favourable to his desires should present itself. וַיִּזְכֹּר לְפָנָיו, "wine was before the king," is a circumstantial clause explanatory of what follows. The words allude to some banquet at which the king and queen were present. The last sentence, "And I had not been sad before him" (וְלֹא הָיִיתִי כָּזֶה לְפָנָיו according to פְּנֵיךְ רָעִים of ver. 2, of a sad countenance), can neither mean, I had never before been sad before him (de Wette); nor, I was accustomed not to be sad before him; but, I had not been sad before him at the moment of presenting the cup to him (Bertheau), because it would not have been becoming to serve the king with a sad demeanour: comp. Esth. iv. 2. The king, however, noticed his sadness, and inquired: "Why is thy countenance sad, since thou art not sick? this is nothing but sorrow of heart, *i.e.* thy sadness of countenance can arise only from sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid;" because the unexpected question obliged him to explain the cause of his sorrow, and he could not tell how the king would view the matter, nor whether he would favour his ardent desire to assist his fellow-countrymen in Judah.—Ver. 3. He nevertheless openly expressed his desire, prefacing it by the accustomed form of wishing the king prosperity, saying: "Let the



king live for ever;" comp. Dan. ii. 4, iii. 9. "Why should not my countenance be sad? for the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and its gates are burned with fire." The question, Why . . . ? means: I have certainly sufficient reason for sadness. The reason is, that (אֲשֶׁר) the city where are the graves of my fathers lieth waste.

Vers. 4-10. Then the king, feeling interested, asked him: For what dost thou make request? בִּקֵּשׁ עָלַי, to make request for or concerning a thing, like Ezra viii. 23, Esth. iv. 8, vii. 7. The question shows that the king was inclined to relieve the distress of Jerusalem which had been just stated to him. "And so I prayed to the God of heaven," to ensure divine assistance in the request he was about to lay before the king. Then Nehemiah answered (ver. 5), "If it please the king, and if thy servant is well-pleasing before thee, (I beg) that thou wouldest send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it." יֵטֵב לִפְנֵי, here and Esth. v. 14, is of like meaning with יֵטֵב בְּעֵינֶי or טוֹב, Esth. viii. 5, 2 Sam. xviii. 4: if thy servant is right in thine eyes, *i.e.* if he thinks rightly concerning the matter in question. The matter of his request is directly combined with this conditional clause by אֲשֶׁר, the connecting term, I beg, being easily supplied from the king's question: For what dost thou beg?—Ver. 6. The king and the queen, who was sitting near him (שָׂגְלָה, Ps. xlv. 10), grant him permission to depart after he has, in answer to their inquiry, fixed the period of his absence. Nehemiah makes the result of the conversation, "And it pleased the king," etc., follow immediately upon the question of the king and queen: For how long shall thy journey be, and when wilt thou return? before telling us what was his answer to this question, which is not brought in till afterwards, so that וְאֶתְּנָה לוֹ זְמַן must be understood as expressing: since I had determined the time.—Vers. 7, 8. Hereupon Nehemiah also requested from the king letters to the governors beyond (west of) the river (Euphrates), to allow him to travel unmolested through their provinces to Judah (יִתְּנוּ לִי), let them give me = let there be given me; הֶעָבִיר, to pass or travel through a country, comp. Deut. ii. 30);

and a letter to Asaph, the keeper (inspector) of the royal forests, to give him timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple, and for the walls of the city, and for the governor's own house. These requests were also granted. פָּרְדִּים in Cant. iv. 13, Eccles. ii. 5, signifies a park or orchard; it is a word of Aryan origin (in Armenian *pardez*, the garden round the house, in Greek *παράδεισος*), and is explained either from the Sanscrit *para-dêça*, a superior district, or (by Haug) from the Zend. *pairi-daêza*, a fenced-in place. In Old-Persian it probably denoted the king's pleasure-grounds, and in our verse a royal wood or forest. Of the situation of this park nothing reliable can be ascertained. As wood for extensive buildings was to be taken from it, the sycamore forest in the low plains, which had been the property of King David (1 Chron. xxvii. 28), and became, after the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty, first a Babylonian, and then a Persian possession, may be intended.<sup>1</sup> לָקְרוֹת, to timber, to overlay, to cover with beams (comp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 11) the gates of the citadel which

<sup>1</sup> Older expositors supposed a *regio a Libano ad Antilibanum protensa et arboribus amœnissimis consita* to be meant. In this view, indeed, they followed Cant. iv. 13, but incorrectly. Cler. thought it to be a *tractus terrarum in Judæa, qui Paradisus regius dicebatur*. Josephus speaks (*Ant.* viii. 7. 3) of fine gardens and ponds at Etham, seven miles south of Jerusalem, where Solomon often made pleasure excursions. Hence Ewald (*Gesch.* iv. p. 169, comp. iii. p. 328) thinks that the פָּרְדִּים which belonged to the king must have been Solomon's old royal park at Ætham, which in the time of Nehemiah had become a Persian domain, and that the hill town lying not far to the west of it, and now called by the Arabs Fureidis, *i.e.* paradisaic, may have received its Hebrew name *Beth-Kerem*, *i.e.* house of vineyards, from similar pleasure-grounds. Hereupon Bertheau grounds the further conjecture, that "the whole district from Ætham to the hill of Paradise, situate about a league east-south-east of Ætham, may from its nature have been once covered with forest; and no hesitation would be felt in connecting the name of the mountain *Gebel el-Fureidis* or *el-Feridis* (Paradise-hill—hill which rises in a *Pardes*) with the *Pardes* in question, if it could be proved that this name was already in existence in præ-Christian times." All these conjectures rest on very uncertain bases. The *Dshebel Fureidis* is also called the Hill of the Franks. See the description of it in Robinson's *Palestine*, ii. p. 392 sq., and Tobler, *Topographie von Jerusalem*, ii. pp. 565–572



belongs to the house, *i.e.* to the temple. This citadel—בִּירָה, in Greek *Bâris*—by the temple is mentioned here for the first time; for in 1 Chron. xxix. 1, 19, the whole temple is called בִּירָה. It was certainly situate on the same place where Hyrcanus I., son of Simon Maccabæus, or the kings of the Asmonean race, built the *ἀκρόπολις* and called it Baris (Jos. *Ant.* xv. 11. 4, comp. with xviii. 4. 3). This was subsequently rebuilt by Herod when he repaired and enlarged the temple, and named Antonia, in honour of his friend Mark Antony. It was a citadel of considerable size, provided with corner towers, walls, chambers, and spacious courts, built on the north-western side of the external chambers of the temple, for the defence of that edifice, and did not extend the entire length of the north side of the present *Haram*, as Robinson (see *Biblical Researches*, p. 300) seeks to show; comp., on the other hand, Tobler, *Topographie von Jerusalem*, i. p. 688 sq., and Rosen, *Haram von Jerusalem*, p. 25 sq. וְלִהְיוֹת is co-ordinate with לְקִירוֹת: “and for the walls of the city;” the timber not being used for building the wall itself, but for the gates (iii. 3, 6). “And for the house into which I come (to dwell).” This must be Nehemiah’s official residence as Pecha. For though it is not expressly stated in the present chapter that Nehemiah was appointed Pecha (governor) by Artaxerxes, yet Nehemiah himself tells us, chap. v. 14, that he had been Pecha from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. Former governors had perhaps no official residence becoming their position. By לְבֵית the temple cannot, as older expositors thought, be intended. This request also was granted by the king, “according to the good hand of my God upon me;” comp. rem. on Ezra vii. 6.—Ver. 9. Nehemiah delivered the letter when he came to the governors on this side Euphrates. The king had also sent with him captains of the army and horsemen. The second half of ver. 9 contains a supplementary remark, so that וַיִּשְׁלַח must be expressed by the pluperfect. Ezra had been ashamed to request a military escort from the Persian monarch (Ezra viii. 22); but the king gave to the high dignitary called Pecha a guard of soldiers, who certainly remained with him in Jerusalem also

for his protection (iv. 17). Besides these, there were in his retinue his brethren, *i.e.* either relations or fellow-countrymen, and servants, comp. iv. 10, v. 10. That this retinue is not mentioned in the present verses, is owing to the fact that the journey itself is not further described, but only indirectly alluded to.—Ver. 10. When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite heard of his coming, it caused them great annoyance (רָעָה נְדוּלָהּ is strengthened by יָרַע לָהֶם, as in Jonah iv. 1) that a man (as Nehemiah expresses himself ironically from their point of view) was come to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. Sanballat is called the Horonite either after his birthplace or place of residence, yet certainly not from Horonaim in Moab, as older expositors imagined (Isa. xv. 5; Jer. xlviii. 34), since he would then have been called a Moabite, but from either the upper or nether Beth-horon, formerly belonging to the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 3, 5, xviii. 13), and therefore in the time of Nehemiah certainly appertaining to the region of the Samaritans (Berth.). Tobiah the Ammonite is called הָעֶבֶר, the servant, probably as being a servant or official of the Persian king. These two individuals were undoubtedly influential chiefs of the neighbouring hostile nations of Samaritans and Ammonites, and sought by alliances with Jewish nobles (vi. 17, xiii. 4, 28) to frustrate, whether by force or stratagem, the efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah for the internal and external security of Judah. Nehemiah mentions thus early their annoyance at his arrival, by way of hinting beforehand at their subsequent machinations to delay the fortifying of Jerusalem.

Vers. 11–18. *Nehemiah's arrival at Jerusalem. He surveys the wall, and resolves to restore it.*—Ver. 11. Having arrived at Jerusalem and rested three days (as Ezra had also done, Ezra viii. 32), he arose in the night, and some few men with him, to ride round the wall of the city, and get a notion of its condition. His reason for taking but few men with him is given in the following sentence: "I had told no man what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem." Although he had come to Jerusalem with the re-



solution of fortifying the city by restoring its circumvallation, he spoke of this to no one until he had ascertained, by an inspection of the wall, the magnitude and extent of the work to be accomplished. For, being aware of the hostility of Sanballat and Tobiah, he desired to keep his intention secret until he felt certain of the possibility of carrying it into execution. Hence he made his survey of the wall by night, and took but few men with him, and those on foot, for the sake of not exciting attention. The beast on which he rode was either a horse or a mule.—Ver. 13. “And I went out by night by the valley-gate, and towards the dragon-well, and to the dung-gate.” אֶל־פְּנֵי, in the direction towards. The dragon-well only occurs here by this name. Judging from its position between the valley-gate and the dung-gate, it is either identical with the well of Gihon (Robinson, *Palestine*, ii. p. 166), whose waters supply the upper and lower pools in the valley of Gihon, the present *Birket el Mamilla* and *Birket es Sultan*, or situate in its immediate neighbourhood. The valley-gate is the modern gate of the city leading to the valley of Gihon, and situated at or near the present Jaffa gate; see rem. on iii. 13. The dung-gate (שַׁעַר הָאִשָּׁפֶת), which in iii. 13 also is placed next the valley-gate, and was a thousand cubits distant therefrom, must be sought for on the south-western side of Zion, where a road, to the south of *Nebi Dáúd* and the Zion gate, now descends into the valley of Hinnom, towards *Súr Baher*. “And I viewed the walls of Jerusalem which lay broken down, and its gates which were consumed by fire.” The word שָׁבַר, which the LXX. read, “I was breaking down,” gives no tolerable sense; for it cannot mean, I broke through the walls, or, I made a path through the ruins. Many mss., however, and several editions, offer שָׁבַר; and R. Norzi informs us that D. Kimchi and Aben Ezra read שָׁבַר, of which only the Piel occurs in Hebrew, answers to the Aramæan סַבַּר, to look to something; and to the Arabic سَبَر, to investigate; and סַבַּר בֵּי means to look on, to consider, to direct the eyes and thoughts to some object. In the open

ו of הַמַּי Hiller conjectures that there is a trace of another reading, perhaps מַפְרָצִים; comp. i. 3.—Ver. 14. “And I went on to the fountain-gate, and to the King’s pool, and there was no room for the beast to come through under me.” The very name of the fountain- or well-gate points to the fountain of Siloah (see rem. on iii. 15); hence it lay on the eastern declivity of Zion, but not in the district or neighbourhood of the present *Bâb el Mogharibeh*, in which tradition finds the ancient dung-gate, but much farther south, in the neighbourhood of the pool of Siloah; see rem. on iii. 15. The King’s pool is probably the same which Josephus (*bell. Jud.* v. 4. 2) calls *Σολομῶνος κολυμβήθρα*, and places east of the spring of Siloah, and which is supposed by Robinson (*Palestine*, ii. pp. 149, 159) and Thenius (*das vorexil. Jerus.*, appendix to a commentary on the books of the Kings, p. 20) to be the present Fountain of the Virgin. Bertheau, however, on the other hand, rightly objects that the Fountain of the Virgin lying deep in the rock, and now reached by a descent of thirty steps, could not properly be designated a pool. He tries rather to identify the King’s pool with the outlet of a canal investigated by Tobler (*Topogr.* i. p. 91 sq.), which the latter regards as a conduit for rain-water, fluid impurities, or even the blood of sacrificed animals; but Bertheau as an aqueduct which, perhaps at the place where its entrance is now found, once filled a pool, of which, indeed, no trace has as yet been discovered. But apart from the difficulty of calling the outlet of a canal a pool (Arnold in Herzog’s *Realencycl.* xviii. p. 656), the circumstance, that Tobler could find in neither of the above-described canals any trace of high antiquity, tells against this conjecture. Much more may be said in favour of the view of E. G. Schultz (*Jerusalem*, p. 58 sq.), that the half-choked-up pool near Ain Silwan may be the King’s pool and Solomon’s pool; for travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mention a *piscina grandis foras* and *natatoria Siloë* at the mouth of the fountain of Siloah (comp. Leyrer in Herzog’s *Realencycl.* xiv. p. 372). See also rem. on iii. 15. Here there was no room for the beast to get



through, the road being choked up with the ruins of the walls that had been destroyed, so that Nehemiah was obliged to dismount.—Ver. 15. Then I (went on) ascending the valley and viewing the wall, and so entered by the valley-gate, and returned. וָאֵתֵי with the participle expresses the continuance of an action, and hence in this place the continuous ascent of the valley and survey of the wall. The נַחַל which he ascended was doubtless the valley of Kidron (נַחַל קִדְרוֹן, 2 Sam. xx. 23, 1 Kings ii. 37, and elsewhere). וָאֵשׁוּב וָאָבֹא are connected, וָשׁוּב expressing merely the idea of repetition (Gesenius, *heb. Gram.* § 142, 3): I came again into the valley-gate. Older expositors incorrectly explain these words to mean, I turned round, traversing again the road by which I had come; Bertheau: I turned to go farther in a westerly direction, and after making the circuit of the entire city, I re-entered by the valley-gate. This sense is correct as to fact, but inadmissible, as requiring too much to complete it. If we take וָשׁוּב adverbially, these completions are unnecessary. Nehemiah does not give the particulars of the latter portion of his circuit, but merely tells us that after having ascended the valley of Kidron, he re-entered by the valley-gate, and returned to his residence, obviously assuming, that from the upper part of the vale of Kidron he could only return to the valley-gate at the west by passing along the northern part of the wall.

Vers. 16-18. He had spoken to no one of his purpose (ver. 12); hence the rulers of the city knew neither whither he was going nor what he was doing (*i.e.* undertaking) when he rode by night out of the city gate accompanied by a few followers. As yet he had said nothing either to the Jews (the citizens of Jerusalem), the priests, the nobles, the rulers, or the rest who did the work. הַחֹרִים and הַסִּנְגָּנִים are connected, as in Ezra ix. 2 הַשָּׂרִים and הַסִּנְגָּנִים. The nobles (חֹרִים, *nobiles*) or princes are the heads of the different houses or races of the people; סִנְגָּנִים, the rulers of the town, the authorities. עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה, the doers of the work, are the builders; comp. Ezra iii. 9. When these are, in comparison with the priests, nobles, and rulers, designated as יֵתֶר, the remnant,

this is explained by the fact that the priests and rulers of the people were not actively engaged in building. הַמְלָאכָה, the work in question, *i.e.* here the building of the walls. עַד כֵּן, until thus, *i.e.* until now, until the time apparent from the context. Nehemiah then, having inspected the condition of the ruined walls, and being now persuaded of the possibility of restoring them, made known his resolution to the nobles, the rulers, and the community, *i.e.* to a public assembly called together for this purpose (ver. 17). “Ye see (have before your eyes, know from experience) the distress that we are in, that Jerusalem lieth waste: come (לָכֵן), let us build up the walls of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.” In other words: Let us by building our walls put an end to the miserable condition which gives our adversaries occasion to reproach us.—Ver. 18. To gain the favourable regard of the assembly for his design, he informs them how God had so far prospered his undertaking: I told them of the hand of my God, that it = that the hand my God had graciously provided for me, *i.e.* that God had so graciously arranged my journey to Jerusalem; and the king’s words that he had spoken to me, *sc.* with respect to the building of the wall, of which we are told *ii.* 8 only thus much, that the king gave orders to the keeper of the royal forest to give him wood for building. Encouraged by this information, the assembly exclaimed, “Let us arise and build;” and “they strengthened their hands for good,” *i.e.* they vigorously set about the good work.

Vers. 19 and 20. When the adversaries of the Jews heard this, they derided their resolution. Beside Sanballat and Tobiah (*comp.* ver. 10), Geshem the Arabian is also named as an adversary: so, too, *vi.* 1, 2, and 6, where Gashmu, the fuller pronunciation of his name, occurs. He was probably the chief of some Arab race dwelling in South Palestine, not far from Jerusalem (*comp.* the Arabians, *iv.* 1). These enemies ironically exclaimed: What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king? The irony lies in the fact that they did not give the Jews credit for power to build fortifications, so as to be able to rebel. *Comp.* *vi.* 6, where



Sanballat, in an open letter to Nehemiah, again reproaches them with rebellion.—Ver. 20. Nehemiah replied with impressive gravity: “The God of heaven, He will prosper us, and we His servants will arise and build; but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem.” זִכָּרוֹן like 2 Sam. xix. 99. זִכָּרוֹן, memorial; only members of the congregation, who may hope to live in their descendants in Jerusalem, can be said to have a memorial there.

CHAPS. III. AND IV.—THE BUILDING OF THE WALLS AND GATES OF JERUSALEM.

In these two chapters is described the building of the walls and gates of Jerusalem: the individuals and families who performed the work, and the portion of wall and the gates on which different families were respectively employed, being specified in chap. iii. 1-32; while the attempts of Sanballat and his associates to obstruct the building and the defensive measures resorted to by Nehemiah follow, iii. 33-iv. 17.

Chap. iii. 1-32. *The enumeration of the builders, and of the gates and portions of wall built*, begins with the sheep-gate and the portion of the wall adjoining it, built by the priests (1 and 2), and concludes with the goldsmiths and merchants who built up to the sheep-gate (ver. 32). Throughout it is almost constantly said of the several parties of builders that they built עַל יְדוֹ, by the side of, next to, the party previously named. Hence we are justified in inferring that the course of the wall is adhered to in this statement, and that the gates are mentioned in the actual order in which they were found in the walls.<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 1 and 2. The narrative of the building is connected with what precedes by וַיִּקֶּם, which alludes to the carrying out of the resolve, וַיִּקְרָם, ii. 18. The

<sup>1</sup> This description of the walls of Jerusalem, together with the short statements in chap. ii. 13-15 and xii. 27-40, forms the chief authority for the topography of ancient Jerusalem (before the captivity), and has been frequently discussed and explained. Comp. a summary of recent topographical investigations on this subject by Arnold in Herzog's *Realencycl.* xviii. p. 620 sq. Among the numerous plans of ancient

enumeration begins with Eliashib the high priest and his brethren, *i.e.* the ordinary priests. These built the sheep-gate, rightly sought by modern topographers in the eastern wall north of Haram, the site of the ancient temple, *i.e.* in the position or neighbourhood of the present St. Stephen's gate, through which the Bedouins to this day drive sheep into the town for sale (Tobler, *Topogr.* i. p. 149). "Although," as Bertheau remarks, "we are not generally justified, after the lapse of so many centuries, during which great changes have been made in the positions of the gates and walls, and in face of the fact that the present walls and gates were not erected till the years 1536, 1537, and 1539, in determining the direction and extent of the walls between the several gates, and the locality of the gates in this description, by the direction and extent of the wall and the locality of the gates in modern Jerusalem (Tobl. *Topogr. Dritte Wanderung*, p. 265), yet in the present instance valid arguments exist in favour of this view. The very neighbourhood of the temple and the nature of the soil bear witness that from ancient times a gate was placed here which took its name from the circumstance that sheep were driven in by it, whether for sale in the market or for sacrificial purposes."<sup>1</sup> They sanctified it and set up its doors: and to the tower Hammeah they sanctified it unto the tower Hananeel. שִׁנְּתוּ, to sanctify, to dedicate (comp. 1 Kings viii. 64), can here only mean that the priests dedicated that portion of building on which they were engaged, as soon as they had finished it, for the purpose of sanctifying the whole work by this preliminary consecration; the solemn dedication of the whole wall not taking place till afterwards, and being related xii. 27 sq. The setting up of the doors in the

Jerusalem, the best is: *A plan of the town and environs of Jerusalem, constructed by C. W. M. Van de Velde; with Memoir by Dr. Titus Tobler, 1858, Gotha.*

<sup>1</sup> In the neighbourhood of this gate was the pool of Bethesda (John v. 2), *i.e.* either the present *Birket Israel* or *Birket es Serain*, south of St. Stephen's gate (Tobler, *Denkblätter*, p. 53 sq., and *Dritte Wanderung*, p. 221), or the Struthion pool mentioned by Josephus, *bell. Jud.* v. 11. 4, *κολυμβήθρα τοῦ στρουθίου*; Krafft, *Topographie von Jerusalem*, p. 127 sq.



gates did not, according to vi. 1, take place till after all the breaches in the wall had been repaired, *i.e.* till the building of the wall was completed. It is, however, mentioned here, and in vers. 3, 6, etc., contemporaneously with the wall-building; because the builders of the several gates, undertaking also the construction and setting up of the doors, the intention is to give a summary of the work executed by the respective building parties. **וְעַד-מִגְדַּל הַמֶּאֱהָה** is still dependent on **יָבִנִּי**, that is to say, this verb must be mentally repeated before the words: they built to the tower Hammeah, they sanctified it (the suffix in **קִדְּשׁוּהָ** can only relate to **מִגְדַּל**). **יָבִנִּי** must also be repeated before **עַד מִגְדַּל הַנָּנְאֵל**: and they built further, unto the tower Hananeel. The tower **הַמֶּאֱהָה** (the hundred) is only mentioned here and chap. xii. 39, but the tower Hananeel is likewise spoken of Jer. xxxi. 38 and Zech. xiv. 10. From these passages it appears that the two towers were so situated, that any one going from west to east along the north wall of the city, and thence southward, would first come to the tower Hananeel, and afterwards to the tower Hammeah, and that both were between the fish-gate and the sheep-gate. From the passages in Jeremiah and Zechariah especially, it is evident that the tower Hananeel stood at the north-east corner of the wall. Hence the statement in this verse, that the portion of wall built by the priests extended to the north-east corner of the wall; and the tower Hammeah must be sought between the sheep-gate and the north-east corner of the wall. Whence the names of these towers were derived is unknown.—Ver. 2. Next to him built the men of Jericho (comp. Ezra ii. 24); and next to them built Zaccur the son of Imri. The suffix of the first **עַל יְדֹ**, though in the singular number, refers to Eliashib and the priests (ver. 1), and that of the second to the men of Jericho, while in vers. 4 and 9, on the contrary, a singular noun is followed by **עַל יָדָם**; both **עַל יְדֹ** and **עַל יָדָם** expressing merely the notion beside, next to, the builders of the respective portions being at one time regarded as in a plural, at another in a singular sense (as a company). The portion built by the men of Jericho and Zaccur the

son of Imri, the head of a family, not mentioned elsewhere. lay between the tower Hananeel and the fish-gate in the north wall. When individuals are, like Zaccur, mentioned in the following description, *e.g.* vers. 4, 6, as builders or repairers of portions of wall, they are heads of houses who engaged in the work of building at the head of the fathers of families and individuals who were dependent on them.—Ver. 3. The fish-gate did the sons of Senaah build (see rem. on Ezra ii. 35); they laid its beams, and set up its doors, bolts, and bars. The fish-gate probably received its name from the fish-market in its neighbourhood, to which the Syrians brought sea-fish (13, 16); it is also mentioned in xii. 39, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 14, and Zeph. i. 10. It was not situated, as Thenius has represented it in his plan of Jerusalem, close to the corner tower of Hananeel, but somewhat to the west of it in the north wall; two lengths of wall being, according to ver. 2, built between this tower and the gate in question. With respect to קְרוֹנוֹ, see rem. on ii. 8. Besides the doors for the gate, מַנְעוּלָיו and בְּרִיחָיו are mentioned, as also vers. 6, 13–15. Both words denote bars for closing doors. בְּרִיחִים are, to judge from the use of this word in the description of the tabernacle (Ex. xxvi. 26 sq. and elsewhere), longer bars, therefore cross-bars, used on the inner side of the door; and מַנְעוּלִים the brackets into which they were inserted.—Vers. 4 and 5. Next to these, Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Hakkoz, Meshullam the son of Berechiah, Zadok the son of Baana, and the Tekoites, repaired in the above order, each a portion of wall. הֶחֱזִיק, to strengthen, means here to repair the gaps and holes in the wall; comp. Ezra xxvii. 9, 27. Meremoth ben Urijah repaired, according to ver. 21, another portion besides. Meshullam ben Berechiah was, according to vi. 18, a person of consideration in Jerusalem. The men of Tekoa, who do not occur among those who returned with Zerubabel (Ezra ii.), also repaired a second portion. “But their nobles brought not their neck to the service of their Lord.” The expression “to bring the neck to service” is, according to Jer. xxvii. 11, to be understood as meaning: to bring the



neck under the yoke of any one, *i.e.* to subject oneself to the service of another. צִנְאָרִים stands for צִנְאָרִים. It is questionable whether אֲדָרְיָהּ is to be taken as the plural of excellence, and understood of God, as in Deut. x. 17, Ps. cxxxv. 3, Mal. i. 6; or of earthly lords or rulers, as in Gen. xl. 1, 2 Sam. x. 3, 1 Kings xii. 27. The former view seems to us decidedly correct, for it cannot be discerned how the suffix should (according to Bertheau's opinion) prevent our thinking of the service of God, if the repairing of the wall of Jerusalem may be regarded as a service required by God and rendered to Him. Besides, the fact that אֲדָרְיָהּ is only used of kings, and is inapplicable whether to the authorities in Jerusalem or to Nehemiah, speaks against referring it to secular rulers or authorities.

Vers. 6-12. From the gate of the old wall to the valley gate.—Ver. 6. שַׁעַר הַיְשָׁנָה does not mean the old gate, for הישנה is genitive. Schultz (*Jerus.* p. 90), Thenius, and Bertheau supply הָעִיר, gate of the old town, and explain the name from the fact that Bezetha, the new town, already existed as a suburb or village in front of the gate, which was named after the contrast. To this Arnold rightly objects (in Herzog's *Realencycl.* xviii. p. 628) that it is by no means proved that there was at that time any contrast between the old and new towns, and as well as Hupfeld (*die topograph. Streitfragen über Jerus.*, in the *morgenl. Zeitschrift*, xv. p. 231) supplies הַחֹמָה: gate of the old wall. He does not, however, derive this designation from the remark (ver. 8), "They fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall," as though this old wall received its name from having been left undestroyed by the Chaldeans, which is irreconcilable with the fact (4-8) that both the gate of the old wall and the portions of wall adjoining it on each side were now built, but understands the term "old wall" as used in contrast to the "broad wall," which had indeed been rebuilt after the destruction by Joash (2 Kings xiv. 13). This view we esteem to be correct. The individuals specified as the builders of this gate are not further known. That two *principes* were employed in the rebuilding of this gate is

explained by Ramb. as arising *vel quod penitus disturbata a Chaldaeis, vel quod magnis sumtibus reparanda fuit, quos unus princeps ferre non potuit.*—Ver. 7. Next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah. If Melatiah is to be regarded as the superintendent of the men of Gibeon, Jadon the Meronothite must be equally esteemed that of the men of Mizpah. Meronoth, mentioned only here and 1 Chron. xxvii. 30, must have been some small place near Mizpah. Mizpah (מִצְפָּה, the watch-tower) is probably the modern *Nebi Samwil*, two leagues to the north-east of Jerusalem; see rem. on Josh. xix. 26. The meaning of the words next following, לְכַסֵּא פֶּחַח וְגו', is questionable. Bertheau, together with Osiander, Cler., de Wette, and others, understands them as more precisely defining the men before named, as men of Gibeon and Mizpah, of the throne or belonging to the throne of the Pechah of Eber hannahar. This addition brings to light the fact that Jews who were not under the jurisdiction of Nehemiah, nevertheless took part in the restoration of the wall. It also distinguishes these men of Mizpah from those mentioned vers. 15 and 19, who were certainly not under the Pechah of Eber hannahar. Finally, the boundary of the little territory of the returned Jewish community must have been at about Mizpah and Gibeon; and a statement that certain inhabitants of this district were not under the Pechah of Jerusalem, but under the Pechah of the province west of Euphrates, would agree with the position of Gibeon and Mizpah. None, however, of these reasons are of much force. For if, according to vers. 5 and 27, the Tekoites repaired two different lengths of wall, without this fact implying any distinction between these two parties of Tekoite builders, the same may be the case with the men of Gibeon and Mizpah. Besides, neither in this verse nor in vers. 15 and 19 are the men of Mizpah in general spoken of, so as to make a distinction necessary; for in this verse two chiefs, Melatiah and Jadon, are designated as men of Gibeon and Mizpah, and in 15 and 19 two rulers of the district of



Mizpah are specified by name. Hence the view that part of the inhabitants of Mizpah were under the jurisdiction of the Pechah of the province west of Euphrates, and part under that of the Pechah of Jerusalem, is devoid of probability. Finally, there is no adequate analogy for the metonymy set up in support of this view, viz. that כִּסֵּא, a seat, a throne, stands for jurisdiction. The words in question can have only a local signification. כִּסֵּא may indeed by metonymy be used for the official residence, but not for the official or judicial district, or jurisdiction of the Pechah. לְכַסֵּא does not state the point to which, but the direction or locality in which, these persons repaired the wall: "towards the seat of the Pechah," i.e. at the place where the court or tribunal of the governor placed over the province on this side Euphrates was held when he came to Jerusalem to administer justice, or to perform any other official duties required of him. This being so, it appears from this verse that this court was within the northern wall, and undoubtedly near a gate.—Ver. 8. Next to him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah of the goldsmiths, and next to him repaired Hananiah, a son of the apothecaries. צוֹרְפִים is in explanatory apposition to the name Uzziel, and the plural is used to denote that his fellow-artisans worked with him under his direction. Hananiah is called בֶּן־הַרְקָחִים, son of the apothecaries, i.e. belonging to the guild of apothecaries. The obscure words, וַיַּעֲזְבוּ וְגו', "and they left Jerusalem unto the broad wall," have been variously interpreted. From xii. 38, where the broad wall is also mentioned, it appears that a length of wall between the tower of the furnaces and the gate of Ephraim was thus named, and not merely a place in the wall distinguished for its breadth, either because it stood out or formed a corner, as Bertheau supposes; for the reason adduced for this opinion, viz. that it is not said that the procession went along the broad wall, depends upon a mistaken interpretation of the passage cited. The expression "the broad wall" denotes a further length of wall; and as this lay, according to xii. 38, west of the gate of Ephraim, the conjecture forces itself upon us, that the broad

wall was that 400 cubits of the wall of Jerusalem, broken down by the Israelite king Joash, from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate (2 Kings xiv. 13), and afterwards rebuilt by Uzziel of a greater breadth, and consequently of increased strength (Joseph. *Antiq.* ix. 10. 3). Now the gate of Ephraim not being mentioned among the rebuilt gates, and this gate nevertheless existing (according to viii. 16) in the days of Nehemiah, the reason of this omission must be the circumstance that it was left standing when the wall of Jerusalem was destroyed. The remark, then, in this verse seems to say the same concerning the broad wall, whether we understand it to mean: the builders left Jerusalem untouched as far as the broad wall, because this place as well as the adjoining gate of Ephraim needed no restoration; or: the Chaldeans had here left Jerusalem, *i.e.* either the town or town-wall, standing. So Hupfeld in his above-cited work, p. 231; Arnold; and even older expositors.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 9 and 10. Further lengths of wall were built by Rephaiah ben Hur, the ruler of the half district of Jerusalem, *i.e.* of the district of country belonging to Jerusalem (comp. ver. 19 with ver. 15, where Mizpah and the district of Mizpah are distinguished); by Jedaiah ben Harumaph,

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau's interpretation of this statement, viz. that at the rebuilding and re-fortification of the town after the captivity, the part of the town extending to the broad wall was left, *i.e.* was not rebuilt, but delayed for the present, answers neither to the verbal sense of the passage nor to the particular mentioned xii. 38, that at the dedication of the wall the second company of them that gave thanks went upon the wall from beyond the tower of the furnaces even unto the broad wall, and over from beyond the gate of Ephraim, etc. Haneberg (in Reusch's *theol. Literaturbl.* 1869, No. 12) supports this view, but understands by "the broad wall" the wall which had a broad circuit, *i.e.* the wall previous to the captivity, and hence infers that the Jerusalem now rebuilt was not equal in extent to the old city. But if a portion of the former city had here been left outside the new wall, the gate of Ephraim would have been displaced, and must have been rebuilt elsewhere in a position to the south of the old gate. Still less can the attempt of the elder Buxtorf (*Lexic. talm. rabb. s.v.* עִיר), now revived by Ewald (*Gesch.* iv. p. 174), to force upon the word עִיר the meaning *restaurare*, or fortify, be justified.



וַיִּנָּה בֵּיתוֹ, and indeed before (opposite) his house, *i.e.* the portion of wall which lay opposite his own dwelling; and by Hattush the son of Hashabniah. Whether Hattush is to be identified with the priest of this name (x. 5), or with the similarly named descendant of David (Ezra viii. 2), or with neither, cannot be determined.—Ver. 11. A second section of wall was repaired by Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hashshub ben Pahath-Moab, two families who came up with Zerubbabel, Ezra ii. 6 and 32. Bertheau understands מְדָה שְׁנִית of a second section of wall added to a first already repaired by the same builders. So, too, he says, did Mere-moth ben Urijah build one portion, ver. 4, and a second, ver. 21; comp. vers. 5 and 27, 15 and 19, 8 and 30. This first portion, however, which this mention of a second presupposes, not being named, he infers that our present text has not preserved its original completeness, and thinks it probable, from xii. 38 and 39, that certain statements, in this description, relating to the gate of Ephraim and its neighbourhood, which once stood before ver. 8, have been omitted. This inference is unfounded. The non-mention of the gate of Ephraim is to be ascribed, as we have already remarked on ver. 8, to other reasons than the incompleteness of the text; and the assertion that מְדָה שְׁנִית assumes that a former portion was repaired by the same builders, receives no support from a comparison of vers. 5 with 27, 15 with 19, and 8 with 30. Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, who, according to ver. 30, built מְדָה שְׁנִי, are not identical with Hananiah the son of the apothecaries, ver. 8. The same remark applies to Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah (ver. 19), and Shallum the ruler of the district of Mizpah (ver. 15). Only in vers. 5 and 27, and 4 and 21, are the names of the builders the same. Moreover, besides vers. 21 and 27, מְדָה שְׁנִית occurs five times more (vers. 11, 19, 20, 24, and 30) with respect to builders not previously (nor subsequently) mentioned in this list. Hence, in five different places, the names of the building parties, and the notices of the portions of wall built by them respectively, must have been lost,—a circumstance à

*priori* incredible. When, however, we consider the verses, in which מִדָּה שְׁנִית occurs, more closely, the second length is, in vers. 19, 20, 21, 24, and 27, more nearly defined by a statement of locality: thus, in ver. 19, we have a second piece over against the ascent to the arsenal at the angle; in ver. 20, a second piece from the angle to the door of the house of Eliashib; in ver. 21, a second piece from the door of the house of Eliashib to . . .; in ver. 24, a second piece from the house of Azariah to . . ., who, according to ver. 23, built near his own house; in ver. 27, a second piece over against the great projecting tower . . ., as far as which, according to ver. 26, the Nethinim dwelt in Ophel. From all this, it is evident that מִדָּה שְׁנִית in these verses, always denotes a second portion of that length of wall previously spoken of, or a portion next to that of which the building was previously mentioned. And so must מִדָּה שְׁנִית be understood in the present verse (11), where it is used because Malchiah and Hashshub repaired or built the tower of the furnaces, besides the portion of wall. מִדָּה שְׁנִית may be rendered, "another or a further piece." The word שְׁנִית is chosen, because that previously mentioned is regarded as a first. The tower of the furnaces lay, according to this verse and xii. 38, where alone it is again mentioned, between the broad wall and the valley-gate. Now, since there was between the gate of Ephraim and the corner-gate a portion of wall four hundred cubits long (see 2 Kings xiv. 13), which, as has been above remarked, went by the name of the broad wall, it is plain that the tower of the furnaces must be sought for in the neighbourhood of the corner-gate, or perhaps even identified with it. This is the simplest way of accounting for the omission of any notice in the present description of this gate, which is mentioned not merely before (2 Chron. xxvi. 9; Jer. xxxi. 38; and 2 Kings xiv. 13), but also after, the captivity (Zech. xiv. 10). It is probable that the tower of the furnaces served as a defence for the corner-gate at the north-western corner of the town, where now lie, upon an earlier building of large stones with morticed edges, probably a fragment of the old Jewish wall,



the ruins of the ancient *Kal'at el Dshalud* (tower of Goliath), which might, at the time of the Crusades, have formed the corner bastion of the city: comp. Rob. *Palestine*, ii. p. 114; *Biblical Researches*, p. 252; and Tobler, *Topogr.* i. p. 67 sq. —Ver. 12. Next repaired Shallum, ruler of the other (comp. ver. 9) half district of Jerusalem, he and his daughters. הָנֻנָּה can only refer to Shallum, not to פְּלִלְיָהּ, which would make the daughters signify the daughters of the district, of the villages and places in the district.

Vers. 13 and 14. From the valley-gate to the dung-gate. The *valley-gate* lay in the west, in the neighbourhood of the present Jaffa gate (see rem. on ii. 13), “where,” as Tobler, *Topogr.* i. p. 163, expresses it, “we may conclude there must almost always have been, on the ridge near the present citadel, the site in the time of Titus of the water-gate also (Joseph. *bell. Jud.* v. 7. 3), an entrance provided with gates.” Hanun and the inhabitants of *Zanoah* are here connected, probably because Hanun was the chief or ruler of the inhabitants of this place. *Zanoah*, now *Zanna*, is in the *Wady Ismail*, west of Jerusalem; see rem. on Josh. xv. 34. They built and set up its doors, etc.; comp. ver. 6. The further statement, “and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung-gate,” still depends on הִחְיִי, the principal verb of the verse. It is incomprehensible how Bertheau can say that this statement does not refer to the repairing of the wall, but only declares that the distance from the valley-gate to the dung-gate amounted to one thousand cubits. For the remark, that a section of such a length is, in comparison with the other sections, far too extensive, naturally proves nothing more than that the wall in this part had suffered less damage, and therefore needed less repair. The number one thousand cubits is certainly stated in round numbers. The length from the present Jaffa gate to the supposed site of the dung-gate, on the south-western edge of Zion, is above two thousand five hundred feet. The dung-gate may, however, have been placed at a greater distance from the road leading to *Baher*. הַשְּׂפוֹת is only another form for הָאֲשָׁפוֹת (without א prosthetic). Malchiah ben Rechab, per-

haps a Rechabite, built and fortified the dung-gate; for though the Rechabites were forbidden to build themselves houses (Jer. xxxv. 7), they might, without transgressing this paternal injunction, take part in building the fortifications of Jerusalem (Berth.). This conjecture is, however, devoid of probability, for a Rechabite would hardly be a prince or ruler of the district of Beth-haccerem. The name Rechab occurs as early as the days of David, 2 Sam. iv. 5. בֵּית־הַכֶּרֶם, *i.e.* the garden or vineyard-house, where, according to Jer. vi. 1, the children of Benjamin were wont to set up a banner, and to blow the trumpet in Tekoa, is placed by Jerome (Comm. Jer. vi.) upon a hill between Jerusalem and Tekoa; on which account Pococke (*Reise*, ii. p. 63) thinks Beth-Cherem must be sought for on the eminence now known as the Frank mountain, the Dshebel Fureidis, upon which was the Herodium of Josephus. This opinion is embraced with some hesitation by Robinson (*Pal.* ii. p. 397), and unreservedly by Wilson (*The Holy City*, i. p. 396) and v. de Velde, because "when we consider that this hill is the highest point in the whole district, and is by reason of its isolated position and conical shape very conspicuous, we shall find that no other locality better corresponds with the passage cited."

Ver. 15. The *fountain-gate* and a portion of wall adjoining it was repaired by Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the ruler of the district of Mizpah. כְּלִי־חַיָּה occurs again, xi. 5, apparently as the name of another individual. To יִבְנֶנּוּ is added יִטְלְלֵנוּ, he covered it, from טָלַל, to shade, to cover, answering to the קָרַיְתוּ of vers. 3 and 6, probably to cover with a layer of beams. The position of the fountain-gate is apparent from the description of the adjoining length of wall which Shallum also repaired. This was "the wall of the pool of Shelach (Siloah) by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David." The word שֶׁלַח recalls שְׁלוּחַ; the pool of Shelach can be none other than the pool which received its water through the שֶׁלַח, *i.e.* *missio* (*aquæ*). By the researches of Robinson (*Pal.* ii. p. 148 sq.) and Tobler (*die Siloahquelle u. der Oelberg*, p. 6 sq.),



it has been shown that the pool of Siloah receives its water from a subterranean conduit 1750 feet long, cut through the rock from the Fountain of the Virgin, *Ain Sitti Miriam*, on the eastern slope of Ophel. Near to the pool of Siloah, on the eastern declivity of Zion, just where the Tyropœan valley opens into the vale of Kidron, is found an old and larger pool (*Birket el Hamra*), now covered with grass and trees, and choked with earth, called by Tobler the lower pool of Siloah, to distinguish it from the one still existing, which, because it lies north-west of the former, he calls the upper pool of Siloah. One of these pools of Siloah, probably the lower and larger, is certainly the king's pool mentioned ii. 14, in the neighbourhood of which lay, towards the east and south-east, the king's garden. The wall of the pool of Shelach need not have reached quite up to the pool, but may have gone along the edge of the south-eastern slope of Zion, at some distance therefrom. In considering the next particular following, "unto the stairs that go down from the city of David," we must turn our thoughts towards a locality somewhat to the north of this pool, the description now proceeding from the south-eastern corner of the wall northward. These stairs are not yet pointed out with certainty, unless perhaps some remains of them are preserved in the "length of rocky escarpment," which Robinson (*Pul.* ii. p. 102, and *Biblical Researches*, p. 247) remarked on the narrow ridge of the eastern slope of the hill of Zion, north of Siloam, at a distance of 960 feet from the present wall of the city, "apparently the foundations of a wall or of some similar piece of building."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau's view, that these stairs were situated where Mount Zion, upon which stood the city of David, descends abruptly towards the east, and therefore on the precipice running from south to north, which still rises ninety-one feet above the ground northwards of the now so-called Bab el Mogharibeh or dung-gate, opposite the southern part of the west wall of the temple area, is decidedly incorrect. For this place is two thousand feet, *i.e.* more than one thousand cubits, distant from the pool of Siloah, while our text places them immediately after the length of wall by this pool. The transposition of these "steps" to a position within the present wall of the city is, in Bertheau's case, connected with

Vers. 16–19. The wall from the steps leading from the city of David to the angle opposite the armoury. From ver. 16 onwards we find for the most part אֶחָדָא, after him, instead of עַל יָדוֹ, which only occurs again in vers. 17 and 19. Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of half the district of Beth-zur (see rem. on 2 Chron. xi. 7), repaired the wall as far as “opposite the sepulchres of David, and unto the pool that was made, and to the house of the heroes.” The sepulchres of David are the sepulchres of the house of David in the city of David (comp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 33). “Opposite the sepulchres of David” is the length of wall on the eastern side of Zion, where was probably, as Thenius

the erroneous notion that the fountain-gate (ver. 15 and ii. 14) stood on the site of the present dung-gate (*Bab el Mogharibeh*), for which no other reason appears than the assumption that the southern wall of the city of David, before the captivity, went over Zion, in the same direction as the southern wall of modern Jerusalem, only perhaps in a rather more southerly direction,—an assumption shown to be erroneous, even by the circumstance that in this case the sepulchres of David, Solomon, and the kings of Judah would have stood outside the city wall, on the southern part of Zion; while, according to the Scripture narrative, David, Solomon, and the kings of Judah were buried *in* the city of David (1 Kings ii. 10, xi. 42, xiv. 31, xv. 8, and elsewhere). But apart from this consideration, this hypothesis is shattered by the statements of this fifteenth verse, which Bertheau cannot explain so inconsistently with the other statements concerning the building of the wall, as to make them say that any one coming from the west and going round by the south of the city towards the east, would first arrive at the fountain-gate, and then at the portion of wall in question; but is obliged to explain, so that the chief work, the building of the fountain-gate, is mentioned first; then the slighter work, the reparation of a length of wall *as supplementary*; and this makes the localities enumerated in ver. 13 succeed each other in the following order, in a direction from the west by south and east towards the north: “Valley-gate—one thousand cubits of wall as far as the dung-gate; dung-gate—the wall of the conduit towards the king’s garden, as far as the stairs which lead from the city of David—fountain-gate.” No adequate reason for this transposition of the text is afforded by the circumstance that no portion of wall is mentioned (vers. 14 and 15) as being repaired between the dung-gate and the valley-gate. For how do we know that this portion on the southern side of Zion was broken down and needing repair? Might not the length between these two gates have been left standing when the city was burnt by the Chaldeans?



endeavours to show in the *Zeitschr. of the deutsch morgenl. Gesellsch.* xxi. p. 495 sq., an entrance to the burying-place of the house of David, which was within the city. The "pool that was made" must be sought at no great distance, in the Tyropœan valley, but has not yet been discovered. The view of Krafft (*Topographie von Jerusalem*, p. 152), that it was the reservoir artificially constructed by Hezekiah, between the two walls for the water of the old pool (Isa. xxii. 11), rests upon incorrect combinations. "The house of the heroes" is also unknown. In vers. 17 and 18, the lengths of wall repaired by the three building parties there mentioned are not stated. "The Levites, Rehum the son of Bani," stands for: the Levites under Rehum the son of Bani. There was a Rehum among those who returned with Zerubbabel, xii. 3, Ezra ii. 2; and a Bani occurs among the Levites in ix. 5. After him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of half the district of Keilah, for his district. Keilah, situate, according to Josh. xv. 44 and 1 Sam. xxiii. 1, in the hill region, is probably the village of Kila, discovered by Tobler (vol. iii. p. 151), eastward of Beit Dshibrin. By the addition לְפָלְכֹו, for his district, i.e. that half of the whole district which was under his rule, "it is expressly stated that the two halves of the district of Keilah worked apart one from the other" (Bertheau). The other half is mentioned in the verse next following.—Ver. 18. "Their brethren" are the inhabitants of the second half, who were under the rule of Bavai the son of Henadad.—Ver. 19. Next to these repaired Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, another piece (on מִדָּה שְׁנִית, see rem. on ver. 11) opposite the ascent to the armoury of the angle. הַנֶּשֶׁק or הַנֶּשֶׁקֶת (in most editions) is probably an abbreviation of בֵּית־הַנֶּשֶׁק, arsenal, armoury; and הַמִּקְצוּעַ is, notwithstanding the article in הַנֶּשֶׁק, genitive: for to combine it as an accusative with עֲלֹת, and read, "the going up of the armoury upon the angle," gives no suitable meaning. The locality itself cannot indeed be more precisely stated. The armoury was probably situate on the east side of Zion, at a place where the wall of the city formed an angle; or it occupied an angle within the city

itself, no other buildings adjoining it on the south. The opinion of Bertheau, that the armoury stood where the tower described by Tobler (*Dritte Wand.* p. 228) stands, viz. about midway between the modern Zion gate and the dung-gate, and of which he says that "its lower strata of stones are undoubtedly of a remoter date than the rebuilding of the wall in the sixteenth century," coincides with the assumption already refuted, that the old wall of the city of David passed, like the southern wall of modern Jerusalem, over Mount Zion.

Vers. 20-25. The wall from the angle to the place of the court of the prison by the king's upper house.—Ver. 20. After him Baruch the son of Zabbai emulously repaired a second length of wall, from the angle to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. Bertheau objects to the reading הַחֶרֶה, and conjectures that it should be הַהֶרֶה, "up the hill." But the reason he adduces, viz. that often as the word הַחֶרֶה occurs in this description, a further definition is nowhere else added to it, speaks as much against, as for his proposed alteration; definitions of locality never, throughout the entire narrative, preceding הַחֶרֶה, but uniformly standing after it, as also in the present verse. Certainly הַחֶרֶה cannot here mean either to be angry, or to be incensed, but may without difficulty be taken, in the sense of the Tiph'al תַּחֲרֶה, to emulate, to contend (Jer. xxii. 15, xii. 5), and the perfect adverbially subordinated to the following verb (comp. Gesen. *Gramm.* § 142, 3, a). The Keri offers וַיִּבֶּ instead of וַיִּבֶּ, probably from Ezra ii. 9, but on insufficient grounds, the name וַיִּבֶּ occurring also Ezra x. 28. Of the position of the house of Eliashib the high priest, we know nothing further than what appears from these verses (20 and 21), viz. that it stood at the northern part of the eastern side of Zion (not at the south-western angle of the temple area, as Bertheau supposes), and extended some considerable distance from south to north, the second length of wall built by Meremoth reaching from the door at its southern end to the תְּכֵלִית, termination, at its northern end. On Meremoth, see rem. on ver. 4.—Ver. 22. Farther northwards repaired



the priests, the men of the district of Jordan. כְּכֶר does not, as Bertheau infers from xii. 28, signify the country round Jerusalem, but here, as there, the valley of the Jordan. See rem. on xii. 28 and on Gen. xiii. 10. Hence this verse informs us that priests were then dwelling in the valley of the Jordan, probably in the neighbourhood of Jericho. The length of wall built by these priests is not further particularized.—Ver. 23. Further on repaired Benjamin and Hashub over against their house, and Azariah the son of Maaseiah, by his house. Nothing further is known of these individuals.—Ver. 24. Next repaired Binnui the son of Henadad, a second portion from the house of Azariah, to the angle and to the corner; and further on (ver. 25) Palal the son of Uzzai, from opposite the angle and the high tower which stands out from the king's house by the court of the prison. We join הָעֵלְיוֹן to הַמִּגְדָּל, though it is also verbally admissible to combine it with בֵּית הַמִּלְכָּה, “the tower which stands out from the king's upper house,” because nothing is known of an upper and lower king's house. It would be more natural to assume (with Bertheau) that there was an upper and a lower tower at the court of the prison, but this is not implied by הָעֵלְיוֹן. The word means first, high, elevated, and its use does not assume the existence of a lower tower; while the circumstance that the same tower is in ver. 27 called the great (הַגָּדוֹל) tells in favour of the meaning high in the present case. The court of the prison was, according to Jer. xxxii. 2, in or near the king's house; it is also mentioned Jer. xxxii. 8, 12, xxxiii. 1, xxxvii. 21, xxxviii. 6, 13, 28, and xxxix. 14. But from none of these passages can it be inferred, as by Bertheau, that it was situate in the neighbourhood of the temple. His further remark, too, that the king's house is not the royal palace in the city of David, but an official edifice standing upon or near the temple area, and including the court of the prison with its towers, is entirely without foundation.<sup>1</sup> The royal palace lay, according

<sup>1</sup> Equally devoid of proof is the view of Ewald, Diestel (in Herzog's *Realencycl.* xiii. p. 325), Arnold, and others, that the royal palace stood upon Moriah or Ophel on the south side of the temple, in support of

to Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 5. 2, opposite the temple (*ἀντικρὺς ἔχων ναόν*), *i.e.* on the north-eastern side of Zion, and this is quite in accordance with the statements of this verse; for as it is not till ver. 27 that the description of the wall-building reaches the walls of Ophel, all the localities and buildings spoken of in vers. 24–27a must be sought for on the east side of Zion. The court of the prison formed, according to Eastern custom, part of the royal fortress upon Zion. The citadel had, moreover, a high tower. This is obvious from Cant. iv. 4, though the tower of David there mentioned, on which hung a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men, may not be identical with the tower of the king's house in this passage; from Mic. iv. 8, where the tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, is the tower of the royal citadel; and from Isa. xxxii. 14, where citadel and tower (*בֵּית־טוֹר*, properly watch-tower) answer to the *אַרְמוֹן* of the royal citadel, which lay with its forts upon the hill of Zion. This high tower of the king's house, *i.e.* of the royal citadel, stood, according to our verses, in the immediate neighbourhood of the angle and the corner (*הַפִּנָּה*); for the section of wall which reached to the *פִּנָּה* lay opposite the angle and the high tower of the king's house. The wall here evidently formed a corner, running no longer from south to north, but turning eastwards, and passing over Ophel, the southern spur of Moriah. A length from this corner onwards was built by Pedaiah the son of Parosh; comp. Ezra ii. 3.

Vers. 26 and 27. Having now reached the place where the wall encloses Ophel, a remark is inserted, ver. 26, on the dwellings of the Nethinim, *i.e.* of the temple servants. The Nethinim dwelt in Ophel as far as (the place) before the water-gate toward the east, and the tower that standeth out. *עַרְבֵי הַמִּגְדָּל הַזֶּה* still depends upon *עַרְבֵי הַיָּד*. The water-gate towards the east, judging from xii. 37, lay beyond the south-eastern corner of the temple area. Bertheau, reasoning upon the view that the open space of the house of God, which Diestel adduces Neh. iii. 25. See the refutation of this view in the commentary on 1 Kings vii. 12 (note).



where Ezra spoke to the assembled people (Ezra x. 9), is identical with the open place before the water-gate mentioned Neh. viii. 1, 3, 16, places it on the east side of the temple area, near where the golden gate (*Rab er Rahme*) now stands. This identity, however, cannot be proved; and even if it could, it would by no means follow that this open space lay on the east side of the temple area. And as little does it follow from xii. 37, as we shall show when we reach this passage. *הַמִּנְדָּל הַיּוֹצֵא* is said by Bertheau to have belonged perhaps to the water-gate towards the east, since, by reason of the statements contained in vers. 31 and 32, we must not seek it so far northwards on the east side of the temple area, as to combine it with the remains of a tower projecting seven and a half feet from the line of wall at the north-east corner, and described by Robinson (*Biblical Researches*, p. 226). But even if the tower in question must not be identified with these remains, it by no means follows that it stood in the neighbourhood of the golden gate. Even Arnold, in his work already cited, p. 636, remarks, in opposition to Bertheau's view, that "it is evident from the whole statement that the tower standing out from the king's house, in vers. 25, 26, and 27, is one and the same, and that Bertheau's view of our having here three separate towers can hardly be maintained," although he, as well as Bertheau, transposes both the king's house and the court of the prison to the south of the temple area. The similar appellation of this tower as *הַיּוֹצֵא* in the three verses speaks so decidedly for its identity, that very forcible reasons must be adduced before the opposite view can be adopted. In ver. 26 it is not a locality near the water-gate in the east which is indicated by *הַמִּנְדָּל הַיּוֹצֵא*, but the western boundary of the dwellings of the Nethinim lying opposite. They dwelt, that is, upon Ophel, southwards of the temple area, on a tract of land reaching from the water-gate in the east to opposite the outstanding tower of the royal citadel in the west, *i.e.* from the eastern slope of the ridge of Ophel down to the Tyropœan valley.—Ver. 27. After them the Tekoites repaired a second piece from opposite the great tower that standeth out to

the wall of Ophel. The great (high) tower of the king's house within the city wall being some distance removed therefrom, the portion of wall on the eastern ridge of Zion from south to north, reaching as far as the turning and the corner, and the commencement of the wall running from this corner eastwards, might both be designated as lying opposite to this tower. The portion mentioned in our verse passed along the Tyropœan valley as far as the wall of Ophel. King Jotham had built much on the wall of Ophel (2 Chron. xxvii. 3); and Manasseh had surrounded Ophel with a very high wall (2 Chron. xxxiii. 14), *i.e.* carried the wall round its western, southern, and eastern sides. On the north no wall was needed, Ophel being protected on this side by the southern wall of the temple area.

Vers. 28–32. The wall of Ophel and the eastern side of the temple area.—Ver. 28. Above the horse-gate repaired the priests, each opposite his own house. The site of the horse-gate appears, from 2 Chron. xxiii. 15 compared with 2 Kings xi. 6, to have been not far distant from the temple and the royal palace; while according to the present verse, compared with ver. 27, it stood in the neighbourhood of the wall of Ophel, and might well be regarded as even belonging to it. Hence we have, with Thenius, to seek it in the wall running over the Tyropœan valley, and uniting the eastern edge of Zion with the western edge of Ophel in the position of the present dung-gate (*Bab el Mogharibeh*). This accords with Jer. xxxi. 40, where it is also mentioned; and from which passage Bertheau infers that it stood at the western side of the valley of Kidron, below the east corner of the temple area. The particular <sup>למעלה</sup>, “from over,” that is, above, is not to be understood of a point *northwards* of the horse-gate, but denotes the place where the wall, passing up from Zion to Ophel, ascended the side of Ophel east of the horse-gate. If, then, the priests here repaired each opposite his house, it is evident that a row of priests' dwellings were built on the western side of Ophel, south of the south-western extremity of the temple area.—Ver. 29. Zadok ben Immer (Ezra ii. 37) was probably the head of the priestly order of Immer.



Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the east gate, can hardly be the same as the Shemaiah of the sons of Shecaniah entered among the descendants of David in 1 Chron. iii. 22. He might rather be regarded as a descendant of the Shemaiah of 1 Chron. xxvi. 6 sq., if the latter had not been enumerated among the sons of Obed-Edom, whose duty was to guard the south side of the temple. The east gate is undoubtedly the east gate of the temple, and not to be identified, as by Bertheau, with the water-gate towards the east (ver. 26). The place where Shemaiah repaired is not more precisely defined; nor can we infer, with Bertheau, from the circumstance of his being the keeper of the east gate, that he, together with his subordinate keepers, laboured at the fortification of this gate and its adjoining section of wall. Such a view is opposed to the order of the description, which passes on to a portion of the wall of Ophel; see rem. on ver. 31.—Ver. 30. אֶחָד here and in ver. 31 gives no appropriate sense, and is certainly only an error of transcription arising from the *scriptio defect.* אֶחָד. Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, are not further known. The name of Meshullam the son of Berechiah occurs previously in ver. 4; but the same individual can hardly be intended in the two verses, the one mentioned in ver. 4 being distinguished from others of the same name by the addition *ben Meshezabeel*. שְׁנִי for שְׁנִי (vers. 27, 24, and elsewhere) is grammatically incorrect, if not a mere error of transcription. נִגְדָה נִשְׁכָּתוֹ, before his dwelling. נִשְׁכָּה occurs only here and xiii. 7, and in the plural הַנִּשְׁכָּהוֹת, xii. 44; it seems, judging from the latter passage, only another form for לִשְׁכָּה, chamber; while in xiii. 7, on the contrary, נִשְׁכָּה is distinguished from לִשְׁכָּה, xiii. 4, 5. Its etymology is obscure. In xiii. 7 it seems to signify dwelling.—Ver. 31. הַצֹּרֶף is not a proper name, but an appellative, son of the goldsmith, or perhaps better, member of the goldsmiths' guild, according to which הַצֹּרֶף does not stand for הַצֹּרֶף, but designates those belonging to the goldsmiths. The statements, (he repaired) unto the house of the Nethinim, and of the merchants opposite the gate הַמִּפְקֵד, and to the upper chamber

of the corner, are obscure. This rendering is according to the Masoretic punctuation; while the LXX., on the contrary, translate according to a different division of the words: Malchiah repaired as far as the house of the Nethinim, and the spice-merchants (repaired) opposite the gate Miphkad, and as far as the ascent of the corner. This translation is preferred by Bertheau, but upon questionable grounds. For the objection made by him, that if the other be adopted, either the same termination would be stated twice in different forms, or that two different terminations are intended, in which case it does not appear why one only should first be mentioned, and then the other also, is not of much importance. In ver. 24 also two terminations are mentioned, while in ver. 16 we have even three together. And why should not this occur here also? Of more weight is the consideration, that to follow the Masoretic punctuation is to make the house of the Nethinim and of the merchants but *one* building. Since, however, we know nothing further concerning the edifice in question, the subject is not one for discussion. The rendering of the LXX., on the other hand, is opposed by the weighty objection that there is a total absence of analogy for supplying הַחֲזִיקִי; for throughout this long enumeration of forty-two sections of wall, the verb הַחֲזִיק or הַחֲזִיקִי, or some corresponding verb, always stands either before or after every name of the builders, and even the אֲחֵרֵי is omitted only once (ver. 25). To the statement, "as far as the house of the Nethinim and the merchants," is appended the further definition: before (opposite) the gate הַמִּפְקָד. This word is reproduced in the LXX. as a proper name (τοῦ Μαφεκάδ), as is also בֵּית הַנְּתִינִים, ἕως Βεθὰν Ναθινίμ); in the Vulgate it is rendered appellatively: *contra portam judicalem*; and hence by Luther, *Rathsthor*. Thenius translates (*Stadt*, p. 9): the muster or punishment gate. מִפְקָד does not, however, signify punishment, although the view may be correct that the gate took the name מִפְקָד from the מִפְקָד הַבַּיִת mentioned Ezek. xliii. 21, where the bullock of the sin-offering was to be burnt without the sanctuary; and it may be inferred from this passage that



near the temple of Solomon also there was an appointed place for burning the flesh of the sin-offering without the sanctuary. In Ezekiel's temple vision, this מִפְקַד הַבַּיִת is probably to be sought in the space behind the sanctuary, *i.e.* at the western end of the great square of five hundred cubits, set apart for the temple, and designated the *Gizra*, or separate place. In the temples of Solomon and Zerubabel, however, the place in question could not have been situate at the west side of the temple, between the temple and the city, which lay opposite, but only on the south side of the temple area, outside the court, upon Ophel, where Thenius has delineated it in his plan of Jerusalem before the captivity. Whether it lay, however, at the south-western corner of the temple space (Thenius), or in the middle, or near the east end of the southern side of the external wall of the temple or temple court, can be determined neither from the present passage nor from Ezekiel's vision. Not from Ezek. xliii. 21, because the temple vision of this prophet is of an ideal character, differing in many points from the actual temple; not from the present passage, because the position of the house of the Nethinim and the merchants is unknown, and the definition נֶגֶד, (before) opposite the gate Miphkad, admits of several explanations. Thus much only is certain concerning this Miphkad gate,—on the one hand, from the circumstance that the wall was built before (נֶגֶד) or opposite this gate, on the other, from its omission in xii. 39, where the prison-gate is mentioned as being in this neighbourhood in its stead,—that it was not a gate of the city, but a gate through which the מִפְקַד was reached. Again, it is evident that the עֲלִיָּה of the corner which is mentioned as the length of wall next following, must be sought for at the south-eastern corner of the temple area. Hence the house of the temple servants and the merchants must have been situate south of this, on the eastern side of Ophel, where it descends into the valley of Kidron. עֲלִיַּת הַפִּנָּה, the upper chamber of the corner, was perhaps a *ὑπερώον* of a corner tower, not at the north-eastern corner of the external circumvallation of the temple area (Bertheau), but at the

south-eastern corner, which was formed by the junction at this point of the wall of Ophel with the eastern wall of the temple area. If these views are correct, all the sections mentioned from ver. 28 to ver. 31 belong to the wall surrounding Ophel. This must have been of considerable length, for Ophel extended almost to the pool of Siloam, and was walled round on its western, southern, and eastern sides.—Ver. 32. The last section, between the upper chamber of the corner and the sheep-gate, was repaired by the goldsmiths and the merchants. This is the whole length of the east wall of the temple as far as the sheep-gate, at which this description began (ver. 1). The eastern wall of the temple area might have suffered less than the rest of the wall at the demolition of the city by the Chaldeans, or perhaps have been partly repaired at the time the temple was rebuilt, so that less restoration was now needed.

A survey of the whole enumeration of the gates and lengths of wall now restored and fortified, commencing and terminating as it does at the sheep-gate, and connecting almost always the several portions either built or repaired by the words *עַל יְדוֹ (יָדָם)* or *אֶחָדָיו*, gives good grounds for inferring that in the forty-two sections, including the gates, particularized vers. 1–32, we have a description of the entire fortified wall surrounding the city, without a single gap. In ver. 7, indeed, as we learn by comparing it with xii. 29, the mention of the gate of Ephraim is omitted, and in 30 or 31, to judge by xii. 39, the prison-gate; while the wall lying between the dung-gate and the fountain-gate is not mentioned between vers. 14 and 15. The non-mention, however, of these gates and this portion of wall may be explained by the circumstance, that these parts of the fortification, having remained unharmed, were in need of no restoration. We read, it is true, in 2 Kings xxv. 10 and 11, that Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard of Nebuchadnezzar, burnt the king's house and all the great houses of the city, and that the army of the Chaldees broke down or destroyed (*נָהַץ*) the walls of Jerusalem round about; but these words must not be so pressed as to make them express a total



levelling of the surrounding wall. The wall was only so far demolished as to be incapable of any longer serving as a defence to the city. And this end was fully accomplished when it was partially demolished in several places, because the portions of wall, and even the towers and gates, still perhaps left standing, could then no longer afford any protection to the city. The danger that the Jews might easily refortify the city unless the fortifications were entirely demolished, was sufficiently obviated by the carrying away into captivity of the greater part of the population. This explains the fact that nothing is said in this description of the restoration of the towers of Hananeel and Hammeah (ver. 11), and that certain building parties repaired very long lengths of wall, as *e.g.* the 1000 cubits between the fountain-gate and the dung-gate, while others had very short portions appointed them. The latter was especially the case with those who built on the east side of Zion, because this being the part at which King Zedekiah fled from the city, the wall may here have been levelled to the ground.

From the consideration of the course of the wall, so far as the description in the present chapter enables us to determine it with tolerable certainty, and a comparison with the procession of the two bands of singers round the restored wall in chap. xii. 31-40, which agrees in the chief points with this description, it appears that the wall on the northern side of the city, before the captivity, coincided in the main with the northern wall of modern Jerusalem, being only somewhat shorter at the north-eastern and north-western corners; and that it ran from the valley (or Jaffa) gate by the tower of furnaces, the gate of Ephraim, the old gate, and the fish-gate to the sheep-gate, maintaining, on the whole, the same direction as the second wall described by Josephus (*bell. Jud.* v. 4. 2.) In many places remains of this wall, which bear testimony to their existence at a period long prior to Josephus, have recently been discovered. In an angle of the present wall near the Latin monastery are found "remains of a wall built of mortice-edged stones, near which lie blocks so large that we at first took them for

portions of the natural rock, but found them on closer inspection to be morticed stones removed from their place. A comparatively large number of stones, both in the present wall between the north-west corner of the tower and the Damascus gate, and in the adjoining buildings, are morticed and hewn out of ancient material, and we can scarcely resist the impression that this must have been about the direction of an older wall." So Wolcott and Tipping in Robinson's *New Biblical Researches*. Still nearer to the gate, about three hundred feet west of it, Dr. Wilson remarks (*Lands of the Bible*, i. p. 421), "that the wall, to some considerable height above its foundation, bears evidence, by the size and peculiarity of its stones, to its high antiquity," and attributes this portion to the old second wall (see Robinson). "Eastward, too, near the Damascus gate, and even near the eastern tower, are found very remarkable remains of Jewish antiquity. The similarity of these remains of wall to those surrounding the site of the temple is most surprising" (Tobler, *Dritte Wand*. p. 339). From these remains, and the intimations of Josephus concerning the second wall, Robinson justly infers that the ancient wall must have run from the Damascus gate to a place in the neighbourhood of the Latin monastery, and that its course thence must have been nearly along the road leading northwards from the citadel to the Latin monastery, while between the monastery and the Damascus gate it nearly coincided with the present wall. Of the length from the Damascus gate to the sheep-gate no certain indications have as yet been found. According to Robinson's ideas, it probably went from the Damascus gate, at first eastwards in the direction of the present wall, and onwards to the highest point of Bezetha; but then bent, as Bertheau supposes, in a south-easterly direction, and ran to a point in the present wall lying north-east of the Church of St. Anne, and thence directly south towards the north-east corner of the temple area. On the south side, on the contrary, the whole of the hill of Zion belonged to the ancient city; and the wall did not, like the modern, pass across the middle of Zion, thus



excluding the southern half of this hill from the city, but went on the west, south, and south-east, round the edge of Zion, so that the city of Zion was as large again as that portion of modern Jerusalem lying on the hill of Zion, and included the sepulchres of David and of the kings of Judah, which are now outside the city wall. Tobler (*Dritte Wand.* p. 336) believes that a trace of the course of the ancient wall has been discovered in the cutting in the rock recently uncovered outside the city, where, at the building of the Anglican Episcopal school, which lies two hundred paces westward under *En-Nebi-Daûd*, and the levelling of the garden and cemetery, were found edged stones lying scattered about, and "remarkable artificial walls of rock," whose direction shows that they must have supported the oldest or first wall of the city; for they are just so far distant from the level of the valley, that the wall could, or rather must, have stood there. "And," continues Tobler, "not only so, but the course of the wall of rock is also to a certain extent parallel with that of the valley, as must be supposed to be the case with a rocky foundation to a city wall." Finally, the city was bounded on its western and eastern sides by the valleys of Gihon and Jehoshaphat respectively.

Vers. 33-38 (chap. iv. 1-6, A. V.). *The ridicule of Tobiah and Sanballat.*—Vers. 33 and 34. As soon as Sanballat heard that we were building (בָּנִים, *partic.*, expresses not merely the resolve or desire to build, but also the act of commencing), he was wroth and indignant, and vented his anger by ridiculing the Jews, saying before his brethren, *i.e.* the rulers of his people, and the army of Samaria (חֵיל, like Esth. i. 3, 2 Kings xviii. 17),—in other words, saying publicly before his associates and subordinates,—“What do these feeble Jews? will they leave it to themselves? will they sacrifice? will they finish it to-day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps that are burned?” מָה עֹשִׂים, not, What will they do? (Bertheau), for the participle is present, and does not stand for the future; but, What are they doing? The form אֲמַל, withered, powerless, occurs here only. The subject of

the four succeeding interrogative sentences must be the same. And this is enough to render inadmissible the explanation offered by older expositors of הִיעֲזְבוּ לָהֶם: Will they leave to them, viz. will the neighbouring nations or the royal prefects allow them to build? Here, as in the case of the following verbs, the subject can only be the Jews. Hence Ewald seeks, both here and in ver. 8, to give to the verb עֲזַב the meaning to shelter: Will they make a shelter for themselves, i.e. will they fortify the town? But this is quite arbitrary. Bertheau more correctly compares the passage, Ps. x. 14, עֲזַבְנוּ עַל אֱלֹהִים, we leave it to God; but incorrectly infers that here also we must supply עַל אֱלֹהִים, and that, Will they leave to themselves? means, Will they commit the matter to God? This mode of completing the sense, however, can by no means be justified; and Bertheau's conjecture, that the Jews now assembling in Jerusalem, before commencing the work itself, instituted a devotional solemnity which Sanballat was ridiculing, is incompatible with the correct rendering of the participle. עֲזַב construed with לְ means to leave, to commit a matter to any one, like Ps. x. 14, and the sense is: Will they leave the building of the fortified walls to themselves? i.e. Do they think they are able with their poor resources to carry out this great work? This is appropriately followed by the next question: Will they sacrifice? i.e. bring sacrifices to obtain God's miraculous assistance? The ridicule lies in the circumstance that Sanballat neither credited the Jews with ability to carry out the work, nor believed in the overruling providence of the God whom the Jews worshipped, and therefore casts scorn by הִזְבַּחְתִּי both upon the faith of the Jews in their God and upon the living God Himself. As these two questions are internally connected, so also are the two following, by which Sanballat casts a doubt upon the possibility of the work being executed. Will they finish (the work) on this day, i.e. to-day, directly? The meaning is: Is this a matter to be as quickly executed as if it were the work of a single day? The last question is: Have they even the requisite materials? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish which are burnt?



The building-stone of Jerusalem was limestone, which gets softened by fire, losing its durability, and, so to speak, its vitality. This explains the use of the verb *הִיָּה*, to revive, to give fresh vital power. To revive burnt stones means, to bestow strength and durability upon the softened crumbled stones, to fit the stones into a new building (*Ges. Lex.*). The construction *וְהָמָּה שְׂרוּפֹת* is explained by the circumstance that *אֲבָנִים* is by its form masculine, but by its meaning feminine, and that *הָמָּה* agrees with the form *אֲבָנִים*.—Ver. 35. Tobiah the Ammonite, standing near Sanballat, and joining in in his raillery, adds: “Even that which they build, if a fox go up he will break their stone wall;” *i.e.*, even if they build up walls, the light footsteps of the stealthy fox will suffice to tread them down, and to make breaches in their work.—Vers. 36 and 37. When Nehemiah heard of these contemptuous words, he committed the matter to God, entreating Him to hear how they (the Jews) were become a scorn, *i.e.* a subject of contempt, to turn the reproach of the enemies upon their own head, and to give them up to plunder in a land of captivity, *i.e.* in a land in which they would dwell as captives. He supplicates, moreover, that God would not cover, *i.e.* forgive (*Ps. lxxxv. 3*), their iniquity, and that their sin might not be blotted out from before His face, *i.e.* might not remain unpunished, “for they have provoked to wrath before the builders,” *i.e.* openly challenged the wrath of God, by despising Him before the builders, so that they heard it. *הִכָּעִים* without an object, spoken of provoking the divine wrath by grievous sins; comp. *2 Kings xxi. 6* with *2 Chron. xxxiii. 6*.—Ver. 38. The Jews continued to build without heeding the ridicule of their enemies, “and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof,” *i.e.* the wall was so far repaired throughout its whole circumference, that no breach or gap was left up to half its height; “and the people had a heart to work,” *i.e.* the restoration went on so quickly because the people had a mind to work.

Chap. iv. *The attempts of the enemies to hinder the work by force, and Nehemiah's precautions against them.*—Vers. 1-8. When the enemies learnt that the restoration of the wall

was evidently getting on, they conspired together to fight against Jerusalem (vers. 1 and 2). The Jews then prayed to God, and set a watch (ver. 3). When the courage of the people began to fail, and their enemies spread a report of sudden attack being imminent, Nehemiah furnished the people on the wall with weapons, and encouraged the nobles and rulers to fight boldly for their brethren, their children, and their possessions (vers. 4–8). The Arabians, Ammonites, and Ashdodites are here enumerated as enemies, besides Sanballat and Tobiah (vers. 2, 10, 19). The Arabians were incited to hostilities against the Jews by Geshem (11, 19), and the Ammonites by Tobiah; the Ashdodites, the inhabitants of the city and territory of Ashdod, in the coast district of Philistia, were perhaps encouraged to renew their old hatred of Judah by Sanballat the Horonite. When these enemies heard that the walls of Jerusalem were bandaged, *i.e.* that the breaches and damages in the wall were repaired, they were filled with wrath. The biblical expression, to lay on a bandage, here and 2 Chron. xxiv. 13, Jer. viii. 22, xxx. 17, xxxiii. 6, is derived from the healing of wounds by means of a bandage, and is explained by the sentence following: that the breaches began to be closed or stopped. The enemies conspired together to march against Jerusalem and injure it. לו, because the people of the town are meant. תוֹעֵה occurs but once more, viz. in Isa. xxxii. 6, in the sense of error; here it signifies *calamities*, for, as Aben Ezra well remarks, *qui in angustiis constitutus est, est velut errans, qui nescit quid agat quove se vertat*.—Ver. 3. The Jews, on the other hand, made preparation by prayer, and by setting a watch (מִשְׁמָר, comp. vii. 3, xiii. 30) day and night. We, viz. Nehemiah and the superintendents of the work, prayed and set a watch עֲלֵיהֶם, against them, to ward off a probable attack. מִפְּנֵיהֶם, for fear of them, comp. ver. 10.—Ver. 4. The placing of the watch day and night, and the continuous labour, must have pressed heavily upon the people; therefore Judah said: “The strength of the bearers of burdens fails, and there is much rubbish; we are not able to build the wall.” That is to say, the labour is beyond our



power, we cannot continue it.—Ver. 5. Their discouragement was increased by the words of their enemies, who said: They (the Jews) shall not know nor see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.—Ver. 6. When, therefore, the Jews who dwelt near them, *i.e.* in the neighbourhood of the adversaries, and heard their words, came to Jerusalem, “and said to us ten times (*i.e.* again and again), that from all places ye must return to us, then I placed,” etc. Jews came from all places to Jerusalem, and summoned those who were building there to return home, for adversaries were surrounding the community on all sides: Sanballat and the Samaritans on the north, the Ammonites on the east, the Arabians on the south, and the Philistines (Ashdodites) on the west. אֲשֶׁר before תָּשׁוּבוּ introduces their address, instead of כִּי; being thus used, *e.g.*, before longer speeches, 1 Sam. xv. 20, 2 Sam. i. 4; and for כִּי generally, throughout the later books, in conformity to Aramæan usage. “Return to us” (שׁוּבוּ עָלַי), as in 2 Chron. xxx. 9, for (שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי), said the Jews who came from all quarters to Jerusalem to their fellow-townsmen, who from Jericho, Gibeon, and Tekoa (comp. iii. 2, 3, 5, 7) were working on the wall of Jerusalem. These words express their fear lest those who were left at home, especially the defenceless women, children, and aged men, should be left without protection against the attacks of enemies, if their able-bodied men remained any longer in Jerusalem to take part in the building of the wall.—Ver. 7a is hardly intelligible. We translate it: Then I placed at the lowest places behind the wall, at the dried-up places, I (even) placed the people, after their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. מִתַּחַת לַמָּקוֹם is a stronger expression for מִתַּחַת לַמָּקוֹם when used to indicate position, and מִן points out the direction. The sense is: at the lowest places from behind the wall. בְּצִחָתִים gives the nature of the places where the people were placed with arms. צִחָתִים and צִחָתִים mean a dry or bare place exposed to the heat of the sun: bare, uncovered, or empty places, perhaps bare hills, whence approaching foes might be discerned at a distance. The second וְאֶעֱמִיד is but

a reiteration of the verb, for the sake of combining it with its object, from which the **וַאֲעָמִיר** at the beginning of the verse was too far removed by the circumstantial description of the locality.<sup>1</sup>—Ver. 8. “And I looked, and rose up, and said.” These words can only mean: When I saw the people thus placed with their weapons, I went to them, and said to the nobles, etc., “Be not afraid of them (the enemies); remember the Lord, the great and the terrible,” who will fight for you against your enemies (Deut. iii. 22, xx. 3, and xxxi. 6), “and fight ye for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses,” whom the enemies would destroy.

Vers. 9–17. Thus was the design of the enemy circumvented, and the Jews returned to their work on the wall, which they had forsaken to betake themselves to their weapons. The manner in which they resumed their building work was, that one half held weapons, and the other half laboured with weapons in hand.—Ver. 9. When our enemies heard that it (their intention) was known to us, and (that) God had brought their counsel to nought (through the measures with which we had met it), we returned all of us to the wall, every one to his work. The conclusion does not begin till **וַיָּשׁוּבוּ וַיַּכְּרוּ הָאֵל**, belonging to the premiss, in continuation of **בִּי נִדְרָע**.—Ver. 10. From that day the half of my servants wrought at the work, and the other half of them held the

<sup>1</sup> Bertheau considers the text corrupt, regarding the word **מִתְחַתִּיּוֹת** as the object of **וַאֲעָמִיר**, and alters it into **מִחֲשִׁבּוֹת** or **חֲשִׁבְנוֹת**, engines for hurling missiles (2 Chron. xxvi. 15), or into **מִטְחִיּוֹת** (a word of his own invention), instruments for hurling. But not only is this conjecture critically inadmissible, it also offers no appropriate sense. The LXX. reads the text as we do, and merely renders **בַּצְחָהִים** conjecturally by *ἐν τοῖς σασπεινοῖς*. Besides, it is not easy to see how **חֲשִׁבְנוֹת** could have arisen from a false reading of **מִתְחַתִּיּוֹת**; and it should be remembered that **מִחֲשִׁבּוֹת** does not mean a machine for hurling, while **מִטְחִיּוֹת** is a mere fabrication. To this must be added, that such machines are indeed placed *upon* the walls of a fortress to hurl down stones and projectiles upon assaulting foes, and not *behind* the walls, where they could only be used to demolish the walls, and so facilitate the taking of the town by the enemy.



spears and shields, the bows and the armour, *i.e.* carried the arms. The servants of Nehemiah are his personal retinue, ver. 17, v. 10, 16, namely, Jews placed at his disposal as Pechah for official purposes. The ו before הַרְמָחִים was probably placed before this word, instead of before the הַמְּגִנִּים following, by a clerical error; for if it stood before the latter also, it might be taken in the sense of *et—et*. מַחֲזִיקִים, instead of being construed with בָּ, is in the accusative, as also in ver. 11, and even in Jer. vi. 23 and Isa. xli. 9, 13. Unnecessary and unsuitable is the conjecture of Bertheau, that the word בְּרָמָחִים originally stood after מַחֲזִיקִים, and that a fresh sentence begins with וַהֲרָמָחִים: and the other half held the spears; and the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the armour, and the rulers, were behind the whole house of Judah,—a strange combination, which places the weapons and rulers behind the house of Judah. Besides, of the circumstance of the weapons being placed behind the builders, so that they might at any moment seize them, we not only read nothing in the text; but in vers. 11 and 12 just the contrary, *viz.* that the builders wrought with one hand, and with the other held a weapon. “The rulers were behind all the house of Judah,” *i.e.* each was behind his own people who were employed on the work, to encourage them in their labour, and, in case of attack, to lead them against the enemy.—In ver. 11 הַבּוֹנִים בַּחוּמָה is prefixed after the manner of a title. With respect to those who built the wall, both the bearers of burdens were lading with the one hand of each workman, and holding a weapon with the other, and the builders were building each with his sword girt on his side. The ו prefixed to הַנִּשְׂאִים and הַבְּנִים means both; and נִשְׂאֵי בִסָּבֶל, bearers of burdens, who cleared away the rubbish, and worked as labourers. These, at all events, could do their work with one hand, which would suffice for emptying rubbish into baskets, and for carrying material in handle baskets. בְּאַחַת יָדוֹ, literally, with the one (namely) of his hands that was doing the work. The suffix of יָדוֹ points to the genitive following. אַחַת וְאַחַת, the one and the other hand. הַשֵּׁלֶחַ, not a missile, but a weapon that was stretched out, held forth, usually a sword or some

defensive weapon: see rem. on Josh. ii. 8, 2 Chron. xxxii. 5. The builders, on the contrary, needed both hands for their work: hence they had swords girt to their sides. "And he that sounded the trumpet was beside me." Nehemiah, as superintendent of the work, stood at the head of his servants, ready to ward off any attack; hence the trumpeter was beside him, to be able to give to those employed on the wall the signal for speedy muster in case danger should threaten.—Ver. 13 sq. Hence he said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, *i.e.* all employed in building, "The work is much (great) and wide, and we are separated upon the wall one far from another; in what place ye hear the sound of the trumpet, assemble yourselves to me: our God will fight for us."—In ver. 15 the whole is summed up, and for this purpose the matter of ver. 10 is briefly repeated, to unite with it the further statement that they so laboured from early morning till late in the evening. "We (Nehemiah and his servants) laboured in the work, and half of them (of the servants) held the spears from the grey of dawn till the stars appeared."—Ver. 16. He took, moreover, a further precaution: he said to the people (*i.e.* to the labourers on the wall, and not merely to the warriors of the community, as Bertheau supposes): Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, *i.e.* to remain together during the night also, and not be scattered through the surrounding district, "that they may be guardianship for us by night and labour by day." The abstracts, guardianship and labour, stand for the concretes, guards and labourers. As לָנוּ, *to us*, refers to the whole community separated on the walls, so is אִישׁ וְנַעֲרֹ to be understood of all the workers, and not of the fighting men only. From אִישׁ וְנַעֲרֹ it only appears that the fathers of families and master builders had servants with them as labourers.—Ver. 17. Nehemiah, moreover, and his brethren (his kinsmen and the members of his house), and his servants, and the men of the guard in his retinue, were constantly in their clothes ("not putting off our clothes" to rest). The last words, אִישׁ שָׁלְחוֹ הַמַּיִם, are very obscure, and give no tolerable sense, whether we explain הַמַּיִם of water for drinking or washing. Luther trans-



lates, Every one left off washing; but the words, Every one's weapon was water, can never bear this sense. Roediger, in *Gesen. Thes. s.v. שָׁלַח*, seeks to alter המים into בִּירוֹ, to which Böttcher (*N. krit. Aehrenl.* iii. p. 219) rightly objects: "how could בִּירוֹ have been altered into הַמִּים, or הַמִּים have got into the text at all, if some portion of it had not been originally there? What this בִּירוֹ expresses, would be far more definitely given with the very slight correction of changing the closing ם of הַמִּים, and reading הַמִּינוּ = הַמִּינוּ (comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 19); thus each had taken his missile on the right (in his right hand), naturally that he might be ready to discharge it in case of a hostile attack." This conjecture seems to us a happy emendation of the unmeaning text, since נו might easily have been changed into ם; and we only differ in this matter from Böttcher, by taking שָׁלַח in its only legitimate meaning of weapon, and translating the words: And each laid his weapon on the right, viz. when he laid himself down at night to rest in his clothes, to be ready for fighting at the first signal from the watch.

CHAP. V.—ABOLITION OF USURY—NEHEMIAH'S  
UNSELFISHNESS.

The events related in this and the following chapter also occurred during the building of the wall. Zealously as the rulers and richer members of the community, following the example of Nehemiah, were carrying on this great undertaking by all the means in their power, the work could not fail to be a heavy burden to the poorer classes, who found it very difficult to maintain their families in these expensive times, especially since they were still oppressed by wealthy usurers. Hence great discontent arose, which soon vented itself in loud complaints. Those who had no property demanded corn for the support of their numerous families (ver. 2); others had been obliged to pledge their fields and vineyards, some to procure corn for their hunger, some to be able to pay the king's tribute; and these complained that they must now give their sons and daughters to bondage (vers.

3-5). When these complaints came to the ears of Nehemiah, he was angry with the rulers; and calling an assembly, he set before them the great injustice of usury, and called upon them to renounce it, to restore to their brethren their mortgaged lands, and to give them what they had borrowed (vers. 6-11). His address made the impression desired. The noble and wealthy resolved to perform what was required; whereupon Nehemiah caused them to take a solemn oath to this effect, indicating by a symbolical act that the heavy wrath of God would fall upon all who should fail to act according to their promise. To this the assembly expressed their Amen, and the people carried out the resolution (vers. 12, 13). Nehemiah then declared with what unselfishness he had exercised his office of governor, for the sake of lightening the heavy burden laid upon the people (vers. 14-19).

Vers. 1-5. *The people complain of oppression.*—Ver. 1. There arose a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews, *i.e.*, as appears from what follows (ver. 7), against the nobles and rulers, therefore against the richer members of the community. This cry is more particularly stated in vers. 2-5, where the malcontents are divided into three classes by וַיִּשְׁׁ, vers. 2, 3, 4.—Ver. 2. There were some who said: Our sons and our daughters are many, and we desire to receive corn, that we may eat and live. These were the words of those workers who had no property. נִקְחָה (from לָקַח), not to take by force, but only to desire that corn may be provided.—Ver. 3. Others, who were indeed possessed of fields, vineyards, and houses, had been obliged to mortgage them, and could now reap nothing from them. עָרַב, to give as a pledge, to mortgage. The use of the participle denotes the continuance of the transaction, and is not to be rendered, We must mortgage our fields to procure corn; but, We have been obliged to mortgage them, and we desire to receive corn for our hunger, because of the dearth. For (1) the context shows that the act of mortgaging had already taken place, and was still continuing in force (we have been obliged to pledge them, and



they are still pledged); and (2) **יִקְחֶהָ** must not be taken here in a different sense from ver. 2, but means, We desire that corn may be furnished us, because of the dearth; not, that we may not be obliged to mortgage our lands, but because they are already mortgaged. **בִּרְעָב**, too, does not necessarily presuppose a scarcity in consequence of a failure of crops or other circumstances, but only declares that they who had been obliged to pledge their fields were suffering from hunger.—Ver. 4. Others, again, complained: We have borrowed money for the king's tribute upon our fields and vineyards. **לָנוּ** means to be dependent, *nexum esse*, and transitively to make dependent, like **מָלֵא**, to be full, and to make full: We have made our fields and our vineyards answerable for money for the king's tribute (Bertheau), *i.e.* we have borrowed money upon our fields for . . . This they could only do by pledging the crops of these lands, or at least such a portion of their crops as might equal the sum borrowed; comp. the law, Lev. xxv. 14-17.—Ver. 5. "And now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, and our sons as their sons; and lo, we are obliged to bring our sons and our daughters into bondage, and some of our daughters are already brought into bondage; and we have no power to alter this, and our fields and vineyards belong to others." "Our brethren" are the richer Jews who had lent money upon pledges, and **בְּנֵיהֶם** are their sons. The sense of the first half of the verse is: We are of one flesh and blood with these rich men, *i.e.*, as Ramb. already correctly explains it: *non sumus deterioris conditionis quam tribules nostri divites, nec tamen nostræ inopiæ ex lege divina Deut. xv. 7, 8, subvenitur, nisi maximo cum fœnore.* The law not only allowed to lend to the poor on a pledge (Deut. xv. 8), but also permitted Israelites, if they were poor, to sell themselves (Lev. xxv. 39), and also their sons and daughters, to procure money. It required, however, that they who were thus sold should not be retained as slaves, but set at liberty without ransom, either after seven years or at the year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 39-41; Ex. xxii. 2 sq.). It is set forth as a special hardship in this verse that some of their daughters were brought into bondage for maid-servants.

אֵין לָאֵל יָדְנִי, literally, our hand is not to God, *i.e.* the power to alter it is not in our hand; on this figure of speech, comp. Gen. xxxi. 29. The last clause gives the reason: Our fields and our vineyards belonging to others, what they yield does not come to us, and we are not in a position to be able to put an end to the sad necessity of selling our daughters for servants.

Vers. 6–13. *The abolition of usury.*—Ver. 6. Nehemiah was very angry at this complaint and these things, *i.e.* the injustice which had been brought to his knowledge.—Ver. 7. “And my heart took counsel upon it (מִלֵּךְ) according to the Chaldee use of מִלֵּךְ, Dan. iv. 24), and I contended with the nobles and rulers, and said to them, Ye exact usury every one of his brother.” לִנְשֹׂא means to lend to any one, and מִשְׁעָה, also מִשְׁעָה, Deut. xxiv. 10, Prov. xxii. 26, and מִשְׁעָה, is the thing lent, the loan, what one borrows from or lends to another. Consequently מִשְׁעָה לִנְשֹׂא is to lend some one a loan; comp. Deut. xxiv. 10. This does not seem to suit this verse. For Nehemiah cannot reproach the nobles for lending loans, when he and his servants had, according to ver. 10, done so likewise. Hence the injustice of the transaction which he rebukes must be expressed in the emphatic precedence given to מִשְׁעָה. Bertheau accordingly regards מִשְׁעָה not as the accusative of the object, but as an independent secondary accusative in the sense of: for the sake of demanding a pledge, ye lend. But this rendering can be neither grammatically nor lexically justified. In the first respect it is opposed by מִשְׁעָה לִנְשֹׂא, Deut. xxiv. 10, which shows that מִשְׁעָה in conjunction with לִנְשֹׂא is the accusative of the object; in the other, by the constant use of מִשְׁעָה in all passages in which it occurs to express a loan, not a demand for a pledge. From Ex. xxii. 24, where it is said, “If thou lend money (תִּלְוֶה) to the poor, thou shalt not be to him בְּנִשְׂכָּה, shalt not lay upon him usury,” it is evident that נִשְׂכָּה is one who lends money on usury, or carries on the business of a money-lender. This evil secondary meaning of the word is here strongly marked by the emphatic præposition of מִשְׁעָה; hence Nehemiah is speaking of those who practise usury. “And I ap-



pointed a great assembly on their account," to put a stop to the usury and injustice by a public discussion of the matter. **עֲלֵיהֶם**, not against them (the usurers), but on their account.—Ver. 8. In this assembly he reproached them with the injustice of their behaviour. "We" (said he) "have, after our ability, redeemed our brethren the Jews which were sold unto the heathen; yet ye would sell your brethren, and they are to be sold to us." *We* (*i.e.* Nehemiah and the Jews living in exile, who were like-minded with him) have bought, in contrast to *ye* sell. They had redeemed their Jewish brethren who were sold to the heathen. **כָּרִי אֲשֶׁר בָּנוּ** for **כָּרִי בָנוּ**, *i.e.*, not according to the full number of those who were among us, meaning as often as a sale of this kind occurred (Bertheau); for **כָּרִי** does not mean completeness, multitude, but only sufficiency, supply, adequacy of means (Lev. xxv. 26); hence **כָּרִי בָנוּ** is: according to the means that we had: *secundum sufficientiam vel facultatem, quæ in nobis est* (Ramb.), or *secundum possibilitatem nostram* (Vulg.). The contrast is still more strongly expressed by the placing of **נִם** before **אֲחֵיהֶם**, so that **נִם** acquires the meaning of nevertheless (Ewald, § 354, a). The sale of their brethren for bond-servants was forbidden by the law, Lev. xxv. 42. The usurers had nothing to answer to this reproach. "They held their peace, and found no word," *sc.* in justification of their proceedings.—Ver. 9. Nehemiah, moreover, continued (**וַיֹּאמֶר**, the Chethiv, is evidently a clerical error for **וַיֹּאמֶר**, for the Niphal **וַיֹּאמֶר** does not suit): "The thing ye do is not good: ought ye not (= ye surely ought) to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?" *i.e.*, we ought not, by harsh and unloving conduct towards our brethren, to give our enemies occasion to calumniate us.—Ver. 10. "I, likewise my brethren and my servants (comp. iv. 17), have lent them money and corn; let us, I pray, remit (not ask back) this loan!" The participle **נֹשְׂמִים** says: we are those who have lent. Herewith he connects the invitation, ver. 11: "Restore unto them, I pray you, even this day (**כְּהַיּוֹם**, about this day, *i.e.* even to-day, 1 Sam. ix. 13), their fields, their vineyards, their olive gardens, and their houses,

and the hundredth of the money, and of the corn, wine, and oil which you have lent them." Nehemiah requires, 1st, that those who held the lands of their poorer brethren in pledge should restore them their property without delay: 2d, that they should remit to their debtors all interest owing on money, corn, etc. that had been lent; not, as the words have been frequently understood, that they should give back to their debtors such interest as they had already received. That the words in ver. 11a bear the former, and not the latter signification, is obvious from the reply, ver. 12, of those addressed: "We will restore, *sc.* their lands, etc., and will not require of them, *sc.* the hundredth; so will we do as thou sayest." Hence we must not translate אֲשֶׁר אָתָם נָשִׂים בָּהֶם, "which you had taken from them as interest" (de Wette), —a translation which, moreover, cannot be justified by the usage of the language, for נָשָׂה בֶּן does not mean to take interest from another, to lend to another on interest. The אֲשֶׁר relates not to וּמִצָּחָה, but to וְהִצֵּחָה . . . הֲרִיגָן; and הֲשִׁיב, to restore, to make good, is used of both the transactions in question, meaning in the first clause the restoration of the lands retained as pledges, and in the second, the remission (the non-requirement) of the hundredth. The hundredth taken as interest is probably, like the *centesima* of the Romans, to be understood of a monthly payment. One per cent. per month was a very heavy interest, and one which, in the case of the poor, might be exorbitant. The law, moreover, forbade the taking of any usury from their brethren, their poor fellow-countrymen, Ex. xxii. 25 and Lev. xxv. 36 sq. When the creditors had given the consent required, Nehemiah called the priests, and made them (the creditors) swear to do according to this promise, *i.e.* conscientiously to adhere to their agreement. Nehemiah obtained the attendance of the priests, partly for the purpose of giving solemnity to the oath now taken, and partly to give to the declaration made in the presence of the priests legal validity for judicial decisions.—Ver. 13. To make the agreement thus sworn to still more binding, Nehemiah confirmed the proceeding by a symbolical action: Also I shook



my lap, and said, So may God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth (fulfilleth) not this promise, and thus may he be shaken out and emptied. לִפְנֵי means the lap of the garment, in which things are carried (Isa. xlix. 22), where alone the word is again found. The symbolical action consisted in Nehemiah's gathering up his garment as if for the purpose of carrying something, and then shaking it out with the words above stated, which declared the meaning of the act. The whole congregation said Amen, and praised the Lord, *sc.* for the success with which God had blessed his efforts to help the poor. And the people did according to this promise, *i.e.* the community acted in accordance with the agreement entered into.

Vers. 14-19. *Nehemiah's unselfish conduct.*—The transaction above related gave Nehemiah occasion to speak in his narrative of the unselfishness with which he had filled the office of governor, and of the personal sacrifices he had made for the good of his fellow-countrymen.—Ver. 14. The statement following is compared with the special occurrence preceding it by וְכֵן. As in this occurrence he had used his credit to do away with the oppression of the people by wealthy usurers, so also had he shown himself unselfish during his whole official career, and shunned no sacrifice by which he might lighten the burdens that lay upon his fellow-countrymen. “From the time that he appointed me to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two-and-thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, I and my servants have not eaten the bread of the governor.” The subject of אֲנִי is left undefined, but is obviously King Artaxerxes. פֶּחָה, their (the Jews') governor. This he was from the twentieth (comp. ii. 1) to the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, in which, according to xiii. 6, he again visited the court of this monarch, returning after a short interval to Jerusalem, to carry out still further the work he had there undertaken. “The bread of the Pechah” is, according to ver. 15, the food and wine with which the community had to furnish him. The meaning is: During this whole period I drew no allow-

ances from the people.—Ver. 15. The former governors who had been before me in Jerusalem—Zerubbabel and his successors—had received allowances, הַכְּבִירוֹ עַל הָעָם, had burdened the people, and had taken of them (their fellow-countrymen) for bread and wine (*i.e.* for the requirements of their table), “afterwards in money forty shekels.” Some difficulty is presented by the word אַחֲרֵי, which the LXX. render by ἔσχατον, the Vulgate *quotidie*. The meaning *ultra, præter*, besides (Ew. § 217, 1), can no more be shown to be that of אַחֲרֵי, than *over* can, which Berthéau attempts to justify by saying that after forty shekels follow forty-one, forty-two, etc. The interpretation, too: reckoned after money (Böttcher, *de Inferis*, § 409, *b*, and *N. krit. Aehrenl.* iii. p. 219), cannot be supported by the passages quoted in its behalf, since in none of them is אַחֲרֵי used *de illo quod normæ est*, but has everywhere fundamentally the local signification *after*. Why, then, should not אַחֲרֵי be here used adverbially, *afterwards*, and express the thought that this money was afterwards demanded from the community for the expenses of the governor’s table? “Even their servants bare rule over the people.” נְשִׁלֹט denotes arbitrary, oppressive rule, abuse of power for extortions, etc. Nehemiah, on the contrary, had not thus acted because of the fear of God.—Ver. 16. “And also I took part in the work of this wall; neither bought we any land, and all my servants were gathered thither unto the work.” הָחִיזְק יָד בְּ = הָחִיזְק בְּ, to set the hand to something; here, to set about the work. The manner in which Nehemiah, together with his servants, set themselves to the work of wall-building is seen from iv. 10, 12, 15, and 17. Neither have we (I and my servants) bought any land, *i.e.* have not by the loan of money and corn acquired mortgages of land; comp. ver. 10.—Ver. 17. But this was not all; for Nehemiah had also fed a considerable number of persons at his table, at his own expense. “And the Jews, both one hundred and fifty rulers, and the men who came to us from the nations round about us, were at my table,” *i.e.* were my guests. The hundred and fifty rulers, comp. ii. 16, were the heads of the different houses of Judah collectively. These were al-



ways guests at Nehemiah's table, as were also such Jews as dwelt among the surrounding nations, when they came to Jerusalem.—Ver. 18. “And that which was prepared for one (*i.e.* a single) day was one ox, six choice (therefore fat) sheep, and fowls; they were prepared for me, *i.e.* at my expense, and once in ten days a quantity of wine of all kinds.” The meaning of the last clause seems to be, that the wine was furnished every ten days: no certain quantity, however, is mentioned, but it is only designated in general terms as very great, לְהַרְבֵּה. וְעַם זֶה, and with this, *i.e.* notwithstanding this, great expenditure, I did not require the bread of the Pechah (the allowance for the governor, comp. ver. 14), for the service was heavy upon the people. הָעֵבֶרָה is the service of building the walls of Jerusalem. Thus Nehemiah, from compassion for his heavily burdened countrymen, resigned the allowance to which as governor he was entitled.—Ver. 19. “Think upon me, my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.” Compare the repetition of this desire, xiii. 14 and 31. עֲשֵׂה עָלַי in the sense of עֲשֵׂה לִי, properly for the sake of this people, *i.e.* for them.

#### CHAP. VI.—SNARES LAID FOR NEHEMIAH—COMPLETION OF THE WALL.

When Sanballat and the enemies associated with him were unable to obstruct the building of the wall of Jerusalem by open violence (chap. iv.), they endeavoured to ruin Nehemiah by secret snares. They invited him to meet them in the plain of Ono (vers. 1, 2); but Nehemiah, perceiving that they intended mischief, replied to them by messengers, that he could not come to them on account of the building. After receiving for the fourth time this refusal, Sanballat sent his servant to Nehemiah with an open letter, in which he accused him of rebellion against the king of Persia. Nehemiah, however, repelled this accusation as the invention of Sanballat (vers. 3–9). Tobiah and Sanballat, moreover, hired a false prophet to make Nehemiah flee into the temple from fear of the snares prepared for him, that they might

then be able to calumniate him (10-14). The building of the wall was completed in fifty-two days, and the enemies were disheartened (15-17), although at that time many nobles of Judah had entered into epistolary correspondence with Tobiah, to obstruct the proceedings of Nehemiah (18, 19).

Vers. 1-9. *The attempts of Sanballat and his associates to ruin Nehemiah.*—Vers. 1, 2. When Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of the enemies, heard that the wall was built, and that no breaches were left therein, though the doors were then not yet set up in the gates, he sent, etc. וַיִּשְׁמַע לוֹ, it was heard by him, in the indefinite sense of: it came to his ears. The use of the passive is more frequent in later Hebrew; comp. vers. 6, 7, xiii. 27, Esth. i. 20, and elsewhere. On Sanballat and his allies, see remarks on ii. 19. The “rest of our enemies” were, according to iv. 1 (iv. 7, A. V.), Ashdodites, and also other hostile individuals. וְגַם עַרְהֶימָּנוּ introduces a parenthetical sentence limiting the statement already made: Nevertheless, down to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates. The wall-building was quite finished, but doors to the gates were as yet wanting to the complete fortification of the city. The enemies sent to him, saying, Come, let us meet together (for a discussion) in the villages in the valley of Ono.—In ver. 7, וַיַּעֲצֶה, let us take counsel together, is synonymous with וַיַּעֲזֶר of the present verse. The form כְּפָרִים, elsewhere only כְּפָר, 1 Chron. xxvii. 25, or כְּפָר, village, 1 Sam. vi. 18, occurs only here. כְּפָרִה, however, being found Ezra ii. 25 and elsewhere as a proper name, the form כְּפָרִי seems to have been in use as well as כְּפָר. There is no valid ground for regarding כְּפָרִים as the proper name of a special locality. To make their proposal appear impartial, they leave the appointment of the place in the valley of Ono to Nehemiah. Ono seems, according to 1 Chron. viii. 12, to have been situate in the neighbourhood of Lod (Lydda), and is therefore identified by Van de Velde (*Mem.* p. 337) and Bertheau with Kefr Ana (کفر عانا) or Kefr Anna, one and three-quarter leagues north of Ludd. But no certain information



concerning the position of the place can be obtained from 1 Chron. viii. 12; and Roediger (in the *Hallische Lit. Zeitung*, 1842, No. 71, p. 665) is more correct, in accordance both with the orthography and the sense, in comparing it with Beit Unia (בֵּית אוּנְיָא), north-west of Jerusalem, not

far from Beitin (Bethel); comp. Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 351. The circumstance that the plain of Ono was, according to the present verse, somewhere between Jerusalem and Samaria, which suits Beit Unia, but not Kefr Ana (comp. Arnold in Herzog's *Realenc.* xii. p. 759), is also in favour of the latter view. "But they thought to do me harm." Probably they wanted to make him a prisoner, perhaps even to assassinate him.—Ver. 3. Nehemiah sent messengers to them, saying: "I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down thither. Why should the work cease whilst I leave it and come down to you?" That is, he let them know that he could not undertake the journey, because his presence in Jerusalem was necessary for the uninterrupted prosecution of the work of building.—Ver. 4. They sent to him four times in the same manner (בְּדִבְרֵי הָיָה, comp. 2 Sam. xv. 6), and Nehemiah gave them the same answer.—Ver. 5. Then Sanballat sent his servant in this manner, the fifth time, with an open letter, in which was written: "It is reported (נִשְׁמָע, it is heard) among the nations, and Gashmu saith, (that) thou and the Jews intend to rebel; for which cause thou buildest the wall, and thou wilt be their king, according to these words." "The nations" are naturally the nations dwelling in the land, in the neighbourhood of the Jewish community. On the form Gashmu, comp. rem. on ii. 19. הָיָה, the particip., is used of that which any one intends or prepares to do: thou art intending to become their king. עַל־כֵּן, therefore, for no other reason than to rebel, dost thou build the wall.—Ver. 7. It was further said in the letter: "Thou hast also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning thee in Jerusalem, saying, King of Judah; and now it will be reported to the king according to these words (or things). Come, therefore, and let us take counsel together," sc. to refute these things as

groundless rumours. By such accusations in an open letter, which might be read by any one, Sanballat thought to oblige Nehemiah to come and clear himself from suspicion by an interview.—Ver. 9. Nehemiah, however, saw through his stratagem, and sent word to him by a messenger: “There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.” בִּדְרָסָם, a contraction of בִּדְרָסָם, from דָּרַס, which occurs again only in 1 Kings xii. 33, to invent, to feign, especially evil things.—Ver. 9. “For,” adds Nehemiah when writing of these things, “they all desired to make us afraid, thinking (לְאִמָּר) their hands will cease from the work, that it be not done.” The last words, “And now strengthen my hands,” are to be explained by the fact that Nehemiah hastily transports himself into the situation and feelings of those days when he prayed to God for strength. To make this request fit into the train of thought, we must supply: I however thought, or said, Strengthen, O God, my hands. צַו is imperative. The translation, in the first pers. sing. of the imperfect, “I strengthened” (LXX., Vulg., Syr.), is only an attempt to fit into their context words not understood by the translators.

Vers. 10–14. A false prophet, hired by Tobiah and Sanballat, also sought, by prophesying that the enemies of Nehemiah would kill him in the night, to cause him to flee with him into the holy place of the temple, and to protect his life from the machinations of his enemies by closing the temple doors. His purpose was, as Nehemiah subsequently learned, to seduce him into taking an illegal step, and so give occasion for speaking evil of him.—Ver. 10. “And I came into the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up.” Nothing further is known of this prophet Shemaiah. From what is here related we learn, that he was one of the lying prophets employed by Sanballat and Tobiah to ruin Nehemiah. We are not told what induced or caused Nehemiah to go into the house of Shemaiah; he merely recounts what the latter was hired by his enemies to effect. From the accessory clause, “and he was shut up,” we may perhaps infer that Shemaiah in some



way or other, perhaps by announcing that he had something of importance to communicate, persuaded Nehemiah to visit him at his house. **וְהָיָה עֲצוּר** does not, however, involve the meaning which Bertheau gives it, viz. that Nehemiah went to Shemaiah's house, because the latter as **עֲצוּר** could not come to him. The phrase says only, that when Nehemiah entered Shemaiah's house, he found him **עֲצוּר**, which simply means shut up, shut in his house, not imprisoned, and still less in a state of ceremonial uncleanness (Ewald), or overpowered by the hand of Jahve—laid hold on by a higher power (Bertheau). It is evident from his proposal to Nehemiah, "Let us go together to the house of God," etc., that he was neither imprisoned in his house, nor prevented by any physical cause from leaving home. Hence it follows that he had shut himself in his house, to intimate to Nehemiah that also he felt his life in danger through the machinations of his enemies, and that he was thus dissimulating in order the more easily to induce him to agree to his proposal, that they should together escape the snares laid for them by fleeing to the temple. In this case, it may be uncertain whether Shemaiah had shut himself up, feigning that the enemies of Judah were seeking his life also, as the prophet of Jahve; or whether by this action he was symbolically announcing what God charged him to make known to Nehemiah. Either view is possible; while the circumstance that Nehemiah in ver. 12 calls his advice to flee into the temple a **נְבוּאָה** against him, and that it was quite in character with the proceedings of such false prophets to enforce their words by symbolical signs (comp. 1 Kings xxii. 11), favours the former. The going into the house of God is more closely defined by **אֶל-תֹּוךְ הַהֵיכָל**, within the holy place, where, as is well known, no layman was allowed to enter. "And let us shut the doors of the holy place; for they (the enemies) will come to slay thee, and indeed this night will they come to slay thee." He seeks to corroborate his warning as a special revelation from God, by making it appear that God had not only made known to him the design of the enemies, but also the precise time at which they intended to carry it into execution.—

Ver. 11. Nehemiah, however, was not to be alarmed thereby, but exclaimed: Should such a man as I flee? and what man like me could go into the holy place and live? I will not go in. <sup>וַיִּחְיֶה</sup> is the perf. with *Vav* consecutive: that he may live. This word is ambiguous; it may mean: to save his life, or: and save his life, not, expiate such a transgression of the law with his life. Probably Nehemiah used it in the latter sense, having in mind the command, Num. xviii. 7, that the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.—Ver. 12. And I perceived,—viz. from the conduct of Shemaiah on my refusal to follow his advice,—and, lo, not God had sent him (*i.e.* had not commissioned or inspired him to speak these words; <sup>לֹא</sup> emphatically precedes <sup>אֱלֹהִים</sup>: not God, but himself), but that he pronounced this prophecy against me, because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. The verb <sup>שִׁכְרוּ</sup> (sing.) agrees only with the latter word, although in fact it refers to both these individuals.—Ver. 13. “On this account was he hired that I might be afraid, and do so; and if I had sinned (by entering the holy place), it (my sin) would have been to them for an evil report, that they might defame me.” The use of <sup>לְמַעַן</sup> before two sentences, the second of which expresses the purpose of the first, is peculiar: for this purpose, that I might fear, etc., was he hired. To enter and to shut himself within the holy place would have been a grave desecration of the house of God, which would have given occasion to his enemies to cast suspicion upon Nehemiah as a despiser of God’s commands, and so to undermine his authority with the people.—In ver. 14 Nehemiah concludes his account of the stratagems of his enemies, with the wish that God would think upon them according to their works. In expressing it, he names, besides Tobiah and Sanballat, the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who, like Shemaiah, would have put him in fear: whence we perceive, 1st, that the case related (vers. 10–13) is given as only one of the chief events of the kind (<sup>מִיִּרְאָה</sup>, like vers. 9, 19); and 2d, that false prophets were again busy in the congregation, as in the period preceding the captivity, and seeking to seduce the people from



hearkening to the voice of the true prophets of God, who preached repentance and conversion as the conditions of prosperity.

Vers. 15 and 16. *The wall completed, and the impression made by this work upon the enemies of the Jews.*—Ver. 15. The wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, *i.e.* of the sixth month, in fifty-two days. According to this statement, it must have been begun on the third day of the fifth month (Ab). The year is not mentioned, the before-named (ii. 1) twentieth year of Artaxerxes being intended. This agrees with the other chronological statements of this book. For, according to ii. 1, it was in Nisan (the first month) of this year that Nehemiah entreated permission of the king to go to Jerusalem; and we learn from v. 14 and xiii. 6 that he was governor in Jerusalem from the twentieth year onwards, and must therefore have set out for that place immediately after receiving the royal permission. In this case, he might well arrive in Jerusalem before the expiration of the fourth month. He then surveyed the wall, and called a public assembly for the purpose of urging the whole community to enter heartily upon the work of restoration (ii. 11–17). All this might take place in the course of the fourth month, so that the work could be actually taken in hand in the fifth. Nor is there any reasonable ground, as Bertheau has already shown, for doubting the correctness of the statement, that the building was completed in fifty-two days, and (with Ewald) altering the fifty-two days into two years and four months.<sup>1</sup> For we must

<sup>1</sup> Ewald, *Gesch.* iv. p. 178, thinks that traces of the correct reading of this verse are found in the statement of Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 5. 7 sq., that the wall of Jerusalem was finished in two years and four months, and that the word וַיִּשְׁנֶתִים may have been omitted from Neh. vi. 15 by an ancient clerical error, though he is obliged to admit that Josephus in other instances gives no trustworthy dates concerning Nehemiah, whom he makes arrive at Jerusalem in the twenty-fifth, and complete the wall in the twenty-eighth year of Xerxes. On the other hand, Bertheau has already remarked, that even if וַיִּשְׁנֶתִים is supplied, no agreement with the statement of Josephus is obtained, since the question still remains how four months can be made out of fifty-two days, or

in this case consider, 1st, the necessity for hastening the work repeatedly pointed out by Nehemiah; 2d, the zeal and relatively very large number of builders—the whole community, both the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the men of Jericho, Tekoa, Gibeon, Mizpah, etc. having combined their efforts; 3d, that the kind of exertion demanded by such laborious work and unintermitted watchfulness as are described chap. iv., though it might be continued for fifty-two days, could scarcely endure during a longer period; and lastly, the amount of the work itself, which must not be regarded as the rebuilding of the whole wall, but only as the restoration of those portions that had been destroyed, the repair of the breaches (i. 3, ii. 13, vi. 1), and of the ruined gates,—a large portion of wall and at least one gate having remained uninjured (see p. 180). To this must be added that the material, so far as stone was concerned, was close at hand, stone needing for the most part to be merely brought out of the ruins; besides which, materials of all kind might have been collected and prepared beforehand. It is, moreover, incorrect to compute the extent of this fortified wall by the extent of the wall of modern Jerusalem.—Ver. 16. The news that the wall was finished spread fear among the enemies, viz. among the nations in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem (comp. iv. 1, v. 9); they were much cast down, and perceived “that this work was effected with the help of our God.” The expression יָפִלוּ בְּעֵינֵיהֶם occurs only here, and must be explained according to יָפִלוּ פָנָיו, his countenance fell (Gen. iv. 5), and יָפִל לֵב, the heart fails (*i.e.* the courage) (1 Sam. xvii. 32): they sank in their own eyes, *i.e.* they felt themselves cast down, discouraged.

Vers. 17–19. To this Nehemiah adds the supplementary remark, that in those days even nobles of Judah were in alliance and active correspondence with Tobiah, because he

*vice versa*, fifty-two days of four months. In fact, it is vain to seek for any common ground on which these two different statements can be harmonized; and hence the two years and four months of Josephus can scarcely be regarded as furnishing traces of another reading of the text.



had married into a respectable Jewish family.—Ver. 17. “Also in those days the nobles of Judah wrote many letters (מְרַבִּים אִמְרֵיהֶם, they made many, multiplied, their letters) passing to Tobiah, and those of Tobiah came to them.”—Ver. 18. For many in Judah were sworn unto him, for he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken (to wife) the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah. In this case Tobiah was connected with two Jewish families,—a statement which is made to confirm the fact that many in Judah were בְּעָלֵי שְׁבוּעָה, associates of an oath, joined to him by an oath, not allies in consequence of a treaty sworn to (Bertheau). From this reason being given, we may conclude his affinity by marriage was confirmed by an oath. Shecaniah ben Arah was certainly a respectable Jew of the race of Arah, Ezra ii. 5. Meshullam ben Berechiah appears among those who shared in the work of building, iii. 4 and 30. According to xiii. 4, the high priest Eliashib was also related to Tobiah. From the fact that both Tobiah and his son Jehohanan have genuine Jewish names, Bertheau rightly infers that they were probably descended from Israelites of the northern kingdom of the ten tribes. With this the designation of Tobiah as “the Ammonite” may be harmonized by the supposition that his more recent or remote ancestors were naturalized Ammonites.—Ver. 19. “Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words to him.” טוֹבוֹתָיו, the good things in him, or “his good qualities and intentions” (Bertheau). The subject of the sentence is the nobles of Judah. כִּוְנֵיָאִים לוֹ, they were bringing forth to him. On this matter Bertheau remarks, that there is no reason for assuming that the nobles of Judah endeavoured, by misrepresenting and distorting the words of Nehemiah, to widen the breach between him and Tobiah. This is certainly true; but, at the same time, we cannot further infer from these words that they were trying to effect an understanding between the two, and representing to Nehemiah how dangerous and objectionable his undertaking was; but were by this very course playing into the hands of Tobiah. For an understanding between two in-

dividuals, hostile the one to the other, is not to be brought about by reporting to the one what is the other's opinion of him. Finally, Nehemiah mentions also that Tobiah also sent letters to put him in fear (יִרְאֵי, infin. Piel, like 2 Chron. xxxii. 18; comp. the participle above, vers. 9 and 14). The letters were probably of similar contents with the letter of Sanballat given in ver. 6.

## II.—NEHEMIAH'S FURTHER EXERTIONS IN BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY.—CHAP. VII.—XII. 43.

The building of the wall being now concluded, Nehemiah first made arrangements for securing the city against hostile attacks (vii. 1–3); then took measures to increase the inhabitants of Jerusalem (vii. 4–73 and xi. 1 and 2); and finally endeavoured to fashion domestic and civil life according to the precepts of the law (chap. viii.–x.), and, on the occasion of the solemn dedication of the wall, to set in order the services of the Levites (chap. xii.).

### CHAP. VII.—THE WATCHING OF THE CITY. MEASURES TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ITS INHABITANTS. LIST OF THE HOUSES THAT RETURNED FROM BABYLON WITH ZERUBBABEL.

Vers. 1–3. *The watching of the city provided for.*—Ver. 1. When the wall was built, Nehemiah set up the doors in the gates, to complete the fortification of Jerusalem (comp. vi. 1). Then were the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites entrusted with the care (הַפִּקְרִי, *præfici*; comp. xii. 14). The care of watching the walls and gates is meant in this connection. According to ancient appointment, it was the duty of the doorkeepers to keep watch over the house of God, and to open and close the gates of the temple courts; comp. 1 Chron. ix. 17–19, xxvi. 12–19. The singers and the Levites appointed to assist the priests, on the contrary,



had, in ordinary times, nothing to do with the service of watching. Under the present extraordinary circumstances, however, Nehemiah committed also to these two organized corporations the task of keeping watch over the walls and gates of the city, and placed them under the command of his brother Hanani, and of Hananiah the ruler of the citadel. This is expressed by the words, ver. 2: I gave Hanani . . . and Hananiah . . . charge over Jerusalem. הַבִּירָה is the fortress or citadel of the city lying to the north of the temple (see rem. on ii. 8), in which was probably located the royal garrison, the commander of which was in the service of the Persian king. The choice of this man for so important a charge is explained by the additional clause: "for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many." The כִּי before אִישׁ is the so-called Caph *veritatis*, which expresses a comparison with the idea of the matter: like a man whom one may truly call faithful. מִרְבִּים is comparative: more God-fearing than many.—Ver. 3. The Chethiv וַיֹּאמֶר is both here and v. 9 certainly a clerical error for the Keri וַיֹּאמְרוּ, though in this place, at all events, we might read וַיֹּאמְרוּ, it was said to them. "The gates of Jerusalem are not to be opened till the sun be hot; and while they (the watch) are yet at their posts, they are to shut the doors and lock them; and ye shall appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, some to be at their watch-posts, others before their house." וַיִּפְּאוּ in Hebrew is used only here, though more frequently in the Talmud, of closing the doors. וַיִּפְּאוּ, to make fast, *i.e.* to lock, as more frequently in Syriac. The *infin. absol.* וַיִּפְּאוּ instead of the *temp. fin.* is emphatic: and you are to appoint. The sense is: the gates are to be occupied before daybreak by the Levites (singers and other Levites) appointed to guard them, and not opened till the sun is hot and the watch already at their posts, and to be closed in the evening before the departure of the watch. After the closing of the gates, *i.e.* during the night, the inhabitants of Jerusalem are to keep watch for the purpose of defending the city from any kind of attack, a part occupying the posts, and the other part watching before their (each

before his own) house, so as to be at hand to defend the city.

Vers. 4-73a. *The measures taken by Nehemiah for increasing the number of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*—Ver. 4. The city was spacious and great, and the people few therein, and houses were not built. רַחֲבַת יָדַיִם, broad on both sides, that is, regarded from the centre towards either the right or left hand. The last clause does not say that there were no houses at all, for the city had been re-inhabited for ninety years; but only that houses had not been built in proportion to the size of the city, that there was still much unoccupied space on which houses might be built.—Ver. 5. And God put into my heart, *i.e.* God inspired me with the resolution; comp. ii. 12. What resolution, is declared by the sentences following, which detail its execution. The resolution to gather together the nobles and rulers of the people for the purpose of making a list of their kinsmen, and thus to obtain a basis for the operations contemplated for increasing the inhabitants of Jerusalem. הַחֲרִים וְהַפְּגָנִים are combined, as in ii. 16. On הַתִּיחֵשׁ, comp. 1 Chron. v. 17.

While this resolve was under consideration, Nehemiah found the register, *i.e.* the genealogical registry, of those who came up at first (from Babylon). בְּרִאשֹׁנָה, at the beginning, *i.e.* with Zerubbabel and Joshua under Cyrus (Ezra ii.), and not subsequently with Ezra (Ezra vii.). “And I found written therein.” These words introduce the list now given. This list, vers. 6-73a, is identical with that in Ezra ii., and has been already discussed in our remarks on that chapter.

CHAP. VIII.—X.—PUBLIC READING OF THE LAW. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. A PUBLIC FAST HELD, AND A COVENANT MADE TO KEEP THE LAW.

These three chapters form a connected whole, and describe acts of worship and solemnities conducted by Ezra and other priests and Levites, Nehemiah as the secular governor being only twice mentioned in them (viii. 9, x. 2). The contents of



the three chapters are as follows: On the approach of the seventh month, which opened with the feast of trumpets, and during which occurred both the feast of tabernacles and the great day of atonement, the people were gathered to Jerusalem; and Ezra, at the request of the congregation, read to the assembled people out of the book of the law on the first and second days. It being found written in the law, that the Israelites were to dwell in booths during the seventh month, it was resolved to keep the festival in accordance with this direction; and this resolution was carried into execution by erecting booths made with branches of trees on house-tops, in courts, and in the public places of the city, and celebrating the seven-days' festival by a daily public reading of the law (chap. viii.). On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the congregation again assembled, with fasting and mourning, to make a public confession of their sins, and to renew their covenant with God (chap. ix. x.).

The second clause of vii. 73 belongs to chap. viii., and forms one sentence with viii. 1. "When the seventh month came, and the children of Israel were in their cities, the whole people gathered themselves together as one man in the open space that was before the water-gate," etc. The capitular division of the Masoretic text is erroneous, and makes the words, "and the children of Israel were in their cities," appear a mere repetition of the sentence, "and all Israel dwelt in their cities." The chronological statement, "when the seventh month came," without mention of the year, points back to the date in vi. 15: the twenty-fifth Elul, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes; on which day the building of the wall was completed. Elul, the sixth month, is followed by Tishri, the seventh, and there is nothing against the inference that the seventh month of the same year is intended; the dedication of the wall not being related till chap. xii., and therefore occurring subsequently, while all the facts narrated in chap. viii.—xi. might, without any difficulty, occur in the interval between the completion of the wall and its dedication. For, besides the public reading of the law on the first two days of the seventh month, the cele-

bration of the feast of tabernacles, and the public fast on the twenty-fourth day of the seventh month (chap. viii.-xi.), nothing more is recorded (xi. 1, 2) than the execution of the resolve made by Nehemiah, immediately after the completion of the wall (vii. 4), viz. to increase the inhabitants of Jerusalem, by appointing by lot one of every ten dwellers in the surrounding country to go to Jerusalem and dwell there. This is succeeded by lists of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the cities of Benjamin and Judah, and lists of the priests and Levites (xi. 3-xii. 26):

Chap. viii. 1-8. *The public reading of the law.*—Vers. 1-3. The introduction to this narrative (vii. 73b-viii. 1a) is identical with Ezra iii. 1. The same matter, the assembling of the people on the approach of the seventh month, is described in the same words. But the object of this assembling of the people was a different one from that mentioned in Ezra iii. Then they met to restore the altar of burnt-offering and the sacrificial worship; now, on the contrary, for the due solemnization of the seventh month, the festal month of the year. For this purpose the people came from the cities and villages of Judah to Jerusalem, and assembled “in the open space before the water-gate,” *i.e.* to the south-east of the temple space. On the situation of the water-gate, see rem. on iii. 26, xii. 37 sq., and Ezra x. 9. “And they spake unto Ezra the scribe” (see rem. on Ezra vii. 11). The subject of וְיִאָּמְרוּ is the assembled people. These requested, through their rulers, that Ezra should fetch the book of the law of Moses, and publicly read it. This reading, then, was desired by the assembly. The motive for this request is undoubtedly to be found in the desire of the congregation to keep the new moon of the seventh month, as a feast of thanksgiving for the gracious assistance they had received from the Lord during the building of the wall, and through which it had been speedily and successfully completed, in spite of the attempts of their enemies to obstruct the work. This feeling of thankfulness impelled them to the hearing of the word of God for the purpose of making His law their rule of life. The assembly consisted of men and women indiscriminately



(אִישׁ וְעַד אִשָּׁה, like Josh. vi. 21, viii. 25, 1 Sam. xxii. 19, 1 Chron. xvi. 3), and כָּל מִבֵּן לְשֹׁמֵעַ, every one that understood in hearing, which would certainly include the elder children. The first day of the seventh month was distinguished above the other new moons of the year as the feast of trumpets, and celebrated as a high festival by a solemn assembly and a cessation from labour; comp. Lev. xxiii. 23-25, Num. xxix. 1-6.—Ver. 3. Ezra read out of the law “from the light (*i.e.* from early morning) till mid-day;” therefore for about six hours. Not, however, as is obvious from the more particular description vers. 4-8, without cessation, but in such wise that the reading went on alternately with instructive lectures on the law from the Levites. “And the ears of all the people were directed to the law,” *i.e.* the people listened attentively. הַמְּבִינִים must be understood according to לְשֹׁמֵעַ of ver. 2. In vers. 4-8 the proceedings at this reading are more nearly described.—Ver. 4. Ezra stood upon a raised stage of wood which had been made for the purpose (לְדַבֵּר, for the matter). מִגָּדָל, usually a tower, here a high scaffold, a pulpit. Beside him stood six persons, probably priests, on his right, and seven on his left hand. In 1 Esdras, seven are mentioned as standing on his left hand also, the name Azariah being inserted between Anaiah and Urijah. It is likely that this name has been omitted from the Hebrew text, since it is improbable that there was one person less on his right than on his left hand. “*Perhaps* Urijah is the father of the Meremoth of iii. 4, 21; Maaseiah, the father of the Azariah of iii. 23; Pedaiah, the individual named iii. 21; the Azariah to be inserted, according to 1 Esdras, the same named iii. 23; a Meshullam occurs, iii. 4, 6; and a Malchiah, iii. 11, 14, 31” (Bertheau).—Ver. 5. Ezra, standing on the raised platform, was above the assembled people (he was מַעַל כָּל-הָעָם). When he opened the book, it was “in the sight of all the people,” so that all could see his action; and “all the people stood up” (עָמְדוּ). It cannot be shown from the O. T. that it had been from the days of Moses a custom with the Israelites to stand at the reading of the law, as the Rabbis assert; comp. Vitringa, *de Synag. vet.* p. 167.—Ver. 6.

Ezra began by blessing the Lord, the great God, perhaps with a sentence of thanksgiving, as David did, 1 Chron. xxix. 10, but scarcely by using a whole psalm, as in 1 Chron. xvi. 8 sq. To this thanksgiving the people answered Amen, Amen (comp. 1 Chron. xvi. 36), lifting up their hands (בְּמַעַל יְדֵיהֶם, with lifting up of their hands; the form מַעַל occurring only here), and worshipping the Lord, bowing down towards the ground.—Ver. 7. And Jeshua, Bani, etc., the Levites, expounded the law to the people (הִבִּין, to cause to understand, here to instruct, by expounding the law). The ו copulative before הַלֵּוִיִּם must certainly have been inserted in the text by a clerical error; for the previously named thirteen (or fourteen) persons are Levites, of whom Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, and Hodijah occur again, ix. 4, 5. The names Jeshua, Sherebiah, Shabtai, and Jozabad are also met with xii. 14, xi. 16, but belong in these latter passages to other individuals who were heads of classes of Levites.—Ver. 8. “And they (the Levites) read in (out of) the book of the law of God, explained and gave the sense; and they (the assembled auditors) were attentive to the reading.” The Rabbis understand מְפָרֵשׁ = the Chaldee מְפָרֵשׁ, of a rendering of the law into the vulgar tongue, *i.e.* a paraphrase in the Chaldee language for those who were not acquainted with the ancient Hebrew. But this cannot be shown to be the meaning of פָּרַשׁ, this word being used in the Targums for the Hebrew נִקְבַּ (קִבֵּב), *e.g.* Lev. xxiv. 16, and for בִּאֵר, Deut. i. 5. It is more correct to suppose a paraphrastic exposition and application of the law (Pfeiffer, *dubia ver.* p. 480), but not “a distinct recitation according to appointed rules” (Gusset. and Bertheau). שׁוֹם is *infin. abs.* instead of the *temp. finit.*: and gave the sense, made the law comprehensible to the hearers. וַיְבִינֵנוּ בְּמִקְרָא, not with older interpreters, Luther (“so that what was read was understood”), and de Wette, “and they (the Levites) made what was read comprehensible,” which would be a mere tautology, but with the LXX., Vulgate, and others, “and they (the hearers) attended to the reading,” or, “obtained an understanding of what was read” (הִבִּין בְּ, like ver. 12, Dan. ix. 23, x. 11). Vitringa (*de syn. ret.* p. 420)



already gives the correct meaning: *de doctoribus narratur, quod legerint et dederint intellectum, de auditoribus, quod lectum intellexerint*. The manner of proceeding with this reading is not quite clear. According to vers. 5-8, the Levites alone seem to have read to the people out of the book of the law, and to have explained what they read to their auditors; while according to ver. 3, Ezra read to the assembled people, and the ears of all were attentive to the book of the law, while we are told in ver. 5 that Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people. If, however, we regard vers. 4-8 as only a more detailed description of what is related vers. 2, 3, it is obvious that both Ezra and the thirteen Levites mentioned in ver. 7 read out of the law. Hence the occurrence may well have taken place as follows: Ezra first read a section of the law, and the Levites then expounded to the people the portion just read; the only point still doubtful being whether the thirteen (fourteen) Levites expounded in succession, or whether they all did this at the same time to different groups of people.

Vers. 9-12. *The celebration of the feast of the new moon.*—Ver. 9. Then Nehemiah, the Tirshatha (see remarks on Ezra ii. 63), and the priest Ezra the scribe, and the Levites who were teaching the people, said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord our God. Mourn not, nor weep; for all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.” הַיּוֹם is the new moon of the seventh month. The portion read made a powerful impression upon the assembled crowds. Undoubtedly it consisted of certain sections of Deuteronomy and other parts of the Torah, which were adapted to convict the people of their sin in transgressing the commands of the Lord, and of the punishments to which they had thus exposed themselves. They were so moved thereby that they mourned and wept. This induced Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites, who had been applying what was read to the hearts of their hearers, to encourage them.—Ver. 10. And he said to them (viz. Nehemiah as governor and head of the community, though the fact that his address is mentioned does not exclude the participation of Ezra and the Levites):

“Go, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send gifts to them for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; neither be ye sorry, for joy in Jahve is your refuge.” מִשְׁמָנִים, fatnesses (λιπάσματα, LXX.), fat pieces of meat, not “rich cakes” (Bertheau); comp. מִשְׁתֶּה שְׂמָנִים, Isa. xxv. 6. מִמְתַּקִּים, sweetened drinks. The sense is: Make glad repasts on good feast-day food and drink; and send portions to the poor who have prepared nothing, that they too may rejoice on this festival. מְנוֹת, gifts, are portions of food; Esth. ix. 19, 22; 1 Sam. i. 4. Hence we see that it was customary with the Israelites to send portions of food and drink, on festivals, to the houses of the poor, that they too might share in the joy of the day. לֵאשֶׁר אֵין נָכוֹן לֵאֵין נָכוֹן (see rem. on 1 Chron. xv. 12), to them for whom nothing is prepared, who have not the means to prepare a feast-day meal. Because the day is holy to the Lord, they are to desire it with holy joy. חֵדוֹת יְהוָה is a joy founded on the feeling of communion with the Lord, on the consciousness that we have in the LORD a God long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth (Ex. xxxiv. 6). This joy is to be to them מַעֲזוֹ, a strong citadel or refuge, because the Almighty is their God; comp. Jer. xvi. 19.—Ver. 11. The Levites also strove to pacify the people, saying: “Hold your peace, *i.e.* give over weeping, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved.”—Ver. 12. This address had its effect. The people went their way, some to their houses, some to their lodgings, to partake of festal repasts, and to keep the feast with joy; “for they gave heed to the words that were declared to them,” *i.e.* they took to heart the address of Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites.

Vers. 13–18. *Celebration of the feast of tabernacles.*—Ver. 13. On the second day were gathered together the heads of the houses of all the people, of the priests, and of the Levites to Ezra the scribe, to attend to the words of the law. The infinitive לְהַשְׁכִּיל may indeed be taken (as by Bertheau) as the continuation of the finite verb, instead of as infinitive absolute (Ewald, § 352, c); this is, however, admissible only in cases where the second verb either states what must be done, or further describes the condition of affairs, while



לְהִשָּׁבִיל here states the purpose for which the heads of the people, etc. assembled themselves unto Ezra. Hence we take לְהִשָּׁבִיל in its usual meaning, and the ו before it as explicative. אֶל הַשָּׁבִיל אֵל, as in Ps. xli. 1, expresses taking an attentive interest in anything. They desired to be further and more deeply instructed in the law by Ezra.—Vers. 14, 15. And they found written in the law that the Lord had commanded Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month; and that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying: “Go forth to the mount, and fetch olive branches, etc. to make booths, as it is written.” This statement is not to be understood as saying that the heads of the people sought in the law, fourteen days before the feast, for information as to what they would have to do, that they might prepare for the due celebration of the feast of tabernacles (Bertheau). The text only states that the heads of the people again betook themselves to Ezra on the second day, to receive from him instruction in the law, and that in reading the law they found the precept concerning the celebration of the festival in booths, *i.e.* they met with this precept, and were thereby induced to celebrate the approaching festival in strict accordance with its directions. The law concerning the feast of tabernacles, of which the essentials are here communicated, is found Lev. xxiii. 39-43. In Deut. xvi. 13 they were only commanded to keep the feast with gladness. The particular of dwelling in booths or bowers is taken from Lev. xxiii. 43; the further details in ver. 15 relate to the carrying out of the direction: “Ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook” (Lev. xxiii. 43). Go to the mountain, a woody district, whence branches may be obtained. עֲלֵי, state constructive plural of עֹלֶה, leaf, foliage, here leafy boughs or branches of trees. וַיֵּץ, the olive, עֵץ שֶׁמֶן, the wild olive (oleaster), the myrtle, the palm, and branches of thick-leaved trees, are here mentioned (the two latter being also named in Leviticus). בְּכֶתֶב does not relate to the preparation of the

booths, but to the precept that the feast should be kept in booths. In ver. 16 the accomplishment of the matter is related, presupposing a compliance with the proclamation sent out into all the cities in the land, and indeed so speedy a compliance that the booths were finished by the day of the feast. The object (the branches of ver. 15) must be supplied to יִבְיִי from the context. They made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the open space at the water-gate (see on ver. 3), and the open space at the gate of Ephraim. On the situation of this gate, see rem. on iii. 8, p. 179. The open space before it must be thought of as within the city walls. On these two public places, booths were probably made by those who had come to Jerusalem, but did not dwell there; while the priests and Levites belonging to other places would build theirs in the courts of the temple.—Ver. 17. And the whole community that had returned from captivity (comp. Ezra vi. 21) made themselves booths and dwelt in booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day, had not the children of Israel done so. יָז, so, refers to the dwelling in booths; and the words do not tell us that the Israelites had not celebrated this festival since the days of Joshua, that is, since they had taken possession of Canaan: for, according to Ezra iii. 4, those who returned from captivity kept this feast in the first year of their return; and a celebration is also mentioned after the dedication of Solomon's temple, 2 Chron. vii. 9, 1 Kings viii. 65. The text only states that since the days of Joshua the whole community had not *so* celebrated it, *i.e.* had not dwelt in booths. Neither do the words imply that since the days of Joshua to that time no booths at all had been made at the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, but only that this had not been done by the whole congregation. On former occasions, those who came up to Jerusalem may have regarded this precept as non-essential, and contented themselves by keeping the feast with solemn assemblies, sacrifices, and sacrificial feasts, without making booths and dwelling in them for seven days.—



Ver. 18. And the book of the law was read from day to day. וִיקְרָא with the subject indefinite, while Ramb. and others supply Ezra. The reading of the law was only ordered at that celebration of the feast of tabernacles which occurred during the sabbatical year, Deut. xxxi. 10 sq. The last day was the seventh, for the eighth as a *עֶצְרָת* did not belong to the feast of tabernacles; see rem. on Lev. xxiii. 36. כְּמִשְׁפַּט like 2 Chron. iv. 20, and elsewhere.

Chap. ix. *The day of general fasting and prayer.*—On the twenty-fourth day of the month, *i.e.* two days after the termination of the feast of tabernacles, the children of Israel re-assembled in the temple to humble themselves before God with mourning and fasting, and, after the reading of the law, to confess their own sins and the sins of their fathers (1-3). After the Levites had invited them to praise God (4, 5), a general confession was made, in which the congregation was reminded of all the grace and favour shown by God to His people, from the days of Abraham down to the time then present; and all the departures of the people from their God, all their rebellions against Him, were acknowledged, to show that the bondage and oppression to which Israel was now subjected were the well-deserved punishment of their sins (6-37). This confession of sin much resembles the confession of the faithfulness of God and the unfaithfulness of Israel in the 106th Psalm, both in its plan and details, but differs from this “Hallelujah Psalm” in the circumstance that it does not rise to the praise of God, to the hallelujah, but stops at the confession that God is righteous and true in all that He has done, and that Israel has done wickedly, without definitely uttering a request for pardon and deliverance from oppression.

Vers. 1-3. On the twenty-second of Tishri was the Hazereth of the feast of tabernacles; on the twenty-fourth the congregation re-assembled in the temple, “with fasting and with sackcloths (penitential garments made of hair; see rem. Joel i. 8) and earth upon them,” *i.e.* spread upon their heads (1 Sam. iv. 12; 2 Sam. i. 2; Job ii. 12),—the external marks of deep mourning and heaviness of heart.—Ver. 2. “And the seed of Israel separated themselves from

all strangers, and stood and confessed all their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers." This separation from strangers does not specially relate to the dissolution of the marriages contracted with heathen women, nor to any measures taken that only Israelites should be admitted to this assembly (Bertheau). It was rather a voluntary renunciation of connection with the heathen, and of heathen customs.—Ver. 3. And they stood up (*i.e.* remained standing) in their place (comp. viii. 7), and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God, *i.e.* listened to the reading of the law, a fourth part of the day (about three hours), and a fourth part (the next three hours) they confessed (made a confession of their sins), and worshipped the LORD their God. This confession and worship is more nearly described 4–37.—Vers. 4 and 5. There stood upon the scaffold of the Levites, *i.e.* upon the platform erected for the Levites (comp. viii. 4), Jeshua and seven other Levites whose names are given, and they cried with a loud voice to God, and said to the assembled congregation, "Stand up, bless the LORD your God for ever and ever! and blessed be the name of Thy glory, which is exalted above all blessing and praise." The repetition of the names of the Levites in ver. 5 shows that this invitation to praise God is distinct from the crying to God with a loud voice of ver. 4, and seems to say that the Levites first cried to God, *i.e.* addressed to Him their confessions and supplications, and after having done so, called upon the congregation to worship God. Eight names of Levites being given in both verses, and five of these—Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, and Sherebiah—being identical, the difference of the three others in the two verses—Bunni, Bani, and Chenani (ver. 4), and Hashabniah, Hodijah, and Pethahiah (ver. 5)—seems to have arisen from a clerical error,—an appearance favoured also by the circumstance that Bani occurs twice in ver. 4. Of the other names in question, Hodijah occurs x. 14, and Pethahiah Ezra x. 23, as names of Levites, but פְּנִי and חֲשַׁבְנִיָּה nowhere else. Hence Bunni, Bani, and Chenani (ver. 4), and Hashabniah (ver. 5), may be assigned to a clerical error; but we have no means for restoring the



correct names. With regard to the matter of these verses, Ramb. remarks on ver. 4: *constitisse opinor omnes simul, ita tamen ut unus tantum eodem tempore fuerit precatus, ceteris ipsi adstantibus atque sua etiam vice Deum orantibus*, hence that the eight Levites prayed to God successively; while Bertheau thinks that these Levites entreated God, in penitential and supplicatory psalms, to have mercy on His sinful but penitent people. In this case we must also regard their address to the congregation in ver. 5 as a liturgical hymn, to which the congregation responded by praising God in chorus. To this view may be objected the circumstance, that no allusion is made in the narrative to the singing of penitential or other songs. Besides, a confession of sins follows in vers. 6-37, which may fitly be called a crying unto God, without its being stated by whom it was uttered. "This section," says Bertheau, "whether we regard its form or contents, cannot have been sung either by the Levites or the congregation. We recognise in it the speech of an individual, and hence accept the view that the statement of the LXX., that after the singing of the Levites, ver. 4, and the praising of God in ver. 5, Ezra came forward and spoke the words following, is correct, and that the words *καὶ εἶπεν* "Εσδρας, which it inserts before ver. 6, originally stood in the Hebrew text." But if Psalms, such as Ps. cv., cvi., and cvii., were evidently appointed to be sung to the praise of God by the Levites or by the congregation, there can be no reason why the prayer vers. 6-37 should not be adapted both in form and matter for this purpose. This prayer by no means bears the impress of being the address of an individual, but is throughout the confession of the whole congregation. The prayer speaks of *our* fathers (vers. 9, 16), of what is come upon *us* (ver. 33), addresses Jahve as *our* God, and says *we* have sinned. Of course Ezra might have uttered it in the name of the congregation; but that the addition of the LXX., *καὶ εἶπεν* "Εσδρας, is of no critical value, and is a mere conjecture of the translators, is evident from the circumstance that the prayer does not begin with the words יהוה הוא אלהינו of ver. 6, but passes into the form of direct ad-

dress to God in the last clause of ver. 5: Blessed be the name of *Thy* glory. By these words the prayer which follows is evidently declared to be the confession of those who are to praise the glory of the Lord; and the addition, "and Ezra said," characterized as an unskilful interpolation. According to what has now been said, the summons, קומו ברכו את יהוה, ver. 5, like the introductions to many Hodu and Hallelujah Psalms (*e.g.* Ps. cv. 1, cvi. 1), is to be regarded as only an exhortation to the congregation to praise God, *i.e.* to join in the praises following, and to unite heartily in the confession of sin. This view of the connection of vers. 5 and 6 explains the reason why it is not stated either in ver. 6, or at the close of this prayer in ver. 37, that the assembled congregation blessed God agreeably to the summons thus addressed to them. They did so by silently and heartily praying to, and praising God with the Levites, who were reciting aloud the confession of sin. On ויברכו R. Sal. already remarks: *nunc incipiunt loqui Levitæ versus Shechinam s. ad ipsum Deum.* The invitation to praise God insensibly passes into the action of praising. If, moreover, vers. 6-37 are related in the manner above stated to ver. 5, then it is not probable that the crying to God with a loud voice (ver. 4) was anything else than the utterance of the prayer subsequently given, vers. 6-37. The repetition of the names in ver. 5 is not enough to confirm this view, but must be explained by the breadth of the representation here given, and is rescued from the charge of mere tautology by the fact that in ver. 4 the office of the individuals in question is not named, which it is by the word הַלְוִיִּם in ver. 5. For הַלְוִיִּם in ver. 4 belongs as genitive to מַעֲלֵה, and both priests and laymen might have stood on the platform of the Levites. For this reason it is subsequently stated in ver. 5, that Jeshua, etc., were Levites; and in doing this the names are again enumerated. In the exhortation, Stand up and bless, etc., Bertheau seeks to separate "for ever and ever" from the imp. בְּרַכּוּ, and to take it as a further qualification of אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. This is, however, unnatural and arbitrary; comp. 1 Chron. xvi. 26. Still more arbitrary is it to supply "One day all



people" to וַיְבָרֶכְנוּ, "shall bless Thy name," etc. וַיְמַרְמִימֵם adds a second predicate to אֵלִים: and which is exalted above all blessing and praise, *i.e. sublimius est quam ut pro dignitate laudari possit* (R. Sal.).

In ver. 6 this praising of God begins with the acknowledgment that Jahve, the Creator of heaven and earth, chose Abram and made a covenant with him to give the land of Canaan to his seed, and had performed this word (vers. 6-8). These verses form the theme of that blessing the name of His glory, to which the Levites exhorted. This theme is then elucidated by facts from Israel's history, in four strophes. *a.* When God saw the affliction of His people in Egypt, He delivered them by great signs and wonders from the power of Pharaoh, gave them laws and judgments on Sinai, miraculously provided them with food and water in the wilderness, and commanded them to take possession of the promised land (vers. 9-15). *b.* Although their fathers rebelled against Him, even in the wilderness, God did not withdraw His mercy from them, but sustained them forty years, so that they lacked nothing; and subdued kings before them, so that they were able to conquer and possess the land (vers. 16-25). *c.* After they were settled in the land they rebelled again, and God delivered them into the hand of their oppressors; but as often as they cried unto Him, He helped them again, till at length, because of their continued opposition, He gave them into the power of the people of the lands, yet of His great mercy did not wholly cast them off (vers. 26-31). *d.* May He now too look upon the affliction of His people, as the God that keepeth covenant and mercy, although they have deserved by their sins the troubles they are suffering (vers. 32-37).

Vers. 6-8. "Thou art Jahve alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, and all their host, the earth and all that is thereon, the sea and all therein; and Thou givest life to them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee. Ver. 7. Thou art Jahve, the God who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham: Ver. 8. And foundest

his heart faithful before Thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give to his seed, and hast performed Thy word; for Thou art righteous." Jahve alone is God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all creatures in heaven and on earth. In order duly to exalt the almightiness of God, the notion of heaven is enhanced by the addition "heaven of heavens," as in Deut. x. 14, 1 Kings viii. 27; and that of earth by the addition "the sea and all therein;" comp. Ps. cxlvi. 6. **כָּל־צִבְּאוֹם**, Gen. ii. 1, here refers only to heaven. **מַחְיָה**, to cause to live = to give and preserve life. **כָּל־בְּרִיאָה** relates to all creatures in heaven and earth. The host of heaven who worshipped God are the angels, as in Ps. cxlviii. 2, ciii. 21. This only God chose Abram; comp. Gen. xii. 1 with xi. 31 and xv. 7, xvii. 5, where God bestowed upon the patriarch Abram the name of Abraham. The words, "Thou foundest his heart faithful," refer to **הַאֱמִינִי** there mentioned. The making of a covenant alludes to Gen. xvii. 5 sq.; the enumeration of six Canaanitish nations to Deut. vii. 1, Ex. iii. 8; comp. with Gen. xv. 20 sq. This His word God performed (fulfilled), for He is righteous. God is called **צַדִּיק**, inasmuch as with Him word and deed correspond with each other; comp. Deut. xxxii. 4.

Vers. 9-15. The fulfilment of this word by the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and their guidance through the wilderness to Canaan.—Ver. 9. "And Thou sawest the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red Sea: Ver. 10. And showedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh and all his servants, and on all the people of his land, because Thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them, and madest Thyself a name, as this day. Ver. 11. And Thou dividedst the sea before them, and they went through the midst of the sea on dry land; and their persecutors Thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters." In ver. 9 are comprised two subjects, which are carried out in vers. 10, 11: (1) the affliction of the Israelites in Egypt, which God saw (comp. Ex. iii. 7), and out of which He



delivered them by the signs and wonders He showed upon Pharaoh (ver. 10); (2) the crying for help at the Red Sea, when the Israelites perceived Pharaoh with his horsemen and chariots in pursuit (Ex. xiv. 10), and the help which God gave them by dividing the sea, etc. (ver. 11). The words in ver. 10a are supported by Deut. vi. 22, on the ground of the historical narrative, Ex. vii.-x. The expression *בִּי הִזִּירוּ עֲלֵיהֶם* is formed according to *אֲשֶׁר יָדוּ עֲלֵיהֶם*, Ex. xviii. 11. *הִזִּיר עַל* occurs Ex. xxi. 14 in a general sense. On *וַתַּעַשׂ לָךְ שֵׁם וְגו'*, comp. Jer. xxxii. 20, Isa. lxiii. 12, 14, 1 Chron. xvii. 22. A name as this day—in that the miracles which God then did are still praised, and He continues still to manifest His almighty power. The words of ver. 11 are supported by Ex. xiv. 21, 22, 28, and xv. 19. *בְּמַצּוֹלוֹת בְּמוֹ אָבֶן* are from Ex. xv. 5; *בְּמַיִם עֵיִים* from Ex. xv. and Isa. xliiii. 16.—Ver. 12. “And Thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. Ver. 13. And Thou camest down upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments: Ver. 14. And madest known unto them Thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses Thy servant. Ver. 15. And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst; and Thou commandedst them to go in and possess the land, which Thou hadst lifted up Thine hand to give them.” Three particulars in the miraculous leading of Israel through the wilderness are brought forward: *a.* Their being guided in the way by miraculous tokens of the divine presence, in the pillar of fire and cloud, ver. 12; comp. Ex. xiii. 21, Num. xiv. 14. *b.* The revelation of God on Sinai, and the giving of the law, vers. 13, 14. The descent of God on Sinai and the voice from heaven agree with Ex. xix. 18, 20, and xx. 1 sq., compared with Deut. iv. 36. On the various designations of the law, comp. Ps. xix. 9, cxix. 43, 39, 142. Of the commandments, that concerning the Sabbath is specially mentioned, and spoken of as a benefit

bestowed by God upon the Israelites, as a proclamation of His holy Sabbath, inasmuch as the Israelites were on the Sabbath to share in the rest of God; see rem. on Ex. xx. 9-11. c. The provision of manna, and of water from the rock, for their support during their journey through the wilderness on the way to Canaan; Ex. xvi. 4, 10 sq., Ex. xvii. 6, Num. xx. 8; comp. Ps. lxxviii. 24, 15, cv. 40. לָבֹא לְרֵשֶׁת like Deut. ix. 1, 5, xi. 31, and elsewhere. נִשְׂאָתָ אֶת־יָרֵךְ is to be understood according to Num. xiv. 30.

Vers. 16-25. Even the fathers to whom God had shown such favour, repeatedly departed from and rebelled against Him; but God of His great mercy did not forsake them, but brought them into possession of the promised land.—Ver. 16. “And they, even our fathers, dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to Thy commandments. Ver. 17. They refused to obey, and were not mindful of Thy wonders that Thou didst amongst them; and hardened their necks, and appointed a captain to return to their bondage. But Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.” In these verses the conduct of the children of Israel towards God is contrasted with His kindness towards this stiff-necked people, the historical confirmation following in ver. 18. וְהֵם is emphatic, and prefixed to contrast the conduct of the Israelites with the benefits bestowed on them. The contrast is enhanced by the ו explicative before אֲבֹתֵינוּ, *even our fathers* (which J.D. Michaelis would expunge, from a misconception of its meaning, but which Bertheau with good reason defends). Words are accumulated to describe the stiff-necked resistance of the people. הִזְיָרוּ as above, ver. 10. “They hardened their necks” refers to Ex. xxxii. 9, xxxiii. 3, xxxiv. 9, and therefore already alludes to the worship of the golden calf at Sinai, mentioned ver. 18; while in ver. 17, the second great rebellion of the people at Kadesh, on the borders of the promised land, Num. xiv., is contemplated. The repetition of the expression, “they hardened their hearts,” shows that a second grievous transgression is already spoken of in ver. 17. This is made even clearer by the next clause, וַיִּתְּנוּ רֹאשׁ וּגו’,



which is taken almost verbally from Num. xiv. 4: "They said one to another, Let us make a captain (נִתְּנָה רֹאשׁ), and return to Egypt;" the notion being merely enhanced here by the addition לְעִבְדָּתָם, to their bondage. The comparison with Num. xiv. 4 also shows that בְּמִרְיָם is a clerical error for בְּמַצְרִים, as the LXX. read; for בְּמִרְיָם, in their stubbornness, after לְעִבְדָּתָם, gives no appropriate sense. In spite, however, of their stiff-neckedness, God of His mercy and goodness did not forsake them. אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, a God of pardons; comp. Dan. ix. 9, Ps. cxxx. 4. חֲנוּן וְרַחוּם וגו' is a reminiscence of Ex. xxxiv. 6. The ו before חָסֵד came into the text by a clerical error.—Ver. 18. "Yea, they even made them a molten calf, and said, This is thy god that brought thee up out of Egypt, and wrought great provocations. Ver. 19. Yet Thou, in Thy manifold mercies, didst not forsake them in the wilderness; the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day to lead them, and the pillar of fire by night to show them light in the way wherein they should go. Ver. 20. Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them, and witheldest not Thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst: Ver. 21. And forty years didst Thou sustain them in the wilderness; they lacked nothing, their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not." אַף כִּי, also (even this) = yea even. On the worship of the golden calf, see Ex. xxiv. 4. The words "they did (wrought) great provocations" involve a condemnation of the worship of the molten calf; nevertheless God did not withdraw His gracious presence, but continued to lead them by the pillar of cloud and fire. The passage Num. xiv. 14, according to which the pillar of cloud and fire guided the march of the people through the wilderness after the departure from Sinai, *i.e.* after their transgression in the matter of the calf, is here alluded to. עֲמוּד הָעָנָן is rhetorically enhanced by אַף: and with respect to the cloudy pillar, it departed not; so, too, in the second clause, אֶת-עֲמוּד הָאֵשׁ; comp. Ewald, § 277, *d.* The words, ver. 20, "Thou gavest Thy good Spirit," etc., refer to the occurrence, Num. xi. 17, 25, where God endowed the seventy elders with the spirit of prophecy for the confirmation

of Moses' authority. The definition "good Spirit" recalls Ps. cxliii. 10. The sending of manna is first mentioned Num. xi. 6-9, comp. Josh. v. 12; the giving of water, Num. xx. 2-8.—In ver. 21, all that the Lord did for Israel is summed up in the assertion of Deut. ii. 7, viii. 4, לֹא הָסִירוֹ; see the explanation of these passages.—Vers. 22-25. The Lord also fulfilled His promise of giving the land of Canaan to the Israelites notwithstanding their rebelliousness. Ver. 22. "And Thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them by boundaries; and they took possession of the land of Sihon, both the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan. Ver. 23. And Thou didst multiply their children as the stars of heaven, and bring them into the land which Thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess. Ver. 24. And the children went in and possessed the land, and Thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, both their kings and the people of the land, to do with them according to their pleasure. Ver. 25. And they took fortified cities, and a fat land, and took possession of houses filled with all kinds of goods, wells digged, vineyards and olive gardens, and fruit trees in abundance; and they ate and became fat, and delighted themselves in Thy great goodness." וַתַּחֲלִקֵם לְפָאָה is variously explained. Aben Ezra and others refer the suffix to the Canaanites, whom God scattered in *multos angulos* or *varias mundi partes*. Others refer it to the Israelites. According to this view, Ramb. says: *fecisti eos per omnes terræ Cananæ angulos habitare*; and Gusset.: *distribuisti eis terram usque ad angulum h. l. nulla vel minima regionum particula excepta*. But חָלַק, Piel, generally means the dividing of things; and when used of persons, as in Gen. xlix. 7, Lam. iv. 16, to divide, to scatter, *sensu malo*, which is here inapplicable to the Israelites. חָלַק signifies to divide, especially by lot, and is used chiefly concerning the partition of the land of Canaan, in Kal, Josh. xiv. 5, xviii. 2, and in Piel, Josh. xiii. 7, xviii. 10, xix. 51. The word פָּאָה also frequently occurs in Joshua, in the sense of a corner or side lying towards a certain quarter of the



heavens, and of a boundary; comp. Josh. xv. 5, xviii. 12, 14, 15, 20. According to this, Bertheau rightly takes the words to say: Thou didst divide them (the kingdoms and nations, *i.e.* the land of these nations) according to sides or boundaries, *i.e.* according to certain definite limits. Sihon is the king of Heshbon (Deut. i. 4), and the ו before אֶת-אֲרָץ 'ח 'ט is not to be expunged as a gloss, but regarded as explicative: and, indeed, both the land of the king of Heshbon and the land of Og. The conquest of these two kingdoms is named first, because it preceded the possession of Canaan (Num. xxi. 21-35). The increase of the children of the Israelites is next mentioned, ver. 23; the fathers having fallen in the wilderness, and only their children coming into the land of Canaan. The numbering of the people in the plains of Moab (Num. xxvi.) is here alluded to, when the new generation was found to be twice as numerous as that which marched out of Egypt; while the words לָבוֹא לָרֶשֶׁת here and in ver. 15, are similar to Deut. i. 10. The taking possession of Canaan is spoken of in ver. 24. וַתִּכְנַע recalls Deut. ix. 3. בְּרָצוֹנָם, according to their pleasure, comp. Dan. viii. 4. Fortified cities, as Jericho and Ai.

Vers. 26-31. But even in that good land the fathers were disobedient: they rejected the commands of God, slew the prophets who admonished them, and were not brought back to the obedience of God even by the chastisements inflicted on them, till at length God delivered them into the hands of Gentile kings, though after His great mercy He did not utterly forsake them.—Ver. 26. “And they were disobedient, and rebelled against Thee, and cast Thy law behind their backs, and slew Thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to Thee, and they wrought great provocations. Ver. 27. And Thou deliveredst them into the hand of their oppressors, so that they oppressed them; and in the time of their oppression they cried unto Thee. Then Thou heardest them from heaven, and according to Thy manifold mercies Thou gavest them deliverers, who delivered them out of the hand of their oppressors. Ver. 28. And when they had rest, they again did evil before Thee. Then Thou deliveredst

them into the hand of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them; and they cried again unto Thee, and Thou heardest from heaven, and didst deliver them according to Thy great mercy, many times.”—Ver. 26 again contains, like ver. 16, a general condemnation of the conduct of the children of Israel towards the Lord their God during the period between their entrance into Canaan and the captivity, which is then justified by the facts adduced in the verses following. In proof of their disobedience, it is mentioned that they cast the commands of God behind their back (comp. 1 Kings xiv. 19, Ezek. xxiii. 35), and slew the prophets, *e.g.* Zechariah (2 Chron. xxiv. 21), the prophets of the days of Jezebel (1 Kings xviii. 13, xix. 10), and others who rebuked their sins to turn them from them. **וְהָעִידָם**, to testify against sinners, comp. 2 Kings xvii. 13, 15. The last clause of ver. 26 is a kind of refrain, repeated from ver. 18.—Vers. 27 and 28 refer to the times of the judges; comp. Judg. ii. 11–23. **מוֹשְׁעֵיהֶם** are the judges whom God raised up to deliver Israel out of the power of their oppressors; comp. Judg. iii. 9 sq. with ii. 16. **רַבּוֹת עֲתִים**, multitudes of times, is a co-ordinate accusative: at many times, frequently; **רַבּוֹת** like Lev. xxv. 51.—Ver. 29. “And testifiedst against them, to bring them back again to Thy law; yet they hearkened not to Thy commandments, and sinned against Thy judgments, which if a man do he shall live in them, and gave a resisting shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear. Ver. 30. And Thou didst bear with them many years, and didst testify against them by Thy Spirit through Thy prophets; but they would not hearken, therefore Thou gavest them into the hand of the people of the lands. Ver. 31. Nevertheless in Thy great mercy Thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for Thou art gracious and merciful.”—Vers. 29 and 30 treat of the times of the kings. **וְהָעִידָם בָּהֶם** is the testimony of the prophets against the idolatrous people; comp. ver. 26. **וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֵיהֶם** is emphatically prefixed, and taken up again by **בָּם**. The sentence, which if a man do he shall live in them, is formed upon Lev. xviii. 5, comp. Ezek. xx. 11. On the figurative expression, they gave a resisting shoulder,



comp. Zech. vii. 11. The simile is taken from the ox, who rears against the yoke, and desires not to bear it; comp. Hos. iv. 16. The sentences following are repeated from ver. 16. תִּמְשֹׁךְ עֲלֵיהֶם is an abbreviated expression for מִשְׁךְ חָסֵר, Ps. xxxvi. 11, cix. 12, Jer. xxxi. 3, to draw out, to extend for a long time favour to any one : Thou hadst patience with them for many years, viz. the whole period of kingly rule from Solomon to the times of the Assyrians. The delivering into the power of the people of the lands, *i.e.* of the heathen (comp. Ps. cvi. 40 sq.), began with the invasion of the Assyrians (comp. ver. 32), who destroyed the kingdom of the ten tribes, and was inflicted upon Judah also by means of the Chaldeans.—Ver. 31. But in the midst of these judgments also, God, according to His promise, Jer. iv. 27, v. 10, 18, xxx. 11, and elsewhere, did not utterly forsake His people, nor make a full end of them ; for He did not suffer them to become extinct in exile, but preserved a remnant, and delivered it from captivity.

Vers. 32-37. May then, God, who keepeth covenant and mercy, now also look upon the affliction of His people, though kings, rulers, priests, and people have fully deserved this punishment ; for they are now bondmen, and in great affliction, in the land of their fathers. Ver. 32. “ And now, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble that hath come upon us, on our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, and our fathers, and on all Thy people, since the times of the kings of Assyria unto this day, seem little to Thee. Ver. 33. Thou art just in all that is come upon us ; for Thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly. Ver. 34. And our kings, our princes, our priests, and our fathers have not kept Thy law, nor hearkened to Thy commandments and Thy testimonies, wherewith Thou didst testify against them. Ver. 35. And they have not served Thee in their kingdom, and in Thy great goodness that Thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which Thou gavest up to them, and have not turned from their wicked works. Ver. 36. Behold, we are now bondmen ; and the land that Thou gavest

unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are bondmen in it. Ver. 37. And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom Thou hast set over us because of our sins; and they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle at their pleasure, and we are in great distress." The invocation of God, ver. 32, like that in i. 5, is similar to Deut. x. 17. **אֵל יִמְעַט לְפָנֶיךָ** stands independently, the following clause being emphasized by **אֵת**, like *e.g.* ver. 19: Let not what concerns all our trouble be little before Thee; comp. the similar construction with **מְעַט** in Josh. xx. 17. What seems little is easily disregarded. The prayer is a *litotes*; and the sense is, Let our affliction be regarded by Thee as great and heavy. The nouns **לְמַלְכֵינוּ**, etc., are in apposition to the suffix of **מִצְעָתָנוּ**, the object being continued by **לְ**.—Ver. 33. Thou art just: comp. ver. 8, Deut. xxxii. 4, Ezra ix. 15. **עַל כָּל**, upon all, *i.e.* concerning all that has befallen us; because their sins deserved punishment, and God is only fulfilling His word upon the sinners. In ver. 34, **אֵת** again serves to emphasize the subject. In the enumeration of the different classes of the people, the prophets are here omitted, because, as God's witnesses, they are not reckoned among these who had transgressed, though involved (ver. 32) in the sufferings that have fallen on the nation.—Ver. 35. **הֵם** are the fathers who were not brought to repentance by God's goodness. **בְּמַלְכוּתָם**, in their independent kingdom. **טוֹבָה הָרַב**, Thy much good, *i.e.* the fulness of Thy goodness, or "in the midst of Thy great blessing" (Bertheau). The predicate **הַרְחֵבָהּ**, the wide, extensive country, is derived from Ex. iii. 8. In ver. 36 sq., the prayer that God would not lightly regard the trouble of His people, is supported by a statement of the need and affliction in which they still are. They are bondmen in the land which God gave to their fathers as a free people, bondmen of the Persian monarchs; and the increase of the land which God appointed for His people belongs to the kings who rule over them. The rulers of the land dispose of their bodies and their cattle, by carrying off both men and cattle for their use, *e.g.* for military service. **כְּרָצוֹנָם** like ver. 24.



Chap. x. *A covenant made (1-32), and an engagement entered into, to furnish what was needed for the maintenance of the temple, its services, and ministers (vers. 33-40).—* Vers. 1-28. For the purpose of giving a lasting influence to this day of prayer and fasting, the assembled people, after the confession of sin (given in chap. ix.), entered into a written agreement, by which they bound themselves by an oath to separate from the heathen, and to keep the commandments and ordinances of God,—a document being prepared for this purpose, and sealed by the heads of their different houses.—Ver. 1. And because of all this we make and write a sure covenant; and our princes, Levites, and priests sign the sealed (document). *בְּכָל-זֹאת* does not mean *post omne hoc*, after all that we have done this day (Schmid, Bertheau, and others); still less, *in omni hoc malo, quod nobis obtigerat* (Rashi, Aben Ezra), but upon all this, *i.e.* upon the foundation of the preceding act of prayer and penitence, we made *אִמְנָה*, *i.e.* a settlement, a sure agreement (the word recurs xi. 23); hence *כֶּרֶת* is used as with *בְּרִית*, ix. 8. *אִמְנָה* may again be taken as the object of *כָּתְבִים*, we write it; *עַל הַחֲתוּם* be understood as “our princes sealed.” *עַל הַחֲתוּם* is the sealed document; comp. Jer. xxii. 11, 14. *עַל הַחֲתוּם* means literally, Upon the sealed document were our princes, etc.; that is, our princes sealed or signed it. Signing was effected by making an impression with a seal bearing a name; hence originated the idiom *אֲשֶׁר עַל הַחֲתוּם*, “he who was upon the sealed document,” meaning he who had signed the document by sealing it. By this derived signification is the plural *עַל הַחֲתוּמִּים* (ver. 2), “they who were upon the document,” explained: they who had signed or sealed the document.—Ver. 2. At the head of the signatures stood Nehemiah the Tirshatha, as governor of the country, and Zidkijah, a high official, of whom nothing further is known, perhaps (after the analogy of Ezra iv. 9, 17) secretary to the governor. Then follow (in vers. 3-9) twenty-one names, with the addition: these, the priests. Of these twenty-one names, fifteen occur in chap. xii. 2-7 as chiefs of the priests who came up with Joshua and Zerubbabel from Babylon, and in xii.

11-20 as heads of priestly houses. Hence it is obvious that all the twenty-one names are those of heads of priestly classes, who signed the agreement in the names of the houses and families of their respective classes. Seraiah is probably the prince of the house of God dwelling at Jerusalem, mentioned xi. 11, who signed in place of the high priest. For further remarks on the orders of priests and their heads, see xii. 1 sq.—Vers. 10-14. The Levites who sealed were: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel, and their brethren, fourteen names. Sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel returned, together with seventy-four other Levites, with Zerubbabel and Jeshua; Ezra ii. 4; Neh. vii. 42. Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, and Sherebiah are also named in xii. 8 as heads of orders of Levites. Of the rest nothing further is known, but we may regard them as heads of Levitical houses.—Vers. 15-28. The heads of the people. Forty-four names, thirteen of which are found in the list (Ezra ii.) of the kindreds who returned with Zerubbabel; see Ezra ii. The rest are names either of the heads of the different houses into which these kindreds were divided, or of the elders of the smaller towns of Benjamin and Judah. The fact that, while only thirty-three kindreds and places are enumerated in Ezra ii., forty-four occur here,—although names of kindreds mentioned in Ezra ii., *e.g.* Shephatiah, Arah, Zaccai, etc., are wanting here,—is to be explained partly by the circumstance that these kindreds included several houses whose different heads all subscribed, and partly by fresh accessions during the course of years to the number of houses.

Vers. 29-32. All the members of the community acceded to the agreement thus signed by the princes of the people, and the heads of the priests and Levites, and bound themselves by an oath to walk in the law of the Lord, and to separate themselves from the heathen.—Vers. 29 and 30. And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the door-keepers, the singers, the Nethinim, and all that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, all who



had knowledge and understanding, held with their brethren, their nobles, and entered into an oath and curse, etc. מְחֻזְקִים is the predicate of the subjects in ver. 29: they were holding with their brethren, *i.e.* uniting with them in this matter. "The rest of the people, the priests," etc., are the members of the community, exclusive of the princes and heads of the priestly and Levitical orders. The Nethinim, to whom belonged the servants of Solomon (see rem. on Ezra ii. 43 sq.), were probably also represented in the assembly by the heads of the Levites. To these are added all who had separated themselves, etc., *i.e.* the descendants of those Israelites who had been left in the land, and who now joined the new community; see rem. on Ezra vi. 21. The connection of נִבְדָּל with אֶל-תּוֹרַת is significant: separated from the heathen to the law of God, *i.e.* to live according thereto; comp. Ezra vi. 21. Not, however, the men only, but also women and children of riper years, acceded to the covenant. כָּל-יֹדֵעַ מִבֵּין, every one knowing, understanding (יֹדֵעַ and מִבֵּין being connected as an asyndeton, to strengthen the meaning), refers to sons and daughters of an age sufficient to enable them to understand the matter. אֲדִירֵיהֶם, their nobles, is connected in the form of an apposition with אֲחֵיהֶם, instead of the adjective הָאֲדִירִים. The princes and the heads of the community and priesthood are intended. בּוֹא בְּאָלָה, to enter into an oath, comp. Ezek. xvii. 13. אָלָה is an oath of self-imprecation, grievous punishments being imprecated in case of transgression; שְׁבוּעָה, a promissory oath to live conformably with the law. We hence perceive the tenor of the agreement entered into and sealed by the princes. *Non subscripsit quidem populus, remarks Clericus, sed ratum habuit, quidquid nomine totius populi a proceribus factum erat, juravitque id a se observatum iri.* Besides the general obligation to observe all the commandments, judgments, and statutes of God, two points, then frequently transgressed, are specially mentioned in vers. 31 and 32. In ver. 31: that we would not give our daughters to the people of the lands, etc.; see rem. on Ezra ix. 2. In ver. 32: that if the people of the land brought wares or any victuals on the Sabbath-day,

to sell, we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath, or on a holy day; and would let the seventh year lie, and the loan of every hand. The words עַמִּי הָאָרֶץ וְגו' are prefixed absolutely, and are afterwards subordinated to the predicate of the sentence by מֵהֶם. מִקְחוֹת, wares for sale, from לָקַח, to take, in the sense of to buy, occurs only here. נָקַח מֵהֶם, to take from them, *i.e.* to buy. נָקַח יוֹם קֹדֶשׁ beside יְשַׁבֵּת means the other holy days, the annual festivals, on which, according to the law, Num. xxviii. and xxix., no work was to be done. To the sanctification of the Sabbath pertained the celebration of the sabbatical year, which is therefore named immediately afterwards. The words נָטַשׁ אֶת־הַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִי, to let the seventh year lie, *i.e.* in the seventh year to let the land lie untilled and unsown, is an abbreviation taken from the language of the law, Ex. xxiii. 10. מִשָּׂא כָל־יָד also depends upon נָטַשׁ. This expression (מִשָּׂא, not מִשָּׂאָה, being the reading of the best editions) is to be explained from Deut. xv. 2, and means the loan, that which the hand has lent to another; see rem. on Deut. xv. 2.

Vers. 33–40. *Agreement to provide for the expenses of the temple and its ministers.*—If the community seriously intended to walk by the rule of God's law, they must take care that the temple service, as the public worship of the community, should be provided for according to the law and a firm footing and due solemnity thus given to religion. For this purpose, it was indispensable to guarantee the contributions prescribed for the necessary expenses of the temple worship, and the support of its ministers. Hence this entering into a solemn agreement to observe the law was regarded as a suitable occasion for regulating the services prescribed by the law with respect to the temple and its ministers, and mutually binding themselves to their observance. — Ver. 33. We ordained for ourselves (עָלֵינוּ, upon us, inasmuch as such things are spoken of as are taken upon one). לָהֵט עָלֵינוּ, to lay upon ourselves the third part of a shekel yearly for the service of the house of our God. It is not said who were to be bound to furnish this contribution, but it is assumed that it was a



well-known custom. This appointed payment is evidently only a revival of the Mosaic precept, Ex. xxx. 13, that every man of twenty years of age and upwards should give half a shekel as a תְּרוּמָה to the Lord,—a tribute which was still paid in Christ's days, Matt. xvii. 24. In consideration, however, of the poverty of the greater portion of the community, it was now lowered to a third of a shekel. The view of Aben Ezra, that a third of a shekel was to be paid in addition to the half shekel levied in conformity with the law, is unsupported by the text. הַעֲבוּרָה, the service of the house of God, is not the building and repairs of the temple, but the regular worship. For, according to ver. 34, the tax was to be applied to defraying the expenses of worship, to supplying the shew-bread, the continual meat and burnt offerings (Num. xxviii. 3-8), the sacrifices for the Sabbaths, new moons (Num. xxviii. 9-15), and festivals (Num. xxviii. 16-29, 38),—for the קִדְשִׁים, holy gifts, by which, from their position between the burnt-offering and the sin-offering, we may understand the thank-offerings, which were offered in the name of the congregation, as *e.g.* the two lambs at Pentecost, Lev. xxiii. 19, and the offerings brought at feasts of dedication, comp. Ex. xxiv. 5, Ezra vi. 17,—for the sin-offerings which were sacrificed at every great festival; and finally for all the work of the house of our God, *i.e.* whatever else was needful for worship (לְ must be supplied from the context before בְּלִמְלֶאכֶת). The establishment of such a tax for the expenses of worship, does not justify the view that the contributions promised by Artaxerxes in his edict, Ezra vii. 20 sq., of things necessary to worship had ceased, and that the congregation had now to defray the expenses from their own resources. For it may readily be supposed, that besides the assistance afforded by the king, the congregation might also esteem it needful to furnish a contribution, to meet the increased requirements of worship, and thus to augment the revenues of the temple,—the royal alms being limited to a certain amount (see Ezra vii. 22).—Ver. 35. “And we cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people for the wood-offering, to bring it into the house of our God, after

our houses, at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law." In the law we merely find it prescribed that wood should be constantly burning on the altar, and that the priest should burn wood on it every morning, and burn thereon the burnt-offering (Lev. vi. 12 sq.). The law gave no directions concerning the procuring of the wood; yet the rulers of the people must, at all events, have always provided for the regular delivery of the necessary quantity. Nehemiah now gives orders, as he himself tells us, xiii. 31, which make this matter the business of the congregation, and the several houses have successively to furnish a contribution, in the order decided by casting lots. The words, "at times appointed, year by year," justify the conclusion that the order was settled for several years, and not that all the different houses contributed in each year.<sup>1</sup>—Vers. 36–38. It was also arranged to contribute the first-fruits prescribed in the law. The infinitive לְהַבִּיא depends on הָעֵמֶרֶנִּי, and is co-ordinate with לָחֵת, ver. 33. The first-fruits of the ground, comp. Ex. xxiii. 19, xxxiv. 26, Deut. xxvi. 2; the first-fruits of all fruit trees, comp. Num. xviii. 13, Lev. xix. 23; the first-born of our sons who were redeemed according to the estimation of the priest, Num. xviii. 16, and of our cattle (*i.e.*

<sup>1</sup> Josephus (*bello Jud.* ii. 17. 6) speaks of α τῶν ξυλοφορίων ἑορτή, which he places on the fourteenth day of the month Δῶος, *i.e.* Ab, the fifth month of the Jewish year. From this Bertheau infers that the plural מִזְמִנִּים מִזְמִנִּים, here and xiii. 31, denotes the one season or day of delivery in each year. But though the name of this festival is derived from the present verse, the LXX. translating עַל קֶרְבֵּן הָעֵצִים, περὶ κλήρον ξυλοφορίας, it appears even from what Josephus says of this feast, ἐν ᾗ παῶσιν ἔθος ὕλην τῷ βωμῷ προσφέρειν, that the feast of wood-carrying does not designate that one day of the year on which the wood was delivered for the service of the altar. According to Mishna Taanit, chap. iv. (in Lightfoot's *horæ hebraicæ in Matth.* i. 1), nine days in the year were appointed for the delivery of wood, viz. 1st Nisan, 20th Tammuz, 5th, 7th, and 10th Ab, etc. Further particulars are given in Lundius, *jüd. Heiligtümer*, p. 1067 sq. The feast of wood-carrying may be compared with our harvest festival; and Bertheau's inference is not more conclusive than would be the inference that our harvest festival denotes the one day in the year on which the harvest is gathered in.



in the case of the unclean, the required redemption, Ex. xiii. 12 sq., Num. xviii. 15), and the firstlings of the herds and of the flocks, the fat of which was consumed on the altar, the flesh becoming the share of the priests, Num. xviii. 17. In ver. 38 the construction is altered, the first person of the imperfect taking the place of the infinitive: and we will bring the first-fruits. עֲרֹסוֹת, probably groats or ground flour; see rem. on Num. xv. 20, etc. תְּרוֹמוֹת, heave-offerings, the offering in this connection, is probably that of wheat and barley, Ezek. xlv. 13, or of the fruits of the field, which are suitably followed by the "fruit of all manner of trees." On "the first of the wine and oil," comp. Num. xviii. 12. These offerings of first-fruits were to be brought into the chambers of the house of God, where they were to be kept in store, and distributed to the priests for their support. "And the tithes of our ground (will we bring) to the Levites; and they, the Levites, receive the tithes in all our country towns. (Ver. 39) And a priest, a son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites take tithes; and the Levites shall bring the tithe of the tithes to the house of our God, into the chambers of the treasury." The parenthetical sentences in these verses, וְהָם הַלְוִיִּם הַמְעֲשִׂיִּים and בְּעֵשֶׂר הַלְוִיִּם, have been variously understood. עֲשֶׂר in the Piel and Hiphil meaning elsewhere to pay tithe, comp. Deut. xiv. 22, xxvi. 12, Gen. xxviii. 22, many expositors adhere to this meaning in these passages also, and translate ver. 38: for they, the Levites, must give again the tenth (to the priests); and ver. 39: when the Levites give the tenth; while the LXX., Vulgate, Syriac, Rashi, Aben Ezra, Clericus, Bertheau, and others, take עֲשֶׂר and הַמְעֲשִׂיִּים in these sentences as signifying to collect tithe. We prefer the latter view, as giving a more suitable sense. For the remark that the Levites must give back the tenth (ver. 38) does not present so appropriate a motive for the demand that the tithes should be paid, as that the tithes are due to the Levites. Still less does the addition, in our agricultural towns, suit the sentence: the Levites must give back the tithe to the priests. Again, the fact that it is not said till

ver. 39 that the Levites have to give the tenth of the tenth to the priests, speaks still more against this view. A priest is to be present when the Levites take the tenth, so that the share of the priests may not be lessened. On "the tenth of the tenth," comp. Num. xviii. 26. Hezekiah had provided store-chambers in the temple, in which to deposit the tithes, 1 Chron. xxxi. 11.—Ver. 40 is confirmatory of the preceding clause: the Levites were to bring the tithe of the tithes for the priests into the chambers of the temple; for thither are both the children of Israel and the Levites, to bring all heave-offerings of corn, new wine, and oil: for there are the holy vessels for the service of the altar (comp. Num. iv. 15), and the priests that minister, and the doorkeepers and the singers, for whose maintenance these gifts provide. "And we will not forsake the house of our God," *i.e.* we will take care that the service of God's house shall be provided for; comp. xiii. 11–14.

CHAP. XI.—INCREASE OF THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM.

LIST OF THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM, AND OF THE OTHER TOWNS.

Vers. 1 and 2 narrate the carrying out of Nehemiah's resolution, chap. vii. 4, to make Jerusalem more populous, and follow vii. 5 as to matter, but the end of chap. x. as to time. For while Nehemiah, after the completion of the wall, was occupied with the thought of bringing into the thinly populated capital a larger number of inhabitants, and had for this purpose convoked a public assembly, that a list of the whole Israelite population of the towns of Benjamin and Judah might be taken in hand, the seventh month of the year arrived, in which all the people assembled at Jerusalem to perform those acts of worship and solemnities (described viii.–x.) in which this month abounded. Hence it was not till after the termination of these services that Nehemiah was able to carry out the measures he had resolved on. For there can be no doubt that vers. 1 and 2 of the present chapter narrate the execution of these measures. The state-



ment that one in ten of all the people was appointed by lot to dwell in Jerusalem, and the remaining nine in other cities, and that the people blessed the men who showed themselves willing to dwell at Jerusalem, can have no other meaning than, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were increased in this proportion, and that this was consequently the measure which God had, according to vii. 5, put it into Nehemiah's heart to take. The statement taken by itself is indeed very brief, and its connection with vii. 5 not very evident. But the brevity and abruptness do not justify Bertheau's view, that these two verses are not the composition of Nehemiah himself, but only an extract from a larger context, in which this circumstance was fully explained. For Nehemiah's style not unfrequently exhibits a certain abruptness; comp. *e.g.* the commencements of chaps. v. and vi., or the information xiii. 6, which are no less abrupt, and which yet no one has conceived to be mere extracts from some other document. Besides, as the connection between vii. 5 and xi. 1 is interrupted by the relation of the events of the seventh month, so, too, is the account of the building of the wall, iv. 17, vi. 15 sq., and vii. 1, interrupted by the insertion of occurrences which took place during its progress. The first sentence, ver. 1, "And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem," cannot be so closely connected with the next, "and the rest of the people cast lots," etc., as to place the rulers in direct contrast to the rest of the people, but must be understood by its retrospect to vii. 4, which gives the following contrast: The rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem, but few of the people dwelt there; to this is joined the next sentence: and the rest of the people cast lots. The "rest of the people" does not mean the assembled people with the exception of the rulers, but the people with the exception of the few who dwelt at Jerusalem. These cast lots to bring (לְהַבִּיאַ) one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem. The predicate, the holy city, occurs here and ver. 18 for the first time. Jerusalem is so called, on the ground of the prophecies, Joel iii. 17 and Isa. xlviii. 2, because the sanctuary of God, the temple, was there. בְּעָרִים

means, in the other cities of Judah and Benjamin. **הַמְתַּנְדְּבִים**, those who showed themselves willing to dwell in Jerusalem, is taken by most expositors in contrast to those who were bound to do this in consequence of the decision of the lot; and it is then further supposed that some first went to Jerusalem of their free choice, and that the lot was then cast with respect to the rest. There are not, however, sufficient grounds for this conclusion, nor yet for the assumption that the decision of the lot was regarded as a constraint. The disposal of the lot was accepted as a divine decision, with which all had, whether willingly or unwillingly, to comply. All who willingly acquiesced in this decision might be designated as **מְתַנְדְּבִים**; and these departed to Jerusalem accompanied by the blessings of the people. Individuals are not so much meant, as chiefly fathers of families, who went with their wives and children.

Vers. 3–36. *The inhabitants of Jerusalem and the other cities.*—Ver. 3. The title reads: “These are the heads of the province who dwelt at Jerusalem; and in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, Israel, the priests, the Levites, the Nethinim, and the sons of Solomon’s servants.” **הַמְּדִינָה** is, as in Ezra ii. 1, the land of Judah, as a province of the Persian kingdom. The repetition of **יָשְׁבוּ** after **בְּעָרֵי יְהוּדָה** is not to be understood as contrasting those who dwelt in the cities with the dwellers in Jerusalem in the sense of “but in the cities of Judah dwelt,” etc., but is here a mere pleonasm. Even the enumeration of the different classes of inhabitants: Israel, the priests, etc., clearly shows that no such contrast is intended; for Israel, the priests, etc., dwelt not only in Jerusalem, but also, according to ver. 20, in the other cities of Judah. And this is placed beyond all doubt by the contents of the list following; the inhabitants of Jerusalem being enumerated 4–24, and the inhabitants of the other cities of Judah and Benjamin, 25–36. If, however, this title refers to the whole of the following list, it cannot, as Rambach and others thought, contain only an enumeration of those who, in consequence of the lot, had taken up their residence at Jerusalem, but



must be intended as a list of the population of the whole province of Judah in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah. It seems strange that the title should announce רָאִשֵׁי הַמִּדְּינָה, while in the list of the inhabitants of Jerusalem are given, besides the heads, the numbers of their brethren, *i.e.* of the individuals or fathers of families under these heads; and that in the list of the inhabitants of the other cities, only inhabitants of Judah and Benjamin are spoken of. Hence this statement refers *a potiori* to the heads, including the houses and families belonging to them, while in the case of the other cities it is assumed that the inhabitants of each locality were under a head. With ver. 4 begins the enumeration of the heads dwelling in Jerusalem, with their houses; and the first clause contains a special title, which affirms that (certain) of the children of Judah and of the children of Benjamin dwelt at Jerusalem. On the parallel list of the inhabitants of Jerusalem before the captivity, 1 Chron. ix. 2-34, and its relation to the present list, see the remarks on 1 Chron. ix.

Vers. 4b-6. Of the children of Judah two heads: Athaiah of the children of Perez (comp. 1 Chron. ii. 4), and Maaseiah of the children of Shela. It has been already remarked on 1 Chron. ix. 5, that הַשְּׁלֵנִי is wrongly pointed, and should be read הַשְּׁלֵנִי. בָּל-חֹהֶה is a proper name, as in iii. 15. Athaiah and Maaseiah are not further known. There were in all four hundred and sixty-eight able-bodied men of the sons of Perez, *i.e.* four hundred and sixty-eight fathers of families of the race of Perez, among whom are probably included the fathers of families belonging to Shela, the younger brother of Perez.—Vers. 7-9. Of the Benjamites there were two heads of houses: Sallu, and after him Gabbai-Sallai, with nine hundred and twenty-eight fathers of families. Their chief was Joel the son of Zichri, and Jehuda the son of Sennah over the city as second (prefect).—Vers. 10-14. Of the priests: Jedaiah, Joiarib, and Jachin, three heads of houses, therefore of orders of priests (for יָרִי before Joiarib probably crept into the text by a clerical error; see rem. on 1 Chron. ix. 10); Seraiah, a descendant of Ahitub, as ruler of

the house of God, and their brethren, *i.e.* the eight hundred and twenty-two ministering priests belonging to these three orders. Also Adaiah, of the house or order of Malchiah, and his brethren, two hundred and forty-two fathers of families; and lastly, Amashai, of the order of Immer, with one hundred and twenty-eight brethren, *i.e.* priests. And their chief was Zabdiel ben Haggadolim (LXX. *υἱὸς τῶν μεγάλων*). *עֲלֵיהֶם* refers to all the before-named priests. *רָאשֵׁי לְאָבוֹת*, heads of fathers, *i.e.* of families, ver. 13, is striking, for the brethren of Adaiah (*אַדְיָהוּ*), in number two hundred and forty-two, could not be heads of houses, but only fathers of families. The words seem to have come into the text only by comparing it with 1 Chron. ix. 13. If they were genuine, we should be obliged to understand *רָאשֵׁי לְאָבוֹת* of fathers of families, contrary to general usage.—Vers. 15–18. Of Levites, Shemaiah, a descendant of Bunni, with the members of his house; Shabbethai and Jozabad, “of the heads of the Levites over the outward business of the house of God,” *i.e.* two heads of the Levites who had the care of the outward business of the temple, probably charged with the preservation of the building and furniture, and the office of seeing that all things necessary for the temple worship were duly delivered. The names Shabbethai and Jozabad have already occurred, viii. 7, as those of two Levites, and are here also personal names of heads of Levites, as the addition *מֵרָאשֵׁי הַלְוִיִּם* informs us. As the office of these two is stated, so also is that of those next following in ver. 17; whence it appears that Shemaiah, of whom no such particular is given, was head of the Levites charged with attending on the priests at the sacrificial worship (the *מְלָאכֶת בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים*, ver. 22). The three named in ver. 17, Mattaniah an Asaphite, Bakbukiah, and Abda a Jeduthunite, are the chiefs of the three Levitical orders of singers. Mattaniah is called *רֹאשׁ הַתְּחִלָּה*, head of the beginning, which gives no meaning; and should probably, as in the LXX. and Vulgate, be read *רֹאשׁ הַתְּהִלָּה*: head of the songs of praise,—he praised for who praised, *i.e.* sounded the *Hodu* for prayer; comp. 1 Chron. xvi. 5, where Asaph is called the chief of the band of



singers. He is followed by Bakkukiah as second, that is, leader of the second band (מִשְׁנֵהוּ מֵאַחֲרָיו like מִשְׁנֵהוּ, 1 Chron. xvi. 5); and Abda the Jeduthunite, as leader of the third. All the Levites in the holy city, *i.e.* all who dwelt in Jerusalem, amounted to two hundred and eighty-four individuals or fathers of families. The number refers only to the three classes named vers. 15-17. For the gatekeepers are separately numbered in ver. 19 as one hundred and seventy-two, of the families of Akkub and Talmon.

Certain special remarks follow in vers. 20-24.—Ver. 20 states that the rest of the Israelites, priests, and Levites dwelt in all the (other) cities of Judah, each in his inheritance. These cities are enumerated in ver. 25 sq.—Ver. 21. The Nethinim dwelt in Ophel, the southern slope of Mount Moriah; see rem. on iii. 26. Their chiefs were Zihah and Gispa. צִיְהָה occurs Ezra ii. 43, followed by חִשְׁפָּא, as head of a division of Levites; whence Bertheau tries, but unsuccessfully, to identify the latter name with חִשְׁפָּא. For it does not follow that, because a division of Nethinim was descended from Hasupha, that Gishpa, one of the chiefs of those Nethinim who dwelt on Ophel, must be the same individual as this Hasupha.—Ver. 22. And the overseer (chief) of the Levites at Jerusalem was Uzzi, the son of Bani, of the sons of Asaph, the singers, in the business of the house of God. The מְלָאכָה of the house of God was the duty of the Levites of the house of Shemaiah, ver. 15. Hence the remark in the present verse is supplementary to ver. 15. The chiefs or presidents of the two other divisions of Levites—of those to whom the outward business was entrusted, and of the singers—are named in vers. 16 and 17; while, in the case of those entrusted with the business of the house of God, ver. 15, the chiefs are not named, probably because they were over the singers, the sons of Asaph, who in ver. 15 had not as yet been named. This is therefore done afterwards in ver. 22. לְנֶגֶד מְלָאכָתָא, *coram opere, i.e. circa ea negotia, quæ coram in templo exigenda erant* (Burm. in Ramb.), does not belong to הַמְשָׁרְרִים, but to פְּקִידֵי הָאֱלֹהִים: Uzzi was overseer of the Levites in respect of their business in the house of God, *i.e.* of those

Levites who had the charge of this business. The reason of this is thus given in ver. 23: "for a command of the king was over them, and an ordinance was over the singers concerning the matter of every day." *עֲלֵיהֶם* refers to the Levites. "A command of the king was over them" means: the king had commanded them. This command was concerning *דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ*, the matter of every day. The words stand at the end of the verse, because they refer to the two subjects *הַמֶּלֶךְ* and *אַמְנָה*. *אַמְנָה* is an arrangement depending upon mutual agreement, a treaty, an obligation entered into by agreement; comp. x. 1. The meaning of the verse is: The every-day matter was laid upon the Levites by the command of the king, upon the singers by an agreement entered into. *דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ*, *pensum quotidianum*, is correctly explained by Schmid: *de rebus necessariis in singulos dies*. That we are not to understand thereby the contribution for every day, the rations of food (Ramb., Berth.), but the duty to be done on each day, is obvious from the context, in which not provisions, but the business of the Levites, is spoken of; and Uzzi the Asaphite was placed over the Levites in respect of their business in the house of God, and not in respect of food and drink. The business of the Levites in the house of God was determined by the command of the king; the business of the singers, on the contrary, especially that one of the singers should exercise a supervision over the services of the Levites in worship, was made the matter of an *אַמְנָה*, an agreement entered into among themselves by the different divisions of Levites. The king is not David, who once regulated the services of the Levites (1 Chron. xxiii. 4 sq.), but the Persian king Artaxerxes, who is mentioned as *הַמֶּלֶךְ* in ver. 24; and *מִצִּיַּת הַמֶּלֶךְ* undoubtedly refers to the full power bestowed by Artaxerxes upon Ezra to order all that concerned the worship of God at Jerusalem; Ezra vii. 12 sq.—Ver. 24. Finally, the official is named who had to transact with the king the affairs of the people, *i.e.* of the whole Jewish community in Judah and Jerusalem. Pethahiah, a Jew of the descendants of Zerah, was at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people. *לִיד הַמֶּלֶךְ* can scarcely be understood



of a royal commissioner at Jerusalem, but certainly designates an official transacting the affairs of the Jewish community at the hand of the king, at his court.

Vers. 25-36. *The inhabitants of the towns of Judah and Benjamin.*—The heads who, with their houses, inhabited country districts are here no longer enumerated, but only the towns, with their adjacent neighbourhoods, which were inhabited by Jews and Benjamites; and even these are but summarily mentioned.—Vers. 25-30. The districts inhabited by the children of Judah. “And with respect to the towns in their fields, there dwelt of the sons of Judah in Kirjath-arba and its daughters,” etc. The use of אֵל as an introductory or emphatic particle is peculiar to this passage, אֵל being elsewhere customary in this sense; comp. Ew. § 310, a. אֵל denotes a respect to something. חֲצֵרִים, properly enclosures, signifies, according to Lev. xxv. 31, villages, towns, boroughs, without walls. שָׂדֵה, fields, field boundaries. בְּנוֹתֶיהָ, the villages and estates belonging to a town; as frequently in the lists of towns in the book of Joshua. Kirjath-arba is Hebron, Gen. xxiii. 2. Jekabzeel, like Kabzeel, Josh. xv. 21. חֲצֵרֶיהָ, its enclosed places, the estates belonging to a town, as in Josh. xv. 45 sq. Jeshua, mentioned only here, and unknown. Moladah and Beth-phelet, Josh. xv. 26, 27. Hazar-shual, *i.e.* Fox-court, probably to be sought for in the ruins of Thaly; see rem. on Josh. xv. 28. Beersheba, now Bir es Seba; see rem. on Gen. xxi. 31. Ziklag, at the ancient Asluj, see Josh. xv. 31. Mekonah, mentioned only here, and unknown. En-rimmon; see rem. on 1 Chron. iv. 32. Zareah, Jarmuth, Zanoah, and Adullam in the plains (see Josh. xv. 33-35), where were also Lachish and Azekah; see on 2 Chron. xi. 9.—In ver. 30b the whole region then inhabited by Jews is comprised in the words: “And they dwelt from Beer-sheba (the south-western boundary of Canaan) to the valley of Hinnom, in Jerusalem,” through which ran the boundaries of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah (Josh. xv. 8).—Vers. 31-35. The dwellings of the Benjamites. Ver. 31. The children of Benjamin dwelt from Geba to Michmash, Aija, etc. Geba, according to 2 Kings xxiii. 8

and Josh xiv. 10, the northern boundary of the kingdom of Judah, is the half-ruined village of Jibia in the Wady el Jib, three leagues north of Jerusalem, and three-quarters of a league north-east of Ramah (Er Ram); see on Josh. xviii. 24. Michmash (מִכְמָשׁ or מִכְמָשׁ), now Mukhmas, sixty-three minutes north-east of Geba, and three and a half leagues north of Jerusalem; see rem. on 1 Sam. xiii. 2. Aija (אֵיָא or אֵיָת, Isa. x. 28), probably one with אֵיָת, Josh. vii. 2, viii. 1 sq., the situation of which is still a matter of dispute, Van de Velde supposing it to be the present Tell el Hadshar, three-quarters of a league south-east of Beitin; while Schegg, on the contrary, places it in the position of the present Tayibeh, six leagues north of Jerusalem (see Delitzsch on Isa. vol. i. p. 277, etc., translation),—a position scarcely according with Isa. x. 28 sq., the road from Tayibeh to Michmash and Geba not leading past Migron (Makhrun), which is not far from Beitin. We therefore abide by the view advocated by Krafft and Strauss, that the ruins of Medinet Chai or Gai, east of Geba, point out the situation of the ancient Ai or Ajja; see rem. on Josh. vii. 2. Bethel is the present Beitin; see on Josh. vii. 2. The position of Nob is not as yet certainly ascertained, important objections existing to its identification with the village el-Isawije, between Anâta and Jerusalem; comp. Valentiner (in the *Zeitschrift d. deutsch. morgld. Gesellsch.* xii. p. 169), who, on grounds worthy of consideration, transposes Nob to the northern heights before Jerusalem, the road from which leads into the valley of Kidron. Ananiah (אֲנַנְיָה), a place named only here, is conjectured by Van de Velde (after R. Schwartz), *Mem.* p. 284, to be the present Beit Hanina (حنينا), east of Nebi Samwil; against which conjecture even the exchange of  $\gamma$  and  $\eta$  raises objections; comp. Tobler, *Topographie*, ii. p. 414. Hazor of Benjamin, supposed by Robinson (*Palestine*) to be Tell 'Assur, north of Tayibeh, is much more probably found by Tobler, *Topographie*, ii. p. 400, in Khirbet Arsûr, perhaps Assur, عصور, eight minutes eastward of Bir Nebâla (between Rama and



Gibeon); comp. Van de Velde, *Mem.* p. 319. Ramah, now er Râm, two leagues north of Jerusalem; see rem. on Josh. xviii. 25. Githaim, whither the Beerothites fled, 2 Sam. iv. 3, is not yet discovered. Tobler (*dritte Wand.* p. 175) considers it very rash to identify it with the village Katanneh in Wady Mansur. Hadid, 'Αδιδά, see rem. on Ezra ii. 33. Zeboim, in a valley of the same name (1 Sam. xiii. 18), is not yet discovered. Neballat, mentioned only here, is preserved in Beith Nebala, about two leagues north-east of Ludd (Lydda); comp. Rob. *Palestine*, and Van de Velde, *Mem.* p. 336. With respect to Lod and Ono, see rem. on 1 Chron. viii. 12; and on the valley of craftsmen, comp. 1 Chron. iv. 14. The omission of Jericho, Gibeon, and Mizpah is the more remarkable, inasmuch as inhabitants of these towns are mentioned as taking part in the building of the wall (iii. 2, 7).—Ver. 36. The enumeration concludes with the remark, “Of the Levites came divisions of Judah to Benjamin,” which can only signify that divisions of Levites who, according to former arrangements, belonged to Judah, now came to Benjamin, *i.e.* dwelt among the Benjamites.

CHAP. XII. 1-43.—LISTS OF PRIESTS AND LEVITES. DEDICATION OF THE WALL OF JERUSALEM.

The list of the inhabitants of the province, chap. xi., is followed by lists of the priests and Levites (xii. 1-26). These different lists are, in point of fact, all connected with the genealogical register of the Israelite population of the whole province, taken by Nehemiah (vii. 5) for the purpose of enlarging the population of Jerusalem, though the lists of the orders of priests and Levites in the present chapter were made partly at an earlier, and partly at a subsequent period. It is because of this actual connection that they are inserted in the history of the building of the wall of Jerusalem, which terminates with the narrative of the solemn dedication of the completed wall in vers. 27-43.

Vers. 1-26. *Lists of the orders of priests and Levites.*—Vers. 1-9 contain a list of the heads of the priests and

Levites who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Joshua. The high priests during five generations are next mentioned by name, vers. 10, 11. Then follow the names of the heads of the priestly houses in the days of Joiakim the high priest; and finally, vers. 22-26, the names of the heads of the Levites at the same period, with titles and subscriptions.

Vers. 1-9. Ver. 1*a* contains the title of the *first list*, vers. 1-9. "These are the priests and Levites who went up with Zerubbabel . . . and Joshua;" comp. Ezra ii. 1, 2. Then follow, vers. 1*b*-7, the names of the priests, with the subscription: "These are the heads of the priests and of their brethren, in the days of Joshua." וְאֶחָדָם still depends on רָאִי. The brethren of the priests are the Levites, as being their fellow-tribesmen and assistants. Two-and-twenty names of such heads are enumerated, and these reappear, with but slight variations attributable to clerical errors, as names of priestly houses in vers. 12-21, where they are given in conjunction with the names of those priests who, in the days of Joiakim, either represented these houses, or occupied as heads the first position in them. The greater number, viz. 15, of these have already been mentioned as among those who, together with Nehemiah, sealed as heads of their respective houses the agreement to observe the law, chap. x. Hence the present chapter appears to be the most appropriate place for comparing with each other the several statements given in the books of Nehemiah and Ezra, concerning the divisions or orders of priests in the period immediately following the return from the captivity, and for discussing the question how the heads and houses of priests enumerated in Neh. x. and xii. stand related on the one hand to the list of the priestly races who returned with Zerubbabel and Joshua, and on the other to the twenty-four orders of priests instituted by David. For the purpose of giving an intelligible answer to this question, we first place in juxtaposition the three lists given in Nehemiah, chaps. x. and xii.



NEH. X. 3-9. Priests who sealed the Covenant.	NEH. XII. 1-7. Priests who were Heads of their Houses.	NEH. XII. 12-21. Priestly Houses, and their respective Heads.
1. Seraiah.	1. Seraiah.*	Seraiah, . . Meraiah.
2. Azariah.	2. Jeremiah.*	Jeremiah, . . Hananiah.
3. Jeremiah.	3. Ezra.*	Ezra, . . Meshullam.
4. Pashur.	4. Amariah.*	Amariah, . . Jehohanan.
5. Amariah.	5. Malluch.*	Meluchi, . . Jonathan.
6. Malchijah.	6. Hattush.*	— — — — —
7. Hattush.	7. Shecaniah.*	Shebaniah, . . Joseph.
8. Shebaniah.	8. Rehum.*	Harim, . . Adna.
9. Malluch.	9. Meremoth.*	Meraioth, . . Helkai.
10. Harim.	10. Iddo.	Idiah, . . Zecariah.
11. Meremoth.	11. Ginnethon.*	Ginnethon, . . Meshullam.
12. Obadiah.	12. Abijah.*	Abijah, . . Zichri.
13. Daniel.	13. Miamin.*	Miniamin, . . — — —
14. Ginnethon.	14. Maadiah.*	Moadiah, . . Piltai.
15. Baruch.	15. Bilgah.*	Bilgah, . . Shammua.
16. Meshullam.	16. Shemaiah.*	Shemaiah, . . Jehonathan.
17. Abijah.	17. Joiarib.	Joiarib, . . Mathnai.
18. Mijamin.	18. Jedaiah.	Jedaiah, . . Uzzi.
19. Maaziah.	19. Sallu.	Sallai, . . Kallai.
20. Bilgai.	20. Amok.	Amok, . . Eber.
21. Shemaiah.	21. Hilkiah.	Hilkiah, . . Hashabiah.
	22. Jedaiah.	Jedaiah, . . Nethaneel.

When, in the first place, we compare the two series in chap. xii., we find the name of the head of the house of Minjamin, and the names both of the house and the head, Hattush, between Meluchi and Shebaniah, omitted. In other respects the two lists agree both in the order and number of the names, with the exception of unimportant variations in the names, as מְלוּכִי (*Chethiv*, ver. 14) for מְלוּדָה (ver. 2); שְׁבַנְיָה (ver. 3) for שְׁבַנְיָה (ver. 14, x. 6); רְחֵם (ver. 3), a transposition of חָרֵם (ver. 15, x. 6); מְרִיּוֹת (ver. 15) instead of מְרִמּוֹת (ver. 3, x. 6); עֲרִיא (*Chethiv*, ver. 16) instead of עֲדִיא (ver. 4); מִיָּמִין (ver. 5) for מְנַיִמִין (ver. 17); מוֹעֲדִיָּה (ver. 17) for מַעֲדִיָּה (ver. 4), or, according to a different pronunciation, מַעֲזִיָּה (x. 9); סָלִי (ver. 20) for סָלִי (ver. 7).—If we next compare the two lists in chap. xii. with that in chap. x., we find that of the twenty-two names given (chap. xii.), the fifteen marked thus \* occur also in chap. x.; עֲזַרְיָה, x. 4, being evidently a

clerical error, or another form of עֲרִיב, xii. 2, 13. Of the names enumerated in chap. x., Pashur, Malchiah, Obadiah, Daniel, Baruch, and Meshullam are wanting in chap. xii., and are replaced by Iddo and the six last: Joiarib, Jedaiah, Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah, and Jedaiah. The name of Eliashib the high priest being also absent, Bertheau seeks to explain this difference by supposing that a portion of the priests refused their signatures because they did not concur in the strict measures of Ezra and Nehemiah. This conjecture would be conceivable, if we found in chap. x. that only thirteen orders or heads of priests had signed instead of twenty-two. Since, however, instead of the seven missing names, six others signed the covenant, this cannot be the reason for the difference between the names in the two documents (chap. x., xii.), which is probably to be found in the time that elapsed between the making of these lists. The date of the list, chap. xii. 1-7, is that of Zerubbabel and Joshua (B.C. 536); that of the other in chap. xii., the times of the high priest Joiakim the son of Joshua, *i.e.*, at the earliest, the latter part of the reign of Darius Hystaspis, perhaps even the reign of Xerxes.

How, then, are the two lists in chap. xii. and that in chap. x., agreeing as they do in names, related to the list of the priests who, according to Ezra ii. 36-39 and Neh. vii. 39-42, returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Joshua? The traditional view, founded on the statements of the Talmud,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In Hieros. Taanith, f. 68a; Tosafta Taanith, c. 11, in Babyl. Erachin, f. 12b. The last statement is, according to Herzfeld, *Gesch.* i. p. 393, as follows: "Four divisions of priests returned from captivity, viz. Jedaiah, Charim, Paschur, and Immer. These the prophets of the returned captives again divided into twenty-four; whereupon their names were written upon tickets and put in an urn, from which Jedaiah drew five, and each of the other three before-named divisions as many: it was then ordained by those prophets, that even if the division Joiarib (probably the first division before the captivity) should return, Jedaiah should nevertheless retain his position, and Joiarib should be עֲרִיב לֵי (associated with him, belonging to him)." Comp. Bertheau on Neh. p. 230, and Oehler in Herzog's *Realencycl.* xii. p. 185, who, though refusing this tradition the value of independent historical testimony, still give it more weight than it deserves.



is, that the four divisions given in Ezra ii. and Neh. vii., "the sons of Jedaiah, the sons of Immer, the sons of Pashur and Harim," were the priests of the four (Davidic) orders of Jedaiah, Immer, Malchijah, and Harim (the second, sixteenth, fifth, and third orders of 1 Chron. xxiv.). For the sake of restoring, according to the ancient institution, a greater number of priestly orders, the twenty-two orders enumerated in Neh. xii. were formed from these four divisions; and the full number of twenty-four was not immediately completed, only because, according to Ezra ii. 61 and Neh. vii. 63 sq., three families of priests who could not find their registers returned, as well as those before named, and room was therefore left for their insertion in the twenty-four orders: the first of these three families, viz. Habaiah, being probably identical with the eighth class, Abia; the second, Hakkoz, with the seventh class of the same name. See Oehler's before-cited work, p. 184 sq. But this view is decidedly erroneous, and the error lies in the identification of the four races of Ezra ii. 36, on account of the similarity of the names Jedaiah, Immer, and Harim, with those of the second, sixteenth, and third classes of the Davidic division, —thus regarding priestly races as Davidic priestly classes, through mere similarity of name, without reflecting that even the number 4487, given in Ezra ii. 36 sq., is incompatible with this assumption. For if these four races were only four orders of priests, each order must have numbered about 1120 males, and the twenty-four orders of the priesthood before the captivity would have yielded the colossal sum of from 24,000 to 26,000 priests. It is true that we have no statement of the numbers of the priesthood; but if the numbering of the Levites in David's times gave the amount of 38,000 males, the priests of that time could at the most have been 3800, and each of the twenty-four orders would have included in all 150 persons, or at most seventy-five priests of the proper age for officiating. Now, if this number had doubled in the interval of time extending to the close of the captivity, the 4487 who returned with Zerubabel would have formed more than half of the whole number

of priests then living, and not merely the amount of four classes. Hence we cannot but regard Jedaiah, Immer, Pashur, and Harim, of Ezra ii. 36, as names not of priestly orders, but of great priestly races, and explain the occurrence of three of these names as those of certain of the orders of priests formed by David, by the consideration, that the Davidic orders were named after heads of priestly families of the days of David, and that several of these heads, according to the custom of bestowing upon sons, grandsons, etc., the names of renowned ancestors, bore the names of the founders and heads of the greater races and houses. The classification of the priests in Ezra ii. 36 sq. is genealogical, *i.e.* it follows not the division into orders made by David for the service of the temple, but the genealogical ramification into races and houses. The sons of Jedaiah, Immer, etc., are not the priests belonging to the official orders of Jedaiah, Immer, etc., but the priestly races descended from Jedaiah, etc. The four races (mentioned Ezra ii. 36, etc.), each of which averaged upwards of 1000 men, were, as appears from Neh. xii. 1-7 and 12, divided into twenty-two houses. From this number of houses, it was easy to restore the old division into twenty-four official orders. That it was not, however, considered necessary to make this artificial restoration of the twenty-four classes immediately, is seen from the circumstances that both under Joiakim, *i.e.* a generation after Zerubbabel's return (xii. 12-21), only twenty-two houses are enumerated, and under Nehemiah, *i.e.* after Ezra's return (in Neh. x.), only twenty-one heads of priestly houses sealed the document. Whether, and how the full number of twenty-four was completed, cannot, for want of information, be determined. The statement of Joseph. *Ant.* vii. 14. 7, that David's division into orders continues to this day, affords no sufficient testimony to the fact.

According, then, to what has been said, the difference between the names in the two lists of chap. x. and xii. is to be explained simply by the fact, that the names of those who sealed the covenant, chap. x., are names neither of orders nor houses, but of heads of houses living in the days



of Ezra and Nehemiah. Of these names, a portion coincides indeed with the names of the orders and houses, while the rest are different. The coincidence or sameness of the names does not, however, prove that the individuals belonged to the house whose name they bore. On the contrary, it appears from xii. 13 and 16, that of two Meshullams, one was the head of the house of Ezra, the other of the house of Ginnethon; and hence, in chap. x., Amariah may have belonged to the house of Malluch, Hattush to the house of Shebaniah, Malluch to the house of Meremoth, etc. In this manner, both the variation and coincidence of the names in chap. x. and xii. may be easily explained; the only remaining difficulty being, that in chap. x. only twenty-one, not twenty-two, heads of houses are said to have sealed. This discrepancy seems, indeed, to have arisen from the omission of a name in transcription. For the other possible explanation, viz. that in the interval between Joiakim and Nehemiah, the contemporary of Eliashib, one house had died out, is very far-fetched.

Vers. 8 and 9. *The heads of Levitical houses in the time of Jeshua the high priest.*—Of these names we meet, chap. x. 10 sq., with those of Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, and Sherebiah, as of heads who sealed the covenant; while those of Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son (?) of Kadmiel, are again cited in ver. 24 as heads of Levites, i.e. of Levitical divisions. The name יהודה does not occur in the other lists of Levites in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and is perhaps miswritten for הוריה (x. 10, xiii. 7). Mattaniah is probably Mattaniah the Asaphite, the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, head of the first band of singers (xi. 17); for he was עַל הַיְדוֹת, over the singing of praise. The form הַיְדוֹת, which should probably be read according to the Keri הַיְדוֹת, is a peculiar formation of an abstract noun; comp. Ewald, § 165, b.—Ver. 9. Bakbukiah and Unni (*Chethiv* עֲנִי), their brethren, were before them (opposite them) לְמִשְׁמְרוֹת, at the posts of service, i.e. forming in service the opposite choir. Ver. 24 forbids us to understand מִשְׁמְרוֹת as watch-posts, though the omission of the doorkeepers (comp. Ezra ii. 42) is remarkable. Bakbu-

kiah recurs ver. 24; the name Unni is not again met with, though there is no occasion, on this account, for the inapt conjecture of Bertheau, that the reading should be וְעִנִּי or וְיַעֲנִי.

Vers. 10 and 11. A note on the *genealogy of the high-priestly line* from Jeshua to Jaddua is inserted, so to speak, as a connecting link between the lists of Levites, to explain the statements concerning the dates of their composition,—dates defined by the name of the respective high priests. The lists given vers. 1–9 were of the time of Jeshua; those from ver. 12 and onwards, of the days of Joiakim and his successors. The name יֹחָנָן, as is obvious from vers. 22 and 23, is a clerical error for יֹחָזָבֶד, Johanan, Greek *Ἰωάννης*, of whom we are told, Joseph. *Ant.* xi. 7. 1, that he murdered his brother Jesus, and thus gave Bagoses, the general of Artaxerxes Mnemon, an opportunity for taking severe measures against the Jews.

Vers. 12–21 contains the *list of the priestly houses and their heads*, which has been already explained in conjunction with that in vers. 1–7.

Vers. 22–26. The *list of the heads of the Levites*, vers. 22 and 24, is, according to ver. 26, that of the days of Joiakim, and of the days of Nehemiah and Ezra. Whence it follows, that it does not apply only to the time of Joiakim; for though Ezra might indeed have come to Jerusalem in the latter days of Joiakim's high-priesthood, yet Nehemiah's arrival found his successor Eliashib already in office, and the statements of vers. 22 and 23 must be understood accordingly.—Ver. 22. “With respect to the Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were recorded the heads of the houses, and also (those) of the priests during the reign of Darius the Persian.” To judge from the הַלְוִיִּם with which it commences, this verse seems to be the title of the list of Levites following, while the rest of its contents rather seems adapted for the subscription of the preceding list of priests (vers. 12–21). עַל מְלָכֻת, under the reign. The use of עַל with reference to time is to be explained by the circumstance that the time, and here therefore the reign of Darius, is re-



garded as the ground and soil of that which is done in it, as *e.g.* ἐπὶ νυκτί, upon night = at night-time. Darius is Darius Nothus, the second Persian monarch of that name; see p. 148, where also the meaning of this verse has been already discussed. In ver. 23, the original document in which the list of Levites was originally included, is alluded to as the book of the daily occurrences or events of the time, *i.e.* the public chronicle, a continuation of the former annals of the kingdom. יְמֵי וְעַד, and also to the days of Johanan, the son of Eliashib. So far did the official records of the chronicle extend. That Nehemiah may have been still living in the days of Johanan, *i.e.* in the time of his high-priesthood, has been already shown, p. 150. The statements in vers. 22 and 23 are aphoristic, and of the nature of supplementary and occasional remarks.—Ver. 24. The names Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, frequently occur as those of heads of Levitical orders: the two first in x. 12 sq., Ezra viii. 18 sq.; the two last in ver. 8, x. 10, and Ezra ii. 40; and the comparison of these passages obliges us to regard and expunge as a gloss the כִּנְיָ before Kadmiel. Opposite to these four are placed their brethren, whose office it was “to praise (and) to give thanks according to the commandment of David,” etc.: comp. 1 Chron. xvi. 4, xxiii. 30, 2 Chron. v. 13; and בְּמִצֹּתָו, 2 Chron. xxix. 25. מִשְׁמָר לְעֵמֶת מִשְׁמָר, ward opposite ward, elsewhere used of the gatekeepers, 1 Chron. xxvi. 16, is here applied to the position of the companies of singers in divine worship. The names of the brethren, *i.e.* of the Levitical singers, follow, ver. 25, where the first three names must be separated from those which follow, and combined with ver. 24. This is obvious from the consideration, that Mattaniah and Bakbukiah are mentioned in xi. 17 as presidents of two companies of singers, and with them Abda the Jeduthunite, whence we are constrained to suppose that עֲבֶדְיָה is only another form for עֲבֹדָה of xi. 17. According, then, to what has been said, the division into verses must be changed, and ver. 25 should begin with the name מִשְׁלֵם. Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub are chiefs of the doorkeepers; the two last

names occur as such both in xi. 19 and Ezra ii. 42, and even so early as 1 Chron. ix. 17, whence we perceive that these were ancient names of races of Levitical doorkeepers. In Ezra ii. 42 and 1 Chron. ix. 17, שְׁלֹם, answering to מִשְׁלָם of the present verse, is also named with them. The combination שְׁמָרִים שְׁוֹעָרִים מִשְׁמָר is striking: we should at least have expected שְׁוֹעָרִים שְׁמָרִים מִשְׁמָר, because, while שְׁוֹעָרִים cannot be combined with מִשְׁמָר, שְׁמָרִים may well be so; hence we must either transpose the words as above, or read according to xi. 19, שְׁמָרִים בְּשַׁעְרֵים. In the latter case, בְּשַׁעְרֵים is more closely defined by the apposition בְּאַסְפֵי הַשַּׁעְרִים: at the doors, viz. at the treasure-chambers of the doors. On אַסְפֵּים, see rem. on 1 Chron. xxvi. 15, 17.—Ver. 26 is the final subscription of the two lists in vers. 12–21 and vers. 24, 25.

Vers. 27–43. *The dedication of the wall of Jerusalem.*—The measures proposed for increasing the numbers of the inhabitants of Jerusalem having now been executed (vii. 5 and xi. 1 sq.), the restored wall of circumvallation was solemnly dedicated. Vers. 27–29 treat of the preparations for this solemnity.—Ver. 27. At the dedication (*i.e.* at the time of, בְּ denoting nearness of time) they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to keep the dedication. Only a portion of the Levites dwelt in Jerusalem (xi. 15–18); the rest dwelt in places in the neighbourhood, as is more expressly stated in vers. 28 and 29. וּשְׂמֵחָה, to keep the dedication *and* joy, is not suitable, chiefly on account of the following וּבְתוֹדוֹת, *and* with songs of praise. We must either read בְּשִׂמְחָה, dedication with joy (comp. Ezra vi. 16), or expunge, with the LXX. and Vulgate, the ו before בְּתוֹדוֹת. בְּ must be repeated before מִצִּלָּתֵם from the preceding words. On the subject, comp. 1 Chron. xiii. 8, xv. 16, and elsewhere.—Vers. 28, 29. And the sons of the singers, *i.e.* the members of the three Levitical companies of singers (comp. ver. 25 and xi. 17), gathered themselves together, both out of the Jordan valley round about Jerusalem, and the villages (or fields, הַצְּרִים, comp. Lev. xxv. 31) of Netophathi, and from Beth-Gilgal, etc. הַבְּכָר does not mean the district round



Jerusalem, the immediate neighbourhood of the city (Bertheau). For, according to established usage, הַבֶּכֶר is used to designate the Jordan valley (see rem. on iii. 22); and כְּבִיבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם is here added to limit the בֶּכֶר,—the whole extent of the valley of the Jordan from the Dead Sea to the Sea of Galilee not being intended, but only its southern portion in the neighbourhood of Jericho, where it widens considerably westward, and which might be said to be round about Jerusalem. The villages of Netophathi (comp. 1 Chron. ix. 16) are the villages or fields in the vicinity of Netopha, *i.e.* probably the modern village of Beit Nettif, about thirteen miles south-west of Jerusalem: comp. Rob. *Palestine*; Tobler, *dritte Wand.* p. 117, etc.; and V. de Velde, *Mem.* p. 336. Bertheau regards Beth-Gilgal as the present Jiljilia, also called Gilgal, situate somewhat to the west of the road from Jerusalem to Nablous (Sichem), about seventeen miles north of the former town. This view is, however, questionable, Jiljilia being apparently too distant to be reckoned among the כְּבִיבוֹת of Jerusalem. “And from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth.” With respect to Geba, see rem. on xi. 31. The situation of Azmaveth is unknown; see rem. on Ezra ii. 24 (p. 30). For the singers had built them villages in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and dwelt, therefore, not in the before-named towns, but in villages near them.—Ver. 30. The dedication began with the purification of the people, the gates, and the wall, by the priests and Levites, after they had purified themselves. This was probably done, judging from the analogy of 2 Chron. xxix. 20, by the offering of sin-offerings and burnt-offerings, according to some special ritual unknown to us, as sacrifices of purification and dedication. This was followed by the central-point of the solemnity, a procession of two bands of singers upon the wall (vers. 31-42).—Ver. 31. Nehemiah brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of those who gave thanks, and two processions. These went each upon the wall in different directions, and stopped opposite each other at the house of God. The princes of Judah are

the princes of the whole community,—Judah being used in the sense of יהוּדִים, iii. 34. מַעַל לַחוֹמָה, upwards to the wall, so that they stood upon the wall. הָעִמִּיד, to place, *i.e.* to cause to take up a position, so that those assembled formed two companies or processions. תוֹדָה, acknowledgment, praise, thanks, and then thankofferings, accompanied by the singing of psalms and thanksgivings. Hence is derived the meaning: companies of those who gave thanks, in vers. 31, 38, 40. וְתַהֲלֻכָתָם, *et processiones*, solemn processions, is added more closely to define תוֹדָה. The company of those who gave thanks consisted of a number of Levitical singers, behind whom walked the princes of the people, the priests, and Levites. At the head of one procession went Ezra the scribe (ver. 36), with one half of the nobles; at the head of the second, Nehemiah with the other half (38). The one company and procession went to the right upon the wall. Before לַיָּמִין we must supply, “one band went” (הַתּוֹדָה הָאַחַת הוֹלֶכֶת), as is evident partly from the context of the present verse, partly from ver. 38. These words were probably omitted by a clerical error caused by the similarity of תַּהֲלֻכָתָם to הוֹלֶכֶת. Thus the first procession went to the right, *i.e.* in a southerly direction, upon the wall towards the dung-gate (see rem. on iii. 14); the second, ver. 38, went over against the first (לְמֵאֵל), *i.e.* in an opposite direction, and therefore northwards, past the tower of the furnaces, etc. The starting-point of both companies and processions is not expressly stated, but may be easily inferred from the points mentioned, and can have been none other than the valley-gate, the present Jaffa gate (see rem. on ii. 13). Before a further description of the route taken by the first company, the individuals composing the procession which followed it are enumerated in vers. 32–36. After them, *i.e.* after the first company of them that gave thanks, went Hoshaiiah and half of the princes of Judah. Hoshaiiah was probably the chief of the one half of these princes. The seven names in vers. 33 and 34 are undoubtedly the names of the princes, and the ו before עֲוִרְיָה is explicative: even, namely. Bertheau’s remark, “After the princes came the orders of priests, Azariah,” etc., is in-



correct. It is true that of these seven names, five occur as names of priests, and heads of priestly houses, viz. : Azariah, x. 3; Ezra, xii. 2; Meshullam, x. 8; Shemaiah, x. 9 and xii. 6; and Jeremiah, xii. 2. But even if these individuals were heads of priestly orders, their names do not here stand for their orders. Still less do Judah and Benjamin denote the half of the laity of Judah and Benjamin, as Bertheau supposes, and thence infers that first after the princes came two or three orders of priests, then half of the laity of Judah and Benjamin, and then two more orders of priests. Ver. 38, which is said to give rise to this view, by no means confirms it. It is true that in this verse הַצִּי הָעָם, besides Nehemiah, are stated to have followed the company of those who gave thanks; but that הָעָם in this verse is not used to designate the people as such, but is only a general expression for the individuals following the company of singers, is placed beyond doubt by ver. 40, where הָעָם is replaced by הַצִּי הַפְּגָנִים; while, beside the half of the rulers, with Nehemiah, only priests with trumpets and Levites with stringed instruments (ver. 41) are enumerated as composing the second procession. Since, then, the priests with trumpets and Levites with musical instruments are mentioned in the first procession (vers. 35 and 36), the names enumerated in vers. 33 and 34 can be only those of the one half of the פְּגָנִים of the people, *i.e.* the one half of the princes of Judah. The princes of Judah, *i.e.* of the Jewish community, consisted not only of laymen, but included also the princes, *i.e.* heads of priestly and Levitical orders; and hence priestly and Levitical princes might also be among the seven whose names are given in vers. 33 and 34. A strict severance, moreover, between lay and priestly princes cannot be made by the names alone; for these five names, which may designate priestly orders, pertain in other passages to laymen, viz. : Azariah, in iii. 23; Ezra, as of the tribe of Judah, 1 Chron. iv. 17; Meshullam, Neh. iii. 4, x. 21, and elsewhere; Shemaiah, Ezra vi. 13, x. 31, 1 Chron. iii. 22, iv. 37 (of Judah), v. 4 (a Reubenite), and other passages (this name being very usual; comp. Simonis *Onomast.* p. 546); Jeremiah, 1 Chron.

v. 24 (a Manassite), xii. 4 (a Benjamite), xii. 10 (a Gadite). Even the name Judah is met with among the priests (ver. 36), and among the Levites, ver. 8, comp. also xi. 9, and that of Benjamin, iii. 33 and Ezra x. 32. In the present verses, the two names are not those of tribes, but of individuals, *nomina duorum principum* (R. Sal.).—Ver. 35. The princes of the congregation were followed by certain “of the sons of the priests” (seven in number, to judge from ver. 41) with trumpets; also by Jonathan the son of Zechariah, who, as appears from the subsequent וְיִחְזִקְיָהוּ, was at the head of the Levitical musicians, *i.e.* the section of them that followed this procession. His brethren, *i.e.* the musicians of his section, are enumerated in ver. 36,—eight names being given, among which are a Shemaiah and a Judah. “With the musical instruments of David, the man of God:” comp. 2 Chron. xxix. 26; 1 Chron. xv. 16, xxiii. 5; Ezra iii. 10. “And Ezra the scribe before them,” viz. before the individuals enumerated from ver. 32, immediately after the company of those who gave thanks, and before the princes, like Nehemiah, ver. 38.—Ver. 37. After this insertion of the names of the persons who composed the procession, the description of the route it took is continued. From “upon the wall, toward the dung-gate (31), it passed on” to the fountain-gate; and וַיֵּלֶךְ, before them (*i.e.* going straight forwards; comp. Josh. v. 6, 20, Amos iv. 3), they went up by the stairs of the city of David, the ascent of the wall, up over the house of David, even unto the water-gate eastward. These statements are not quite intelligible to us. The stairs of the city of David are undoubtedly “the stairs that lead down from the city of David” (iii. 15). These lay on the eastern slope of Zion, above the fountain-gate and the Pool of Siloam. הַמַּעֲלָה לַחוֹמָה might be literally translated “the ascent to the wall,” as by Bertheau, who takes the sense as follows: (The procession) went up upon the wall by the ascent formed by these steps at the northern part of the eastern side of Zion. According to this, the procession would have left the wall by the stairs at the eastern declivity of Zion, to go up upon the wall again by this ascent. There is, however, no reason for



this leaving of the wall, and that which Bertheau adduces is connected with his erroneous transposition of the fountain-gate to the place of the present dung-gate. *הַמַּעֲלָה לַחֹמָה* seems to be the part of the wall which, according to iii. 19, lay opposite the *עֶלְת הַנֶּשֶׁק הַמְּקֻצָּע*, a place on the eastern edge of Zion, where the wall was carried over an elevation of the ground, and where consequently was an ascent in the wall. Certainly this cannot be insisted upon, because the further statement *מֵעַל לְבֵית דָּוִד* is obscure, the preposition *לְ* admitting of various interpretations, and the situation of the house of David being uncertain. Bertheau, indeed, says: “*וְעַד* in the following words corresponds with *מֵעַל* before *לְבֵית דָּוִד*: a wall over the house of David is not intended; and the meaning is rather, that after they were come as far as the wall, they then passed over the house of David, *i.e.* the place called the house of David, even to the water-gate.” But the separation of *מֵעַל* from *לְבֵית דָּוִד* is decidedly incorrect, *לְ* being in the preceding and following passages always used in combination, and forming one idea; comp. ver. 31 (twice) and vers. 38 and 39. Hence it could scarcely be taken here in ver. 37 in a different sense from that which it has in 31 and 38. Not less objectionable is the notion that the house of David is here put for a place called the house of David, on which a palace of David formerly stood, and where perhaps the remains of an ancient royal building might still have been in existence. By the house of David is meant, either the royal palace built (according to Thenius) by Solomon at the north-eastern corner of Zion, opposite the temple, or some other building of David, situate south of this palace, on the east side of Zion. The former view is more probable than the latter. We translate *מֵעַל לְבֵית דָּ*, past the house of David. For, though *מֵעַל לַחֹמָה* must undoubtedly be so understood as to express that the procession went upon the wall (which must be conceived of as tolerably broad), yet *מֵעַל לְמִגְדָּל*, ver. 38, can scarcely mean that the procession also went up over the tower which stood near the wall. In the case of the gates, too, *מֵעַל לְ* cannot mean over upon; for it is inconceivable that this solemn procession should have gone

over the roof of the gates; and we conclude, on the contrary, that it passed beside the gates and towers. Whether the route taken by the procession from the house of David to the water-gate in the east were straight over the ridge of Ophel, which ran from about the horse-gate to the water-gate, or upon the wall round Ophel, cannot be determined, the description being incomplete. After the house of David, no further information as to its course is given; its halting-place, the water-gate, being alone mentioned.

The route taken by the second company is more particularly described.—Vers. 38 and 39. “And the second company of them that gave thanks, which went over against, and which I and the (other) half of the people followed, (went) upon the wall past the tower of the furnaces, as far as the broad wall; and past the gate of Ephraim, and past the gate of the old (wall), and past the fish-gate, and past the tower Hananeel and the tower Hammeah, even to the sheep-gate: and then took up its station at the prison-gate.” לְמוֹאֵל (in this form with א only here; elsewhere מוֹל, Deut. i. 1, or מוֹל), over against, opposite, *sc.* the first procession, therefore towards the opposite side, *i.e.* to the left; the first having gone to the right, *viz.* from the valley-gate northwards upon the northern wall. וְאֲנִי אַחֲרֵיהֶם וְנִי (and I behind them) is a circumstantial clause, which we may take relatively. The order of the towers, the lengths of wall, and the gates, exactly answer to the description in chap. iii. 1–12, with these differences:—*a.* The description proceeds from the sheep-gate in the east to the valley-gate in the west; while the procession moved in the opposite direction, *viz.* from the valley-gate to the sheep-gate. *b.* In the description of the building of the wall, chap. iii., the gate of Ephraim is omitted (see *rem.* on iii. 8, p. 170). *c.* In the description, the prison-gate at which the procession halted is also unmentioned, undoubtedly for the same reason as that the gate of Ephraim is omitted, *viz.* that not having been destroyed, there was no need to rebuild it. שַׁעַר הַמִּצְדָּה is translated, gate of the prison or watch: its position is disputed; but it can scarcely be doubted that הַמִּצְדָּה is the court of the prison mentioned



iii. 25 (הַצֵּר הַמִּצְרָה), by or near the king's house. Starting from the assumption that the two companies halted or took up positions opposite each other, Hupfeld (in his before-cited work, p. 321) transposes both the court of the prison and the king's house to the north of the temple area, where the citadel, בִּירָה, *βῆρις*, was subsequently situated. But "this being forbidden," as Arnold objects (in his before-cited work, p. 628), "by the order in the description of the building of the wall, iii. 25, which brings us absolutely to the southern side," Bertheau supposes that the two processions which would arrive at the same moment at the temple,—the one from the north-east, the other from the south-east,—here passed each other, and afterwards halted opposite each other in such wise, that the procession advancing from the south-west stood on the northern side, and that from the north-west at the southern side of the temple area. This notion, however, having not the slightest support from the text, nor any reason appearing why the one procession should pass the other, it must be regarded as a mere expedient. In ver. 40 it is merely said, the two companies stood in the house of God; and not even that they stood opposite each other, the one on the north, the other on the south side of the temple. Thus they may have stood side by side, and together have praised the Lord. Hence we place the prison-gate also on the south-eastern corner of the temple area, and explain the name from the circumstance that a street ran from this gate over Ophel to the court of the prison near the king's house upon Zion, which, together with the gate to which it led, received its name from the court of the prison. Not far from the prison-gate lay the water-gate in the east, near which was an open space in the direction of the temple area (viii. 1). On this open space the two companies met, and took the direction towards the temple, entering the temple area from this open space, that they might offer their thank-offerings before the altar of burnt-offering (ver. 43). Besides, the remark upon the position of the two companies (ver. 40) anticipates the course of events, the procession following the second company being first described in vers. 40b-42. At the

end of ver. 40 the statement of ver. 38—I and the half of the people behind—is again taken up in the words: I and the half of the rulers with me. The סגנים are, as in ver. 32, the princes of the congregation, who, with Nehemiah, headed the procession that followed the company of those who gave thanks. Then followed (ver. 41) seven priests with trumpets, whose names are given, answering to the sons of the priests with trumpets (ver. 36a) in the first procession. These names are all met with elsewhere of other persons. These were succeeded, as in ver. 36, by eight Levites—eight individuals, and not eight divisions (Bertheau). And the singers gave forth sound, *i.e.* of voices and instruments,—whether during the circuit or after the two companies had taken their places at the temple, is doubtful. The president of the Levitical singers was Jezrahiah.—Ver. 43. The solemnity terminated with the offering of great sacrifices and a general festival of rejoicing. In the matter of sacrificing, the person of Nehemiah would necessarily recede; hence he relates the close of the proceedings objectively, and speaks in the third person, as he had done when speaking of the preparations for them, ver. 27, etc., only using the first (vers. 31, 38, 40) person when speaking of what was appointed by himself, or of his own position. The זבחים were chiefly thankofferings which, terminating in feasting upon the sacrifices,—and these feasts in which the women and children participated,—contributed to the enhancement of the general joy, the joy which God had given them by the success He had accorded to their work of building their wall. For a description of their rejoicing, comp. 2 Chron. xx. 27, Ezra vi. 22, and iii. 13.

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III.—NEHEMIAH'S OPERATIONS DURING HIS SECOND SOJOURN IN JERUSALEM.—CHAP. XII. 44—XIII. 31.

The joint efforts of Nehemiah and Ezra succeeded both in restoring the enactments of the law for the performance and



maintenance of the public worship, and in carrying out the separation of the community from strangers, especially by the dissolution of unlawful marriages (xii. 44—xiii. 3). When Nehemiah, however, returned to the king at Babylon, in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, and remained there some time, the abuses which had been abolished were again allowed by the people. During Nehemiah's absence, Eliashib the priest prepared a chamber in the fore-court of the temple, as a dwelling for his son-in-law Tobiah the Ammonite. The delivery of their dues to the Levites (the first-fruits and tenths) was omitted, and the Sabbath desecrated by field-work and by buying and selling in Jerusalem; Jews married Ashdodite, Ammonitish, and Moabitish wives; even a son of the high priest Joiada allying himself by marriage with Sanballat the Horonite. All these illegal acts were energetically opposed by Nehemiah at his return to Jerusalem, when he strove both to purify the congregation from foreigners, and to restore the appointments of the law with respect to divine worship (xiii. 4—31).

The narration of these events and of the proceedings of Nehemiah in the last section of this book, is introduced by a brief summary (in chap. xii. 44—xiii. 3) of what was done for the ordering of divine worship, and for the separation of Israel from strangers; and this introduction is so annexed to what precedes, not only by the formula בְּיוֹם הַהוּא (xii. 44 and xiii. 1), but also by its contents, that it might be regarded as a summary of what Nehemiah had effected during his first stay at Jerusalem. It is not till the connective וְלִפְנֵי מוֹדָה, "and before this" (xiii. 4), with which the recital of what occurred during Nehemiah's absence from Jerusalem, in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, begins, that we perceive that this description of the restored legal appointments relates not only to the time before the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, but applies also to that of Nehemiah's second stay at Jerusalem, and bears only the appearance of an introduction, being in fact a brief summary of all that Nehemiah effected both before and after the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes. This is a form of statement

which, as already remarked, p. 152, is to be explained by the circumstance that Nehemiah did not compile this narrative of his operations till the evening of his days.

Chap. xii. 44–xiii. 3. *The reformatations in worship and in social life effected by Nehemiah.*—Vers. 44–47. *Appointments concerning divine worship.* Ver. 44. And at that time were certain appointed over the chambers of store-places for the heave-offerings, the first-fruits, and the tenths, to gather into them, according to the fields of the cities, the portions appointed by the law for the priests and Levites. Though the definition of time בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא corresponds with the בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא of ver. 43, it is nevertheless used in a more general sense, and does not refer, as in ver. 43, to the day of the dedication of the wall, but only declares that what follows belongs chiefly to the time hitherto spoken of. יוֹם means, not merely a day of twelve or twenty-four hours, but very frequently stands for the time generally speaking at which anything occurs, or *certum quoddam temporis spatium*; and it is only from the context that we can perceive whether יוֹם is used in its narrower or more extended meaning. Hence בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא is often used in the historical and prophetic books, *de die*, or *de tempore modo memorato*, in contradistinction to הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, the time present to the narrator; comp. 1 Sam. xxvii. 6, xxx. 25, and the discussion in Gesen. *Thes.* p. 369. That the expression refers in the present verse not to any particular day, but to the time in question generally, is obvious from the whole statement, vers. 44–47. נִשְׁכָּחוֹת לְאוֹצְרוֹת are not chambers for the treasures, *i.e.* treasure-chambers; but both here and xiii. 12, אוֹצְרוֹת signify places where stores are kept, magazines; hence: these are chambers for store-places for the heave-offerings, etc.; comp. x. 38–40. With respect to נִשְׁכָּחוֹת, see rem. on iii. 30. לְשָׂרֵי הָעָרִים, according to the fields of the cities, according to the delivery of the tenth of the crop from the fields of the different cities. These contributions necessitated the appointment of individuals to have the care of the store-chambers; “for Judah rejoiced in the priests and the Levites who were ministering,” and therefore contributed willingly and abundantly “the portions of the law,”



*i.e.* the portions prescribed in the law. The form מְנָאוֹת is exchanged for מְנִיּוֹת, ver. 47 and xiii. 10. הָעֹמְדִים is a shorter expression for לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, Deut. x. 8: standing before the Lord, *i.e.* ministering.—Ver. 45. And they cared for the care of their God, etc.; *i.e.* they observed all that was to be observed, both with respect to God and with respect to purification, *i.e.* they faithfully and punctually performed their office. On שָׁמַר מִשְׁמֶרֶת, see rem. on Gen. xxvi. 5 and Lev. viii. 35. “And (so also) the singers and doorkeepers,” *i.e.* they, too, observed the duties incumbent on them. This must be mentally supplied from the beginning of the verse. “According to the commandment of David and of Solomon his son;” comp. 2 Chron. viii. 14 and 1 Chron. xxiv. 26. ו must be inserted before שְׁלֹמֹה, as in the LXX. and Vulgate, after the analogy of 2 Chron. xxxiii. 7 and xxxv. 4; for an asyndeton would be here too harsh. As ו is here omitted, so does it also appear superfluously before אֶסָּף, ver. 46, probably by a clerical error. The verse can be only understood as saying: “for in the days of David, Asaph was of old chief of the singers, and of the songs of praise, and of the thanksgiving unto God.” ו before Asaph is here out of place; for to take it as introducing a conclusion: in the days of David, therefore, was Asaph . . . seems unnatural. The י probably came into the text through a reminiscence of 2 Chron. xxix. 30 and xxxv. 15. The matter, however, of these passages is consistent with the naming of David *and* Asaph, while such a co-ordination is unsuitable in the present passage. The Masoretes have indeed attempted to make sense of the words by altering the singular ראש into the plural ראשי; but the Keri ראשי is nothing more than a worthless conjecture, arising partly from the unsuitableness of ו before אֶסָּף, and partly from the consideration that Henan and Ethan were, as well as Asaph, chiefs of bands of singers. Nehemiah, however, was not concerned in this passage about exactness of statement,—the mention of Asaph as chief of the singers being quite sufficient for the purpose of his remark, that from the times of David onward orders of singers had existed.—In ver. 47 this subject is concluded by the general

statement that all Israel, *i.e.* the whole community, in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, gave the portions prescribed in the law for the ministers of the sanctuary, singers, doorkeepers, Levites, and priests. מְקַדְּשִׁים, they were sanctifying, *i.e.* consecrants. הִקְדִּישׁ, to sanctify, said of the bringing of gifts and dues to the ministers of the sanctuary; comp. 1 Chron. xxvi. 27, Lev. xxvii. 14. On the matter itself, comp. x. 38 sq. and Num. xviii. 26–29.

Chap. xiii. 1–3. *Public reading of the law, and separation from strangers.*—Ver. 1. At a public reading of the law, it was found written therein, that no Ammonite or Moabite should come into the congregation of God, because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam to curse them, though God turned the curse into a blessing. This command, found in Deut. xxiii. 4–6, is given in full as to matter, though slightly abbreviated as to form. The sing. יִשְׁבֹּר relates to Balak king of Moab, Num. xxii. 2 sq., and the suffix of עָלַי to Israel as a nation; see the explanation of Deut. xxiii. 4 sq.—Ver. 3. This law being understood, all strangers were separated from Israel. עָרֵב is taken from Ex. xii. 38, where it denotes the mixed multitude of non-Israelitish people who followed the Israelites at their departure from Egypt. The word is here transferred to strangers of different heathen nationalities living among the Israelites. The date of the occurrence here related cannot be more precisely defined from the בְּיוֹם הַהוּא. Public readings of the law frequently took place in those days, as is obvious from chap. viii. and ix., where we learn that in the seventh month the book of the law was publicly read, not only on the first and second days, but also daily during the feast of tabernacles, and again on the day of prayer and fasting on the twenty-fourth of the month. It appears, however, from לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ, ver. 4, compared with ver. 6, that the reading vers. 1–3 took place in the interval between Nehemiah's first and second stay at Jerusalem. This view is not opposed by the facts mentioned vers. 4 sq. and 23 sq. The separation of the עָרֵב could not be carried out at once; and hence, notwithstanding repeated resolutions to sever them—



selves from strangers (ix. 2, x. 31), cases to the contrary might be discovered, and make fresh separations needful.

Vers. 4-31. *Nehemiah, on his return to Jerusalem, reforms the irregularities that had broken out during his absence.*—

Vers. 4-9. While Nehemiah was at Babylon with King Artaxerxes, Eliashib the high priest had given up to his relative, Tobiah the Ammonite (ii. 10, iii. 35, and elsewhere), a large chamber in the temple, *i.e.* in the fore-court of the temple (ver. 7), probably for his use as a dwelling when he visited Jerusalem (see rem. on ver. 8). On his return, Nehemiah immediately cast all the furniture of Tobiah out of this chamber, purified the chambers, and restored them to their proper use as a magazine for the temple stores. לְבֵנֵי מִזְבֵּחַ, before this (comp. Ewald, § 315, *c*), refers to the before-mentioned separation of the עֵרֶב from Israel (ver. 3). Eliashib the priest is probably the high priest of that name (iii. 1, xii. 10, 22). This may be inferred from the particular: set over (he being set over) the chambers of the house of our God; for such oversight of the chambers of the temple would certainly be entrusted to no simple priest, though this addition shows that this oversight did not absolutely form part of the high priest's office. For נָתַן, in the sense of to set, to place over, comp. 1 Kings ii. 35; the construction with נָתַן instead of עָל is, however, unusual, but may be derived from the local signification of נָתַן, upon, over. Ewald and Bertheau are for reading לְשֹׁכֵת instead of the sing. לְשֹׁכֶת, because in ver. 5 it is not הַלְשֹׁכֶת that is spoken of, but a large chamber. לְשֹׁכֵת may, however, be also understood collectively. Eliashib, being a relation of Tobiah (קָרוֹב like Ruth ii. 20), prepared him a chamber. The predicate of the sentence, ver. 4, follows in ver. 5 with וַיַּעַשׂ, in the form of a conclusion following the accessory sentence of the subject. How Tobiah was related to Eliashib is nowhere stated. Bertheau conjectures that it was perhaps only through the circumstance that Johanan, the son of Tobiah, had married a daughter of Meshullam ben Berechiah (vi. 18), who, according to iii. 30, was a priest or Levite, and might have been nearly related to the high priest. "A great chamber," perhaps made so by

throwing several chambers into one, as older expositors have inferred from ver. 9, according to which Nehemiah, after casting out the goods of Tobiah, had the chambers (plural) cleansed. The statement also in ver. 5*b*, that there (in this great chamber) were aforetime laid up not only the meat-offerings (*i.e.* oil and flour, the materials for them), the incense, and the sacred vessels, but also the tithe of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, and the heave-offerings of the priests, seems to confirm this view. This tenth is designated as *מַצֵּיֹת הַלֵּוִיִּם*, the command of the Levites, *i.e.* what was apportioned to the Levites according to the law, the legal dues for which *מִשְׁפָּט* is elsewhere usual; comp. Deut. xviii. 3, 1 Sam. ii. 13. The heave-offering of the priest is the tenth of their tenth which the Levites had to contribute, x. 39.—Ver. 6. In all this, *i.e.* while this was taking place, I was not in Jerusalem; for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes I went to the king, and after the lapse of some days I entreated the king (*נִשְׁאַלְתִּי* like 1 Sam. xx. 6, 28). What he entreated is not expressly stated; but it is obvious from what follows, “and I came to Jerusalem,” that it was permission to return to Judea. Even at his first journey to Jerusalem, Nehemiah only requested leave to make a temporary sojourn there, without giving up his post of royal cup-bearer; comp. ii. 5 sq. Hence, after his twelve years’ stay in Jerusalem, he was obliged to go to the king and remain some time at court, and then to beg for fresh leave of absence. How long he remained there cannot be determined,—*לְקֹץ יָמִים*, after the lapse of days, denoting no definite interval; comp. Gen. iv. 3. The view of several expositors, that *יָמִים* means a year, is devoid of proof. The stay of Nehemiah at court must, as already remarked, p. 149, have lasted longer than a year, since so many illegal acts on the part of the community as Nehemiah on his return discovered to have taken place, could not have occurred in so short a time. Artaxerxes is here called king of Babylon, because the Persian kings had conquered the kingdom of Babylon, and by this conquest obtained dominion over the Jews. Nehemiah uses this title to express also the fact that he had travelled to



Babylon.—Ver. 7. At his return he directed his attention to the evil committed by Eliashib in preparing a chamber in the court of the temple (כִּבְיֹן like Ezra viii. 15) for Tobiah. —Vers. 8, 9. This so greatly displeased him, that he cast out all the household stuff of Tobiah, and commanded the chamber to be purified, and the vessels of the house of God, the meat-offering and the frankincense, and probably the tenths and heave-offerings also, the enumeration being here only abbreviated, to be again brought into it. From the words *household* stuff, it appears that Tobiah used the chamber as a dwelling when he came from time to time to Jerusalem.

Vers. 10-14. The payment of dues to the Levites, and the delivery of the tenths and first-fruits, had also been omitted. —Ver. 10. "And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given; and the Levites and singers who had to do the work, were fled every one to his field." The Levites, *i.e.* the assistants of the priests, the singers, and also the porters, who are not expressly mentioned in this passage, were accustomed to receive during the time of their ministry their daily portions of the tenths and first-fruits (xii. 47). When then these offerings were discontinued, they were obliged to seek their maintenance from the fields of the towns and villages in which they dwelt (xii. 28 sq.), and to forsake the service of the house of God. This is the meaning of the בָּרַח, to flee to the fields.—Ver. 11. "Then I contended with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken?" It was the duty of the מְנַיִם, the heads of the community (comp. ii. 16), to see that the tithes, etc., were regularly brought to the house of God. Hence Nehemiah rebukes them by asking: Why is the house of God forsaken? *i.e.* through the non-delivery of the dues. On נָעִיב, comp. x. 40. This rebuke made the impression desired. Nehemiah assembled the Levites and set them in their place (comp. ix. 3, 2 Chron. xxx. 16, xxxv. 10), *i.e.* he brought them back to the performance of their official duties, and (ver. 12) all Judah (the whole community) brought the tithe of the corn, etc., into the store-chambers of the temple; comp. x. 38 sq., 2 Chron. xi. 11.—Ver. 13. "And I ap-

pointed as managers of the stores (or storehouses, *i.e.* magazines) Shemaiah the priest," etc. **וְאוֹצְרֵהָ**, Hiphil, for **אוֹצְרֵהָ**, is a denominative from **אוֹצַר**, to set some one over the treasure. Whether Shemaiah and Zadok are the individuals of these names mentioned in iii. 30, 29, cannot be determined. Zadok is called a **סוֹפֵר**, a writer or secretary, not a scribe in the Jewish sense of that word. A Pedaiah occurs viii. 4. **וְעַל יָדָם**, and at their hand Hanan, probably as an under-steward. These four were placed in this position because they were esteemed faithful. **וְעַלֵּיהֶם**, and it was (incumbent) on them (comp. 1 Chron. ix. 27, Ezra x. 12) to distribute to their brethren, *i.e.* to the priests and Levites, the portions due to them (ver. 10). Nehemiah concludes his account of this matter with the wish, that God may remember him concerning it (comp. v. 19), and not wipe out the kindnesses which he has shown to the house of God and its watches. **תִּמְחָה**, abbreviated from the Hiphil **תִּמְחֶה**, to cause to wipe out. **הַחֲסִדִּים** like 2 Chron. xxxv. 26. **מִשְׁמָרִים** (this form occurring only here), properly watches, watch-posts, here the office of attending on the service of the temple.

Vers. 15–22. *Field-work and trading on the Sabbath done away with.*—Ver. 15. In those days, *i.e.* when he was occupied with the arrangements for worship, Nehemiah saw in Judah (in the province) some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses, and also wine, grapes, and figs, and all kinds of burdens, and bringing it to Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day. The **מִבֵּיָאִים** is again taken up by the second **וּמִבֵּיָאִים**, and more closely defined by the addition: to Jerusalem. Robinson describes an ancient wine-press in his *Biblical Researches*, p. 178. On **בַּל-מִשָּׂא**, comp. Jer. xvii. 21 sq. **וְאֶעֱדָר**, and I testified (against them), *i.e.* warned them on the day wherein they sold victuals. **צִיר**, food, victuals; Ps. cxxxii. 15, Josh. ix. 5, 14. He warned them no longer to sell victuals on the Sabbath-day. Bertheau, on the contrary, thinks that Nehemiah saw how the market people in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem started while it was still the Sabbath, not for the purpose of selling during that day, but for that of being early in the market



on the next day, or the next but one. The text, however, offers no support to such a notion. In ver. 16 it is expressly said that selling took place in Jerusalem on the Sabbath; and the very bringing thither of wine, grapes, etc., on the Sabbath, presupposes that the sale of these articles was transacted on that day.—Ver. 16. Tyrians also were staying therein, bringing fish and all kind of ware (מִכָּר), and sold it on the Sabbath to the sons of Judah and in Jerusalem. יָשַׁב is by most expositors translated, to dwell; but it is improbable that Tyrians would at that time dwell or settle at Jerusalem: hence יָשַׁב here means to sit, *i.e.* to stay awhile undisturbed, to tarry.—Vers. 17, 18. Nehemiah reprov'd the nobles of Judah for this profanation of the Sabbath, reminding them how their fathers (forefathers) by such acts (as rebuked *e.g.* by Jeremiah, chap. xvii. 21 sq.) had brought upon the people and the city great evil, *i.e.* the misery of their former exile and present oppression; remarking in addition, “and ye are bringing more wrath upon Israel, profaning the Sabbath,” *i.e.* you are only increasing the wrath of God already lying upon Israel, by your desecration of the Sabbath. Comp. on the last thought, Ezra x. 10, 14. He also instituted measures for the abolition of this trespass.—Ver. 19. He commanded that the gates of Jerusalem should be closed when it began to be dark before the Sabbath, and not re-opened till the Sabbath was over. In the description of this measure the command and its execution are intermixed, or rather the execution is brought forward as the chief matter, and the command inserted therein. “And it came to pass, as soon as the gates of Jerusalem were dark (*i.e.* when it was dark in the gates) before the Sabbath, I commanded, and the gates were shut; and I commanded that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath,” *i.e.* after sunset on the Sabbath-day. עָלָל, in the sense of to grow dark, occurs in Hebrew only here, and is an Aramæan expression. Nehemiah also placed some of his servants at the gates, that no burdens, *i.e.* no wares, victuals, etc., might be brought in on the Sabbath. אֶשְׁרָ is wanting before לֹא יָבִיאוּ; the command is directly alluded to, and, with

the command, must be supplied before **לֹא יָבוֹא**. The placing of the watch was necessary, because the gates could not be kept strictly closed during the whole of the day, and ingress and egress thus entirely forbidden to the inhabitants.—Ver. 20. Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of ware remained throughout the night outside Jerusalem, once and twice. Thus, because egress from the city could not be refused to the inhabitants, the rest of the Sabbath was broken outside the gates. Nehemiah therefore put an end to this misdemeanour also.—Ver. 21. He warned the merchants to do this no more, threatening them: “If you do (this) again (*i.e.* pass the night before the walls), I will lay hands on you,” *i.e.* drive you away by force. The form **לָנִים** for **לָנִים** occurs only here as a “semi-passive” formation; comp. Ewald, § 151, *b*. From that time forth they came no more on the Sabbath.—Ver. 22. A further measure taken by Nehemiah for the sanctification of the Sabbath according to the law, is so briefly narrated, that it does not plainly appear in what it consisted. “I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and they should come keep the gates to sanctify the Sabbath-day.” The meaning of the words **בָּאִים שְׁמֵרִים הַשְּׁעָרִים** is doubtful. The Masoretes have separated **בָּאִים** from **שְׁמֵרִים** by Sakeph; while de Wette, Bertheau, and others combine these words: and that they should come to the keepers of the doors. This translation cannot be justified by the usage of the language; for **בֹּא** with an accusative of the person occurs only, as may be proved, in prophetic and poetical diction (Job xx. 22; Prov. x. 24; Isa. xli. 25; Ezek. xxxii. 11), and then in the sense of to come upon some one, to surprise him, and never in the meaning of to come or go to some one. Nor does this unjustifiable translation give even an appropriate sense. Why should the Levites go to the doorkeepers to sanctify the Sabbath? Bertheau thinks it was for the purpose of solemnly announcing to the doorkeepers that the holy day had begun, or to advertise them by some form of consecration of its commencement. This, however, would have been either a useless or unmeaning ceremony. Hence we must relinquish this connection of



the words, and either combine שְׁמָרִים הַשְּׁעָרִים as an asyndeton with בָּאִים: coming and watching the gates, or: coming as watchers of the gates; and then the measure taken would consist in the appointment of certain Levites to keep the gates on the Sabbath, as well as the ordinary keepers, thus consecrating the Sabbath as a holy day above ordinary days. Nehemiah concludes the account of the abolition of this irregularity, as well as the preceding, by invoking a blessing upon himself; comp. rem. on ver. 14. הִנָּקָה עָלַי like Joel ii. 17.

Vers. 23-29. *Marriages with foreign wives dissolved.*—Vers. 23 and 24. “In those days I also saw, *i.e.* visited, the Jews who had brought home Ashdodite, Ammonite, and Moabite wives; and half of their children spoke the speech of Ashdod, because they understood not how to speak the Jews’ language, and according to the speech of one and of another people.” It is not said, I saw Jews; but, the Jews who . . . Hence Bertheau rightly infers, that Nehemiah at this time found an opportunity of seeing them, perhaps upon a journey through the province. From the circumstance, too, that a portion of the children of these marriages were not able to speak the language of the Jews, but spoke the language of Ashdod, or of this or that nation from which their mothers were descended, we may conclude with tolerable certainty, that these people dwelt neither in Jerusalem nor in the midst of the Jewish community, but on the borders of the nations to which their wives belonged. הוֹשִׁיב like Ezra x. 2. וּבְנֵיהֶם precedes in an absolute sense: and as for their children, one half (of them) spake. יְהוּדִית (comp. 2 Kings xviii. 26, Isa. xxxvi. 11, 2 Chron. xxxii. 18) is the language of the Jewish community, the vernacular Hebrew. The sentence וּבְלִשׁוֹן עַם וָעַם is an explanatory parenthesis, still depending upon מְדַבֵּר: spake according to the language, *i.e.* spake the language, of this and that people (of their mothers). The speech of Ashdod is that of the Philistines, which, according to Hitzig (*Urgeschichte u. Mythol. der Philistäer*), belonged to the Indo-Germanic group. The languages, however, of the Moabites and Ammonites were

undoubtedly Shemitic, but so dialectically different from the Hebrew, that they might be regarded as foreign tongues. —Ver. 25. With these people also Nehemiah contended (אָרִיב like vers. 11 and 17), cursed them, smote certain of their men, and plucked off their hair (מָרַט, see rem. on Ezra ix. 3), and made them swear by God: Ye shall not give your daughters, etc.; comp. x. 31. On the recurrence of such marriages after the separations effected by Ezra of those existing at his arrival at Jerusalem, comp. the remark, p. 135 sq. Nehemiah did not insist on the immediate dissolution of these marriages, but caused the men to swear that they would desist from such connections, setting before them, in ver. 26, how grievous a sin they were committing. “Did not Solomon, king of Israel, sin on account of these?” (עַל אֵלֶּה, on account of strange wives). And among many nations there was no king like him (comp. 1 Kings iii. 12 sq., 2 Chron. i. 12); and he was beloved of his God (alluding to 2 Sam. xii. 24), and God made him king over all Israel (1 Kings iv. 1); and even him did foreign women cause to sin (comp. 1 Kings xi. 1–3). “And for you is it heard to do (that ye do) all this great evil, to transgress against our God, and to marry strange wives?” Bertheau thus rightly understands the sentence: “If the powerful King Solomon was powerless to resist the influence of foreign wives, and if he, the beloved God, found in his relation to God no defence against the sin to which they seduced him, is it not unheard of for you to commit so great an evil?” He also rightly explains הִנְשַׁמֵּעַ according to Deut. ix. 32; while Gesenius in his *Thes.* still takes it, like Rambach, as the first person imperf.: *nobisne morem geramus faciendo*; or: Should we obey you to do so great an evil? (de Wette); which meaning—apart from the consideration that not obedience, but only toleration of the illegal act, is here in question—greatly weakens, if it does not quite destroy, the contrast between Solomon and לָכֶם.—Ver. 28. Nehemiah acted with greater severity towards one of the sons of Joiada the high priest, and son-in-law of Sanballat. He drove him from him (מֵעָלַי, that he might not be a burden to me). The reason for



this is not expressly stated, but is involved in the fact that he was son-in-law to Sanballat, *i.e.* had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite (ii. 10), who was so hostile to Nehemiah and to the Jewish community in general, and would not comply with the demand of Nehemiah that he should dismiss this wife. In this case, Nehemiah was obliged to interfere with authority. For this marriage was a pollution of the priesthood, and a breach of the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites. Hence he closes the narrative of this occurrence with the wish, ver. 29, that God would be mindful of them (לָהֶם, of those who had done such evil) on account of this pollution, etc., *i.e.* would punish or chastise them for it. נִאָּסָה, *stat. constr. pl.* from נָאָס, pollution (*plurale tant.*). It was a pollution of the priesthood to marry a heathen woman, such marriage being opposed to the sacredness of the priestly office, which a priest was to consider even in the choice of a wife, and because of which he might marry neither a whore, nor a feeble nor a divorced woman, while the high priest might marry only a virgin of his own people (Lev. xxi. 7, 14). The son of Joiada who had married a daughter of Sanballat was not indeed his presumptive successor (Johanan, xii. 11), for then he would have been spoken of by name, but a younger son, and therefore a simple priest; he was, however, so nearly related to the high priest, that by his marriage with a heathen woman the holiness of the high-priestly house was polluted, and therewith also "the covenant of the priesthood," *i.e.* not the covenant of the everlasting priesthood which God granted to Phinehas for his zeal (Num. xxv. 13), but the covenant which God concluded with the tribe of Levi, the priesthood, and the Levites, by choosing the tribe of Levi, and of that tribe Aaron and his descendants, to be His priest (לְכֹהֲנָיו לוֹ, Ex. xxviii. 1). This covenant required, on the part of the priests, that they should be "holy to the Lord" (Lev. xxi. 6, 8), who had chosen them to be ministers of His sanctuary and stewards of His grace.

Josephus (*Ant.* xi. 7. 2) relates the similar fact, that Manasseh, a brother of the high priest Jaddua, married

Nikaso, a daughter of the satrap Sanballat, a Cuthite ; that when the Jewish authorities on that account excluded him from the priesthood, he established, by the assistance of his father-in-law, the temple and worship on Mount Gerizim (xi. 8. 2-4), and that many priests made common cause with him. Now, though Josephus calls this Manasseh a brother of Jaddua, thus making him a grandson of Joiada, and transposing the establishment of the Samaritan worship on Gerizim to the last years of Darius Codomannus and the first of Alexander of Macedon, it can scarcely be misunderstood that, notwithstanding these discrepancies, the same occurrence which Nehemiah relates in the present verses is intended by Josephus. The view of older theologians, to which also Petermann (art. *Samaria* in Herzog's *Realenc.* xiii. p. 366 sq.) assents, that there were two Sanballats, one in the days of Nehemiah, the other in the time of Alexander the Great, and that both had sons-in-law belonging to the high-priestly family, is very improbable ; and the transposition of the fact by Josephus to the times of Darius Codomannus and Alexander accords with the usual and universally acknowledged incorrectness of his chronological combinations. He makes, *e.g.*, Nehemiah arrive at Jerusalem in the twenty-fifth year of Xerxes, instead of the twentieth of Artaxerxes, while Xerxes reigned only twenty years.

Vers. 30 and 31. Nehemiah concludes his work with a short summary of what he had effected for the community. "I cleansed them from all strangers" (comp. ver. 23 sq., ix. 2, xiii. 1 sq.), "and appointed the services for the priests and Levites, each in his business, and for the wood-offering at times appointed (x. 35), and for the first-fruits" (x. 36 sq.). The suffix to *וּמִהַרְתִּים* refers to the Jews. *נָכַר*, strange, means foreign heathen customs, and chiefly marriages with heathen women, ver. 23 sq., ix. 2, xiii. 1. *הַעֲמִיד מִשְׁמָרוֹת*, properly to set a watch, here used in the more general sense of to appoint posts of service for the priests and Levites, *i.e.* to arrange for the attendance upon those offices which they had to perform at their posts in the temple, according to the law ; comp. x. 37, 40, xii. 44-46, xiii. 13. *וַיִּקְרְבוּ* and



וְלַבְבִּירִים, ver. 31, still depend on וְאַעֲמִידָהּ מִשְׁמֶרֶת : I appointed the attendance for the delivery of the wood for the altar at appointed times (comp. x. 35), and for the first-fruits, *i.e.* for bringing into the sanctuary the heave-offering for the priests. The בְּבִירִים are named as *pars pro toto*, instead of all the תְּרוּמוֹת prescribed by the law. On the arrangements connected with these two subjects, viz. the purification from heathen practices, and the restoration of the regular performance of divine worship, was Nehemiah's whole energy concentrated, after the fortification of Jerusalem by a wall of circumvallation had been completed. He thus earned a lasting claim to the gratitude of the congregation of his fellow-countrymen that returned from Babylon, and could conclude his narrative with the prayer that God would remember him for good. On this frequently-repeated supplication (comp. vers. 14, 22, and v. 19) Rambach justly remarks: *magnam Nehemiæ pietatem spirat*. This piety is, however—as we cannot fail also to perceive—strongly pervaded by the legal spirit of post-Babylonian Judaism.





THE BOOK OF ESTHER





# THE BOOK OF ESTHER

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## § I. NAME, CONTENTS, OBJECT, AND UNITY OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER.



HIS book bears the name of אֶסְתֵּר or מְנַלְתֵּי אֶסְתֵּר, book of Esther, also briefly that of מְנַלְתֵּי with the Rabbis, from Esther the Jewess, afterwards raised to the rank of queen, to whom the Jews were indebted for their deliverance from the destruction with which they were threatened, as related in this book.

Its contents are as follows :—Ahashverosh, king of Persia, gave, in the third year of his reign, a banquet to the grandees of his kingdom at Susa; and on the seventh day of this feast, when his heart was merry with wine, required the Queen Vashti to appear before his guests and show her beauty. When she refused to come at the king's commandment, she was divorced, at the proposal of his seven counsellors; and this divorce was published by an edict throughout the whole kingdom, lest the example of the queen should have a bad effect upon the obedience of other wives to their husbands (chap. i.). When the king, after his wrath was appeased, began again to feel a tenderness towards his divorced wife, the most beautiful virgins in the whole kingdom were, at the advice of his servants, brought to the house of the women at Susa, that the king might choose a wife at his pleasure. Among these virgins was Esther the Jewess, the foster-daughter and near relative of Mordochai, a Benjamite living in exile, who, when brought before the king, after the customary preparation, so pleased him, that he chose her for his queen. Her intercourse with Mordochai continued after her reception into the royal palace; and

during his daily visits in the gate of the palace, he discovered a conspiracy against the life of the king, and thus rendered him an important service (chap. ii.). Ahashverosh afterwards made Haman, an Agagite, his prime minister or grand vizier, and commanded all the king's servants to pay him royal honours, *i.e.* to bow down before him. When this was refused by Mordochai, Haman's indignation was so great, that he resolved to destroy all the Jews in the whole empire. For this purpose he appointed, by means of the lot, both the month and day; and obtained from the king permission to prepare an edict to all the provinces of the kingdom, appointing the thirteenth day of the twelfth month for the extermination of the Jews throughout the whole realm (chap. iii.). Mordochai apprised Queen Esther of this cruel command, and so strongly urged her to apply to the king on behalf of her people, that she resolved, at the peril of her life, to appear before him unbidden. When she was so favourably received by him, that he promised beforehand to grant whatever she had to request, even to the half of his kingdom, she first entreated that the king and Haman should eat with her that day. During the repast, the king inquired concerning her request, and she answered that she would declare it on the following day, if the king and Haman would again eat with her (iv. 1-8). Haman, greatly elated at this distinction, had the mortification, on his departure from the queen, of beholding Mordochai, who did not rise up before him, in the gate of the palace; and returning to his house, formed, by the advice of his wife and friends, the resolution of hanging Mordochai next day upon a gallows; for which purpose he immediately caused a tree fifty cubits high to be prepared (v. 9-14). Next night, however, the king, being unable to sleep, caused the records of the kingdom to be read to him, and was thereby reminded of the obligation he was under to Mordochai. When, on this occasion, he learnt that Mordochai had as yet received no reward for this service, he sent for Haman, who had resorted thus early to the court of the palace for the purpose of obtaining the royal permission for the execution of Mordochai, and



asked him what should be done to the man whom the king desired to honour. Haman, thinking this honour concerned himself, proposed the very highest, and was by the king's command obliged, to his extreme mortification, himself to pay this honour to Mordochai, his wife and friends interpreting this occurrence as an omen of his approaching ruin (vi.). When the king and Haman afterwards dined with Esther, the queen begged for her life and that of her people, and pointed to Haman as the enemy who desired to exterminate the Jews. Full of wrath at this information, the king went into the garden of the palace; while Haman, remaining in the room, fell at the feet of the queen to beg for his life. When the king, returning to the banquet chamber, saw Haman lying on the queen's couch, he thought he was offering violence to the queen, passed sentence of death upon him, caused him to be hanged upon the gallows he had erected for Mordochai (vii.), and on the same day gave his house to the queen, and made Mordochai his prime minister in the place of Haman (viii. 1, 2). Hereupon Esther earnestly entreated the reversal of Haman's edict against the Jews; and since, according to the laws of the Medes and Persians, an edict issued by the king and sealed with the seal-royal could not be repealed, the king commanded Mordochai to prepare and publish throughout the whole kingdom another edict, whereby the Jews were permitted, to their great joy and that of many other inhabitants of the realm (viii. 3-17), not only to defend themselves against the attacks of their enemies on the appointed day, but also to kill and plunder them. In consequence of this, the Jews assembled on the appointed day to defend their lives against their adversaries; and being supported by the royal officials, through fear of Mordochai, they slew in Susa 500, and in the whole kingdom 75,000 men, besides 300 more in Susa on the day following, but did not touch the goods of the slain. They then celebrated in Susa the fifteenth, and in the rest of the kingdom the fourteenth, day of the month Adar, as a day of feasting and gladness (ix. 1-19). Hereupon Mordochai and Queen Esther sent letters to all the Jews in the kingdom, in which

they ordered the yearly celebration of this day, by the name of the feast of Purim, *i.e.* lots, because Haman had cast lots concerning the destruction of the Jews (ix. 20–32). In conclusion, the documents in which are described the acts of Ahashverosh and the greatness of Mordochai, who had exerted himself for the good of his people, are pointed out (chap. x.).

From this glance at its contents, it is obvious that the *object* of this book is to narrate the events in remembrance of which the feast of Purim was celebrated, and to transmit to posterity an account of its origin. The aim of the entire contents of this book being the institution of this festival, with which it concludes, there can be no reasonable doubt of its *integrity*, which is also generally admitted. Bertheau, however, after the example of J. D. Michaelis, has declared the sections ix. 20–28 and 29–32 to be later additions, incapable of inclusion in the closely connected narrative of chap. i.–ix. 19, and regards chap. x. as differing from it both in matter and language. The sections in question are said to be obviously distinct from the rest of the book. But all that is adduced in support of this assertion is, that the words קָם, to institute (ix. 21, 27, 29, 31), סָף, to come to an end, to cease (ix. 28), the plural צִוְמוֹת, fasts (ix. 31), and an allusion to the decree in a direct manner, occur only in these sections. In such a statement, however, no kind of consideration is given to the circumstance that there was no opportunity for the use of קָם סָף and the plur. צִוְמוֹת in the other chapters. Hence nothing remains but the direct introduction of the decree, which is obviously insufficient to establish a peculiarity of language. Still weaker is the proof offered of diversity of matter between ix. 20–32 and chap. i.–ix. 19; Bertheau being unable to make this appear in any way, but by wrongly attributing to the word קָם the meaning: to confirm a long-existing custom.

## § II. HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

The feast of Purim is mentioned, 2 Macc. xv. 36, under the name of *Μαρδοχαϊκή ἡμέρα*, as a festival existing in the



time of Nicanor (about 160 B.C.); and Josephus tells us, *Ant.* xi. 6. 13, that it was kept by the Jews during a whole week. Now the institution of this festival must have been based upon an historical event similar to that related in this book. Hence even this is sufficient to show that the assertion of Semler, Oeder, and others, that this book contains a fictitious parable (*confictam esse universam parabolam*), is a notion opposed to common sense. For if this festival has been from of old celebrated by the Jews all over the world, it must owe its origin to an occurrence which affected the whole Jewish people, and the names Purim and Mordochai's day are a pledge, that the essential contents of this book are based upon an historical foundation. The name Purim (*i.e.* lots), derived from the Persian, can be suitably explained in no other manner than is done in this book, viz. by the circumstance that lots were cast on the fate of the Jews by a Persian official, who contemplated their extermination, for the purpose of fixing on a favourable day for this act; while the name, Mordochai's day, preserves the memory of the individual to whom the Jews were indebted for their deliverance. Hence all modern critics admit, that at least an historical foundation is thus guaranteed, while a few doubt the strictly historical character of the whole narrative, and assert that while the feast of Purim was indeed celebrated in remembrance of a deliverance of the Jews in the Persian empire, it was the existence of this festival, and the accounts given by those who celebrated it, which gave rise to the written narrative of the history of Esther (thus Bertheau). On the other hand, the historical character of the whole narrative has been defended not only by Hävernicks (*Einl.*), M. Baumgarten (*de fide libri Estheræ*, 1839), and others, but also, and upon valid grounds, by Staehelin (*spez. Einl. in die kanon. BB. des A. T.* § 51 sq.). The objections that have been raised to its credibility have arisen, first from the habit of making subjective probability the standard of historical truth, and next from an insufficient or imperfect attention to the customs, manners, and state of affairs at the Persian court on the one hand, or an incorrect view of the meaning

of the text on the other. When, *e.g.*, Bertheau as well as Bleek (*Einleit.* p. 286) says, "The whole is of such a nature that the unprejudiced observer cannot easily regard it as a purely historical narrative," Cleric. (*dissert. de scriptoribus librr. hist.* § 10) far more impartially and correctly decides: *Mirabilis sane est et παράδοξος (quis enim neget?) historia, sed multa mirabilia et a moribus nostris aliena olim apud orientales ut apud omnes alios populos contigerunt.* The fact that King Ahashverosh should grant his grand vizier Haman permission to publish an edict commanding the extermination of the Jews throughout his empire, is not challenged by either Bleek or Bertheau; and, indeed, we need not go so far as the despotic states of the East to meet with similar occurrences; the Parisian massacre of St. Bartholomew being a sufficient proof that the apparently incredible may be actual reality.<sup>1</sup> And all the other statements of this book, however seemingly unaccountable to us, become conceivable when we consider the character of King Ahashverosh, *i.e.*, as is now generally admitted, of Xerxes, who is described by Greek and Roman historians as a very luxurious, voluptuous, and at the same time an extremely cruel tyrant. A despot who, after his army had been hospitably entertained on its march to Greece, and an enormous sum offered towards defraying the expenses of the war, by Pythius the rich Lydian, could be betrayed into such fury by the request of the latter, that of his

<sup>1</sup> Rosenmüller (*bibl. Altertumsk.* i. 1, p. 379) calls to mind Mithridates king of Pontus, who, when at war with the Romans, secretly issued an order to all the satraps and local authorities of his realm, to assassinate all Romans, without distinction of age or sex, on an appointed day, in consequence of which 80,000 perished on one day; also the pasha of Zaid Mehmed in the sixteenth century, who surprised the nation of the Druses, and put to death all whom he met with (comp. Arvieux, *merkw. Nachr.* i. p. 391); and then continues: "It is almost more incredible that a ruler should, from the blindness of religious zeal, either execute or drive out of his realm 100,000 of his most diligent and prosperous subjects; yet the history of modern Europe offers us, in Ferdinand the Catholic, who chased 300,000 Jews from Spain, and Louis XIV., who, after putting some thousands of Protestants to death, banished hundreds of thousands from France, examples of such incredible events."



five sons who were in the army the eldest might be released, to be the comfort of his declining years, as to command this son to be hewn into two pieces, and to make his army pass between them (Herod. vii. c. 37-39; Seneca, *de ira*, vii. 17); a tyrant who could behead the builders of the bridge over the Hellespont, because a storm had destroyed the bridge, and command the sea to be scourged, and to be chained by sinking a few fetters (Herod. vii. 35); a debauchee who, after his return from Greece, sought to drive away his vexation at the shameful defeat he had undergone, by revelling in sensual pleasures (Herod. ix. 108 sq.); so frantic a tyrant was capable of all that is told us in the book of Esther of Ahashverosh.

Bleek's objections to the credibility of the narrative consist of the following points: *a.* That it is inconceivable that if the Persian despot had formed a resolution to exterminate all the Jews in his kingdom, he would, even though urged by a favourite, have proclaimed this by a royal edict published throughout all the provinces of his kingdom twelve months previously. In advancing this objection, however, Bleek has not considered that Haman cast lots for the appointment of the day on which his project was to be carried into execution; the Persians being, according to Herod. iii. 128, Cyrop. i. 6. 46, frequently accustomed to resort to the lot; while not only in Strabo's time, but to the present day also, everything is with them decided according to the dicta of soothsayers and astrologers. If, then, the lot had declared the day in question to be a propitious one for the matter contemplated, the haughty Haman would not reflect that the premature publication of the edict would afford a portion of the Jews the opportunity of escaping destruction by flight. Such reflections are inconsistent with absolute confidence in the power of magical decisions; and even if what was possible had ensued, he would still have attained his main object of driving the Jews out of the realm, and appropriating their possessions.—*b.* That at *this* time Judea, which was then almost wholly reinhabited by Jews, was among the provinces of Persia, and that hence the king's edict commanded the

extermination of almost all the population of that country. This, he says, it is difficult to believe; and not less so, that when the first edict was not repealed, the second, which granted the Jews permission to defend themselves against their enemies, should have resulted everywhere in such success to the Jews, even though, from fear of Mordochai the new favourite, they were favoured by the royal officials, that all should in all countries submit to them, and that they should kill 75,000 men, equally with themselves subjects of the king. To this it may be replied: that Judea was, in relation to the whole Persian realm, a very unimportant province, and in the time of Xerxes, as is obvious from the book of Ezra, by no means "almost wholly," but only very partially, inhabited by Jews, who were, moreover, regarded with such hostility by the other races dwelling among them, that the execution of the decree cannot appear impossible even here. With regard to the result of the second edict, the slaughter of 75,000 men, this too is perfectly comprehensible. For since, according to Medo-Persian law, the formal repeal of a royal edict issued according to legal form was impracticable, the royal officials would understand the sense and object of the second, and not trouble themselves much about the execution of the first, but, on the contrary, make the second published by Mordochai, who was at that time the highest dignitary in the realm, their rule of action for the purpose of ensuring his favour. Round numbers, moreover, of the slain are evidently given; *i.e.* they are given upon only approximate statements, and are not incredibly high, when the size and population of the kingdom are considered. The Persian empire, in its whole extent from India to Ethiopia, must have contained a population of at least 100,000,000, and the number of Jews in the realm must have amounted to from two to three millions. A people of from two to three millions would include, moreover, at least from 500,000 to 700,000 capable of bearing arms, and these might in battle against their enemies slay 75,000 men. Susa, the capital, would not have been less than the Stamboul of the present day, and would probably contain at least



half a million of inhabitants; and it by no means surpasses the bounds of probability, that in such a town 500 men should be slain in one day, and 300 more on the following, in a desperate street fight. Nor can the numbers stated be looked upon as too high a computation. The figures are only rendered improbable by the notion, that the Jews themselves suffered no loss at all. Such an assumption, however, is by no means justified by the circumstance, that such losses are unmentioned. It is the general custom of the scriptural historians to give in their narratives of wars and battles only the numbers of the slain among the vanquished foes, and not to mention the losses of the victors. We are justified, however, in supposing that the war was of an aggravated character, from the fact that it bore not only a national, but also a religious character. Haman's wrath against Mordochai was so exasperated by the information that he was a Jew, that he resolved upon the extermination of the people of Mordochai, *i.e.* of all the Jews in the realm (iii. 4-6). To obtain the consent of the king, he accused the Jews as a scattered and separated people, whose laws were different from the laws of all other nations, of not observing the laws of the king. This accusation was, "from the standpoint of Parseism, the gravest which could have been made against the Jews" (*Haev. Einl.* ii. 1, p. 348). The separation of the Jews from all other people, a consequence of the election of Israel to be the people of God, has at all times inflamed and nourished the hatred of the Gentiles and of the children of this world against them. This hatred, which was revived by the edict of Haman, could not be quenched by the counter-edict of Mordochai. Though this edict so inspired the royal officials with fear of the powerful minister, that they took part with, instead of against the Jews, yet the masses of the people, and especially the populations of towns, would not have paid such respect to it as to restrain their hatred against the Jews. The edict of Mordochai did not forbid the execution of that of Haman, but only allowed the Jews to stand up for their lives, and to slay such enemies as should attack them (viii. 11). The heathen were not thereby restrained from under-

taking that fight against the Jews, in which they were eventually the losers.—When, however, *c.* Bleek finds it “utterly unnatural” that, after the Jews had slain 500 of their foes in one day in Susa, the king should, at the request of Esther, whose vengeance and thirst of blood were not yet appeased, have granted an edict that the slaughter should be renewed on the following day, when no attack upon the Jews was permitted, his objection rests upon a sheer misunderstanding of the whole affair. The queen only requested that “it should be granted to the Jews in Susa to do to-morrow also, according to the decree of to-day” (ix. 13), *i.e.* “to stand for their lives, and slay all who should assault them” (viii. 11). This petition presupposes that the heathen population of Susa would renew the attack upon the Jews on the next day. Hence it is evident that Bleek’s assertion, that the heathen were not allowed on that day to renew their attack upon the Jews, is an erroneous notion, and one at variance with the text. Together with this erroneous assumption, the reproach of vengeance and bloodthirstiness raised against Esther is also obviated. Her foresight in securing the lives of her people against renewed attacks, betrays neither revenge nor cruelty. Unless the heathen population had attacked the Jews on the second day, the latter would have had no opportunity of slaying their foes. How little, too, the Jews in general were influenced by a desire of vengeance, is shown by the fact so repeatedly brought forward, that they laid not their hand on the spoil of the slain (ix. 9, 15), though this was granted them by the royal edict (viii. 11).—*d.* Bleek’s remaining objections are based partly upon misrepresentations of the state of affairs, and partly upon erroneous notions of Eastern customs.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* the remark that, though *all* Susa was thrown into consternation by the edict of Haman, it rejoiced greatly at the second; where Bleek has inserted *all* to make the matter appear incredible by exaggeration. In the text we only read “the city of Susa was perplexed” (iii. 15), “the city of Susa rejoiced and was glad” (viii. 15); *i.e.*, in the city of Susa there was in the one instance perplexity, in the other rejoicing. Also that the king published a special decree in all the provinces of his kingdom, that every man should be master in his own house,—a misin-



If, then, all the objections raised against the credibility of the narrative may be thus disposed of, we are perfectly justified in adhering to a belief in the historical character of the whole book, since even Bleek cannot deny, that some at least of "the customs and arrangements of the Persian court are both vividly and faithfully depicted." To this must be added the statement of the names of the individuals who take part in the narrative, *e.g.* the courtiers, i. 10; the seven princes of Persia, i. 14; the keeper of the women's houses, ii. 8 and 14; the ten sons of Haman, ix. 7-9, and others; and the reference to the book of the chronicles of the Medes and Persians, as the documents in which not only the acts of Ahashverosh, but also the greatness of Mordochai, were written (x. 2). As the numerous and otherwise wholly unknown names could not possibly be invented, so neither can the reference to the book of the chronicles be a mere literary fiction. When, therefore, Bertheau thinks, that the writer of this book, by thus bringing forward so many small details, by stating the names of otherwise unknown individuals, and especially by giving so much accurate information concerning Persian affairs and institutions,—the correctness of which is in all respects confirmed both by the statements of classical authors and our present increased knowledge of Oriental matters,—certainly proves himself acquainted with the scene in which the narrative takes place, with Persian names and affairs, but not possessed also of an historical knowledge of the actual course of events; we can perceive

terpretation of the passage i. 22; see the explanation of this verse. Finally, the difficulty that Esther, as queen-consort, should have concealed her nationality so long as is stated in the narrative, can exist only for those unacquainted with the state of affairs in the harem of an Oriental prince. The Persian monarchs, who had a fresh concubine for each day, would certainly be ignorant of the descent of each; and though, according to Herod. iii. 84, the queens were generally of the race of the Achæmenides, yet the same historian also relates (iii. 31) of Cambyses, that the royal *δικασταί* declared to him, with respect to his marriage with a sister, that: *τῷ βασιλεύοντι Περσέων ἐξεῖναι ποιεῖν τὸ αὐν βούληται*. The case, too, of a concubine being raised to the rank of queen by a Persian monarch is not inconceivable.

in this last inference only the unsupported decision of a subjectivistic antipathy to the contents of the book.

### § III. AUTHORSHIP AND DATE OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

No certain information concerning the *author* of this book is obtainable. The talmudic statement in *Baba bathr.* 15. 1, that it was written by the men of the Great Synagogue, is devoid of historical value; and the opinion of Clem. Al., Aben Ezra, and others, that Mordochai was its author, as is also inferred from ix. 20 and 23 by de Wette, is decidedly a mistaken one,—the writer plainly distinguishing in this passage between himself and Mordochai, who sent letters concerning the feast of Purim to the Jews in the realm of Persia. Other conjectures are still more unfounded. The date, too, of its composition can be only approximately determined. The opinion that in ix. 19 the long existence of the feast of Purim is presupposed, cannot be raised to the rank of a certainty. Nor does the book contain allusions pointing to the era of the Greek universal monarchy. This is admitted by Stähelin, who remarks, p. 178: "The most seemingly valid argument in support of this view, viz. that Persian customs are explained in this book, i. 1, 13 (for vii. 8, usually cited with these passages, is out of the question, and is the king's speech in answer to viii. 5), is refuted by the consideration, that the book was written for the information of Palestinian Jews; while Hävernicks, ii. 1, p. 361, refers to a case in Bohaeddin, in which this biographer of Saladin, p. 70, though writing for Arabs, explains an Arabian custom with respect to prisoners of war." On the other hand, both the reference to the chronicles of the Medes and Persians (x. 2), and the intimate acquaintance of the writer with Susa and the affairs of the Persian monarchy, decidedly point to the fact, that the date of its composition preceded the destruction of the Persian empire, and may perhaps have been that of Artaxerxes I. or Darius Nothus, about 400 B.C. The omission, moreover, of all reference to Judah and Jerusalem, together with the absence not only of theo-



cratic notions, but of a specially religious view of circumstances, favour the view that the author lived not in Palestine, but in the more northern provinces of the Persian realm, probably in Susa itself. For though his mode of representing events, which does not even once lead him to mention the name of God, is not caused by the irreligiousness of the author, but rather by the circumstance, that he neither wished to depict the persons whose acts he was narrating as more godly than they really were, nor to place the whole occurrence — which manifests, indeed, the dealings of Divine Providence with the Jewish people, but not the dealings of Jahve with the nation of Israel—under a point of view alien to the actors and the event itself, yet a historian acquainted with the theocratic ordinances and relations of Judah would scarcely have been capable of so entirely ignoring them.

#### § IV. THE CANONICITY OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

The book of Esther has always formed a portion of the Hebrew canon. It is included also among the twenty-two books which, according to Josephus, *c. Ap. i. 8*, were acknowledged by the Jews as *δικαίως πεπιστευμένα*. For Josephus, who repeatedly asserts, that the history of the Hebrews from Moses to Artaxerxes was written by the prophets and worthy to be believed, relates also in his *Jewish Antiquities* (l. xi. c. 6) the history of Esther, Mordochai, and Haman. Certain critics have indeed desired to infer, from the statement in the Talmud, *Jerush. Megill. 70. 4*, that “among the eighty elders who contended against the institution of the feast of Purim by Esther and Mordochai as an innovation in the law, there were more than thirty prophets,” that the Jews did not formerly attribute the same authority to the book of Esther as to the other Scriptures (Movers, *loci quidam historiæ canonis V. T. p. 28*; Bleek, *Einl. p. 404*); but even Bertheau doubts whether this passage refers to the whole book of Esther. For it treats unambiguously only of the fact chap. ix. 29–32, which is very specially stated

to have been an institution of Esther and Mordochai, and concerning which differences of opinion might prevail among the Rabbis. The further remark of Movers, *l.c.*, that the oldest patristic testimonies to the inclusion of this book in the canon are of such a nature, *ut ex iis satis verisimiliter effici possit, eum tunc recens canonum adjectum esse*, because it occupies the last place in the series of O. T. writings given by Origen, Epiphanius, and Jerome, according to Jewish authority, and because the canons of the Greek Church, which more accurately enumerate the books received by the synagogue, do not contain the book of Esther, is also incorrect. For (1.) the lists of the canonical books of the O. T. given by Origen (in Euseb. *hist. eccl.* vi. 25) and Epiphanius give these books not according to their order in the Hebrew canon, but to that of the Alexandrian version, while only Jerome places the book of Esther last. (2.) In the lists of the Greek Church this book is omitted only in that given in Euseb. *hist. eccl.* iv. 26, from the *eclogæ* of Melito, Bishop of Sardis, and in that of Gregory of Nazianzen, while it is included in those of Origen and Cyril of Jerusalem; a circumstance which leads to the supposition that it might have been omitted by an oversight in transcription in those of Origen and Epiphanius. Only Athanasius (in his *epist. fest.*), Amphilochius (in the *Jambi ad Seleuc.*), and the author of the *Synopsis Athanasius*, who is supposed not to have lived till the tenth century, reckon it among the apocryphal books; while Junilius (of the sixth century) remarks that there were many in his days who doubted the canonicity of the book of Esther. From this it is sufficiently obvious, that these doubts were not founded upon historical tradition, but proceeded only from subjective reasons, and were entertained because offence was taken, first at the non-mention of the name of God in this book, and then at the confessedly apocryphal additions mingled with this book in the Alexandrian translation. The author of the *Synopsis Ath.*, moreover, expressly says that the Hebrews regarded this book as canonical. The well-known harsh judgments of Luther in his work *de servo ar-*



*litrio : liber Esther, quamvis hunc habent in canone, dignior omnibus, me iudice, qui extra canonem haberetur*, and in his *Table Talk*, are purely subjective.<sup>1</sup> Luther could never reconcile himself to this book, because he felt that the saving truths of Scripture were absent from it. The later Jews, on the contrary, exalted it even far above the Thorah and the prophets.<sup>2</sup>

Later Protestant theologians, too, have, in their efforts to justify the canonicity of this book, over-estimated its canonical value, and attributed to the history therein related, Messianic references which are foreign to its meaning (comp. the verdict given upon it in Carpzov's *Introd. in V. T.* p. 369 sq.). The moderate opinion of Brentius is: *hic liber utilis est ad docendam fidem et timorem Dei, ut pii non frangantur adversis, sed invocantes nomen Domini ex fide, accipiant spem salutis ; impii vero alieno supplicio terreantur et ad pietatem convertantur*. This opinion is one far better founded than the depreciatory decision of modern critics, that this book breathes a spirit of revenge and pride (de Wette-Schrader) ; or of Bertheau, that "Esther and Mordochai are full of a spirit of revenge and hostility not to Gentile ways, but to the Gentiles themselves, of cruelty, and of ungodly confidence in a victory over the world, by worldly power and the employment of worldly means," and that this book "belongs to the historical records of the revelation made to Israel, only in so far as it helps to fill up the chasm between the times of the prophets and the days of our Lord." "The book itself and its position in the canon plainly testify, that the people to whom the victory over the world was promised, separated themselves farther and farther from communion with the holy God, trusted to their own arm and to worldly power, and could not, therefore, but be worsted in their contest

<sup>1</sup> "And while the Doctor was correcting the second book of Maccabees he said : I am so hostile to this book and that of Esther, that I wish they did not exist ; they are too Judaizing, and contain many heathenish improprieties."

<sup>2</sup> Comp. the collection of rabbinical eulogies of this book in Aug. Pfeiffer, *thes. herm.* p. 597 sq., and in Carpzov's *introd.* i. p. 366.

with the empire of the times." Such a verdict is justified neither by the circumstance, that the Jews, who reject Christ's redemption, understand and over-estimate this book in a carnal manner, nor by the fact, that the name of God does not once occur therein. With respect to the first point, the book itself is not to blame for being misused by Jews who have not accepted the redemption which is by Christ, to nourish a fanatical hatred of all Gentiles. Even if Esther and Mordochai were filled with a spirit of revenge toward the Gentiles, no reproach could in consequence be cast on the book of Esther, which neither praises nor recommends their actions or behaviour, but simply relates what took place without blame or approval. But neither are the accusations raised against Esther and Mordochai founded in truth. The means they took for the deliverance and preservation of their people were in accordance with the circumstances stated. For if the edict promulgated by Haman, and commanding the extermination of the Jews, could not, according to the prevailing law of the Medo-Persians, be repealed, there was no other means left to Mordochai for the preservation of his countrymen from the destruction that threatened them, than the issue of a counter-edict permitting the Jews to fight for their lives against all enemies who should attack them, and conceding to them the same rights against their foes as had been granted to the latter against the Jews by the edict of Haman. The bloodshed which might and must ensue would be the fault neither of Mordochai nor Esther, but of Haman alone. And though Mordochai had irritated the haughty Haman by refusing him adoration, yet no Jew who was faithful to the commands of his God could render to a man that honour and adoration which are due to the Lord only. Besides, even if the offence of which he was thereby guilty against Haman might have incited the latter to punish him individually, it could offer no excuse for the massacre of the entire Jewish nation. As for the second point, viz. the non-mention of the name of God in this book, we have already remarked, § 3, that this omission is not caused by a lack of devoutness or reverence, the narrative itself



presenting features which lead to an opposite conclusion. In the answer which Mordochai sends to Esther's objection to appear before the king unbidden, "If thou holdest thy peace, there shall arise help and deliverance for the Jews from another place," is expressed the assured belief that God would not leave the Jews to perish. To this must be added, both that the Jews express their deep sorrow at the edict of Haman by fasting and lamentation (iv. 1-3), and that Queen Esther not only prepares for her difficult task of appearing before the king by fasting herself, but also begs to be assisted by the fasting of all the Jews in Susa (iv. 16). Now fasting was a penitential exercise, and the only form of common worship practised by Jews dwelling among Gentiles; and this penitential exercise was always combined with prayer even among the heathen (comp. Jon. iii. 5 sq.), though prayer and calling upon God might not be expressly mentioned. Finally, the occasion of this conflict between Jews and Gentiles was a religious one, viz. the refusal of adoration to a man, from fear of transgressing the first commandment. All these things considered, we may with Stähelin appropriate what Lutz in his *bibl. Hermeneutik*, p. 386, says concerning this book: "A careful survey will suffice to show, that the religious principle predominates in the book of Esther, and that there is a religious foundation to the view taken of the occurrence. For it is represented as providential, as an occurrence in which, although the name of God is unmentioned, a higher Power, a Power on the side of Israel, prevails. Even in single features a closer inspection will plainly recognise a religious tone of feeling, while the whole book is pervaded by religious moral earnestness." It is this religious foundation which has obtained and secured its position in the canon of the inspired books of the O. T. The book is a memorial of the preservation of the Jewish people, during their subjection to a universal empire, by means of a special and providential disposition of secular events, and forms in this respect a supplement to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which relate the restoration of the Jewish community to the land of their fathers.

On the additions to the book of Esther in the Alexandrian version, which Luther, after the example of Jerome, excluded from the book and relegated to the Apocrypha under the title of *Stücke in Esther*, comp. my *Lehrb. der Einleitung*, § 237, and O. F. Fritzsche's *kurzgef. exeget. Hdb. zu den Apokryphen des N. T.* p. 68 sq.

For the exegetic literature, see *Lehrb. der Einl.* v. § 150. Comp. also E. Ph. L. Calmberg, *liber Esteræ interpretatione latina brevique commentario illustr.*, Hamb. 1837, 4, and Bertheau's Commentary, quoted p. 18.



## EXPOSITION

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### CHAP. I.—THE BANQUET OF KING AHASHVEROSH AND THE DIVORCE OF QUEEN VASHTI.



**A**HASHVEROSH, king of Persia, gave, in the third year of his reign, a banquet to the grandees of his kingdom then assembled in Susa, for the purpose of showing them the greatness and glory of his kingdom; while the queen at the same time made a feast for the women in the royal palace (vers. 1–9). On the seventh day of the feast, the king, “when his heart was merry with wine,” sent a message by his chief courtiers to the queen, commanding her to appear before him, to show the people and the princes her beauty, and on her refusal to come, was greatly incensed against her (vers. 10–12). Upon inquiring of his astrologers and princes what ought in justice to be done to the queen on account of this disobedience, they advised him to divorce Vashti by an irrevocable decree, and to give her dignity to another and better; also to publish this decree throughout the whole kingdom (vers. 13–20). This advice pleasing the king, it was acted upon accordingly (vers. 21 and 22).

Vers. 1–8. The banquet. Vers. 1–3 mark a period. עָשָׂה מִשְׁתֶּה, which belongs to יְהִי, does not follow till ver. 3, and even then the statement concerning the feast is again interrupted by a long parenthesis, and not taken up again and completed till ver. 5. On the use of יְהִי in historical narratives at the beginning of relations having, as in the present instance and Ruth i. 1, no reference to a preceding narrative,

see the remark on Josh. i. 1. Even when no express reference to any preceding occurrence takes place, the historian still puts what he has to relate in connection with other historical occurrences by an "and it came to pass." Ahashverosh is, as has already been remarked on Ezra iv. (p. 73), Xerxes, the son of Darius Hystaspis. Not only does the name אֲחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ point to the Old-Persian name Ks'ayars'a (with א prosthetic), but the statements also concerning the extent of the kingdom (chap. i. 1, x. 1), the manners and customs of the country and court, the capricious and tyrannical character of Ahashverosh, and the historical allusions are suitable only and completely to Xerxes, so that, after the discussions of Justi in Eichhorn's *Repert.* xv. pp. 3-38, and Baumgarten, *de fide*, etc., pp. 122-151, no further doubt on the subject can exist. As an historical background to the occurrences to be delineated, the wide extent of the kingdom ruled by the monarch just named is next described: "He is that Ahashverosh who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces." מְדִינָה . . . שְׁבַע is not an accusative dependent on מֶלֶךְ, he ruled 127 provinces, for מֶלֶךְ, to reign, is construed with עַל or בְּ, but is annexed in the form of a free apposition to the statement: "from India to Cush;" as also in chap. viii. 9. הִדּוּ is in the Old-Persian cuneiform inscriptions, Hidhu; in Zend, Hendu; in Sanscrit, Sindhu, *i.e.* dwellers on the Indus, for Sindhu means in Sanscrit the river Indus; comp. Rædiger in Gesenius, *Thes.* Append. p. 83, and Lassen, *Indische Alterthumsk.* i. p. 2. כִּשׁ is Ethiopia. This was the extent of the Persian empire under Xerxes. Mardonius in Herod. vii. 9 names not only the Sakers and Assyrians, but also the Indians and Ethiopians as nations subject to Xerxes. Comp. also Herod. vii. 97, 98, and viii. 65, 69, where the Ethiopians and Indians are reckoned among the races who paid tribute to the Persian king and fought in the army of Xerxes. The 127 מְדִינֹת, provinces, are governmental districts, presided over, according to chap. viii. 9, by satraps, pechahs, and rulers. This statement recalls that made in Dan. vi. 2, that Darius the Mede set over his kingdom 120 satraps. We have already shown



in our remarks on Dan. vi. 2 that this form of administration is not in opposition to the statement of Herod. iii. 89 sq., that Darius Hystaspis divided the kingdom for the purpose of taxation into twenty *ἀρχαί* which were called *σατραπῆται*. The satrapies into which Darius divided the kingdom generally comprised several provinces. The first satrapy, *e.g.*, included Mysia and Lydia, together with the southern part of Phrygia; the fourth, Syria and Phœnicia, with the island of Cyprus. The Jewish historians, on the other hand, designate a small portion of this fourth satrapy, viz. the region occupied by the Jewish community (Judah and Benjamin, with their chief city Jerusalem), as *מְדִינָה*, Ezra ii. 1, Neh. i. 3, vii. 6, xi. 3. Consequently the satrapies of Darius mentioned in Herodotus differ from the *medinoth* of Dan. vi. 2, and Esth. i. 1, viii. 9. The 127 *medinoth* are a division of the kingdom into geographical regions, according to the races inhabiting the different provinces; the list of satrapies in Herodotus, on the contrary, is a classification of the nations and provinces subject to the empire, determined by the tribute imposed on them.—Ver. 2. The words: in those days, take up the chronological statement of ver. 1, and add thereto the new particular: when King Ahashverosh sat on the throne of his kingdom in the citadel of Susa. *שָׁבַת* does not involve the notion of quiet and peaceable possession after the termination of wars (Clericus, Rambach), but that of being seated on the throne with royal authority. Thus the Persian kings are always represented upon a raised seat or throne, even on journeys and in battle. According to Herod. vii. 102, Xerxes watched the battle of Thermopylæ sitting upon his throne. And Plutarch (*Themistocl.* c. 13) says the same of the battle of Salamis. Further examples are given by Baumg. *l.c.* p. 85 sq. On the citadel of Susa, see Neh. i. 1, and remarks on Dan. viii. 2.—Ver. 3. “In the third year of his reign he made a feast to all his princes and his servants, when the forces of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, were before him.” *עָשָׂה מִשְׁתֶּה*, to make, to prepare, *i.e.* to give, a feast; comp. Gen. xxi. 8. The princes and the servants are, all who were assembled about him in

Susa. These are specified in the words which follow as חַיִּל 'פ. We might supply ל before חַיִּל from the preceding words, (viz.) the forces, etc.; but this would not suit the לִפְנֵי at the end of the verse. For this word shows that an independent circumstantial clause begins with חַיִּל, which is added to call attention to the great number of princes and servants assembled at Susa (Bertheau): the forces of Persia . . . were before him: when they were before him. By חַיִּל, the host, the forces, Bertheau thinks the body-guard of the king, which, according to Herod. vii. 40, consisted of 2000 selected horsemen, 2000 lancers, and 10,000 infantry, is intended. There is, however, no adequate reason for limiting חַיִּל to the body-guard. It cannot, indeed, be supposed that the whole military power of Persia and Media was with the king at Susa; but חַיִּל without בָּל can only signify an *élite* of the army, perhaps the captains and leaders as representing it, just as "the people" is frequently used for "the representatives of the people." The Persians and Medes are always named together as the two kindred races of the ruling nation. See Dan. vi. 9, who, however, as writing in the reign of Darius the Mede, places the Medes first and the Persians second, while the contrary order is observed here when the supremacy had been transferred to the Persians by Cyrus. On the form פָּרִס, see rem. on Ezra 1. i. After the mention of the forces, the *Partemim*, i.e. nobles, magnates (see on Dan. i. 3), and the princes of the provinces are named as the chief personages of the civil government.—Ver. 4. "When he showed the glorious riches of his kingdom and the excellent honour of his greatness many days, one hundred and eighty days." This verse has been understood by most expositors as stating that the king magnificently and splendidly entertained all the grandees mentioned in ver. 3 for a full half-year, and gave them a banquet which lasted 180 days. Clericus supposes proceedings to have been so arranged, that the *proceres omnium provinciarum* were not entertained at one and the same time, but *alii post alios*, because all could not be absent together *per sex menses a suis provinciis*. Bertheau, however, thinks that the historian did not purpose



to give an exact and graphic description of the proceeding, but only to excite astonishment, and that they who are astonished will not inquire as to the manner in which all took place. The text, however, does not say, that the feast lasted 180 days, and hence offers no occasion for such a view, which is founded on a mistaken comprehension of ver. 4, which combines 'בְּהִרְאֹתוֹ וּגו' with מִשְׁתֶּה of ver. 3, while the whole of ver. 4 is but a further amplification of the circumstantial clause: when the forces, etc., were before him; the description of the banquet not following till ver. 5, where, however, it is joined to the concluding words of ver. 4: "when these (180) days were full, the king made a feast to all the people that were found in the citadel of Susa, from great to small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's house." This verse is thus explained by Bertheau: after the soldiers, nobles, and princes of the district had been entertained for six months, all the male inhabitants of Susa were also entertained in a precinct of the palace garden, the women being feasted by Vashti the queen in the palace (ver. 9). It is, however, obvious, even from ver. 11, which says that on the seventh day of this banquet the king commanded the queen to appear "to show the people and the princes her beauty," that such a view of the occurrence is inadmissible. For this command presupposes, that the people and princes were assembled at the king's banquet; while, according to the view of Bertheau and older expositors, who insist on two banquets, one lasting 180 days, the other seven, the latter was given to the male inhabitants of Susa only. The princes and people of the whole kingdom did not, however, dwell in Susa. These princes and people, to whom the queen was to show her beauty, are undoubtedly the princes and servants of the king, the forces of Persia and Media, and the nobles and princes of the provinces enumerated in ver. 3. With this agrees also the description of the guests invited to the seven days feast. כָּל-הָעָם הַנִּמְצָאִים בְּשׁוּשַׁן does not signify "all the inhabitants of Susa," but all then present, *i.e.* then assembled in the citadel of Susa. הַנִּמְצָאִים used of persons means, those who for some purpose are found or present in any

place, in distinction from its usual inhabitants; comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 17, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 32, Ezra viii. 25; and **הָעָם** does not here signify people in the sense of population, but people who are met in a certain place, and is used both here and Neh. xii. 38 of an assembly of nobles and princes. **לְמַגְדֹּל וְעַד קָטָן**, moreover, does not mean old and young, but high and low, the greater and lesser servants (**עֲבָדִים**) of the king, and informs us that of those assembled at Susa, both princes and servants participated without exception in the banquet.—This view of 3–5 is confirmed by the consideration, that if the seven days banquet were a different one from that mentioned in ver. 3, there could be no reason for naming the latter, which would then be not only entirely unconnected with the narrative, but for which no object at all would be stated; for **בְּהִרְאֹתוֹ** cannot be translated, as in the Vulgate, by *ut ostenderet*, because, as Bertheau justly remarks, **ב** cannot indicate a purpose. From all these reasons it is obvious, that the feast of which further particulars are given in 5–8 is the same **מִשְׁתֶּה** which the king, according to ver. 3, gave to his **שָׂרִים** and **עֲבָדִים**, and that the text, rightly understood, says nothing of two consecutive banquets. The sense of vers. 3–5 is accordingly as follows: King Ahasuerus gave to his nobles and princes, when he had assembled them before him, and showed them the glorious riches of his kingdom and the magnificence of his greatness for 180 days, after these 180 days, to all assembled before him in the fortress of Susa, a banquet which lasted seven days. The connection of the more particular description of this banquet, by means of the words: when these (the previously named 180) days were over, following upon the accessory clause, ver. 4, is anacoluthistic, and the anacoluthon has given rise to the misconception, by which ver. 5 is understood to speak of a second banquet differing from the **מִשְׁתֶּה** of ver. 3. The purpose for which the king assembled the grandees of his kingdom around him in Susa for a whole half-year is not stated, because this has no connection with the special design of the present book. If, however, we compare the statement of Herod. vii. 8, that Xerxes, after the re-subjection of Egypt, summoned the chief



men of his kingdom to Susa to take counsel with them concerning the campaign against Greece, it is obvious, that the assembly for 180 days in Susa, of the princes and nobles mentioned in the book of Esther, took place for the purpose of such consultation. When, too, we compare the statement of Herod. vii. 20, that Xerxes was four years preparing for this war, we receive also a corroboration of the particular mentioned in ver. 3, that he assembled his princes and nobles in the third year of his reign. In this view "the riches of his kingdom," etc., mentioned in ver. 4, must not be understood of the splendour and magnificence displayed in the entertainment of his guests, but referred to the greatness and resources of the realm, which Xerxes descanted on to his assembled magnates for the purpose of showing them the possibility of carrying into execution his contemplated campaign against Greece. The banquet given them after the 180 days of consultation, was held in the court of the garden of the royal palace. בֵּיתֶן is a later form of בֵּית, which occurs only here and vii. 7, 8. הָצֵר, court, is the space in the park of the royal castle which was prepared for the banquet. The fittings and furniture of this place are described in ver. 6. "White stuff, variegated and purple hangings, fastened with cords of byssus and purple to silver rings and marble pillars; couches of gold and silver upon a pavement of malachite and marble, mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell." The description consists of mere allusions to, or exclamations at, the splendour of the preparations. In the first half of the verse the hangings of the room, in the second, the couches for the guests, are noticed. הָוֵר from הָוֵר means a white tissue of either linen or cotton. Bertheau supposes that the somewhat larger form of ה is intended to denote, even by the size of letter employed, the commencement of the description. כְּרִפָּם, occurring in Sanscrit, Persian, Armenian, and Arabic, in Greek *κάrpασoς*, means originally cotton, in Greek, according to later authorities, a kind of fine flax, here undoubtedly a cotton texture of various colours. תְּכֵלֶת, deep blue, purple. The hangings of the space set apart were of these materials. Blue and white were, according to Curtius vi. 6. 4, the royal colours of the

Persians; comp. M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, ii. pp. 891 and 951 of the third edition, in which is described also the royal table, p. 952. The hangings were fastened (אָחַז) with cords of white byssus and purple to rings and pillars of white marble. מְטוֹת, couches (divans) of gold and silver, *i.e.* covered with cloth woven of gold and silver thread, were prepared for the guests at the feast. These couches were placed upon a tessellated, mosaic-like floor; the tessellation being composed of stones of various colours. בִּהָט, in Arabic a mock stone, in LXX. *σμαραγδίτης*, a spurious emerald, *i.e.* a green-coloured stone resembling the emerald, probably malachite or serpentine. שֵׁשׁ is white marble; יָדָר, Arabic <sup>س</sup>جَدَرٌ <sup>س</sup>جَرَّةٌ, pearl, LXX.

πίννινος λίθος, a pearl-like stone, perhaps mother-of-pearl. סִחָרָה, a kind of dark-coloured stone (from סָחַר = שָׁחַר, to be dark), black, black marble with shield-like spots (all three words occur only here).—Ver. 7. The entertainment: “And drinks poured into vessels of gold! and vessels differing from vessels, and royal wine in abundance, according to the hand of a king. (Ver. 8) And the drinking was according to law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house to do according to every one’s pleasure.” הִשְׁקוּת, inf. Hiph., to give to drink, to hand drinks, is used substantively. The golden drinking vessels were of various kinds, and each differing in form from another. Great variety in drinking vessels pertained to the luxury of Persians; comp. Xenoph. *Cyrop.* viii. 8, 18. יַיִן מִלְּבָנִית is wine from the royal cellar, therefore costly wine. Many interpreters understand it of the Chalybonian wine, which the Persian kings used to drink. See rem. on Ezek. xxvii. 18. בְּיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ, according to the hand of the king, *i.e.* according to royal bounty; comp. 1 Kings x. 13. The words: “the drinking was according to law, none did compel,” are generally understood to say, that the king abolished for this banquet, the prevailing custom of pledging his guests. According to Grecian information (see Baumgarten, p. 12 sq.), an exceedingly large quantity of wine was drunk at Persian banquets. This sense of the words is not, however, quite



certain. The argument of Baumgarten, *Si hic mos vulgaris fuisset in epulis regiis, sine dubio hæc omnia non commemorata essent*, no more holds good than his further remark: *formulam illam בְּרַת אֵין אֵינִם non puto adhibitam fuisse, nisi jam altera contraria בְּרַת אֵינִם solemnis esset facta*. The historian can have noticed this only because it was different from the Jewish custom. Bertheau also justly remarks: "We are not told in the present passage, that the king, on this occasion, exceptionally permitted moderation, especially to such of his guests as were, according to their ancestral customs, addicted to moderation, and who would else have been compelled to drink immoderately. For the words with which this verse concludes, while they imply also a permission to each to drink as little as he chose, are specially intended to allow every one to take much. יָסַד עַל, to appoint concerning, *i.e.* to enjoin, comp. 1 Chron. ix. 22. רַב בֵּית, those over the house, *i.e.* the court officials.

Vers. 9-12. Vashti the queen also gave a banquet to the women in the royal house (palace) which belonged to King Ahashverosh, probably in the royal apartments of the palace, which were placed at her disposal for this great feast to be given to the women. The name Vashti may be compared with the Old-Persian *valista*, *i.e.* *optimus*. In Persian وَشْتِی means a beautiful woman. This statement serves as an introduction to the scene which follows. Vers. 10 and 11. On the seventh, *i.e.* the last day of the banquet, when the king's heart was merry with wine, he commanded his seven chamberlains to bring Vashti the queen before him, with the royal crown, to show her beauty to the people and princes. בָּטוֹב לֵב וְגו', when the heart of the king was merry through wine, *i.e.* when the wine had made him merry, comp. 2 Sam. xiii. 28, Jud. xvi. 25. It was the office of the seven eunuchs who served before the king (מְשִׁרֵת אֶת-פָּנָי) like 1 Sam. ii. 18) to be the means of communication between him and the women, and to deliver to them messages on the part of the monarch. Their number, seven, was connected with that of the Amshaspands; see rem. on ver. 14. The attempts made

to explain their several names are without adequate foundation; nor would much be gained thereby, the names being of no significance with respect to the matter in question. In the LXX. the names vary to some extent. The queen was to appear with the crown on her head (כֶּתֶר, *klédaris* or *κίταρις*, a high turban terminating in a point), and, as is self-evident, otherwise royally apparelled. The queen was accustomed on ordinary occasions to take her meals at the king's table; comp. Herod. ix. 110. There is, however, an absence of historical proof, that she was present at great banquets. The notice quoted from Lucian in Brissonius, *de regio Pers. princ.* i. c. 103, is not sufficient for the purpose.—Ver. 12. The queen refused to appear at the king's command as delivered by the eunuchs, because she did not choose to stake her dignity as a queen and a wife before his inebriated guests. The audacity of Persians in such a condition is evident from the history related Herod. v. 18.

Vers. 13–15. The king, greatly incensed at this disobedience to his behest, inquired of his wise men what was to be done to Queen Vashti according to law. These wise men are ver. 13 designated as those “who knew the times,” *i.e.* astrologers and magi, who give counsel according to celestial phenomena; comp. the wise men of Babylon, Dan. ii. 27, v. 15; Isa. xlv. 25, xlvii. 13; Jer. l. 35. Of these he inquires, “for thus was the business of the king conducted before all that knew law and judgment.” דָּבָר here does not signify word or speech, but matter, business; and the meaning of this parenthetical sentence is, that in every matter, the king, before deciding, applied to those who were skilled in law and judgment to hear their opinions concerning it. With this is joined a second explanatory parenthetical sentence, ver. 14: “And those next him were Carshena, etc., the seven princes of the Persians and Medes, who behold the king's countenance, who hold the first seat in his kingdom.” הַקָּרִיב אֵלָיו is indefinite, and may be understood as expressing the plural. It is perhaps questionable how this clause should be combined with what precedes, whether with בְּלִי-יָדַעִי דָּת וְדָן, before all that knew law and judgment and those next him,



or with **לְחַכְמִים**, ver. 13 : he spoke to the wise men . . . and those next him. In any case the sense is, that the seven princes of the Persians and Medes were also numbered either among the wise men who knew the times, or those who were skilled in the law. These seven princes are the seven king's counsellors of Ezra vii. 14, and by their number of seven form a counterpart to the seven Amshaspands. They who see the face of the king, *i.e.* are allowed direct intercourse with him. Herod. iii. 84 relates of the seven princes who conspired the overthrow of the pretended Smerdis, that they resolved, that it should be permitted them to present themselves unannounced before the future king. Hence many expositors identify these seven princes with the authorities called the seven counsellors, but without sufficient grounds. The number seven frequently recurs,—comp. the seven eunuchs, ver. 5, the seven maidens who waited on Esther, ii. 9,—and refers in the present case to the seven Amshaspands, in others to the days of the week, or the seven planets. **הַיֹּשְׁבִים רִאשֹׁנָה**, who sit first, *i.e.* in the highest place, *i.e.* constitute the highest authority in the realm. What the king said (ver. 13) does not follow till ver. 15 : “According to law, what is to be done to Queen Vashti, because she has not done the word of the king,” *i.e.* not obeyed his command by the eunuchs? **בְּדָת**, according to law, legally, is placed first because it is intended emphatically to assert that the proceeding is to be in conformity with the law. **עֲשֵׂה** with **בְּ**, to inflict something on any one.

Vers. 16-20. The counsel of the wise men. Ver. 16. Memucan, who was the last mentioned in ver. 14, comes forward as spokesman for the rest, and declares before the king and the princes, *i.e.* in a solemn assembly, and evidently as the result of a previous joint consultation : Vashti the queen has not done wrong to the king alone, but also to all the princes and all the people, because the example of the queen will lead all the Median and Persian wives to despise their husbands. Therefore an irrevocable edict is to be published decreeing the divorce of Queen Vashti, and this law published throughout the whole realm, that all wives may

show honour to their husbands. Vashti has not transgressed against the king alone (ver. 16), but against all the princes and people in all the provinces of King Ahashverosh (ver. 16.) In what respect, then, is the latter assertion true? We are told vers. 17 and 18. "For the deed of the queen will come abroad to (לְעַל for לְאֵל) all women, to bring their husbands into contempt in their eyes (the *infin.* לְהַבְזוֹת stating the result), while they will say," etc. (the suffix of בְּאִמְרָם relates to the women, who will appeal to the disobedience of the queen). Ver. 18. "And this day (*i.e.* already) the princesses of the Persians and Medians, who hear of the act of the queen (דְּבַר, not the word, but the thing, *i.e.* her rejection of her husband's command), will tell it to all the princes of the king, and (there will be) enough contempt and provocation. קֶצֶף is an outburst of anger; here, therefore, a provocation to wrath. Bertheau makes the words 'וּבְרִי בּוֹ' וְק' the object of תִּאמְרָנָה, which, after the long parenthesis, is united to the copula by ו, and for, "to speak contempt and wrath," reads: to speak contemptuously in wrath. But this change cannot be substantiated. The expression, to speak wrath, is indeed unexampled, but that is no reason for making קֶצֶף stand for בְּקֶצֶף, the very adoption of such an ellipsis showing, that this explanation is inadmissible. The words must be taken alone, as an independent clause, which may be readily completed by יְהִיָּה: and contempt and wrath will be according to abundance. בְּרִי is a litotes for: more than enough. The object of תִּאמְרָנָה must be supplied from the context: it—that is, what the queen said to her husband. In the former verse Memucan was speaking of all women; here (ver. 18) he speaks only of the princesses of the Persians and Medes, because these are staying in the neighbourhood of the court, and will immediately hear of the matter, and "after the manner of the court ladies and associates of a queen will quickly follow, and appeal to her example" (Berth.).—Ver. 19. After this argument on the queen's conduct, follows the proposal: "If it please the king (לְטוֹב עַל like Neh. ii. 5), let there go from him a word of the kingdom (*i.e.* a royal edict), and let it be written (entered) in the laws of the Persians and the Medes,



and not pass away, that Vashti come no more before King Ahashverosh; and let the king give her queenship (her royal rank) to another who is better than she." An edict issued by the king, entered among the laws of the Persians and Medes, and sealed with the royal signet (viii. 8), does not pass away, *i.e.* remains in force, is irrevocable (comp. Dan. vi. 9). The counsellors press for the issue of such an edict, for the purpose of making it impossible to the king to take Vashti again into favour, lest they should experience her vengeance on the restoration of her influence. רַעֲיָתָהּ, her companion, is any other woman, Vashti being here regarded merely as a woman. הַטּוֹבָה includes both beauty and good behaviour (Berth.). By this means, add the counsellors in ver. 20, all the ill effects of Vashti's contumacy will be obviated. "And when the king's decree, which he shall make, is heard in his whole kingdom, for it is great, all wives shall give honour to their husbands, from great to small." פְּתָנִים is according to the *Keri* to be pointed as the constructive state, פְּתָנִים. The expression פְּתָנִים עֲשֶׂה is explained by the circumstance, that פְּתָנִים signifies not only edict, decree, but also thing (see on Dan. iii. 16): to do a thing. In the present verse also it might be so understood: when the thing is heard which the king will do in his whole kingdom. The parenthetical clause, for it is great, is intended to flatter the king's vanity, and induce an inclination to agree to the proposal. "From great to small" signifies high and low, old and young.

Vers. 21 and 22. The saying pleased the king and the princes, and the king carried it into execution. He sent letters into all his provinces to make known his commands, and to let all husbands know, that they were to bear rule in their own houses. "In every province according to its writing, and to every people according to their speech" (comp. viii. 9), that his will might be clearly understood by all the subjects of his wide domain, who spoke different languages and used different alphabetical characters. The contents of these letters follow in לְהִיּוֹת וְגו', that every man should be master in his own house. These words state only the chief matter and object of the edict; but they presuppose that

the fact which gave rise to the decree, viz. the refusal of Vashti, and her consequent deposition, were also mentioned. The last words: "and that he shall speak according to the language of his people," are obscure. Older expositors understand them to mean, that every man was to speak only his native language in his house, so that in case he had a foreign wife, or several who spoke other languages, they might be obliged to learn his language, and to use that alone. Bertheau, on the other hand, objects that such a sense is but imported into the words, and in no wise harmonizes with the context. Both these assertions are, however, unfounded. In the words, the man shall speak according to the language of his people, *i.e.* he shall speak his native tongue in his house, it is implied that no other language was to be used in the house, and the application of this law to foreign wives is obvious from the context. The rule of the husband in the house was to be shown by the fact, that only the native tongue of the head of the house was to be used in the family. Thus in a Jewish family the Ashdodite or any other language of the wife's native land could not have been used, as we find to have been the case in Judæa (Neh. xiii. 23). All other explanations are untenable, as has been already shown by Baumgarten, p. 20; and the conjecture set up after Hitzig by Bertheau, that instead of כָּל־שָׂוֹן עִמּוֹ we should read כָּל־שָׂוֹן עִמּוֹ, every one shall speak what becomes him, gives not only a trivial, and not at all an appropriate thought, but is refuted even by the fact that not שָׂוֹן עִם, but only שָׂוֹן לְ (comp. iii. 8) could bear the meaning: to be becoming to any one. Such a command may, indeed, appear strange to us; but the additional particular, that every man was to speak his native tongue, and to have it alone spoken, in his own house, is not so strange as the fact itself that an edict should be issued commanding that the husband should be master in the house, especially in the East, where the wife is so accustomed to regard the husband as lord and master. Xerxes was, however, the author of many strange facts besides this.



## CHAP. II.—ELEVATION OF ESTHER TO THE THRONE.

## SERVICE RENDERED BY MORDOCHAI TO THE KING.

When the wrath of King Ahashverosh was appeased, and he remembered his harsh treatment of Vashti, his courtiers proposed that he should send to fetch fair young virgins from all parts of his realm to the house of the women in Susa, that he might choose a new queen from among them. This proposal pleasing the king, was acted upon (vers. 1-4). In the fortress of Susa, however, there dwelt one of the Jews who had been carried into captivity from Jerusalem, and whose name was Mordochai. This man had brought up Esther, his uncle's daughter, as his own child (vers. 5-7). When, then, in pursuance with the king's commands, many maidens were gathered together in Susa, Esther also was brought into the king's house, and found favour with the keeper of the women while, according to order, she was going through a course of purification and anointing (vers. 8-14). When her turn came to be brought before the king, she found favour in his sight above all the other maidens, and was chosen by him to be queen in the place of Vashti. By Mordochai's command, however, she disclosed her race and lineage to no one (vers. 15-20). At the same time two courtiers conspired against the life of the sovereign. Their conspiracy being discovered by Mordochai, was by him revealed to Esther, who gave information of it to the king, whereupon the matter was investigated, and found to have been correctly stated. The offenders were punished, and the event duly registered in the chronicles of the kingdom.

Vers. 1-4. When, after these things, the wrath of King Ahashverosh was laid (שָׁן, from שָׁבַן, to be sunk, spoken of wrath to be laid), he remembered Vashti and what she had done, and what was decreed against her (נִיּוֹן, to determine, to decree irrevocably; comp. גִּזְרֵה, Dan. iv. 14); a desire for reunion with her evidently making itself felt, accompanied perhaps by the thought that she might have been too harshly treated. To prevent, then, a return of affection for his rejected wife ensuing,—a circumstance which might greatly

endanger all who had concurred in effecting her repudiation,—the servants of the king, *i.e.* the court officials who were about him, said: “Let there be young maidens, virgins fair to look on, sought for the king.” בְּתוּלוֹת, virgins, is added to נְעוּרוֹת, the latter word signifying merely young women of marriageable age. Ver. 3. “And let the king appoint (וַיִּפְקֶד) is the continuation of (וַיִּבְקֹשׁ) officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together every virgin who is fair to look on to the citadel of Susa, to the house of the women, unto the hand of Hega the king’s eunuch, the keeper of the women, and let them appoint their things for purification; and let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti.” To the hand of Hega, *i.e.* to his care and superintendence, under which, as appears from ver. 12, every maiden received into the house of the women had to pass a year before she was brought before the king. Hega (called Hegai, vers. 8 and 15) was an eunuch, the keeper of the women, *i.e.* superintendent of the royal harem. וַיִּנָּתֶן is the *infin. abs.*, used instead of the *verb. fin.* to give prominence to the matter: let them appoint. תְּמַרְקִים, from מָרַק, to rub, to polish, signifies purification and adornment with all kind of precious ointments; comp. ver. 12. This speech pleased the king, and he acted accordingly.

Vers. 5-7. Before relating how this matter was carried into execution, the historian introduces us to the two persons who play the chief parts in the following narrative. Ver. 5. There was (dwelt) in the citadel of Susa a Jew of the name of Mordochai (מֹרְדֳּכַי, in more correct editions מִרְדָּכַי), the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite (יִמְיִי like 1 Sam. ix. 1). Jair, Shimei, and Kish can hardly mean the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather of Mordochai. On the contrary, if Jair were perhaps his father, Shimei and Kish may have been the names of renowned ancestors. Shimei was probably the son of Gera, well known to us from the history of David, 2 Sam. xvi. 5 sq. and 1 Kings ii. 8, 36 sq., and Kish the father of Saul, 1 Chron. viii. 33, 1 Sam. ix. 1; for in



genealogical series only a few noted names are generally given; comp., e.g., 1 Chron. ix. 19, vi. 24 sq. Upon the ground of this explanation, Josephus (*Ant.* xi. 6) makes Esther of royal descent, viz. of the line of Saul, king of Israel; and the Targum regards Shimei as the Benjamite who cursed David. The name Mordochai occurs in Ezra ii. 2 and Neh. vii. 7 as that of some other individual among those who returned from captivity with Zerubbabel, but can hardly be connected with the Persian مردکی, little man.

Aben Ezra, Lightfoot, and others, indeed, are of opinion that the Mordochai of the present book really came up with Zerubbabel, but subsequently returned to Babylon. Identity of name is not, however, a sufficient proof of identity of person. The chronological statement, ver. 6: who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been carried away with Jeconiah, king of Judah, etc., offers some difficulty. For from the captivity of Jeconiah in the year 599 to the beginning of the reign of Xerxes (in the year 486) is a period of 113 years; hence, if the מֹרְדֳּכַי is referred to Mordochai, he would, even if carried into captivity as a child by then, have reached the age of from 120 to 130 years, and as Esther was not made queen till the seventh year of Xerxes (ii. 16), would have become prime minister of that monarch at *about* the age of 125. Rambach, indeed, does not find this age incredible, though we cannot regard it as probable that Mordochai should have become minister at so advanced an age.<sup>1</sup> On this account Clericus, Baumgarten, and others refer the relative מֹרְדֳּכַי to the last name, Kish, and understand that he was carried away with Jeconiah, while his great-grandson Mordochai was born in captivity. In this case Kish and Shimei must be regarded as the great-grandfather and grandfather of Mordochai. We grant the possibility of this view; nevertheless it is more

<sup>1</sup> Baumg. aptly remarks, *l.c.*, p. 125: *Etsi concedendum est, non esse contra naturam, si Mordechæus ad illam ætatem pervenerit, et summa hac constitutus senectute gravissimis negotiis perficiendis par fuerit, tamen est hoc rarissimum et nisi accedit certum testimonium, difficile ad credendum.*

in accordance with the Hebrew narrative style to refer אִשָּׁר to the chief person of the sentence preceding it, viz. Mordochai, who also continues to be spoken of in ver. 7. Hence we prefer this reference, without, however, attributing to Mordochai more than 120 years of age. For the relative clause: who had been carried away, need not be so strictly understood as to assert that Mordochai himself was carried away; but the object being to give merely his origin and lineage, and not his history, it involves only the notion that he belonged to those Jews who were carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar with Jeconiah, so that he, though born in captivity, was carried to Babylon in the persons of his forefathers. This view of the passage corresponds with that formerly presented by the list of the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Jacob who went down with him to Egypt; see the explanation of the passage in question.<sup>1</sup> Ver. 7. Mordochai was אִמֶּן, keeper, bringer up, i.e. foster-father, to Hadassah (אִמֶּן constructed as a participle with אָת). הַדַּסָּה means a myrtle (הַדַּס in the Shemitish), like the Greek name *Μυρτιά*, *Μυρρίνη*. "That is Esther," the queen known by the name of Esther. The name אֶסְתֵּר is the Old-Persian *stara* with א prosthetic, and corresponds with the Greek *ἀστήρ*, star, in modern Persian *sitareh*. She was בְּתִידְרוֹ, daughter of his father's brother, and adopted by Mordochai after the death of her parents; we are told, moreover, that she had a fine figure and beautiful countenance. Her father, whose name, according to ver. 15, was Abihail, was uncle to Mordochai, and hence Esther was his cousin.

Vers. 8–11. When, then, the king's commandment and decree was heard, i.e. proclaimed throughout the kingdom, and many maidens gathered together in Susa, Esther also

<sup>1</sup> Baumgarten also considers this view admissible, rightly remarking, p. 127: *Scriptoribus sacris admodum familiare est singulos homines non per se et sepositos spectare, sed familias et gentes ut corpora quasi individua complecti, ita ut posterius majorum personis quasi contenti et inclusi, majores vero in posteris ipsi subsistere et vivere existimentur. Ex hac ratione Mordechæus captus esse dici potest, quamvis ipse satis diu post Jeconiam tempora ex iis, qui a Nebucadnezaro abducti sunt, natus fuerit.*



was received into the royal harem, under the keeping of Hegai. The maiden pleased him and won his favour (נָשָׂא חֶסֶד, to bear away love, *i.e.* to obtain favour, synonymous with נָשָׂא חֵן, ver. 15 and chap. v. 2). וַיְבַהֵל וגו', and he hastened to give her her ointments for purification, and the seven maidens appointed to her from the king's house. The infinitives לָהּ לָתֵת are, according to the Aramæan idiom, placed after their objects and dependent on וַיְבַהֵל. On תַּמְרוּקִים, see on ver. 3. מְנוּחַ, portions, are here portions of food, as in chap. ix. 19, 22, and 1 Sam. i. 4. The seven maidens (הַנְּעָרוֹת with the article) are the maids appointed to wait upon a young virgin selected for the king. The participle רְאִיּוֹת: chosen for a particular purpose,—in the Talmud and rabbinical Hebrew רְאִי, *dignus, decens, conveniens*,—occurs only here. וַיִּשְׁנֶה, he changed her and her maids into the best of the house of the women, *i.e.* he took them out of the ordinary rooms and placed them in the best apartments, probably in the state-rooms, where those who were accustomed to be brought to the king used to dwell.—Ver. 10 contains a supplementary remark. This kind and respectful treatment was shown to Esther, because, in obedience to Mordochai's command, she had not shown her people nor her kindred, *i.e.* her Jewish extraction; for a Jewish maiden would hardly have experienced such friendly usage. Ver. 11 also contains an additional notice, prefixed here to enable what follows to be rightly understood, and repeated in another connection ver. 19, and on several other occasions: Mordochai walked every day before the court or enclosure of the women's house, to know the welfare (שְׁלוֹם) of Esther and what became of her (וַיַּעֲשֶׂה בָּהּ), properly, what was done to her). Hence Mordochai was in constant communication with Esther. How this communication was effected is not more particularly stated; probably by means of the maids appointed to wait on her. Jewish expositors are of opinion, that Mordochai held high office, and that having consequently free access to the royal palace, he could easily find the means of communicating with his relative.

Vers. 12-18. Before relating the appearance of Esther

before the king, the narrator more particularly describes in vers. 12–14 the preparations for this event, and how Esther behaved with respect to them.—Vers. 12 and 13. “When every maid’s turn came (*i.e.* at every time that any maid’s turn came) to go in to King Ahashverosh, after the time when it had been done to her twelve months according to the law of the women—for thus were the days of their purification accomplished: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with balsam and ointments of purification for women—and the maiden came to the king, all that she desired was given her to go with her out of the women’s house unto the king’s house.” תור, turn in succession, used only here and ver. 15. The turn to go in unto the king did not come to any maid until מִקֵּץ הַיּוֹם וְגו', at the end of the time when it had been done to her according to the law. . . . This time lasted twelve months after her reception into the house of the women; and the law of the women, according to which it was done to her, was, that she should be purified for six months with oil of myrrh, and as long with בְּשָׂמִים, sweet odours and other ointments. וּבִיּוֹם הַנִּעְרָה בָּאָה (ver. 13) forms the continuation of the antecedent clause commencing with בְּהַיּוֹם, or, to speak more correctly, of a second antecedent with which the conclusion אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר is connected. Some expositors understand בִּיּוֹם, with the LXX., of the time: *illo sc. tempore*; others of the condition: *hoc modo ornata* or *ea lege* (Cler.), and therefore as parallel in meaning with the כֵּן of chap. iv. 16. Either view is admissible and suits the sense, but the latter is more in harmony with the parallel passage chap. iv. 16, and therefore preferable. All that was to be given her, can only relate to ornaments and jewels, which were to be given that each might appear before the king adorned and dressed after her own taste.—Ver. 14. In the evening she went (to the king), and on the morrow she returned to the women’s house, a second (time) to the hand (under the keeping of) Shaashgaz, the king’s chamberlain, who kept the concubines; she came no more to the king, except the king delighted in her and she were called by name, *i.e.* specially. שְׁנִית instead of שְׁנִית, like Neh. iii. 30.—



Ver. 15. When Esther's turn came to go in unto the king, she required nothing (to take with her, see ver. 13) but what Hegai the king's chamberlain appointed (hence was not concerned to please the king by special adornment), and she obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her, namely, by her modesty and humility. On נִשָּׂא הֵן, see remarks on ver. 9.—Ver. 16. She was taken into the king's house (מִלְכוּת instead of הַמֶּלֶךְ, the palace of the kingdom, the royal residence) in the tenth month, *i.e.* the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.—Ver. 17. And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; and he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. The meaning evidently is, that the king, immediately after their first meeting, bestowed his affections upon Esther in preference to all the women and maidens, and chose her queen.—Ver. 18. To celebrate Esther's elevation to the crown, the king made a great feast, called Esther's feast, to all his princes and servants, and granted release to the provinces. The *verbale* Hiph. הִנָּחָה is translated in the LXX. ἄφεσις, Vulg. *requies*, and understood either of a remission of taxes or a remission of labour, a holiday. Although the Chald. understands it of a remission of taxes, yet the use of the verb עָשָׂה rather favours the latter meaning, viz. the appointment of a holiday, on which there would be a resting from labour. Finally, he gave gifts with royal munificence מִשָּׁאָה like Amos v. 11, Jer. xl. 5; כִּי־רַחֲמָהּ like chap. i. 7.—It seems strange that a period of four years should intervene between the repudiation of Vashti in the third year of Ahashverosh and the elevation of Esther in the seventh, an interval whose length cannot be adequately accounted for by the statements of the present book. Only a few days could have elapsed between the disgrace of Vashti and the time when the king remembered her; for this took place, we are told, when the king's wrath was appeased. The proposal to collect virgins from all parts of his kingdom to Susa was then immediately made. Now, if the carrying out of this proposal took half a year, and the preparation of the virgins

by anointing, etc., lasted a year, Esther, even if her turn to go in unto the king had not come for six months, might have been made queen two years after the repudiation of Vashti. As she obtained the favour of Hegai immediately upon her reception into the women's house, so that he hastened her purifications (ver. 9), she would not be brought before the king among the last, but would rather be one of the first to go in. The long interval which elapsed between the repudiation of Vashti and the elevation of Esther, can only be satisfactorily explained by the history of the reign of Xerxes; in fact, by the circumstance that his campaign against Greece took place during this time.

Vers. 19-23 relate the intervention of an incident of great importance in the subsequent development of the narrative. When virgins were for the second time gathered together, two courtiers were incensed with the king, and sought to lay hands upon him. This thing was known to Mordochai, who sat in the gate of the palace and kept up a constant communication with Esther even after she became queen, and by him communicated to her, that she might bring it to the knowledge of the king. The matter being investigated and found to have been truly reported, the offenders were punished, and an entry of the particulars made in the chronicles of the kingdom. The words "when virgins were assembled for the second time," which serve to define the time when the conspiracy of the two courtiers took place, as is obvious from the circumstance that **בַּהֲקִבֵּץ בָּתִּים**, ver. 21, refers to **בַּהֲקִבֵּץ בַּת**, ver. 19, are obscure. The obscurity lies in the fact that no reason for assembling virgins can be perceived, after the choice of Ahashverosh had fallen upon Esther. The sentence **וּבַהֲקִבֵּץ בְּתוֹלוֹת שָׁנִית** unmistakably corresponds with **וּבַהֲקִבֵּץ נְעוּרוֹת** of ver. 8. This was already rightly perceived by Grotius, who, however, wrongly infers: *est ἐπ'ἀνόδος (retrogressio), referendum enim hoc ad illa quæ supra, ii. 2.* This is, however, not only incompatible with **שָׁנִית**, but also with the circumstance that, according to the correct understanding of the sentences in vers. 21 and 22, Esther was then already queen, and Mordochai was sitting in the gate of the king's



palace, and thence keeping up communication with her; while as long as Esther was in the women's house preparing for her interview with the king, under the guardianship of Hegai, he walked day by day before the court of the women's house (ver. 11). Still less admissible is the view of Drusius, received by Bertheau, that the gathering of the virgins for the second time is to be understood from the circumstance, that after going in to the king, they had to go into the second house of the women, under the stricter guardianship of Shaashgaz (ver. 14). For, being no longer בְּתוּלוֹת, but פִּילִגְשִׁים (ver. 14), their reception into the house of the concubines could not be called a second gathering together, since as virgins they were formerly in a different house. The only explanation of the שְׁנִיָּת left us is the view, that even after the choice of Esther to be queen, a second gathering together of virgins actually took place; for this, as C. a Lapide remarks, is what the words undoubtedly declare. The matter itself was in accordance with the prevailing custom of polygamy, which kings carried to such an extent, that, as C. a Lapide points out, Solomon, *e.g.*, had 700 wives and 300 concubines, *i.e.* *secondarias uxores*. From וּמֶרְדֵּכַי, ver. 19, onwards, explanatory circumstantial clauses follow: "Then Mordochai sat in the king's gate" introduces the parenthetical sentence, "Esther had not yet showed her kindred and her people (comp. ver. 10), as Mordochai had charged her; for Esther did the commandment of Mordochai as when she was under his care;" *i.e.* Esther obeyed, after her elevation to be queen, the command of Mordochai not to make her Jewish descent known, as she had formerly done while she was yet his foster-daughter. אֶמְנָה, care, education, is a substantive derived from אָמַן.—Ver. 21. The definition of time in ver. 19 is again taken up by the words: in those days; then the explanatory clause, ver. 20, is repeated; and after this we are informed what it was that had then occurred. In those days Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's courtiers, who were the threshold-keepers (palace-watchers, LXX. ἀρχισωματοφύλακες), were wroth, and sought to lay hands on King Ahashverosh, *i.e.* to slay him. Ver. 22. This thing was

known to Mordochai, and by him communicated to Esther, who told it, in Mordochai's name, to the king. Ver. 23. The matter was investigated (*sc.* by the king), and found out, *sc.* as Mordochai had testified. The two criminals were hanged on a tree, *i.e.* impaled on a stake, a sort of crucifixion,—see rem. on chap. vi. 11,—and the circumstance entered in the book of the chronicles, *i.e.* the chronicles of the kingdom. לְפָנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, before the king, *i.e.* in his presence, immediately after sentence had been passed by a court over which the monarch presided.

#### CHAP. III.—HAMAN'S ELEVATION AND HIS DESIGN AGAINST THE JEWS.

King Ahashverosh promoted Haman the Agagite above all the princes about him, and commanded all his servants to fall down before him. This mark of reverence was refused by Mordochai the Jew from religious scruples. When intelligence of this was brought to Haman, he sought to obtain the extermination of the Jews throughout the kingdom (1–6). The twelfth month was appointed by the casting of lots for this purpose; and Haman, by exciting the suspicion of the king against the Jews as an exclusive and law-opposing people, obtained from him an edict to this effect (7–11), and sent it, by letters sealed with the king's seal, by the hand of messengers into all the provinces of the kingdom in the first month, that they might be ready to carry it into execution in the twelfth month; whereat the city of Susa was much perplexed (12–15).

Vers. 1–6. The elevation of Haman above all the princes of the kingdom is said in a general manner to have taken place “after these things,” *i.e.* after the matters related in chap. ii. גָּדַל, to make great, to make any one a great man; נִשָּׂא, elevated, is more precisely defined by the sentence following: he set his seat above all the princes that were with him, *i.e.* above the seat of all the princes about the king; in fact, advanced him to the highest post, made him his grand vizier. Haman is called the son of Hammedatha אֲחִימָדָת, the Agagite, or of the Agagites. אֲחִימָדָת recalls אֲמָלִיק king of the Amalekites,



conquered and taken prisoner by Saul, and hewn in pieces by Samuel, 1 Sam. xv. 8, 33. Hence Jewish and Christian expositors regard Haman as a descendant of the Amalekite king. This is certainly possible, though it can by no means be proved. The name Agag is not sufficient for the purpose, as many individuals might at different times have borne the name אַגַּג, *i.e.* the fiery. In 1 Sam. xv., too, Agag is not the *nomen propr.* of the conquered king, but a general *nomen dignitatis* of the kings of Amalek, as Pharaoh and Abimelech were of the kings of Egypt and Gerar. See on Num. xxiv. 7. We know nothing of Haman and his father beyond what is said in this book, and all attempts to explain the names are uncertain and beside the mark.—Ver. 2. All the king's servants that were in the gate of the king, *i.e.* all the court officials, were to kneel before Haman and bow themselves to the earth. So had the king commanded concerning him. This mark of reverence was refused by Mordochai.—Vers. 3 and 4. When the other officials of the court asked him from day to day, why he transgressed the king's commandment, and he hearkened not unto them, *i.e.* gave no heed to their words, they told it to Haman, "to see whether Mordochai's words would stand; for he had told them that he was a Jew." It is obvious from this, that Mordochai had declared to those who asked him the reason why he did not fall down before Haman, that he could not do so because he was a Jew,—that as a Jew he could not show that honour to man which was due to God alone. Now the custom of falling down to the earth before an exalted personage, and especially before a king, was customary among Israelites; comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 4, xviii. 28, 1 Kings i. 16. If, then, Mordochai refused to pay this honour to Haman, the reason of such refusal must be sought in the notions which the Persians were wont to combine with the action, *i.e.* in the circumstance that they regarded it as an act of homage performed to a king as a divine being, an incarnation of Oromasdes. This is testified by classical writers; comp. Plutarch, *Themist.* 27; Curtius, viii. 5. 5 sq., where the latter informs us that Alexander the Great imitated this custom on his march to India, and remarks, § 11 :

*Persas quidem non pie solum, sed etiam prudenter reges suos inter Deos colere ; majestatem enim imperii salutis esse tutelam.* Hence also the Spartans refused, as Herod. vii. 136 relates, to fall down before King Xerxes, because it was not the custom of Greeks to honour mortals after this fashion. This homage, then, which was regarded as an act of reverence and worship to a god, was by the command of the king to be paid to Haman, as his representative, by the office-bearers of his court ; and this Mordochai could not do without a denial of his religious faith.—Ver. 5. When, then, Haman, whose attention had been called to the fact, saw, when next he went in unto the king, that Mordochai did not fall down before him, he was full of wrath, and (ver. 6) thought scorn, *i.e.* in his pride esteemed it too contemptible, to lay hands on Mordochai alone, *i.e.* to execute him alone, for this opposition to the royal commands ; for they had showed him the people of Mordochai, *i.e.* had told him that as a Jew Mordochai had refused this act of worship, and that the whole Jewish nation thought and acted accordingly. Therefore he sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahashverosh, the people of Mordochai. The subject Haman is repeated before מְרַדְּכָיִי for the sake of clearness, because it was not expressly named with מְרַדְּכָיִי. עַם מְרַדְּכָיִי is in apposition to כָּל-הַיְּהוּדִים : all the Jews as the people of Mordochai, because they were the people of Mordochai and shared his sentiments.

Vers. 7–11. To ensure the success of this great undertaking, viz. the extermination of all the Jews in the kingdom, Haman had recourse to the lot, that he might thus fix on a propitious day for the execution of his project. Astrology plays an important part among all ancient nations, nothing of any magnitude being undertaken without first consulting its professors concerning a favourable time and opportunity ; comp. rem. on Ezek. xxi. 26.—Ver. 7. “In the first month, *i.e.* Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahashverosh, they cast Pur, *i.e.* the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to the twelfth month, *i.e.* the month Adar.” The subject of הַפִּיל is left indefinite, because it is self-evident that



this was done by some astrologer or magician who was versed in such matters. Bertheau tries unnaturally to make Haman the subject, and to combine the subsequent לִפְנֵי הָמָן with הַנּוֹרָל: "Haman cast Pur, *i.e.* the lot, before Haman," which makes Pur signify: the lot before Haman. לִפְנֵי הָמָן means in the presence of Haman, so that he also might see how the lot fell. פּוּר is an Old-Persian word meaning lot (*sors*); in modern Persian بارة, *bâra*, signifies time, case (*fois, cas*), پاره, *pâra* or *pâre*, piece (*morceau, pièce*), and بهر, *behr*, *behre*, and بهر, *behre*, lot, share, fate; comp. Zenker, *Turco-Arabic and Persian Lexicon*, pp. 162 and 229. The words "from day to day, from month to the twelfth month," must not be understood to say, that lots were cast day by day and month by month till the twelfth; but that in the first month lots were at once cast, one after the other, for all the days and months of the year, that a favourable day might be obtained. We do not know the manner in which this was done, "the way of casting lots being unknown to us." The words: from month to the twelfth month, are remarkable; we should expect from month to month till the twelfth month. Bertheau supposes that the words יוֹם שְׁלֹשָׁה לַחֹדֶשׁ וַיַּחֲדֹשׁ were omitted after יוֹם שְׁלֹשָׁה through the eye of the transcriber passing on from the first לַחֹדֶשׁ to the second. The text of the LXX. actually contains such words, and the possibility of such an oversight on the part of a transcriber must certainly be admitted. In the book of Esther, however, the LXX. translation is no critical authority, and it is just as possible that the author of the Hebrew book here expresses himself briefly and indefinitely, because he was now only concerned to state the month determined by lot for the undertaking, and intended to mention the day subsequently. —Ver. 8. Haman having by means of the lot fixed upon a favourable day for the execution of the massacre, betook himself to the king to obtain a royal decree for the purpose. He represented to the monarch: "There is a people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of thy kingdom, and their laws are different from all other

people (*i.e.* from the laws of all other people), and they keep not the laws of the king, and it is not fitting for the king to leave them alone. Ver. 9. If it seem good to the king, let it be written (*i.e.* let a written decree be published) to destroy them; and I will weigh ten thousand talents of silver to those who do the business, that they may bring them into the treasuries of the king." This proposal was very subtilly calculated. First Haman casts suspicion on the Jews as a nation scattered abroad and dwelling apart, and therefore unsociable,—as refractory, and therefore dangerous to the state; then he promises the king that their extermination will bring into the royal treasury a very considerable sum of money, viz. the property of the slaughtered. Ten thousand talents of silver, reckoned according to the Mosaic shekel, are £3,750,000, according to the civil shekel £1,875,000; see rem. on 1 Chron. xxii. 14. עֲשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה, those who execute a work, builders in 2 Kings xii. 12, are here and ch. ix. 3 the king's men of business, who carry on the king's business with respect to receipts and disbursements, the royal financiers.—Ver. 10. The king agreed to this proposal. He drew his signet ring from his hand, and delivered it to Haman, that he might prepare the edict in the king's name, and give it by the impression of the royal seal the authority of an irrevocable decree; see rem. on viii. 8. "To the enemy of the Jews" is added emphatically.—Ver. 11. Lest it should appear as though the king had been induced by the prospect held out of obtaining a sum of money, he awards this to Haman. "The silver be given to thee, and the people to do to them (let it be done to them) as seemeth good to thee." וְהָעָם precedes absolutely: as for the people of the Jews, etc.

Vers. 12–15. Haman, without delay, causes the necessary writings to be prepared, and sent into all the provinces of the kingdom. Ver. 12. "Then were called the king's scribes in the first month, on the thirteenth day of it (יב, in it, in the said month); and there was written according to all that Haman commanded, to the satraps of the king, and to the governors who (were placed) over every province, and to the rulers of every people, to each several province accord-



ing to its writing, and to each different people according to their language (comp. rem. on i. 22); in the name of King Ahashverosh was it written, and sealed with the king's seal." **אַחַשְׁוֵרְשׁ** and **פָּחוֹת** placed in juxtaposition, as in Ezra viii. 36, are the imperial officials. Beside these are also named the **שָׂרִים** of every people, the native princes of the different races. The writing was finished on the thirteenth day of the month, because this day of the month had been fixed upon as propitious by the lot.—Ver. 13. And the letters were sent (**נִשְׁלַחַת**, *infin. abs. Niph.* instead of the *verb. fin.*) by posts. **הָרָצִים** are the post-riders, the *aggaroi*, who were stationed on the high roads of the realm, generally four parasangs apart, to transmit with the more speed the royal letters and messages. Herod. v. 14, viii. 98 (Berth.), comp. Brisson. *de reg. Pers. princ.* i. c. 238 sq. **לְהַשְׁמִיד וְגו'**, to destroy, to kill, and cause to perish all Jews from the youth to the old man, children and women, in one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, and to deprive them of their spoil. The three verbs are combined to give strength to the expression. **שָׁלָלָם** is their property, which is called spoil because it was delivered up to plunder. Haman having held out the prospect of a large sum as the result of exterminating the Jews, and the king having bestowed this upon Haman, the plundering of the Jews, thus permitted to all the inhabitants of the kingdom who should assist in exterminating them, must be understood as implying, that they would have to deliver a portion of the booty thus obtained to Haman.—Ver. 14. The copy of the writing, that the law might be given in every province, was opened to all people, that they might be ready by this day. This verse does not announce a copy of the royal decree that had been prepared and sent by the posts, which would in that case be replaced by a mere allusion to its contents (Bertheau). The words contain no trace of an announcement such as we find in Ezra iv. 11, vii. 11, but the historical notice, that the copy of the writing which was sent as a law into the provinces was **נִלְוִי**, opened, *i.e.* sent unclosed or unsealed to all people. **נִלְוִי** is the predicate to the subject **פֶּתִיחָן וְגו'** (comp. on this word the note to Ezra

iv. 14), and between the subject and predicate is inserted the infinitive clause 'לְהַנְתִּין דָּת וְגו' for the purpose of once more briefly mentioning the contents and destination of the פֶּתֶק: that a law might be given in every province. To attain this object the more certainly, the copy of the decree, which was brought into every province by the posts, was open or unsealed, that all people might read its contents, and keep themselves in readiness for the execution of what was therein commanded on the appointed day. לַיּוֹם הַזֶּה is the thirteenth day of the twelfth month named in the letter.—Ver. 15. The posts went forth hastening (דָּחַף like 2 Chron. xxvi. 20) at the king's commandment, and the decree was given (promulgated) in the citadel of Susa,—an explanatory clause; and the king and Haman sat down to drink while the messengers went forth with the decree, but the city of Susa, in which it was first published, was in perplexity (on נְבוּכָה comp. Ex. xiv. 3, Joel i. 18). The cruel measure could not but fill all peace-loving citizens with horror and anxiety.—Here the question is forced upon us, why the decree should have been so prematurely published. The scribes were summoned to prepare it on the thirteenth day of the first month. For this purpose, even though many copies had to be made in different languages, no very long time would be required in a well-appointed government office. As soon as the scribes had finished their work, the decree was sent out by the posts into all quarters of the realm, and would arrive in even the most distant provinces in three weeks at furthest. This would place almost eleven, and in the remotest parts about ten months between the publication and execution of the decree. What then was the motive for such an interval? Certainly so long a time could not be required for preparing to carry it out, nor is this hinted at in the text, as Bertheau supposes. Nor could it be intended that the Jews should suffer a long period of anxiety. On the contrary, the motive seems to have been, as Clericus and others have already conjectured, to cause many Jews to leave their property and escape to other lands, for the sake of preserving their lives. Thus



Haman would attain his object. He would be relieved of the presence of the Jews, and be able to enrich himself by the appropriation of their possessions (comp. p. 307). On the other hand, the providence of God overruling the event in the interest of the Jews, is unmistakeably evident both in Haman's haste to satisfy his desire for vengeance, and in the falling of the lot upon so distant a day. It was only because there was so long an interval between the publication of the decree and the day appointed by lot for its execution, that it was possible for the Jews to take means for averting the destruction with which they were threatened, as the further development of the history will show.

CHAP. IV.—MORDOCHAI'S MOURNING ON ACCOUNT OF THE  
DECREE FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF THE JEWS, AND  
HIS ADMONITION TO ESTHER TO INTERCEDE FOR HER  
PEOPLE.

When Mordochai heard what had happened, he went mourning and lamenting about the city, and even to the king's gate; and the decree of Haman occasioned great lamentations among the Jews in all the provinces of the kingdom (1-3). When Queen Esther heard through her maids and courtiers of Mordochai's mourning, she sent him raiment that he might put off his mourning garb, but he refused to do so. She then sent an eunuch to him to inquire more particularly as to its cause. Mordochai informed him of all that had happened, giving him a copy of the decree to show to Esther, and charging her to entreat the king's favour for her people (4-8). The queen, however, expressed her hesitation to go in unto the king unsummoned, but upon Mordochai's repeated admonition, resolved to make the desired attempt, at the peril of her life (9-17).

Vers. 1-3. Mordochai learnt all that was done,—not only what had been openly proclaimed, but, as is shown by ver. 7, also the transaction between the king and Haman. Then he rent his garments, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, making loud and bitter lamenta-

tion. Comp. on the last words, Gen. xxvii. 34. The combination of אָפֶר with יִלְבֹּשׁ שֵׁק is an abbreviation for : put on a hairy garment and spread ashes upon his head, in sign of deep grief ; comp. Dan. ix. 3, Job ii. 12, and elsewhere.—Ver. 2. And came even before the king's gate, *i.e.*, according to ver. 6, the open space before the entrance to the royal palace ; for none might enter wearing mourning. אֵין לְבוֹא, there is no entering, *i.e.* none may enter ; comp. Ewald, § 321, *c.*—Ver. 3. Also in every province whither the king's decree arrived, there arose a great mourning among the Jews. מִקוֹם אֲשֶׁר is an adverbial *accusat. loci* in apposition to בְּכָל-מְדִינָה : in every place to which the word of the king and his decree reached, *i.e.* arrived. "Sackcloth and ashes were spread for many," *i.e.* many sat in hairy garments upon the earth, where ashes had been spread ; comp. Isa. lviii. 5. The meaning is : All the Jews broke out into mourning, weeping, and lamentation, while many manifested their grief in the manner above described.

Vers. 4-8. The matter was made known to Esther by her maids and eunuchs, *i.e.* by her attendants. The *Chethiv* תְּבוּאֵינָה does not elsewhere occur after ו consecutive, hence the substitution of the *Keri* תְּבוּאָנָה. The object of יִגִּידוּ : what they told her, is evidently, from what follows, the circumstance of Mordochai's appearance in deep mourning before the gate of the palace. On receiving this information the queen fell into convulsive grief (תַּחֲלָחַל, an intensive form of חָל, to be seized with painful grief), and sent to Mordochai raiment to put on instead of his sackcloth, evidently for the purpose of enabling him to enter the palace and give her the particulars of what had happened. But Mordochai did not accept the raiment.—Vers. 5-7. Then Esther sent Hatach, one of the eunuchs whom the king had set before her, *i.e.* appointed to attend her, to Mordochai to learn "what this, and why this," *i.e.* what was the meaning and the cause of his thus going about in mourning. When Hatach came forth to him in the open place of the city before the king's gate, Mordochai told him all that had happened, and the amount of the money which Haman had promised to weigh to the king's treasures



(*i.e.* to pay into the royal treasury) for the Jews, to destroy them, *i.e.* that it might be permitted him to destroy the Jews. פָּרִשָּׁה, properly a determined, accurate statement, from פָּרַשׁ in the sense of to determine clearly (see rem. on Lev. xxiv. 12); here, according to the context: amount, sum. This promise of Haman is here emphatically mentioned as the chief point, not so much for the purpose of raising the indignation of Esther to the highest pitch (Bertheau), as to show the resentment and eagerness with which Haman had urged the extermination of the Jews. The *Chethiv* יְהוּדִים is the rarer form for יְהוּדִים, and is repeated viii. 1, 7, 13, ix. 15, 18.—Ver. 8. Mordochai also gave Hatach a copy of the decree published in Susa (נָתַן בְּשִׁשָּׁן, like iii. 15) to show it to the queen. The וְלִהְיוֹת לָהּ following is more correctly drawn towards the subsequent וְלַעֲוֹת, as by Bertheau, than connected according to the accentuation with what precedes. Before this infinitive must be supplied from the context, especially from ver. 7: and Mordochai commissioned him or told him (Hatach): to declare unto her and to command her (Esther) to go in unto the king, to entreat him and to make request before him for her people. בִּקֵּשׁ עַל, to beg, to make request for something, like Ezra viii. 23, and chap. vii. 7. עַל עַמָּה, concerning her people, *i.e.* in this connection: for them.

Vers. 9-17. When Hatach brought this information to Esther, she sent word by him to Mordochai, that she might not go in unto the king unsummoned. תְּצַוֶּהוּ אֶל מ', she ordered or commissioned him to Mordochai, viz. to tell him what follows, ver. 11: "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces (*i.e.* all the officers and subjects of the king) know, that with respect to every man or woman that shall come in unto the king, into the inner court, that is not called—one (the same) law (is) for him: to put (him) to death, except him to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live." בְּלֹא-אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה precede as *nominativi absol.*; these are followed by two relative clauses, which are succeeded by the anacoluthic predicate אֶחָת דָּתוֹ: one and the same law is for him (דָּתוֹ, the law concerning him, the unsummoned appearer, the matter of which is briefly stated by

(לְהַמִּית). In the inner court dwelt the king, seated on his throne (comp. v. 1). The law, that every one entering unbidden should be put to death, was subject to but one exception: 'לְבַד מֵאִשָּׁר וּגו', except him to whom the king stretches out, etc. יָשַׁטְתָּ הוֹשִׁיטָה from יָשַׁט, appearing only in the present book (v. 2, viii. 4), but frequently in Chaldee and Syriac, signifies to hold out, to extend, with לוֹ, to or towards him. יִשְׂרָבֵיט, the Aramaic form for יָשַׁבֵּט, sceptre. Access to the royal presence had been already rendered difficult by an edict issued by Dejokes the Mede, Herod. i. 9; and among the Persians, none, with the exception of a few individuals (Herod. iii. 118), were permitted to approach the king without being previously announced (Herod. iii. 140; Corn. Nepos, *Conon*, 3). Any one entering unannounced was punished with death, unless the king, according to this passage, gave it to be understood by stretching forth his sceptre that he was to remain unpunished. It is, however, self-evident, and the fact is confirmed by Herod. iii. 140, that any who desired audience were allowed to announce themselves. Esther might, it seems, have done this. Why, then, did she not make the attempt? The answer lies in her further message to Mordochai: "and I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days." From these words it appears, that formerly she had been more frequently summoned before the king. Now, however, a whole month had passed without any invitation. Hence she concluded that the king did not much wish to see her, and for this reason dared not go unto him unbidden. Evidently, too, she was unwilling to be announced, because in that case she would have been obliged immediately to make known to the king the cause of her desiring this interview. And this she would not venture to do, fearing that, considering the great favour in which Haman stood with the king, she might, if she did not provoke his displeasure against herself through her intercession for her people, at least meet with a rejection of her petition. To set aside an irrevocable decree sealed with the king's seal, must have appeared to Esther an impossible undertaking. To have asked such a thing of the king would



have been indeed a bold venture.—Vers. 12-14. When what Esther said was reported to Mordochai, he sent word back to her (הַשִּׁיב): “Think not in thy soul (with thyself) to be saved in the house of the king above all the Jews; for if thou holdest thy peace at this time, recovery and deliverance will arise from another place, but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed. And who knows if thou hast attained to royalty for a time such as this!” By the words: “Think not that thou wilt be saved in the king’s house above all the Jew,” *i.e.* alone of all the Jews, Mordochai does not reproach Esther with being indifferent to the fate of her fellow-countrymen, but rather calls her attention to the fact that her own life is in danger. This is evident from the clause: if thou hold thy peace, will not intercede with the king for thy people, help will come from some other quarter. רָחָה = רָחָהָה, Ex. viii. 11, ἀναψύξις, deliverance from oppressive restraint. יַעֲמֹד, rise up, arise, used according to later custom for קָם, as in 1 Chron. xx. 4. The thought is: the Jewish nation cannot perish, its continuance is guaranteed by the divine promise. If thou wilt venture nothing for its safety, God will bring deliverance, but destruction will come upon thee and thy family. Though Mordochai neither speaks of God, nor alludes directly to His assistance, he still grounds his hopes of the preservation of his people upon the word and promise of God, and Brentius pertinently remarks: *habes hic excellentem ac plane heroicam Mardochæi fidem, qua in præsentissimo ac periculosissimo discrimine videt futuram liberationem.* The last clause of ver. 14 is by most expositors understood as saying: and who knows whether thou hast not for a time like this attained to royalty? This agrees with the sense, but cannot be verbally justified, for אֵם does not mean whether not. The sentence contains an aposiopesis. The clause depending on the conditional אֵם is unspoken, but understood. Besides, הִנֵּנָהּ is not in the imperfect. Hence it can only be translated: Who knows, if thou hadst not attained to royalty at or for such a time? Then the clause omitted would be: what thou then wouldst have done. מִי יָדַע more frequently has the meaning of *perhaps*; and Mordochai says:

perhaps thou hast attained to royalty (to the dignity of queen) for a time like this, *sc.* to use thy position for the deliverance of thy people. In the turn thus given to the sentence it contains the most urgent injunction to Esther to use her high position for the preservation of her fellow-countrymen.—Ver. 15. This pressing monition produced its result. Esther returned answer to Mordochai: “Go, gather together all the Jews that are found in Susa, and fast ye for me: I also and my maidens will fast; and so will I go to the king against the law; and if I perish, I perish.” Esther resolves to go to the king unsummoned, but begs Mordochai and all the Jews to unite in a three days’ fast, during which she and her maidens will also fast, to seek by earnest humiliation God’s gracious assistance in the step she proposes to take, for the purpose of averting the threatened destruction of her people. “Though ‘God’ and ‘prayer’ are not here mentioned, it is yet obviously assumed that it was before God that the Jews were to humble themselves, to seek His help, and to induce Him to grant it. 1 Kings xxi. 27–29; Joel i. 14; Jonah, iii. 5 sq.” (Berth.). To designate the strictness of this fasting, the words: “neither eat nor drink,” are added. The “three days, night and day,” are not to be reckoned as three times twenty-four hours, but to be understood of a fast which lasts till the third day after that on which it begins; for according to v. 1, Esther goes to the king on the third day. Comp. the similar definition of time, Jonah ii. 1. The addition “day and night” declares that the fast was not to be intermitted. וַיִּכְנּוּ, and in thus, *i.e.* in this state of fasting. אֲשֶׁר לֹא כַדָּת: which is not according to law. אֲשֶׁר לֹא is used, like the Aramæan form לֹא דִי, in the sense of *without* (comp. Ewald, § 222, c): without according to law = contrary to law. The last words: “if I perish, I perish,” etc., are the expression not of despair, but of resignation, or perfect submission to the providence of God; comp. Gen. xliii. 14.—Ver. 17. And Mordochai went his way, *i.e.* from the place before the court of the king, to do what the queen had commanded him to do.



CHAP. V.—ESTHER'S GRACIOUS RECEPTION BY THE KING.  
HAMAN'S RAGE AGAINST MORDOCHAI.

On the third day Esther betook herself in her royal apparel to the inner court of the palace, and was so kindly received by the king, that he promised to grant her any petition she might make; whereupon she requested the king to come with Haman that day to a banquet which she had prepared (vers. 1-8). On returning from this banquet, Haman saw Mordechai in the king's gate, and when the latter did not bow before him, was so enraged, that, upon the advice of his wife and friends, he resolved to induce the king to permit the execution of Mordechai on the following day (vers. 9-14).

Vers. 1-8. On the third day Esther put on her royal apparel and entered the inner court of the king's house, opposite the dwelling of the king, where he was sitting on his throne before the gate (ver. 1). The third day must be counted from the day of the transaction between the queen and Mordechai (iv. 14); the first day being that on which it took place. The fasting, then, would not begin till midday; and on the third day Esther went to the king to invite him on that day to a banquet, which would surely take place in the forenoon. Thus the three days' fast would last from the afternoon of the first to the forenoon of the third day, *i.e.* from 40 to 45 hours. **הִלְבִּישׁ מַלְכוּת**, she put on royalty, royal dignity, *i.e.* arrayed herself in royal apparel. Bertheau thinks that the word **לְבוּשׁ** has been inadvertently omitted before **מַלְכוּת**; but such a conjecture is without sufficient support, the passages vi. 8 and viii. 15 being of another kind. The expression is elliptical, and **מַלְכוּת** is easily completed by the notion **לְבוּשׁ** furnished by the verb.—Ver. 2. When the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she obtained favour in his eyes (see rem. on ii. 9), and he held out to her the golden sceptre that was in his hand; and Esther drew near and touched the top of the sceptre, probably kissed it, as the *Vulgate* renders the word.—Ver. 3. The king, concluding from the circumstance of her appearing

there unsummoned, that she had some urgent matter to bring before him, said to her: "What wilt thou, Queen Esther? and what is thy request? To the half of the kingdom it shall be granted thee." A short expression for: if thy request relates even to the half of the kingdom, it shall be granted. Ver. 4. Esther, however, for the present requested nothing further, than that on that day (to-day) the king and Haman should come to the banquet she had prepared. **אִם טוֹב עָלַי** like i. 19. —Ver. 5. The king commanded Haman to hasten thither, to do as the queen had said. **מִהֲרֵי**, hastened Haman, *i.e.* sent to fetch him quickly. **מִהֲרֵי** like 2 Chron. xviii. 8, 1 Kings xxii. 9. **לַעֲשׂוֹת**, that the word of the queen might be done, carried out. —Ver. 6. At the repast, and indeed at "the banquet of wine," when the greatest cheerfulness would prevail, the king repeated his question as to the desire of the queen, making the same promise as in ver. 3. **וַתַּעֲשֶׂה**, an abbreviated form of the imperfect **תַּעֲשֶׂהָ**, is optative or jussive: and it shall be done.—Vers. 7 and 8. Esther answered: "My petition and my request—if I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition and to do my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and to-morrow I will do as the king hath said," *i.e.* make known my request. Though the king had, in the midst of the gaiety, asked what was Esther's request, she did not esteem the time an appropriate one for expressing it. She begins: my petition and my request,—but then stops, and says only, if the king will do her the favour to come with Haman to a banquet again on the morrow, she will then bring forward her petition. Esther invited Haman with the king on both occasions, that, as Calovius remarks, *eum apud regem præsentem accusaret decreti surrepti contra suos populares nomine, et in os omnes cavillandi vias ei præcluderet.*

Vers. 9–14. Haman went forth from the palace satisfied and with a joyful heart. When, however, he saw Mordochai in the king's gate, who neither stood up nor trembled before him, he was full of indignation against him. **וְלֹא קָם וְגו'** are circumstantial clauses following the principal clause without a copula. **קָם** and **עָלָה** are perfects, and **וְלֹא—וְלֹא** are used in



the sense of *neque*—*neque*. עָנָה constructed with מִן means to tremble before any one, to be disquieted.—Ver. 10. Haman, however, refrained himself; and without immediately giving vent to his rage at Mordochai, went home and sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh, that he might unburden himself before them, and take counsel with them for Mordochai's destruction.—Ver. 11. He first spoke to them of his wealth and domestic happiness, of the “glory of his riches and the multitude of his children.” From ix. 7-10 we learn that Haman had ten sons; and many sons were not looked upon as a great blessing from God by the Israelites only, but were also esteemed a signal prosperity among the Persians, the king annually sending presents to him who had the greatest number of sons.<sup>1</sup> Haman next recounted to them the great honours he had attained; אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר, all how the king had made him great, and how he had advanced him above the princes; comp. iii. 1. אֲשֶׁר is a second accusative of the means by which something is brought to pass. Finally, ver. 12, what high distinction had just been accorded him, by the queen having invited him alone to come to her banquet with the king. “Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet which she had prepared but myself; and to-morrow am I also invited unto her with the king.” הֵאֵל enhances the meaning: even this honour is shown me. אֲנִי קְרוּאָה-לָהּ, I am her invited guest = I am invited to her and by her; comp. Ew. § 295, c.—Ver. 13. And yet all his good fortune is embittered to him as often as he sees the hated Jew Mordochai. “And all this availeth me not at every time when I see the Jew Mordochai sitting in the king's gate.” לֹא שׂוּהָ לִי is, not being equalled to me, *i.e.* not answering my desires, not affording me satisfaction. בְּכָל-עֵת אֲשֶׁר, at all time when = as often as. The fortune and honour he enjoys fail to satisfy him, when he sees the Jew Mordochai refuse to show him the reverence which he claims.—

<sup>1</sup> Herod. says, i. 136: Ἀνδραγαθίη δ' αὐτῇ ἀποδέδεται, μετὰ τὸ μάχεσθαι εἶναι ἀγαθόν, ὅς ἂν πολλοὺς ἀποδέξῃ παῖδας· τῷ δὲ τοὺς πλείστους ἀποδεικνύντι, δῶρα ἐκπέμπει ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀνά πᾶν ἔτος. Comp. Strabo, xv. 3. 17.

Ver. 14. His wife and all his friends advise: "Let a tree be made (set up) fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak to the king, that Mordochai may be hanged thereon (*i.e.* impaled; see on מִלֵּךְ ii. 23); and then go in merrily with the king to the banquet." The counsellors take it for granted that the king will without hesitation agree to Haman's proposal to execute Mordochai, and therefore advise him at once to make the necessary preparations, so that the hated Jew may be hanged on the morrow before the banquet, and Haman may then go with the king to the feast prepared by the queen, free from all annoyance. 'עָשָׂה עֵץ גָּב, to make, *i.e.* to erect a high tree. The higher the stake, the farther would it be seen. The 3d pers. plu. יַעֲשֶׂי stands instead of the passive: let them make = let . . be made. So too יִהְיֶי for let . . be hanged. This speech pleased Haman, and he caused the stake to be erected.

#### CHAP. VI.—ELEVATION OF MORDOCHAI AND DISGRACE OF HAMAN.

The next night the king, being unable to sleep, caused the chronicles of the kingdom to be read to him. The account of the conspiracy discovered by Mordochai, which was written therein, was thus brought before him, and he inquired of his servants whether this man had been rewarded (vers. 1-3a). On receiving a negative answer, the king sent to inquire who was in the court; and Haman being found there thus early, he had him summoned, and asked him: what should be done to the man in whose honour the king delighteth. Haman, supposing that the king could intend to honour no one but himself, voted for the very highest public mark of respect (vers. 3b-9), and was then obliged at the king's command to pay the proposed honour to Mordochai (vers. 10, 11). From this humiliation his wife and friends prognosticated his speedy downfall (vers. 12-14).

Vers. 1-11. An unexpected turn of affairs. Ver. 1. On that night between Esther's first and second banquet, the king's sleep fled, and he commanded to bring the book of records of



the chronicles and to read therefrom. On סֵפֶר הַזְּכָרֹנוֹת, comp. Ezra iv. 15. The title is here more particularly stated than in ii. 23, where the book is briefly called: The book of the chronicles. וַיִּהְיוּ נִקְרָאִים, and they (the chronicles) were read before the king. The participle denotes the long continuance of this reading.—Ver. 2. And it was found written therein among other matters, that Mordochai had given information concerning the two courtiers who were plotting against the king's life. This is the conspiracy related ii. 21-23. The name Bigthana is in ii. 21 written Bigthan.—Ver. 3. On this occasion the king asked: What honour and greatness hath been done to Mordochai for this? עַל־זֶה, for giving this information. And the king's servants answered: Nothing has been shown him. עֲשָׂה עִם, to show any one something, *e.g.* favour; comp. 2 Sam. ii. 6, iii. 8, and elsewhere. גְּדוּלָּה, greatness, *i.e.* promotion to honour.—Ver. 4. To repair this deficiency, and to do honour to the man who had done good service to the king—as the Persian monarchs were accustomed, comp. Brisson. *de reg. Pers. princ.* i. c. 135—he asked, “who is in the court?” *i.e.* whether some minister or state functionary were there with whom he might consult concerning the honour due to Mordochai. Those who desired an audience with the king were accustomed to appear and wait in the outer court, until they were summoned into the inner court to present themselves before the monarch. From this question of the king it appears that it was already morning. And Haman, it is parenthetically remarked, was come into the outer court to speak to the king, to hang Mordochai on the tree which he had prepared.—Ver. 5. The attendants inform the king that Haman is in the court; whereupon the king commands: יָבוֹא, let him come in.—Ver. 6. As soon as he enters the king asks: What is to be done to the man in whose honour the king delighteth? *i.e.* whom he delights to honour. And Haman, thinking (אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ), to say in one's heart, *i.e.* to think) to whom will the king delight to show honour more than to me (יֹתֵר מִמֶּנִּי), projecting before me, surpassing me, hence adverbially, beyond me, *e.g.* Eccles. xii. 12, comp. ii. 15, vii. 11, 16)? votes immediately for the greatest possible mark

of honour, and says, ver. 7 sq.: "As for the man in whose honour the king delighteth, let them bring the royal apparel with which the king has been clothed, and a horse on which the king has ridden, and the king's crown upon his head, and let them deliver this apparel and horse to one of the chief princes of the king, and let them array (*i.e.* with the royal apparel) the man in whose honour the king delighteth, and cause him to ride upon the horse through the streets of the city, and proclaim before him: Thus shall it be done to the man in whose honour the king delighteth." 'אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר וְנו', ver. 7, precedes absolutely, and the predicate does not follow till וְהַלְבִּישׁ, ver. 9, where the preceding subject is now by an anacoluthon taken up in the accusative (אֶת־הָאִישׁ). Several clauses are inserted between, for the purpose of enumerating beforehand all that appertains to such a token of honour: a royal garment, a royal steed, a crown on the head, and one of the chief princes for the carrying out of the honour awarded. The royal garment is not only, as Bertheau justly remarks, such a one as the king is accustomed to wear, but, as is shown by the perf. לָבַשׁ, one which the king has himself already put on or worn. Hence it is not an ordinary state-robe, the so-called Median apparel which the king himself, the chief princes among the Persians, and those on whom the king bestowed such raiment were wont to appear in (Herod. iii. 84, vii. 116; Xenoph. *Cyrop.* viii. 3. 1, comp. with the note of Baehr on Her. iii. 84), but a costly garment, the property of the sovereign himself. This was the highest mark of honour that could be shown to a subject. So too was the riding upon a horse on which the king had ridden, and whose head was adorned with a royal crown. נָתַן is perf. Niph., not 1st pers. pl. imperf. Kal, as Maurer insists; and בְּרֹאשׁוֹ אֲשֶׁר refers to the head of the horse, not to the head of the man to be honoured, as Clericus, Rambach, and most ancient expositors explain the words, in opposition to the natural sense of — אֲשֶׁר נָתַן בְּרֹאשׁוֹ. We do not indeed find among classical writers any testimony to such an adornment of the royal steed; but the circumstance is not at all improbable, and seems to be corroborated by ancient remains, certain Assyrian and ancient



Persian sculptures, representing the horses of the king, and apparently those of princes, with ornaments on their heads terminating in three points, which may be regarded as a kind of crown. The *infin. absol.* וְנָתַן is a continuation of the preceding jussive יָבִיאוּ: and they shall give, let them give the garment—to the hand of a man, *i.e.* hand or deliver to him. The garment and horse are to be delivered to one of the noblest princes, that he may bring them to the individual to be honoured, may array him in the garment, set him on the horse, and proclaim before him as he rides through the city, etc. On הַפְּרָתָּיִם, comp. i. 4, and on the matter itself, Gen. xl. 43. רָחוֹב is either an open square, the place of public assemblage, the forum, or a collective signifying the wide streets of the city. יַעֲשֶׂה כָכָה as in Deut. xxv. 9 and elsewhere.—Vers. 10, 11. This honour, then, the haughty Haman was now compelled to pay to the hated Jew. The king commanded him: “Make haste, take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said,” *i.e.* in the manner proposed by thee, “and do even so to Mordochai the Jew, that sitteth at the king’s gate; let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken,” *i.e.* carry out your proposal exactly. How the king knew that Mordochai was a Jew, and that he sat in the king’s gate, is not indeed expressly stated, but may easily be supplied from the conversation of the king with his servants concerning Mordochai’s discovery of the conspiracy, vers. 1-3. On this occasion the servants of the king would certainly give him particulars concerning Mordochai, who by daily frequenting the king’s gate, ii. 19, v. 9, would certainly have attracted the attention of all the king’s suite. Nor can doubt be cast upon the historical truth of the fact related in this verse by the question: whether the king had forgotten that all Jews were doomed to destruction, and that he had delivered them up to Haman for that purpose (J. D. Mich.). Such forgetfulness in the case of such a monarch as Xerxes cannot surprise us.

Vers. 12-14. After this honour had been paid him, Mordochai returned to the king’s gate; but Haman hastened to his house, “sad and with his head covered,” to relate to

his wife and friends all that had befallen him. A deeper mortification he could not have experienced than that of being obliged, by the king's command, publicly to show the highest honour to the very individual whose execution he was just about to propose to him. The covering of the head is a token of deep confusion and mourning; comp. Jer. xiv. 4, 2 Sam. xv. 30. Then his wise men, and Zeresh his wife, said to him: "If Mordochai, before whom thou hast begun to fall, be of the seed of the Jews, thou wilt not prevail against him, but wholly fall before him." לֹא תִכָּבֵּל לוֹ, *non prævalebis ei*, comp. Gen. xxxii. 26. נָפֹל תָּפֹל with an emphatic *infin. absol.*: wholly fall. Instead of the אֶהְיֶיךָ, הִכְמִי are here named, or to speak more correctly, the friends of Haman are here called his wise men (*magi*). Even in v. 14 Haman's friends figure as those with whom he takes counsel concerning Mordochai, *i.e.* as his counsellors or advisers; hence it is very probable that there were magi among their number, who now "come forward as a *genus sapientum et doctorum* (Cicero, *divin.* i. 23)" (Berth.), and predict his overthrow in his contest with Mordochai. The ground of this prediction is stated: "If Mordochai is of the seed of the Jews," *i.e.* of Jewish descent, then after this preliminary fall a total fall is inevitable. Previously (v. 14) they had not hesitated to advise him to hang the insignificant Jew; but now that the insignificant Jew has become, as by a miracle, a man highly honoured by the king, the fact that the Jews are under the special protection of Providence is pressed upon them. *Ex fato populorum*, remarks Grotius, *de singulorum fati judicabant. Judæi gravissime oppressi a Cyri temporibus contra spem omnem resurgere cœperant.* We cannot, however, regard as well founded the further remark: *de Amalecitis audierant oraculum esse, eos Judæorum manu perituros*, which Grotius, with most older expositors, derives from the Amalekite origin of Haman. The revival of the Jewish people since the times of Cyrus was sufficient to induce, in the minds of heathen who were attentive to the signs of the times, the persuasion that this nation enjoyed divine protection.—Ver. 14. During this conversation certain



courtiers had already arrived, who hastily brought Haman to the banquet of the queen, to which he would certainly go in a less happy state of mind than on the preceding day.

#### CHAP. VII.—HAMAN'S DOWNFALL AND RUIN.

At this second banquet the king again inquired of the queen what was her petition, when she entreated that her life and that of her people might be spared, for that she and her people were sold to destruction (vers. 1-4). The king, evidently shocked at such a petition, asked who was the originator of so evil a deed, and Esther named the wicked Haman as the enemy (vers. 5, 6). Full of indignation at such a crime, the king rose from the banquet and went into the garden; Haman then fell down before the queen to entreat for his life. When the king returned to the house, he saw Haman lying on the couch on which Esther was sitting, and thinking that he was offering violence to the queen, he passed sentence of death upon him, and caused him to be hanged on the tree he had erected for Mordochai (vers. 7-10).

Vers. 1-6. The king and Haman came to drink (לשנות), *i.e.* to partake of the משתה, in the queen's apartment.—Ver. 2. At this banquet of wine the king asked again on the second day, as he had done on the first (chap. v. 6): What is thy petition, Queen Esther, etc.? Esther then took courage to express her petition. After the usual introductory phrases (ver. 3 like v. 8), she replied: "Let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request." For, she adds as a justification and reason for such a petition, "we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. And if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had been silent, for the enemy is not worth the king's damage." In this request עמי is a short expression for: the life of my people, and the preposition ב, the so-called ב pretii. The request is conceived of as the price which she offers or presents for her life and that of her people. The expression נמכרנו, we are sold, is used by

Esther with reference to the offer of Haman to pay a large sum into the royal treasury for the extermination of the Jews, iii. 9, iv. 7. אֵלַי, contracted after Aramæan usage from לוֹ אִם, and occurring also Eccles. vi. 6, supposes a case, the realization of which is desired, but not to be expected, the matter being represented as already decided by the use of the perfect. The last clause, כִּי אֵין הָצָר וְגו', is by most expositors understood as a reference, on the part of Esther, to the financial loss which the king would incur by the extermination of the Jews. Thus Rambach, *e.g.*, following R. Sal. ben Melech, understands the meaning expressed to be: *hostis nullo modo æquare, compensare, resarcire potest pecunia sua damnum, quod rex ex nostro excidio patitur*. So also Cler. and others. The confirmatory clause would in this case refer not to הִתְחַשְׁתִּי, but to a negative notion needing completion: but I dare not be silent; and such completion is itself open to objection. To this must be added, that שָׁוָה in Kal constructed with בִּי does not signify *compensare*, to equalize, to make equal, but to be equal; consequently the Piel should be found here to justify the explanation proposed. שָׁוָה in Kal constructed with בִּי signifies to be of equal worth with something, to equal another thing in value. Hence Gesenius translates: the enemy does not equal the damage of the king, *i.e.* is not in a condition to compensate the damage. But neither when thus viewed does the sentence give any reason for Esther's statement, that she would have been silent, if the Jews had been sold for slaves. Hence we are constrained, with Bertheau, to take a different view of the words, and to give up the reference to financial loss. נָזַק, in the Targums, means not merely financial, but also bodily, personal damage; *e.g.* Ps. xci. 7, Gen. xxvi. 11, to do harm, 1 Chron. xvi. 22. Hence the phrase may be understood thus: For the enemy is not equal to, is not worth, the damage of the king, *i.e.* not worthy that I should annoy the king with my petition. Thus Esther says, ver. 4: The enemy has determined upon the total destruction of my people. If he only intended to bring upon them grievous oppression, even that most grievous oppression of slavery, I



would have been silent, for the enemy is not worthy that I should vex or annoy the king by my accusation.—Ver. 5. The king, whose indignation was excited by what he had just heard, asks with an agitation, shown by the repetition of the וַיֹּאמֶר: “Who is he, and where is he, whose heart hath filled him (whom his heart hath filled) to do so?” Evil thoughts proceed from the heart, and fill the man, and impel him to evil deeds: Isa. xlv. 20; Eccles. viii. 11; Matt. xv. 19.—Ver. 6. Esther replies: “The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman.” Then was Haman afraid before the king and the queen. נִבְּעַת as in 1 Chron. xxi. 30, Dan. viii. 17.

Vers. 7-10. The king in his wrath arose from the banquet of wine, and went into the garden of the house (סָדָה is here a pregnant expression, and is also combined with אֶל-גִּנָּתָהּ); but Haman remained standing to beg for his life to Queen Esther (בִּקֵּשׁ עַל as in iv. 8), “for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king” (כָּלָה, completed, *i.e.* determined; comp. 1 Sam. xx. 7, 9, xxv. 17, and elsewhere); and hence that he had no mercy to expect from him, unless the queen should intercede for him.—Ver. 8. The king returned to the house, and found Haman falling (נָפַל as in Josh. viii. 10, Deut. xxi. 1, and elsewhere) at or on the couch on which Esther was (sitting), *i.e.* falling as a suppliant at her feet; and crediting Haman in the heat of his anger with the worst designs, he cried out: “Shall also violence be done to the queen before me in the house?” The *infin.* לִבְבוֹשׁ after the interrogatory particle signifies: Is violence to be done, *i.e.* shall violence be done? as in 1 Chron. xv. 2 and elsewhere; comp. Ewald, § 237, c. בָּבֵשׁ, to tread under foot, to subdue, used here in the more general sense, to offer violence. Without waiting for an explanation, the king, still more infuriated, passes sentence of death upon Haman. This is not given in so many words by the historian, but we are told immediately that: “as the word went out of the king’s mouth, they covered Haman’s face.” הַדְּבָר is not the speech of the king just reported, but the judicial sentence, the death warrant, *i.e.* the word to punish Haman with death. This is unmistakeably shown by the

further statement: they covered Haman's face. The subject is indefinite: the attendants present. To cover the face was indeed to begin to carry the sentence of death into execution. With respect to this custom, expositors appeal to Curtius, vi. 8. 22: *Philetam—capite velato in regiam adducunt*; and Cicero, *pro C. Rabirio* iv. 13: *I lictor, colliga manus, caput obnubito, arbori infelici suspendito*.—Ver. 9. Then said Harbonah (already mentioned i. 10), one of the eunuchs before the king, *i.e.* who held office before the king: "Behold also the tree which Haman made (comp. v. 14) stands in the house of Haman." □ points to the fact that the other eunuchs had already brought forward various particulars concerning Haman's crime. Mordochai, who had spoken good for the king, *viz.* when he gave information of the conspiracy, ii. 22, vi. 2. On this tree the king ordered that Haman should be hanged, and this sentence was executed without delay.—"And the king's wrath was pacified." With this remark the narrative of this occurrence is closed, and the history pursues its further course as follows.

CHAP. VIII.—MORDOCHAI ADVANCED TO HAMAN'S POSITION.  
COUNTER-EDICT FOR THE PRESERVATION OF JEWS.

The king bestowed the house of Haman on Esther, and advanced Mordochai to Haman's place of prime minister (vers. 1 and 2). Esther then earnestly besought the king for the abolition of the edict published by Haman against the Jews, and the king permitted her and Mordochai to send letters in the king's name to all the Jews in his kingdom, commanding them to stand for their life, and to slay their enemies, on the day appointed for their own extermination (vers. 3–14). These measures diffused great joy throughout the kingdom (vers. 15–17).

Vers. 1 and 2. By the execution of Haman, his property was confiscated, and the king decreed that the house of the Jews' enemy should be given to Esther. The "house of Haman" undoubtedly means the house with all that pertained to it. "And Mordochai came before the king, for Esther had



told him what he was to her," viz. her kinsman and foster-father, ii. 7. This information effected Mordochai's appearance before the king, *i.e.* his reception into the number of the high dignitaries who beheld the face of the king, *i.e.* were allowed personal access to him; comp. i. 10, 14, vii. 9. —Ver. 2. And the king took off his seal-ring which he had taken from Haman (comp. iii. 10), and gave it to Mordochai. **וְהָעֵבִיר מִן**, to cause to go from some one, *i.e.* to take away. By this act Mordochai was advanced to the post of first minister of the king; comp. Gen. xli. 42, 1 Macc. vi. 15. The king's seal gave the force of law to royal edicts, the seal taking the place of the signature. See rem. on ver. 8 and iii. 10.

Vers. 3-14. The chief enemy of the Jews was now destroyed; but the edict, written in the king's name, sealed with the royal seal, and published in all the provinces of the kingdom, for the destruction of all the Jews on the 13th day of the twelfth month, was still in force, and having been issued in due legal form, could not, according to the laws of the Persians and Medes, be revoked. Queen Esther therefore entreated the king to annul the designs of Haman against the Jews. Vers. 3 and 4. "Esther spake again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and wept, and besought him to do away with (**וְהָעֵבִיר**, to cause to depart) the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he devised against the Jews. And the king held out his golden sceptre towards Esther, and Esther arose and stood before the king." This verse gives a summary of the contents of Esther's speech, which is reported verbally in vers. 5 and 6, so that we must translate the imperfects **וַתִּפֹּל—וַתִּבְקֶה וַתִּתְחַנֵּן**: She spoke before the king, falling at his feet and beseeching him with weeping, that he would do away with **רָעַת הָמָן**, the evil that Haman had done, and his device against the Jews. The king stretched out his sceptre (comp. chap. iv. 11) as a sign that he would graciously grant her petition; whereupon she arose, stood before the king, and made known her request. —Ver. 5. The introductory formula are in part similar to those used chap. i. 19, v. 4, 8, vii. 3; but the petition referring to a great and important matter, they are strength-

ened by two new phrases: "If the thing is advisable (בְּיָשָׁר, proper, convenient, advantageous, a later word occurring again only Eccles. xi. 6, x. 10,—in ii. 21, iv. 4, 5, 10 of the same book, בְּיָשָׁרוֹן) before the king, and if I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written (let a writing be issued, like chap. iii. 9), to frustrate (לְהַשִּׁיב, *i.e.* to put out of force) the letters, the device of Haman . . . which he wrote to destroy the Jews, who are in all the provinces of the king." מַחֲשַׁבַּת הַמֶּלֶךְ, the device, the proposal of Haman, is added to הַפְּפָרִים, briefly to characterize the contents of the letters. On the matter itself, comp. iii. 8 sq. and 12 sq. "For how shall I endure to see the destruction of my people?" The verbs אוֹכַל וְרָאִיתִי are so combined that the second is governed by the first, וְרָאִיתִי standing instead of the infinitive; comp. Ew. § 285, *c.* רָאָה cons. ק denotes an interested beholding, whether painful or joyous, of something; comp. Gen. xliv. 34. מוֹלָדָה in parallelism with עַם denotes those who are of like descent, the family, members of a tribe.—Vers. 7 and 8. The king could not simply revoke the edict issued by Haman in due legal form, but, ready to perform the request of the queen, he first assures her of his good intentions, reminding her and Mordochai that he has given the house of Haman to Esther and hanged Haman, because he laid hand on the Jews (אֶתוֹ תָּלִי, him they have executed); and then grants them permission, as he had formerly done to Haman, to send letters to the Jews in the king's name, and sealed with the king's seal, and to write בְּטוֹב בְּעֵינֵיכֶם, "as seems good to you," *i.e.* to give in writing such orders as might in Esther's and Mordochai's judgment render the edict of Haman harmless. "For," he adds, "what is written in the king's name and sealed with his seal cannot be reversed." This confirmatory clause is added by the king with reference to the law in general, not as speaking of himself objectively as "the king." יִכְתֹּב לְהַשִּׁיב refers to Esther's request: לְהַשִּׁיב (ver. 5). וְנִחַתָּם, *infin. abs.* used instead of the *perfect*.—Vers. 9–14. These letters were prepared in the same manner as those of Haman (chap. iii. 12–15), on the 23d day of the third month, the month Sivan, and sent into all the pro-



vinces. "And it was written according to all that Mordochai commanded." They were sent to the Jews and to the satraps, etc., of the whole wide realm from India to Ethiopia (see i. 1), while those of Haman had been issued only to the satraps, etc. The rest coincides with chap. iii. 12. וַיִּכְתֹּב, and he (Mordochai) wrote. To show the speed with which the letters were despatched, (messengers) "on horseback, on coursers, government coursers, the sons of the stud," is added to בְּיַד הָרָצִים. רָצִים is a collective, meaning swift horses, coursers; comp. 1 Kings v. 8. אֲחֻשְׁתָּרִים (vers. 11 and 14) answers to the Old-Persian *kschatrana*, from *kschatra*, government, king, and means government, royal, or court studs. So Haug in Ewald's *bibl. Jahrb.* v. p. 154. The older explanation, mules, on the other hand, is founded on the modern Persian *estar*, which, to judge from the Sanscrit *açvatara*, must in ancient Persian have been *açpatara*. רָצִים, ἀπ. λεγ. from רָצָה, answering to the Syriac زُصَل, herd, especially a herd of horses, and to the Arabic رُكَّة, stud, is explained by Bertheau as a superlative form for the animal who excels the rest of the herd or stud in activity, perhaps the breeding stallion, while others understand it of the stud in general. The contents of the edict follow in vers. 11 and 12: "that the king allows the Jews in every city to assemble and to stand for their life (*i.e.* to fight for their lives, comp. Dan. xii. 1), to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish all the power (חַיִּל, military power) of the people and province that should assault them, children and women, and to plunder their property, upon a certain day," etc. The appointed time is thus stated as in chap. iii. 13. The Jews were thus authorized to attack and destroy all enemies who should assault them on the day appointed for their extermination. Ver. 13 coincides with chap. iii. 14b, with this difference, that the Jews are to be ready on this day to avenge themselves on their enemies. Ver. 14 also is similar to chap. iii. 15, except that the expression is strengthened by an addition to הָרָצִים as in ver. 10, and by that of הָחִפִּים, urged on, to מְבַהֲלִים, hastened, to point out the utmost despatch possible.

Vers. 15–17. The joy experienced throughout the kingdom at these measures. Ver. 15. After transacting with the king this measure so favourable to the Jews, Mordochai went out from the king in a garment of deep blue and white material (comp. i. 6), and with a great crown of gold, and a mantle of byssus and purple. תְּכָרִיךְ, ἀπ. λεγ., in the Aramæan תְּכָרִיכָא, a wide mantle or covering. The meaning is not, as Bertheau remarks, that he left the king in the garment which had been, according to chap. vi. 8 sq., presented to him, nor that he left him with fresh tokens of his favour, clothed in a garment, crown, and mantle just bestowed on him, but that he left him in a magnificent state garment, and otherwise festally apparelled, that he might thus show, even by his external appearance, the happiness of his heart. Of these remarks, the first and last are quite correct; the second, however, can by no means be so, because it affords no answer to the question how Mordochai had obtained crown and mantle during his stay with the king and in the royal palace. The garments in which Mordochai left the king are evidently the state garments of the first minister, which Mordochai received at his installation to his office, and, as such, no fresh token of royal favour, but only his actual induction in his new dignity, and a sign of this induction to all who saw him issue from the palace so adorned. “The city of Susa rejoiced and was glad,” *i.e.* rejoiced for gladness. The city, *i.e.* its inhabitants on the whole.—Ver. 16. The Jews (*i.e.* in Susa, for those out of the city are not spoken of till ver. 17) had light and gladness, and delight and honour.” אֹרֶה (this form occurs only here and Ps. cix. 12), light, is a figurative expression for prosperity. יָקָר, honour—in the joy manifested by the inhabitants of Susa at the prevention of the threatened destruction.—Ver. 17. And in every province and city . . . there was joy and a glad day, a feast day, comp. chap. ix. 19, 22, while Haman’s edict had caused grief and lamentation, chap. iv. 3. “And many of the people of the land (*i.e.* of the heathen inhabitants of the Persian empire) became Jews, for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.” מְתִיבֵהֶם, to confess oneself a Jew, to become a Jew, a denominative formed from יְהוּדִי,



occurs only here. On the confirmatory clause, comp. Ex. xv. 16, Deut. xi. 25. This conversion of many of the heathen to Judaism must not be explained only, as by Clericus and Grotius, of a change of religion on the part of the heathen, *ut sibi hoc modo securitatem et reginæ favorem pararent, metuentes potentiam Mardechæi*. This may have been the inducement with some of the inhabitants of Susa. But the majority certainly acted from more honourable motives, viz. a conviction, forced upon them by the unexpected turn of affairs in favour of the Jews, of the truth of the Jewish religion; and the power of that faith and trust in God manifested by the Jews, and so evidently justified by the fall of Haman and the promotion of Mordochai, contrasted with the vanity and misery of polytheism, to which even the heathen themselves were not blind. When we consider that the same motives in subsequent times, when the Jews as a nation were in a state of deepest humiliation, attracted the more earnest-minded of the heathen to the Jewish religion, and induced them to become proselytes, the fact here related will not appear surprising.

CHAP. IX.—THE JEWS AVENGED OF THEIR ENEMIES. THE  
FEAST OF PURIM INSTITUTED.

On the day appointed by both edicts, the Jews assembled in the towns and provinces of the kingdom to slay all who sought their hurt, and being supported by the royal officials, inflicted a great defeat upon their enemies (vers. 1–10). At the queen's desire, the king granted permission to the Jews in Susa to fight against their enemies on the following day also (vers. 11–15), while in the other towns and districts of the kingdom they fought for their lives only on the 13th of Adar; so that in these places they rested on the 14th, but in Susa not till the 15th, and consequently kept in the latter the one day, in the former the other, as a day of feasting and rejoicing (vers. 16–19). The observance of this day of resting as a festival, under the name of Purim, by all the Jews in the Persian monarchy, was then instituted by Esther and Mordochai (vers. 20–32).

Vers. 1–10. *The Jews avenged of their enemies.*—Ver. 1. In the twelfth month, on the thirteenth day of the same—the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities, etc. Several parenthetical clauses succeed this definition of time, so that the statement of what then took place does not follow till נִקְהָלִי, ver. 2. These parenthetical clauses state not only the meaning of the day just named, but also give a general notice of the conflict between the Jews and their enemies. The first runs: “when the word of the king drew nigh and his decree to be done,” *i.e.* when the execution of the royal decree approached. The second is: “on the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have the mastery of them, and it was changed (*i.e.* the contrary occurred), that the Jews had the mastery over them that hated them.” שָׁלַט בָּ, to rule, to have the mastery over. נִהְפֹּךְ is *infin. abs.*, used instead of the *imperf.* הוּא is referred by Bertheau to יוֹם: the day was changed from a day of misfortune to a day of prosperity for the Jews, alluding to ver. 22; but it is not a change of the day which is here spoken of, but a change of the hope of the enemies into its opposite; hence we must regard הוּא as neuter: it was changed, *i.e.* the contrary occurred. The pronoun הֵמָּה serves to emphasize the subject; comp. Ewald, § 314, *a*, who in this and similar cases takes הוּא, הֵמָּה in the sense of *ipse, ipsi*.—Ver. 2. בְּעָרֵיהֶם, in their cities, *i.e.* the cities in which they dwelt in all the dominions of the king. לְשַׁלַּח יָד, to stretch out the hand (as also in ii. 21, iii. 6, for the purpose of killing) against those who sought their hurt, *i.e.* sought to destroy them. “And no one stood before them (עָמַד בְּפָנֵי, like Josh. x. 8, xxi. 42, and elsewhere), because the fear of them fell upon all people (see rem. on viii. 17). And all the rulers of the provinces, and the satraps and governors (comp. viii. 9), and those that did the king’s business (עָשִׂי הַמְּלָאכָה, see rem. on iii. 9), supported the Jews (נִשָּׂא like Ezra i. 4), because the fear of Mordochai fell upon them.”—Ver. 4. “For Mordochai was great in the king’s house (was much esteemed by the king), and his fame went through all the provinces (שָׁמַעוּ as in Josh. vi. 27, ix. 9, Jer. vi. 24); for this man Mordochai became continually greater;” comp. 2 Chron.



xvii. 12, where the partic. נָל stands instead of the infin. abs. נָל.—Ver. 5. Thus supported, the Jews inflicted defeat upon their enemies with the sword, and with slaughter and destruction. הָקָה with בָּ, to deal a blow upon or against some one, to cause or bring about upon enemies a defeat; comp. e.g. 2 Sam. xxiii. 10, xxiv. 17, Num. xxii. 6. The notion is strengthened by מִכַּת־הָרֶב וְנָ, literally, to strike a stroke of the sword, and of slaughter, and of destruction, in accordance with the decree, viii. 11. “And did according to their will to those that hated them,” i.e. retaliated upon their enemies at their discretion.—Ver. 6. In the citadel of Susa they destroyed (in round numbers) 500 men.—Vers. 7-10. Also they slew the ten sons of Haman, whose names are given, 7-9;<sup>1</sup> but on the spoil they laid not their hand, though this was allowed to them, viii. 11, as it had been commanded to their enemies by Haman’s edict, iii. 13, *ut ostenderent, se non aliud quam vitæ suæ incolumitatem quærere; hanc enim perdere volebant ii qui occidebantur.* C. a Lapide.

Vers. 11-19. When on the same day an account was given to the king of the result of the conflict, and the number of those slain in Susa reported, he announced to Queen Esther: the Jews have slain in the citadel of Susa 500 men and the ten sons of Haman; “what have they done in the rest of the king’s provinces?” i.e. if they have killed 500 men in Susa, how many may they not have slain in other parts of the kingdom? and then asked her what else she wished or required. With respect to the words, comp. v. 6 and vii. 2.

<sup>1</sup> The peculiar position of the names of the sons of Haman in editions of the Bible, grounded as it is upon the ancient mode of writing, must originally have been intended merely to give prominence to the names, and facilitate their computation. The later Rabbis, however, have endeavoured to discover therein some deeper meaning. This mode of writing the names has been said to be *signum voti, ut a ruina sua nunquam amplius resurgent*, or also a *sign quod sicut hi decem filii in linea perpendiculari, unus supra alterum, suspensi fuerint.* Comp. Buxtorf, *Synagoga jud.* pp. 157-159 of the Basle edit. 1580. What is indicated by the smaller forms of the letters ת, ש, and י, in the first, seventh, and tenth names, is not known; the larger י in the tenth may have been meant to give prominence, by the character employed, to this name as the last.

—Ver. 13. Esther requested: “let it be granted to the Jews which are in Susa to do to-morrow also according to the decree of to-day (*i.e.* exactly as to-day), and let the ten sons of Haman be hanged upon the tree,” *i.e.* their dead bodies nailed on crosses—*majoris infamiae causa*, according to Hebrew and Persian custom; comp. Deut. xxi. 22 and the explanation of Ezra vi. 11. On the motive for this request, see above, p. 310.—Ver. 14. The king commanded it so to be done. “Then was a decree given at Susa, and they hanged the ten sons of Haman.” The decree given in Susa does not refer to the hanging of the sons of Haman, but to the permission given to the Jews to fight against their enemies on the morrow also. This is required not only by a comparison of viii. 13, but also by the connection of the present verse; for in consequence of this decree the Jews assembled on the 14th Adar (comp. וַיִּקְהֲלוּ, then they assembled themselves, ver. 15), while the hanging of the sons of Haman, on the contrary, is related in an accessory clause by a simple perfect, הָלְלוּ.—Ver. 15. On this second day the Jews slew 300 more; comp. ver. 10.—Ver. 16. The rest of the Jews in the provinces, *i.e.* the Jews in the other parts of the kingdom, assembled themselves and stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes 75,000, but upon the spoil they laid not their hand. וַיָּנוּחַ מֵאֵיבֵיהֶם inserted between וַיַּעֲמֵד עַל נַפְשָׁם and וַיִּהְיוּ is striking; we should rather have expected the resting or having rest from their enemies after the death of the latter, as in vers. 17 and 18, where this is plainly stated to have taken place on the day after the slaughter. The position of these words is only explained by the consideration, that the narrator desired at once to point out how the matter ended. The narrative continues in the *infin. abs.* instead of expressing this clause by the *infin. constr.*, and so causing it to be governed by what precedes. Thus—as Ew. § 351, c, remarks—all the possible hues of the sentence fade into this grey and formless termination (*viz.* the use of the *infin. absol.* instead of the *verb. fin.*). This inaccuracy of diction does not justify us, however, in assuming that we have here an interpolation or an alteration in the



text. The statement of the day is given in ver. 17, and then the clause following is again added in the *inf. absol.*: "and they rested on the 14th day of the same (of Adar), and made it a day of feasting and gladness."—Ver. 18. The Jews in Susa, on the other hand, who were both on the 13th and 14th Adar still fighting against their enemies, and did not rest till the 15th, made this latter their day of rejoicing.—In ver. 19 it is again stated that the Jews in the country towns and villages made the 14th their day of gladness, and this statement is appended by *על־כֵּן* to make this appear the result of what precedes. The *Chethiv* *הַפְּרוּזִים* is perhaps an Aramaic expression for *פְּרוּזִים*, Deut. iii. 5 and 1 Sam. vi. 18. *פְּרוּזִי* means the inhabitants of the open, *i.e.* unfortified, towns and villages of the plains in contrast to the fortified capital; see on Deut. iii. 5. On *פְּרוּזוֹת*, compare Ezek. xxxviii. 11, Zech. ii. 8. *מִשְׁלוֹחַ מְנוּחַ וְגו'*, and of mutual sending of gifts, *i.e.* portions of food; comp. Neh. viii. 10, 12.

Vers. 20-32. The feast of Purim instituted by letters from Mordochai and Esther. Ver. 20. Mordochai wrote these things, and sent letters to all the Jews, etc. *הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה* does not mean the contents of the present book, but the events of the last days, especially the fact that the Jews, after overcoming their enemies, rested in Susa on the 15th, in the other provinces on the 14th Adar, and kept these days as days of rejoicing. This is obvious from the object of these letters, ver. 21: *לָקִים עֲלֵיהֶם וְגו'*, to appoint among them "that they should keep the 14th day of the month Adar and the 15th day of the same yearly, as the days on which the Jews rested from their enemies, and as the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a glad day, that they should keep them as days of feasting and joy, and of mutual sending of portions one to another, and gifts to the poor." *עָשָׂה יוֹם*, to keep, to celebrate a day. The *לְהִיּוֹת עֲשִׂים*, ver. 21, is after long parentheses taken up again in *לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתָם קִיָּם*, to establish a matter, to authorize it, comp. Ruth iv. 7. Both the 14th and 15th Adar were made festivals because the Jews on them had rest from their enemies, and celebrated this rest by feasting, some on the

former, some on the latter day.—Ver. 23. And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordochai had written to them. They had begun, as ver. 22 tells us, by keeping both days, and Mordochai wrote to them that they should make this an annual custom. This they agreed to do in consequence of Mordochai's letters. The reason of their so doing is given in vers. 24 and 25, and the name of this festival is explained, ver. 26, by a brief recapitulation of the events which gave rise to it. Then follows, vers. 26*b* and 27, another wordy statement of the fact, that it was by reason of this letter, and on account of what they had seen, *i.e.* experienced, that the annual celebration of this feast was instituted for a perpetual memorial to all Jews at all times (vers. 28 and 29).—Ver. 24. For Haman, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them (comp. iii. 1, 6 sq.), and had cast Pur, that is the lot (see on iii. 7), to consume them and to destroy them. *הַמָּוֶלֶת*, mostly used of the discomfiture with which God destroys the enemies, Ex. xiv. 24, Deut. ii. 15, and elsewhere.—Ver. 25. *וּבְנֵי אֶסְתֵּר*, and when it (the matter), not when she, Esther, came before the king,—for Esther is not named in the context,—he commanded by letters (viii. 8), *i.e.* he gave the written order: let the wicked device which he devised against the Jews return upon his own head; and they hanged him and his sons upon the tree.—Ver. 26. Wherefore they called these days Purim after the name Pur. This first *עַל־כֵּן* refers to what precedes and states the reason, resulting from what has just been mentioned, why this festival received the name of *Purim*. With the second *עַל־כֵּן* begins a new sentence which reaches to ver. 28, and explains how it happened that these feast-days became a general observance with all Jews; namely, that because of all the words of this letter (of Mordochai, ver. 20), and of what they had seen concerning the matter (*עַל־כֵּן*, concerning so and so), and what had come upon them (therefore for two reasons: (1) because of the written injunction of Mordochai; and (2) because they had themselves experienced this event), the Jews established, and took upon themselves, their descendants, and all who should join



themselves unto them (proselytes), so that it should not fail (*i.e.* inviolably), to keep (to celebrate) these two days according to the writing concerning them and the time appointed thereby year by year.—Ver. 28. And that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and these days of Purim are not to pass away among the Jews, nor their remembrance to cease among their seed. The participles **וְנִעְשִׂים** and **נִזְכָּרִים** still depend on **לְהִיּוֹת**, ver. 27. Not till the last clause does the construction change in **לֹא יַעֲבֹרוּ** to the *temp. finit.* **וְלֹא יַעֲבֹר** is a periphrasis of the adverb: imperishably, inviolably. **בְּכִתְבָּם**, *secundum scriptum eorum*, *i.e.* as Mordochai had written concerning them (ver. 23). **בְּיָמָם**, as he had appointed their time. **סוּף מֵן**, to come to an end from, *i.e.* to cease among their descendents.

Vers. 29-32. A second letter from Queen Esther and Mordochai to appoint fasting and lamentation on the days of Purim. Ver. 29. And Esther the queen and Mordochai the Jew wrote with all strength, that is very forcibly, to appoint this second letter concerning Purim, *i.e.* to give to the contents of this second letter the force of law. **הַזֹּאת** refers to what follows, in which the contents of the letter are briefly intimated. The letter is called **הַשְּׁנִיָּה** with reference to the first letter sent by Mordochai, ver. 20 sq.—Ver. 30. And he (Mordochai) sent letters, *i.e.* copies of the writing mentioned ver. 29, to all the Jews in the 127 provinces (which formed) the kingdom of Ahashverosh, words of peace and truth, *i.e.* letters containing words of peace and truth (ver. 31), to appoint these days of Purim in their portions of time according as Mordochai the Jew and Esther the queen had appointed, and as they (the Jews) had appointed for themselves and for their descendants, the things (or words = precepts) of the fastings and their lamentations. **בְּיָמֵיהֶם**, in their appointed times; as the suffix relates to the days of Purim, the **יָמִים** can mean only portions of time in these days. The sense of vers. 29-31 is as follows: According to the injunctions of Esther and Mordochai, the Jews appointed for themselves and their descendants times also of

fasting and lamentation in the days of Purim. To make this appointment binding upon all the Jews in all provinces of the Persian monarchy, Esther and Mordochai published a second letter, which was sent by Mordochai throughout the whole realm of King Ahashverosh. To this is added, ver. 32, that the decree of Esther appointed these matters of Purim, *i.e.* the injunction mentioned vers. 29–31, also to fast and weep during these days, and it was written in the book. **הַסֵּפֶר**, the book in which this decree was written, cannot mean the writing of Esther mentioned ver. 29, but some written document concerning Purim which has not come down to us, though used as an authority by the author of the present book. The times when the fasting and lamentation were to take place in the days of Purim, are not stated in this verse; this could, however, only be on the day which Haman had appointed for the extermination of the Jews, *viz.* the 13th Adar. This day is kept by the Jews as **תַּעֲנִית אֶסְתֵּר**, Esther's fast.<sup>1</sup>

#### CHAP. X.—THE POWER AND GREATNESS OF MORDOCHAI.

Ver. 1. And King Ahashverosh laid a tribute upon the land, and upon the isles of the sea. Ver. 2. And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the statement of the greatness of Mordochai to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? The *Chethiv* **אֶחָדָם** is a clerical error for **אֶחָדָם**. The word **מִס**, service,

<sup>1</sup> According to 2 Macc. xv. 36, the victory over Nicanor was to be celebrated on the 13th Adar, but, according to a note of Dr. Cassel in Grimm's *kurzgef. exeget. Handb. zu den Apokryphen*, on 2 Macc. xv. 36, the festival of Nicanor is mentioned in Jewish writings, as *Megillat Taanit*, c. 12, in the Babylonian Talmud, *tr. Taanit*, f. 18b, in *Massechet Sofrim* 17, 4, but has been by no means observed for at least the last thousand years. The book *Scheiltot* of R. Acha (in the 9th century) speaks of the 13th Adar as a fast-day in memory of the fast of Esther, while even at the time of the Talmud the "Fast of Esther" is spoken of as a three days fast, kept, however, after the feast of Purim. From all this it is obvious, that a diversity of opinions prevailed among the Rabbis concerning the time of this fast of Esther.



here stands for tribute. As the provinces of the kingdom paid the imposts for the most part in natural produce, which they had reared or obtained by the labour of their hands, their labour (agriculture, cattle-keeping, etc.) was to a certain extent service rendered to the king. The matter of ver. 1 seems extraneous to the contents of our book, which has hitherto communicated only such information concerning Ahashverosh as was necessary for the complete understanding of the feast of Purim. "It seems"—remarks Bertheau—"as though the historian had intended to tell in some further particulars concerning the greatness of King Ahashverosh, for the sake of giving his readers a more accurate notion of the influential position and the agency of Mordochai, the hero of his book, who, according to ix. 4, waxed greater and greater; but then gave up his intention, and contented himself with referring to the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia, which contained information of both the power and might of Ahashverosh and the greatness of Mordochai." There is not, however, the slightest probability in such a conjecture. This matter may be simply explained by the circumstance, that the author of this book was using as an authority the book of the chronicles alluded to in ver. 2, and is quite analogous with the mode observed in the books of Kings and Chronicles by historians both of Babylonian and post-Babylonian days, who quote from the documents they make use of such events only as seem to them important with regard to the plan of their own work, and then at the close of each reign refer to the documents themselves, in which more may be found concerning the acts of the kings, at the same time frequently adding supplementary information from these sources,—comp. *e.g.* 1 Kings xiv. 30, xv. 7, 23, 32, xxii. 47–50, 2 Kings xv. 37, 2 Chron. xii. 15,—with this difference only, that in these instances the supplementary notices follow the mention of the documents, while in the present book the notice precedes the citation. As, however, this book opened with a description of the power and glory of King Ahashverosh, but yet only mentioned so

much concerning this ruler of 127 provinces as was connected with the history of the Jews, its author, before referring to his authorities, gives at its close the information contained in ver. 1, from the book of the chronicles of the kingdom, in which probably it was connected with a particular description of the power and greatness of Ahashverosh, and probably of the wars in which he engaged, for the sake of briefly intimating at the conclusion whence the king derived the means for keeping up the splendour described at the commencement of the book. This book of the chronicles contained accounts not only of the power and might of Ahashverosh, but also a פִּרְשָׁה, a plain statement or accurate representation of the greatness of Mordochai wherewith the king had made him great, *i.e.* to which he had advanced him, and therefore of the honours of the individual to whom the Jews were indebted for their preservation. On this account is it referred to. For Mordochai was next to the king, *i.e.* prime minister of the king (מִשְׁנָה, comp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 7), and great among the Jews and acceptable to the multitude of his brethren, *i.e.* he was also a great man among the Jews and was beloved and esteemed by all his fellow-countrymen (on רָצִי, comp. Deut. xxiii. 24), seeking the good of his people and speaking peace to all his race. This description of Mordochai's position with respect both to the king and his own people has, as expressive of an exalted frame of mind, a rhetorical and poetic tinge. Hence it contains such expressions as רֵב אֶחָיו, the fulness of his brethren, דָּרֵשׁ טוֹב; comp. Ps. cxxii. 9, Jer. xxxviii. 4. On דָּבַר שְׁלוֹם, comp. Ps. lxxxv. 9, xxxv. 20, xxviii. 3. זֵרַע in parallelism with עַמּוֹ is not the descendants of Mordochai, or his people, but his race. Comp. on this signification of זֵרַע, 2 Kings xi. 1, Isa. lxi. 9. The meaning of the two last phrases is: Mordochai procured both by word and deed the good and prosperity of his people. And this is the way in which honour and fortune are attained, the way inculcated by the author of the 34th Psalm in vers. 13-15, when teaching the fear of the Lord.



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