THE EXPOSITOR'S BIBLE

EDITED BY THE REV.

W. ROBERTSON NICOLL, M.A., LL.D.

Editor of " Tht Expositor,'' itc.

THE BOOK OF THE TWELVE PROPHETS

VOL. IL—ZEPHANIAH, NAHUM, HABAKKUK, OBADIAH. HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH I.—VUI., " MALACHI," JOEL, "ZECHARIAH" IX.—XIV. AND JONAH

BY

GEORGE ADAM SMITH, D.D., LL.D.

NEW YORK

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THE BOOK

OF

THE TWELVE PROPHETS

COMMONLY CALLED THE MINOR

BY

GEORGE ADAM SMITH, D.D., LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF HEBREW AND OLD TESTAMENT EXEGESIS
FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, GLASGOW

IN *TWO VOLUMES*

VOL. II.--ZEPHANIAH, NAHUM, HABAKKUK, OBADIAH, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH I.—VHL, "MALACHI," JOEL, "ZECHARIAH" IX.-XIV. AND JONAH

WITH HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL INTRODUCTIONS

SECOND EDITION

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PREFACE

THE first volume on the Twelve Prophets dealt with the three who belonged to the Eighth Century: Amos, Hosea and Micah. This second volume includes the other nine books arranged in chronological order: Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk, of the Seventh Century; Obadiah, of the Exile; Haggai, Zechariah i.—viii., "Malachi" and Joel, of the Persian Period, 538—331; "Zechariah" ix.—xiv., and the Book of Jonah, of the Greek Period, which began in 332, the date of Alexander's Syrian campaign.

The same plan has been followed as in Volume 1. A historical introduction is offered to each period. To each prophet are given, first a chapter of critical introduction, and then one or more chapters of exposition. A complete translation has been furnished, with critical and explanatory notes. All questions of date and of text, and nearly all of interpretation, have been confined to the introductions and the notes, so that those who consult the volume only for expository purposes will find the exposition unencumbered by the discussion of technical points.

The necessity of including within one volume so many prophets, scattered over more than three centuries, and each of them requiring a separate introduction, has reduced the space available for the practical application of their teaching to modern life. But this is the less to be regretted, that the contents of the nine books before us are not so applicable to our own day, as we have found their greater predecessors to be. On the other hand, however, they form a more varied introduction to Old Testament Criticism, while, by the long range of time which they cover, and the many stages of religion to which they belong, they afford a wider view of the development of prophecy. Let us look for a little at these two points.

1. To Old Testament Criticism these books furnish valuable introduction—some of them, like Obadiah, Joel and "Zechariah" ix.—xiv., by the great variety of opinion that has prevailed as to their dates or their relation to other prophets with whom they have passages in common; some, like Zechariah and "Malachi," by their relation to the Law, in the light of modern theories of the origin of the latter; and some, like Joel and Jonah, by the question whether we are to read them as history, or as allegories of history, or as apocalypse. That is to say, these nine books raise, besides the usual questions of genuineness and integrity, every other possible problem of Old

Testament Criticism. It has, therefore, been necessary to make the critical introductions full and detailed. The enormous differences of opinion as to the dates of some must start the suspicion of arbitrariness, unless there be included in each case a history of the development of criticism, so as to exhibit to the English reader the principles and the evidence of fact upon which that criticism is based. I am convinced that what is chiefly required just now by the devout student of the Bible is the opportunity to judge for himself how far Old Testament Criticism is an adult science; with what ampunt of reasonableness it has been prosecuted ; how gradually its conclusions have been reached, how jealously they have been contested; and how far, amid the many varieties of opinion which must always exist with reference to facts so ancient and questions so obscure, there has been progress towards agreement upon the leading problems. But, besides the accounts of past criticism given in this volume, the reader will find in each case an independent attempt to arrive at a conclusion. This has not always been successful. A number of points have been left in doubt; and even where results have been stated with some degree of positiveness, the reader need scarcely be warned (after what was said in the Preface to Vol. I.) that many of these must necessarily be provisional. But, in looking back from the close of this work upon the discussions which it contains,

I am more than ever convinced of the extreme probability of most of the conclusions. Among these are the following: that the correct interpretation of Habakkuk is to be found in the direction of the position to which Budde's ingenious proposal has been carried on pages 123 ff. with reference to Egypt; that the most of Obadiah is to be dated from the sixth century; that "Malachi" is an anonymous work from the eve of Ezra's reforms; that Joel follows "Malachi"; and that "Zechariah" ix.—xiv. has been rightly assigned by Stade to the early years of the Greek Period. I have ventured to contest Kosters' theory that there was no return of Jewish exiles under Cyrus, and am the more disposed to believe his strong argument inconclusive, not only upon a review of the reasons I have stated in Chap. XVI., but on this ground also, that many of its chief adherents in this country and Germany have so modified it as virtually to give up its main contention. I think, too, there can be little doubt as to the substantial authenticity of Zephaniah ii. (except the verses on Moab and Ammon) and iii. 1-13, of Habakkuk ii. 5 ff., and of the whole of Haggai; or as to the ungenuine character of the lyric piece in Zechariah ii. and the intrusion of "Malachi" ii. 11-13a. On these and smaller points the reader will find full discussion at the proper places.

[I may here add a word or two upon some of the critical conclusions reached in Vol. I., which have

been recently contested. The student will find strong grounds offered by Canon Driver in his *Joel and Amos*[1] for the authenticity of those passages in Amos which, following other critics, I regarded or suspected as not authentic. It makes one diffident in one's opinions when Canon Driver supports Professors Kuenen and Robertson Smith on the other side. But on a survey of the case I am unable to feel that even they have removed what they admit to be "forcible" objections to the authorship by Amos of the passages in question. They seem to me to have established not more than a possibility that the passages are authentic; and on the whole I still feel that the probability is in the other direction. If I am right, then I think that the date of the apostrophes to Jehovah's creative power which occur in the Book of Amos, and the reference to astral deities in chap. v. 27, may be that which I have suggested on pages 8 and 9 of this volume. Some critics have charged me with inconsistency in denying the authenticity of the epilogue to Amos while defending that of the epilogue to Hosea. The two cases, as my arguments proved, are entirely different. Nor do I see any reason to change the conclusions of Vol. I. upon the questions of the authenticity of various parts of Micah.]

The text of the nine prophets treated in this volume

[1] Cambridge Bible for Schools, 1897

has presented even more difficulties than that of the three treated in Vol. I. And these difficulties must be my apology for the delay of this volume.

2. But the critical and textual value of our nine books is far exceeded by the historical. Each exhibits a development of Hebrew prophecy of the greatest interest. From this point of view, indeed, the volume might be entitled " The Passing of the Prophet." For throughout our nine books we see the spirit and the style of the classic prophecy of Israel gradually dissolving into other forms of religious thought and feeling. The clear start from the facts of the prophet's day, the ancient truths about Jehovah and Israel, and the direct appeal to the conscience of the prophet's contemporaries, are not always given, or when given are mingled, coloured and warped by other religious interests, both present and future, which are even powerful enough to shake the ethical absolutism of the older prophets. With Nahum and Obadiah the ethical is entirely missed in the presence of the claims—and we cannot deny that they were natural claims—of the long-suffering nation's hour of revenge upon her heathen tyrants. With Zephaniah prophecy, still austerely ethical, passes under the shadow of apocalypse; and the future is solved, not upon purely historical lines, but by the intervention of "supernatural" elements. With Habakkuk the ideals of the older prophets encounter

the shock of the facts of experience: we have the prophet as sceptic. Upon the other margin of the Exile, Haggai and Zechariah (i.—viii.), although they are as practical as any of their predecessors, exhibit the influence of the exilic developments of ritual, angelology and apocalypse. God appears further off from Zechariah than from the prophets of the eighth century, and in need of mediators, human and superhuman. With Zechariah the priest has displaced the prophet, and it is very remarkable that no place is found for the latter beside *the two sons of oil*, the political and priestly heads of the community, who, according to the Fifth Vision, stand in the presence of God and between them feed the religious life of Israel. Nearly sixty years later "Malachi" exhibits the working of Prophecy within the Law, and begins to employ the didactic style of the later Rabbinism. Joel starts, like any older prophet, from the facts of his own day, but these hurry him at once into apocalypse; he calls, as thoroughly as any of his predecessors, to repentance, but under the imminence of the Day of the Lord, with its 14 supernatural" terrors, he mentions no special sin and enforces no single virtue. The civic and personal ethics of the earlier prophets are absent. In the Greek Period, the oracles now numbered from the ninth to the fourteenth chapters of the Book of Zechariah repeat to aggravation the exulting revenge of Nahum and

Obadiah, without the strong style or the hold upon history which the former exhibits, and show us prophecy still further enwrapped in apocalypse. But in the Book of Jonah, though it is parable and not history, we see a great recovery and expansion of the best elements of prophecy. God's character and Israel's true mission to the world are revealed in the spirit of Hosea and of the Seer of the Exile, with much of the tenderness, the insight, the analysis of character and even the humour of classic prophecy. These qualities raise the Book of Jonah, though it is probably the latest of our Twelve, to the highest rank among them. No book is more worthy to stand by the side of Isaiah xl.—lv.; none is nearer in spirit to the New Testament.

All this gives unity to the study of prophets so far separate in time, and so very distinct in character, from each other. From Zephaniah to Jonah, or over a period of three centuries, they illustrate the dissolution of Prophecy and its passage into other forms of religion.

The scholars, to whom every worker in this field is indebted, are named throughout the volume. I regret that Nowack's recent commentary on the Minor Prophets (Gottingen : Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht) reached me too late for use (except in footnotes) upon the earlier of the nine prophets.

GEORGE ADAM SMITH.

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% t. = circa*: it refers chiefly to the accession of the kings of Judah; the years are exact so far as they concern nearly all the Assyrian data. A date opposite the mere name of a king signifies the year of his accession.

	EGYPT.	JUDAH.	THE PROPHETS.	PHILISTIA, PHCNICIA, ARABIA, CYPRUS, ETC.	ASSYRIA.	
727 c.	Shabaka.	Hezekiah.	...	...	Shalmaneser XV.	727
72s	...	(Siege of Samaria begins.)				
723 or 1	=es	(Fall of Samaria.)	...	...	Sargon takes Samaria.	72a or 1
720 or 19	100	...	...	Gasa overthrown by.	Sargon as he marches past Judah and defeats Egypt at Raphia.	720 or 19
715	ss	(Samaria peopled	. . .	. . . . .	by subjugated tribes deported from Assyria.)	715
			Isaiah,	Ashdod taken by	Sargon.	711
709	...	...	...	...	Sargon takes Babylon from Merodach-Baladan,	709
705	...	...	Micah.	...	Death of Sargon. Accession of Sennacherib.	705
7<H	Taharka.	Events in Isaiah xxxix, ?	...	...	War with Merodach-Baladan.	704
701	...	Invasion of Judah . . Deliverance of Jerusalem.	. . .	and all Palestine u Siege of Ekron.	by Sennacherib.	701
	Defeat of Egypt .	. . . . .	. . .	at Battle of Eltekeh . .	by Sennacherib.	
7695^	...	Manasseh.				
692	...	...	...	...	Sennacherib destroys Babylon.	69a
681	...	...	...	...	Sennacherib murdered, Asarhaddon.	681
678	...	...	...	Sidon subdued-and Sidonians deported	by Asarhaddon.	678
676	...	Manasseh and	. . . .	si Palestine princes pay tribute to also Greek princes of Cyprus	3 Assyria:	676
		dodnal vassal	. . . .	. . . .	of Babylon.	
594	Psamtix n.					
593	...	Jewish revolt . . Stayed by Jeremiah,	. . .	. . . . .	against Babylon,	593
589	Uah-ab-ra (Hophra, A pries)	offers help to Zedekiah, who	. . .	. . . . .	revolts from Babylon,	589
587-6	...	Jerusalem taken . . Second Great Exile .		..... 1.....	by Nebuchadrezzar, to Babylonia.	587-6

, *ft = circa.* The mere name of a

	EGYPT.	THE JEWS.	THE PROPHETS.
as a m s&	...	...	...
	...	The Jews return to Jerusalem Zerubbabel and Joshua. Restoration of altar and sacrifice.	. . .
	...	Foundation-stone of Temple(?) Attacks of Samaritans begin.	
	...	...	...
	Conquest of Egypt by	. . . . .	. . .
	...	...	. .
	...	...	
	...	Building of the Temple begun by Zerubbabel and Joshua.	) Haggai. r Zechariah J (L—vill).
516	...	Completion of Temple.	...
515	...	...	...
333	...	...	...
332	Invasion of Egypt, after marching past Judah,		. . .
331	Alexander leaves Egypt, marches past Judah,		. . .

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPHETS OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY

CHAPTER 1

THE SEVENTH CENTURY BEFORE CHRIST

THE three prophets who were treated in the first volume of this work belonged to the eighth century before Christ: if Micah lived into the seventh his labours were over by 675. The next group of our twelve, also three in number, Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk, did not appear till after 630. To make our study continuous[1] we must now sketch the course of Israel's history between.

In another volume of this series,[9] some account was given of the religious progress of Israel from Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem in 701 to Jeremiah and the Fall of Jerusalem in 587. Isaiah's strength was bent upon establishing the inviolableness of Zion. Zion, he said, should not be taken, and the people, though cut to their roots, should remain planted in their own land, the stock of a noble nation in the latter days. But Jeremiah predicted the ruin both of City and Temple, summoned Jerusalem's enemies against her in the name of Jehovah, and counselled his people to submit to them. This reversal of the prophetic ideal had a twofold reason. In the first place the moral condition of Israel was worse in 600 B.C. than it had been in 700; another century had shown how much the nation needed the penalty and purgation of

[1] See Vol 1, p. viii. * Expositor's Bible, *Isaiah xL—levi.*, , Chap. II.

exile. But secondly, however the inviolableness of Jerusalem had been required in the interests of pure religion in 701, religion had now to show that it was independent even of Zion and of Israel's political survival. Our three prophets of the eighth century (as well as Isaiah himself) had indeed preached a gospel which implied this, but it was reserved to Jeremiah to prove that the existence of state and temple was not indispensable to faith in God, and to explain the ruin of Jerusalem, not merely as a well-merited penance, but as the condition of a more spiritual intercourse between Jehovah and His people.

It is our duty to trace the course of events through the seventh century, which led to this change of the standpoint of prophecy, and which moulded the messages especially of Jeremiah's contemporaries, Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk. We may divide the century into three periods: *First,* that of the Reaction and Persecution under Manasseh and Amon, from 695 or 690 to 639, during which prophecy was silent or anonymous; *Second,* that of the Early Years of Josiah, 639 to 625, near the end of which we meet with the young Jeremiah and Zephaniah; *Third,* the Rest of the Century, 625 to 600, covering the Decline and Fall of Niniveh, and the prophets Nahum and Habakkuk, with an addition carrying on the history to the Fall of Jerusalem in 587-6.

1. REACTION UNDER MANASSEH AND AMON (695 ?—639).

Jerusalem was delivered in 701, and the Assyrians kept away from Palestine for twenty-three years.[1]

[1] **It is uncertain whether Hezekiah was an Assyrian vassal during these years, as his successor Manasseh is recorded to have been in 676.**

Judah had peace, and Hezekiah was free to devote his latter days to the work of purifying the worship of his people. What he exactly achieved is uncertain. The historian imputes to him the removal of the high places, the destruction of all Maeboth and Asheras, and of the brazen serpent.[1] That his measures were drastic is probable from the opinions of Isaiah, who was their inspiration, and proved by the reaction which they provoked when Hezekiah died. The *removal* of the high places and the concentration of the national worship within the Temple would be the more easy that the provincial sanctuaries had been devastated by the Assyrian invasion, and that the shrine of Jehovah was glorified by the raising of the siege of 701.

While the first of Isaiah's great postulates for the future, the inviolableness of Zion, had been fulfilled, the second, the reign of a righteous prince in Israel, seemed doomed to disappointment Hezekiah died early in the seventh century/ and was succeeded by his son Manasseh, a boy of twelve, who appears to have been captured by the party whom his father had opposed. The few years' peace—peace in Israel was always dangerous to the health of the higher religion—the interests of those who had suffered from the reforms, the inevitable reaction which a rigorous puritanism provokes —these swiftly reversed the religious fortunes of Israel. Isaiah's and Micah's predictions of the final overthrow of Assyria seemed falsified, when in 681 the more vigorous Asarhaddon succeeded Sennacherib, and in 678 swept the long absent armies back upon Syria.

[1] **2 Kings xviii. 4.**

2 **The exact date is quite uncertain; 695 is suggested on the chronological table prefixed to this volume, but it may have been 690 or 685.**

Sidon was destroyed, and twenty-two princes of Palestine immediately yielded their tribute to the conqueror. Manasseh was one of them, and his political homage may have brought him, as it brought Ahaz, within the infection of foreign idolatries.[1] Everything, in short, worked for the revival of that eclectic paganism which Hezekiah had striven to stamp out The high places were rebuilt; altars were erected to Baal, with the sacred pole of Asherah, as in the time of Ahab; shrines to the *host of heaven* defiled the courts of Jehovah's house; there was a recrudescence of soothsaying, divination and traffic with the dead.

But it was all very different from the secure and sunny temper which Amos had encountered in Northern Israel.[2] The terrible Assyrian invasions had come between. Life could never again feel so stable. Still more destructive had been the social poisons which our prophets described as sapping the constitution of Israel for nearly three generations. The rural simplicity was corrupted by those economic changes which

[1] Cf. McCurdy, *Histoty, Prophecy and the Monuments,* § 799.

[1] Stade *(Gesch. des Volkes Israel* I., pp. 627 f.) denies to Manasseh the reconstruction of the high places, the Baal altars and the Asheras, for he does not believe that Hezekiah had succeeded in destroying these. He takes 2 Kings xxi. 3, which describes these reconstructions, as a late interpolation rendered necessary to reconcile the tradition that Hezekiah's reforms had been quite in the spirit of Deuteronomy, with the fact that there were still high places in the land when Josiah began his reforms. Further, Stade takes the rest of 2 Kings xxi. 26-7 as also an interpolation, but unlike verse 3 an accurate account of Manasseh's idolatrous institutions, because it is corroborated by the account of Josiah's reforms, 2 Kings xxiii. Stade also discusses this passage in *Z.A.T.W.*, 1886, pp. 186 ff.

[2] See Vol. I., p. 41. In addition to the reasons ot the change given above, we must remember that we are now treating, not of Northern Israel, but of the more stern and sullen Judaeans.

Micah bewails. With the ousting of the old families from the soil, a thousand traditions, memories and habits must have been broken, which had preserved the people's presence of mind in days of sudden disaster, and had carried them, for instance, through so long a trial as the Syrian wars. Nor could the blood of Israel have run so pure after the luxury and licentiousness described by Hosea and Isaiah. The novel obligations of commerce, the greed to be rich, the increasing distress among the poor, had strained the joyous temper of that nation of peasants' sons, whom we met with Amos, and shattered the nerves of their rulers. There is no word of fighting in Manasseh's days, no word of revolt against the tyrant. Perhaps also the intervening puritanism, which had failed to give the people a permanent faith, had at least awakened within them a new conscience.

At all events there is now no more *ease in Zion*, but a restless fear, driving the people to excesses of religious zeal. We do not read of the happy country festivals of the previous century, nor of the careless pride of that sudden wealth which built vast palaces and loaded the altar of Jehovah with hecatombs. The full-blooded patriotism, which at least kept ritual in touch with clean national issues, has vanished. The popular religion is sullen and exasperated. It takes the form of sacrifices of frenzied cruelty and lust. Children are passed through the fire to Moloch, and the Temple is defiled by the orgies of those who abuse their bodies to propitiate a foreign and a brutal god.[1]

But the most certain consequence of a religion whose nerves are on edge is persecution, and this raged all

[1] 2 Kings xxi, xxiii

the earlier years of Manasseh. The adherents of the purer faith were slaughtered, and Jerusalem drenched[1] with innocent blood. Her *own sword*, says Jeremiah, *devoured the prophets like a destroying lion}*

It is significant that all that has come down to us from this " killing time" is anonymous;' we do not meet with our next group of public prophets till Manasseh and his like-minded son have passed away. Yet prophecy was not wholly stifled. Voices were raised to predict the exile and destruction of the nation. *Jehovah spake by His servants*;[4] while others wove into the prophecies of an Amos, a Hosea or an Isaiah some application of the old principles to the new circumstances. It is probable, for instance, that the extremely doubtful passage in the Book of Amos, v. 26 £, which imputes to Israel as a whole the worship of astral deities from Assyria, is to be assigned to the reign of Manasseh. In its present position it looks very like an intrusion : nowhere else does Amos charge his generation with serving foreign gods; and certainly in all the history of Israel we could not find a more suitable period for so specific a charge than the days when into the central sanctuary of the national worship images were introduced of the host of heaven, and the nation was, in consequence, threatened with exile.[6]

[1] ***Filled from mouth to mouth*** **(2 Kings xxi. 16).**

*** Jer. ii. 30.**

*** We have already seen that there is no reason for that theory of so many critics which assigns to this period Micah. See Vol. I., p. 370.**

[4] 2 Kings xxi. 10 ff.

• Whether the parenthetical apostrophes to Jehovah as Maker of the heavens, their hosts and all the powers of nature (Amos iv. 13, v. 8, 9, ix 5, 6), are also to be attributed to Manasseh's reign is more doubtful. Yet the following facts are to be observed: that

In times of persecution the documents of the suffering faith have ever been reverenced and guarded with especial zeal. It is not improbable that the prophets, driven from public life, gave themselves to the arrangement of the national scriptures; and some critics date from Manasseh's reign the weaving of the two earliest documents of the Pentateuch into one continuous book of history.[1] The Book of Deuteronomy forms a problem by itself. The legislation which composes the bulk of it[2] appears to have been found among the Temple

these passages are also (though to a less degree than v. 26 f.) parenthetic; that their language seems of a later cast than that of the time of Amos (see Vol. I., pp. 204, 205: though here evidence is adduced to show that the late features are probably post-exilic); and that Jehovah is expressly named as the *Maker* of certain of the stars. Similarly when Mohammed seeks to condemn the worship of the heavenly bodies, he insists that God is their Maker. Koran, Sur. 41, 37: "To the signs of His Omnipotence belong night and day, sun and moon; but do not pray to sun or moon, for God hath created them." Sur. 53, 50: "Because He is the Lord of Sirius." On the other side see Driver's *Joel and Amos* (Cambridge Bible for Schools Series), 1897, pp. 118f, 189.

How deeply Manasseh had planted in Israel the worship of the heavenly host may be seen from the survival of the latter through all the reforms of Josiah and the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer. vii. 18, viii., xliv.; Ezek. viii. Cf. Stade, *Gesch, des V. Israel,* I., pp. 629 ff.).

[1] The Jehovist and Elohist into the closely mortised JE. Stade indeed assigns to the period of Manasseh Israel's first acquaintance with the Babylonian cosmogonies and myths which led to that reconstruction of them in the spirit of her own religion which we find in the Jehovistic portions of the beginning of Genesis *(Gesch, des V. Isr.,* I., pp. 630 ff.). But it may well be doubted (1) whether the reign of Manasseh affords time for this assimilation, and (2) whether it was likely that Assyrian and Babylonian theology could make so deep and lasting impression upon the purer faith of Israel at a time when the latter stood in such sharp hostility to all foreign influences and was so bitterly persecuted by the parties in Israel who had succumbed to these influences.

*** Chaps, v.-xxvi., xxvii.**

archives at the end of our period, and presented to Josiah as an old and forgotten work.[1] There is no reason to charge with fraud those who made the presentation by affirming that they really invented the book. They were priests of Jerusalem, but the book is written by members of the prophetic party, and ostensibly in the interests of the priests of the country. It betrays no tremor of the awful persecutions of Manasseh's reign; it does not hint at the distinction, then for the first time apparent, between a false and a true Israel. But it does draw another distinction, familiar to the eighth century, between the true and the false prophets. The political and spiritual premisses of the doctrine of the book were all present by the end of the reign of Hezekiah, and it is extremely improbable that his reforms, which were in the main those of Deuteronomy, were not accompanied by some code, or by some appeal to the fountain of all law in Israel.

But whether the Book of Deuteronomy now existed or not, there were those in the nation who through all the dark days between Hezekiah and Josiah laid up its truth in their hearts and were ready to assist the latter monarch in his public enforcement of it

While these things happened within Judah, very great events were taking place beyond her borders. Asarhaddon of Assyria (681—668) was a monarch of long purposes and thorough plans. Before he invaded Egypt, he spent a year (675) in subduing the restless tribes of Northern Arabia, and another (674) in conquering the peninsula of Sinai, an ancient appanage of Egypt. Tyre upon her island baffled his assaults,

[1] 621 B.C.

but the rest of Palestine remained subject to him. He received his reward in carrying the Assyrian arms farther into Egypt than any of his predecessors, and about 670 took Memphis from the Ethiopian Pharaoh Taharka. Then he died. Assurbanipal, who succeeded, lost Egypt for a few years, but about 665, with the help of his tributaries in Palestine, he overthrew Taharka, took Thebes, and established along the Nile a series of vassal states. He quelled a revolt there in 663 and overthrew Memphis for a second time. The fall of the Egyptian capital resounds through the rest of the century; we shall hear its echoes in Nahum. Tyre fell at last with Arvad in 662. But the Assyrian empire had grown too vast for human hands to grasp, and in 652 a general revolt took place in Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, Elam, Babylon and Asia Minor. In 649 Assurbanipal reduced Elam, and Babylon; and by two further campaigns (647 and 645) Hauran, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Nabatea and all the northern Arabs. On his return from these he crossed Western Palestine to the sea and punished Usu and Akko. It is very remarkable that, while Assurbanipal, who thus fought the neighbours of Judah, makes no mention of her, nor numbers Manasseh among the rebels whom he chastised, the Book of Chronicles should contain the statement that *Jehovah sent upon Manasseh the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, who bound him with fetters and carried him to Babylon.*[1] What grounds the Chronicler had for such a statement are quite unknown to us. He introduces Manasseh's captivity as the consequence of idolatry, and asserts that on his restoration Manasseh abolished in Judah

[1] 3 Chron. xxxiii. 11 f.

all worship save that of Jehovah, but if this happened (and the Book of Kings has no trace of it) it was without result. Amon, son of Manasseh, continued to sacrifice to all the images which his father had introduced.

2. THE EARLY YEARS OF JOSIAH (639—625): JEREMIAH AND ZEPHANIAH.

Amon had not reigned for two years when *his servants conspired against him, and he was slain in his own house.*[1] But the *people of the land* rose against the court, slew the conspirators, and secured the throne for Amon's son, Josiah, a child of eight It is difficult to know what we ought to understand by these movements. Amon, who was slain, was an idolater; the popular party, who slew his slayers, put his son on the throne, and that son, unlike both his father and grandfather, bore a name compounded with the name of Jehovah. Was Amon then slain for personal reasons ? Did the people, in their rising, have a zeal for Jehovah ? ' Was the crisis purely political, but usurped by some school or party of Jehovah who had been gathering strength through the later years of Manasseh, and waiting for some such unsettlement of affairs as now occurred ? The meagre records of the Bible give us no help, and for suggestions towards an answer we must turn to the wider politics of the time.

Assurbanipal's campaigns of 647 and 645 were the last appearances of Assyria in Palestine. He had not attempted to reconquer Egypt,[8] and her king, Psamtik I.,

[1] **2 Kings xxi. 23.**

2 But in his conquests of Hauran, Northern Arabia and the eastern neighbours of Judah, he had evidently sought to imitate the policy of

began to push his arms northward. Progress must have been slow, for the siege of Ashdod, which Psamtik probably began after 645, is said to have occupied him twenty-nine years. Still, he must have made his influence to be felt in Palestine, and in all probability there was once more, as in the days of Isaiah, an Egyptian party in Jerusalem. As the power of Assyria receded over the northern horizon, the fascination of her idolatries, which Manasseh had established in Judah, must have waned. The priests of Jehovah's house, jostled by their pagan rivals, would be inclined to make common cause with the prophets under a persecution which both had suffered. With the loosening of the Assyrian yoke the national spirit would revive, and it is easy to imagine prophets, priests and people working together in the movement which placed the child Josiah on the throne. At his tender age, he must have been wholly in the care of the women of the royal house; and among these the influence of the prophets may have found adherents more readily than among the counsellors of an adult prince. Not only did the new monarch carry the name of Jehovah in his own; this was the case also with his mother's father.[1] In the revolt, therefore, which raised this unconscious child to the throne and in the circumstances which moulded his character, we may infer that there already existed the germs of the great work of reform which his manhood achieved.

Asarhaddon in 675 f., and secure firm ground in Palestine and Arabia for a subsequent attack upon Egypt That this never came shows more than anything else could Assyria's consciousness of growing weakness.

[1] The name of Josiah's (anpae) mother was Jedidah (77), daughter of Adaiah (ngy) of Bokath in the Shephelah of Judah.

For some time little change would be possible, but from the first facts were working for great issues. The Book of Kings, which places the destruction of the idols after the discovery of the law-book in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, records a previous cleansing and restoration, of the house of Jehovah.[1] This points to the growing ascendency of the prophetic party during the first fifteen years of Josiah's reign. Of the first ten years we know nothing, except that the prestige of Assyria was waning; but this fact, along with the preaching of the prophets, who had neither a native tyrant nor the exigencies of a foreign alliance to silence them, must have weaned the people from the worship of the Assyrian idols. Unless these had been discredited, the repair of Jehovah's house could hardly have been attempted; and that this progressed means that part of Josiah's destruction of the heathen images took place before the discovery of the Book of the Law, which happened in consequence of the cleansing of the Temple.

But just as under the good Hezekiah the social condition of the people, and especially the behaviour of the upper classes, continued to be bad, so it was again in the early years of Josiah. There was a *remnant of Baal** in the land. The shrines of *the host of heaven* might have been swept from the Temple, but they were still worshipped from the housetops.[8] Men swore by the Queen of Heaven, and by Moloch, the King. Some turned back from Jehovah; some, grown up in idolatry, had not yet sought Him. Idolatry may have been disestablished from the national sanctuary:

[1] 2 Kings xxii., xxiii.

[1] Zeph. i. 4: the LXX. reads *namts o Baal.* See below, p. 40, n. 3.

• *Ibid.*, 5.

its practices still lingered (how intelligibly to us!) in social and commercial life. Foreign fashions were affected by the court and nobility; trade, as always, was combined with the acknowledgment of foreign gods.[1] Moreover, the rich were fraudulent and cruel. The ministers of justice, and the great in the land, ravened among the poor. Jerusalem was full of oppression. These were the same disorders as Amos and Hosea exposed in Northern Israel, and as Micah exposed in Jerusalem. But one new trait of evil was added. In the eighth century, with all their ignorance of Jehovah's true character, men had yet believed in Him, gloried in His energy, and expected Him to act—were it only in accordance with their low ideals. They had been alive and bubbling with religion. But now they *had thickened on their lees.* They had grown sceptical, dull, indifferent; they said in their hearts, *Jehovah will not do good, neither will He do evil!*

Now, just as in the eighth century there had risen, contemporaneous with Israel's social corruption, a cloud in the north, black and pregnant with destruction, so was it once more. But the cloud was not Assyria. From the hidden world beyond her, from the regions over Caucasus, vast, nameless hordes of men arose, and, sweeping past her unchecked, poured upon Palestine. This was the great Scythian invasion recorded by Herodotus? We have almost no other report than his few paragraphs, but we can realise the event from our knowledge of the Mongol and Tartar invasions which in later centuries pursued the same path southwards. Living in the saddle, and (it would seem) with no infantry nor chariots to delay them, these Centaurs

[1] *IM.*, 8-12. [1] 1. 102 ff.

swept on with a speed of invasion hitherto unknown. In 630 they had crossed the Caucasus, by 626 they were on the borders of Egypt Psamtik I. succeeded in purchasing their retreat,[1] and they swept back again as swiftly as they came. They must have followed the old Assyrian war-paths of the eighth century, and, without foot-soldiers, had probably kept even more closely to the plains. In Palestine their way would lie, like Assyria's, across Hauran, through the plain of Esdraelon, and down the Philistine coast, and in fact it is only on this line that there exists any possible trace of them.[8] But they shook the whole of Palestine into consternation. Though Judah among her hills escaped them, as she escaped the earlier campaigns of Assyria, they showed her the penal resources of her offended God. Once again the dark, sacred North was seen to be full of the possibilities of doom.

Behold, therefore, exactly the two conditions, ethical and political, which, as we saw, called forth the sudden prophets of the eighth century, and made them so sure of their message of judgment: on the one side Judah, her sins calling aloud for punishment; on the other side the forces of punishment swiftly drawing on. It was precisely at this juncture that prophecy again arose, and as Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah appeared in the end of the eighth century, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Nahum and Jeremiah appeared in the end of the seventh. The coincidence is exact, and a remarkable confirmation of the truth which we deduced from the experience of Amos, that the assurance of the prophet

[1] Herod., 1.105.

2 The new name of Bethshan in the mouth of Esd-aelon, viz. Scythopolis, is said to be derived from them (but see *Hist. Geog. of the Holy Land*, pp. 363 f.); they conquered Askalon (Herod., 1.105).

in Israel arose from the coincidence of his conscience with his political observation. The justice of Jehovah demands His people's chastisement, but see—the forces of chastisement are already upon the horizon. Zephaniah uses the same phrase as Amos: *the Day of Jehovah*, he says, *is drawing near*.

We are now in touch with Zephaniah, the first of our prophets, but, before listening to him, it will be well to complete our survey of those remaining years of the century in which he and his immediate successors laboured.

3. THE REST OF THE CENTURY (625—586): THE FALL OF NINIVEH; NAHUM AND HABAKKUK.

Although the Scythians had vanished from the horizon of Palestine and the Assyrians came over it no more, the fateful North still lowered dark and turbulent. Yet the keen eyes of the watchmen in Palestine perceived that, for a time at least, the storm must break where it had gathered. It is upon Niniveh, not upon Jerusalem, that the prophetic passion of Nahum and Habakkuk is concentrated; the new day of the Lord is filled with the fate, not of Israel, but of Assyria.

For nearly two centuries Niniveh had been the capital and cynosure of Western Asia; for more than one she had set the fashions, the art, and even, to some extent, the religion of all the Semitic nations. Of late years, too, she had drawn to herself the world's trade. Great roads from Egypt, from Persia and from the JEgean converged upon her, till like Imperial Rome she was filled with a vast motley of peoples, and men went forth from her to the ends of the earth.

Under Assurbanipal travel and research had increased, and the city acquired renown as the centre of the world's wisdom. Thus her size and glory, with all her details of rampart and tower, street, palace and temple, grew everywhere familiar. But the peoples gazed at her as those who had been bled to build her. The most remote of them had seen face to face on their own fields, trampling, stripping, burning, the warriors who manned her walls. She had dashed their little ones against the rocks. Their kings had been dragged from them and hung in cages about her gates. Their gods had lined the temples of her gods. Year by year they sent her their heavy tribute, and the bearers came back with fresh tales of her rapacious insolence. So she stood, bitterly clear to all men, in her glory and her cruelty! Their hate haunted her every pinnacle; and at last, when about 625 the news came that her frontier fortresses had fallen and the great city herself was being besieged, we can understand how her victims gloated on each possible stage of her fall, and saw her yield to one after another of the cruelties of battle, siege and storm, which for two hundred years she had inflicted on themselves. To such a vision the prophet Nahum gives voice, not on behalf of Israel alone, but of all the nations whom Niniveh had crushed.

It was obvious that the vengeance which Western Asia thus hailed upon Assyria must come from one or other of two groups of peoples, standing respectively to the north and to the south of her.

To the north, or north-east, between Mesopotamia and the Caspian, there were gathered a congeries of restless tribes known to the Assyrians as the Madai or Matai, the Medes. They are mentioned first

by Shalmaneser II. in 840, and few of his successors do not record campaigns against them. The earliest notice of them in the Old Testament is in connection with the captives of Samaria, some of whom in 720 were settled among them.[1] These Medes were probably of Turanian stock, but by the end of the eighth century, if we are to judge from the names of some of their chiefs,[8] their most easterly tribes had already fallen under Aryan influence, spreading westward from Persia.[8] So led, they became united and formidable to Assyria. Herodotus relates that their King Phraortes, or Fravartis, actually attempted the siege of Niniveh, probably on the death of Assurbanipal in 625, but was slain.[4] His son Kyaxares, Kastarit or Uvakshathra, was forced by a Scythian invasion of his own country to withdraw his troops from Assyria; but having either bought off or assimilated the Scythian invaders, he returned in 608, with forces sufficient to overthrow the northern Assyrian fortresses and to invest Niniveh herself.

The other and southern group of peoples which threatened Assyria were Semitic. At their head were the Kasdim or Chaldeans.[6] This name appears for

[1] **2 Kings xvii. 6 : *and in the cities* (LXX. *mountains) of the Medes,* The Heb. is "19, Maḍai.**

[2] **Mentioned by Sargon.**

[1] **Sayce, *Empires of the East*^ 239: cf McCurdy, § 823 f.**

[4] **Herod., 1. 103.**

[4] **Heb. Kasdim, oMp; LXX. Xanao; ; Assyr. Kalda, Kaldu The Hebrew form with *s* is regarded by many authorities as the original, from the Assyrian root *kashadu,* to conquer, and the Assyrian form with *I* to have arisen by the common change of *sh* through *r* into *l.* The form with *s* does not occur, however, in Assyrian, which also possesses the root *kaladu*^ with the same meaning as *kashadu,* See Mr. Pinches' articles on Chaldea and the Chaldeans in the new edition of Vol. I. of Smith's *Bible Dictionary,***

the first time in the Assyrian annals a little earlier than that of the Medes,[1] and from the middle of the ninth century onwards the people designated by it frequently engage the Assyrian arms. They were, to begin with, a few half-savage tribes to the south of Babylon, in the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf; but they proved their vigour by the repeated lordship of all Babylonia and by inveterate rebellion against the monarchs of Niniveh. Before the end of the seventh century we find their names used by the prophets for the Babylonians as a whole. Assurbanipal, , who was a patron of Babylonian culture, kept the country quiet during the last years of his reign, but his son Asshur-itil-ilani, upon his accession in 625, had to grant the viceroyalty to Nabopolassar' the Chaldean with a considerable degree of independence. Asshur-itil-ilani was succeeded in a few years '3 by Sinsuriskin, the Sarakos of the Greeks, who preserved at least a nominal sovereignty over Babylon,[8] but Nabopolassar must already have cherished ambitions of succeeding the Assyrian in the empire of the world. He enjoyed sufficient freedom to organise his forces to that end.

These were the two powers which from north and south watched with impatience the decay of Assyria. That they made no attempt upon her between 625 and 608 was probably due to several causes : their jealousy of each other, the Medes' trouble with the Scythians, Nabopolassar's genius for waiting till his forces were

[1] **About 880 B.C. in the annals of Assurnatsirpal. See Chrono* logical Table to Vol. I.**

[8] **No inscriptions of Asshur-itil-ilani have been found later than the first two years of his reign.**

* **Billerbeck-Jeremias, , "[i] Der Untergang Niniveh's," in Delitzsch and Haupt's *BciMgt mar Assyriotogu,* III., p. 113.**

ready, and above all the still considerable vigour of the Assyrian himself. The Lion, though old,[1] was not broken. His power may have relaxed in the distant provinces of his empire, though, if Budde be right about the date of Habakkuk,[3] the peoples of Syria still groaned under the thought of it; but his own land—his *lair*[9] as the prophets call it—was still terrible. It is true that, as Nahum perceives, the capital was no longer native and patriotic as it had been; the trade fostered by Assurbanipal had filled Niniveh with a vast and mercenary population, ready to break and disperse at the first breach in her walls. Yet Assyria proper was covered with fortresses, and the tradition had long fastened upon the peoples that Niniveh was impregnable. Hence the tension of those years. The peoples of Western Asia looked eagerly for their revenge; but the two powers which alone could accomplish this stood waiting—afraid of each other perhaps, but more afraid of the object of their common ambition.

It is said that Kyaxares and Nabopolassar at last came to an agreement;[8] but more probably the crisis was hastened by the appearance of another claimant for the coveted spoil. In 608 Pharaoh Necho *went up against the king of Assyria towards the river Euphrates.*[4] This Egyptian advance may have forced the hand of

[1] Nahum ii.

[3] See below, p. 120.

[3] Abydenus (apud Euseb., *Chron.* 1. 9) reports a marriage between Nebuchadrezzar, Nabopolassar's son, and the daughter of the Median king.

[4] 2 Kings xxiii. 29. The history is here very obscure. Necho, met at Megiddo by Josiah, and having slain him, appears to have spent a year or two in subjugating, and arranging for the government of Syria (*ibid.* 33-35), and only reached the Euphrates in 605, when Nebuchadrezzar defeated him.

Kyaxares, who appears to have begun his investment of Niniveh a little after Necho defeated Josiah at Megiddo.[1] The siege is said to have lasted two years. Whether this included the delays necessary for the reduction of fortresses upon the great roads of approach to the Assyrian capital we do not know; but Niniveh's own position, fortifications and resources may well account for the whole of the time. Colonel Billerbeck, a military expert, has suggested 3 that the Medes found it possible to invest the city only upon the northern and eastern sides. Down the west flows the Tigris, and across this the besieged may have been able to bring in supplies and reinforcements from the fertile country beyond. Herodotus affirms that the Medes effected the capture of Niniveh by themselves,[8] and for this some recent evidence has been found,[4] so that another tradition that the Chaldeans were also actively

[1] The reverse view is taken by Wellhausen, who says *(Israel u. Jud, Gesch.*, pp. 97 f.) : " Der Pharaoh scheint ausgezogen zu sein um sich seinen Teil an der Erbschaft Ninives vorwegzunehmen, whrend die Meder und Chalder die Stadt belagerten."

[1] See above, p. 20, n. 3.

• I. 106.

[4] A stele of Nabonidus discovered at Hilleh and now in the museum at Constantinople relates that in his third year, 553, the king restored at Harran the temple of Sin, the moon-god, which the Medes had destroyed fifty-four years before, *i.e.* 607. Whether the Medes did this before, during or after the siege of Niniveh is uncertain, but the approximate date of the siege, 608—606, is thus marvellously confirmed. The stele affirms that the Medes alone took Niniveh, but that they were called in by Marduk, the Babylonian god, to assist Nabopolassar and avenge the deportation of his image by Sennacherib to Niniveh. Messerschmidt *(Mittheilungen der Vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft,* 1. 1896) argues that the Medes were summoned by the Babylonians while the latter were being sore pressed by the Assyrians. Winckler had already *(Untersuch,* pp. 124 ff., 1889) urged that the Babylonians would refrain from taking an active part in the overthrow of Niniveh, in

engaged/ which has nothing to support it, may be regarded as false, Nabopolassar may still have been in name an Assyrian viceroy; yet, as Colonel Billerbeck points out, he had it in his power to make Kyaxares' victory possible by holding the southern roads to Niniveh, detaching other viceroys of her provinces and so shutting her up to her own resources. But among other reasons which kept him away from the siege may have been the necessity of guarding against Egyptian designs on the moribund empire. Pharaoh Necho, as we know, was making for the Euphrates as early as 608. Now if Nabopolassar and Kyaxares had arranged to divide Assyria between them, then it is likely that they agreed also to share the work of making their inheritance sure, so that while Kyaxares overthrew Niniveh, Nabopolassar, or rather his son Nebuchadrezzar/ waited for and overthrew Pharaoh by Carchemish on the Euphrates. Consequently Assyria was divided between the Medes and the Chaldeans; the latter as her heirs in the south took over her title to Syria and Palestine.

The two prophets with whom we have to deal at this time are almost entirely engrossed with the fall of

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fear of incurring the guilt of sacrilege. Neither Messerschmidt's paper, nor Scheil's (who describes the stele in the *Recueil des Travaux,* XVIII., 1896), being accessible to me, I have written this note on the information supplied by Rev. C. H. W. Johns, of Cambridge, in the *Expository Times,* 1896, and by Prof. A. B. Davidson in App. I. to *Nak., Hab. and Zeph.*

[1] Berosus and Abydenus in Eusebius.

[3] This spelling (Jer. xlix, 28) is nearer the original than the alternative Hebrew Nebuchadnezzar. But the LXX. Naovxoovcop, and the NaovKopcopos of Abydenus and Megasthenes and Naoxopgopos of Strabo, have preserved the more correct vocalisation; for the original is Nabu-kudurri-usur = Nebo, defend the crown!

Assyria. Nahum exults in the destruction of Niniveh ; Habakkuk sees in the Chaldeans nothing but the avengers of the peoples whom Assyria[1] had oppressed. For both these events are the close of an epoch : neither prophet looks beyond this. Nahum (not on behalf of Israel alone) gives expression to the epoch's long thirst for vengeance on the tyrant; Habakkuk (if Budde's reading of him be right[2]) states the problems with which its victorious cruelties had filled the pious mind—states the problem and beholds the solution in the Chaldeans. And, surely, the vengeance was so just and so ample, the solution so drastic and for the time complete, that we can well understand how two prophets should exhaust their office in describing such things, and feel no motive to look either deep into the moral condition of Israel, or far out into the future which God was preparing for His people. It might, of course, be said that the prophets' silence on the latter subjects was due to their positions immediately after the great Reform of 621, when the nation, having been roused to an honest striving after righteousness, did not require prophetic rebuke, and when the success of so godly a prince as Josiah left no spiritual ambitions unsatisfied. But this (even if the dates of the two prophets were certain) is hardly probable; and the other explanation is sufficient. Who can doubt this who has realised the long epoch which then reached a crisis, or has been thrilled by the crash of the crisis itself? The fall of Niniveh was deafening enough to drown for the moment, as it does in Nahum, even a Hebrew's clamant conscience of his country's sin. The problems, which the long success of Assyrian cruelty had started,

[1] But see below, pp. 123 f.

[3] Below, pp. 121 f.

were old and formidable enough to demand statement and answer before either the hopes or the responsibilities of the future could find voice. The past also requires its prophets. Feeling has to be satisfied, and experience balanced, before the heart is willing to turn the leaf and read the page of the future.

Yet, through all this time of Assyria's decline, Israel had her own sins, fears and convictions of judgment to come. The disappearance of the Scythians did not leave Zephaniah's predictions of doom without means of fulfilment; nor did the great Reform of 621 remove the necessity of that doom. In the deepest hearts the assurance that Israel must be punished was by these things only confirmed. The prophetess Huldah, the first to speak in the name of the Lord after the Book of the Law was discovered, emphasised not the reforms which it enjoined but the judgments which it predicted. Josiah's righteousness could at most ensure for himself a peaceful death: his people were incorrigible and doomed.[1] The reforms indeed proceeded, there was public and widespread penitence, idolatry was abolished. But those were only shallow pedants who put their trust in the possession of a revealed Law and purged Temple/ and who boasted that therefore Israel was secure. Jeremiah repeated the gloomy forecasts of Zephaniah and Huldah, and even before the wickedness of Jehoiakim's reign proved the obduracy of Israel's heart, he affirmed *the imminence of*

[1] **2 Kings xxii. 11-20. The genuineness of this passage is proved (as against Stade, *Gesek des Volkes Isratl,* I.) by the promise which it gives to Josiah of a peaceful death. Had it been written after the battle of Megiddo, in which Josiah was slain, it could not have contained such a promise.**

*** Jer. vii. 4, viii. 8.**

the evil out of the north and the great destruction.[1] Of our three prophets in this period Zephaniah, though the earliest, had therefore the last word. While Nahum and Habakkuk were almost wholly absorbed with the epoch that is closing, he had a vision of the future. Is this why his book has been ranged among our Twelve after those of his slightly later contemporaries ?

The precise course of events in Israel was this—and we must follow them, for among them we have to seek exact dates for Nahum and Habakkuk. In 621 the Book of the Law was discovered, and Josiah applied himself with thoroughness to the reforms which he had already begun. For thirteen years he seems to have had peace to carry them through. The heathen altars were thrown down, with all the high places in Judah and even some in Samaria. Images were abolished. The heathen priests were exterminated, with the wizards and soothsayers. The Levites, except the sons of Zadok, who alone were allowed to minister in the Temple, henceforth the only place of sacrifice, were debarred from priestly duties. A great passover was celebrated.[8] The king did justice and was the friend of the poor;[8] it went well with him and the people.[4] He extended his influence into Samaria; it is probable that he ventured to carry out the injunctions of Deuteronomy with regard to the neighbouring heathen.[6] Literature flourished : though

[1] vi. 1.

[3] All these reforms in 2 Kings xxiii.

[5] Jer. xxii. 15 f.

[4] *Ibid.* 16.

[8] We have no record of this, but a prince who so rashly flung himself in the way of Egypt would not hesitate to claim authority over Moab and Ammon.

critics have not combined upon the works to be assigned to this reign, they agree that a great many were produced in it. Wealth must have accumulated: certainly the nation entered the troubles of the next reign with an arrogant confidence that argues under Josiah the rapid growth of prosperity in every direction. Then of a sudden came the fatal year of 608. Pharaoh Necho appeared in Palestine[1] with an army destined for the Euphrates, and Josiah went up to meet him at Megiddo. His tactics are plain—it is the first strait on the land-road from Egypt to the Euphrates—but his motives are obscure. Assyria can hardly have been strong enough at this time to fling him as her vassal across the path of her ancient foe. He must have gone of himself. "His dream was probably to bring back the scattered remains of the northern kingdom to a pure worship, and to unite the whole people of Israel under the sceptre of the house of David; and he was not inclined to allow Egypt to cross his aspirations, and rob him of the inheritance which was falling to him from the dead hand of Assyria."[2]

Josiah fell, and with him not only the liberty of his

[1] **2 Kings xxiii. 24. The question whether Necho came by land from Egypt or brought his troops in his fleet to Acre is hardly answered by the fact that Josiah went to Megiddo to meet him. But Megiddo on the whole tells more for the land than the sea. It is not on the path from Acre to the Euphrates; it is the key of the land-road from Egypt to the Euphrates. Josiah could have no hope of stopping Pharaoh on the broad levels of Philistia; but at Megiddo there was a narrow pass, and the only chance of arresting so large an army as it moved in detachments. Josiah's tactics were therefore analogous to those of Saul, who also left his own territory and marched north to Esdraelon, to meet his foe—and death.**

[1] **A. B. Davidson, *TH Exile and the Restoration,* p. 8 (Bible Class Primers, ed. by Salmond; Edin., T. & T. Clark, 1897).**

people, but the chief support of their faith. That the righteous king was cut down in the midst of his days and in defence of the Holy Land—what could this mean? Was it, then, vain to serve the Lord? Could He not defend His own? With some the disaster was a cause of sore complaint, and with others, perhaps, of open desertion from Jehovah.

But the extraordinary thing is, how little effect Josiah's death seems to have had upon the people's self-confidence at large, or upon their adherence to Jehovah. They immediately placed Josiah's second son on the throne;[1] but Necho, having got him by some means to his camp at Riblah between the Lebanons, sent him in fetters to Egypt, where he died, and established in his place Eliakim, his elder brother. On his accession Eliakim changed his name to Jehoiakim, a proof that Jehovah was still regarded as the sufficient patron of Israel; and the same blind belief that, for the sake of His Temple and of His Law, Jehovah would keep His people in security, continued to persevere in spite of Megiddo. It was a most immoral ease, and filled with injustice. Necho subjected the land to a fine. This was not heavy, but Jehoiakim, instead of paying it out of the royal treasures, exacted it from *the people of the land?* and then employed the peace which it purchased in erecting a costly palace for himself by the forced labour of his subjects.[3] He was covetous, unjust and violently cruel. Like prince like people: social oppression prevailed, and there was a recrudescence of the idolatries of Manasseh's time,[8] especially (it may be inferred) after Necho's defeat at Carchemish in 605. That all this should

[1] 2 Kings xxiii, 33-35. [3] Jer. xxii, 13-15. [8] Jer. xi.

exist along with a fanatic trust in Jehovah need not surprise us who remember the very similar state of the public mind in North Israel under Amos and Hosea. Jeremiah attacked it as they had done. Though Assyria was fallen, and Egypt was promising protection, Jeremiah predicted destruction from the north on Egypt and Israel alike. When at last the Egyptian defeat at Carchemish stirred some vague fears in the people's hearts, Jeremiah's conviction broke out into clear flame. For three-and-twenty years he had brought God's word in vain to his countrymen. Now God Himself would act: Nebuchadrezzar was but His servant to lead Israel into captivity.[1]

The same year, 605 or 604, Jeremiah wrote all these things in a volume;[8] and a few months later, at a national fast, occasioned perhaps by the fear of the Chaldeans, Baruch, his secretary, read them in the house of the Lord, in the ears of all the people. The king was informed, the roll was brought to him, and as it was read, with his own hands he cut it up and burned it, three or four columns at a time. Jeremiah answered by calling down on Jehoiakim an ignominious death, and repeated the doom already uttered on the land. Another prophet, Urijah, had recently been executed for the same truth; but Jeremiah and Baruch escaped into hiding.

This was probably in 603, and for a little time Jehoiakim and the populace were restored to their false security by the delay of the Chaldeans to come south. Nebuchadrezzar was occupied in Babylon, securing his succession to his father. At last, either in 602 or more probably in 600, he marched into Syria, and

[1] XXV. i ff. [8] xxxvi.

Jehoiakim *became his servant for three years}* in such a condition the Jewish state might have survived for at least another generation, but in 599 or 597 Jehoiakim, with the madness of the doomed, held back his tribute. The revolt was probably instigated by Egypt, which, however, did not dare to support it As in Isaiah's time against Assyria, so now against Babylon, Egypt was a blusterer *who blustered and sat still.* She still *helped in vain and to no purpose?* Nor could Judah count on the help of the other states of Palestine. They had joined Hezekiah against Sennacherib, but remembering perhaps how Manasseh had failed to help them against Assurbanipal,, and that Josiah had carried things with a high hand towards them,[4] they obeyed Nebuchadrezzar's.command and raided Judah till he himself should have time to arrive.[6] Amid these raids the senseless Jehoiakim seems to have perished,[6] for when Nebuchadrezzar appeared before Jerusalem in 597, his son Jehoiachin, a youth of eighteen, had succeeded to the throne. The innocent reaped the harvest sown by the guilty. In the attempt (it would appear) to save his people from destruction,[7] Jehoiachin capitulated. But Nebuchadrezzar was not content with

[1] 2 Kings xxiv. 1. In the chronological table appended to Kautzsch's *BiM* this verse and Jehoiakim's submission are assigned to 602. But this allows too little time for Nebuchadrezzar to confirm his throne in Babylon and march to Palestine, and it is not corroborated by the record in the Book of Jeremiah of events in Judah in 604—602.

[3] Nebuchadrezzar did not die till 562.

* See *Isaiah i.—xxxix.* (Expositor's Bible), pp. 223 f.

[4] See above, p. 26, n. 5.

[5] 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

[4] Jer. xxxvii. 30, but see 2 Kings xxiv. 6.

[7] So Josephus puts it (X *AnUq.*^ vii. x). Jehoiachin was unusually

the person of the king: he deported to Babylon the court, a large number of influential persons, *the mighty men of the land* or what must have been nearly all the fighting men, with the necessary military artificers and swordsmiths. Priests also went, Ezekiel among them, and probably representatives of other classes not mentioned by the annalist All these were the flower of the nation. Over what was left Nebuchadrezzar placed a son of Josiah on the throne who took the name of Zedekiah. Again with a little common-sense, the state might have survived; but it was a short respite. The new court began intrigues with Egypt, and Zedekiah, with the Ammonites and Tyre, ventured a revolt in 589. Jeremiah and Ezekiel knew it was in vain. Nebuchadrezzar marched on Jerusalem, and though for a time he had to raise the siege in order to defeat a force sent by Pharaoh Hophra, the Chaldean armies closed in again upon the doomed city. Her defence was stubborn; but famine and pestilence sapped it, and numbers fell away to the enemy. About the eighteenth month, the besiegers took the northern suburb and stormed the middle gate. Zedekiah and the army broke their lines only to be captured at Jericho. In a few weeks more the city was taken and given over to fire. Zedekiah was blinded, and with a large number of his people carried to Babylon. It was the end, for although a small community of Jews was left at Mizpeh under a Jewish viceroy and with Jeremiah to guide them, they were soon broken up and fled to Egypt. Judah had perished. Her savage neighbours,

bewailed (Lam. iv. 20; Ezek. xvii. 22 ff.). He survived in captivity till the death of Nebuchadrezzar, whose successor Evil-Merodach in 561 took him from prison and gave him a place in his palace (2 Kings xxv. 27 f).

who had gathered with glee to the day of Jerusalem's calamity, assisted the Chaldeans in capturing the fugitives, and Edomites came up from the south on the desolate land.

It has been necessary to follow so far the course of events, because of our prophets Zephaniah is placed in each of the three sections of Josiah's reign, and by some even in Jehoiakim's; Nahum has been assigned to different points between the eve of the first and the eve of the second siege of Niniveh; and Habakkuk has been placed by different critics in almost every year from 621 to the reign of Jehoiachin; while Obadiah, whom we shall find reasons for dating during the Exile, describes the behaviour of Edom at the final siege of Jerusalem. The next of the Twelve, Haggai, may have been born before the Exile, but did not prophesy till 520. Zechariah appeared the same year, Malachi not for half a century after. These three are prophets of the Persian period. With the approach of the Greeks Joel appears, then comes the prophecy which we find in the end of Zechariah's book, and last of all the Book of Jonah. To all these post-exilic prophets we shall provide later on the necessary historical introductions.

ZEPHANIAH

Dies Trap, Digs lUa!—ZEPH. i 15.

" His book is the first tinging of prophecy with apocalypse: that is the moment which it supplies in the history of Israel's religion."

CHAPTER II

THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

THE Book of Zephaniah is one of the most difficult in the prophetic canon. The title is very generally accepted; the period from which chap. i. dates is recognised by practically all critics to be the reign of Josiah, or at least the last third of the seventh century. But after that doubts start, and we find present nearly every other problem of introduction.

To begin with, the text is very damaged. In some passages we may be quite sure that we have not the true text;[1] in others we cannot be sure that we have it,* and there are several glosses.' The bulk of the second chapter was written in the Qinah, or elegiac measure, but as it now stands the rhythm is very much broken. It is difficult to say whether this is due to the dilapidation of the original text or to wilful insertion of glosses and other later passages. The Greek version of Zephaniah possesses the same general features as that of other difficult prophets. Occasionally it enables us to correct the text; but by the time it was made the text must already have contained the same corruptions which we encounter, and the

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[1] i 3b, 56; ii. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 last word, 144; iii. 18, 190, 20.
[3] i. 146; ii. i, 3; iii. 1, 5,6, 7, 8, 10,15, 17.
[*] t 3b, 5b ; ii. 2, 6; iii. 5 (?).

translators were ignorant besides of the meaning of some phrases which to us are plain.[1]

The difficulties of textual criticism as well as of translation are aggravated by the large number of words, grammatical forms and phrases which either happen very seldom in the Old Testament,[1] or nowhere else in it at all.[8] Of the rare words and phrases, a very few (as will be seen from the appended notes) are found in earlier writings. Indeed all that are found are from the authentic prophecies of Isaiah, with whose style and doctrine Zephaniah's own exhibit most affinity. All the other rarities of vocabulary and grammar are shared only by *later* writers; and as a whole the language of Zephaniah exhibits symptoms which separate it by many years from the language of the prophets of the eighth century, and range it with that of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Second Isaiah and still later literature. It may be useful to the student to collect in a note the most striking of these

[1] For details see translation below.

[2] i. 3, ni?gpp, only in Isa. iii. 6; 15, nav, only in Job xxx. 3, xxxviii. 27—cf. Psalms lxxii. 18, lxxiv. 3; ii. 8, D'D11, Isa. xliii. 28—cf. li. 7; 9, 2n, Prov. xxiv. 31, Job xxx. 7; 15, n2y, Isa. xxii. 2, xxiii. 7, xxxii. 13—cf. xiii. 3, xxiv. 8; iii. 1, n2' 33, see next note but one; 3, 3^ 'MT, Hab. i. 8; n, [illegible] Isa. xiii. 3; 18, *2, Lam. L 4, mm.

[8] i. 11, wnbon as the name of a part of Jerusalem, otherwise only Jer. xv. 19; ADS 2'0 ; 12, KBP in pt. Qal, and otherwise only Exod. xv. 8, Zech. xiv. 6, Job x. 10; 14, 02 (adj.), but the pointing may be wrong—cf. Maher-shalal-hash-baz, Isa. viii. 1, 3; ms ' in Qal, elsewhere only once in Hi. Isa. xiii. 13; 17, Din> in sense of flesh, cf. Job xx. 23; 18, n2n2 if a noun (?); ii. 1, wop in Qal and Hithpo, elsewhere only in Polel; מכמש, np; 11, n, to make lean, otherwise only in Isa. xvii, 4, to be lean; 14, nn (?); iii. 1, TeD, pt of MD ; n, pt Qal, in Jer. xlvi. 16, 1. 16, it may be a noun; 4 m13 WK ; 6, 152 ; 9, I DDP; 10, yo na nnn (?); 15, np in sense to *turn away*; 18, m'n T'DD (?).

symptoms of the comparative lateness of Zephaniah's dialect.[1]

We now come to the question of date, and we take, to begin with, the First Chapter. It was said above that critics agree as to the general period—between 639, when Josiah began to reign, and 600. But this period was divided into three very different sections, and each of these has received considerable support from modern criticism. The great majority of critics place the chapter in the early years of Josiah, before the enforcement of Deuteronomy and the great Reform in 621.[2] Others have argued for the later years of Josiah, 621—608, on the ground that the chapter implies that the great Reform has already taken place, and otherwise shows knowledge of Deuteronomy;[3] while some prefer the days of reaction under Jehoiakim, 608 ff.,* and assume that the phrase in the title, *in the days of Josiah*, is a late and erroneous inference from i. 4.

The evidence for the argument consists of the title and the condition of Judah reflected in the body of the

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[1] i. 8, etc., 21• IPD, followed by person, but not by thing—cf. Jer. ix. 24, xxiii. 34, etc., Job xxzvi. 23, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23, Ezek., i. 2;; 13, nowb,, only in Hab. i. 7, Isa. xlii., Jer. xxx. 16, 2 Kings xxi, 14; 17, "lx0. Hi. ofs, only in I Kings viii. 37, and Deut., 2 Chron., Jer., Neh.; ii. 3, mav; 8, D'DHJ, Isa. xliii. 28, li. 7 (fem. pl.); 9,2n Prov.. xxiv. 31, Job xxx. 7; iii. 1, n22,, Ni, pt.—impure, Isa. lix. 3, Lam. iv. 14; no, a pt. in Jer. xlvi. 16, 1. 16; 3, 31V OKT, Hab. i. 8—cf. Jer. v. 6, maw 3KT; 9, ma,, Isa. xlix. 2, 113, Ezek. xx. 38, 1 Chron. vii. 40, ix. 22, xyi. 41, Neh. v. 18, Job xxxiii. 3, Eccles, iii. i8, ix. 1; 11, mix "v, , Isa. xiii. 3; 18, ¶ 2), Lam. i. 4 has M2).

2 So Hitzig, Ewald, Pusey, Kuenen, Robertson Smith *(Encyc. Brit.)*, Driver, Wellhausen, Kirkpatrick, Budde, von Orelli, Cornill, Schwally, Davidson.

* So Delitzsch, Kleinert, and Schulz *(Commentar Uber den Proph. Zeph.*, 1892, p. 7, quoted by KOnig), [4] So Knig,

chapter. The latter is a definite piece of oratory. Under the alarm of an immediate and general war, Zephaniah proclaims a vast destruction upon the earth. Judah must fall beneath it: the worshippers of Baal, of the host of heaven and of Milcom, the apostates from Jehovah, the princes and house of the king, the imitators of foreign fashions, and the forceful and fraudulent, shall be cut off in a great slaughter. Those who have grown sceptical and indifferent to Jehovah shall be unsettled by invasion and war. This shall be the Day of Jehovah, near and immediate, a day of battle and disaster on the whole land.

The conditions reflected are thus twofold—the idolatrous and sceptical state of the people, and an impending invasion. But these suit, more or less exactly, each of the three sections of our period. For Jeremiah distinctly states that he had to attack idolatry in Judah for twenty-three years, 627 to 604;[1] he inveighs against the falseness and impurity of the people alike before the great Reform, and after it while Josiah was still alive, and still more fiercely under Jehoiakim. And, while before 621 the great Scythian invasion was sweeping upon Palestine from the north, after 621, and especially after 604, the Babylonians from the same quarter were visibly threatening the land. But when looked at more closely, the chapter shows several features which suit the second section of our period less than they do the other two. The worship of the host of heaven, probably introduced under Manasseh, was put down by Josiah in 621; it revived under Jehoiakim,[2] but during the latter years of Josiah it cannot possibly have been so public as Zephaniah describes.[8]

[1] Jer. xxv. [1] Jer. vii. 18. • i 3.

Other reasons which have been given for those years are inconclusive[1]—the chapter, for instance, makes no indubitable reference to Deuteronomy or the Covenant of 621—and on the whole we may leave the end of Josiah's reign out of account Turning to the third section, Jehoiakim's reign, we find one feature of the prophecy which suits it admirably. The temper described in ver. 12—*men who are settled on their lees, who say in their heart, Jehovah doeth neither good nor evil*—is the kind of temper likely to have been produced among the less earnest adherents of Jehovah by the failure of the great Reform in 621 to effect either the purity or the prosperity of the nation. But this is more than counterbalanced by the significant exception of the king from the condemnation which ver. 8 passes

[1] **Kleinert in his Commentary in Lange's *Bibelwerk*, and Delitzsch in his article in Herzog's *RMl~Encydopadi*^ both offer a number of inconclusive arguments. These are drawn from the position of Zephaniah after Habakkuk, but, as we have seen, the order of the Twelve is not always chronological; from the supposition that Zephaniah i. 7, *Silence before the Lord Jehovah* quotes Habakkuk ii. 20, *Keep silence before Him all the earth*, but the phrase common to both is too general to be decisive, and if borrowed by one or other may just as well have been Zephaniah's originally as Habakkuk's; from the phrase *remnant of Baal* (i. 4), as if this were appropriate only after the Reform of 621, but it was quite as appropriate after the beginnings of reform six years earlier; from the condemnation of *the sons of the king* (i. 8), whom Delitzsch takes as Josiah's sons, who before the great Reform were too young to be condemned, while later their characters did develop badly and judgment fell upon all of them, but *sons of the king*, even if that be the correct reading (LXX *house of the king*), does not necessarily mean the reigning monarch's children; and from the assertion that Deuteronomy is quoted in the first chapter of Zephaniah, and " so quoted as to show that the prophet needs only to put the people in mind of it as something supposed to be known," but the verses cited in support of this (viz. 13, 15, 17 : cf. Deut xxviii. 30 and 29) are too general in their character to prove the assertion. See translation below.**

on the *princes and the sons of the king.* Such an exception could not have been made when Jehoiakim was on the throne; it points almost conclusively to the reign of the good Josiah. And with this agrees the title of the chapter—*in the days of Josiah,*[1] We are, therefore, driven back to the years of Josiah before 621. In these we find no discrepancy either with the chapter itself, or with its title. The southward march of the Scythians,[1] between 630 and 625, accounts for Zephaniah's alarm of a general war, including the invasion of Judah; the idolatrous practices which he describes may well have been those surviving from the days of Manasseh,[8] and not yet reached by the drastic measures of 621; the temper of scepticism and hopelessness condemned by ver. 12 was possible among those adherents of Jehovah who had hoped greater things from the overthrow of Amon than the slow and small reforms of the first fifteen years of Josiah's reign. Nor is a date before 621 made at all difficult by the genealogy of Zephaniah in the title. If, as is probable,[4] the Hezekiah given as his great-great-grandfather be Hezekiah the king, and if he died about 695, and Manasseh, his successor, who was then twelve, was his eldest son, then by 630 Zephaniah cannot have been much more than twenty years of age,

[1] KOnig has to deny the authenticity of this in order to make his case for the reign of Jehoiakim. But nearly all critics take the phrase as genuine.

3 See above, p. 15. For inconclusive reasons Schwally, *Z.A.T.W.*, 1890, pp. 215-217, prefers the Egyptians under Psamtik. See in answer Davidson, p. 98.

* Not much stress can be laid upon the phrase *I will cut off the remnant of Baal,* ver. 4, for, if the reading be correct, it may only mean the destruction of Baal-worship, and not the uprooting of what has been left over.

[4] See below, p. 47, n. 2.

and not more than twenty-five by the time the Scythian invasion had passed away.[1] It is therefore by no means impossible to suppose that he prophesied before 625; and besides, the data of the genealogy in the title are too precarious to make them valid, as against an inference from the contents of the chapter itself.

The date, therefore, of the first chapter of Zephaniah may be given as about 625 B.C., and probably rather before than after that year, as the tide of Scythian invasion has apparently not yet ebbed.

The other two chapters have within recent years been almost wholly denied to Zephaniah. Kuenen doubted chap. iii. 9-20. Stade makes all chap. iii. post-exilic, and suspects it 1-3, 11. A very thorough examination of them has led Schwally[1] to assign to exilic or post-exilic times the whole of the little sections comprising them, with the possible exception of chap. iii. 1-7, which " may be " Zephaniah's. His essay has been subjected to a searching and generally hostile criticism by a number of leading scholars;[8] and he has admitted the inconclusiveness of some of his reasons.[4]

Chap. ii. 1-4 is assigned by Schwally to a date later than Zephaniah's, principally because of the term *meekness* (ver. 3), which is a favourite one with post-exilic writers. He has been sufficiently answered;[6] and the

[1] **If 695 be the date of the accession of Manasseh, being then twelve, Amariah, Zephaniah's great-grandfather, cannot have been more than ten, that is, born in 705. His son Gedaliah was probably not born before 689, his son Kushi probably not before 672, and his son Zephaniah probably not before 650.**

[2] **Z.A,T.W,, *1890,* Heft 1.**

[8] *** Bacher, *Z,A.TW.,* 1891, 186; Cornill, *Einltitung,* 1891; Budde, *Theol. Stud, u, Krit.,* 1893, 393 ff.; Davidson, *Nah., Hab. and Zeph^* 100 ff.**

[4] **Z.A,T.W.,** 1891, Heft 2.

[6] *** By especially Bacher, Cornill and Budde as above.**

close connection of w. 1-3 with chap. i. has been clearly proved.[1] Chap. ii. 4-15 is the passage in elegiac measure but broken, an argument for the theory that insertions have been made in it The subject is a series of foreign nations—Philistia (5-7), Moab and Ammon (8-10), Egypt (11) and Assyria (13-15). The passage has given rise to many doubts; every one must admit the difficulty of coming to a conclusion as to its authenticity. On the one hand, the destruction just predicted is so universal that, as Professor Davidson says, we should expect Zephaniah to mention other nations than Judah? The concluding oracle on Nineveh must have been published before 608, and even Schwally admits that it may be Zephaniah's own. But if this be so, then we may infer that the first of the oracles on Philistia is also Zephaniah's, for both it and the oracle on Assyria are in the elegiac measure, a fact which makes it probable that the whole passage, however broken and intruded upon, was originally a unity. Nor is there anything in the oracle on Philistia incompatible with Zephaniah's date. Philistia lay on the path of the Scythian invasion; the phrase in ver. 7, *shall turn their captivity*, is not necessarily exilic. As Cornill, too, points out, the expression in ver. 13, *He will stretch out His hand to the north*, implies that the prophecy has already looked in other directions. There remains the passage between the oracles on Philistia and Assyria. This is not in the elegiac measure. Its subject is Moab

[1] See Budde and Davidson.

*** The ideal of chap. i.—ii. 3, of the final security of a poor and lowly remnant of Israel, " necessarily implies that they shall no longer be threatened by hostility from without, and this condition is satisfied by the prophet's view ot the impending judgment on the ancient enemies of his nation," s.c. those mentioned in ii. 4-15 (Robertson Smith, *Entyc. Brit*^ art. " Zephaniah ").**

and Ammon, who were not on the line of the Scythian invasion, and Wellhausen further objects to it, because the attitude to Israel of the two peoples whom it describes is that which is attributed to them only just before the Exile and surprises us in Josiah's reign. Dr. Davidson meets this objection by pointing out that, just as in Deuteronomy, so here, Moab and Ammon are denounced, while Edom, which in Deuteronomy is spoken of with kindness, is here not denounced at all. A stronger objection to the passage is that ver. n predicts the conversion of the nations, while ver. 12 makes them the prey of Jehovah's sword, and in this ver. 12 follows on naturally to ver. 7. On this ground as well as on the absence of the elegiac measure the oracle on Moab and Ammon is strongly to be suspected.

On the whole, then, the most probable conclusion is that chap. ii. 4-15 was originally an authentic oracle of Zephaniah's in the elegiac metre, uttered at the same date as chap. i.—ii. 3, the period of the Scythian invasion, though from a different standpoint; and that it has suffered considerable dilapidation (witness especially w. 6 and 14), and probably one great intrusion, w. 8-10.

There remains the Third Chapter. The authenticity has been denied by Schwally, who transfers the whole till after the Exile. But the chapter is not a unity.[1]

[1] **See, however, Davidson for some linguistic reasons for taking the two sections as one. Robertson Smith, also in 1888 (*Entyc. Brit.*, art. "Zephaniah"), assumed (though not without pointing out the possibility of the addition of other pieces to the genuine prophecies of Zephaniah) that "a single leading motive runs through the whole book, and the first two chapters would be incomplete without the third, which moreover is certainly pre-exilic (w. 1-4) and presents specific points of contact with what precedes, as well as a general agreement in style and idea."**

In the first place, it falls into two sections, w. 1-13 and 14-20. There is no reason to take away the bulk of the first section from Zephaniah. As Schwally admits, the argument here is parallel to that of chap. i.—ii. 3. It could hardly have been applied to Jerusalem during or after the Exile, but suits her conditions before her fall. Schwally's linguistic objections to a pre-exilic date have been answered by Budde.[1] He holds ver. 6 to be out of place and puts it after ver. 8, and this may be. But as it stands it appeals to the impenitent Jews of ver. 5 with the picture of the judgment God has already completed upon the nations, and contrasts with ver. 7, in which God says that He trusts Israel will repent. Vv. 9 and 10 are, we shall see, obviously an intrusion, as Budde maintains and Davidson admits to be possible?

We reach more certainty when we come to the second section of the chapter, w. 14-20. Since Kuenen it has been recognised by the majority of critics that we have here a prophecy from the end of the Exile or after the Return. The temper has changed. Instead of the austere and sombre outlook of chap. i.—ii. 3 and chap. iii. 1-13, in which the sinful Israel is to be saved indeed, but only as by fire, we have a triumphant prophecy of her recovery from all affliction (nothing is said of her sin) and of her glory among

[1] **Schwally (234) thinks that the epithet pHY (ver. 5) was first applied to Jehovah by the Second Isaiah (xlv. 21, lxiv. 2, xlii. 21), and became frequent from his time on. In disproof Budde (3398) quotes Exod. ix. 27, Jer. xii. 1, Lam. i. 18. Schwally also points to 1133 as borrowed from Aramaic.**

*** Budde, p. 395; Davidson, 103. Schwally (230 ff.) seeks to prove the unity of 9 and 10 with the context, but he has apparently mistaken the meaning of ver. 8 (231). That surely does not mean that the nations are gathered in order to punish the godlessness of the Jews, but that they may themselves be punished,**

the nations of the world. To put it otherwise, while the genuine prophecies of Zephaniah almost grudgingly allow a door of escape to a few righteous and humble Israelites from a judgment which is to fall alike on Israel and the Gentiles, chap. iii. 14-20 predicts Israel's deliverance from her Gentile oppressors, her return from captivity and the establishment of her renown over the earth. The language, too, has many resemblances to that of Second Isaiah.[1] Obviously therefore we have here, added to the severe prophecies of Zephaniah, such a more hopeful, peaceful epilogue as we saw was added, during the Exile or immediately after it, to the despairing prophecies of Amos.

[1] **See Davidson, 103.**

CHAPTER III

THE PROPHET AND THE REFORMERS

ZEPHANIAH i.—ii. 3

TOWARDS the year 625, when King Josiah had passed out of his minority,[1] and was making his first efforts at religious reform, prophecy, long slumbering, awoke again in Israel.

Like the king himself, its first heralds were men in their early youth. In 627 Jeremiah calls himself but a boy, and Zephaniah can hardly have been out of his teens? For the sudden outbreak of these young lives there must have been a large reservoir of patience and hope gathered in the generation behind them. So Scripture itself testifies. To Jeremiah it was said: *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou earnest forth out of the womb I consecrated thee?* In an age when names were bestowed only because of their significance,[4] both prophets bore that of Jehovah in their own. So did Jeremiah's father, who was of the priests of Anathoth. Zephaniah's "[1] forbears" are given for four generations, and with one exception

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[1] **Josiah, born *c.* 648, succeeded *c,* 639, was about eighteen in 630, and then appears to have begun his reforms.**

[1] **See above, pp. 40 f, n. 1.**

[4] **Jeni. 5***

* **See G. B. Gray, *Hebrew Proper Names.***

they also are called after Jehovah: *The Word of Jehovah which came to Sephanyah, son of Kushi, son of Gedhalyah^ son of Amaryah, son of Hizkiyah, in the days of Joshiyahu^ Amon's son, king of Judah.* Zephaniah's great-great-grandfather Hezekiah was in all probability the king.[1] His father's name Kushi, or *Ethiop,* is curious. If we are right, that Zephaniah was a young man towards 625, then Kushi must have been born towards 663, about the time of the conflicts between Assyria and Egypt, and it is possible that, as Manasseh and the predominant party in Judah so closely hung upon and imitated Assyria, the adherents of Jehovah put their hope in Egypt, whereof, it may be, this name Kushi is a token.[8] The name Zephaniah itself, meaning *Jehovah hath hidden,* suggests the prophet's birth in the " killing-time " of Manasseh. There was at least one other contemporary of the same name—a priest executed by Nebuchadrezzar.*

[1] **Josiah**

[9] **It is not usual in the O.T. to carry a man's genealogy beyond his grandfather, except for some special purpose, or in order to include some ancestor of note. Also the name Hezekiah is very rare apart from the king. The number of names compounded with Jah or Jehovah is another proof that the line is a royal one. The omission of the phrase *king of Judah* after Hezekiah's name proves nothing; it may have been of purpose because the phrase has to occur immediately again.**

[9] **It was not till 652 that a league was made between the Palestine princes and Psamtik I. against Assyria. This certainly would have been the most natural year for a child to be named Kushi. But that would set the birth of Zephaniah as late as 632, and his prophecy towards the end of Josiah's reign, which we have seen to be improbable on other grounds.**

[4] **Jer. xxi, 1, xxix. 25,29, xxxvij. 3, lii. 24 ff.; 2 Kings xxv. 18. The analogous Phoenician name 233D3, Saphan-ba'al = "Baal protects or hides," is found in No. 207 of the Phoenician inscriptions in the *Corpus Inter. Semiticarum.***

Of the adherents of Jehovah, then, and probably of royal descent, Zephaniah lived in Jerusalem. We descry him against her, almost as clearly as we descry Isaiah. In the glare and smoke of the conflagration which his vision sweeps across the world, only her features stand out definite and particular: the flat roofs with men and women bowing in the twilight to the host of heaven, the crowds of priests, the nobles and their foreign fashions; the *Fishgate)* the New or *Second* Town, where the rich lived, the *Heights* to which building had at last spread, and between them the hollow *Mortar* with its markets, Phoenician merchants and money-dealers. In the first few verses of Zephaniah we see almost as much of Jerusalem as in the whole book either of Isaiah or Jeremiah.

For so young a man the vision of Zephaniah may seem strangely dark and final. Yet not otherwise was Isaiah's inaugural vision, and as a rule it is the young and not the old whose indignation is ardent and unsparing. Zephaniah carries this temper to the extreme. There is no great hope in his book, hardly any tenderness and never a glimpse of beauty. A townsman, Zephaniah has no eye for nature; not only is no fair prospect described by him, he has not even a single metaphor drawn from nature's loveliness or peace. He is pitilessly true to his great keynotes: *I will sweeps sweep from the face of the ground; He will burn,* burn up everything. No hotter book lies in all the Old Testament. Neither dew nor grass nor tree nor any blossom lives in it, but it is everywhere fire, smoke and darkness, drifting chaff, ruins, nettles, saltpits, and owls and ravens looking from the windows of desolate palaces. Nor does Zephaniah foretell the restoration of nature in the end of the days. There is no prospect

of a redeemed and fruitful land„ but only of a group of battered and hardly saved characters: a few meek and righteous are hidden from the fire and creep forth when it is over. Israel is left *a poor and humble folk.* No prophet is more true to the doctrine of the remnant„ or more resolutely refuses to modify it. Perhaps he died young.

The full truth, however, is that Zephaniah, though he found his material in the events of his own day, tears himself loose from history altogether. To the earlier prophets the Day of the Lord, the crisis of the world, is a definite point in history: full of terrible, divine events, yet "' natural" ones—battle, siege, famine, massacre and captivity. After it history is still to flow on, common days come back and Israel pursue their way as a nation. But to Zephaniah the Day of the Lord begins to assume what we call the " supernatural." The grim colours are still woven of war and siege, but mixed with vague and solemn terrors from another sphere, by which history appears to be swallowed up, and it is only with an effort that the prophet thinks of a rally of Israel beyond. In short, with Zephaniah the Day of the Lord tends to become the Last Day. His book is the first tinging of prophecy with apocalypse: that is the moment which it supplies in the history of Israel's religion. And, therefore, it was with a true instinct that the great Christian singer of the Last Day took from Zephaniah his keynote. The [0] Dies Ir, ,Dies Illa " 'of Thomas of Celano is but the Vulgate translation of Zephaniah's *A day of wrath is that day.*[1]

[1] **Chap. i. 15. With the above paragraph cf. Robertson Smith,** *Ettcyc. Brit.,* **art. " Zèphaniah."**

Nevertheless, though the first of apocalyptic writers, Zephaniah does not allow himself the license of apocalypse. As he refuses to imagine great glory for the righteous, so he does not dwell on the terrors of the wicked. He is sober and restrained, a matter-of-fact man, yet with power of imagination, who, amidst the vague horrors he summons, delights in giving a sharp realistic impression.' The Day of the Lord, he says, what is it ? *A strong man—there /—crying bitterly.*[1]

It is to the fierce ardour, and to the elemental interests of the book, that we owe the absence of two features of prophecy which are so constant in the prophets of the eighth century. Firstly, Zephaniah betrays no interest in the practical reforms which (if we are right about the date) the young king, his contemporary, had already started? There was a party of reform, the party had a programme, the programme was drawn from the main principles of prophecy and was designed to put these into practice. And Zephaniah was a prophet—and ignored them. This forms the dramatic interest of his book. Here was a man of the same faith which kings, priests and statesmen were striving to realise in public life, in the assured hope—as is plain from the temper of Deuteronomy—that the nation as a whole would be reformed and become a very great nation, righteous and victorious. All this he ignored,

[1] **Chap. i. 146.**

* **In fact this forms one difficulty about the conclusion which we have reached as to the date. We saw that one reason against putting the Book of Zephaniah after the great Reforms of 621 was that it betrayed no sign of their effects. But it might justly be answered that, if Zephaniah prophesied before 621, his book ought to betray some sign of the approach of reform. Still the explanation given above is satisfactory.**

and gave his own vision of the future: Israel is a brand plucked from the burning; a very few meek and righteous are saved from the conflagration of a whole world. Why? Because for Zephaniah the elements were loose, and when the elements were loose what was the use of talking about reforms? The Scythians were sweeping down upon Palestine, with enough of God's wrath in them to destroy a people still so full of idolatry as Israel was; and if not the Scythians, then some other power in that dark, rumbling North which had ever been so full of doom. Let Josiah try to reform Israel, but it was neither Josiah's nor Israel's day that was falling. It was the Day of the Lord, and when He came it was neither to reform nor to build up Israel, but to make visitation and to punish in His wrath for the unbelief and wickedness of which the nation was still full.

An analogy to this dramatic opposition between prophet and reformer may be found in our own century. At its crisis, in 1848, there were many righteous men rich in hope and energy. The political institutions of Europe were being rebuilt. In our own land there were great measures for the relief of labouring children and women, the organisation of labour and the just distribution of wealth. But Carlyle that year held apart from them all, and, though a personal friend of many of the reformers, counted their work hopeless: society was too corrupt, the rudest forces were loose, "Niagara" was near. Carlyle was proved wrong and the reformers right, but in the analogous situation of Israel the reformers were wrong and the prophet right. Josiah's hope and daring were overthrown at Megiddo, and, though the Scythians passed away, Zephaniah's conviction of the sin and doom of Israel

was fulfilled, not forty years later, in the fall of Jerusalem and the great Exile.

Again, to the same elemental interests, as we may call them, is due the absence from Zephaniah's pages of all the social and individual studies which form the charm of other prophets. With one exception, there is no analysis of character, no portrait, no satire. But the exception is worth dwelling upon : it describes the temper equally abhorred by both prophet and reformer —that of the indifferent and stagnant man. Here we have a subtle and memorable picture of character, which is not without its warnings for our own time.

Zephaniah heard God say: *And it shall be at that time that I will search out Jerusalem with lights, and I will make visitation upon the men who are become stagnant upon their lees, who say in their hearts, Jehovah doeth no good and doeth no evil.*[1] The metaphor is clear. New wine was left upon its lees only long enough to fix its colour and body.[1] If not then drawn off it grew thick and syrupy—sweeter indeed than the strained wine, and to the taste of some more pleasant, but feeble and ready to decay. "To settle upon one's lees" became a proverb for sloth, indifference and the muddy mind. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth and hath settled upon his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel; therefore his taste stands in him and his scent is not changed?* The characters stigmatised by Zephaniah are also obvious. They were a precipitate from the ferment of fifteen years back. Through the cruel days of Manasseh and Amon hope had been

[1] Chap, i 12.

* So *win* upon lees* a generous wine according to Isa. xxv. 6.

3 Jer. xlviii. II.

stirred and strained, emptied from vessel to vessel, and so had sprung sparkling and keen into the new days of Josiah. But no miracle came, only ten years of waiting for the king's majority and five more of small, tentative reforms. Nothing divine happened. There were but the ambiguous successes of a small party who had secured the king for their principles. The court was still full of foreign fashions, and idolatry was rank upon the housetops. Of course disappointment ensued—disappointment and listlessness. The new security of life became a temptation; persecution ceased, and religious men lived again at ease. So numbers of eager and sparkling souls, who had been in the front of the movement, fell away into a selfish and idle obscurity. The prophet hears God say, *I must search Jerusalem with lights* in order to find them. They had "fallen from the van and the freemen"; they had "sunk to the rear and the slaves," where they wallowed in the excuse that *Jehovah* Himself *would do nothing—neither goody* therefore it is useless to attempt reform like Josiah and his party, *nor evily* therefore Zephaniah's prophecy of destruction is also vain. Exactly the same temper was encountered by Mazzini in the second stage of his career. Many of those, who with him had eagerly dreamt of a free Italy, fell away when the first revolt failed—fell away not merely into weariness and fear, but, as he emphasises, into the very two tempers which are described by Zephaniah, scepticism and self-indulgence.

All this starts questions for ourselves. Here is evidently the same public temper, which at all periods provokes alike the despair of the reformer and the indignation of the prophet: the criminal apathy of the well-to-do classes sunk in ease and religious indiffer-

ence. We have to-day the same mass of obscure, nameless persons, who oppose their almost unconquerable inertia to every movement of reform, and are the drag upon all vital and progressive religion. The great causes of God and Humanity are not defeated by the hot assaults of the Devil, but by the slow, crushing, glacier-like mass of thousands and thousands of indifferent nobodies. God's causes are never destroyed by being blown up, but by being sat upon. It is not the violent and anarchical whom we have to fear in the war for human progress, but the slow, the staid, the respectable. And the danger of these does not lie in their stupidity. Notwithstanding all their religious profession, it lies in their real scepticism. Respectability may be the precipitate of unbelief. Nay, it is that, however religious its mask, wherever it is mere comfort, decorousness and conventionality; where, though it would abhor articulately confessing that God does nothing, it virtually means so—*says* so (as Zephaniah puts it) *in its hearty* by refusing to share manifest opportunities of serving Him, and covers its sloth and its fear by sneering that God is not with the great crusades for freedom and purity to which it is summoned. In these ways, Respectability is the precipitate which unbelief naturally forms in the selfish ease and stillness of so much of our middle-class life. And that is what makes mere respectability so dangerous. Like the unshaken, unstrained wine to which the prophet compares its obscure and muddy comfort, it tends to decay. To some extent our respectable classes are just the dregs and lees of our national life; like all dregs, they are subject to corruption. A great sermon could be preached on the putrescence of respectability—how the ignoble comfort

of our respectable classes and their indifference to holy causes lead to sensuality, and poison the very institutions of the Home and the Family, on which they pride themselves. A large amount of the licentiousness of the present day is not that of outlaw and disordered lives, but is bred from the settled ease and indifference of many of our middle-class families.

It is perhaps the chief part of the sin of the obscure units, which form these great masses of indifference, that they think they escape notice and cover their individual responsibility. At all times many have sought obscurity, not because they are humble, but because they are slothful, cowardly or indifferent. Obviously it is this temper which is met by the words, *I will search out Jerusalem with lights.* None of us shall escape because we have said, "I will go with the crowd," or "I am a common man and have no right to thrust myself forward." We shall be followed and judged, each of us for his and her personal attitude to the great movements of our time. These things are not too high for us: they are *our* duty; and we cannot escape our duty by slinking into the shadow.

For all this wickedness and indifference Zephaniah sees prepared the Day of the Lord—near, hastening and very terrible. It sweeps at first in vague desolation and ruin of all things, but then takes the outlines of a solemn slaughter-feast for which Jehovah has consecrated the guests, the dim unnamed armies from the north. Judah shall be invaded, and they that are at ease, who say *Jehovah does nothing,* shall be unsettled and routed. One vivid trait comes in like a screech upon the hearts of a people unaccustomed for years to war. *Hark, JehovaKs Day!* cries the prophet. *A strong man—there !—crying bitterly.* From

this flash upon the concrete, he returns to a great vague terror, in which earthly armies merge in heavenly; battle, siege, storm and darkness are mingled, and destruction is spread abroad upon the whole earth. The first shades of Apocalypse are upon us.

We may now take the full text of this strong and significant prophecy. We have already given the title. Textual emendations and other points are explained in footnotes.

I will sweep, sweep away everything from the face of the ground—oracle of Jehovah—sweep man and beast, sweep the fowl of the heaven and the fish of the sea, and I will bring to ruin[1] *the wicked and cut off the men of wickedness from the ground—oracle of Jehovah. And I will stretch forth My hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem ; and I will cut offfrom this place the remnant * of the Baal,*[1] *the names * of the priestlings*

[a] The text reads *the ruins* (ni222P, unless we prefer with Wellhausen D'2/20, *the stumbling-blocks,* i.e. *idols) with the wicked, and I will cut off man* (LXX. *the lawless) from off the face of the ground.* Some think the clause partly too redundant, partly too specific, to be original. But suppose we read 'n2vom (cf. Mal. ii. 8, Lam. i. 14 and *passim**. this is more probable than Schwally's '29, *op. cit^* p. 169), and for DR the reading which probably the LXX. had before them, me DTE (Job xx. 29, xxvii 13, Prov. xi. 7: cf. 71722 DTM, Prov. vi. 12) or 21 DTE (cf. iii. 5), we get the rendering adopted in the translation above. Some think the whole passage an intrusion, yet it is surely probable that the earnest moral spirit of Zephaniah would aim at the wicked from the very outset of his prophecy.

[1] LXX. *names,* held by some to be the original reading (Schwally, etc.). In that case the phrase might have some allusion to the well-known promise in Deut., *the place where I shall set My name.* This is more natural than a reference to Hosea ii. 19, which is quoted by some.

[1] Some Greek codd. take Baal as fem., others as plur.

[d] So LXX.

with the priests, and them who upon the housetops bow themselves to the host of heaven, and them who. . .1 swear by their Melech^ and them who have turned from following Jehovah, and who do not seek Jehovah nor have inquired of Him.

Silence for the Lord Jehovah I For near is JehovaKs Day. Jehovah has prepared a[1] slaughter, He has consecrated His guests.

*And it shall be in Jehovah's day of slaughter that I will make visitation upon the princes and the house * of the king, and upon all who array themselves in foreign raiment; and I will make visitation upon all who leap over the threshold^ on that day, who fill their lord's house full of violence and fraud.*

And on that day—oracle of Jehovah—there shall be a noise of crying from the Fishgate, and wailing from the Mishneh^ and great havoc on the Heights. Howl,

[1] **Heb. reads *and them who bow themselves, who swear, by Jehovah.* So LXX. B with *and* before *who swear.* But LXX. A omits *and.* LXX. Q omits *them who bow themselves.* Wellhausen keeps the clause with the exception of *who swear,* and so reads (to the end of verse) *them who bow themselves to Jehovah and swear by Milcom.***

[8] **Or Molech = king. LXX. *by their king.* Other Greek versions: Molòch and Melchom. Vulg. Melchom.**

• **LXX *His.***

[4] **So L X Heb. *sons.***

• **Is this some superstitious rite of the idol-worshippers as described in the case of Dagon, i Sam. v. $? Or is it a phrase for breaking into a house, and so parallel to the second clause of the verse ? Most interpreters prefer the latter. The idolatrous rites have been left behind. Schwally suggests the original order may have been : *princes and sons of the king, whofill their lords house full of violence and deceit: and I will visit upon every one that leapeth over the threshold on that day, and upon all that wear foreign raiment.***

[6] **The *Second* or New Town: cf. a Kings xxii. 14, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 22, which state that the prophetess Huldah lived there. Cf. Neh. iii 9, 12, xi. 9.**

0 dwellers in the Mortar,[1] for undone are all the merchant folk[2]; cut off are all the money-dealers?

And in that time it shall be^ that I will search Jerusalem with lanterns, and make visitation upon the men who are become stagnant upon their lees, who in their hearts say, Jehovah doeth no good and doeth no evil? Their substance shall be for spoil, and their houses for wasting. . . .[3]

Near is the great Day of Jehovah, near and very speedy? Hark, the Day of Jehovah ! A strong man—there!—crying bitterly !

A day of wrath is that Day!' Day of siege and blockade, day of stress and distress^ day of darkness and murk, day of cloud and heavy mist, day of the war-horn and battle-roar, up against the fenced cities and against the highest turrets! And I will beleaguer men, and they shall walk like the blind, for they have sinned against Jehovah; and poured out shall their blood be like dust, and the flesh of them like dung. Even their silver, even their gold shall not avail to save them

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[1] **The hollow probably between the western and eastern hills, or the upper part of the Tyropoean (Orelli).**

[2] ***"Reb. people of Canaan.***

• **7'03, found only here, from 7003, to lift up, and in Isa. xl. 15 to weigh. Still it may have a wider meaning, *all they that carry money* (Davidson).**

[4] **See above, p. 52.**

• **The Hebrew text and versions here add : *And they shall build houses and not inhabit* (Greek *in them)' and plant vineyards and not drink the wine thereof.* But the phrase is a common one (Deut. xxviii. 30; Amos v. 11: cf. Micah vi. 15), and while likely to have been inserted by a later hand, is here superfluous, and mars the firmness and edge of Zephaniah's threat.**

• **For nb' Wellhausen reads 'npp, pt Pi; but' הֹר may be a verbal adj.; compare the phrase 27" np, Isa. viii. 1.**

[7] **Dies Ire, Dies Illa !**

[8] **Heb. sho'ah u-mesho'ah. Lit ruin (or devastation) and destruction.**

in the day of Jehovah's wrath,[1] *and in the fire of His zeal shall all the earth be devoured,.* for *destruction, yea,*[1] *sudden collapse shall He make of all the inhabitants of the earth.*

Upon this vision of absolute doom there follows[8] a qualification for the few meek and righteous. They may be hidden on the day of the Lord's anger; but even for them escape is only a possibility. Note the absence of all mention of the Divine mercy as the cause of deliverance. Zephaniah has no gospel of that kind. The conditions of escape are sternly ethical—meekness, the doing of justice and righteousness. So austere is our prophet

. . . *O people unabashed !*[h] *before that ye become as*

[1] Some take this first clause of ver. 18 as a gloss. See Schwally *in loco.*

[2] Read q& for TK. So LXX, Syr., Wellhausen, Schwally.

* In vv. 1-3 of chap, ii, wrongly separated from chap. i.: see Davidson.

[4] Heb. IP| wrppn. AV. *Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together* (PghP is *to gather straw* or *sticks*— cf. Arab. *kash,* to sweep up—and Nithp. of the Aram, is to assemble). Orelli: *Crowd and crouch down.* Ewald compares Aram, *kash,* late Heb. VVP, *to grow old,* which he believes originally meant *to be withered, grey.* Budde suggests ann 102; but, as Davidson remarks, it is not easy to see how this, if once extant, was altered to the present reading.

• w is usually thought to have as its root meaning *to be pale* or *colourless, i.e.* either white or black (*Journal of Phil.,* 14, 125), whence W *silver* or *the pale metal*: hence in the Qal to long for, Job xiv. 15, Ps. xvii. 12; so Ni, Gen. xxxi. 30, Ps. Ixxxiv. 3; and here *to be ashamed.* But the derivation of the name for silver is quite imaginary, and the colour of shame is red rather than white : cf. the mod. Arab. saying, " They are a people that cannot blush; they have no blood in their faces," *i.e.* shameless. Indeed Schwally says *(in loco),* "' Die Bedeutung fahl, blass ist unerweislich." Hence (in spite of the meanings of the Aram. ADD both to lose colour and to be ashamed) a derivation for the Hebrew is more probably to be found in the root *kasaf,* to cut off. The Arab. —S, which in the classic tongue

the drifting chaff] before the anger of Jehovah come upon you,[1] before there come upon you the day of JehovaKs wrath ;3 seek Jehovah, all ye meek of the land who do His ordinance,[3] seek righteousness, seek meekness, peradventure ye may hide yourselves in the day of JehovaKs wrath.

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means to cut a thread or eclipse the sun, is in colloquial Arabic to give a rebuff, refuse a favour, disappoint, shame. In the forms inkasafand 'itkasafXt means to receive a rebuff, be disappointed, then shy or timid, and *kasuf* means shame, shyness (as well as eclipse of the sun). See Spiro's *Arabic-English Vocabulary.* In Ps. lxxxiv. ?D33 is evidently used of unsatisfied longing (but see Cheyne), which is also the proper meaning of the parallel n25 (cf other passages where n23 is used of still unfulfilled or rebuffed hopes: Job xix., 27, Ps. lxix., 4, cxix., 81, cxliii., 7). So in Ps. xvii. 4 AD3 is used of a lion who is longing for, i^t still disappointed in, his prey, and so in Job xiv. 15*

1 LXX. *irpb TOO ybeaGat fyAt ds Mot* (here in error reading '?) for YD) *raparopevbuevov, Tpb TOO ireXSw ' buas 6pyfy Kuplou* (last clause omitted by K"). According to this the Hebrew text, which is obviously disarranged, may be restored to av rbp yn-2 0293 mm mn N2 ?ּ ּ97.

2 This clause Wellhausen deletes. Cf. Hexaplar Syriac translation.

* LXX. take this also as imperative, *do judgment,* and so co-ordinate to the other clauses.

CHAPTER IV

N INIVE DE LEND A

ZEPHANIAH ii. 4*15

THERE now come a series of oracles on foreign nations, connected with the previous prophecy by the conjunction *for*^ and detailing the worldwide judgment which it had proclaimed. But though dated from the same period as that prophecy, *circa* 626„ these oracles are best treated by themselves.[1]

These oracles originally formed one passage in the well-known Qinah or elegiac measure; but this has suffered sadly both by dilapidation and rebuilding. How mangled the text is may be seen especially from w. 6 and 14, where the Greek gives us some help in restoring it. The verses (8-11) upon Moab and Ammon cannot be reduced to the metre which both precedes and follows them. Probably, therefore, they are a later addition: nor did Moab and Ammon lie upon the way of the Scythians, who are presumably the invaders pictured by the prophet.[8]

The poem begins with Philistia and the sea-coast,

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[1] **See above, pp. 41 ft.**

3 **Some, however, think the prophet is speaking in prospect of the Chaldean invasion of a few years later. This is not so likely, because he pictures the overthrow of Niniveh as subsequent to the invasion of Philistia, while the Chaldeans accomplished the latter only after Niniveh had fallen.**

the very path of the Scythian raid.[1] Evidently the latter is imminent, the Philistine cities are shortly to be taken and the whole land reduced to grass. Across the emptied strip the long hope of Israel springs seaward; but—mark!—not yet with a vision of the isles beyond. The prophet is satisfied with reaching the edge of the Promised Land: *by the sea shall they feed** their flocks.

For Gaza forsaken shall be,
Ashḳ'ldn a desert.
Ashdod—by noon shall they rout her,
And Ekṛon be torn up![2]

Ah! woe, dwellers of the sea-shore,
Folk of Kereṯhim.
*The word of Jehovah against thee, K^na^an^*
Land of the Philistines !

[1] **According to Herodotus.**

* **Ver. 7, LXX**

[2] **The measure, as said above, is elegiac: alternate lines long with a rising, and short with a falling, cadence. There is a play upon the names, at least on the first and last—"Gazzah" or "'Azzah. 'Azubah"—which in English we might reproduce by the use of Spenser's word for "dreary": *For Gaw ghastful shall be.* "'Ekṛon te'aḳer." LXX. *AK Kapur iKpi^ueijoeral (B), iKpctp^erat (A). In the second line we have a slighter assonance, 'Ashkēlon lishmamah. In the third the verb is qavpat; Bacher (*Z.A.T.W.*, 1891, 185 ff.) points out that 222 is not used of cities, but of their populations or of individual men, and suggests (from Abul walid) me", *shall possess her,* as "a plausible emendation." Schwally (*ibid.*, 260) prefers to alter to 122, with the remark that this is not only a good parallel to pn, but suits the LXX. expidhcerau—On the expression *by noon* see Davidson, *N. H. and Z.*, Appendix, Note 2, where he quotes a parallel expression, in the Senjerli inscription, of Asarhaddon: that he took Memphis by midday or in half a day (Schrader). This suits the use of the phrase in Jer. xv. 8, where it is parallel to *suddenly.***

[4] **Canaan omitted by Wellhausen, who reads 120 for D3'. But as the metre requires a larger number of syllables in the first line of**

*And I destroy thee to the last inhabitant^*
And Kereth shall become shepherds? cots?
And folds for flocks.
And the coast[1] for the remnant of Judah's house;
*By the sea * shall they feed.*
In Ashkęlon's houses at even shall they couch;
. . . . . .[6]
*For Jehovah their God shall visit them^*
And turn their captivity?

There comes now an oracle upon Moab and Ammon (vv. 8-11). As already said, it is not in the elegiac measure which precedes and follows it, while other features cast a doubt upon its authenticity. Like other oracles on the same peoples, this denounces the loud-mouthed arrogance of the sons of Moab and Ammon.

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each couplet than in the second, Kna'an should probably remain. The difficulty is the use of Canaan as synonymous with *Land of the Philistines.* Nowhere else in the Old Testament is it expressly applied to the coast south of Carmel, though it is so used in the Egyptian inscriptions, and even in the Old Testament in a sense which covers this as well as other lowlying parts of Palestine.

[1] An odd long line, either the remains of two, or perhaps we should take the two previous lines as one, omitting Canaan.

[*] So LXX. : Hebrew text *and the sea-coast shall become dwellings, cols (np) of shepherds.* But the pointing and meaning of n are both conjectural, and the *sea-coast* has probably fallen by mistake into this verse from the next. On Kereth and Kerethim as names for Philistia and the Philistines see *Hist. Geog.*, p. 171.

[1] LXX. adds *of the sea.* So Wellhausen, but unnecessarily and improbably for phonetic reasons, as *sea* has to be read in the next line.

[4] So Wellhausen, reading for Dr? D20-7.

• Some words must have fallen out, for *first* a short line is required here by the metre, and *second* the LXX. have some additional words, which, however, give us no help to what the lost line was: dr *xpocrov vlOv* 'Toba.

• As stated above, there is no conclusive reason against the pre-exilic date of this expression.

I have heard[1] *the reviling of Moab and the insults of the sons of Ammon, who have reviled My people and vaunted themselves upon their*[1] *border. Wherefore as Hive, saith Jehovah of Hosts, God of Israel, Moab shall become as Sodom, and Ammon's sons as Gomorrah—the possession*[8] *of nettles, and saltpits,*[4] *and a desolation for ever; the remnant of My people shall spoil them, and the rest of My nation possess them. This to them for their arrogance, because they reviled, and vaunted themselves against, the people of*[5] *Jehovah of Hosts. Jehovah showeth Himself terrible*^ *against them, for He hath made lean*[r] *all gods of earth, that all the coasts of the nations may worship Him, every man from his own place*[1]*.*

The next oracle is a very short one (ver. 12), upon Egypt, which after its long subjection to Ethiopic dynasties is called, not Miraim,, but Kush, or Ethiopia. The verse follows on naturally to ver. 7, but is not reducible to the elegiac measure.

Also ye, O Kushites, are the slain of My sword.[9]

[1] CL Isa. xvi. 6.

[2] LXX. *My.*

• Doubtful word, not occurring elsewhere.

[4] Heb. singular.

[5] LXX. omits *the ptopk of.*

[4] LXX. *maketh Hitttself manifest*^ nano for anna.

draf λεγόμενον. The passive of the verb means *to grow kan* (Isa. xvii, 4).

• Dpo has probably here the sense which it has in a few other passages of the Old Testament, and in Arabic, of *sacral plan.*

Many will share Schwally's doubts (p. 192) about the authenticity of ver. 11; nor, as Wellhausen points out, does its prediction of the conversion of the heathen agree with ver. 12, which devotes them to destruction. Ver. 12 follows naturally on to ver. 7.

• Wellhausen reads *His sword,* to agree with the next verse. Perhaps an is an abbreviation for mn a.

The elegiac measure is now renewed[1] in an oracle against Assyria, the climax and front of heathendom (w. 13-15). It must have been written before 608 : there is no reason to doubt that it is Zephaniah's.

And may He stretch out His hand against the North,
And destroy Asshur;
And may He turn Niniveh to desolation.
Dry as the desert.
And herds shall couch in her midst,
Every beast of ... ?
Yea, pelican and bittern shall roost on the capitals;*
The owl shall hoot in the window,
The raven on the doorstep.

* * * * *

Such is the City, the jubilant,
She that sitteth at ease,

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* See Budde, *Z.A.T.W.*, 1882, 25.

* Heb. reads *a nation,* and Wellhausen translates *tin bunits Gemisch von Volk.* LXX. *beasts of the earth.*

[1] קאַת, a water-bird according to Deut xiv. 17, Lev. xL 18, mostly taken as *pelican**, so R.V. A.V. *cormorant.* קפּד has usually been taken from קפד, to draw together, therefore *hedgehog* or *porcupine.* But the other animals mentioned here are birds, and it is birds which would naturally roost on capitals. Therefore *bittern* is the better rendering (Hitzig, Cheyne). The name is onomatopoeic. Cf. Eng. butter-dump. LXX. translates *chameleons and hedgehogs.*

[4] Heb.: *a voice shall sing in the window, desolation on the threshold, for He shall uncover the cedar-work.* LXX. Καὶ *Qypla* φωνὴ *puvhve* ἐν *roît* διορύγμασιν *aurfs,* κόραξ *KbpaKtt* ἐπὶ *rdif* τὸν *TVXQCW* ἀναμέσον *aMjt,* ἐν *bi6n* εἴδους *eibpos* τὸ *bedanifM aurss* : Wild beasts shall sound in her excavations, ravens in her porches, because (the) cedar is her height. For קול, *voice,* Wellhausen reads קד, *owl,* and with the LXX. עי, *raven,* for אין, *desolation.* The last two words are left untranslated above, ערה occurs only here and is usually taken to mean cedar-work; but it might be pointed *her* cedar, ערהּ, *he,* or *one, has stripped the cedar-work.*

She that saith in her heart I am*
And there is none else I
How hath she become desolation I
'A lair of beasts.
Every one passing by her hisses,
Shakes his hand.

The essence of these oracles is their clear confidence in the fall of Niniveh. From 652, when Egypt revolted from Assyria, and, Assurbanipal notwithstanding, began to push northward, men must have felt, throughout all Western Asia, that the great empire upon the Tigris was beginning to totter. This feeling was strengthened by the Scythian invasion, and after 625 it became a moral certainty that Niniveh would fall[1]—which happened in 607-6. These are the feelings, 625 to 608, which Zephaniah's oracles reflect. We can hardly over-estimate what they meant. Not a man was then alive who had ever known anything else than the greatness and the glory of Assyria. It was two hundred and thirty years since Israel first felt the weight of her arms? It was more than a hundred since her hosts had swept through Palestine,[8] and for at least fifty her supremacy had been accepted by Judah. Now the colossus began to totter. As she had menaced, so she was menaced. The ruins with which for nigh three centuries she had strewn Western Asia—to these were to be reduced her own impregnable and ancient glory. It was the close of an epoch.

[1] See above, pp. 17, 18. * At the battle of Karkar, 854.
* Under Tiglath-Pileser in 734.

CHAPTER V

SO AS BY FIRE

ZEPHANIAH iii

THE third chapter of the Book of Zephaniah consists[1] of two sections, of which only the first, w. I-13, is a genuine work of the prophet; while the second, w. 14-20, is a later epilogue such as we found added to the genuine prophecies of Amos. It is written in the large hope and brilliant temper of the Second Isaiah, saying no word of Judah's sin or judgment, but predicting her triumphant deliverance out of all her afflictions.

In a second address to his City (w. 1-13) Zephaniah strikes the same notes as he did in his first He spares the king, but denounces the ruling and teaching classes. Jerusalem's princes are lions, her judges wolves, her prophets braggarts, her priests pervert the law, her wicked have no shame. He repeats the proclamation of a universal doom. But the time is perhaps later. Judah has disregarded the many threats. She will not accept the Lord's discipline; and while in chap. i.—ii. 3 Zephaniah had said that the meek and righteous might escape the doom, he now emphatically affirms that all proud and impenitent men shall be removed from Jerusalem, and a humble

[1] See above, pp. 43-45.

people be left to her, righteous and secure. There is the same moral earnestness as before, the same absence of all other elements of prophecy than the ethical. Before we ask the reason and emphasise the beauty of this austere gospel, let us see the exact words of the address. There are the usual marks of poetic diction in it—elliptic phrases, the frequent absence of the definite article, archaic forms and an order of the syntax different from that which obtains in prose. But the measure is difficult to determine, and must be printed as prose. The echo of the elegiac rhythm in the opening is more apparent than real: it is not sustained beyond the first verse. Verses 9 and 10 are relegated to a footnote, as very probably an intrusion, and disturbance of the argument.

Woe, tebel and unclean, city of oppression /[1] *She listens to no voice, she accepts no discipline, in Jehovah she trusts not, nor has drawn near to her God.*

Her princes in her midst are roaring lions; her judges evening wolves,[3] *they . . J not till morning; her*

[1] **Heb. *the city the oppressor,* The two participles in the first clause are not predicates to the noun and adjective of the second (Schwally), but vocatives, though without the article, after nn.**

[3] **LXX *wolves of Arabia.***

*** The verb left untranslated, 10212, is quite uncertain in meaning. D12 is a root common to the Semitic languages and seems to mean originally *to cut off,* while the noun D2 is *a bone.* In Num. xxiv. 8 the Piel of the verb used with another word for bone means *to gnaw, munch.* (The only other passage where it is used, Ezek. xxiii. 34, is corrupt) So some take it here: *they do not gnaw bones till morning, ie.* devour all at once; but this is awkward, and Schwally (198) has proposed to omit the negative, *they do gnaw bones till morning,* yet in that case surely the impf. and not the perf. tense would have been used. The LXX render *they do not leave over,* and it has been attempted, though inconclusively, to derive this meaning from that of**

prophets are braggarts and traitors; her priests have profaned what is holy and done violence to the Law.[1] *Jehovah is righteous in the midst of her*[9] *He does no wrong. Morning by morning He brings His judgment to light: He does not let Himself fail*[1]*—but the wicked man knows no shame. I have cut off nations, their turrets are ruined; I have laid waste their broad streets, till no one passes upon them; destroyed are their cities, without a man, without a dweller? I said, Surely she will fear Me, she will accept punishment;* and all that I have visited upon her^ shall never vanish from her eyes? But* only *the more zealously have they corrupted all their doings?*

*Wherefore wait ye for Me—oracle of Jehovah—*wait *for the day of My rising to testify, for 'tis My fixed purpose* to sweep nations together, to collect kingdoms, to pour upon them .. . • all the heat of My wrath—*

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cutting off, **i.e.** *laying aside* **(the Arabic Form II. means, however,** *to leave behind).* **Another line of meaning perhaps promises more. In Aram. the verb means** *to be the cause of anything, to bring about,* **and perhaps contains the idea of** *deciding* **(Levy** *sub voce* **compares** *Kpbw, cerno)* **; in Arab, it means, among other things,** *to commit a crime, be guilty,* **but in mod. Arabic** *to fine.* **Now it is to be noticed that here the expression is used of** *judges,* **and it may be there is an intentional play upon the double possibility of meaning in the root.**

[1] **Ezek. xxii. 26:** *Her priests have done violence to My Law and have profaned My holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, between the clean and the unclean.* **Cf. Jer. ii. 8.**

[1] **Schwally by altering the accents:** *morning by morning He giveth forth His judgment: no day does He fail.*

• **On this ver. 6 see above, p. 44. It is doubtful.**

[4] **Or** *discipline.*

[8] **Wellhausen:** *that which I have commanded her.* **Cf. Job xxxvi. 23; c Chron. xxxvi. 23; Ezra i. 2.**

[4] **So LXX., reading qw for the Heb MP, her** *dwelling.*

7 **A frequent phrase of Jeremiah's.**

• **'DDUD, decree, ordinance, decision.**

[9] **Heb.** *My anger.* **LXX. omits.**

yea, with the fire of My jealousy shall the whole earth be consumed}

In that day thou shalt not be ashamed[1] *of all thy deeds^ by which thou hast rebelled against Me: for then will I turn out of the midst of thee all who exult with* that *arrogance of thine^ and thou wilt not again vaunt thyself upon the Mount of My Holiness. But I will leave in thy midst a people humble and poor, and they shall trust in the name of Jehovah. The Remnant of Israel shall do no evil, and shall not speak falsehood, and no fraud shall be found in their mouth, but they shall pasture and they shall couch, with none to make them afraid.*

Such is the simple and austere gospel of Zephaniah.

[1] **That is to say, the prophet returns to that general judgment of the whole earth, with which in his first discourse he had already threatened Judah. He threatens her with it again in this eighth verse, because, as he has said in the preceding ones, all other warnings have failed. The eighth verse therefore follows naturally upon the seventh, just as naturally as in Amos iv. ver. 12, introduced by the same 122 as here, follows its predecessors. The next two verses of the text, however, describe an opposite result: instead of the destruction of the heathen, they picture their conversion, and it is only in the eleventh verse that we return to the main subject of the passage, Judah herself, who is represented (in harmony with the close of Zephaniah's first discourse) as reduced to a righteous and pious remnant. Vv. 9 and 10 are therefore obviously a later insertion, and we pass to the eleventh verse. Vv. 9 and xo: *For then* (this has no meaning after ver. 8) *will I give to the peoples a pure lip* (elliptic phrase: *turn to the peoples a pure lip*—i.e. *turn their* evil lip into *a pure lip:* pure - *picked out select, excellent,* cf. Isa. xlix. 2), *that they may all of them call upon the name of the Lord, that they may serve Him with one consent* (Heb. *shoulder, LXE.yoke). From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia*—there follows a very obscure phrase, xa-na OPp, sup- *pliants (?) of the daughter of My dispersed,* but Ewald *of the daughter of Phut—they shall bring Mine offering.*

[2] **Wellhausen *despair.* * Heb. *the jubilant ones of thme arrogance.***

It is not to be overlooked amid the lavish and gorgeous promises which other prophets have poured around it, and by ourselves, too, it is needed in our often unscrupulous enjoyment of the riches of grace that are in Christ Jesus. A thorough purgation, the removal of the wicked, the sparing of the honest and the meek; insistence only upon the rudiments of morality and religion; faith in its simplest form of trust in a righteous God, and character in its basal elements of meekness and truth,—these and these alone survive the judgment. Why does Zephaniah never talk of the Love of God, of the Divine Patience, of the Grace that has spared and will spare wicked hearts if only it can touch them to penitence ? Why has he no call to repent, no appeal to the wicked to turn from the evil of their ways? We have already seen part of the answer. Zephaniah stands too near to judgment and the last things. Character is fixed, the time for pleading is past; there remains only the separation of bad men from good. It is the same standpoint (at least ethically) as that of Christ's visions of the Judgment. Perhaps also an austere gospel was required by the fashionable temper of the day. The generation was loud and arrogant; it gilded the future to excess, and knew no shame.[1] The true prophet was forced to reticence; he must make his age feel the desperate earnestness of life, and that salvation is by fire. For the gorgeous future of its unsanctified hopes he must give it this severe, almost mean, picture of a poor and humble folk, hardly saved but at last at peace.

The permanent value of such a message is proved

[1] See w. 4,5, n.

by the thirst which we feel even to-day for the clear, cold water, of its simple promises. Where a glaring optimism prevails, and the future is preached with a loud assurance, where many find their only religious enthusiasm in the resurrection of mediaeval ritual or the singing of stirring and gorgeous hymns of second-hand imagery, how needful to be recalled to the earnestness and severity of life, to the simplicity of the conditions of salvation, and to their ethical, not emotional, character! Where sensationalism has so invaded religion, how good to hear the sober insistence upon God's daily commonplaces—*morning by morning He bringeth forth His judgment to light*—and to know that the acceptance of discipline is what prevails with Him. Where national reform is vaunted and the progress of education, how well to go back to a prophet who ignored all the great reforms of his day that he might impress his people with the indispensableness of humility and faith. Where Churches have such large ambitions for themselves, how necessary to hear that the future is destined for *a poor folk,* the meek and the honest. Where men boast that their religion—Bible, Creed or Church—has undertaken to save them, *vaunting themselves on the Mount of My Holiness*^ how needful to hear salvation placed upon character and a very simple trust in God.

But, on the other hand, is any one in despair at the darkness and cruelty of this life, let him hear how Zephaniah proclaims that, though all else be fraud, *the Lord is righteous in the midst* of us, *He doth not let Himself jail,* that the resigned heart and the humble, the just and the pure heart, is imperishable, and in the end there is at least peace.

EPILOGUE.

VERSES 14-20.

Zephaniah's prophecy was fulfilled. The Day of the Lord came, and the people met their judgment. The Remnant survived—a *folk poor and humble.* To them, in the new estate and temper of their life, came a new song from God—perhaps it was nearly a hundred years after Zephaniah had spoken—and they added it to his prophecies. It came in with wonderful fitness, for it was the song of the redeemed, whom he had foreseen, and it tuned his book, severe and simple, to the full harmony of prophecy, so that his book might take a place in the great choir of Israel—the diapason of that full salvation which no one man, but only the experience of centuries, could achieve.

Sing out, O daughter of Zion ! shout aloud, O Israel! Rejoice and be jubilant with all thy[1] *heart, daughter of Jerusalem I Jehovah hath set aside thy judgments*[3] *He hath turned thy foes. King of Israel, Jehovah is in thy midst; thou shalt not see*[8] *evil any more.*

In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem^ Fear not. O Zion, let not thy hands droop ! Jehovah, thy God, in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy, He will make new*[6] *His love, He will exult over thee with singing.*

> Heb. *the*

* T979. But Wellhausen reads mpep, thine adversaries; cf. Job ix. 15.

[1] Reading *P (with LXX., Wellhausen and Schwally) for '75 of the Hebrew text, *fear.*

[4] Lit. *mighty man.*

• Heb. *will be silent in,* Mn, but not in harmony with the next clause. LXX. and Syr. render *will make new,* which translates U, a form that does not elsewhere occur, though that is no objection to

The scattered of thy congregation[1] have I gathered—thine[1] are they^...[8] reproach upon her. Behold, 1am about to do all for thy sake at that time and I will rescue the lame and the outcast will I bring in* and I will make them for renown and fame whose shame is in the whole earth.* in that time I will bring you in] even in the time that I gather you.[1] For I will set you for fame and renown among all the peoples of the earth, when I turn again your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah.[1]*

finding it in Zephaniah, or 2302. Hitzig: *Ht makes new things in His low.* Buhl: *He renews His low,* Schwally suggests nn',, *He rejoices in His low.*

[1] LXX. *In ths days of thy festival,* which it takes with the previous verse. The Heb. construction is ungrammatical, though not unprecedented—the construct state before a preposition. Besides *213| is obscure in meaning. It is a Ni. pt for 72 |from n2, *to bs sad*: cf. the Pi. in Lam. iii. 33 But the Hiphil nan |in 2 Sam. xx. 13, followed (as here) by 𝔓 means *to thrust away, from,* and that is probably the sense here.

[1] LXX. *thine oppressed* in acc. governed by the preceding verb, which in LXX. begins the verse.

* The Heb., nest,, *burden of,* is unintelligible. Wellhausen proposes 072 neso,

[4] This rendering is only a venture in the almost impossible task of restoring the text of the clause. As it stands the Heb. runs, *Behold, I am about to do,* or *dtal, with thins oppressors* (which Hitzig and Ewald accept). Schwally points q2PP (active) as a passive, q!2vP,, *thine oppressed.* LXX. has lod *yd roG ds vol hexes aw, i.e.* it read T58 qrp2 Following its suggestion we might read Tarp? 25-ne,, and so get the above translation. * Micah iv. 6.

• This rendering (Ewald's) is doubtful The verse concludes with *in the whole earth their shame.* But DDP3 may be a gloss. LXX. take it as a verb with the next verse.

[7] LXX. *do good toyou;* perhaps 2K for M2K.

[8] So Heb. literally, but the construction is very awkward. Perhaps we should read *in that time I will gather you.*

[8] *Before your eyes, i.e.* in your lifetime. It is doubtful whether ver. 20 is original to the passage. For it is simply a variation on ver. 19, and it has more than one impossible reading: see previous note, and for 03 ma" read oamav.

NAHUM

Wos to the City of Blood,
All ofher guile, robbery-full, ceaseless rapine t

Hark the whip,
And the rumbling of wheels I
Horses at the gallop,
And the rattling dance of the chariot t
Cavalry at the charge.
Flash of sabres, and lightning of lances t

CHAPTER VI

THE BOOK OF NAHUM *[1]*

THE Book of Nahum consists of a double title and three odes. The title runs *Oracle of Niniveh: Book of the Vision of Nahum the Ḳlkoshite.* The three odes, eager and passionate pieces, are all of them apparently vibrant to the impending fall of Assyria. The first, chap. i. with the possible inclusion of chap. ii. 2,1 is general and theological, affirming God's power of vengeance and the certainty of the overthrow of His enemies. The second, chap. ii. with the omission of ver. 2,3 and the third, chap, iii., can hardly be disjoined; they both present a vivid picture of the siege, the storm and the spoiling of Niniveh.

The introductory questions, which title and contents start, are in the main three: 1. The position of El^Osh, to which the title assigns the prophet; 2. The authenticity of chap. i.; 3. The date of chaps, ii., iii.: to which siege of Niniveh do they refer ?

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[1] **In the English version, but in the Hebrew chap. ii. w. 1 and 3; for the Hebrew text divides chap. i. from chap. ii. differently from the English, which follows the Greek. The Hebrew begins chap. ii. with what in the English and Greek is the fifteenth verse of chap. i.:** ***BehM, upon the "fountains,*** **etc.**

*** In the English text, but in the Hebrew with the omission of w. 1 and 3: see previous note,**

1. THE POSITION OF ELKOSH.

The title calls Nahum the Elkoshite—that is, native or citizen of Elḳosh.[1] Three positions have been claimed for this place, which is not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible.

The first we take is the modern Al-Ḳosh, a town still flourishing about twenty-four miles to the north of the site of Niniveh,[2] with "no fragments of antiquity" about it, but possessing a "simple plaster box," which Jews, Christians and Mohammedans alike reverence as the tomb of Nahum.[3] There is no evidence that Al-Ḳdsh, a name of Arabic form, is older than the Arab period, while the tradition which locates the tomb there is not found before the sixteenth century of our era, but on the contrary Nahum's grave was pointed out to Benjamin of Tudela in 1165 at 'Ain Japhata, on the south of Babylon.[4] The tradition that the prophet lived and died at Al-Ḳosh is therefore due to the similarity of the name to that of Nahum's Elḳosh, as well as to the fact that Niniveh was the subject of his prophesying.[5] In his book there is no trace of proof for the assertion that Nahum was a descendant of the ten tribes exiled in 721 to the region to the north of Al-Ḳosh. He prophesies for Judah alone. Nor does he show any more knowledge of Niniveh than her ancient fame must have scattered

[1] Other meanings have been suggested, but are impossible.

[2] So it lies on Billerbeck's map in Delitzsch and Haupt's *Beitr&ge sur Assyr.* III. Smith's *Bible Dictionary* puts it at only a m. N. of Mosul.

[3] Layard, *Niniveh and its Remains,* I. 233, 3rd ed., 1849.

[4] Bohn's *Early Travels in Palestine,* p. 102.

[5] Just as they show Jonah's tomb at Niniveh itself

to the limits of the world.[1] We might as well argue from chap. iii. 8-10 that Nahum had visited Thebes of Egypt.

The second tradition of the position of Elḳosh is older. In his commentary on Nahum Jerome says that in his day it still existed, a petty village of Galilee, under the name of Helkesei,[2] or Elkese, and apparently with an established reputation as the town of Nahum.[8] But the book itself bears no symptom of its author's connection with Galilee, and although it was quite possible for a prophet of that period to have lived there, it is not very probable.[4]

A third tradition places Elḳosh in the south of Judah. A Syriac version of the accounts of the prophets, which are ascribed to Epiphanius,* describes Nahum as "of ElḲOsh beyond Bet Gabre, of the tribe of Simeon";[6] and

[1] See above, p. 18.

[1] Just as in Micah's case Jerome calls his birthplace Moresheth by the adjective Morasthi, so with equal carelessness he calls Elkosh by the adjective with the article Ha-elkoshi, the Elkoshite. Jerome's words are: "Quum Elcese usque hodie in Galilea viculus sit, parvus quidem et vix ruinis veterum aedificiorum indicans vestigia, sed tamen notus judseis et mihi quoque a circumducente monstratus" (in *Prol. ad Prophetiam Nachumi).* In the *Onomasticon* Jerome gives the name as Elcese, Eusebius as EXxere, but without defining the position.

• This Elkese has been identified, though not conclusively, with the modern El Kauze near Ramieh, some seven miles W. of Tibnin.

* Ct Kuenen, $75, n. 5 ; Davidson, p. 12 (2).

Capernaum, which the Textus Receptus gives as *Karepvaoby,* but most authorities as Kacapvaobu and the Peshitto as Kaphar Nahum, obviously means Village of Nahum, and both Hitzig and Knobel looked for Elkosh in it See *Hist, Geog,* p. 456.

Against the Galilean origin of Nahum it is usual to appeal to John vii. 52: *Starch and set that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet;* but this is not decisive, for Jonah came out of Galilee.

8 Though perhaps falsely.

• This occurs in the Syriac translation of the Old Testament by Paul

it may be noted that Cyril of Alexandria says[1] that Elkese was a village in the country of the Jews. This tradition is superior to the first in that there is no apparent motive for its fabrication, and to the second in so far as Judah was at the time of Nahum a much more probable home for a prophet than Galilee; nor does the book give any references except such as might be made by a Judaean? No modern place-name, however, can be suggested with any certainty as the echo of Elḳosh. Umm LLis, which has been proved not to be Lachish, contains the same radicals, and some six and a quarter miles east from Beit-Jibrin at the upper end of the Wady es Sur there is an ancient well with the name Bir el Kfis.[8]

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of Telia, 617 A.D., in which the notices of Epiphanius (Bishop of Constantia in Cyprus A.D. 367) or Pseudepiphanius are attached to their respective prophets. It was first communicated to the *Z.D.P.V.*, 1. 122 ff., by Dr. Nestle : cf. *Hist, Gsog.*^ p. 231, n. 1. The previously known readings of the passage were either geographically impossible, as " He came from Elkesei beyond Jordan, towards Begabar of the tribe of Simeon" (so in Paris edition, 1622, of the works of St. Epiphanius, Vol. II., p. 147: cf. Migne, *Patr, Gr.*, XLIII. 409); or based on a misreading of the title of the book: "Nahum son of Elkesaios was of Jesbe of the tribe of Simeon "; or indefinable : "Nahum was of Elkesem beyond Betabarem of the tribe of Simeon "; these last two from recensions of Epiphanius published in 1855 by Tischendorf (quoted by Davidson, p. 13). In the Zrxnpov *rQv* IB* IIpodyrGv *Kal* 'Ioco0, attributed to Hesychius, Presbyter of Jerusalem, who died 428 or 433 (Migne, *Patrologia Gr*^ XCIII. 1357), it is said that Nahum was drd 'EAxegeir (Helcesin) W/MW ro *rapelv 4K* (puXfs *Zvuev*; to which has been added a note from Theophylact, 'EAxacat *ripar TOQ* 'Iopvov els *BiyaPfL*

[1] **Ad Nahum i. 1 (Migne, *Pair. Gr.*, LXXL 780): Kun *94 alry TATTW* TOO r^r *'Iovalo xopas.***

* **The selection Bashan, Carmel and Lebanon (i. 4), does not prove northern authorship.**

• **MP28 may be (1) a theophoric name = Ḳosh is God; and Ḳosh might then be the Edomite deity Dip whose name is spelt with**

2. THE AUTHENTICITY OF CHAP. I.

Till recently no one doubted that the three chapters formed a unity. "Nahum's prophecy," said Kuenen in 1889, "is a whole." In 1891[1] Cornill affirmed that no questions of authenticity arose in regard to the book; and in 1892 Wellhausen saw in chap. i. an introduction leading "in no awkward way to the proper subject of the prophecy."

Meantime, however, Bickell,* discovering what he thought to be the remains of an alphabetic Psalm in chap, i 1-7, attempted to reconstruct throughout chap. i.—it 3 twenty-two verses, each beginning with a successive letter of the alphabet. And, following this, Gunkel in 1893 produced a more full and plausible

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a Shin on the Assyrian monuments (Baethgen, *Btiträgt 9. Sewtit, Religwnsgeschichto,* p. II; Schrader, *K.A.T?,* pp. 150, 6x3), and who is probably the same as the Arab deity Kais (Baethgen, *id.,* p. 108); and this would suit a position in the south of Judah, in which region we find the majority of place-names compounded with 78. Or else (2) the K is prosthetic, as in the place-names 3"3 K on the Phoenician coast, U28 in Southern Canaan, TT, , etc. In this case we might find its equivalent in the form thP?' (cf. 2MD8 2'13) ; but no such form is now extant or recorded at any previous period* The form LAkis would not suit. On Bir el KQs see Robinson, *B.R.,* III., p. 14, and Gudrin,/^/, ' III., p. 341. Bir el Kfts means Well of the Bow, or, according to Gurin, , of the Arch, from ruins that stand by it. The position, *cast* of Beit-Jibrin, is unsuitable; for the early Christian texts quoted in the previous note fix it *btyond,* presumably south or south-west of Beit-Jibrin, and in the tribe of Simeon. The error " tribe of Simeon " does not matter, for the same fathers place Bethzecharias, the alleged birthplace of Habakkuk, there. ,

[1] *Einlcitung,* 1st ed.

* Who seems to have owed the hint to a quotation by Delitzsch on Psalm ix. from G. Frohnmeyer to the effect that there were traces of "alphabetic " verses in chap, i., at least in w. 3-7. See Bickell's *BcitrSgc sur Semit. Mctrik,* Separatabdruck, Wien, 1894.

reconstruction of the same scheme.[1] By radical emendations of the text, by excision of what he believes to be glosses and by altering the order of many of the verses, Gunkel seeks to produce twenty-three distichs, twenty of which begin with the successive letters of the alphabet, two are wanting, while in the first three letters of the twenty-third, שובי, he finds very probable the name of the author, Shobai or Shobi.[3] He takes this ode, therefore, to be an eschatological Psalm of the later Judaism, which from its theological bearing has been thought suitable as an introduction to Nahum's genuine prophecies.

The text of chap, i.—ii. 4 has been badly mauled and is clamant for reconstruction of some kind. As it lies, there are traces of an alphabetical arrangement as far as the beginning of ver. 9,[8] and so far Gunkel's changes are comparatively simple. Many of his emendations are in themselves and apart from the alphabetic scheme desirable. They get rid of difficulties and improve the poetry of the passage.[4] His reconstruction is always clever and as a whole forms a wonderfully spirited poem. But to have produced good or poetical Hebrew is not conclusive proof of having recovered the original, and there are obvious objections to the

[1] *Z.A.T.W.*, 1893, pp. 223 ff.

[2] Cf. Ezra ii. 42; Neh. vii. 45; 2 Sam. xvii. 27.

[3] Ver. 1 is title; 2 begins with א; 3 is found in בד 2, 36; J in 2a, 4; is wanting—Bickell proposes to substitute a New-Hebrew word Ps, Gunkel 381, for סתק, 46; נ in gnn, 5a; 1 in xem, 56; T by removing 22D> of ver. *6a* to the end of the clause (and reading it there 1D?), and so leaving 1m' as the first word; ח in חמון in 6b; D in 210, 7a; by eliding 1 from I", 76; 3 in ו n23, 8; ל is wanting, though Gunkel seeks to supply it by taking % beginning ח?, with 98, before *ga*; D begins 9a.

[4] See below in the translation.

process. Several of the proposed changes are unnatural in themselves and unsupported by anything except the exigencies of the scheme; for example, *2b* and 3a are dismissed as a gloss only because, if they be retained, the *Aleph* verse is two bars too long. The gloss, Gunkel thinks, was introduced to mitigate the absoluteness of the declaration that Jehovah is a God of wrath and vengeance; but this is not obvious and would hardly have been alleged apart from the needs of the alphabetic scheme. In order to find a *Daleth* it is quite arbitrary to say that the first %Dx in *4b* is redundant in face of the second, and that a word beginning with *Daleih* originally filled its place, but was removed because it was a rare or difficult word I The re-arrangement of 7 and 8a is very clever, and reads as if it were right; but the next effort, to get a verse beginning with *Lamed,* is of the kind by which anything might be proved. These, however, are nothing to the difficulties which vv. 9-14 and chap. ii. 1, 3, present to an alphabetic scheme, or to the means which Gunkel takes to surmount them. He has to re-arrange the order of the verses,[1] and of the words within the verses. The distichs beginning with *Nun* and *Ḳoph* are wanting, or at least undecipherable. To provide one with initial *Resh* the interjection has to be removed from the opening of chap. ii. I, and the verse made to begin with on and to run thus: *the feet of him that bringeth good news on the mountains; behold him that publisheth peace.* Other unlikely changes will be noticed when we come to the translation. Here we may ask the question : if the passage was originally alphabetic, that is, furnished with so fixed and easily recognised a frame, why has it so fallen to pieces ? And again, if it has so fallen

[1] As thus: ga, xi *b,* 1a (but unintelligible), 10, 13, 14, ii. I, 3

to pieces, is it possible that it can be restored ? The many arbitrarinesses of Gunkel's able essay would seem, to imply that it is not. Dr. Davidson says : " Even if it should be assumed that an alphabetical poem lurks under chap, i., the attempt to restore it, just as in Psalm x., can never be more than an academic exercise."

Little is to be learned from the language. Wellhausen, who makes no objection to the genuineness of the passage, thinks that about ver. 7 we begin to catch the familiar dialect of the Psalms. Gunkel finds a want of originality in the language, with many touches that betray connection not only with the Psalms but with late eschatological literature. But when we take one by one the clauses of chap, i., we discover very few parallels with the Psalms, which are not at the same time parallels with Jeremiah's or some earlier writings. That the prophecy is vague, and with much of the air of the later eschatology about it, is no reason for removing it from an age in which we have already seen prophecy beginning to show the same apocalyptic temper.[1] Gunkel denies any reference in ver. 9b to the approaching fall of Niniveh, although that is seen by Kuenen, Wellhausen, König and others, and he omits ver. na, in which most read an allusion to Sennacherib.

Therefore, while it is possible that a later poem has been prefixed to the genuine prophecies of Nahum, and the first chapter supplies many provocations to belief in such a theory, this has not been proved, and the able, essays of proof have much against them. The question is open.[1]

[1] **See above on Zephaniah, pp. 49 ff.**

*** Cornill, in the 2nd ed. of his *EinUitung,* has accepted Gunkel's and Bickell's main contentions.**

3. THE DATE OF CHAPS. II. AND III.

We turn now to the date of the Book apart from this prologue. It was written after a great overthrow of the Egyptian Thebes[1] and when the overthrow of Nineveh was imminent. Now Thebes had been devastated by Assurbanipal about 664 (we know of no later overthrow), and Niniveh fell finally about 607. Nahum flourished, then, somewhere between 664 and 607.[3] Some critics, feeling in his description of the fall of Thebes the force of a recent impression, have placed his prophesying immediately after that, or about 660.*[4] But this is too far away from the fall of Niniveh. In 660 the power of Assyria was unthreatened. Nor is 652, the year of the revolt of Babylon, Egypt and the princes of Palestine, a more likely date.[4] For although in that year Assyrian supremacy ebbed from Egypt never to return, Assurbanipal quickly reduced Elam, Babylon and all Syria. Nahum, on the other hand, represents the very centre of the empire as threatened. The land of Assyria is apparently already invaded (iii. 13, etc.). Niniveh, if not invested, must immediately be so, and that by forces too great for resistance. Her mixed populace already show signs of breaking up. Within, as without, her doom is sealed. All this implies not only the advance of an enormous force upon Niniveh, but the reduction of her people to the last stage of

[1] iii. 8-10.

[3] The description of the fall of No-Amon precludes the older view almost universally held before the discovery of Assurbanipal's destruction of Thebes, viz. that Nahum prophesied in the days of Hezekiah or in the earlier years of Manasseh (Lightfoot, Pusey, Ngelsbach, etc.).

* So Schrader, Volck in Herz. *Real. Ew.*, and others.

[4] It is favoured by Winckler, *A.T, Untirsuch.*, pp. 127 £

hopelessness. Now, as we have seen,[1] Assyria proper was thrice overrun. The Scythians poured across her about 626, but there is no proof that they threatened Niniveh.[1] A little after Assurbanipal's death in 625, the Medes under King Phraortes invaded Assyria, but Phraortes was slain and his son Kyaxares called away by an invasion of his own country. Herodotus says that this was after he had defeated the Assyrians in a battle and had begun the siege of Niniveh,' but before he had succeeded in reducing the city. After a time he subdued or assimilated the Scythians, and then investing Niniveh once more, about 607, in two years he took and destroyed her.

To which of these two sieges by Kyaxares are we to assign the Book of Nahum? Hitzig, Kuenen, Cornill and others incline to the first on the ground that Nahum speaks of the yoke of Assyria as still heavy on Judah, though about to be lifted. They argue that by 608, when King Josiah had already felt himself free enough to extend his reforms into Northern Israel, and dared to dispute Necho's passage across Esdraelon, the Jews must have been conscious that they had nothing more to fear from Assyria, and Nahum could hardly have written as he does in i. I3, *I will break his yoke from off thee and burst thy bonds in sunder.** But this is not conclusive,

[1] **Above, pp. 15 f.; 19, 22 ff.**

* **This in answer to Jeremias in Delitzsch's and Haupt's *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, III. 96.**

' **I. 103.**

[4] **Hitzig's other reason, that the besiegers of Niniveh are described by Nahum in ii. 3 ff. as single, which was true of the siege in 625 c., but not of that of 607-6, when the Chaldeans joined the Medes, is disposed of by the proof on p. 22 above, that even in 607-6 the Medes carried on the siege alone.**

for *first*, as we have seen, it is not certain that i. 13 is from Nahum himself, and *second*, if it be from himself, he might as well have written it about 608 as about 625, for he speaks not from the feelings of any single year, but with the impression upon him of the whole epoch of Assyrian servitude then drawing to a close. The eve of the later siege as a date for the book is, as Davidson remarks,[1] "well within the verge of possibility," and some critics prefer it because in their opinion Nahum's descriptions thereby acquire greater reality and naturalness. But this is not convincing, for if Kyaxares actually began the siege of Niniveh about 625, Nahum's sense of the imminence of her fall is perfectly natural. Wellhausen indeed denies that earlier siege. "Apart from Herodotus," he says, "it would never have occurred to anybody to doubt that Nahum's prophecy coincided with the fall of Niniveh."[1] This is true, for it is to Herodotus alone that we owe the tradition of the earlier siege. But what if we believe Herodotus ? In that case, it is impossible to come to a decision as between the two sieges. With our present scanty knowledge of both, the prophecy of Nahum suits either equally well.[8]

Fortunately it is not necessary to come to a decision.

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[1] **Page 17.**

*** In commenting on chap. i. 9; p. 156 of *Kleine Propheten,***

. * The phrase which is so often appealed to by both sides, i. 9, *Jehovah maketh a complete end, not twice shall trouble arise,* is really inconclusive. Hitzig maintains that if Nahum had written this after the first and before the second siege of Niniveh he would have had to say,[41] not thrice *shall trouble arise*" This is not conclusive : the prophet is looking only at the future and thinking of it—*not twice* again *shall trouble rise;* and if there were really two sieges of Niniveh, would the words *not twice* have been suffered to remain, if

Nahum, we cannot too often insist, expresses the feelings neither of this nor of that decade in the reign of Josiah, but the whole volume of hope, wrath and just passion of vengeance which had been gathering for more than a century and which at last broke into exultation when it became certain that Nineveh was falling. That suits the eve of either siege by Kyaxares. Till we learn a little more about the first siege and how far it proceeded towards a successful result, perhaps we ought to prefer the second. And of course those who feel that Nahum writes not in the future but the present tense of the details of Niniveh's overthrow, must prefer the second.

That the form as well as the spirit of the Book of Nahum is poetical is proved by the familiar marks of poetic measure—the unusual syntax, the frequent absence of the article and particles, the presence of elliptic forms and archaic and sonorous ones. In the two chapters on the siege of Niniveh the lines are short and quick, in harmony with the dashing action they echo.

As we have seen, the text of chap. i. is very uncertain. The subject of the other two chapters involves the use of a number of technical and some foreign terms, of the meaning of most of which we are

they had been a confident prediction *before* the first siege? Besides, the meaning of the phrase is not certain; it may be only a general statement corresponding to what seems a general statement in the first clause of the verse. Kuenen and others refer the *trouble* not to that which is about to afflict Assyria, but to the long slavery and slaughter which Judah has suffered at Assyria's hands. Davidson leaves it ambiguous.

ignorant.[1] There are apparently some glosses; here and there the text is obviously disordered. We get the usual help, and find the usual faults, in the Septuagint; they will be noticed in the course of the translation.

[1] **Technical military terms: ii. 2, mmm; 4, n2D();4, wn; 6, 5Dn; iii. 3, n2v(?). Probably foreign terms: ii. 8, an; Hi. 17, TD. Certainly foreign: iii 17, TDDD.**

CHAPTER VII

THE VENGEANCE OF THE LORD

NAHUM i

THE prophet Nahum, as we have seen,[1] arose probably in Judah, if not about the same time as Zephaniah and Jeremiah, then a few years later. Whether he prophesied before or after the great Reform of 621 we have no means of deciding. His book does not reflect the inner history, character or merits of his generation. His sole interest is the fate of Niniveh. Zephaniah had also doomed the Assyrian capital, yet he was much more concerned with Israel's unworthiness of the opportunity presented to them. The yoke of Asshur, he saw, was to be broken, but the same cloud which was bursting from the north upon Niniveh must overwhelm the incorrigible people of Jehovah. For this Nahum has no thought His heart, for all its bigness, holds room only for the bitter memories, the baffled hopes, the unappeased hatreds of a hundred years. And that is why we need not be anxious to fix his date upon one or other of the shifting phases of Israel's history during that last quarter of the seventh century. For he represents no single movement of his fickle people's progress, but

[1] Above, pp. 78 ff., 85 f.

the passion of the whole epoch then drawing to a close. Nahum's book is one great At Last!

And, therefore, while Nahum is a worse prophet than Zephaniah, with less conscience and less insight, he is a greater poet, pouring forth the exultation of a people long enslaved, who see their tyrant ready for destruction. His language is strong and brilliant; his rhythm rumbles and rolls, leaps and flashes, like the horsemen and chariots he describes. It is a great pity the text is so corrupt. If the original lay before us, and that full knowledge of the times which the excavation of ancient Assyria may still yield to us, we might judge Nahum to be an even greater poet than we do.

We have seen that there are some reasons for doubting whether he wrote the first chapter of the book,[1] but no one questions its fitness as an introduction to the exultation over Niniveh's fall in chapters ii. and iii. The chapter is theological, affirming those general principles of Divine Providence, by which the overthrow of the tyrant is certain and God's own people are assured of deliverance. Let us place ourselves among the people, who for so long a time had been thwarted, crushed and demoralised by the most brutal empire which was ever suffered to roll its force across the world, and we shall sympathise with the author, who for the moment will feel nothing about his God, save that He is a God of vengeance. Like the grief of a bereaved man, the vengeance of an enslaved people has hours sacred to itself. And this people had such a God ! Jehovah must punish the tyrant, else were He untrue. He had been patient, and patient, as a verse

[1] See above, pp. 81 ff.

seems to hint,[1] just because He was omnipotent, but in the end He must rise to judgment He was God of heaven and earth, and it is the old physical proofs of His power, so often appealed to by the peoples of the East, for they feel them as we cannot, which this hymn calls up as Jehovah sweeps to the overthrow of the oppressor. *Before such power of wrath who may stand ? What think ye of Jehovah ?* The God who works with such ruthless, absolute force in nature will not relax in the fate He is preparing for Niniveh. *He is one who maketh utter destruction,* not needing to raise up His forces a second time, and as stubble before fire so His foes go down before Him. No half-measures are His, Whose are the storm, the drought and the earthquake.

Such is the sheer religion of the Proem to the Book of Nahum—thoroughly Oriental in its sense of God's method and resources of destruction; very Jewish, and very natural to that age of Jewish history, in the bursting of its long pent hopes of revenge. We of the West might express these hopes differently. We should not attribute so much personal passion to the Avenger. With our keener sense of law, we should emphasise the slowness of the process, and select for its illustration the forces of decay rather than those of sudden ruin. But we must remember the crashing times in which the Jews lived. The world was breaking up. The elements were loose, and all that God's own people could hope for was the bursting of their yoke, with a little shelter in the day of trouble. The elements were loose, but amidst the blind crash the little people knew that Jehovah knew them.

[1] Ver. 3, if the reading be correct.

A God jealous and avenging is Jehovah;
Jehovah is avenger and lord of wrath;
Vengeful is Jehovah towards His enemies,
And implacable He to His foes.

Jehovah is long-suffering and great in might,[1]
Yet He will not absolve.
Jehovah 1 His way is in storm and in hurricane,
And clouds are the dust of His feet?
He curbeth the sea, and drieth it up;
All the streams hath He parched.
Withered[1] *be Bashan and Carmel;*
The bloom of Lebānon is withered.
Mountains have quaked before Him,
And the hills have rolled down.
Earth heaved at His presence,
The world and all its inhabitants.
Before His rage who may stand,
Or who abide in the glow of His anger?
His wrath pours forth like fire,
And rocks are rent before Him.

Good is Jehovah to them that wait upon Him in the day of trouble/
And He knoweth them that trust Him.
With an overwhelming flood He makes an end of His rebels,
And His foes He comes down on[6] *with darkness.*

[1] **Gunkel amends to *in mercy* to make the parallel exact But see above, p. 82.**

[2] **Gunkel's emendation is quite unnecessary here.**

[*] **See above, p. 83.**

[*] **So LXX, Heb. = *for a stronghold in the day of trouble.***

[*] ***Thrusts into,* Wellhausen, reading 7 or 7 for T. LXX *darkness shall pursue.***

What think ye of Jehovah ?
He is one that makes utter destruction;
Not twice need trouble arise.
For though they be like plaited thorns,
And sodden as ... ^
They shall be consumed like dry stubble.

Came there not '3 *out of thee one to plan evil against Jehovah,*
A counsellor of mischief?[8]

Thus saith Jehovah, . . . many waters, yet shall they be cut off and pass away, and I will so humble thee that I need humble thee*[6] *no more;* and Jehovah hath ordered concerning thee, that no more of thy seed be sown: from the house of thy God, I will cut off graven and molten image. I will make thy sepulchre . . J*

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[1] **Heb. and R.V.** ***drenched as with theit drink.*** **LXX.** ***like a tangled yew.*** **The text is corrupt**

[1] **The superfluous word 187D at the end of ver. 10 Wellhausen reads as won at the beginning of ver. n.**

• **Usually taken as Sennacherib.**

[4] **The Hebrew is given by the R.V.** ***though they be in full strength and likewise many.*** **LXX.** ***Thus saith Jehovah ruling over many waters,*** **reading 0'31 D'D 2D' and omitting the first pl. Similarly Syr.** ***Thus saith Jehovah of the heads of many waters,*** **D'2l D'D w0 7V. Wellhausen, substituting D'D for the first pl, translates,** ***Let the great waters be ever so full, they will yet all. .. ?*** **(misprint here)** ***and vanish*** **For "13V read nap with LXX., borrowing 1 from next word.**

• **Lit** ***and I will afflict thee, I will not afflict thee again.*** **This rendering implies that Niniveh is the object. The A.V.,** ***though I have afflicted thee I will afflict thee no more,*** **refers to Israel.**

• **Omit ver. 13 and run 14 on to 12. For the curious alternation now occurs: Assyria in one verse, Judah in the other. Assyria: i, 12, 14, it 2 (Heb.; Eng. ii. 1), 4f Judah: i 13, it 1 (Heb.; Eng. i 15), 3 (Heb.; Eng. 2). Remove these latter, as Wellhausen does, and the verses on Assyria remain a connected and orderly whole. So in the text above.**

*** Syr.** ***make it thy sepulchre.*** **The Hebrew left untranslated above**

Disentangled from the above verses are three which plainly refer not to Assyria but to Judah. How they came to be woven among the others we cannot tell. Some of them appear applicable to the days of Josiah after the great Reform.

And now will I break his yoke from upon thee,
And burst thy bonds asunder.
Lo, upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth
good tidings,
That publisheth peace I
Keep thy feasts, 0 Judah,
Fulfil thy vows:
For no more shall the wicked attempt to pass through
thee;
Cut off is the whole of him.[1]
For Jehovah hath turned the pride of Jacob,
*Like to the pride of Israēl: **
For the plunderers plundered them,
And destroyed their vinebranches.

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might be rendered *for thou art vile.* Bickell amends into *dunghills.* Lightfoot, *Chron. Temp. et Ord. Tsxt K.T.* in Collected Works, 1. 109, takes this as a prediction of Sennacherib's murder in the temple, an interpretation which demands a date for Nahum under either Hezekiah or Manasseh. So Pusey also, p. 357.

[1] LXX. *destruction,* n29 for n22.

2 Davidson: *restoreth ths excellency of Jacoby as the excellency of Israel,* but when was the latter restored ?

CHAPTER VIII

THE SIEGE AND FALL OF NINIVEH

NAHUM ii.,„iii

THE scene now changes from the presence and awful arsenal of the Almighty to the historical consummation of His vengeance. Nahum foresees the siege of Niniveh. Probably the Medes have already overrun Assyria.[1] The *Old Lion* has withdrawn to his inner den, and is making his last stand. The suburbs are full of the enemy, and the great walls which made the inner city one vast fortress are invested. Nahum describes the details of the assault. Let us try, before we follow him through them, to form some picture of Assyria and her capital at this time?

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[1] **See above, pp. 22 ff.**

2 **The authorities are very full. First there is M. Botta's huge work *Monument de Ninive,* Paris, 5 vols., 1845. Then must be mentioned the work of which we availed ourselves in describing Babylon in *Isaiah xl.—txvi.,* Expositor's Bible, pp. 52 ff.: "Memoirs by Commander James Felix Jones, I.N.," in *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government,* No. XLIII., New Series, 1857. It is good to find that the careful and able observations of Commander Jones, too much neglected in his own country, have had justice done them by the German Colonel Billerbeck in the work about to be cited. Then there is the invaluable *Niniveh and its Remains,* by Layard. There are also the works of Rawlinson and George Smith. And recently Colonel Billerbeck, founding on these and other works, has published an admirable monograph (lavishly illustrated by maps and pictures),**

As we have seen,[1] the Assyrian Empire began about 625 to shrink to the limits of Assyria proper, or Upper Mesopotamia, within the Euphrates on the south-west, the mountain-range of Kurdistan on the north-east, the river Chabor on the north-west and the Lesser Zab on the south-east? This is a territory of nearly a hundred and fifty miles from north to south, and rather more than two hundred and fifty from east to west To the south of it the Viceroy of Babylon, Nabopolassar, held practically independent sway over Lower Mesopotamia, if he did not command as well a large part of the Upper Euphrates Valley. On the north the Medes were urgent, holding at least the farther, ends of the passes through the Kurdish mountains, if they had not already penetrated these to their southern issues.

The kernel of the Assyrian territory was the triangle, two of whose sides are represented by the Tigris and the Greater Zab, the third by the foot of the Kurdistan mountains. It is a fertile plain, with some low hills. To-day the level parts of it are covered by a large number of villages and well-cultivated fields. The more frequent mounds of ruin attest in ancient

not only upon the military state of Assyria proper and of Nineveh at this period, but upon the whole subject of Assyrian fortification and art of besieging, as well as upon the course of the Median invasions. It forms the larger part of an article to which Dr. Alfred Jeremias contributes an introduction, and reconstruction with notes of chaps, ii. and iii. of the Book of Nahum : " Der Untergang Niniveh's und die Weissagungschrift des Nahum von Elkosh," in Vol. III of *Btitr&gt mr Assyriologw und Stmitischcn Sprachwissenschaft,* edited by Friedrich Delitzsch and Paul Haupt, with the support of Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore, U.S.A. : Leipzig, 1895.

[1] Pages 20 £

*** Colonel Billerbeck (p. 115) thinks that the south-east frontier at this time lay more to the north, near the Greater Zab.**

times a still greater population. At the period of which we are treating, the plains must have been covered by an almost continuous series of towns. At either end lay a group of fortresses. The southern was the ancient capital of Assyria, Kalchu,, now Nimrud, about six miles to the north of the confluence of the Greater Zab and the Tigris. The northern, close by the present town of Khorsabad, was the great fortress and palace of Sargon, Dur-Sargina:[1] it covered the roads upon Niniveh from the north, and standing upon the upper reaches of the Choser protected Niniveh's water supply. But besides these there were scattered upon all the main roads and round the frontiers of the territory a number of other forts, towers and posts, the ruins of many of which are still considerable, but others have perished without leaving any visible traces. The roads thus protected drew in upon Niniveh from all directions. The chief of those, along which the Medes and their allies would advance from the east and north, crossed the Greater Zab, or came down through the Kurdistan mountains upon the citadel of Sargon. Two of them were distant enough from the latter to relieve the invaders from the necessity of taking it, and Kalchu lay far to the south of all of them. The brunt of the first defence of the land would therefore fall upon the smaller fortresses.

Niniveh itself lay upon the Tigris between Kalchu and Sargon's city, just where the Tigris is met by the Choser. Low hills descend from the north upon the very site of the fortress, and then curve east and south, bow-shaped, to draw west again upon the Tigris at

[1] **First excavated by M. Botta, 1842—1845. See also George Smith, *Assyr. Disc.*, pp. 98 f.**

the south end of the city. To the east of the latter they leave a level plain, some two and a half miles by one and a half. These hills appear to have been covered by several forts. The city itself was four-sided, lying lengthwise to the Tigris and cut across its breadth by the Choser. The circumference was about seven and a half miles, enclosing the largest fortified space in Western Asia, and capable of holding a population of three hundred thousand. The western wall, rather over two and a half miles long, touched the Tigris at either end, but between there lay a broad, bow-shaped stretch of land, probably in ancient times, as now, free of buildings. The north-western wall ran up from the Tigris for a mile and a quarter to the low ridge which entered the city at its northern corner. From this the eastern wall, with a curve upon it, ran down in face of the eastern plain for a little more than three miles, and was joined to the western by the short southern wall of not quite half a mile. The ruins of the western wall stand from ten to twenty, those of the others from twenty-five to sixty, feet above the natural surface, with here and there the still higher remains of towers. There were several gates, of which the chief were one in the northern and two in the eastern wall. Round all the walls except the western ran moats about a hundred and fifty feet broad—not close up to the foot of the walls, but at a distance of some sixty feet. Water was supplied by the Choser to all the moats south of it; those to the north were fed from a canal which entered the city near its northern corner. At these and other points one can still trace the remains of huge dams, batardeaux and sluices; and the moats might be emptied by opening at either end of the western wall other dams, which kept back the waters

from the bed of the Tigris. Beyond its moat, the eastern wall was protected north of the Choser by a large outwork covering its gate, and south of the Choser by another outwork, in shape the segment of a circle, and consisting of a double line of fortification more than five hundred yards long, of which the inner wall was almost as high as the great wall itself, but the outer considerably lower. Again, in front of this and in face of the eastern plain was a third line of fortification, consisting of a low inner wall and a colossal outer wall still rising to a height of fifty feet, with a moat one hundred and fifty feet broad between them. On the south this third line was closed by a large fortress.

Upon the trebly fortified city the Medes drew in from east and north, far away from Kalchu and able to avoid even Dur-Sargina. The other fortresses on the frontier and the approaches fell into their hands, says Nahum, like *ripe fruit}* He cries to Niniveh to prepare for the siege.[2] Military authorities[8] suppose that the Medes directed their main attack upon the northern corner of the city. Here they would be upon a level with its highest point, and would command the water-works by which most of the moats were fed. Their flank, too, would be protected by the ravines of the Choser. Nahum describes fighting in the suburbs before the assault of the walls, and it was just here, according to some authorities,[4] that the famous suburbs of Niniveh lay, out upon the canal and the road to Khorsabad. All the open fighting which Nahum

[1] iii. 12.

[3] iii. 14.

[3] See Jones and Billerbeck.

[4] Delitzsch places the mam V of Gen. x. 11, the " ribit Nina " of the inscriptions, on the north-east of Niniveh.

foresees would take place in these *outplaces* and *broad streets*[1]—the mustering of the *red* ranks/ the *prancing horses*[8] and *rattling chariots*[4] and *cavalry at the charge)* Beaten there the Assyrians would retire to the great walls, and the waterworks would fall into the hands of the besiegers. They would not immediately destroy these, but in order to bring their engines and battering-rams against the walls they would have to lay strong dams across the moats;; the eastern moat has actually been found filled with rubbish in face of a great breach at the north end of its wall. This breach may have been effected not only by the rams but by directing upon the wall the waters of the canal; or farther south the Choser itself, in its spring floods, may have been confined by the besiegers and swept in upon the sluices which regulate its passage through the eastern wall into the city. To this means tradition has assigned the capture of Niniveh,® and Nahum perhaps foresees the possibility of it: *the gates of the rivers are opened^ the palace is dissolved)*

Now of all this probable progress of the siege Nahum, of course, does not give us a narrative, for he is writing upon the eve of it, and probably, as we have seen, in Judah, with only such knowledge of the position and strength of Niniveh as her fame had scattered across the world. The military details, the muster, the fighting in the open, the investment, the assault, he did not need to go to Assyria or to wait for the fall of Niniveh

[1] ii. 4 Eng., 5 Heb.
[9] ii. 3 Eng., 4 Heb.
[*] iii. 3.
[•] *Ibid,* LXX.
[4] iii. 2.
[•] It is the waters of the Tigris that the tradition avers to have broken the wall; but the Tigris itself runs in a bed too low for this : it can only have been the Choser. See both Jones and Billerbeck.
[t] u.&

to describe as he has done. Assyria herself (and herein lies much of the pathos of the poem) had made all Western Asia familiar with their horrors for the last two centuries. As we learn from the prophets and now still more from herself, Assyria was the great Besieger of Men. It is siege, siege, siege, which Amos, Hosea and Isaiah tell their people they shall feel: *siege and blockade, and that right round the land !* It is siege, irresistible and full of cruelty, which Assyria records as her own glory. Miles of sculpture are covered with masses of troops marching upon some Syrian or Median fortress. Scaling ladders and enormous engines are pushed forward to the walls under cover of a shower of arrows. There are assaults and breaches, panic-stricken and suppliant defenders. Streets and places are strewn with corpses, men are impaled, women led away weeping, children dashed against the stones. The Jews had seen, had felt these horrors for a hundred years, and it is out of their experience of them that Nahum weaves his exultant predictions. The Besieger of the world is at last besieged; every cruelty he has inflicted upon men is now to be turned upon himself. Again and again does Nahum return to the vivid details, —he hears the very whips crack beneath the walls, and the rattle of the leaping chariots; the end is slaughter, dispersion and a dead waste.[1]

[1] **If the above conception of chaps, ii. and iii. be correct, then there is no need for such a re-arrangement of these verses as has been proposed by Jeremias and Billerbeck. In order to produce a continuous narrative of the progress of the siege, they bring forward iii. 12-15 (describing the fall of the fortresses and gates of the land and the call to the defence of the city), and place it immediately after ii. 2, 4 (the description of the invader) and ii. 5-I1 (the appearance of chariots in the suburbs of the city, the opening of the floodgates, the flight and the spoiling of the city). But if they believe that the**

Two other points remain to be emphasised.

There is a striking absence from both chapters of any reference to Israel.[1] Jehovah of Hosts is mentioned twice in the same formula,[8] but otherwise the author does not obtrude his nationality. It is not in Judah's name he exults, but in that of all the peoples of Western Asia. Niniveh has sold *peoples* by her harlotries and *races* by her witchcraft; it is *peoples* that shall gaze upon her nakedness and *kingdoms* upon her shame. Nahum gives voice to no national passions, but to the outraged conscience of mankind. We see here another proof, not only of the large, human heart of prophecy, but of that which in the introduction to these Twelve Prophets we ventured to assign as one of its causes. By crushing all peoples to a common level of despair, by the universal pity which her cruelties excited, Assyria contributed to the development in Israel of the idea of a common humanity.[8]

The other thing to be noticed is Nahum's feeling of the incoherence and mercenariness of the vast population of Niniveh. Niniveh's command of the world had turned her into a great trading power. Under Assur-banipal the lines of ancient commerce had been diverted so as to pass through her. The immediate result was

original gave an orderly account of the progress of the siege, why do they not bring forward also iii. 2 f., which describe the arrival of the foe under the city walls ? The truth appears to be as stated above. We have really two poems against Niniveh, chap. ii. and chap. iii. They do not give an orderly description of the siege, but exult over Niniveh's imminent downfall, with gleams scattered here and there of how this is to happen. Of these "impressions" of the coming siege there are three, and in the order in which we now have them they occur very naturally: ii. 5 ff., iii. 2 f., and iii. 12 ff.

[1] ii. 2 goes with the previous chapter. See above, pp. 94 £

2 ii. 13, iii. 5.

*** See above, Vol. I., Chap. IV., especially pp. 54 ff.**

an enormous increase of population, such as the world had never before seen within the limits of one city. But this had come out of all races and was held together only by the greed of gain. What had once been a firm and vigorous nation of warriors, irresistible in their united impact upon the world, was now a loose aggregate of many peoples, without patriotism, discipline or sense of honour. Nahum likens it to a reservoir of waters,[1] which as soon as it is breached must scatter, and leave the city bare. The Second Isaiah said the same of Babylon, to which the bulk of Niniveh's mercenary populace must have fled:—

Thus are they grown to thee, they who did weary thee,
Traders of thine from thy youth up;
Each as he could escape have they fled;
None is thy helper? '

The prophets saw the truth about both cities. Their vastness and their splendour were artificial. Neither of them, and Niniveh still less than Babylon, was a natural centre for the world's commerce. When their political power fell, the great lines of trade, which had been twisted to their feet, drew back to more natural courses, and Niniveh in especial became deserted. This is the explanation of the absolute collapse of that mighty city. Nahum's foresight, and the very metaphor in which he expressed it, were thoroughly sound. The population vanished like water. The site bears little trace of any disturbance since the ruin by the Medes, except such as has been inflicted by the weather and the wandering tribes around. Mosul, Niniveh's

[1] **ii. 8.**

* ***Isaiah xl.—Levi.*** **(Expositor's Bible), pp. 197 ff.**

representative to-day, is not built upon it, and is but a provincial town. The district was never meant for anything else.

The swift decay of these ancient empires from the climax of their commercial glory is often employed as a warning to ourselves. But the parallel, as the previous paragraphs suggest, is very far from exact. If we can lay aside for the moment the greatest difference of all, in religion and morals, there remain others almost of cardinal importance. Assyria and Babylonia were not filled, like Great Britain, with reproductive races, able to colonise distant lands, and carry everywhere the spirit which had made them strong at home. Still more, they did not continue at home to be homogeneous. Their native forces were exhausted by long and unceasing wars. Their populations, especially in their capitals, were very largely alien and distraught, with nothing to hold them together save their commercial interests. They were bound to break up at the first disaster. It is true that we are not without some risks of their peril. No patriot among us can observe without misgiving the large and growing proportion of foreigners in that department of our life from which the strength of our defence is largely drawn—our merchant navy. But such a fact is very far from bringing our empire and its chief cities into the fatal condition of Niniveh and Babylon. Our capitals, our commerce, our life as a whole are still British to the core. If we only be true to our ideals of righteousness and religion, if our patriotism continue moral and sincere, we shall have the power to absorb the foreign elements that throng to us in commerce, and stamp them with our own spirit.

We are now ready to follow Nahum's two great

poems delivered on the eve of the Fall of Niniveh. Probably, as we have said, the first of them has lost its original opening. It wants some notice at the outset of the object to which it is addressed: this is indicated only by the second personal pronoun. Other needful comments will be given in footnotes.

1.

The Hammer[1] is come up to thy face !
Hold the rampart! [2] Keep watch on the way !
*Brace the loins![9] Pull thyself firmly together !**
The shields[9] of his heroes are red,
The warriors are in scarlet; [6]
Like[7] fire are the ... [9] of the chariots in the day of his muster,
And the horsemen[9] are prancing.

[1] Read rep with Wellhausen (cf. Siegfried-Stade's *WorUrbuch,* sub PB) for PPP, *Breaker in pieces.* In Jer. li. 20 Babylon is also called by Jehovah His YAP, *Hammer* or *Maul.*

[9] *Keep watch,* Wellhausen.

[9] This may be a military call to attention, the converse of "Stand at ease) "

[4] Heb. literally: *brace up thy power exceedingly.*

[9] Heb. singular.

• Rev. ix. 17. Purple or red was the favourite colour of the Medes. The Assyrians also loved red. 7 Read PD for "82.

• m12p, the word omitted, is doubtful; it does not occur elsewhere. LXX. *hrlau*; Vulg. *habenoe.* Some have thought that it means *scythes*—cf. the Arabic *falad,* "to cut"—but the earliest notice of chariots armed with scythes is at the battle of Cunaxa, and in Jewish literature they do not appear before 2 Macc. xiii. 2. Cf. Jeremias, *op. eit.,* p. 97, where Billerbeck suggests that the words of Nahum are applicable to the covered siege-engines, pictured on the Assyrian monuments, from which the besiegers flung torches on the walls: cf. *ibid.,* p. 167, n. ***. But from the parallelism of the verse it is more probable that ordinary chariots are meant. The leading chariots were covered with plates of metal (Billerbeck, p. 167).

[9] So LXX, reading bwD for ow2 of Heb. text, that means

Through the markets rage chariots,
They tear across the squares;[1]
The look of them is like torches,
Like lightnings they dart to and fro?
He musters his nobles. . . ?
*They rush to the wall and the mantlet * is fixed /*
The river-gates[6] *burst open, the palace dissolves?*
And Hu^ab[7] *is stripped, is brought forth,*
With her maids sobbing like doves,
Beating their breasts.

fir-trees, if the latter be correct, then we should need to suppose with Billerbeck that either the long lances of the Aryan Medes were meant, or the great, heavy spears which were thrust against the walls by engines. We are not, however, among these yet; it appears to be the cavalry and chariots in the open that are here described.

[1] Or *broad places or suburbs.* See above, pp. 100 f.

* See above, p. 106, end of n. 8.

[2] Heb. *They stumble in their goings.* Davidson holds this is more probably of the defenders. Wellhausen takes the verse as of the besiegers. See next note.

[4] T7D0.. Partic. of the verb *to cover,* hence covering thing: whether *mantlet* (on the side of the besiegers) or *bulwark* (on the side of the besieged: cf. TPP, Isa. xxii. 8) is uncertain. Billerbeck says, if it be an article of defence, we can read ver. 5 as illustrating the vanity or the hurried defence, when the elements themselves break in w. 6 and 7 (p. 101 : cf. p. 176, n. ♦).

• *Sluices* (Jeremias) or *bridge-gates* (Wellhausen) ?

• Or *breaks into motion,* i.e. *flight.*

[1] 287, if a Hebrew word, might be Hophal of 223 and has been taken to mean *it is determined, she* (Niniveh) *is taken captive.* Volck (in Herzog), Kleinert, Orelli: *it is settled.* LXX. *birbaraau* = 23. Vulg. *miles* (as if some form of &%?). Hitzig points it 380, *the Heard,* Wellhausen *the toad.* But this noun is masculine (Lev. xi. 29) and the verbs feminine. Davidson suggests the other 250, fem., the *litter* or *palanquin* (Isa. Ixvi. 20): [41] in lieu of anything better one might be tempted to think that the litter might mean the woman or lady, just as in Arab, dhainah means a woman's litter and then a woman." One is also tempted to think of '270, *the beauty.* The Targ. has «n32b, *the queen.* From as early as

And Niniveh! she was like a reservoir of waters,
Her waters . . .[1]
And now they flee. " Stand, stand / " but there is
none to rally.
Plunder silver, plunder gold I
Infinite treasures, mass of all precious things!
Void and devoid and desolate 3 *is she.*
Melting hearts and shaking knees,
And anguish in all loins,
And nothing but faces full of black fear?

Where is the Lion's den,
And the young lions' feeding ground ?*
Whither the Lion retreated[^]
The whelps of the Lion, with none to affray:
The Lion, who tore enough for his whelps,
And strangled for his lionesses.

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at least 1527 *(Latina Interpretatio* Xantis Pagnini Lucensis revised and edited for the Plantin Bible, 1615) the word has been taken by a series of scholars as a proper name, Hussab. So Ewald and others. It may be an Assyrian word, like some others in Nahum, Perhaps, again, the text is corrupt.

Mr. Paul Ruben *(Academy,* March 7th, 1896) has proposed instead of nnon, *is brought forth,* to read nnvn, and to translate it by analogy of the Assyrian "etellu," fem. "etellitu" = great or exalted, *The Lady.* The line would then run *Hussab, the lady, is stripped.* (With nonmn Cheyne, *Academy,* June 21st, 1896, compares monv, which, he suggests, is "Yahwe is great" or "is lord.")

[1] Heb. t'n 'P' for on We 'D', *from days she was.* A.V. *is of old.* R. V. *hath been of old,* and Marg, *from the days that she hath been.* LXX., *her waters,* J'P'. On waters fleeing, cf Ps. civ. 7.

[8] Bukah, umebukah, umēbullakah. Ewald: *desert and desolation and devastation.* The adj. are feminine.

[1] Literally: *and the faces of all them gather lividness.*

* For no Wellhausen reads nup, *cave* or *hold.*

' LXX. reading in22 for M32

And he filled his pits with prey$_9$
And his dens with rapine.

Lo$_f$ *I am at thee [oracle of Jehovah of Hosts):*
I will put up thy . . .[1] *in flames.*
The sword shall devour thy young lions;
I will cut offfrom the earth thy rapine,
And the noise of thine envoys shall no more be heard.

2.

Woe to the City of Bloody
All of her guile$_9$ *robbery^full*$_9$ *ceaseless rapine l*

Hark the whip,
And the rumbling of the wheel,
And horses galloping,
And the rattling dance of the chariot !3
Cavalry at the charge? and flash of sabres$_9$
And lightning of lances,
Mass oj slain and weight of corpses,
Endless dead bodies—
They stumble on their dead !
—For the manifold harlotries of the Harlot,
The well-favoured, mistress of charms$_9$
She who sold nations with her harlotries
And races by her witchcrafts I

Lo$_f$ *I am at thee [oracle of Jehovah of Hosts):*
I will uncover thy skirts to thy face ;[4]

[1] **Heb. *her chariots.* LXX. and Syr. suggest *thy mass* or *muliitude*$_t$ HD 31 Davidson suggests *thy lair*$_t$ n3s3n.**

[2] **Literally *and the chariot dancings* but the word, merakedah, has a rattle in it.**

*** Doubtful, n21p. LXX. dvaalvovros.**

[4] **Jeremias (104) shows how the Assyrians did this to female captives.**

*Give nations to look on thy nakedness^*
And kingdoms upon thy shame;
Will have thee pelted with filth, and disgrace thee,
And set thee for a gazingstock ;
So that every one seeing thee shall shrink from thee and say,
" Shattered is Niniveh—who will pity her?
Whence shall I seek for comforters to thee ? "

Shalt thou be better than No-Amon}
Which sat upon the Nile streams 3—waters were round her—
*Whose rampart was the sea} and waters her wall ? **
Kush was her strength and Misraim without end;
Phut and the Lybians were there to assist her.*
Even she was for exile, she went to captivity:
Even her children were dashed on every street corner;
For her nobles they cast lots,
And all her great men were fastened with fetters.

Thou too shalt stagger} shalt grow faint;
Thou too shalt seek help from[7] the foe !

[1] **Jer. xlvi. 25: *I will punish Amon at No.* Ezek. xxx. 14-16: . . .*judgments in No. . . . I will cut off No-Amon* (Heb. and A.V. *multitude of No*, reading non ; so also LXX. rd mAfeos for nos) . . . *and No shall be broken up.* It is Thebes, the Egyptian name of which was Nu-Amen. The god Amen had his temple there : Herod. 1. 182, II. 42. Nahum refers to Assurbanipal's account of the fall of Thebes. See above, p. 11.**

[3] **omn. PL of the word for Nile.**

[*] **Arabs still call the Nile the sea.**

[4] **So LXX, reading D' for Heb. D'.**

[4] **So LXX.; Heb. *thee.***

[4] **Heb. *be drunken.***

[7] **I.e. *against, because of.***

All thy fortresses are fig-trees with figs early-ripe:
Be they shaken they fall on the mouth of the eater.
Lo, thy folk are but women in thy midst:[1]
To thy foes the gates of thy land fly open;
Fire has devoured thy bars.

Draw thee water for siege, strengthen thy forts 1
Get thee down to the mud, and tramp in the clay !
Grip fast the brick-mould !
There fire consumes thee, the sword cuts thee off.[1]
Make thyself many as a locust swarm,
Many as grasshoppers,
Multiply thy traders more than heaven's stars,
—The locusts break off[3] *and fly away.*
Thy ... are as locusts and thy ... as grass-
hoppers,
That hive in the hedges in the cold of the day:[5]
The sun is risen, they are fled,
And one knows not the place where they be.

[1] Jer. 1. 37, H. 30.

[1] Heb. and LXX. add *devour thee like the locust,* probably a gloss.

[3] Cf Jer. ix. 33. Some take it of the locusts stripping the skin which confines their wings : Davidson.

[4] TD. A.V. *thy crowned ones;* but perhaps like its neighbour an Assyrian word, meaning we know not what. Wellhausen reads TIDD, LXX. d *OV/JL(UKT6S ffoO* (applied in Deut. xxiii. 3 and Zech. ix. 6 to the offspring of a mixed marriage between an Israelite and a Gentile), deine Mischlinge : a term of contempt for the floating foreign or semi-foreign population which filled Niniveh and was ready to fly at sight of danger. Similarly Wellhausen takes the second term, DDD. This, which occurs also in Jer. li. 27, appears to be some kind of official. In Assyrian *dupsar* is scribe, which may, like Heb. 'DO, have been applied to any high official. See Schrader, *K.A.T.*, Eng. Tr., I. 141, II. 118. See also Fried. Delitzsch, *Wo lag Farad.*, p. 142. The name and office were ancient. Such Babylonian officials are mentioned in the Tell el Amarna letters as present at the Egyptian court

[5] Heb. *day of cold.*

Asleep are thy shepherds, 0 king of Assyria,
Tty nobles do slumber;[1]
Thy people are strewn on the mountains,
Without any to gather.
There is no healing of thy wreck,
Fatal thy wound !
All who hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hand at thee,
For upon whom hath not thy cruelty passed without ceasing ?

[1] **1207, *dwell,* is the Heb. reading. But LXX 1307, *exoljucer.* Sleep must be taken in the sense of death: cf jer. li. 39, 57; Isa. xiv. 18.**

HABAKKUK

Upon my watch-tower will I stand,
And take up my post on the rampart,
I will watch to see what He will say to me,
And what answer I get back to my plea,

• • • • •

The righteous shall live by his faithfulness.

" The beginning of speculation in Israel."

CHAPTER IX

THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

AS it has reached us, the Book of Habakkuk, under the title *The Oracle which Habakkuk the prophet received by vision,* consists of three chapters, which fall into three sections. *First:* chap. i. 2—ii. 4 (or 8), a piece in dramatic form; the prophet lifts his voice to God against the wrong and violence of which his whole horizon is full, and God sends him answer. *Second:* chap. ii. 5 (or 9)—20, a taunt-song in a series of Woes upon the wrong-doer. *Third*: ''chap. iii., part psalm, part prayer, descriptive of a Theophany and expressive of Israel's faith in their God. Of these three sections no one doubts the authenticity of the *first}* opinion is divided about the *second}* about the *third* there is a growing agreement that it is not a genuine work of Habakkuk, but a poem from a period after the Exile.

1. CHAP. I. 2—II. 4 (OR 8).

Yet it is the first piece which raises the most difficult questions. All[1] admit that it is to be dated somewhere along the line of Jeremiah's long career, *c. 627*—586. There is no doubt about the general trend of the argument: it is a plaint to God on the sufferings of

[1] **Except one or two critics who place it in Manasseh's reign. See below.**

the righteous under tyranny, with God's answer. But the order and connection of the paragraphs of the argument are not clear. There is also difference of opinion as to who the tyrant is—native, Assyrian or Chaldee; and this leads to a difference, of course, about the date, which ranges from the early years of Josiah to the end of Jehoiakim's reign, or from about 630 to 597.

As the verses lie, their argument is this. In chap. i. 2-4 Habakkuk asks the Lord how long the wicked are to oppress the righteous, to the paralysing of the Torah, or Revelation of His Law, and the making futile of judgment. For answer the Lord tells him, w. 5-11, to look round among the heathen: He is about to raise up the Chaldees to do His work, a people swift, self-reliant, irresistible. Upon which Habakkuk resumes his question, vv. 12-17,, how long will God suffer a tyrant who sweeps up the peoples into his net like fish'? Is he to go on with this for ever? In ii. I Habakkuk prepares for an answer, which comes in ii. 2, 3, 4: let the prophet wait for the vision though it tarries; the proud oppressor cannot last, but the righteous shall live by his constancy, or faithfulness.

The difficulties are these. Who are the wicked oppressors in chap. i. 2-4 ? Are they Jews, or some heathen nation ? And what is the connection between w. 1-4 and w. 5-11? Are the Chaldees, who are described in the latter, raised up to punish the tyrant complained against in the former ? To these questions three different sets of answers have been given.

First: the great majority of critics take the wrong complained of in w. 2-4 to be wrong done by unjust and cruel Jews to their countrymen, that is, civic disorder and violence, and believe that in w. 5-11

Jehovah is represented as raising up the Chaldees to punish the sin of Judah—a message which is pretty much the same as Jeremiah's. But Habakkuk goes further: the Chaldees themselves with their cruelties aggravate his problem, how God can suffer wrong, and he appeals again to God, w. 12-17. Are the Chaldees to be allowed to devastate for ever ? The answer is given, as above, in chap. ii. 1-4. Such is practically the view of Pusey, Delitzsch, Kleinert, Kuenen, Sinker,[1] Driver, Orelli, Kirkpatrick, Wildeboer and Davidson, a formidable league, and Davidson says "this is the most natural sense of the verses and of the words used in them." But these scholars differ as to the date. Pusey, Delitzsch and Volck take the whole passage from i. 5 as prediction, and date it from before the rise of the Chaldee power in 625, attributing the internal wrongs of Judah described in vv. 2-4 to Manasseh's reign or the early years of Josiah.[1] But the rest, on the grounds that the prophet shows some experience of the Chaldean methods of warfare, and that the account of the internal disorder in Judah does not suit Josiah's reign, bring the passage down to the reign of Jehoiakim, 608—598, or of Jehoiachin, 597. Kleinert and Von

[1] **See next note.**

[3] So Pusey. Delitzsch in his commentary on Habakkuk, 1843, preferred Josiah's reign, but in his O. T. *Hist of Redemption* 1881, p. 226, Manasseh's. Volck (in Herzog, *Real Encyc.* art. "Habakkuk," 1879), assuming that Habakkuk is quoted both by Zephaniah (see above, p. 39, n.) and Jeremiah, places him before these. Sinker *{The Psalm of Habakkuk:* see below, p. 127, n. 2) deems "the prophecy, taken as a whole," to bring "before us the threat of the Chaldean invasion, the horrors that follow in its train," etc., with a vision of the day "when the Chaldean host itself, its work done, falls beneath a mightier foe." He fixes the date either in the concluding years of Manasseh's reign, or the opening years of that of Josiah (Preface, 1-4).

Orelli date it before the battle of Carchemish,„ 605, in which the Chaldean Nebuchadrezzar wrested from Egypt the Empire of the Western Asia, on the ground that after that Habakkuk could not have called a Chaldean invasion of Judah incredible (i. 5). But Kuenen, Driver, Kirkpatrick, Wildeboer and Davidson date it after Carchemish. To Driver it must be immediately after, and before Judah became alarmed at the consequences to herself. To Davidson the description of the Chaldeans "is scarcely conceivable before the battle," "hardly one would think before the deportation of the people under Jehoiachin."[1] This also is Kuenen's view, who thinks that Judah must have suffered at least the first Chaldean raids, and he explains the use of an undoubted future in chap, i.5, *Lo, I am about to raise up the Chaldeans*^ as due to the prophet's predilection for a dramatic style. "'He sets himself in the past, and represents the already experienced chastisement [of Judah] as having been then announced by Jehovah. His eon temporaries could not have mistaken his meaning."

Second: others, however, deny that chap. i. 2-4 refers to the internal disorder of Judah, except as the effect of foreign tyranny. The *righteous* mentioned there are Israel as a whole, *the wicked* their heathen oppressors. So Hitzig, Ewald, KOnig and practically Smend. Ewald is so clear that Habakkuk ascribes no sin to Judah, that he says we might be led by this to assign the prophecy to the reign of the righteous Josiah; but he prefers, because of the vivid sense which the prophet betrays of actual experience of the Chaldees, to date the

[1] **Pages 53, 49. Kirkpatrick (Smith's *Diet, of the Bible?* art "Habakkuk," 1893) puts it not later than the sixth year of Jehoiakim.**

passage from the reign of Jehoiakim, and to explain Habakkuk's silence about his people's sinfulness as due to his overwhelming impression of Chaldean cruelty. KOnig[1] takes w. 2-4 as a general complaint of the violence that fills the prophet's day, and w. 5-11 as a detailed description of the Chaldeans, the instruments of this violence. Vv. 5-11, therefore, give not the judgment upon the wrongs described in w. 2-4, but the explanation of them. Lebanon is already wasted by the Chaldeans (ii. 17); therefore the whole prophecy must be assigned to the days of Jehoiakim. Giesebrecht[2] and Wellhausen adhere to the view that no sins of Judah are mentioned, but that the *righteous* and *wicked* of chap. i. 4 are the same as in ver. 13, viz. Israel and a heathen tyrant. But this leads them to dispute that the present order of the paragraphs of the prophecy is the right one. In chap. i. 5 the Chaldeans are represented as about to be raised up for the first time, although their violence has already been described in vv. 1-4, and in w. 12-17 these are already in full career. Moreover ver. 12 follows on naturally to ver. 4. Accordingly these critics would remove the section w. 5-11. Giesebrecht prefixes it to ver. 1, and dates the whole passage from the Exile. Wellhausen calls 5-11 an older passage than the rest of the prophecy, and removes it altogether as not Habakkuk's. To the latter he assigns what remains, i. 1-4, 12-17, ii. 1-5, and dates it from the reign of Jehoiakim.[8]

Third: from each of these groups of critics Budde of Strasburg borrows something, but so as to construct an

[1] *End. in das A. T. ' B^itrage" sur Jesaiakrilik,* 1890, pp. 197 f.

• See Further Note on p. 128.

arrangement of the verses, and to reach a date, for the whole, from which both differ.[1] With Hitzig, Ewald, Knig, Smend, Giesebrecht and Wellhausen he agrees that the violence complained of in i. 2-4 is that inflicted by a heathen oppressor, *the wicked* on the Jewish nation, the *righteous.* But with Kuenen and others he holds that the Chaldeans are raised up, according to i. 5-11, to punish the violence complained of in i. 2-4 and again in i. 12-17. In these verses it is the ravages of another heathen power than the Chaldeans which Budde descries. The Chaldeans are still to come, and cannot be the same as the devastator whose long continued tyranny is described in i. 12-17. They are rather the power which is to punish him. He can only be the Assyrian. But if that be so, the proper place for the passage, i. 5-11, which describes the rise of the Chaldeans must be after the description of the Assyrian ravages in i. 12-17, and in the body of God's answer to the prophet which we find in ii. 2 ff. Budde, therefore, places i. 5-11 after ii. 2-4. But if the Chaldeans are still to come, and Budde thinks that they are described vaguely and with a good deal of imagination, the prophecy thus arranged must fall somewhere between 625, when Nabopolassar the Chaldean made himself independent of Assyria and King of Babylon, and 607, when Assyria fell. That the prophet calls Judah *righteous* is proof that he wrote after the great Reform of 621; hence, too, his reference to Torah and Mishpat (i. 4), and his complaint of the obstacles which Assyrian supremacy presented to their free course. As the Assyrian yoke appears not to have been felt anywhere in Judah by 608, Budde would

[1] *Stouten u. Kritiken* for 1893.

fix the exact date of Habakkuk's prophecy about 615. To these conclusions of Budde Cornill,, who in 1891 had very confidently assigned the prophecy of Habakkuk to the reign of Jehoiakim, gave his adherence in 1896.[1]

Budde's very able and ingenious argument has been subjected to a searching criticism by Professor Davidson, who emphasises first the difficulty of accounting for the transposition of chap, i 5-11 from what Budde alleges to have been its original place after ii. 4 to its present position in chap, i.[3] He points out that if chap. i. 2-4 and 12-17 and ii. 5 ff. refer to the Assyrian, it is strange the latter is not once mentioned. Again, by 615 we may infer (though we know little of Assyrian history at this time) that the Assyrian's hold on Judah was already too relaxed for the prophet to impute to him power to hinder the Law, especially as Josiah had begun to carry his reforms into the northern kingdom; and the knowledge of the Chaldeans displayed in i. 5-11 is too fresh and detailed[8] to suit so early a date: it was possible only after the battle of Carchemish. And again, it is improbable that we have two different nations, as Budde thinks, described by the

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[1] Cf. the opening of $ 30 in the first edition of his *EinUitung* with that of § 34 in the third and fourth editions.

[8] Budde's explanation of this is, that to the later editors of the book, long after the Babylonian destruction of Jews, it was incredible that the Chaldean should be represented as the deliverer of Israel, and so the account of him was placed where, while his call to punish Israel for her sins was not emphasised, he should be pictured as destined to doom; and so the prophecy originally referring to the Assyrian was read of him. " This is possible," says Davidson, " if it be true criticism is not without its romance."

[3] This in opposition to Budde's statement that the description of the Chaldeans in i. 5-I1 "ist eine phantastische Schilderung" (p. 387).

very similar phrases in i. II, *his own power becomes his god,* and in i. 16, *he sacrifices to his net.* Again, chap. i. 5-11 would not read quite naturally after chap. ii. 4. And in the woes pronounced on the oppressor it is not one nation, the Chaldeans, which are to spoil him, but all the remnant of the peoples (ii. 7, 8).

These objections are not inconsiderable. But are they conclusive ? And if not, is any of the other theories of the prophecy less beset with difficulties ?

The objections are scarcely conclusive. We have no proof that the power of Assyria was altogether removed from Judah by 615; on the contrary, even in 608 Assyria was still the power with which Egypt went forth to contend for the empire of the world. Seven years earlier her hand may well have been strong upon Palestine. Again, by 615 the Chaldeans, a people famous in Western Asia for a long time, had been ten years independent: men in Palestine may have been familiar with their methods of warfare; at least it is impossible to say they were not.[1] There is more weight in the objection drawn from the absence of the name of Assyria from all of the passages which Budde alleges describe it; nor do we get over all difficulties of text by inserting i. 5-11 between ii. 4 and 5. Besides, how does Budde explain i. *12b* on the theory that it means Assyria ? Is the clause not premature at that point ? Does he propose to elide it, like Wellhausen ? And in any case an erroneous transposition of the

[1] **It is, however, a serious question whether it would be possible in 615 to describe the Chaldeans as *a nation that traversed the breadth of the earth to occupy dwelling-places that were not his own* (i. 6). This suits better after the battle of Carchemish.**

original is impossible to prove and difficult to account for.[1]

But have not the other theories of the Book of Habakkuk equally great difficulties ? Surely, we cannot say that the *righteous* and the *wicked* in i. 4 mean something different from what they do in i. 13? But if this is impossible the construction of the book supported by the great majority of critics[1] falls to the ground. Professor Davidson justly says that it has "something artificial in it" and "puts a strain on the natural sense."[8] How can the Chaldeans be described in i. 5 as *just about to be raised up,* and in 14-17 as already for a long time the devastators of earth? Ewald's, Hitzig's and Kdnig's views[4] are equally beset by these difficulties; KOnig's exposition also "strains the natural sense." Everything, in fact, points to i. 5-11 being out of its proper place; it is no wonder that Giesebrecht, Wellhausen and Budde independently arrived at this conclusion.[6] Whether Budde be right in inserting i. 5-11 after ii. 4, there can be little doubt of the correctness of his views that i. 12-17 describe a heathen oppressor who is not the Chaldeans. Budde says this oppressor is Assyria. Can he be any one else? From 608 to 605 Judah was sorely beset by Egypt, who had overrun all Syria up to the Euphrates. The Egyptians killed Josiah, deposed his successor, and put their own vassal under a very heavy tribute ; *gold and silver were exacted of the people of the land:* the picture of distress in i. 1-4 might easily be that of

[1] See above, p. 121, n. 2. * Pages 49 and 50.

[3] See above, pp. 114 ff. [4] See above, pp. 118 t.

■ Wellhausen in 1873 (see p. 661); Giesebrecht in 1890; Budde in 1892, before he had seen the opinions of either of the others (see *Stud, und Krit^* 1893, p. 386, n. 2).

Judah in these three terrible years. And if we assigned the prophecy to them, we should certainly give it a date at which the knowledge of the Chaldeans expressed in i. 5-11 was more probable than at Budde's date of 615. But then does the description in chap, i. 14-17 suit Egypt so well as it does Assyria? We can hardly affirm this, until we know more of what Egypt did in those days, but it is very probable.

Therefore, the theory supported by the majority of critics being unnatural, we are, with our present meagre knowledge of the time, flung back upon Budde's interpretation that the prophet in i. 2—ii. 4 appeals from oppression by a heathen power, which is not the Chaldean, but upon which the Chaldean shall bring the just vengeance of God. The tyrant is either Assyria up to about 615 or Egypt from 608 to 605, and there is not a little to be said for the latter date.

In arriving at so uncertain a conclusion about i.—ii. 4, we have but these consolations, that no other is possible in our present knowledge, and that the uncertainty will not hamper us much in our appreciation of Habakkuk's spiritual attitude and poetic gifts.[1]

2. CHAP. II. 5-20.

The dramatic piece i. 2—ii. 4 is succeeded by a series of fine taunt-songs, starting after an introduction from *6b*, then 9, 11, 15 and (18) 19, and each opening with

[1] **Cornill quotes a rearrangement of chaps, i, ii., by Rothstein, who takes i. 2-4, 120, 13, ii. 1-3, 4, 5 a, i. 6-10, 14, 15 a, ii. *66*, 7, 9, *10abB*, 11, 15, 16, 19, 18, as an oracle against Jehoiakim and the godless in Israel about 605, which during the Exile was worked up into the present oracle against Babylon. Cornill esteems it "too complicated." Budde (*Expositor*, 1895, pp. 372 f) and Nowack hold it untenable.**

Woe / Their subject is, if we take Budde's interpretation of the dramatic piece, the Assyrian and not the Chaldean[1] tyrant. The text, as we shall see when we come to it, is corrupt. Some words are manifestly wrong, and the rhythm must have suffered beyond restoration. In all probability these fine lyric Woes, or at least as many of them as are authentic—for there is doubt about one or two—were of equal length. Whether they all originally had the refrain now attached to two is more doubtful.

Hitzig suspected the authenticity of some parts of this series of songs. Stade[8] and Kuenen have gone further and denied the genuineness of w. 9-20. But this is with little reason. As Budde says, a series of Woes was to be expected here by a prophet who follows so much the example of Isaiah.[3] In spite of Kuenen's objection, w. 9-11 would not be strange of the Chaldean, but they suit the Assyrian better. Vv. 12-14 are doubtful: 12 recalls Micah iii. 10; 13 is a repetition of Jer. li. 58; 14 is a variant of Isa. xi. 9. Very likely Jer. li. 58, a late passage, is borrowed from this passage; yet the addition used here, *Are not these things*[4] *from the Lord of Hosts ?* looks as if it noted a citation. Vv. 15-17 are very suitable to the Assyrian; there is no reason to take them from Habakkuk.[6] The final song, w. 18 and 19, has its Woe at the beginning of its second verse, and closely resembles the language of later prophets.[8]

[1] As of course was universally supposed according to either of the other two interpretations given above.

[8] *Z.A.TW.*, 1884, p. 154.

[3] Cf Isa. v. 8 £ (x. 1-4), etc.

[4] So LXX.

[6] Cf. Davidson, p. 56, and Budde, p. 391, who allows 9-11 and 15-17.

[8] *E^* Isa. xl. 18 ff., xliv. 9 ff., xlvi. 5 ff., etc. On this ground

Moreover the refrain forms a suitable close at the end of ver. 17. Ver. 20 is a quotation from Zephaniah/ perhaps another sign of the composite character of the end of this chapter. Some take it to have been inserted as an introduction to the theophany in chap. iii.

Smend has drawn up a defence 3 of the whole passage, ii. 9-20, which he deems not only to stand in a natural relation to vv. 4-8, but to be indispensable to them. That the passage quotes from other prophets, he holds to be no proof against its authenticity. If we break off with ver. 8, he thinks that we must impute to Habakkuk the opinion that the wrongs of the world are chiefly avenged by human means—a conclusion which is not to be expected after chap. i.—ii. I ff.

3. CHAP. III.

The third chapter, an Ode or Rhapsody, is ascribed to Habakkuk by its title. This, however, does not prove its authenticity: the title is too like those assigned to the Psalms in the period of the Second Temple.[8] On the contrary, the title itself, the occurrence of the musical sign Selah in the contents, and the colophon suggest for the chapter a liturgical origin after the Exile.[4] That this is more probable than the alternative

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it is condemned by Stade, Kuenen and Budde. Davidson finds this not a serious difficulty, for, he points out, Habakkuk anticipates several later lines of thought.

[1] See above, p. 39, n.

*** *A. T. RetigionsgtschichU,* p. 229, n. 2.**

[1] Cf. the ascription by the LXX. of Psalms cxlvi.—cl. to the prophets Haggai and Zechariah.

[4] Cf Kuenen, who conceives it to have been taken from a post-exilic collection of Psalms. See also Cheyne, *The Origin of the Psalter'*. "exilic or more probably post-exilic" (p. 125). "The most natural

opinion, that, being a genuine work of Habakkuk, the chapter was afterwards arranged as a Psalm for public worship, is confirmed by the fact that no other work of the prophets has been treated in the same way. Nor do the contents support the authorship by Habakkuk. They reflect no definite historical situation like the preceding chapters. The style and temper are different. While in them the prophet speaks for himself, here it is the nation or congregation of Israel that addresses God. The language is not, as some have maintained, late;[1] but the designation of the people as *Thine anointed*, a term which before the Exile was applied to the king, undoubtedly points to a post-exilic date. The figures, the theophany itself, are not necessarily archaic, but are more probably moulded on archaic models. There are many affinities with Psalms of a late date.

At the same time a number of critics[2] maintain the genuineness of the chapter, and they have some grounds for this. Habakkuk was, as we can see from chaps, i. and ii., a real poet. There was no need why a man of his temper should be bound down to reflecting only

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position for it is in the Persian period. It was doubtless appended to Habakkuk, for the same reason for which Isa. lxiii. 7—lxiv. was attached to the great prophecy of Restoration, viz. that the earlier national troubles seemed to the Jewish Church to be typical of its own sore troubles after the Return. ... The lovely closing verses of Hab. iii. are also in a tone congenial to the later religion" (p. 156). Much less certain is the assertion that the language is imitative and artificial *(ibid.);* while the statement that in ver. 3—cf. with DeuL xxxiii. 2—we have an instance of the effort to avoid the personal name of the Deity (p. 287) is disproved by the use of the latter in ver. 2 and other verses.

[1] ne W2, ver. 13, cannot be taken as a proof of lateness; read probably ne nn.

*** Pusey, Ewald, Konig, Sinker (The *Psalm of Habakkuk*^ Cambridge, 1890), Kirkpatrick (Smith's *BibU Dict.,* art. " Habakkuk "), Von Orelli**

his own day. If so practical a prophet as Hosea, and one who has so closely identified himself with his times, was wont to escape from them to a retrospect of the dealings of God with Israel from of old, why should not the same be natural for a prophet who was much less practical and more literary and artistic? There are also many phrases in the Psalm which may be interpreted as reflecting the same situation as chaps, i., ii. All this, however, only proves possibility.

The Psalm has been adapted in Psalm lxxvii, 17-20.

FURTHER NOTE ON CHAP. I.—II. 4.

Since this chapter was in print Nowack's *Die Kleinen Propketen* in the " Handkommentar z. A. T." has been published. He recognises emphatically that the disputed passage about the Chaldeans, chap. i. 5-11, is out of place where it lies (this against Kuenen and the other authorities cited above, p. 117), and admits that it follows on, with a natural connection, to chap. ii. 4, to which Budde proposes to attach it. Nevertheless, for other reasons, which he does not state, he regards Budde's proposal as untenable ; and reckons the disputed passage to be by another hand than Habakkuk's, and intruded into the latter's argument. Habakkuk's argument he assigns to after 605; perhaps 590. The tyrant complained against would therefore be the Chaldean.—Driver in the 6th ed. of his *Introduction* (1897) deems Budde's argument "too ingenious," and holds by the older and most numerously supported argument (above, pp. 116 ff).—On a review of the case in the light of these two discussions, the present writer holds to his opinion that Budde's rearrangement, which he has adopted, offers the fewest difficulties.

CHAPTER X

THE PROPHET AS SCEPTIC

HABAKKUK i.—ii. 4

OF the prophet Habakkuk we know nothing that is personal save his name—to our ears his somewhat odd name. It is the intensive form of a root which means to caress or embrace. More probably it was given to him as a child, than afterwards assumed as a symbol of his clinging to God.[1]

Tradition says that Habakkuk was a priest, the son of Joshua, of the tribe of Levi, but this is only an inference from the late liturgical notes to the Psalm which has been appended to his prophecy.[8] All that we know for certain is that he was a contemporary

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1 ¦pipan **(the Greek 'AuBarovy, LXX. version of the title of this book, and again the inscription to** *BA and the Dragon,* **suggests the pointing ppan ¦; Epiph.,** *De ViEs Proph.***—see next note—spells it '** *kppaKovfl),* **from** pan, *to embrace,* **Jerome: " He is called [4] embrace * either because of his love to the Lord, or because he wrestles with God." Luther: "Habakkuk means one who comfortsand holdsup his people as one embraces a weeping person."**

*** See above, pp. 126 £ The title to the Greek version of** *BA and the Dragon* **bears that the latter was taken from the prophecy of Hambakoum, son of Jesus, of the tribe of Levi. Further details are offered in the** *De Wis Prophetarum* **of (Pseud-) Epiphanius,** *Epiph. Opera,* **ed. Paris, 1622, Vol. II., p. 147, according to which Habakkuk belonged to Beoxnp, which is probably Be@axapas of I Macc. vi. 32, the modern Beit-Zakaryeh, a little to the north of Hebron, and placed by this notice, as Nahum's Elkosh is placed, in the tribe of Simeon. His grave was shown in the neighbouring Keilah. The notice further**

of Jeremiah, with a sensitiveness under wrong and impulses to question God which remind us of Jeremiah; but with a literary power which is quite his own. We may emphasise the latter, even though we recognise upon his writing the influence of Isaiah's.

Habakkuk's originality, however, is deeper than style. He is the earliest who is known to us of a new school of religion in Israel. He is called *prophet*^ but at first he does not adopt the attitude which is characteristic of the prophets. His face is set in an opposite direction to theirs. They address the nation Israel, on behalf of God: he rather speaks to God on behalf of Israel. Their task was Israel's sin, the proclamation of God's doom and the offer of His grace to their penitence. Habakkuk's task is God Himself, the effort to find out what He means by permitting tyranny and wrong. They attack the sins, he is the first to state the problems, of life. To him the prophetic revelation, the Torah, is complete: it has been codified in Deuteronomy and enforced by Josiah. Habakkuk's business is not to add to it but to ask why it does not work. Why does God suffer wrong to triumph, so that the Torah is paralysed, and Mishpat, the prophetic *justice* or *judgment,* comes to nought? The prophets travailed for Israel's character—to get the people to love justice till justice prevailed among them: Habakkuk feels justice cannot prevail in Israel, because of the great disorder

alleges that when Nebuchadrezzar came up to Jerusalem Habakkuk fled to Ostracine, where he travelled in the country of the Ishmaelites; but he returned after the fall of Jerusalem, and died in 538, two years before the return of the exiles. *Bel and the Dragon* tells an extraordinary story of his miraculous carriage of food to Daniel in the lions' den soon after Cyrus had taken Babylon.

which God permits to fill the world. It is true that he arrives at a prophetic attitude, and before the end authoritatively declares God's will; but he begins by searching for the latter, with an appreciation of the great obscurity cast over it by the facts of life. He complains to God, asks questions and expostulates. This is the beginning of speculation in Israel. It does not go far: it is satisfied with stating questions *to* God; it does not, directly at least, state questions *against* Him. But Habakkuk at least feels that revelation is baffled by experience, that the facts of life bewilder a man who believes in the God whom the prophets have declared to Israel. As in Zephaniah prophecy begins to exhibit traces of apocalypse, so in Habakkuk we find it developing the first impulses of speculation.

We have seen that the course of events which troubles Habakkuk and renders the Torah ineffectual is somewhat obscure. On one interpretation of these two chapters, that which takes the present order of their verses as the original, Habakkuk asks why God is silent in face of the injustice which fills the whole horizon (chap. i. 1-4), is told to look round among the heathen and see how God is raising up the Chaldeans (i. 5-11), presumably to punish this injustice (if it be Israel's own) or to overthrow it (if w. 1-4 mean that it is inflicted on Israel by a foreign power). But the Chaldeans only aggravate the prophet's problem; they themselves are a wicked and oppressive people: how can God suffer them? (i. 12-17). Then come the prophet's waiting for an answer (ii. 1) and the answer itself (ii. 2 ff). Another interpretation takes the passage about the Chaldeans (i. 5-11) to be out of place where it now lies, removes it to after chap. ii. 4

as a part of God's answer to the prophet's problem, and leaves the remainder of chap. i. as the description of the Assyrian oppression of Israel, baffling the Torah and perplexing the prophet's faith in a Holy and Just God.[1] Of these two views the former is, we have seen, somewhat artificial, and though the latter is by no means proved, the arguments for it are sufficient to justify us in re-arranging the verses chap, i.—ii. 4 in accordance with its proposals.

The Oracle which Habakkuk the Prophet Received by Vision?

How long, O Jehovah, have I called and Thou hearest not?
I cry to Thee^ Wrong! and Thou sendest no help.
Why make me look upon sorrow,
And fill mine eyes with trouble ?
Violence and wrong are before me,
Strife comes and quarrel arises?
So the Law is benumbed, and judgment never gets forth:[4]
Por the wicked beleaguers the righteous,
So judgment comes forth perverted.

* * * * *

Art not Thou of old, Jehovah, my God, my Holy One? . . .[6]

[1] **See above, pp. 119 ff.** [2] **Heb.** *saw.*

[8] **Text uncertain. Perhaps we should read,** ***Why make me look upon sorrow and trouble ? why fill mine eyes with violence and wrong ? Strife is come before me, and quarrel arises.***

[4] ***Never gets awery,*** **to use a colloquial expression.**

• **Here w. 5-11 come in the original.**

[8] **Ver. 126:** ***We shall not die*** **(many Jewish authorities read** ***Thou shall not die). O Jehovah, for judgment hast Thou set him, and, O my Rock, for punishment host Thou appointed him.***

Purer of eyes than to behold evil,[9]
And that canst not gaze upon trouble I
Why gazest Thou upon traitors,[1]
Art dumb when the wicked swallows him that is more righteous than he?[1]
Thou hast let men be made[8] *like fish of the sea,*
Like worms that have no ruler I[k]
He lifts the whole of it with his angle;
Draws it in with his net, sweeps it in his drag-net:
So rejoices and exults.
So he sacrifices to his net, and offers incense to his drag-net;
For by them is his portion fat, and his food rich.
Shall he for ever draw his sword,[5]
And ceaselessly, ruthlessly massacre nations?[9]

Upon my watch-tower I will stand,
And take my post on the ramparti
I will watch to see what He will say to me,
And what answer I[9] *get back to my plea.*

And Jehovah answered me and said:
Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets,
That he may run who reads it.

[1] **Wellhausen : *on the robbery of robbers.***

[9] **LXX, *devoureth the righteous.***

[9] **Literally *Thou hast made men.***

[4] **Wellhausen: cf. Jer. xviii. 1, xix. 1.**

* **So Giesebrecht (see above, p. 119, n. 2), reading 1h pH* own for ih pH* 15-21 *shall he therefore empty his net?***

• **Wellhausen, reading I, for 'nm> ! *should he therefore be emptying his net continually, and slaughtering the nations without pity ?***

[1] **'m3D. But Wellhausen takes it as from 133 and =: *ward* or *watch-tower.* So Nowack.**

[8] **So Heb. and LXX.; but Syr. *he:* so Wellhausen, *what answer He returns to my plea.***

For[1] the vision is for a time yet to be fixed,
Yet it hurries[9] to the end, and shall not fail:
Though it Unger, wait thou for it;
Coming it shall come[9] and shall not be behind?
Lo ! swollen,[4] not level is his[5] soul within him;
But the righteous shall live by his faithfulness?

* • • • •

Look[n] round among the heathen, and look well,
Shudder and be shocked;[8]
For I am[9] about to do a work in your days,
Ye shall not believe it when told.
*For, lo, I am about to raise up the Kasdim^*
A people the most bitter and the most hasty,
That traverse the breadths of the earth,
To possess dwelling-places not their own.
Awful and terrible are they;
From themselves [u] start their purpose and rising.

---

[1] **Bredenkamp (*Stud. u. Krit.*, 1889, pp. 161 ff.) suggests that the writing on the tablets begins here and goes on to ver. ^*a*. Budde (*Z.A.T.W.*, 1889, pp. 155 f.) takes the *□ which opens it as simply equivalent to the Greek *Uri*, introducing, like our marks of quotation, the writing itself.**

2 npp: cf. Psalm xxvii. 12. Bredenkamp emends to p‘ רַח .

[1] *Not be latt, or past its fixed time.*

[4] So literally the Heb. nzap, i.e. *ixrrogant, false*: cf. the colloquial expression *swoUen-head* = conceit, as opposed to level-headed. Bredenkamp, *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1889, 121, reads 12730 for nan. עֻפְלָה Wellhausen suggests 777 nan, *Ilo, the sinner*, in contrast to pris of next clause. Nowack prefers this.

• LXX. wrongly *my*.

• LXX. *TIOTU, faith*, and so in N. T.

[9] Chap. i. 5-11.

• So to bring out the assonance, reading anpns anpppnil

• So LXX.

[14] Or Chaldeans; on the name and people see above, p. 19.

[11] Heb. singular.

Fleeter than leopards their steeds,
Swifter than night-wolves.
Their horsemen leap[1] *from afar;*
They swoop like the eagle arhaste to devour.
All for wrong do they[1] *come;*
The set of their faces is forward,*
And they sweep up captives like sand.
They—at kings do they scoff,
And princes are sport to themi
They—they laugh at each fortress,
Heap dust up and take it!
Then the wind shiftsf and they pass /
But doomed are those whose own strength is their god l[4]

The difficulty of deciding between the various arrangements of the two chapters of Habakkuk does not, fortunately, prevent us from appreciating his argument. What he feels throughout (this is obvious, however you arrange his verses) is the tyranny of a great

[1] Omit 1'D1 (evidently a dittography) and the lame 1827' which is omitted by LXX, and was probably inserted to afford a verb for the second 1D

[1] Heb. sing., and so in all the clauses here except the next.

* A problematical rendering. HD ID is found only here, and probably means *direction.* Hitzig translates *desire, effort, striving.* HDHp, *towards the front* or *forward;* but elsewhere it means only *eastward:* oMp, *the east wind.* CE Judg. v. 21, pep. ?n owP ?n12, *a river of spates* or *rushes is the river Kishon {Hist. Geog.,* p. 395). Perhaps we should change D'D to a singular suffix, as in the clauses before and after, and this would leave D to form with npmp a participle from pn (cf. Amos ix. 10).

[4] Or *their spirit changes,* or *they change like the wind* (Wellhausen suggests m). Grtz reads d3 and n?n, *he renews his strength.*

* Von Orelli. For oe Wellhausen proposes DP, *and sets.*

heathen power/ be it Assyrian, Egyptian or Chaldean. The prophet's horizon is filled with wrong:[8] Israel thrown into disorder, revelation paralysed, justice perverted? But, like Nahum, Habakkuk : feels not for Israel alone. The Tyrant has outraged humanity.[4] He *sweeps peoples into his net,* and as soon as he empties this, he fills it again *ceaselessly,* as if there were no just God above. He exults in his vast cruelty, and has success so unbroken that he worships the very means of it. In itself such impiety is gross enough, but to a heart that believes in God it is a problem of exquisite pain. Habakkuk's is the burden of the finest faith. He illustrates the great commonplace of religious doubt, that problems arise and become rigorous in proportion to the purity and tenderness of a man's conception of God. It is not the coarsest but the finest temperaments which are exposed to scepticism. Every advance in assurance of God or in appreciation of His character develops new perplexities in face of the facts of experience, and faith becomes her own most cruel troubler. Habakkuk's questions are not due to any cooling of the religious temper in Israel, but are begotten of the very heat and ardour of prophecy in its encounter with experience. His tremulousness, for instance, is impossible without the high knowledge of God's purity and faithfulness, which older prophets had achieved in Israel:—

> *Art not Thou of old, O LORD, my God, my Holy One,*

---

[1] ***The wicked*** **of chap. i. 4 must, as we have seen, be the same as** ***the wicked*** **of chap. i. 13—a heathen oppressor of** ***the righteous,*** ***i^t*** **the people of God.**

' i. 3- *1.4. • i. 13-17.

Purer of eyes than to behold evil,
And incapable of looking upon wrong?

His despair is that which comes only from eager and persevering habits of prayer:—

How long, O LORD, have I called and Thou hearest not!
I cry to Thee of wrong and Thou givest no help !

His questions, too, are bold with that sense of God's absolute power, which flashed so bright in Israel as to blind men's eyes to all secondary and intermediate causes. *Thou,* he says,—

Thou hast made men like fishes of the sea,
Like worms that have no ruler,

boldly charging the Almighty, in almost the temper of Job himself, with being the cause of the cruelty inflicted by the unchecked tyrant upon the nations; *for shall evil happen, and Jehovah not have done it?*[1] Thus all through we perceive that Habakkuk's trouble springs from the central founts of prophecy. This scepticism—if we may venture to give the name to the first motions in Israel's mind of that temper which undoubtedly became scepticism—this scepticism was the inevitable heritage of prophecy: the stress and pain to which prophecy was forced by its own strong convictions in face of the facts of experience. Habakkuk, *the prophet,* as he is called, stood in the direct line of his order, but just because of that he was the father also of Israel's religious doubt.

But a discontent springing from sources so pure

[1] **Amos iii. 6. See Vol. I.,, p. 90.**

was surely the preparation of its own healing. In a verse of exquisite beauty the prophet describes the temper in which he trusted for an answer to all his doubts:—

On my watch-tower will I stand,
And take up my post on the rampart;
I will watch to see what He says to me,
And what answer I get back to my plea.

This verse is not to be passed over, as if its metaphors were merely of literary effect. They express rather the moral temper in which the prophet carries his doubt, or, to use New Testament language, *the good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck.* Nor is this temper patience only and a certain elevation of mind, nor only a fixed attention and sincere willingness to be answered. Through the chosen words there breathes a noble sense of responsibility. The prophet feels he has a post to hold, a rampart to guard. He knows the heritage of truth, won by the great minds of the past; and in a world seething with disorder, he will take his stand upon that and see what more his God will send him. At the very least, he will not indolently drift, but feel that he has a standpoint, however narrow, and bravely hold it. Such has ever been the attitude of the greatest sceptics—not only, let us repeat, earnestness and sincerity, but the recognition of duty towards the truth : the conviction that even the most tossed and troubled minds have somewhere a Tower appointed of God, and upon it interests human and divine to defend. Without such a conscience, scepticism, however intellectually gifted, will avail nothing. Men who drift never discover, never grasp aught They are only

dazzled by shifting gleams of the truth, only fretted and broken by experience.

Taking then his stand within the patient temper, but especially upon the conscience of his great order, the prophet waits for his answer and the healing of his trouble. The answer comes to him in the promise of *a Vision*, which, though it seem to linger, will not be later than the time fixed by God. *A Vision* is something realised, experienced—something that will be as actual and present to the waiting prophet as the cruelty which now fills his sight. Obviously some series of historical events is meant, by which, in the course of time, the unjust oppressor of the nations shall be overthrown and the righteous vindicated. Upon the re-arrangement of the text proposed by Budde,[1] this series of events is the rise of the Chaldeans, and it is an argument in favour of his proposal that the promise of *a Vision* requires some such historical picture to follow it as we find in the description of the Chaldeans—chap. i. 5-11. This, too, is explicitly introduced by terms of vision : *See among the nations and look round. . . . Yea, behold I am about to raise up the Kasdim.* But before this Vision is given/ and for the uncertain interval of waiting ere the facts come to pass, the Lord enforces upon His watching servant the great moral principle that arrogance and tyranny cannot, from the nature of them, last, and that if the righteous be only patient he will survive them:—

Lo, swollen, not level, is his soul within him;
But the righteous shall live by his faithfulness.

[1] **See above, pp. 119 ff.**

[2] **Its proper place in Budde's re-arrangement is after chap, ii 4**

We have already seen[1] that the text of the first line of this couplet is uncertain. Yet the meaning is obvious, partly in the words themselves, and partly by their implied contrast with the second line. The soul of the wicked is a radically morbid thing : *inflated, swollen* (unless we should read *perverted,* which more plainly means the same thing[8]), not *level,* not natural and normal. In the nature of things it cannot endure. *But the righteous shall live by his faithfulness.* This word, wrongly translated *faith* by the Greek and other versions, is concentrated by Paul in his repeated quotation from the Greek[8] upon that single act of faith by which the sinner secures forgiveness and justification. With Habakkuk it is a wider term. *yEmunah^* from a verb meaning originally to be firm, is used in the Old Testament in the physical sense of steadfastness. So it is applied to the arms of Moses held up by Aaron and Hur over the battle with Amalek : *they were steadiness till the going down of the sun.*[5] It is also used of the faithful discharge of public office,[8] and of fidelity as between man and wife.[7] It is also faithful testimony,[8] equity in judgment,® truth in speech,[10] and sincerity or honest dealing.[11] Of course it has faith in God as its secret—the verb from which it is derived is the regular Hebrew term to believe—but it is rather the temper which faith produces of endurance, steadfastness, integrity. Let the righteous, however baffled his faith be by experience, hold on in

[1] Above, p. 134, n. 4.
[1] in place of n?PY.
• Rom.' i. 17; Gal. iii. if,
* MDs.'
5 Exod. xvii. 12.
3 Chron. xix. 9.
[9] Hosea iL 22 (Heb.).
• Prov. xiv. 5.
• Isa. xi. 5.
* Prov. xii. 17: cf. Jer. ix. 2.
[1] [1] Prov. xii. 22, xxviii. 3a

loyalty to God and duty, and he shall live. Though St. Paul, as we have said, used the Greek rendering of *faith* for the enforcement of trust in God's mercy through Jesus Christ as the secret of forgiveness and life, it is rather to Habakkuk's wider intention of patience and fidelity that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews returns in his fuller quotation of the verse: *For yet a little while and He that shall come will come and will not tarry; now the just shall live by faith^ but if he draw back My soul shall have no pleasure in himy*

Such then is the tenor of the passage. In face of experience that baffles faith, the duty of Israel is patience in loyalty to God. In this the nascent scepticism of Israel received its first great commandment, and this it never forsook. Intellectual questions arose, of which Habakkuk's were but the faintest foreboding—questions concerning not only the mission and destiny of the nation, but the very foundation of justice and the character of God Himself. Yet did no sceptic, however bold and however provoked, forsake his *faithfulness.* Even Job, when most audaciously arraigning the God of his experience, turned from Him to God as in his heart of hearts he believed He must be, experience notwithstanding. Even the Preacher, amid the aimless flux and drift which he finds in the universe, holds to the conclusion of the whole matter in a command, which better than any other defines the contents of the *faithfulness* enforced by Habakkuk: *Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man.* It has been the same with the great mass

[1] Heb. X. 37, 38.

of the race. Repeatedly disappointed of their hopes, and crushed for ages beneath an intolerable tyranny, have they not exhibited the same heroic temper with which their first great questioner was endowed ? Endurance—this above all others has been the quality of Israel: *though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.* And, therefore, as Paul's adaptation, *The just shall live by faiths* has become the motto of evangelical Christianity, so we may say that Habakkuk's original of it has been the motto and the fame of Judaism: *The righteous shall live by his faithfulness.*

CHAPTER XI

TYRANNY IS SUICIDE

HABAKKUK ii. 5-20

IN the style of his master Isaiah, Habakkuk follows up his *Vision* with a series of lyrics on the same subject: chap. ii. 5-20. They are taunt-songs, the most of them beginning with *Woe unto*$_9$ addressed to the heathen oppressor. Perhaps they were all at first of equal length, and it has been suggested that the striking refrain in which two of them close—

For metis bloody and eartiis waste.
Cities and their inhabitants—

was once attached to each of the others as well. But the text has been too much altered, besides suffering several interpolations,[1] to permit of its restoration, and we can only reproduce these taunts as they now run in the Hebrew text. There are several quotations (not necessarily an argument against Habakkuk's authorship); but, as a whole, the expression is original, and there are some lines of especial force and freshness. Verses 5-6a are properly an introduction, the first Woe commencing with 6b.

The belief which inspires these songs is very simple.

[1] See above, pp. 1251.

Tyranny is intolerable. In the nature of things it cannot endure, but works out its own penalties. By oppressing so many nations, the tyrant is preparing the instruments of his own destruction. As he treats them, so in time shall they treat him. He is like a debtor who increases the number of his creditors. Some day they shall rise up and exact from him the last penny. So that in cutting off others he is *but forfeiting his own life.* The very violence done to nature, the deforesting of Lebanon for instance, and the vast hunting of wild beasts, shall recoil on him. This line of thought is exceedingly interesting. We have already seen in prophecy, and especially in Isaiah, the beginnings of Hebrew Wisdom—the attempt to uncover the moral processes of life and express a philosophy of history. But hardly anywhere have we found so complete an absence of all reference to the direct interference of God Himself in the punishment of the tyrant; for *the cup of Jehovahs right hand* in ver. 16 is simply the survival of an ancient metaphor. These *proverbs* or *taunt-songs,* in conformity with the proverbs of the later Wisdom, dwell only upon the inherent tendency to decay of all injustice. Tyranny, they assert, and history ever since has affirmed their truthfulness—tyranny is suicide.

The last of the taunt-songs, which treats of the different subject of idolatry, is probably, as we have seen, not from Habakkuk's hand, but of a later date.[1]

[1] **See above, pp. 125 f. Nowack (1897) agrees that Cornill's and others' conclusion that w. 9-20 are not Habakkuk's is too sweeping. He takes the first, second and fourth of the taunt-songs as authentic, but assigns the third (w. 12-14) and the fifth (18-20) to another hand. He deems the refrain, *Sb* and 176, to be a gloss, and puts 19 before 18, Driver, *Introd.,* 6th ed., holds to the authenticity of all the verses.**

INTRODUCTION TO THE TAUNT-SONGS (ii. 5-6a).

• • • •

For ... [1] treacherous,
An arrogant fellow, and is not...[1]
Who opens his desire wide as Sheol;
He is like deaths unsatisfied;
And hath swept to himself all the nations,
And gathered to him all peoples.
Shall not these, all of them, take up a proverb upon him,
And a taunt-song against him ? and say :—

FIRST TAUNT-SONG (ii. 6b-8).

Woe unto him who multiplies what is not his own,
—How long?—
And loads him with debts ![8]
Shall not thy creditors rise up,*
And thy troublers awake,

[1] **The text reads, *For also wins is treacherous,* under which we might be tempted to suspect some such original as, *As wins is treacherous, so* (next line) *the proud fellow,* etc. (or, as Davidson suggests, *Like wins is ths trsachsrous dealer),* were it not that the word *wins* appears neither in the Greek nor in the Syrian version. Wellhausen suggests that m'"n, *wins,* is a corruption of nn, with which the verse, like vv. *6b,* 9, 12, 15, 19, may have originally begun, but according to *6a* the taunt-songs, opening with nn, start first in *6b.* Bredenkamp proposes 1887 DPI),**

3 The text is m3', a verb not elsewhere found in the Old Testament, and conjectured by our translators to mean *ksspsth at hones,* because the noun allied to it means *homestead* or *resting-place.* The Syriac gives *is not ssdisfisd,* and Wellhausen proposes to read m' with that sense. See Davidson's note on the verse.

' *NN. thick day,* which is reached by breaking up the word 2'DAD, *pledge* or *debt,* into 30, *thick doud,* and bb, *day.*

[4] Literally *thy biters,* TM), but 1,23, *biting,* is *interest* or *usury,* and the Hiphil of 703 is *to exact interest.*

And thou be for spoil[1] to them ?
Because thou hast spoiled many nations,
All the rest of the peoples shall spoil thee.
For men's blood, and earth's waste,
Cities and all their inhabitants.[1]

SECOND TAUNT-SONG (ii. 9-11).

Woe unto him that gains evil gain for his house[j]
To set high his nest, to save him from the grasp of calamity /
Thou hast planned shame for thy house;
Thou hast cut off[k] many people,
While forfeiting thine own life?
For the stone shall cry out from the wall,
And the lath[8] from the timber answer it.

THIRD TAUNT-SONG (ii. 12-14).

Woe unto him that builds a city in blood?
And stablishes a town in iniquity /[8]
Lo, is it not from Jehovah of hosts,
That the nations shall toil for smoke, '
And the peoples wear themselves out for nought ?.'
*But earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah[1],^*
Like the waters that cover the sea.

[1] **LXX., sing., Heb. pl.**

[2] **These words occur again in ver. 17. Wellhausen thinks they suit neither here nor there. But they suit all the taunt-songs, and some suppose that they formed the refrain to each of these.**

[j] **Dynasty or people ?** [4] **So LXX. ; Heb. *cutting off*.**

[k] **The grammatical construction is obscure, if the text be correct. There is no mistaking the meaning.**

[8] **, D'DD, not elsewhere found in the O.T., is in Rabbinic Hebrew both *cross-beam* and *lath*.**

[c] **Micah iii. 10.** [•] **Literally *fire*.**

[8] **Jer. xxii. 13.** [1'] **Jer. li. 58: which original ?**

FOURTH TAUNT-SONG (ii. 15-17).

Woe unto him that gives his neighbour to drink,
From the cup of his wrath[1] till he be drunken,
That he may gloat on his 2[2] nakedness!
Thou art sated with shame—not with glory;
Drink also thou, and stagger.[3]
Comes round to thee the cup of Jehovah's right hand,
And foul shame[4] on thy glory.
For the violence to Lebdnon shall cover thee,
The destruction of the beasts shall affray thee[3]
For men's blood, and earth's waste,
Cities and all their inhabitants.[3]

FIFTH TAUNT-SONG (ii. 18-20).

What boots an image, when its artist has graven it,
A cast-image and lie-oracle, that its moulder has trusted upon it,
Making dumb idols ?
Woe to him that saith to a block, Awake !
To a dumb stone, Arise !

[1] After Wellhausen's suggestion to read inpn ADD instead of the text on]ïBDD, *adding,* or *mixing, thy wrath.*

[2] SoLXX. Q.; Heb. *their.*

[3] Read 2n (cf Nahum ii. 4; Zech, zii, 2). The text is pwn, not found elsewhere, which has been conjectured to mean *uncover the foreskin.* And there is some ground for this, as parallel to *his nakedness* in the previous clause. Wellhausen also removes the first clause to the end of the verse: *Drink also thou and reel; there comes to thee the cup in Jehovah's right hand, and thou wilt glut thyself with shame instead of honour.*

[4] So R.V. for n2pp, which A.V. has taken as two words—'P, for , which cf. Jer. xxv. 27, where however the text is probably corrupt, and n2p. With this confusion cf. above, ver. 6, wba.

[5] Read with LXX. 1nm for mm of the text.

[6] See above, ver. 8.

Can it teach ?
Lo$_t$ it . . .1 with gold and silver;
There is no breath at all in the heart of it.
But Jehovah is in His Holy Temple:
Silence before Him$_9$ all the earth I

> mop?

CHAPTER XII

*IN THE MIDST OF THE YEARS[9]

HABAKKUK iii,

WE have seen the impossibility of deciding the age of the ode which is attributed to Habakkuk in the third chapter of his book. But this is only one oi the many problems raised by that brilliant poem. Much of its text is corrupt, and the meaning of many single words is uncertain. As in most Hebrew poems of description, the tenses of the verbs puzzle us; we cannot always determine whether the poet is singing of that which is past or present or future, and this difficulty is increased by his subject, a revelation of God in nature for the deliverance of Israel. Is this the deliverance from Egypt, with the terrible tempests which accompanied it ? Or have the features of the Exodus been borrowed to describe some other deliverance, or to sum up the constant manifestation of Jehovah for His people's help?

The introduction, in ver. 2, is clear. The singer has heard what is to be heard of Jehovah, and His great deeds in the past. He prays for a revival of these *in the midst of the years.* The times are full of trouble and turmoil. Would that God, in the present confusion of baffled hopes and broken issues, made

[1] Above, pp. 126 f

Himself manifest by power and brilliance, as of old! *In turmoil remember mercy!* To render *turmoil* by *wrath*$_9$ as if it were God's anger against which the singer's heart appealed, is not true to the original word itself,[1] affords no parallel to *the midst of the years*$_f$ and misses the situation. Israel cries from a state of life in which the obscure years are huddled together and full of turmoil. We need not wish to fix the date more precisely than the writer himself does, but may leave it with him *in the midst of the years.*

There follows the description of the Great Theophany, of which, in his own poor times, the singer has heard. It is probable that he has in his memory the events of the Exodus and Sinai. On this point his few geographical allusions agree with his descriptions of nature. He draws all the latter from the desert, or Arabian, side of Israel's history. He introduces none of the sea-monsters, or imputations of arrogance and rebellion to the sea itself, which the influence of Babylonian mythology so thickly scattered through the later sea-poetry of the Hebrews. The Theophany takes place in a violent tempest of thunder and rain, the only process of nature upon which the desert poets of Arabia dwell with any detail. In harmony with this, God appears from the southern desert, from Teman and Paran, as in the theophanies in Deuteronomy xxxiii. and in the Song of Deborah;[8] a few

[1] t2 | nowhere in the Old Testament means *wrath,* but either roar and noise of thunder (Job xxzvii.. 2) and of horsehoofs (xxxix.. 24), or the raging of the wicked (iii. 17) or the commotion of fear (iii, 26; Isa. xiv. 3).

* *Jehovah from Sinai hath come,*
And risen from Seir upon them;
He shone from Mount Paran,

lines recall the Song of the Exodus,[1] and there are many resemblances to the phraseology of the Sixty-Eighth Psalm. The poet sees under trouble the tents of Kushan and of Midian, tribes of Sinai. And though the Theophany is with floods of rain and lightning, and foaming of great waters, it is not with hills, rivers or sea that God is angry, but with the *nations* the oppressors of His poor people, and in order that He may deliver the latter. All this, taken with the fact that no mention is made of Egypt, proves that, while the singer draws chiefly upon the marvellous events of the Exodus and Sinai for his description, he celebrates not them alone but all the ancient triumphs of God over the heathen oppressors of Israel. Compare the obscure line—these be *His goings of old.*

The report of it all fills the poet with trembling (ver. 16 returns upon ver. 26), and although his language is too obscure to permit us to follow with certainty the course of his feeling, he appears to await in confidence the issue of Israel's present troubles. His argument seems to be, that such a God may be trusted still, in face of approaching invasion (ver. 16).

And broke from Meribah of Kadesh;
From the South fire ... to them.

Deut. xxxiii. 2, slightly altered after the LXX *South:* some form of PD' must be read to bring the line into parallel with the others; p, Teman, is from the same root

Jehovah, in Thy going forth from Seir,
In Thy marching from Edom's fields
Earth shook, yea, heaven dropped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water.
Mountains flowed down before Jehovah,
Yon Sinai at the face of the God of Israel.

Judges v. 4, 5.

[1] **Exod. xv.**

The next verse, however, does not express the experience of trouble from human foes; but figuring the extreme affliction of drought, barrenness and poverty, the poet speaking in the name of Israel declares that, in spite of them, he will still rejoice in the God of their salvation (ver. 17). So sudden is this change from human foes to natural plagues, that some scholars have here felt a passage to another poem describing a different situation. But the last lines with their confidence in the *God of salvation*^ a term always used of deliverance from enemies, and the boast, borrowed from the Eighteenth Psalm, *He maketh my feet like to hinds*[1] *feet and gives me to march on my heights,* reflect the same circumstances as the bulk of the Psalm, and offer no grounds to doubt the unity of the whole.[1]

PSALM[2] OF HABAKKUK THE PROPHET.

LORD, I have heard the report of Thee;
I stand in awe /.[3]
LORD, revive Thy work in the midst of the years,
in the midst of the years make Thee known •[4]
in turmoil[6] *remember mercy I*

[1] **in this case ver. 17 would be the only one that offered any reason for suspicion that it was an intrusion.**

[3] **non, lit, Prayer, but used for Psalm: cf. Psalm cii. 1.**

[*] **Sinker takes with this the first two words of next line : *I havt trembled^ O LORD, at Thy work,***

[4] **mn., Imp. Niph., after LXX ' yvwcehon. The Hebrew has gmn. Hi., *make known,* The LXX. had a text of these verses which reduplicated them, and it has translated them very badly.**

[4] **t, *turmoil, noise,* as in Job : a meaning that offers a better parallel to *in the midst of the years* than *wrath,* which the word also means. Davidson, however, thinks it more natural to understand the *wrath* manifest at the coming of Jehovah to judgment. So Sinker.**

*God comes from Teman,**
The Holy from Mount Paran?
He covers the heavens with His glory,
And filled with His praise is the earth.
The flash is like lightning;
*He has rays from each hand of Him^*
Therein[8] is *the ambush of His might.*

*Pestilence travels before Him^*
The plague fire breaks forth at His feet.
He stands and earth shakes,*
He looks and drives nations asunder;
And the ancient mountains are cloven,
The hills everlasting sink down.
These be *His ways from of old?*

*Under trouble I see the tents of KOshan^*

[1] Vulg. *ab Austro, from the South.*

* LXX. adds *Karaeidor δacos,* which seems the translation of a clause, perhaps a gloss, containing the name of Mount Se'ir, as in the parallel descriptions of a theophany, Deut. xxiii. 2, Judg. v. 4. See Sinker, p. 45.

[3] Wellhausen, reading De for DE, translates *He made them,* etc.

[4] So LXX. Heb. *and measures the earth.*

[5] This is the only way of rendering the verse so as not to make it seem superfluous : so rendered it sums up and clenches the theophany from ver. 3 onwards; and a new strophe now begins. There is therefore no need to omit the verse, as Wellhausen does.

• LXX. 'Allores ; but these are Kush, and the parallelism requires a tribe in Arabia. Calvin rejects the meaning *Ethiopian* on the same ground, but takes the reference as to King Kushan in Judg. iii. 8, 10, on account of the parallelism with Midian. The Midianite wife whom Moses married is called the Kushite (Num. xii. 1). Hommel *(Anc. Hebrew Tradition as illustrated by the Monuments,* p. 315 and n. 1) appears to take Zerah the Kushite of 2 Chron. xiv. 9 ff. as a prince of Kush in Central Arabia. But the narrative which makes him deliver his invasion of Judah at Mareshah surely confirms the usual opinion that he and his host were Ethiopians coming up from Egypt.

The curtains of Midian's land are quivering.
Is it with hills[1] *Jehovah is wroth ?*
Is Thine anger with rivers ?
Or against the sea is Thy wrath,
That Thou ridest it *with horses,*
Thy chariots of victory ?
Thy bow is stripped bare;[3]
Thou gluttest (?) Thy *shafts.*[3]
Into rivers Thou cleavest the earth ;[4]
Mountains see Thee and writhe;
The rainstorm sweeps on:[6]
The Deep utters his voice,

[1] For bnnan, *is it with streams,* read gnnan, is *it with hills:* because hills have already been mentioned, and rivers occur in the next clause, and are separated by the same disjunctive particle, DK, which separates *the sea* in the third clause from them. The whole phrase might be rendered, *is it with hills* Thou art *angry, O Jehovah ?*

[2] Questionable: the עֲרֵה , Ni. of a supposed ערה, does not elsewhere occur, and is only conjectured from the noun my, *nakedness,* and ny, *stripping.* LXX. has *evrelvo ' ivrewas,* and Wellhausen reads, after 2 Sam. xxiii. 18, 1 Chr. xi. 21, *Thou bringest into action Thy bow.*

[3] מַטֶּה nitSD un?y, literally *sworn are staves* or *rods of speech.* A.V.: according *to the oaths of the tribes,* even Thy *word.* LXX (omitting nivar and adding mil') *M CK^Trpa,* Xyal Kpios. These words "form a riddle which all the ingenuity of scholars has not been able to solve. Delitzsch calculates that a hundred translations of them have been offered" (Davidson). In parallel to previous clause about a *bow,* we ought to expect Mop, *staves,* though it is not elsewhere used for *shafts* or *arrows,* mvav may have been PPA7, *Thou safest.* The Cod. Barb, reads: *xpnaai<; crfy paperpns abrou, Thou hast satiated the shafts of his quiver.* Sinker: *sworn are the punishments of the solemn decree,* and relevantly compares Isa. xi. 4, *the rod of His mouth;* xxx. 32, *rod of doom.* Ewald: *sevenfold shafts of war.* But cf. Psalm cxviii. 12.

[4] Uncertain, but a more natural result of cleaving than *the rivers Thou cleavest into dry land* (Davidson and Wellhausen).

[8] But Ewald takes this as of the Red Sea floods sweeping on the Egyptians.

He lifts up his roar upon high,[1]
Sun and moon stand still in their dwellings
At the flash of Thy shafts as they speed,
At the sheen of the lightning, Thy lance.
In wrath Thou stridest the earth,
In anger Thou threshest the nations !
Thou art forth to the help of Thy people,
To save Thine anointed?
Thou hast shattered the head from the house of the wicked,
Laying bare from . . .[8] *to the neck.*
Thou hast pierced with Thy spears the head of his princes?
They stormed forth to crush me;
Their triumph was as to devour the poor in secret?
Thou hast marched on the sea with Thy horses;
Foamed the great waters.*

I have heard, and my heart[1] *shakes;*

[1] NV)l 1'7 Dll = he *lifts up his hands on high.* But the LXX. read Inb, *pavraolas* avrss, and took N2)l with the next verse. The reading 'nb (for I'8b) is indeed nonsense, but suggests an emendation to InD, *his shout* or *wail*: cf. Amos vi. 7, Jer. xvi. 5.

' 'Reading for 12" in, required by the ace. following. *Thins anointed,* lit. *Thy Messiah,* according to Isa. xl. ff. the whole people.

• Heb. TD', *foundation.* LXX. *bonds.* Some suggest laying bare from the foundation to the neck, but this is mixed unless *neck* happened to be a technical name for a part of a building: cf. Isa. viii. 8, xxx. 28.

[4] Heb. *his spears* or *staves; his own* (Von Orelli). LXX. *is iKordaei:* see Sinker, pp. 56 ff. *Princes*: 179 only here. Hitzig: *his brave ones.* Ewald, Wellhausen, Davidson: *his princes.* Delitzsch: *his hosts.* LXX. *Kepdkbt Svvcurrwv.*

* So Heb. literally. A very difficult line. On LXX. see Sinker, pp. 60 f.

• For ph, *heap* (so A.V.), read some part of ⁊on, *to foam.* LXX. rapocovras : cf. Psalm xlvi. 4.

[9] So LXX. K (some codd.), softening the original *betty*$_t$

At the sound my lips tremble,[1]
Rottenness enters my bones,[2]
My steps shake under me?
I will. . ? for the day of trouble
Thai pours in on the people?

Though the fig-tree do not blossom,[*]
And no fruit be on the vines,
Fail the produce of the olive,
And the fields yield no meat,
Cut off[1] *be the flock from the fold,*
And no cattle in the stalls,
Yet in the LORD will I exult,
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.
Jehovah, the Lord, is my might;
He hath made my feet like the hinds[1]*,*
And on my heights He gives me to march.

This Psalm, whose musical signs prove it to have been employed in the liturgy of the Jewish Temple, has also largely entered into the use of the Christian

[1] **Or *my lips quiver aloud*—Mp2, *vocally* (Von Orelli).**

[3] **By the Hebrew the bones were felt, as a modern man feels his nerves: Psalms xxxii., IL; job.**

[*] **For Wx, for which LXX. gives h this uov, read inonxt, *my steps;* and for Mnes, LXX. ἐταράχθη, I27.**

[4] **ma. LXX. *dvaracouq, I will rest.* A.V.: *that I might rest in the day of trouble.* Others: *I will wait for.* Wellhausen suggests DHas (Isa. 1, 24), *I will take comfort.* Sinker takes WN as the simple relative: *I who will wait patiently for the day of doom.* Von Orelli takes it as the conjunction *because.***

[1] **9373, *it invades, brings up troops on them,* only in Gen. xlix. 19 and here. Well hausen: *which invades us.* Sinker: *for the coming up against the people of him who shall assail it.***

[•] **npn ; but LXX. mpn, *o KapTopop-fioti,, bear no fruit.***

[‘] **For 13 Wellhausen reads 122 LXX. ἐξελιπεν**

Church. The vivid style, the sweep of vision, the exultation in the extreme of adversity with which it closes, have made it a frequent theme of preachers and of poets. St. Augustine's exposition of the Septuagint version spiritualises almost every clause into a description of the first and second advents of Christ.[1] Calvin's more sober and accurate learning interpreted it of God's guidance of Israel from the time of the Egyptian plagues to the days of Joshua and Gideon, and made it enforce the lesson that He who so wonderfully delivered His people in their youth will not forsake them in the midway of their career.[8] The closing verses have been torn from the rest to form the essence of a large number of hymns in many languages.

For ourselves it is perhaps most useful to fasten upon the poet's description of his own position in the midst of the years, and like him to take heart, amid our very similar circumstances, from the glorious story of God's ancient revelation, in the faith that He is still the same in might and in purpose of grace to His people. We, too, live among the nameless years. We feel them about us, undistinguished by the manifest workings of God, slow and petty, or, at the most, full of inarticulate turmoil. At this very moment we suffer from the frustration of a great cause, on which believing men had set their hearts as God's cause; Christendom has received from the infidel no greater reverse since the days of the Crusades. Or, lifting our eyes to a larger horizon, we are tempted to see about us a wide, flat waste of years. It is nearly nineteen centuries

[1] *De Civitato Dei*, XVIII. 32.

[2] So he paraphrases *in the midst of the years.*

since the great revelation of God in Christ, the redemption of mankind, and all the wonders of the Early Church. We are far, far away from that, and unstirred by the expectation of any crisis in the near future. We stand *in the midst of the years,* equally distant from beginning and from end. It is the situation which Jesus Himself likened to the long double watch in the middle of the night—*if he come in the second watch or in the third watch*—against whose dulness He warned His disciples. How much need is there at such a time to recall, like this poet, what God has done —how often He has shaken the world and overturned the nations, for the sake of His people and the Divine causes they represent. *His ways are everlasting.* As He then worked, so He will work now for the same ends of redemption. Our prayer for *a revival of His work* will be answered before it is spoken.

It is probable that much of our sense of the staleness of the years comes from their prosperity. The dull feeling that time is mere routine is fastened upon our hearts by nothing more firmly than by the constant round of fruitful seasons—that fortification of comfort, that regularity of material supplies, which modern life assures to so many. Adversity would brace us to a new expectation of the near and strong action of our God. This is perhaps the meaning of the sudden mention of natural plagues in the seventeenth verse of our Psalm. Not in spite of the extremes of misfortune, but just because of them, should we exult in *the God of our salvation;* and realise that it is by discipline He makes His Church to feel that she is not marching over the dreary levels of nameless years, but *on our high places He makes us to march.*

"Grant, Almighty God, as the dulness and hardness

of our flesh is so great that it is needful for us to be in various ways afflicted—oh grant that we patiently bear Thy chastisement, and under a deep feeling of sorrow flee to Thy mercy displayed to us in Christ, so that we depend not on the earthly blessings of this perishable life, but relying on Thy word go forward in the course of our calling, until at length we be gathered to that blessed rest which is laid up for us in heaven, through Christ our Lord. Amen."[1]

[1] **From the prayer with which Calvin concludes his exposition of Habakkuk.**

OBADIAH

And Saviours shall come up on Mount Zion to judge Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be Jehovah's,

CHAPTER XIII

THE BOOK OF OBADIAH

THE Book of Obadiah is the smallest among the prophets, and the smallest in all the Old Testament. Yet there is none which better illustrates many of the main problems of Old Testament criticism. It raises, indeed, no doctrinal issue nor any question of historical accuracy. All that it claims to be is *The Vision of Obadiah*;[1] and this vague name, with no date or dwelling-place to challenge comparison with the contents of the book, introduces us without prejudice to the criticism of the latter. Nor is the book involved in the central controversy of Old Testament scholarship, the date of the Law. It has no reference to the Law. Nor is it made use of in the New Testament. The more freely, therefore, may we study the literary and historical questions started by the

[1] mav, 'Obadyah, the later form of inpay, 'Obadyahu (a name occurring thrice before the Exile: Ahab's steward who hid the prophets of the Lord, I Kings xviii. 3-7, 16; of a man in David's house, I Chron. xxvii. 19; a Levite in Josiah's reign, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12), is the name of several of the Jews who returned from exile: Ezra viii. 9, the son of Jehi'el (in I Esdras viii. 'Aaias); Neh. x. 6, a priest, probably the same as the Obadiah in xii. 25, a porter, and the M331, the singer, in xL 17, who is called nav in i Chron. ix. 16. Another 'Obadyah is given in the eleventh generation from Saul, I Chron. viii. 38, ix. 44; another in the royal line in the time of the Exile, iii. 21; a man of Issachar, vii. 3; a Gadite under David, xii. 9; a *prince* under Jehoshaphat sent *to teach in the cities of Judah,*

twenty-one verses which compose the book. Their brief course is broken by differences of style, and by sudden changes of outlook from the past to the future. Some of them present a close parallel to another passage of prophecy, a feature which when present offers a difficult problem to the critic. Hardly any of the historical allusions are free from ambiguity, for although the book refers throughout to a single nation—and so vividly that even if Edom were not named we might still discern the character and crimes of that bitter brother of Israel—yet the conflict of Israel and Edom was so prolonged and so monotonous in its cruelties, that there are few of its many centuries to which some scholar has not felt himself able to assign, in part or whole, Obadiah's indignant oration. The little book has been tossed out of one century into another by successive critics, till there exists in their estimates of its date a difference of nearly six hundred years.[1] Such a fact seems, at first sight, to convict criticism either of arbitrariness or helplessness;[a] yet a little consideration of details is enough to lead us to an appreciation of the reasonable methods of Old Testament criticism, and of its indubitable progress

2 Cbron. xvii. 7. With the Massoretic points nay means worshipper of Jehovah : cf. Obed-Edom, and so in the Greek form, 'Oeov, of Cod. B. But other Codd., A, 0 and t, give 'Azov or 'ABcov, and this, with the alternative Hebrew form K128 of Neh. xi. 17, suggests rather n 12P, *servant of Jehovah,* The name as given in the title is probably intended to be that of an historical individual, as in the titles of all the other books; but which, or if any, of the above mentioned it is impossible to say. Note, however, that it is the later post-exilic form of the name that is used, in spite of the book occurring among the pre-exilic prophets. Some, less probably, take the name Obadyah to be symbolic of the prophetic character of the writer.

[1] 889 B.C. Hofmann, Keil, etc.; and soon after 312, Hitzig.

[1] Cf. the extraordinary tirade of Pusey in his Introd, to Obadiah.

towards certainty, in spite of our ignorance of large stretches of the history of Israel. To the student of the Old Testament nothing could be more profitable than to master the historical and literary questions raised by the Book of Obadiah, before following them out among the more complicated problems which are started by other prophetical books in their relation to the Law of Israel, or to their own titles, or to claims made for them in the New Testament.

The Book of Obadiah contains a number of verbal parallels to another prophecy against Edom which appears in Jeremiah xlix. 7-22. Most critics have regarded this prophecy of Jeremiah as genuine, and have assigned it to the year 604 B.C. The question is whether Obadiah or Jeremiah is the earlier. Hitzig and Vatke[1] answered in favour of Jeremiah; and as the Book of Obadiah also contains a description of Edom's conduct in the day of Jerusalem's overthrow by Nebuchadrezzar, in 586, they brought the whole book down to post-exilic times. Very forcible arguments, however, have been offered for Obadiah's priority? Upon this priority, as well as on the facts that Joel, whom they take to be early, quotes

[1] **The first in his Commentary on *DU Zwolf KUint PropfaUn;* the other in his *EinUilung.***

* **Caspari *(Der Proph. Ob. ausgsUgi* 1842), Ewald, Graf, Pusey, Driver, Giesebrecht, Wildeboer and KOnig. Cf. Jer. xlix. 9 with Ob. 5; Jer. xlix. 14 ff. with Ob. 1-4 The opening of Ob. i ff. is held to be more in its place than where it occurs in the middle of Jeremiah's passage. The language of Obadiah is " terser and more forcible. Jeremiah seems to expand Obadiah, and parts of Jeremiah which have no parallel in Obadiah are like Obadiah's own style " (Driver). This strong argument is enforced in detail by Pusey: "Out of the sixteen verses of which the prophecy of Jeremiah against Edom consists, four are identical with those of Obadiah; a fifth embodies**

from Obadiah„ and that Obadiah's book occurs among the first six—presumably the pre-exilic members—of the Twelve, a number of scholars have assigned all of it to an early period in Israel's history. Some fix upon the reign of Jehoshaphat, when Judah was invaded by Edom and his allies Moab and Ammon, but saved from disaster through Moab and Ammon turning upon the Edomites and slaughtering them.[1] To this they refer the phrase in Obadiah 9, *the men of thy covenant have betrayed thee.* Others place the whole book in the reign of Joram of Judah (849—842 B.C.), when, according to the Chronicles,[1] Judah was invaded and Jerusalem partly sacked by Philistines and Arabs.[8] But in the story of this invasion there is no mention of Edomites, and the argument which is drawn from Joel's quotation of Obadiah fails if Joel, as we shall see, be of late date. With greater prudence Pusey declines to fix a period.

The supporters of a pre-exilic origin for the *whole* Book of Obadiah have to explain w. 11-14, which appear to reflect Edom's conduct at the sack of

a verse of Obadiah's; of the eleven which remain ten have some turns of expression or idioms, more or fewer, which occur in Jeremiah, either in these prophecies against foreign nations, or in his prophecies generally. Now it would be wholly improbable that a prophet, selecting verses out of the prophecy of Jeremiah, should have selected precisely those which contain none of Jeremiah's characteristic expressions; whereas it perfectly fits in with the supposition that Jeremiah interwove verses of Obadiah with his own prophecy, that in verses so interwoven there is not one expression which occurs elsewhere in Jeremiah." Similarly Nowack, *Comm*^ 1897.

[1] 2 Chron. xx. [2] 2 Chron. xxi. 14-17.

*** So Delitzsch, Keil, Volck in Herzog's *Real. Ency.* IL, Orelli and Kirkpatrick. Delitzsch indeed suggests that the prophet may have been *Obadiah the prince* appointed by Jehoshaphat *to teach in the cities of Judah.* See above, p. 163, n. 1.**

Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar in 586, and they do so in two ways. Pusey takes the verses as predictive of Nebuchadrezzar's siege. Orelli and others believe that they suit better the conquest and plunder of the city in the time of Jehoram. But, as Calvin has said, "they seem to be mistaken who think that Obadiah lived before the time of Isaiah."

The question, however, very early arose, whether it was possible to take Obadiah as a unity. Vv. 1-9 are more vigorous and firm than w. 10-21. In w. 1-9 Edom is destroyed by nations who are its allies; in w. 10-21 it is still to fall along with other Gentiles in the general judgment of the Lord.[1] Vv. 10-21 admittedly describe the conduct of the Edomites at the overthrow of Jerusalem in 586; but w. 1-9 probably reflect earlier events; and it is significant that in them alone occur the parallels to Jeremiah's prophecy against Edom in 604. On some of these grounds Ewald regarded the little book as consisting of two pieces, both of which refer to Edom, but the first of which was written before Jeremiah, and the second is post-exilic. As Jeremiah's prophecy has some features more original than Obadiah's,' he traced both prophecies to an original oracle against Edom, of which Obadiah on the whole renders an exact version. He fixed the date of this oracle in the earlier days of Isaiah, when Rezin of Syria enabled Edom to assert again its independence of Judah, and Edom won back Elath, which Uzziah had taken.[8] Driver, Wildeboer

[1] **Driver,** ***Introd.***

[1] **Jer. xlix. 9 and 16 appear to be more original than Ob. 3 and** ***2b,*** **Notice the presence in Jer. xlix. 16 of nx?pn„ which Obadiah omits.**

3 **2 Kings xiv. 22; xvi. 6, Revised Version margin.**

and Cornill[1] adopt this theory, with the exception of the period to which Ewald refers the original oracle. According to them, the Book of Obadiah consists of two pieces, vv. 1-9 pre-exilic, and w. 10-21 post-exilic and descriptive in 11-14 of Nebuchadrezzar's sack of Jerusalem.

This latter point need not be contested.[2] But is it clear that 1-9 are so different from 10-21 that they must be assigned to another period ? Are they necessarily pre-exilic? Wellhausen thinks not, and has constructed still another theory of the origin of the book, which, like Vatke's, brings it all down to the period after the Exile.

There is no mention in the book either of Assyria or of Babylonia.[8] The allies who have betrayed Edom (ver. 7) are therefore probably those Arabian tribes who surrounded it and were its frequent confederates.[4] They are described as *sending* Edom *to the border (ib* Wellhausen thinks that this can only refer to the great northward movement of Arabs which began to press upon the fertile lands to the south-east of Israel during the time of the Captivity. Ezekiel[5] prophesies that Ammon and Moab will disappear before the Arabs, and we know that by the year 312 the latter were firmly

[1] ***Einl.*[1] pp. 185 f.: " In any case Obadiah 1-9 are older than the fourth year of Jehoiakim."**

*** " That the verses Obadiah 10 ff. refer to this event [the sack ot Jerusalem] will always remain the most natural supposition, for the description which they give so completely suits that time that it is not possible to take any other explanation into consideration."**

3 Edom paid tribute to Sennacherib in 701, and to Asarhaddon (681—669). According to 2 Kings xxiv. 2 Nebuchadrezzar sent Ammonites, Moabites and Edomites [for DR read OTN] against Jehoiakim, who had broken his oath to Babylonia.

[4] For Edom's alliances with Arab tribes cf. Gen. xxv. 13 with xxxvi 3, 12, etc. * Ezek. xxv. 4, 5, 10.

settled in the territories of Edom.[1] Shortly before this the Hagarenes appear in Chronicles, and Seir is called by the Arabic name Gebal,® while as early as the fifth century "Malachi"[3] records the desolation of Edom's territory by the *jackals of the wilderness*^ and the expulsion oi the Edomites, who will not return. The Edomites were pushed up into the Negeb of Israel, and occupied the territory round, and to the south of, Hebron till their conquest by John Hyrcanus about 130; even after that it was called Idumaea.[4] Wellhausen would assign Obadiah I-7' to the same stage of this movement as is reflected in "Malachi" i. 1-5 ;; and, apart from certain parentheses, would therefore take the whole of Obadiah as a unity from the end of the fifth century before Christ. In that case Giesebrecht argues that the parallel prophecy, Jeremiah xlix. 7-22,, must be reckoned as one of the passages of the Book of Jeremiah in which post-exilic additions have been inserted.[6]

Our criticism ot this theory may start from the seventh verse of Obadiah : *To the border they have sent ihee^ all the men of thy covenant have betrayed thee, they have overpowered thee, the men of thy peace.* On our present knowledge of the history of Edom it is impossible to assign the first of these clauses to any period before the Exile. No doubt in earlier days Edom was more than once subjected to Arab *razzias.* But up to the Jewish Exile the Edomites were still in

[1] Diod. Sic. XIX. 94. A little earlier they are described as in possession of Iturea,, on the south-east slopes of Anti-Lebanon (Arrian II. 20, 4).

[2] Psalm lxxxiii. 8. [3] i. 1-5.

[4] *E^*, in the New Testament: Mark Hi. 8.

[1] So too Nowack, 1897.

possession of their own land. So the Deuteronomist[1] implies, and so Ezekiel[8] and perhaps the author of Lamentations.[8] Wellhausen's claim, therefore, that the seventh verse of Obadiah refers to the expulsion of Edomites by Arabs in the sixth or fifth century B.C. may be granted.[4] But does this mean that verses I-6 belong, as he maintains, to the same period? A negative answer seems required by the following facts. To begin with, the seventh verse is not found in the parallel prophecy in Jeremiah. There is no reason why it should not have been used there, if that prophecy had been compiled at a time when the expulsion of the Edomites was already an accomplished fact. But both by this omission and by all its other features, that prophecy suits the time of Jeremiah, and we may leave it, therefore, where it was left till the appearance of Wellhausen's theory—namely, with Jeremiah himself.[6] Moreover Jeremiah xlix. 9 seems to have been adapted in Obadiah 5 in order to suit verse 6. But again, Obadiah 1-6, which contains so many parallels to Jeremiah's prophecy, also seems to imply that the Edomites are still in possession of their land. *The nations* (we may understand by this the Arab tribes) are risen against Edom, and Edom is already despicable in face of them (vv. 1, 2); but he has not yet fallen, any more than, to the writer of Isaiah

[1] Deut. ii. 5, 8, 12. [2] Ezek. xxxv., esp. 2 and 15.

* iv. 21 : yet *Ue* fails in LXX., and some take MR to refer to the Holy Land itself. Buhl, *Gesch. der Edomiter,* 73.

[4] It can hardly be supposed that Edom's treacherous allies were Assyrians or Babylonians, for even if the phrase " men of thy covenant" could be applied to those to whom Edom was tributary, the Assyrian or Babylonian method of dealing with conquered peoples is described by saying that they took them off into captivity, not that they *sent them to the border,* * So even Comill, *Etnl**

:xlv.—xlvii., who uses analogous language, Babylon is already fallen. Edom is weak and cannot resist the Arab *razzias.* But he still makes his eyrie on high and says: *Who will bring me down ?* To which challenge Jehovah replies, not [4]1 have brought thee down/ but *I will bring thee down.* The post-exilic portion of Obadiah, then, I take to begin with verse 7; and the author of this prophecy has begun by incorporating in w. 1-6 apre-exilic prophecy against Edom, which had been already, and with more freedom, used by Jeremiah. Verses 8-9 form a difficulty. They return to the future tense, as if the Edomites were still to be cut off from Mount Esau. But verse 10, as Wellhausen points out, follows on naturally to verse 7„ and, with its successors, clearly points to a period subsequent to Nebuchadrezzar's overthrow of Jerusalem. The change from the past tense in w. 10-11 to the imperatives of 12-14 need cause, in spite of what Pusey says, no difficulty, but may be accounted for by the excited feelings of the prophet. The suggestion has been made, and it is plausible, that Obadiah speaks as an eye-witness of that awful time. Certainly there is nothing in the rest of the prophecy (w. 15-21) to lead us to bring it further down than the years following the destruction of Jerusalem. Everything points to the Jews being still in exile. The verbs which describe the inviolateness of Jerusalem (17), and the reinstatement of Israel in their heritage (17, 19), and their conquest of Edom (18), are all in the future. The prophet himselt: appears to write in exile (20). The captivity of Jerusalem is in Sepharad *(ib.)* and the *saviours* have to *come up* to Mount Zion; that is to say, they are still beyond the Holy Land (21).[1]

[1] **This in answer to Wellhausen on the verse.**

The one difficulty in assigning this date to the prophecy is that nothing is said in the Hebrew of ver. 19 about the re-occupation of the hill-country of Judaea itself, but here the Greek may help us.[1] Certainly every other feature suits the early days of the Exile.

The result ot our inquiry is that the Book of Obadiah was written at that time by a prophet in exile, who was filled by the same hatred of Edom as filled another exile, who in Babylon wrote Psalm cxxxvii.; and that, like so many of the exilic writers, he started from an earlier prophecy against Edom, already used by Jeremiah? [Nowack (*Comm.*, 1897) takes vv. 1-14 (with additions in vv. 1, 5, 6, 8f. and 12) to be from a date not long after the Fall of Jerusalem, alluded to in vv. 11-14; and w. 15-21 to belong to a later period, which it is impossible to fix exactly.]

There is nothing in the language of the book to disturb this conclusion. The Hebrew of Obadiah is pure; unlike its neighbour, the Book of Jonah, it contains neither Aramaisms nor other symptoms of decadence. The text is very sound. The Septuagint Version enables us to correct w. 7 and 17, offers the true division between vv. 9 and 10, but makes an omission which leaves no sense in ver. 17.[3] It will be best to give all the twenty-one verses together before commenting on their spirit.

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[1] **See below, p. 175, n. 6.**

2 **Calvin, while refusing in his introduction to Obadiah to fix a date (except in so far as he thinks it impossible for the book to be earlier than Isaiah), implies throughout his commentary on the book that it was addressed to Edom while the Jews were in exile. See his remarks on vv. 18-20.**

[*] **There is a mistranslation in ver. 18: 15 is rendered by wuppopos.**

THE VISION OF OBADIAH.

Thus hath the Lord Jehovah spoken concerning Edom.[1]
" A report have we heard from Jehovah^ and a messenger has been sent through the nations, [i] Up and kt us rise against her to battle! Lo$_9$*1 have made thee small among the nations, thou art very despised! The arrogance of thy heart hath miskd thee, dweller in clefts of the Rock* 3; *the height is his dwelling, that saith in his heart * Who shall bring me down to earth!' Though thou build high as the eagk, though between the stars thou set thy nest, thence will I bring thee down—oracle of Jehovah, if thieves had come into thee by night (how art thou humbled!)*; would they not steal* just *what they wanted? If vine-croppers had come into thee, would they not kave some gleanings ? (How searched out is Esau, how rifkd his treasures /)"* But now *to* thy very *border have they sent thee, all the men of thy covenant*[4] *have betrayed thee, the men of thy peace have overpowered thee*[4]*; they kept setting traps for thee—there is no understanding in him ! "[6] • Shall*

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[1] **This is no doubt from the later writer,„ who before he gives the new word of Jehovah with regard to Edom, quotes the earlier prophecy, marked above by quotation marks. In no other way can we explain the immediate following of the words " [i] Thus hath the Lord spoken " with ' *We* have heard a report," etc.**

[2] *** Sela,' the name of the Edomite capital, Petra.**

[5] **The parenthesis is not in Jer. xlix. 9; Nowack omits it. *1/ spoilers* occurs in Heb. before *by night**. delete.**

[4] **Antithetic to *thieves* and *spoilers by night,* as the sending of the people to their border is antithetic to the thieves taking only what they wanted.**

' ךמ>, *thy bread,* which here follows, is not found in the LXX., and is probably an error due to a mechanical repetition of the letters of the previous word.

*** Again perhaps a quotation from an earlier prophecy: Nowack counts it from another hand. Mark the sudden change to the future.**

it not be in that day—oracle of Jehovah—that I will cause the wise men to perish from Edom, and understanding from Mount Esau ? And thy heroes, O Teman, shall be dismayed, till[1] *every man be cut off from Mount Esau." For the slaughter*[6] *for the outraging of thy brother Jacob, shame doth cover thee, and thou art cut offfor ever. In the day of thy standing aloof*[3] *in the day when strangers took captive his substance, and aliens came into his gates,*[1] *and they cast lots on Jerusalem, even thou wert as one of them 1* Ah,, *gloat not*[6] *upon the day of thy brother,*[6] *the day of his misfortune*[7] *,exult not over the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction, and make not thy mouth large*[6] *in the day of distress. Come not up into the gate of My people in the day of their disaster. Gloat not thou, yea thou, upon his ills, in the day of his disaster, nor put forth thy hand to his substance in the day of his disaster, nor stand at the parting*[6] of the ways (?) *to cut off his fugitives; nor arrest his escaped ones in the day of distress.*

For near is the day of Jehovah, upon all the nations—

[1] **Heb.** ***so th.it.***

2 **With LXX. transfer this expression from the end of the ninth to the beginning of the tenth verse.**

* **"When thou didst stand on the opposite side."—Calvin.**

[4] **Plural; LXX. and Qeri.**

* **Sudden change to imperative. The English versions render,** ***Thou shouldest not have looked on,*** **etc.**

• **Cf. Ps. cxxxvii. 7,** ***the day of Jerusalem.***

[7] **The day of his strangeness -** ***aliena fortuna.***

[8] **With laughter. Wellhausen and Nowack suspect ver. 13 as an intrusion.**

[8] **PB does not elsewhere occur. It means cleaving, and the LXX. render it by** *SIEK^OX^,* ***i.e.*** **pass between mountains. The Arabic forms from the same root suggest the sense of a band of men standing apart from the main body on the watch for stragglers (cf. 122, in ver. 11). Calvin, " the going forth Grtz, ,** ***breach,*** **but see Nowack.**

as thou hast done, so shall it be done to thee: thy deed shall come back on thine own head.

For as ye[9] have drunk on my holy mount, all the nations shall drink continuously, drink and reel, and be as though they had not been? But on Mount Zion shall be refuge, and it shall be inviolate, and the house of Jacob shall inherit those who have disinherited them} For the house of Jacob shall be fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, but the house of Esau shall become stubble, and they shall kindle upon them and devour them, and there shall not one escape of the house of Esau—for Jehovah hath spoken.

And the Negeb shall possess Mount Esau, and the Shephelah the Philistines;[9] and the Mountain[9] shall possess Ephraim and the field of Samaria? and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. And the exiles of this host[9] of the children of Israel shall possess (?) the

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[1] **Wellhausen proposes to put the last two clauses immediately after ver. 14.**

[1] **The prophet seems here to turn to address his own countrymen: the drinking will therefore take the meaning of suffering God's chastising wrath. Others, like Calvin, take it in the opposite sense, and apply it to Edom : "as ye have exulted," etc.**

[3] ***Reel*—for 72 we ought (with Wellhausen) probably to read 903 : cf. Lam. iv. 2. Some codd. of LXX. omit *all the nations . . . continuously, drink and reel.* But & 0* A and Q have *all the nations shall drink wine.***

[4] **So LXX. Heb. *their heritages.***

[1] **That is the reverse of the conditions after the Jews went into exile, for then the Edomites came up on the Negeb and the Philistines on the Shephelah.**

* ***1^*. of Judah, the rest of the country outside the Negeb and Shephelah. The reading is after the LXX.**

[9] **Whereas the pagan inhabitants of these places came upon the hill-country of Judaea during the Exile.**

[B] **An unusual form of the word. Ewald would read *coast.* The verse is obscure.**

land[1] of the Canaanites unto Sarephath^ and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall inherit the cities of the Negeb. And saviours shall come up on Mount Zion to iudge Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be Jehovahs.*

[1] SoLXX.

[1] The Jews themselves thought this to be Spain : so Onkelos, who translates TDD by M'BPF — Hispania. Hence the origin of the name Sephardim Jews. The supposition that it is Sparta need hardly be noticed. Our decision must lie between two other regions —the one in Asia Minor, the other in S.W. Media. *First,* in the ancient Persian inscriptions there thrice occurs (great Behistun inscription, I. 15; inscription of Darius, 11. 12, 13; and inscription of Darius from Naksh-i-Rustam) (Jparda It is connected with Janua or Ionia and Katapatuka or Cappadocia (Schrader, *Cun. Inscr. and O. T.,* Germ, ed., p. 446; Eng., Vol. II., p. 145); and Sayce shows that, called Shaparda on a late cuneiform inscription of 275 B.C., it must have lain in Bithynia or Galatia *(Higher Criticism and Monuments^* p. 483). Darius made it a satrapy. It is clear, as Cheyne says *(Founders of O. T. Critiasm,* p. 312), that those who on other grounds are convinced of the post-exilic origin of this part of Obadiah, of its origin in the Persian period, will identify Sepharad with this Qparda, which both he and Sayce do. But to those of us who hold that this part of Obadiah is from the time of the Babylonian exile, as we have sought to prove above on pp. 171 £, then Sepharad cannot be Çparda, for Nebuchadrezzar did not subdue Asia Minor and cannot have transported Jews there. Are we then forced to give up our theory of the date of Obadiah 10-21 in the Babylonian exile ? By no means. For, *second,* the inscriptions of Sargon, king of Assyria (721—705 B.C.), mention a Shaparda, in S.W. Media towards Babylonia, a name phonetically correspondent to TBD (Schrader, *I.C.),* and the identification of the two is regarded as [14] exceedingly probable " by Fried. Delitzsch *(Wo lag das Parodies ?* p. 249). But even if this should be shown to be impossible, and if the identification Sepharad - Çparda be proved, that would not oblige us to alter our opinion as to the date of the whole of Obadiah 10-21, for it is possible that later additions, including Sepharad, have been made to the passage.

CHAPTER XIV

EDOM AND ISRAEL,

OBADIAH 1-2 1

r the Book of Obadiah presents us with some of the most difficult questions of criticism, it raises besides one of the hardest ethical problems in all the vexed history of Israel.

Israel's fate has been to work out their calling in the world through antipathies rather than by sympathies, but of all the antipathies which the nation experienced none was more bitter and more constant than that towards Edom. The rest of Israel's enemies rose and fell like waves: Canaanites were succeeded byFPhilistines, Philistines by Syrians, Syrians by Greeks. Tyrant relinquished his grasp of God's people to tyrant: Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian; the Seleucids, the Ptolemies. But Edom was always there, *and fretted his anger for ever.*[1] From that far back day when their ancestors wrestled in the womb of Rebekah to the very eve of the Christian era, when a Jewish king[3] dragged the Idumeans beneath the yoke of the Law, the two peoples scorned, hated and scourged each other, with a relentlessness that finds no analogy, between kindred

[1] **Amos i. 11. See Vol. I., p. 129.**

[3] **John Hyrcanus, about 130 B.C.**

and neighbour nations, anywhere else in history. About 1030 David, about 130 the Hasmoneans, were equally at war with Edom; and few are the prophets between those distant dates who do not cry for vengeance against him or exult in his overthrow. The Book of Obadiah is singular in this, that it contains nothing else than such feelings and such cries. It brings no spiritual message. It speaks no word of sin, or of righteousness, or of mercy, but only doom upon Edom in bitter resentment at his cruelties, and in exultation that, as he has helped to disinherit Israel, Israel shall disinherit him. Such a book among the prophets surprises us. It seems but a dark surge staining the stream of revelation, as if to exhibit through what a muddy channel these sacred waters have been poured upon the world. Is the book only an outbreak of Israel's selfish patriotism ? This is the question we have to discuss in the present chapter.

Reasons for the hostility of Edom and Israel are not far to seek. The two nations were neighbours with bitter memories and rival interests. Each of them was possessed by a strong sense of distinction from the rest of mankind, which goes far to justify the story of their common descent. But while in Israel this pride was chiefly due to the consciousness of a peculiar destiny not yet realised—a pride painful and hungry —in Edom it took the complacent form of satisfaction in a territory of remarkable isolation and self-sufficiency, in large stores of wealth, and in a reputation for worldly wisdom—a fulness that recked little of the future, and felt no need of the Divine.

The purple mountains, into which the wild sons of Esau clambered, run out from Syria upon the desert, some hundred miles by twenty of porphyry and red

sandstone. They are said to be the finest rock scenery in the world. "Salvator Rosa never conceived so savage and so suitable a haunt for banditti."[1] From Mount Hor, which is their summit, you look down upon a maze of mountains, cliffs, chasms, rocky shelves and strips of valley. On the east the range is but the crested edge of a high, cold plateau, covered for the most part by stones, but with stretches of corn land and scattered woods. The western walls, on the contrary, spring steep and bare, black and red, from the yellow of the desert 'Arabah. The interior is reached by defiles, so narrow that two horsemen may scarcely ride abreast, and the sun is shut out by the overhanging rocks. Eagles, hawks and other mountain birds fly screaming round the traveller. Little else than wild-fowls' nests are the villages; human eyries perched on high shelves or hidden away in caves at the ends of the deep gorges. There is abundance of water. The gorges are filled with tamarisks, oleanders and wild figs. Besides the wheat lands on the eastern plateau, the wider defiles hold fertile fields and terraces for the vine. Mount Esau is, therefore, no mere citadel with supplies for a limited siege, but a well-stocked, well-watered country, full of food and lusty men, yet lifted so high, and locked so fast by'precipice and slippery mountain, that it calls for little trouble of defence. *Dweller in the clefts of the rock, the height is his habitation, that saith in his heart: Who shall bring me down to earth ?*[a]

On this rich fortress-land the Edomites enjoyed a civilisation far above that of the tribes who swarmed

[1] **Irby and Mangles'** ***Travels*****: cf. Burckhardt's** ***Trawls in Syria,*** **and Doughty,** ***Arabia Deserta,*** **I.**

[a] **Obadiah 3.**

upon the surrounding deserts; and at the same time they were cut off from the lands of those Syrian nations who were their equals in culture and descent. When Edom looked out of himself, he looked *down* and *across* —down upon the Arabs, whom his position enabled him to rule with a loose, rough hand, and across at his brothers in Palestine, forced by their more open territories to make alliances with and against each other, from all of which he could afford to hold himself free. That alone was bound to exasperate them. In Edom himself it appears to have bred a want of sympathy, a habit of keeping to himself and ignoring the claims both of pity and of kinship—with which he is charged by all the prophets. *He corrupted his natural feelings^ and watched his passion for ever.*[1] *Thou stoodest aloof!*[3]

This self-sufficiency was aggravated by the position of the country among several of the main routes of ancient trade. The masters of Mount Se'ir' held the harbours of 'Akaba, into which the gold ships came from Ophir. They intercepted the Arabian caravans and cut the roads to Gaza and Damascus. Petra, in the very heart of Edom, was in later times the capital of the Nabatean kingdom, whose commerce rivalled that of Phoenicia, scattering its inscriptions from Teyma in Central Arabia up to the very gates of Rome.[8] The earlier Edomites were also traders, middlemen between Arabia and the Phoenicians; and they filled their caverns with the wealth both of East and West.[4] There can be little doubt that it was this which first drew the envious hand of Israel upon a land so cut

[1] Amos i.: cf. Ezek. xxxv. 5.
[3] Obadiah 10.
[8] *C. I. S.,* II. i. 183 ff.
[4] Obadiah 6.

off from their own and so difficult of invasion. Hear the exultation of the ancient prophet whose words Obadiah has borrowed: *How searched out is Esau^ and his hidden treasures rifled!*[1] But the same is clear from the history. Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Amaziah,„ Uzziah and other Jewish invaders of Edom were all ambitious to command the Eastern trade through Elath and Ezion-geber. For this it was necessary to subdue Edom; and the frequent reduction of the country to a vassal state, with the revolts in which it broke free, were accompanied by terrible cruelties upon both sides.[2] Every century increased the tale of bitter memories between the brothers, and added the horrors of a war of revenge to those of a war for gold.

The deepest springs of their hate, however, bubbled in* their blood. In genius, temper and ambition, the two peoples were of opposite extremes. It is very singular that we never hear in the Old Testament of the Edomite gods. Israel fell under the fascination of every neighbouring idolatry, but does not even mention that Edom had a religion. Such a silence cannot be accidental, and the inference which it suggests is confirmed by the picture drawn of Esau himself. Esau is a *profane person*[3]; with no conscience of a birthright, no faith in the future, no capacity for visions ; dead to the unseen, and clamouring only for the satisfaction of his appetites. The same was probably the character of his descendants; who had, of course, their own gods, like every other people in that Semitic world,[4]

[1] Verse 6.

[2] See the details in Vol. I., pp. 129 f.

[3] Heb. xii. 16.

[4] We even know the names of some of these deities from the theophorous names of Edomites: *e.g.* Baal-chanan (Gen. xxxvi. 38), Hadad (*ib.* 35 ; 1 Kings xi. 14 ff.) ; Malikram, Kausmalaka, Kausgabri

but were essentially irreligious, living for food, spoil and vengeance, with no national conscience or ideals—a kind of people who deserved even more than the Philistines to have their name descend to our times as a symbol of hardness and obscurantism. It is no contradiction to all this that the one intellectual quality imputed to the Edomites should be that of shrewdness and a wisdom which was obviously worldly. *The wise men of Edom^ the cleverness of Mount Esau*[1] were notorious. It is the race which has given to history only the Herods—clever, scheming, ruthless statesmen, as able as they were false and bitter, as shrewd in policy as they were destitute of ideals. *That fox,* cried Christ, and crying stamped the race.

But of such a national character Israel was in all points, save that of cunning, essentially the reverse. Who had such a passion for the ideal ? Who such a hunger for the future, such hopes or such visions? Never more than in the day of their prostration, when Jerusalem and the sanctuary fell in ruins, did they feel and hate the hardness of the brother, who *stood aloof* and *made large his mouth?*

It is, therefore, no mere passion for revenge, which inspires these few, hot verses of Obadiah. No doubt, bitter memories rankle in his heart He eagerly repeats [8] the voices of a day when Israel matched Edom in cruelty and was cruel for the sake of gold, when Judah's kings coveted Esau's treasures and were foiled.

(on Assyrian inscriptions: Schrader, *K.A.T*[1] 150, (613); Kocaapos, *VLoffpovoi, E-wrfrifM, EWIWOJHK {Rev. archeol.* 1870, I. pp. 109 ff., 170 ff.), Kocroapos (Jos., XV. *Ant* vii. 9). See Baethgen, *BeiMge £ur Semit Ret Gesdi.*, pp. 10 ff.

[1] Obadiah 8: cf. Jer. xlix. 7.

[9] Obadiah 11, 12: cf Ezek. xxxv. 12 f.

[9] 1-5 or 6. See above, pp. 167, 171 f.

No doubt there is exultation in the news he hears, that these treasures have been rifled by others; that all the cleverness of this proud people has not availed against its treacherous allies; and that it has been sent packing to its borders.[1] But beneath such savage tempers, there beats the heart which has fought and suffered for the highest things, and now in its martyrdom sees them baffled and mocked by a people without vision and without feeling. Justice, mercy and truth; the education of humanity in the law of God, the establishment of His will upon earth—these things, it is true, are not mentioned in the Book of Obadiah, but it is for the sake of some dim instinct of them that its wrath is poured upon foes whose treachery and malice seek to make them impossible by destroying the one people on earth who then believed and lived for them. Consider the situation. It was the darkest hour of Israel's history. City and Temple had fallen, the people had been carried away. Up over the empty land the waves of mocking heathen had flowed, there was none to beat them back. A Jew who had lived through these things, who had seen 3 the day of Jerusalem's fall and passed from her ruins under the mocking of her foes, dared to cry back into the large mouths they made: Our day is not spent; we shall return with the things we live for; the land shall yet be ours, and the kingdom our God's.

Brave, hot heart! It shall be as thou sayest; it shall be for a brief season. But in exile thy people and thou have first to learn many more things about the heathen than you can now feel. Mix with them on that far-off coast, from which thou criest. Learn what the world is, and that more beautiful and more

[1] Verse 7. [2] See above, p. 171.

"The exiles returned from Babylon to found not a kingdom but a church."

KIRKPATRICK.

"Israel is no longer a kingdom, but a colony" (p. 189).

CHAPTER XV

ISRAEL UNDER THE PERSIANS (539—331 B.C.)

THE next group of the Twelve Prophets—Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and perhaps Joel—fall within the period of the Persian Empire. The Persian Empire was founded on the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus in 539 B.C., and it fell in the defeat of Darius III. by Alexander the Great at the battle of Gaugamela, or Arbela, in 331. The period is thus one of a little more than two centuries.

During all this time Israel were the subjects of the Persian monarchs, and bound to them and their civilisation by the closest of ties. They owed them their liberty and revival as a separate community upon its own land. The Jewish State—if we may give that title to what is perhaps more truly described as a Congregation or Commune—was part of an empire which stretched from the JEgean to the Indus, and the provinces of which were held in close intercourse by the first system of roads and posts that ever brought different races together. Jews were scattered almost everywhere across this empire. A vast number still remained in Babylon, and there were many at Susa and Ecbatana, two of the royal capitals. Most of these were subject to the full influence of Aryan manners and religion; some were even members of the Persian Court and had access to the Royal Presence. In the

Delta of Egypt there were Jewish settlements, and Jews were found also throughout Syria and along the coasts, at least, of Asia Minor. Here they touched another civilisation, destined to impress them in the future even more deeply than the Persian. It is the period of the struggle between Asia and Europe, between Persia and Greece : the period of Marathon and Thermopylae, of Salamis and Plataea, of Xenophon and the Ten Thousand. Greek fleets occupied Cyprus and visited the Delta. Greek armies—in the pay of Persia —trod for the first time the soil of Syria.[1]

In such a world, dominated for the first time by the Aryan, Jews returned from exile, rebuilt their Temple and resumed its ritual, revived Prophecy and codified the Law: in short, restored and organised Israel as the people of God, and developed their religion to those ultimate forms in which it has accomplished its supreme service to the world.

In this period Prophecy does not maintain that lofty position which it has hitherto held in the life

[1] **The chief authorities for this period are as follows:—A. Ancient: the inscriptions of Nabonidus, last native King of Babylon, Cyrus and Darius I.; the Hebrew writings which were composed in, or record the history of, the period; the Greek historians Herodotus, fragments of Ctesias in Diodorus Sic. etc., of Abydenus in Eusebius, Berosus. B. Modern : Meyer's and Duncker's Histories of Antiquity; art. " Ancient Persia " in *En^d. Brit.,* by Noldeke and Gutschmid; Sayce, *Anc, Empires;* the works of Kuenen, Van Hoonacker and Kosters given on p. 192; recent histories of Israel, *e.g.* Stade's, Wellhausen's and Klostermann's; P. Hay Hunter, *After the Exile, a Hundred Years of Jewish History and Literature,* 2 Vols., Edin. 1890; W. Fairweather, *From the Exile to the Advent,* Edin. 1895. On Ezra and Nehemiah see especially Ryle's *Commentary* in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools,* and Bertheau-Ryssel's in *Kursgefasstes Exegetisches Handbuch*: cf. also Charles C. Torrey, *The Composition and Historical Value of Ezra-Nehemiah,* in the *Beihefte zur Z.A.T.W.,* ll., 1896.**

of Israel, and the reasons for its decline are obvious. To begin with, the national life, from which it springs, is of a far poorer quality. Israel is no longer a kingdom, but a colony. The state is not independent: there is virtually no state. The community is poor and feeble, cut off from all the habit and prestige of their past, and beginning the rudiments of life again in hard struggle with nature and hostile tribes. To this level Prophecy has to descend, and occupy itself with these rudiments. We miss the civic atmosphere, the great spaces of public life, the large ethical issues. Instead we have tearful questions, raised by a grudging soil and bad seasons, with all the petty selfishness of hunger-bitten peasants. The religious duties of the colony are mainly ecclesiastical: the building of a temple, the arrangement of ritual, and the ceremonial discipline of the people in separation from their heathen neighbours. We miss, too, the clear outlook of the earlier prophets upon the history of the world, and their calm, rational grasp of its forces. The world is still seen, and even to further distances than before. The people abate no whit of their ideal to be the teachers of mankind. But it is all through another medium. The lurid air of Apocalypse envelops the future, and in their weakness to grapple either politically or philosophically with the problems which history offers, the prophets resort to the expectation of physical catastrophes and of the intervention of supernatural armies. Such an atmosphere is not the native air of Prophecy, and Prophecy yields its supreme office in Israel to other forms of religious development. On one side the ecclesiastic comes to the front—the legalist, the organiser of ritual, the priest; on another, the teacher, the moralist, the thinker

and the speculator. At the same time personal religion is perhaps more deeply cultivated than at any other stage of the people's history. A large number of lyrical pieces bear proof to the existence of a very genuine and beautiful piety throughout the period.

Unfortunately the Jewish records for this time are both fragmentary and confused ; they touch the general history of the world only at intervals, and give rise to a number of difficult questions, some of which are insoluble. The clearest and only consecutive line of data through the period is the list of the Persian monarchs. The Persian Empire, 539—331, was sustained through eleven reigns and two usurpations, of which the following is a chronological table:—

Cyrus (Kurush) the Great	539—529
Cambyses (Kambujiya)	529—522
Pseudo-Smerdis, or Baradis	522
Darius (Darayahush) I., Hystaspis	521—485
Xerxes (Kshayarsha) I.	485—464
Artaxerxes (Artakshathra) I., Longimanus	464—424
Xerxes II.	424—423
Sogdianus	423
Darius II., Nothus	423—404
Artaxerxes II., Mnemon	404—358
Artaxerxes III., Ochus	358—338
Arses	338—335
Darius III., Codomanus.	335—331

Of these royal names, Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes (Ahasuerus) and Artaxerxes are given among the Biblical data; but the fact that there are three Darius', two Xerxes* and three Artaxerxes' makes possible more

than one set of identifications, and has suggested different chronological schemes of Jewish history during this period. The simplest and most generally accepted identification of the Darius, Xerxes (Ahasuerus) and Artaxerxes of the Biblical history,[1] is that they were the first Persian monarchs of these names; and after needful rearrangement of the somewhat confused order of events in the narrative of the Book of Ezra, it was held as settled that, while the exiles returned under Cyrus about 537, Haggai and Zechariah prophesied and the Temple was built under Darius I. between the second and the sixth year of his reign, or from 520 to 516; that attempts were made to build the walls of Jerusalem under Xerxes I. (485—464), but especially under Artaxerxes I. (464—424), under whom first Ezra in 458 and then Nehemiah in 445 arrived at Jerusalem, promulgated the Law and reorganised Israel.

But this has by no means satisfied all modern critics. Some in the interests of the authenticity and correct order of the Book of Ezra, and some for other reasons, argue that the Darius under whom the Temple was built was Darius II., or Nothus, 423—404, and thus bring down the building of the Temple and the prophets Haggai and Zechariah a whole century later than the accepted theory;[2] and that therefore the Artaxerxes, under whom Ezra and Nehemiah laboured, was not the first Artaxerxes, or Longimanus

[1] **Ezra iv. 5-7, etc., vi. 1-14, etc.**

[2] **Havet, *Revue des Deux Mondes,* XCIV. 799 ff. (art *La Modernite des Prophetes)* ; Imbert (in defence of the historical character of the Book of Ezra), *Le Temple Reconstruit par Zorobabel,* extrait du *Museon,* 1888-9 (this I have not seen); Sir Henry Howorth in the *Academy* for 1893—see especially pp. 326 ff.**

(464—424), but the second, or Mnemon (404—358).[1] This arrangement of the history finds some support in the data, and especially in the *order* of the data, furnished by the Book of Ezra, which describes the building of the Temple under Darius *after* its record of events under Xerxes I. (Ahasuerus) and Artaxerxes I? But, as we shall see in the next chapter, the Compiler of the Book of Ezra has seen fit, for some reason, to violate the chronological order of the data at his disposal, and nothing reliable can be built upon his arrangement. Unravel his somewhat confused history, take the contemporary data supplied in Haggai and Zechariah, add to them the historical probabilities of the time, and you will find, as the three Dutch scholars Kuenen, Van Hoonacker and Kosters have done,[1] that the rebuilding of the Temple cannot possibly be dated so late as the reign of the second Darius (423—404), but must be left, according to the usual acceptation, under Darius I. (521—485). Haggai, for instance, plainly implies that among those who saw the Temple rising were men who had seen its predecessor destroyed in 586/ and Zechariah declares that God's wrath on Jerusalem has just lasted seventy years.[6] Nor (however much his confusion may give grounds to the contrary) can the Compiler of the Book of Ezra

[1] Another French writer, Bellang, in the *Muston* for 1890, quoted by Kuenen *(Ges. Abhandl.,* p. 213), goes further, and places Ezra and Nehemiah under the *third* Artaxerxes, Ochus (358—338).

* Ezra iv. 6—*v.*

• Kuenen, *Ds Chronologic van hot Pcrsische Tiidvah dor joodscht GcschitdcntSf* 1890, translated by Budde in Kuenen's *Gcsamwults Abhandlungen,* pp. 212 ff.; Van Hoonacker, *Zorobabel et le Second Temple* (1892); ; Kosters, *Het Herstel van Israel,* in *Het Persische Tijdvak,* 1894, translated by Basedow, *Die Wiederherstellung Israels im Persischen Zeitalter,* 1896.

[4] Hag. ii. 3. [1] Zech, i 12,

have meant any other reign for the building of the Temple than that of Darius I. He mentions that nothing was done to the Temple *all the days of Cyrus and up to the reign of Darius*:[1] by this he cannot intend to pass over the first Darius and leap on three more reigns, or a century, to Darius II. He mentions Zerubbabel and Jeshua both as at the head of the exiles who returned under Cyrus, and as presiding at the building of the Temple under Darius.[2] If alive in 536, they may well have been alive in 521, but cannot have survived till 423.[3] These data are fully supported by the historical probabilities. It is inconceivable that the Jews should have delayed the building of the Temple for more than a century from the time of Cyrus. That the Temple was built by Zerubbabel and Jeshua in the beginning of the reign of Darius I. may be considered as one of the unquestionable data of our period.

But if this be so, then there falls away a great part of the argument for placing the building of the walls of Jerusalem and the labours of Ezra and Nehemiah under Artaxerxes II. (404—358) instead of Artaxerxes I. It is true that some who accept the building of the Temple under Darius I. nevertheless put Ezra and Nehemiah under Artaxerxes II. The weakness of their case, however, has been clearly exposed by Kuenen,[4] who proves that Nehemiah's mission to

[1] Ezra iv. 5.

[2] As Kuenen shows, p. 226, nothing can be deduced from Ezra vi. 14.

[3] Ezra ii. 2, iv. 1 ff., v. 2.

[4] P. 227; in answer to De Saulcy, *&tude CkronologiqM des Livres dEsdras et de Nehnnie* (1868), *Sept Stëeles de IHistoire Jttdalque* (1874). De Saulcy's case rests on the account of Josephus (XI. *Ant.* vii. 2-8: cf. ix. 1), the untrustworthy character of which and its confusion of two distant eras Kuenen has no difficulty in showing.

Jerusalem must have fallen in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes I., or 445.[1] " On this fact there can be no further difference of opinion."[1]

These two dates then are fixed: the beginning of the Temple in 520 by Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and the arrival of Nehemiah at Jerusalem in 445. Other points are more difficult to establish, and in particular there rests a great obscurity on the date of the two visits of Ezra to Jerusalem. According to the Book of Ezra,[1] he went there first in the seventh year of Artaxerxes I., or 458 B.C., thirteen years before the arrival of Nehemiah. He found many Jews married to heathen wives, laid it to heart, and called a general assembly of the people to drive the latter out of the community. Then we hear no more of him: neither in the negotiations with Artaxerxes about the building of .the walls, nor upon the arrival of Nehemiah, nor in Nehemiah's treatment of the mixed marriages. He is absent from everything, till suddenly he appears again at the dedication of the walls by Nehemiah and at the reading of the Law.[4] This "eclipse of Ezra," as Kuenen well calls it, taken with the mixed character of all the records left of him, has moved some to deny to him and his reforms and his promulgation of the Law any historical reality

[1] **When Nehemiah came to Jerusalem Eliyashib was high priest, and he was grandson of Jeshua, who was high priest in 520, or seventy-five years before; but between 520 and the twentieth year of Artaxerxes II. lie one hundred and thirty-six years. And again, the Artaxerxes of Ezra iv. 8-23, under whom the walls of Jerusalem were begun, was the immediate follower of Xerxes (Ahasuerus), and therefore Artaxerxes I., and Van Hoonacker has shown that he must be the same as the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah.**

[2] **Kosters, p. 43.**

[1] vii **1-8.**

[4] **Neh. xii. 36, viii., x.**

whatever;[1] while others, with a more sober and rational criticism, have sought to solve the difficulties by another arrangement of the events than that usually accepted. Van Hoonacker makes Ezra's *first* appearance in Jerusalem to be at the dedication of the walls and promulgation of the Law in 445, and refers his arrival described in Ezra vii. and his attempts to abolish the mixed marriages to a second visit to Jerusalem in the twentieth year, not of Artaxerxes I., but of Artaxerxes IL, or 398 B.C. Kuenen has exposed the extreme unlikelihood, if not impossibility, of so late a date for Ezra, and in this Kosters holds with him.[2] But Kosters agrees with Van Hoonacker in placing Ezra's activity subsequent to Nehemiah's and to the dedication of the walls.

These questions about Ezra have little bearing on our present study of the prophets, and it is not our duty to discuss them. But Kuenen, in answer to Van Hoonacker, has shown very strong reasons[3] for holding in the main to the generally accepted theory of Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem in 458, the seventh year of Artaxerxes I.; and though there are great difficulties about the narrative which follows, and especially about Ezra's sudden disappearance from the scene till after Nehemiah's arrival, reasons may be found for this?

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[1] Vernes, *Precis d'Histoire Juive depuis les Origines jusqu'a ikpoque Persane* (1889), pp. 579 ff. (not seen); more recently also Charles C. Torrey of Andover, *The Composition and Historical Value of Esra-Nehemiah*, in the *Beihefte sur Z.A.T.W.*, IL, 1896.

[2] Pages 113 ff. [3] Page 237.

[4] The failure of his too hasty and impetuous attempts at so wholesale a measure as the banishment of the heathen wives; or his return to Babylon, having accomplished his end. See Ryle, *Esra and Nehemiah*, in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools*, Introd., pp. xl. f.

We are therefore justified in holding, in the meantime, to the traditional arrangement of the great events in Israel in the fifth century before Christ. We may divide the whole Persian period by the two points we have found to be certain, the beginning of the Temple under Darius I. in 520 and the mission of Nehemiah to Jerusalem in 445, and by the other that we have found to be probable, Ezra's arrival in 458.

On these data the Persian period may be arranged under the following four sections, among which we place those prophets who respectively belong to them :—

1. From the Taking of Babylon by Cyrus to the Completion of the Temple in the sixth year of Darius I., 538—516: Haggai and Zechariah in 520 ff.

2. From the Completion of the Temple under Darius I. to the arrival of Ezra in the seventh year of Artaxerxes L, 516—458: sometimes called the period of silence, but probably yielding the Book of "Malachi."

3. The Work of Ezra and Nehemiah under Artaxerxes I., Longimanus, 458—425.

4. The Rest of the Period, Xerxes II. to Darius III., 425—331: the prophet Joel and perhaps several other anonymous fragments of prophecy.

Of these four sections we must now examine the first, for it forms the necessary introduction to our study of Haggai and Zechariah, and above all it raises a question almost greater than any of those we have just been discussing. The fact recorded by the Book of Ezra, and till a few years ago accepted without doubt by tradition and modern criticism, the first Return of Exiles from Babylon under Cyrus, has lately been altogether denied; and the builders of the

Temple in 520 have been asserted to be, not returned exiles, but the remnant of Jews left in Judah by Nebuchadrezzar in 586. The importance of this for our interpretation of Haggai and Zechariah, who instigated the building of the Temple, is obvious: we must discuss the question in detail.

CHAPTER XVI

FROM THE RETURN FROM BABYLON TO THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

(536—516 B.C.)

CYRUS the Great took Babylon and the Babylonian Empire in 539. Upon the eve of his conquest the Second Isaiah had hailed him as the Liberator of the people of God and the builder of their Temple. The Return of the Exiles and the Restoration both of Temple and City were predicted by the Second Isaiah for the immediate future; and a Jewish historian, the Compiler of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, who lived about 300 B.C., has taken up the story of how these events came to pass from the very first year of Cyrus onward. Before discussing the dates and proper order of these events, it will be well to have this Chronicler's narrative before us. It lies in the first and following chapters of our Book of Ezra.

According to this, Cyrus, soon after his conquest of Babylon, gave permission to the Jewish exiles to return to Palestine, and between forty and fifty thousand[1] did so return, bearing the vessels of Jehovah's house which the Chaldeans had taken away in 586.

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[1] **42,360, *besides their servants,* is the total sum given in Ezra ii. 64; but the detailed figures in Ezra amount only to 29,818, those in Nehemiah to 31,089, and those in i Esdras to 30,143 (other MSS. 30,678). See Ryle on Ezra ii. 64.**

These Cyrus delivered *to Sheshbazzar^ prince of Judah*[1] (who is further described in an Aramaic document incorporated by the Compiler of the Book of Ezra as " Pehah," or *provincial governor;** and as laying the foundation of the Temple 3), and there is also mentioned in command of the people a Tirshatha, probably the Persian Tarsita,[4] which also means *provincial governor.* Upon their arrival at Jerusalem, the date of which will be immediately discussed, the people are said to be under Jeshu'a ben Jōṣadak[4] and Zerubbabel ben She'altī'el,' who had already been mentioned as the head of the returning exiles/ and who is called by his contemporary Haggai Pehah, or *governor, of Judah** Are we to understand by Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel one and the same person ? Most critics have answered in the affirmative, believing that Sheshbazzar is but the Babylonian or Persian name by which the Jew Zerubbabel was known at court; • and this view is supported by the facts that Zerubbabel was of the house of David and is called Pehah by Haggai, and by the argument that the command given by the Tirshatha to the Jews to abstain from *eating the most holy things*[10] could only have been given by a

[1] Ezra i. 8.
[2] Ezra v. 14.
* *Ib.* 16.
[4] Ezra ii. 63.
• pTrir yazi: Ezra iil 2, like Ezra i. 1-8, from the Compiler of Ezra-Nehemiah.
• 27762279 7977.
[2] Ezra ii. 2.
[2] Hag. i. 14, ii. 2, 21, and perhaps by Nehemiah (vii. 65-70). Nehemiah himself is styled both Pehah (xiv. 20) and Tirshatha (viii. 9, x. 1).
• As Daniel and his three friends had also Babylonian names.
10 Ezra ii. 63.

native Jew.[1] But others, arguing that Ezra v. I, compared with w. 14 and 16, implies that Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar were two dififerent persons, take the former to have been the most prominent of the Jews themselves, but the latter an official, Persian or Babylonian, appointed by Cyrus to carry out such business in connection with the Return as could only be discharged by an imperial officer.[8] This is, on the whole, the more probable theory.

If it is right, Sheshbazzar, who superintended the Return, had disappeared from Jerusalem by 521, when Haggai commenced to prophesy, and had been succeeded as Peḥah, or governor, by Zerubbabel. But in that case the Compiler has been in error in calling Sheshbazzar *a prince of Judah?*

The next point to fix is what the Compiler considers to have been the date of the Return. He names no year, but he recounts that the same people, whom he has just described as receiving the command of Cyrus to return, did immediately leave Babylon,[4] and he says that they arrived at Jerusalem in *the seventh month,* but again without stating a year.[6] In any case, he

[1] Cf. Ryle, xxxi ff.; and on Ezra i. 8, ii. 63.

[*] Stade, *Gesch. des Volkes Israel,* II. 98 f: cf. Kuenen, *GesammelU Abhandl,,* 220.

[*] Ezra i. 8.

[4] Ezra i. compared with ii. i.

[*] Some think to find this in I Esdras v. 1-6, where it is said that Darius, a name they take to be an error for that of Cyrus, brought up the exiles with an escort of a thousand cavalry, starting in the first month of the second year of the king's reign. This passage, however, is not beyond suspicion as a gloss (see Ryle on Ezra i. n), and even if genuine may be intended to describe a second contingent of exiles despatched by Darius I. in his second year, 520. The names given include that of Jesus, son of Josedec, and instead of Zerubbabel's, that of his son Joacim.

obviously intends to imply that the Return followed immediately on reception of the permission to return, and that this was given by Cyrus very soon after his occupation of Babylon in 539-8. We may take it that the Compiler understood the year to be that we know as 537 B.C. He adds that, on the arrival of the caravans from Babylon, the Jews set up the altar on its old site and restored the morning and evening sacrifices; that they kept also the Feast of Tabernacles, and thereafter all the rest of the *feasts of Jehovah*; and further, that they engaged masons and carpenters for building the Temple, and Phoenicians to bring them cedar-wood from Lebanon.[1]

Another section from the Compiler's hand states that the returned Jews set to work upon the Temple *in the second month of the second year* of their Return, presumably 536 B.C., laying the foundation-stone with due pomp, and amid the excitement of the whole people? Whereupon certain *adversaries*, by whom the Compiler means Samaritans, demanded a share in the building of the Temple, and when Jeshua and Zerubbabel refused this, *the people of the land* frustrated the building of the Temple even until the reign of Darius, 521 ff.

This—the second year of Darius—is the point to which contemporary documents, the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, assign the beginning of new measures to build the Temple. Of these the Compiler of the Book of Ezra says in the meantime nothing, but after barely mentioning the reign of Darius leaps at once[8] to further Samaritan obstructions—though not of the building 01 the Temple (be it noted), but of the building of the city

[1] Ezia iii. 3-7. [*] *Ib,* 8-13: [•] Ezra iv. 7.

walls—in the reigns of Ahasuerus, that is Xerxes, presumably Xerxes I., the successor of Darius, 485—464, and of his successor Artaxerxes I., 464—424;[1] the account of the latter of which he gives not in his own language but in that of an Aramaic document, Ezra iv. 8 ff. And this document, after recounting how Artaxerxes empowered the Samaritans to stop the building of the walls of Jerusalem, records[2] that the building ceased *till the second year of the reign of Darius,* when the prophets Haggai and Zechariah stirred up Zerubbabel and Jeshua to rebuild, not the city walls, be it observed, but the Temple, and with the permission of Darius this building was at last completed in his sixth year.[8] That is to say, this Aramaic document brings us back, with *the frustrated building of the walls* under Xerxes I. and Artaxerxes I. (485—424), to the same date under their predecessor Darius I., viz. 520, to which the Compiler had brought down *the frustrated building of the Temple!* The most reasonable explanation of this confusion, not only of chronology, but of two distinct processes—the erection of the Temple and the fortification of the city—is that the Compiler was misled by his desire to give as strong an impression as possible of the Samaritan obstructions by placing them all together. Attempts to harmonise the order of his narrative with the ascertained sequence of the Persian reigns have failed.[4]

[1] See above, p. 193.

[2] iv. 24.

[3] Ezra iv. 24—vi. 15.

[4] There are in the main two classes of such attempts. (a) Some have suggested that the Ahasuerus (Xerxes) and Artaxerxes mentioned in Ezra iv. 6 and 7 ff. are not the successors of Darius I. who bore these names, but titles of his predecessors Cambyses and the Pseudo-Smerdis (see above, p. 190). This view has been disposed of

Such then is the character of the compilation known to us as the Book of Ezra. If we add that in its present form it cannot be of earlier date than 300 B.C., or two hundred and thirty-six years after the Return, and that the Aramaic document which it incorporates is probably not earlier than 430, or one hundred years after the Return, while the List of Exiles which it gives (in chap, ii.) also contains elements that cannot be earlier than 430, we shall not wonder that grave doubts should have been raised concerning its trustworthiness as a narrative.

These doubts affect, with one exception, all the great facts which it professes to record. The exception is the building of the Temple between the second and sixth years of Darius I., 520—516, which we have already seen to be past doubt.[1] But all that the Book of Ezra relates before this has been called in question, and it has been successively alleged : (1) that there was no such attempt as the book describes to build the Temple before 520, (2) that there was no Return of Exiles at all under Cyrus, and that the Temple was not built by Jews who had come from Babylon, but by Jews who had never left Judah.

These conclusions, if justified, would have the most important bearing upon our interpretation of Haggai and Zechariah. It is therefore necessary to examine them with care. They were reached by critics in the order just stated, but as the second is the more

by Kuenen, *Ges. Abhandl.*, pp. 224 ff., and by Ryle, pp. 65 ff. *(b)* The attempt to prove that the Darius under whom the Temple was built was not Darius I. (521—485), the predecessor of Xerxes I. and Artaxerxes I. (485—424), but their successor once removed, Darius II., Nothus (423—404). So, in defence of the Book of Ezra, Imbert. For his theory and the answer to it see above, pp. 191 f.

[1] See above, pp. 192 ff.

sweeping and to some extent involves the other, we may take it first.

1. Is the Book of Ezra, then, right or wrong in asserting that there was a great return of Jews, headed by Zerubbabel and Jeshua, about the year 536, and that it was they who in 520—516 rebuilt the Temple ?

The argument that in recounting these events the Book of Ezra is unhistorical has been fully stated by Professor Kosters of Leiden.[1] He reaches his conclusion along three lines of evidence: the Books of Haggai and Zechariah, the sources from which he believes the Aramaic narrative Ezra v. 1—vi. 18 to have been compiled, and the list of names in Ezra ii. In the Books of Haggai and Zechariah, he points out that the inhabitants of Jerusalem whom the prophets summon to build the Temple are not called by any name which implies that they are returned exiles; that nothing in the description of them would lead us to suppose this; that God's anger against Israel is represented as still unbroken; that neither prophet speaks of a Return as past, but that Zechariah seems to look for it as still to come? The second line of evidence is an analysis of the Aramaic document, Ezra v. 6ff., into two sources, neither of which implies a Return under Cyrus. But these two lines of proof cannot avail against the List of Returned Exiles offered us in Ezra ii. and

[1] **For his work see above, p. 192, n. 3. I regret that neither Wellhausen's answer to it, nor Kosters' reply to Wellhausen, was accessible to me in preparing this chapter. Nor did I read Mr. Torrey's *resume* of Wellhausen's answer, or Wellhausen's notes to the second edition of his *Isr. u. Jud. GtschichU,* till the chapter was written. Previous to Kosters, the Return under Cyrus had been called in question only by the very arbitrary French scholar M. Vernes in 1889-90.**

* **ii. 6 ff. Eng., 10 ff. Heb.**

Nehemiah vii., if the latter be genuine. On his third line of evidence, Dr. Kosters, therefore, disputes the genuineness of this List, and further denies that it even gives itself out as a List of Exiles returned under Cyrus. So he arrives at the conclusion that there was no Return from Babylon under Cyrus, nor any before the Temple was built in 520 ff., but that the builders were *people of the land*, Jews who had never gone into exile.

The evidence which Dr. Kosters draws from the Book of Ezra least concerns us. Both because of this and because it is the weakest part of his case, we may take it first

Dr. Kosters analyses the bulk of the Aramaic document, Ezra v.—vi. 18, into two constituents. His arguments for this are very precarious.[1] The first document, which he takes to consist of chap. v. 1-5 and 10, with perhaps vi. 6-15 (except a few phrases), relates that Thathnai, , Satrap of the West of the Euphrates, asked Darius whether he might allow the Jews to proceed with the building of the Temple, and received command not only to allow but to help them, on the ground that Cyrus had already given them permission. The second, chap. v. II-17, , vi. 1-3, affirms that the building

[1] **His chief grounds for this analysis are (l) that in v. 1-5 the Jews are said to have *begun* to build the Temple in the second year of Darius, while in v. 16 the foundation-stone is said to have been laid under Cyrus; (2) the frequent want of connection throughout the passage; (3) an alleged doublet: in v. 17—vi. I search is said to have been made for the edict of Cyrus *in Babylon,* while in vi. 2 the edict is said to have been found *in Ecbatana.* But (1) and (3) are capable of very obvious explanations, and (2) is far from conclusive.—The remainder of the Aramaic text, iv. 8-24, Kosters seeks to prove is by the Chronicler or Compiler himself. As Torrey *(op. dt^* p. 11) has shown, this [M] is as unlikely as possible." At the most he may have made additions to the Aramaic document.**

had actually begun under Cyrus, who had sent Sheshbazzar, the Satrap, to see it carried out. Neither of these documents says a word about any order from Cyrus to the Jews to return; and the implication of the second, that the building had gone on uninterruptedly from the time of Cyrus' order to the second year of Darius,[1] is not in harmony with the evidence of the Compiler of the Book of Ezra, who, as we have seen,* states that Samaritan obstruction stayed the building till the second year of Darius.

But suppose we accept Kosters' premisses and agree that these two documents really exist within Ezra v.—vi. 18. Their evidence is not irreconcilable. Both imply that Cyrus gave command to rebuild the Temple: if they were originally independent that would but strengthen the tradition of such a command, and render a little weaker Dr. Kosters' contention that the tradition arose merely from a desire to find a fulfilment of the Second Isaiah's predictions[8] that Cyrus would be the Temple's builder. That neither of the supposed documents mentions the Return itself is very natural, because both

[1] Ezra v. 16.

2 Above, pp. 201 f.

[B] Isa. xliv. 28, xlv. 1. According to Kosters, the statement of the Aramaic document about the rebuilding of the Temple is therefore a pious invention of a literal fulfilment of prophecy. To this opinion Cheyne adheres *(Introd. to the Book of Isaiah,* 1895, p. xxxviii), and adds the further assumption that the Chronicler, being "shocked at the ascription to Cyrus (for the Judaean builders have no credit given them) of what must, he thought, have been at least equally due to the zeal of the exiles," invented his story in the earlier chapters of Ezra as to the part the exiles themselves took in the rebuilding. It will be noticed that these assumptions have precisely the value of such. They are merely the imputation of motives, more or less probable to the writers of certain statements, and may therefore be fairly met by probabilities from the other side. But of this more later on.

are concerned with the building of the Temple. For the Compiler of the Book of Ezra, who on Kosters' argument put them together, the interest of the Return is over; he has already sufficiently dealt with it. But more—Kosters' second document, which ascribes the building of the Temple to Cyrus, surely by that very statement implies a Return of Exiles during his reign. For is it at all probable that Cyrus would have committed the rebuilding of the Temple to a Persian magnate like Sheshbazzar, without sending with him a large number of those Babylonian Jews who must have instigated the king to give his order for rebuilding ? We may conclude then that Ezra v.—vi. 18, whatever be its value and its date, contains no evidence, positive or negative, against a Return of the Jews under Cyrus, but, on the contrary, takes this for granted.

We turn now to Dr. Kosters' treatment of the so-called List of the Returned Exiles. He holds this List to have been, not only borrowed for its place in Ezra ii. from Nehemiah vii.,[1] but even interpolated in the latter. His reasons for this latter conclusion are very improbable, as will be seen from the appended note, and really weaken his otherwise strong case.[8] As to the contents of the List, there are, it is true, many elements which date from Nehemiah's own time and even later. But these are not sufficient to prove

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[1] **This is the usual opinion of critics, who yet hold it to be genuine —g Ryle.**

[3] **He seeks to argue that a List of Exiles returned under Cyrus in 536 could be of no use for Nehemiah's purpose to obtain in 445 a census of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; but surely, if in his efforts to make a census Nehemiah discovered the existence of such a List, it was natural for him to give it as the basis of his inquiry, or (because the List—see above, p. 203—contains elements from Nehemiah's own time) to enlarge it and bring it down to date. But Dr. Kosters thinks**

that the List was not originally a List of Exiles returned under Cyrus. The verses in which this is asserted—Ezra ii. 1, 2; Nehemiah vii. *6,* 7—plainly intimate that those Jews who came up out of the Exile were the same who built the Temple under Darius. Dr. Kosters endeavours to destroy the force of this statement (if true so destructive of his theory) by pointing to the number of the leaders which the List assigns to the returning exiles. In fixing this number as twelve, the author, Kosters maintains, intended to make the leaders representative of the twelve tribes and the body of returned exiles as equivalent to All-Israel. But, he argues, neither Haggai nor Zechariah considers the builders of the Temple to be equivalent to All-Israel, nor was this conception realised in Judah till after the arrival of Ezra with his bands. The force of this argument is greatly weakened by remembering how natural it would have been for men, who felt the Return under Cyrus, however small, to be the fulfilment of the Second Isaiah's glorious predictions of a restoration of All-Israel, to appoint twelve leaders, and so make them representative of the nation as a whole. Kosters' argument against the naturalness of such an appointment in 537, and therefore against the truth of the statement of the List about it, falls to the ground.

But in the Books of Haggai and Zechariah Dr. Kosters

also that, as Nehemiah would never have broken the connection of his memoirs with such a List, the latter must have been inserted by the Compiler, who at this point grew weary of the discursiveness of the memoirs, broke from them, and then—inserted this lengthy List! This is simply incredible—that he should seek to atone for the diffuseness of Nehemiah's memoirs by the intrusion of a very long catalogue which had no relevance to the point at which he broke them off.

finds much more formidable witnesses for his thesis that there was no Return of exiles from Babylon before the building of the Temple under Darius. These books nowhere speak of a Return under Cyrus, nor do they call the community who built the Temple by the names ot Gdlah or B'ne ha-Glah, *Captivity* or *Sons of the Captivity,* which are given after the Return of Ezra's bands;; but they simply name them *this people'* or *remnant oj the people,* people of the land? Judah* or *House of Judah?* names perfectly suitable to Jews who had never left the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Even if we except from this list the phrase *the remnant of the people,* as intended by Haggai and Zechariah in the numerical sense of *the rest* or *all the others?* we have still to deal with the other titles, with the absence from them of any symptom descriptive of return from exile, and with the whole silence of our two prophets concerning such a return. These are very striking phenomena, and they undoubtedly afford considerable evidence for Dr. Kosters' thesis.[4] But it cannot escape notice that the

[1] Hag. i. 2, 12; ii. 14.

* Hag. i. 12, 14; ii. 2; Zech. viii. 6, 11, 12.

* Hag. ii. 4; Zech. vii. 5.

[4] Zech. ii. 16; viii. 13,15.

* It is used in Hag. i 12, 14, it 2, only after the mention of the leaders; see, however, Pusey's note 9 to Hag. i. 12; while in Zech, viii,. 6, 11, 18, it might be argued that it was employed in such a way as to cover not only Jews who had never left their land, but all Jews as well who were left of ancient Israel.

• Compare Cheyne, *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah,* 1895,. xxxv ff,. who says that in the main points Kosters* conclusions " appear so inevitable" that he has " constantly presupposed them" in dealing with chaps, lvi.—lxvi. of Isaiah; and Torrey, *op, cit.,* 1896,. p. 53: "Kosters has demonstrated, from the testimony of Haggai and Zechariah, that Zerubbabel and Jeshua were not returned exiles; and furthermore,. that the prophets Haggai and Zechariah knew nothing of an important return of exiles from Babylonia.'* Cf. also Wildeboer, *LitUralur dts A, T.,* pp. 291 ff

evidence they afford is mainly negative, and this raises two questions: (i) Can the phenomena in Haggai and Zechariah be accounted for ? and (2) whether accounted for or not, can they be held to prevail against the mass of positive evidence in favour of a Return under Cyrus ?

An explanation of the absence of all allusion in Haggai and Zechariah to the Return is certainly possible.

No one can fail to be struck with the spirituality of the teaching of Haggai and Zechariah. Their one ambition is to put courage from God into the poor hearts before them, that these out of their own resources may rebuild their Temple. As Zechariah puts it, *Not by wiight, nor by power^ but by My Spirit, saith Jehovah of Hosts.*[1] It is obvious why men of this temper should refrain from appealing to the Return, or to the royal power of Persia by which it had been achieved. We can understand why, while the annals employed in the Book of Ezra record the appeal of the political leaders of the Jews to Darius upon the strength of the edict of Cyrus, the prophets, in their effort to encourage the people to make the most of what they themselves were and to enforce the omnipotence of God's Spirit apart from all human aids, should be silent about the latter. We must also remember that Haggai and Zechariah were addressing a people to whom (whatever view we take of the transactions under Cyrus) the favour of Cyrus had been one vast disillusion in the light of the predictions of Second Isaiah.[1] The

[1] iv. 4.

*** Of course it is always possible that, if there had been no great Return from Babylon under Cyrus, the community at Jerusalem in 520 had not heard of the prophecies of the Second Isaiah.**

Persian magnate Sheshbazzar himself, invested with full power, had been unable to build the Temple for them, and had apparently disappeared from Judah, leaving his powers as Peḥah, or governor, to Zerubbabel. Was it not, then, as suitable to these circumstances, as it was essential to the prophets' own religious temper, that Haggai and Zechariah should refrain from alluding to any of the political advantages, to which their countrymen had hitherto trusted in vain ?[1]

Another fact should be marked. If Haggai is silent about any return from exile in the past, he is equally silent about any in the future. If for him no return had yet taken place, would he not have been likely to predict it as certain to happen ? [2] At least his silence on the subject proves how absolutely he confined his thoughts to the circumstances before him, and to the needs of his people at the moment he addressed them. Kosters, indeed, alleges that Zechariah describes the Return from Exile as still future—viz. in the lyric piece appended to his Third Vision.[3] But, as we shall see when we come to it, this lyric piece is most probably an intrusion among the Visions, and is not to be assigned to Zechariah himself. Even, however, if it were from the same date and author as the Visions, it

[1] **This argument, it is true, does not fully account for the curious fact that Haggai and Zechariah never call the Jewish community at Jerusalem by a name significant of their return from exile. But in reference to this it ought to be noted that even the Aramaic document in the Book of Ezra which records the Return under Cyrus does not call the builders of the Temple by any name which implies that they have come up from exile, but styles them simply *the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem* (Ezra v. 1), in contrast to the Jews who were in foreign lands.**

[2] **Indeed, why does he ignore the whole Exile itself if no return from it has taken place ?**

[3] **Zech. ii. 10-17 Heb., 6-13 Eng.**

would not prove that no return from Babylon had taken place, but only that numbers of Jews still remained in Babylon.

But we may now take a further step. If there were these natural reasons for the silence of Haggai and Zechariah about a return of exiles under Cyrus, can that silence be allowed to prevail against the mass of testimony which we have that such a return took place ? It is true that, while the Books of Haggai and Zechariah are contemporary with the period in question, some of the evidence for the Return, Ezra i. and iii.—iv. 7, is at least two centuries later, and upon the date of the rest, the List in Ezra it and the Aramaic document in Ezra iv. 8 ff,, we have no certain information. But that the List is from a date very soon after Cyrus is allowed by a large number of the most advanced critics,[1] and even if we ignore it, we still have the Aramaic document, which agrees with Haggai and Zechariah in assigning the real, effectual beginning of the Temple-building to the second year of Darius and to the leadership of Zerubbabel and Jeshua at the instigation of the two prophets.

May we not trust the same document in its relation of the main facts concerning Cyrus? Again, in his memoirs Ezra[1] speaks of the transgressions of the GOlah or B'ne ha-GOlah in effecting marriages with the mixed people of the land, in a way which shows that he means by the name, not the Jews who had just come up with himself from Babylon, but the older community whom he found in Judah, and who had

[1] *Eg.* Stade, Kuenen (op. *at.*, p. 216). So, too, Klostermann, *Gcsch. des Volks Israel,* Mnchen,, 1896. Wellhausen, in the second edition of his *Gesch.,* does not admit that the List is one of exiles returned under Cyrus (p. 155, n.).

[8] ix. 4; x. 6, 7.

had time, as his own bands had not, to scatter over the land and enter into social relations with the heathen.

But, as Kuenen points out,[1] we have yet further evidence for the probability of a Return under Cyrus, in the explicit predictions of the Second Isaiah that Cyrus would be the builder of Jerusalem and the Temple. "If they express the expectation, nourished by the prophet and his contemporaries, then it is clear from their preservation for future generations that Cyrus did not disappoint the hope of the exiles, from whose midst this voice pealed forth to him." And this leads to other considerations. Whether was it more probable for the poverty-stricken *people of the land*, the dregs which Nebuchadrezzar had left behind, or for the body and flower of Israel in Babylon, to rebuild the Temple? Surely for the latter.[1] Among them had risen, as Cyrus drew near to Babylon, the hopes and the motives, nay, the glorious assurance of the Return and the Rebuilding; and with them was all the material for the latter. Is it credible that they took no advantage of their opportunity under Cyrus? Is it credible that they waited nearly a century before seeking to return to Jerusalem, and that the building of the Temple was left to people who were half-

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 216, where he also quotes the testimony of the Book of Daniel (ix. 25).

2 Since writing the above I have seen the relevant notes to the second edition of Wellhausen's *Gesch.*, pp. 155 and 160. "The re-founding of Jerusalem and the Temple cannot have started from the Jews left behind in Palestine." "The remnant left in the land would have restored the old popular cultus of the high places. Instead of that we find even before Ezra the legitimate cultus and the hierocracy in Jerusalem: in the Temple-service proper Ezra discovers nothing to reform. Without the leaven of the Golah the Judaism of Palestine is in its origin incomprehensible."

heathen, and, in the eyes of the exiles, despicable and unholy? This would be credible only upon one condition, that Cyrus and his immediate successors disappointed the predictions of the Second Isaiah and refused to allow the exiles to leave Babylon. But the little we know of these Persian monarchs points all the other way: nothing is more probable, for nothing is more in harmony with Persian policy, than that Cyrus should permit the captives of the Babylon which he conquered to return to their own lands.[1]

Moreover, we have another, and to the mind of the present writer an almost conclusive argument, that the Jews addressed by Haggai and Zechariah were Jews returned from Babylon. Neither prophet ever charges his people with idolatry; neither prophet so much as mentions idols. This is natural if the congregation addressed was composed of such pious and ardent adherents of Jehovah, as His word had brought back to Judah, when His servant Cyrus opened the way. But had Haggai and Zechariah been addressing *the people of the land*, who had never left the land, they could not have helped speaking of idolatry.

Such considerations may very justly be used against an argument which seeks to prove that the narratives of a Return under Cyrus were due to the pious invention of a Jewish writer who wished to record that the predictions of the Second Isaiah were fulfilled by Cyrus, their designated trustee.[8] They certainly

[1] The inscription of Cyrus is sometimes quoted to this effect: cf. P. Hay Hunter, *op. cit.*, 35. But it would seem that the statement of Cyrus is limited to the restoration of Assyrian idols and their worshippers to Assur and Akkad. Still, what he did in this case furnishes a strong argument for the probability of his having done the same in the case of the Jews.

3 See above, p. 206, and especially n. 3.

possess a far higher degree of probability than that argument does.

Finally there is this consideration. If there was no return from Babylon under Cyrus, and the Temple, as Dr. Kosters alleges, was built by the poor people of the land, is it likely that the latter should have been regarded with such contempt as they were by the exiles who returned under Ezra and Nehemiah? Theirs would then have been the glory of reconstituting Israel, and their position very different from what we find it.

On all these grounds, therefore, we must hold that the attempt to discredit the tradition of an important return of exiles under Cyrus has not been successful; that such a return remains the more probable solution of an obscure and difficult problem; and that therefore the Jews who with Zerubbabel and Jeshua are represented in Haggai and Zechariah as building the Temple in the second year of Darius, 520, had come up from Babylon about 537.[1] Such a conclusion, of course, need not commit us to the various data offered by the Chronicler in his story of the Return, such as the Edict of Cyrus, nor to all of his details.

2. Many, however, who grant the correctness of the tradition that a large number of Jewish exiles returned under Cyrus to Jerusalem, deny the statement of the Compiler of the Book of Ezra that the returned exiles immediately prepared to build the Temple and laid the foundation-stone with solemn festival, but were

[1] **Even Cheyne, after accepting Kosters* conclusions as in the main points inevitable *(op, cit.,* , p. xxxv), considers (p. xxxviii) that " the earnestness of Haggai and Zechariah (who cannot have stood alone) implies the existence of a higher religious element at Jerusalem long before 432 B.C. Whence came this higher element but from its natural home among the more cultured Jews in Babylonia?"**

hindered from proceeding with the building till the second year of Darius.[1] They maintain that this late narrative is contradicted by the contemporary statements of Haggai and Zechariah, who, according to them, imply that no foundation-stone was laid till 520 B.C.[3] For the interpretation of our prophets this is not a question of cardinal importance. But for clearness' sake we do well to lay it open.

We may at once concede that in Haggai and Zechariah there is nothing which necessarily implies that the Jews had made any beginning to build the Temple before the start recorded by Haggai in the year 520. The one passage, Haggai ii. 18, which is cited to prove this[8] is at the best ambiguous, and many scholars claim it as a fixture of that date for the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of 520.' At the same time, and even granting that the latter interpretation of Haggai ii. 18 is correct, there is nothing in either Haggai or Zechariah to make it impossible that a foundation-stone had been laid some years before, but abandoned in consequence of the Samaritan obstruction, as alleged in Ezra iii. 8-11. If we keep in mind Haggai's and Zechariah's silence

[1] Ezra iii. 8-13.

[3] Schrader, "Ueber die Dauer des Tempelbaues," in *Stud, u, Krit,* 1879, 460 ff.; Stade, *Gesch. des Volkes Israel,* II. 115 f.; Kuenen, *op, at.,* p. 222; Kosters, *op, cit.,* Chap. I., § I. To this opinion others have adhered: KOnig *(Einleit, in das A.T,),* Ryssel *(op. at.)* and Marti (2nd edition of Kayser's *Theol, des A, T,,* p. 200). Schrader (p. 563) argues that Ezra iii. 8-13 was not founded on a historical document, but is an imitation of Neh. vii. 73—viii.; and Stade that the Aramaic document in Ezra which ascribes the laying of the foundation-stone to Sheshbazzar, the legate of Cyrus, was not earlier than 430.

[•] Ryle, *op. a't,,* p. xxx

[4] Stade, Wellhausen, etc. See below, Chap. XVIII. on Hag. ii. 18.

about the Return from Babylon, and their very natural concentration upon their own circumstances,[1] we shall not be able to reckon their silence about previous attempts to build the Temple as a conclusive proof that these attempts never took place. Moreover the Aramaic document, which agrees with our two prophets in assigning the only effective start of the work on the Temple to 520,[2] does not deem it inconsistent with this to record that the Persian Satrap of the West of the Euphrates[3] reported to Darius that, when he asked the Jews why they were rebuilding the Temple, they replied not only that a decree of Cyrus had granted them permission,[4] but that his legate Sheshbazzar had actually laid the foundation-stone upon his arrival at Jerusalem, and that the building had gone on without interruption from that time to 520.5 This last assertion, which of course was false, may have been due either to a misunderstanding of the Jewish elders by the reporting Satrap, or else to the Jews themselves, anxious to make their case as strong as possible. The latter is the more probable alternative. As even Stade admits, it was a very natural assertion for the Jews to make, and so conceal that their effort of 520 was due to the instigation of their own prophets. But in any case the Aramaic document corroborates the statement of the Compiler that there was a foundation-stone laid in the early years of Cyrus, and does not conceive this to be inconsistent with its own narrative of a stone being laid in 520, and an effective start at last made upon the Temple works. So much does Stade feel the force of this, that he concedes not only that Sheshbazzar may have started some preparation

[1] See above, pp. 210 f.
[2] Ezra iv. 24, v. 1
[3] Ezra v. 6.
[4] *Ib.* 13.
[5] *Ib.* 16.

for building the Temple, but that he may even have laid the stone with ceremony.[1]

And indeed, is it not in itself very probable that some early attempt was made by the exiles returned under Cyrus to rebuild the house of Jehovah ? Cyrus had been predicted by the Second Isaiah not only as the redeemer of God's people, but with equal explicitness as the builder of the Temple; and all the argument which Kuenen draws from the Second Isaiah for the fact of the Return from Babylon[8] tells with almost equal force for the fact of some efforts to raise the fallen sanctuary of Israel immediately after the Return. Among the returned were many priests, and many no doubt of the most sanguine spirits in Israel. They came straight from the heart of Jewry, though that heart was in Babylon; they came with the impetus and obligation of the great Deliverance upon them; they were the representatives of a community which we know to have been comparatively wealthy. Is it credible that they should not have begun the Temple at the earliest possible moment?

Nor is the story of their frustration by the Samaritans any less natural.[8] It is true that there were not any adversaries likely to dispute with the colonists the land in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem. The Edomites had overrun the fruitful country about

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[1] *Gesch.*, II., p. 123.

* See above, p. 213.

[8] Ezra iv. 1-4. "That the relation of Ezra iv. 1-4 is historical seems to be established against objections which have been taken to it by the reference to Esarhaddon, which A. v. Gutschmidt has vindicated by an ingenious historical combination with the aid of the Assyrian monuments *(New Beitr&ge,* p. 145)."—Robertson Smith, art. "Haggai," *Encyc, Brit,*

Hebron, and part of the Shephelah. The Samaritans held the rich valleys of Ephraim, and probably the plain of Ajalon. But if any peasants struggled with the stony plateaus of Benjamin and Northern Judah, such must have been of the remnants of the Jewish population who were left.behind by Nebuchadrezzar, and who clung to the sacred soil from habit or from motives of religion. Jerusalem was never a site to attract men, either for agriculture, or, now that its shrine was desolate and its population scattered, for the command of trade.[1] The returned exiles must have been at first undisturbed by the envy of their neighbours. The tale is, therefore, probable which attributes the hostility of the latter to purely religious causes—the refusal of the Jews to allow the half-heathen Samaritans to share in the construction of the Temple.[1] Now the Samaritans could prevent the building. While stones were to be had by the builders in profusion from the ruins of the city and the great quarry to the north of it, ordinary timber did not grow in their neighbourhood, and though the story be true that a contract was already made with Phoenicians to bring cedar to Joppa, it had to be carried thence for thirty-six miles. Here, then, was the opportunity of the Samaritans. They could obstruct the carriage both of the ordinary timber and of the cedar. To this state of affairs the present writer found an analogy in 1891 among the Circassian colonies settled by the Turkish Government a few years earlier in the vicinity of Gerasa and Rabbath-Ammon. The colonists had built their houses from the numerous ruins of these cities, but at Rabbath-Ammon they said their great difficulty had been about timber. And we

[1] Cf. *Hist. Gtog.*, pp. 317 ff. [2] Ezra iv.

could well understand how the Beduin, who resented the settlement of Circassians on lands they had used for ages, and with whom the Circassians were nearly always at variance,[1] did what they could to make the carriage of timber impossible. Similarly with the Jews and their Samaritan adversaries. The site might be cleared and the stone of the Temple laid, but if the timber was stopped there was little use in raising the walls, and the Jews, further discouraged by the failure of their impetuous hopes of what the Return would bring them, found cause for desisting from their efforts. Bad seasons followed, the labours for their own sustenance exhausted their strength, and in the sordid toil their hearts grew hard to higher interests. Cyrus died in 529, and his legate Sheshbazzar, having done nothing but lay the stone, appears to have left Judaea.[2] Cambyses marched more than once through Palestine, and his army garrisoned Gaza, but he was not a monarch to have any consideration for Jewish ambitions. Therefore—although Samaritan opposition ceased on the stoppage of the Temple works and the Jews procured timber enough for their private dwellings[8]—is it wonderful that the site of the Temple should be neglected and the stone laid by Sheshbazzar forgotten, or that the disappointed Jews should seek to explain the disillusions of the Return, by arguing that God's time for the restoration of His house had not yet come ?

1 **There was a sharp skirmish at Rabbath-Ammon the night we spent there, and at least one Circassian was shot**

2 **" Sheshbazzar presumably having taken up his task with the usua conscientiousness of an Oriental governor, that is having done nothing though the work was nominally in hand all along (Ezra v. 16)."—Robertson Smith, art. " Haggai," *Encyc, Brit.***

• **See below, Chap. XVIII.**

The death of a cruel monarch is always in the East an occasion for the revival of shattered hopes, and the events which accompanied the suicide of Cambyses in 522 were particularly fraught with the possibilities of political change. Cambyses' throne had been usurped by one Gaumata, who pretended to be Smerdis or Barada, a son of Cyrus. In a few months Gaumata was slain by a conspiracy of seven Persian nobles, of whom Darius, the son of Hystaspes, both by virtue of his royal descent and by his own great ability, was raised to the throne in 521. The empire had been too profoundly shocked by the revolt of Gaumata to settle at once under the new king, and Darius found himself engaged by insurrections in all his provinces except Syria and Asia Minor.[1] The colonists in Jerusalem, like all their Syrian neighbours, remained loyal to the new king; so loyal that their Pehah or Satrap was allowed to be one of themselves—Zerubbabel, son of She'alti'el,' a son of their royal house. Yet though they were quiet, the nations were rising against each other and the world was shaken. It was just such a crisis as had often before in Israel rewakened prophecy. Nor did it fail now; and when prophecy was roused what duty lay more clamant for its inspiration than the duty of building the Temple ?

We are in touch with the first of our post-exilic prophets, Haggai and Zechariah.

[1] **Herod., I. 130, III. 127.**

[3] **I Chron. iii. 19 makes him a son of Pedaiah, brother of She'alti'el, son of Jehoiachin, the king who was carried away by Nebuchadrezzar in 597 and remained captive till 561, when King Evil-Merodach set him in honour. It has been supposed that, She'alti'el dying childless, Pedaiah by levirate marriage with his widow became father of Zerubbabel.**

HAGGAI

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CHAPTER XVII

THE BOOK OF HAGGAI

THE Book of Haggai contains thirty-eight verses, which have been divided between two chapters.[1] The text is, for the prophets, a comparatively sound one. The Greek version affords a number of corrections, but has also the usual amount of misunderstandings, and, as in the case of other prophets, a few additions to the Hebrew text.[2] These and the variations in the other ancient versions will be noted in the translation below.®

The book consists of four sections, each recounting a message from Jehovah to the Jews in Jerusalem in 520 B.C., *the second year of Darius* (Hystaspis), *by the hand of the prophet Haggai.*

The *first,* chap, i., dated the first day of the sixth month, during our September, reproves the Jews for building their own *deled houses,* while they say that *the time fin building Jehovah's house has not yet come;*

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[1] **In the English Bible the division corresponds to that of the Hebrew, which gives fifteen verses to chap. i. The LXX. takes the fifteenth verse along with ver. 1 of chap. ii.**

[2] **ii. 9, 14 : see on these passages, pp. 243, n. 1, 246, n. 4.**

[8] **Besides the general works on the text of the Twelve Prophets, already cited, M. Tony Andree has published *Critique du T^xU dAggu: Quoin Tableaux Comparatifs* (Paris, 1893), which is also included in his general introduction and commentary on the prophet, quoted below.**

affirms that this is the reason of their poverty and of a great drought which has afflicted them. A piece of narrative is added recounting how Zerubbabel and Jeshua,, the heads of the community, were stirred by this word to lead the people to begin work on the Temple, on the twenty-fourth day of the same month.

The *second* section, chap. ii. 1-9, contains a message, dated the twenty-first day of the seventh month, during our October, in which the builders are encouraged for their work. Jehovah is about to shake all nations, these shall contribute of their wealth, and the latter glory of the Temple be greater than the former.

The *third* section, chap. ii. 10-19, contains a word of Jehovah which came to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, during our December. It is in the form of a parable based on certain ceremonial laws, according to which the touch of a holy thing does not sanctify so much as the touch of an unholy pollutes. Thus is the people polluted, and thus every work of their hands. Their sacrifices avail nought, and adversity has persisted: small increase of fruits, blasting, mildew and hail. But from this day God will bless.

The *fourth* section, chap. ii. 20-23, is a second word from the Lord to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. It is for Zerubbabel, and declares that God will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the forces of many of the Gentiles by war. In that day Zerubbabel, the Lord's elect servant, shall be as a signet to the Lord.

The authenticity of all these four sections was doubted by no one,[1] till ten years ago W. Bhme„

[1] **Robertson Smith *(Encyc. Brit.,* art. "' Haggai," 1880) does not even mention authenticity. "Without doubt from Haggai himself" (Kuenen). "The Book of Haggai is without doubt to be dated,**

besides pointing out some useless repetitions of single words and phrases, cast suspicion on chap. i. 13, and questioned the whole of the *fourth* section, chap. ii. 20-23.[1] With regard to chap. i. 13, it is indeed curious that Haggai should be described as *the messenger of Jehovah* \ while the message itself, *I am with you*, seems superfluous here, and if the verse be omitted, ver. 14 runs on naturally to ver. 12.[2] Bhme's reasons for disputing the authenticity of chap. ii. 20-23 are much less sufficient. He thinks he sees the hand of an editor in the phrase *Jor a second time* in ver. 20; notes the omission of the title "prophet"[3] after Haggai's name, and the difference of the formula *the word came to Haggai* from that employed in the previous sections, *by the hand of Haggai*^ and the repetition of ver. *6 b* in ver. 21 ; and otherwise concludes that the section is an insertion from a later hand. But the formula *the word came to Haggai* occurs also in ii. 10:[4] the other points are trivial, and while it was most natural for Haggai the contemporary of Zerubbabel to entertain of the latter such hopes as the passage expresses, it is inconceivable that a later writer, who knew how they had not been fulfilled in Zerubbabel, should have invented them.[6]

Recently M. Tony Andree, *privat-docent* in the University of Geneva, has issued a large work on Haggai,[6] in which he has sought to prove that the *third* section of

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according to its whole extant contents, from the prophet Haggai, whose work fell in the year 520 " (Konig). So Driver, Kirkpatrick, Cornill, etc.

[1] *Z,A,T.W.*, 1887, 215 f. • Which occurs only in the LXX.

*** So also Wellhausen. [4] See note on that verse.**

*** Cf. Wildeboer, *Litr. dts A, T,* 294.**

[8] *Lt Prophete Aggt% Introduction Critique et Coutmentairt,* Paris, Fischbacher, 1893.

the book, chap. ii. (10) 11-19, is from the hand of another writer than the rest He admits[1] that in neither form, nor style, nor language is there anything to prove this distinction, and that the ideas of all the sections suit perfectly the condition of the Jews in the time soon after the Return. But he considers that chap. ii. (10) 11-19 interrupts the connection between the sections upon either side of it; that the author is a legalist or casuist, while the author of the other sections is a man whose only ecclesiastical interest is the rebuilding of the Temple; that there are obvious contradictions between chap. ii. (10) 11-19 and the rest of the book; and that there is a difference of vocabulary. Let us consider each of these reasons.

The first, that chap. ii. (10) 11*19 interrupts the connection between the sections on either side of it, is true only in so far as it has a different subject from that which the latter have more or less in common. But the second of the latter, chap. ii. 20-23, treats only of a corollary of the first, chap. ii. 1-9, and that corollary may well have formed the subject of a separate oracle. Besides, as we shall see, chap. ii. 10-19 is a natural development of chap. i.[a] The contradictions alleged by M. Andree are two. He points out that while chap. i. speaks only of a *drought*,* chap. ii. (10) 11-19 mentions[4] as the plagues on the crops shiddāphdn and yērākdn, generally rendered *blasting* and *mildew* in our English Bible, and bārād, or *hail*; and these he reckons to be plagues due not to drought but to excessive moisture. But shiddphn and yerākdn, which are always connected in the Old Testament and are words of doubtful meaning, are not referred to damp in any of the passages in

[1] Page 151. • i. 10, II.
[8] Below, p. 249, [4] ii. 17.

which they occur, but, on the contrary, appear to be the consequences of drought.[1] The other contradiction alleged refers to the ambiguous verse ii. 18, on which we have already seen it difficult to base any conclusion, and which will be treated when we come to it in the course of translation? Finally, the differences in language which M. Andree cites are largely imaginary, and it is hard to understand how a responsible critic has come to cite, far more to emphasise them, as he has done. We may relegate the discussion of them to a note,[8] and need here only remark that there is among

[1] They follow drought in Amos iv. 9; and in the other passages where they occur—Deut. xxviii. 22; 1 Kings viii. 37 ; 2 Chron. vi. 28 —they are mentioned in a list of possible plagues after famine, or pestilence, , or fevers, all of which, with the doubtful exception of fevers, followed drought.

[1] Above, p. 216; below, p. 248, n. 2.

* Some of M. Andree's alleged differences need not be discussed at all, eg. that between ' "BD and "07. But here are the others. He asserts that while chap. i. calls *oil and mint* "yiṣhar and tirdsh," chap. ii. (10) 11*19 calls them "yayin and shemen." But he over* looks the fact that the former pair of names, meaning the newly pressed oil and wine, suit their connection, in which the fruits of the earth are being catalogued, i. 11, while the latter pair, meaning the finished wine and oil, equally suit their connection, in which articles of food are being catalogued, ii. 12. Equally futile is the distinction drawn between i. 9, which speaks of bringing the crops *to the house, or* as we should say *home,* and ii. 19, which speaks of seed being *in the barn,* Again, what is to be said of a critic who adduces in evidence' of distinction of authorship the fact that i. 6 employs the verb labhash, *to clothe,* while ii. 12 uses beged for *garment,* and who actually puts in brackets the root bagad, as if it anywhere in the Old Testament meant *to clothe!* Again, Andree remarks that while ii. (10) 11-19 does not employ the epithet *Jehovah of Hosts,* but only *Jehovah,* the rest of the book frequently uses the former; but he omits to observe that the rest of the book, besides using *Jehovah of Hosts,* often uses the name Jehovah alone [the phrase in ii. (10) 11*19 is mn' DNJ,, and occurs twice ii. 14, 17 ; but the rest of the book has also mm ' na, ii. 4; and besides mm 'W, i. 1, , ii. 1, ii. 20; mm D8, i. 8; and D2K mm and mm "DD, i. 12]. Again, Andree observes

them but one of any significance: while the rest of the book calls the Temple *the House* or *the House of Jehovah* (or *of Jehovah oj Hosts),* chap. ii. (10) 11-19 styles it *palace,* or temple, of Jehovah.[1] On such a difference between two comparatively brief passages it would be unreasonable to decide for a distinction of authorship.

There is, therefore, no reason to disagree with the consensus of all other critics in the integrity of the Book of Haggai. The four sections are either from himself or from a contemporary of his. They probably represent,[8] not the full addresses given by him on the occasions stated, but abstracts or summaries of these. "‘ It is never an easy task to persuade a whole population to make pecuniary sacrifices, or to postpone private to public interests; and the probability is, that in these brief remains of the prophet Haggai we have but one or two specimens of a ceaseless diligence and persistent determination, which upheld and animated the whole people till the work was accomplished."[3]

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that while the rest of the book designates Israel always by Dy' and the heathen by ''3, chap. ii. (10) 11-19, in ver. 14, uses both terms of Israel. Yet in this latter case n3 is used only in parallel to DD„ as frequently in other parts of the Old Testament. Again, that while in the rest of the book Haggai is called the prophet (the doubtful i. 13 may be omitted), he is simply named in ii. (10) 11*19, means nothing, for the name here occurs only in introducing his contribution to a conversation, in recording which it was natural to omit titles. Similarly insignificant is the fact that while the rest of the book mentions only *the High Priest,* chap. ii. (10) 11-19 talks only of *the priests*: because here again each is suitable to the connection.—Two or three of Andree's alleged grounds (such as that from the names for wine and oil and that from labhash and beged) are enough to discredit his whole case.

[1] ii. 15, 18.

*** In this opinion, stated first by Eichhorn, most critics agree.**

*** Marcus Dods, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi,* 1879, in Handbooks for Bible Classes: Edin., T. & T. Clark.**

At the same time it must be noticed that the style of the book is not wholly of the bare, jejune prose which it is sometimes described to be. The passages of Haggai's own exhortation are in the well-known parallel rhythm of prophetic discourse: see especially chap, i., ver. 6.

The only other matter of Introduction to the prophet Haggai is his name. The precise form[1] is not elsewhere found in the Old Testament; but one of the clans of the tribe of Gad is called Haggi,[8] and the letters H G I occur as the consonants of a name on a Phoenician inscription.[8] Some[4] have taken Haggai to be a contraction of Haggiyah, the name of a Levitical family,[6] but although the final *yod* of some proper names stands for Jehovah, we cannot certainly conclude that it is so in this case. Others [6] see in Haggai a probable contraction for Hagariah/ as Zaccai, the original of Zacchaeus, is a contraction of Zechariah.[8] A more general opinion[8] takes the termination as adjectival,[10] and the root to be " hag," *feast* or *festival*^ In that case Haggai would mean *festal,* and it has been supposed that the name would be given to him from

[1] ah, Greek "Aoryalos.

* 'JO, Gen. xlvi. 16, Num. xxvi. 15; Greek 'Ayet, 'Ayeis. The feminine n'i, Haggith, was the name of one of David's wives: 2 Sam. iii. 4.

• No. 67 of the Phoenician inscriptions in G *I. S.*

[4] Hiller, *Onom. Sacrum,* Tab., 1706 (quoted by Andree), and Pusey.

[4] nn,'1 Chron. vi. 15; Greek 'Amya, Lu. 'Avaa.

[8] Kdhler, *NachtxiL Proph.,* I. 2; Wellhausen in fourth edition of Bleek's *Einlciiung*; Robertson Smith, *Encyc. Brit.,* art " Haggai."

[7] nn-*Jehovah hath girded.*

• Derenbourg, *Hist, de la Palestine,* pp. 95, 150.

[9] Jerome, Gesenius, and most moderns.

[1] As in the names '2173, '3377, '22, etc.,

[11] The radical double *g* of which appears in composition.

his birth on the day of some feast. It is impossible to decide with certainty among these alternatives. M. Andree,[1] who accepts the meaning *festal*, ventures the hypothesis that, like "Malachi," Haggai is a symbolic title given by a later hand to the anonymous writer of the book, because of the coincidence of his various prophecies with solemn festivals.[9] But the name is too often and too naturally introduced into the book to present any analogy to that of "Malachi"; and the hypothesis may be dismissed as improbable and unnatural.

Nothing more is known of Haggai than his name and the facts given in his book. But as with the other prophets whom we have treated, so with this one, Jewish and Christian legends have been very busy. Other functions have been ascribed to him; a sketch of his biography has been invented. According to the Rabbis he was one of the men of the Great Synagogue, and with Zechariah and "Malachi" transmitted to that mythical body the tradition of the older prophets.[8] He was the author of several ceremonial regulations, and with Zechariah and "Malachi" introduced into the alphabet the terminal forms of the five elongated letters.[4] The Christian Fathers narrate that he was of the tribe of Levi,[5] that with Zechariah he prophesied in exile of the Return,[5] and was still young when he arrived in Jerusalem/ where he died and was

[1] *Op. dt.*, p. 8.

3 i. I, the new moon; ii. I, the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles ; ii. 18, the foundation of the Temple (?).

• Baba-bathra, 15a, etc.

[4] Megilla, 26.

* Hesychius : see above, p 80, n.

* Augustine, *Enarratio in Psalm cxlvH.*

7 Pseud-Epiphanius, *De Vitis Prophtiarum.*

buried. A strange legend, founded on the doubtful verse which styles him *the messenger of Jehovah,* gave out that Haggai, as well as for similar reasons "Malachi" and John the Baptist, were not men, but angels in human shape.[1] With Zechariah Haggai appears on the titles of Psalms cxxxvii., cxlv.—cxlviii. in the Septuagint; cxi., cxlv., cxlvi. in the Vulgate; and cxxv., cxxvi. and cxlv.—cxlviii. in the Peshitto.[1] " in the Temple at Jerusalem he was the first who chanted the Hallelujah, . . . wherefore we say: Hallelujah, which is the hymn of Haggai and Zechariah."* All these testimonies are, of course, devoid of value.

Finally, the modern inference from chap. ii. 3, that Haggai in his youth had seen the former Temple, had gone into exile, and was now returned a very old man,[4] may be probable, but is not certain. We are quite ignorant of his age at the time the word of Jehovah came to him.

[1] **Jerome on Hag. i. 13.**

[1] **Eusebius did not find these titles in the Hexaplar Septuagint See Field's *Hexaplar* on Psalm cxlv. 1. The titles are of course wholly without authority.**

• **Pseud-Epiphanius, as above.**

[4] **So Ewald, Wildeboer (p. 295) and others.**

CHAPTER XVIII

HAGGAI AND THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

HAGGAI i., ii

WE have seen that the most probable solution oi the problems presented to us by the inadequate and confused records of the time is that a considerable number of Jewish exiles returned from Jerusalem to Babylon about 537, upon the permission of Cyrus, and that the Satrap whom he sent with them not only allowed them to raise the altar on its ancient site, but himself laid for them the foundation-stone of the Temple.[1]

We have seen, too, why this attempt led to nothing, and we have followed the Samaritan obstructions, the failure of the Persian patronage, the drought and bad harvests, and all the disillusion of the fifteen years which succeeded the Return.[2] The hostility of the Samaritans was entirely due to the refusal of the Jews to give them a share in the construction of the

[1] **See above, pp. 210-18, and emphasise specially the facts that the most pronounced adherents of Kosters[1] theory seek to qualify his absolute negation of a Return under Cyrus, by the admission that some Jews did return; and that even Stade, who agrees in the main with Schrader that no attempt was made by the Jews to begin building the Temple till 520, admits the probability of a stone being laid by Sheshbazzar about 536.**

[1] **See above, pp. 218 ff.**

Temple, and its virulence, probably shown by preventing the Jews from procuring timber, seems to have ceased when the Temple works were stopped. At least we find no mention of it in our prophets; and the Jews are furnished with enough of timber to panel and ciel their own houses.[1] But the Jews must have feared a renewal of Samaritan attacks if they resumed work on the Temple, and for the rest they were too sodden with adversity, and too weighted with the care of their own sustenance, to spring at higher interests. What immediately precedes our prophets is a miserable story of barren seasons and little income, money leaking fast away, and every man's sordid heart engrossed with his own household. Little wonder that critics have been led to deny the great Return of sixteen years back, with its grand ambitions for the Temple and glorious future of Israel. But the like collapse has often been experienced in history when bands of religious men, going forth, as they thought, to freedom and the immediate erection of a holy commonwealth, have found their unity wrecked and their enthusiasm dissipated by a few inclement seasons on a barren and a hostile shore. Nature and their barbarous fellow-men have frustrated what God had promised. Themselves, accustomed from a high stage of civilisation to plan still higher social structures, are suddenly reduced to the primitive necessities of tillage and defence against a savage foe. Statesmen, poets and idealists of sorts have to hoe the ground, quarry stones and stay up of nights to watch as sentinels. Destitute of the comforts and resources with which they have grown up, they live in constant battle with their bare and unsympathetic

[4] Hag. L 4.

environs. It is a familiar tale in history, and we read it with ease in the case of Israel. The Jews enjoyed this advantage, that they came not to a strange land, but to one crowded with inspiring memories, and they had behind them the most glorious impetus of prophecy which ever sent a people forward to the future. Yet the very ardours of this hurried them past a due appreciation of the difficulties they would have to encounter, and when they found themselves on the stony soil of Judah, which they had been idealising for fifty years, and were further afflicted by barren seasons, their hearts must have suffered an even more bitter disillusion than has so frequently fallen to the lot of religious emigrants to an absolutely new coast.

1. THE CALL TO BUILD (Chap. i.).

It was to this situation, upon an autumn day, when the colonists felt another year of beggarly effort behind them and their wretched harvest had been brought home, that the prophet Haggai addressed himself. With rare sense he confined his efforts to the practical needs of the moment. The sneers of modern writers have not been spared upon a style that is crabbed and jejune, and they have esteemed this to be a collapse of the prophetic spirit, in which Haggai ignored all the achievements of prophecy and interpreted the word of God as only a call to hew wood and lay stone upon stone. But the man felt what the moment needed, and that is the supreme mark of the prophet. Set a prophet there, and what else could a prophet have done ? It would have been futile to rewaken those most splendid voices of the past, which had in part been the reason of the people's disappointment, and equally futile to interpret the mission of the great

world powers towards God's people. What God's people themselves could do for themselves—that was what needed telling at the moment; and if Haggai told it with a meagre and starved style, this also was in harmony with the occasion. One does not expect it otherwise when hungry men speak to each other of their duty.

Nor does Haggai deserve blame that he interpreted the duty as the material building of the Temple. This was no mere ecclesiastical function. Without the Temple the continuity of Israel's religion could not be maintained. An independent state, with the full courses of civic life, was then impossible. The ethical spirit, the regard for each other and God, could prevail over their material interests in no other way than by common devotion to the worship of the God of their fathers. In urging them to build the Temple from their own unaided resources, in abstaining from all hopes of imperial patronage, in making the business one, not of sentiment nor of comfortable assurance derived from the past promises of God, but of plain and hard duty—Haggai illustrated at once the sanity and the spiritual essence of prophecy in Israel.

Professor Robertson Smith has contrasted the central importance which Haggai attached to the Temple with the attitude of Isaiah and Jeremiah, to whom "the religion of Israel and the holiness of Jerusalem have little to do with the edifice of the Temple. The city is holy because it is the seat of Jehovah's sovereignty on earth, exerted in His dealings with and for the state of Judah and the kingdom of David."[1] At the same time it ought to be pointed out that even to Isaiah the

[1] Art. "Haggai," *Encyc. Brit.*

Temple was the dwelling-place of Jehovah, and if it had been lying in ruins at his feet, as it was at Haggai's, there is little doubt he would have been as earnest as Haggai in urging its reconstruction. Nor did the Second Isaiah, who has as lofty an idea of the spiritual destiny of the people as any other prophet, lay less emphasis upon the cardinal importance of the Temple to their life, and upon the certainty of its future glory.

In the second year of Darius[1] *the king*$_9$ *in the sixth month and the first day of the month*—that is, on the feast of the new moon—*the word of Jehovah came by*^ *Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel*$_9$ *son of She'altfel*;* *Satrap of Judah*$_9$ *and to Jehoshud, son of Jeho$adakf the high priest*—the civil and religious heads of the community—*as follows*[5] *:—*

Thus hath Jehovah of Hosts spoken^ *saying: This people have said*$_f$ *Not yet*[9] *is come the time for the building of JehovdKs House. Therefore Jehovah's word is come by Haggai the prophet*$_9$ *saying: Is it a time for you—you*[7]*—to be dwelling in houses deled with planksf while this House is waste ? And now thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Lay to heart how things have gone with you? Ye*

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[1] **Heb. Daryavesh.**

[1] **Heb.** *by the hand oj.*

*** See above, PR 199 f. and 221.**

*** See below, pp. 258, 279, 292 ff.**

*** Heb.** *saying.*

• For sa-ny k? [1] — *not the time of coming* **read with Hitzig and Wellhausen 83 PP 8?,** *not now is come;* **forpy cf. Ezek. xxiii, 4, Psalm lxxiv. 6.**

[7] The emphasis may be due only to the awkward grammatical construction.

[8] DDD, from JDD, *to cover* **with planks of cedar, 2 Kings vi. 9: cf. iii. 7.**

• Heb. *set your hearts* **(see Vol. I., pp. 258, 275, 321, 323)** *upon your ways;* **but** *your ways* **cannot mean here, as elsewhere,** *your conduct,* **but obviously from what follows** *the ways* **you have been led,** *the way* **things have gone with you—the barren seasons and little income.**

sowed much but had little incor^e, ate and were not satisfied, drank and were not full, put on clothing and there was no warmth, while he that earned wages has earned them into a bag with holes.

Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts:[1] *Go up into the mountain*—the hill-country of Judah—*and bring in timber, and build the House, that I may take pleasure tn it, and show My glory, saith Jehovah. Ye looked for much and it has turned out little*[2]*; and what ye brought home I puffed at. On account of what?—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts—on account of My House which is waste, while ye are hurrying every man after his own house. Therefore*[3] *hath heaven shut off the dew*[4]*; and earth shut off her increase. And I have called drought upon the earth, both upon the mountains^ and upon the corn, and upon the wine, and upon the oil, and upon what the ground brings forth, and upon man, and upon beast, and upon all the labour of the hands.*

For ourselves, Haggai's appeal to the barren seasons and poverty of the people as proof of God's anger with their selfishness must raise questions. But we have already seen, not only that natural calamities were by the ancient world interpreted as the penal instruments of the Deity, but that all through history they have had a wonderful influence on the spirits of men, forcing them to search their own hearts and to believe that

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[1] The Hebrew and Versions here insert *set your hearts upon your ways*, obviously a mere clerical repetition from ver. 5.

[2] For oyo? nam read with the LXX. *ISStb* mm or 'nn.

[3] The Dohy here inserted in the Hebrew text is unparsable, not found in the LXX. and probably a clerical error by dittography from the preceding -2.

[4] Heb. *heavens are shut from dew.* But perhaps the D of 200 should be deleted. So Wellhausen. There is no instance of an intransitive Qal of 223.

[5] Query?

Providence is conducted for other ends than those of our physical prosperity. "Have not those who have believed as Amos believed ever been the strong spirits of our race, making the very disasters which crushed them to the earth the tokens that God has great views about them?"[1] Haggai, therefore, takes no sordid view of Providence when he interprets the seasons, from which his countrymen had suffered, as God's anger upon their selfishness and delay in building His House.

The straight appeal to the conscience of the Jews had an immediate effect Within three weeks they began work on the Temple.

And Zerubbabel, son of Shdaltfel$_t$ and Jehoshud, son ofJeho$adak, the high priest, and all the rest of the people, hearkened to the voice of Jehovah their God, and to the words of Haggai the prophet, as Jehovah their God had sent him; and the people feared before the face of Jehovah. [And Haggai, the messenger of Jehovah, in JehovaKs mission to the people, spake, saying, I am with you— oracle of Jehovah. 2 And Jehovah stirred the spirit of Zerubbabel, son of She'altfel, Satrap of Judah, and the spirit of Jehoshud, son ofJeho^adak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the rest of the people; and they went and did work in the House of Jehovah of Hosts, their God, on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king?*

Note how the narrative emphasises that the new energy was, as it could not but be from Haggai's unflattering words, a purely spiritual result. It was

[1] **Vol. I., pp. 162 ft.**

[2] **See above, p. 227.**

• The LXX. wrongly takes this last verse of chap, i as the first half of the first verse of chap. ii.

the *spirit* of Zerubbabel, and the *spirit* of Jehoshua, and the *spirit* of all the rest of the people, which was stirred—their conscience and radical force of character. Not in vain had the people suffered their great disillusion under Cyrus, if now their history was to start again from sources so inward and so pure.

2. COURAGE, ZERUBBABEL! COURAGE, JEHOSHUA AND ALL THE PEOPLE! (Chap. ii. 1-9).

The second occasion on which Haggai spoke to the people was another feast the same autumn, the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles,[1] the twenty-first of the seventh month. For nearly four weeks the work on the Temple had proceeded. Some progress must have been made, for comparisons became possible between the old Temple and the state of this one. Probably the outline and size of the building were visible. In any case it was enough to discourage the builders with their efforts and the means at their disposal. Haggai's new word is a very simple one of encouragement. The people's conscience had been stirred by his first; they needed now some hope. Consequently he appeals to what he had ignored before, the political possibilities which the present state of the world afforded—always a source of prophetic promise. But again he makes his former call upon their own courage and resources. The Hebrew text contains a reference to the Exodus which would be appropriate to a discourse delivered during the Feast of Tabernacles, but it is not found in the Septuagint, and is so impossible to construe that it has been justly suspected as a gloss, inserted by some later hand, only

[1] Lev. xxiii. 34,36,40-42.

because the passage had to do with the Feast of Tabernacles.

In the seventh month, *on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of Iehovah came by*[1] *Haggai the prophet, saying:—*

Speak now to Zerubbabel, son of Shdaltfel, Satrap of Judah, and to Jehoshud, son of Jehoṣadaḳ, the high priest, and to the rest of the people, saying: Who among you is left that saw this House in its former glory, and how do ye see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes?[2] *And now courage,*[3] *O Zerubbabel—oracle of Jehovah—and courage, Jehoshud, son of Jehosadaḳ, O high priest; * and courage, all people of the land I—oracle of Jehovah; and get to work, for I am with you—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts*[8]*—and My Spirit is standing in your midst, Fear not I For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: It is but a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the costly things*[3] *of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this House with glory, saith*

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[1] ***By the hand of,***

* **D2'277 ts? arp, Literally,** ***is not the like of it as nothing in your eyes ?*** **But that can hardly be the meaning. It might be equivalent to** ***is it not, as it stands, as nothing in your eyes ?*** **But the fact is that in Hebrew construction of a simple, unemphasised comparison, the comparing particle 2 stands before** ***both*** **objects compared : as, for instance, in the phrase (Gen. xliv. 18)** **np'p3 I p'p,** ***thou art as Pharaoh.***

• **Literally:** ***be strong,***

* **It is difficult to say whether** ***high priest*** **belongs to the text or not.**

• **Here occurs the anacolouthic clause, introduced by an ace. without a verb, which is not found in the LXX. and is probably a gloss (see above, p. 241) :** ***The promise which I made with you in your going forth from Egypt.***

• **Hebrew has singular,** ***costly thing*** **or** ***desirableness,*** **nn (fem. for neut.), but the verb** ***shall come*** **is in the plural, and the LXX. has rd KAexr,** ***the choice things.*** **See below, next page.**

Jehovah of Hosts. Mine is the silver and Mine the gold —oracle of Jehovah of Hosts. Greater shall the latter glory of this House be than the former^ saith Jehovah of Hosts, and in this place will I give peace[1]*—oracle oj Jehovah of Hosts.*

From the earliest times this passage, by the majority of the Christian Church, has been interpreted of the coming of Christ. The Vulgate renders ver. *7b, Et veniet Desiderates cunctis geniibus,* and so a large number of the Latin Fathers, who are followed by Luther, *Der Trost alter Heiden^* and by our own Authorised Version, *And the Desire of all nations shall come.* This was not contrary to Jewish tradition, for Rabbi Akiba had defined the clause of the Messiah, and Jerome received the interpretation from his Jewish instructors. In itself the noun, as pointed in the Massoretic text, means *longing* or *object of longing.** But the verb which goes with it is in the plural, and by a change of points the noun itself may be read as a plural.[8] That this was the original reading is made extremely probable by the fact that it lay before the translators of the Septuagint, who render: *the picked.*

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[1] The LXX. add a parallel clause *kal dphvnv Yuxfis'els* reprrolow' *ravri* *ro Krl^n* roD dvaorhcat rdr rady rɔror, which would read in Hebrew ... 00 ... 327 mo? mz. On nn Wellhausen cites I Chron. xi. 8, = *rtstort* or *revive.*

2 n3pp| -' *longing,* 2 Chron. xxi, 2, and *object of longing,* Dan. xi. 37. It is the feminine or neuter, and might be rendered as a collective, *desirable things.* Pusey cites Cicero's address to his wife: *Valete, mea desideria, valete (Ep. ad Family* xiv. 2 fin.).

3 non, plural feminine of pass. part, as in Gen. xxvii. 15, where it is an adjective, but used as a noun - *precious things,* Dan. xi. 38, 43, which use meets the objection of Pusey, *in loco,* where he wrongly maintains that *precious things,* if intended, must have been expressed by '002.

or *chosen, things of the nations.*[1] So the old Italic version : *Et venient omnia electa gentium?* Moreover this meaning suits the context, as the other does not The next verse mentions silver and gold. "We may understand what he says," writes Calvin, "of Christ; we indeed know that Christ was the expectation of the whole world; . . . but as it immediately follows, *Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold,* the more simple meaning is that which I first stated : that the nations would come, bringing with them all their riches, that they might offer themselves and all their possessions a sacrifice to God." •

3. THE POWER OF THE UNCLEAN (Chap. ii. 10-19).

Haggai's third address to the people is based on a deliverance which he seeks from the priests. The Book of Deuteronomy had provided that, in all difficult cases not settled by its own code, the people shall seek a *deliverance* or *Torah* from the priests, *and shall observe to do according to the deliverance which the priests deliver to thee?* Both noun and verb, which may be thus literally translated, are also used for the completed and canonical Law in Israel, and they signify that in the time of the composition of the Book of Deuteronomy that Law was still regarded as in process of growth. So it is also in the time of Haggai: he

[1] **exAerra rvre *rw iOvQv.* Theodore of Mopsuestia takes it as *tied persons of all nations,* to which a few moderns adhere.**

2 Augustini *Contra Donaiistas post CoUaHonem,* cap. xx. 30 (Migne, *Latin Patrology,* XLIII., p. 671).

• Calvin, *Comm. in Haggai* ii. 6-9.

'Deut.zvii.8fr.:3 7e nmg 'B-?pl. Compare the expression nD 1012, 2 Chron. xv. 3, and the duties of the teaching priests assigned by the Chronicler (2 Chron. xvii. 7-9) to the days of Jehoshaphat.

does not consult a code of laws, nor asks the priests what the canon says, as, for instance, our Lord does with the question, *how readest thou ?* But he begs them to give him *a* Torah or *deliverance*^ based of course upon existing custom, but not yet committed to writing? For the history of the Law in Israel this is, therefore, a passage of great interest.

On the twenty-fourth of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of Jehovah came to[3] *Haggai the prophet, saying: Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, Ask, I pray, of the priests a deliverance*^ *saying:—*

If a man be carrying flesh that is holy in the skirt of his robe, and with his skirt touch bread or pottage or wine or oil or any food, shall the latter *become holy ? And the priests gave answer and said, No! And Haggai said, If one unclean by a corpse*[3] *touch any of these, shall* the latter *become unclean ? And the priests gave answer and said, It shall.* That is to say, holiness which passed from the source to an object immediately in touch with the latter did not spread further; but pollution infected not only the person who came into

[1] **Note that it is not *the Torah,* but *a Torah*.**

*** The nearest passage to the *deliverance* of the priests to Haggai is Lev. vi. 20, 21 (Heb.), 27, 28 (Eng.). This is part of the Priestly Code not promulgated till 445 B.C., but based, of course, on long extant custom, some of it very ancient *Everything that touches the flesh* (of the sin-offering, which is holy) *shall be holy*—^h^f the verb used by the priests in their answer to Haggai—*and when any of its blood has been sprinkled on a garment, that whereon it was sprinkled shall be washed in a holy place. The earthen vessel wherein it has been boiled shall be broken, and if it has been boiled in a brasen vessel, this shall he scoured and rinsed with water.***

*** So several old edd. and many codd., and adopted by Baer (see his note *in loco)* in his text. But most of the edd. of the Massoretic text read '72 ¡ after Cod. Hill. For the importance of the question see above, p. 227.** [4] **Torah.** * **vp; Mpn**

contact with it, but whatever he touched.[1] M The flesh of the sacrifice hallowed whatever it should touch, but not further;[2] but the human being who was defiled by touching a dead body, defiled all he might touch."[8] *And Haggai answered and said: So is this people, and so is this nation before Me—oracle of Jehovah—and so is all the work of their hands, and what they offer there—* at the altar erected on its old site—*is unclean?* That is to say, while the Jews had expected their restored ritual to make them holy to the Lord, this had not been effective, while, on the contrary, their contact with sources of pollution had thoroughly polluted both themselves and their labour and their sacrifices. What these sources of pollution are is not explicitly stated, but Haggai, from his other messages, can only mean, either the people's want of energy in building the Temple, or the unbuilt Temple itself. Andree goes so far as to compare the latter with the corpse, whose

[1] **There does not appear to be the contrast between indirect contact with a holy thing and direct contact with a polluted which Wellhausen says there is. In either case the articles whose character is in question stand second from the source of holiness and pollution —the holy flesh and the corpse.**

[3] **See above, p. 245, n. 2.**

• **Pusey, in *loco.***

[4] **The LXX. have here found inserted three other clauses: Evexev' *rQv Anuprov avtv rûr ὀρθρωῶν, dbwrjO^dcrrai r Tpwrtbirov rvev'* aurv, *Kal IpMeire &* rkats *iXlyxorrat.* The first clause is a misreading (Wellhausen), DP onnp? I22 for nd DDR2? I2, be*cause ye take a bribe,* and goes well with the third clause, modified from Amos v. 10: gD 773 80)7, *they hate him who reproves in the gate.* These may have been inserted into the Hebrew text by some one puzzled to know what the source of the people's pollution was, and who absurdly found it in sins which in Haggai's time it was impossible to impute to them. The middle clause, 2BP 327))! Dinsy, they *vex themselves with their labours,* is suitable to the sense of the Hebrew text of the verse, as Wellhausen points out, but besides gives a connection with what follows.**

touch, according to the priests, spreads infection through more than one degree. In any case Haggai means to illustrate and enforce the building of the Temple without delay; and meantime he takes one instance of the effect he has already spoken of, *the work of their hands*, and shows how it has been spoilt by their neglect and delay. *And now, I pray, set your hearts backward from to-day*[^] *before stone was laid upon stone in the Temple of Jehovah:* . . . [2] *when one came to a heap of grain of twenty measures, and it had become ten, or went to the winevat to draw fifty measures,*[3] *and it had become twenty. I smote you with blasting and with withering? and with hail all the work of your hands, and* . . . [6]*—oracle of Jehovah. Lay now your hearts* on the time *before to-day* 6 *(the twenty-fourth day of the*

[1] From this day and onward.

[2] Heb. literally *since they were. NN. since those days were.*

[3] Winevat, 22, is distinguished from winepress, n3, in Josh. ix. 13, and is translated by the Greek broAvov Mark xii. 1, *Xqvbv* Matt. xxi. 33, *dug a pit for the winepress*; but the name is applied sometimes to the whole winepress—Hosea ix. 2 etc., Job xxiv. 11, *to tread the winepress.* The word translated *measures*, as in LXX. *juerpifrdf*, ישׁ 9, and that is properly the vat in which the grapes were trodden (Isa. Ixiii. 3), but here it can scarcely mean fifty *vatfuls*, but must refer to some smaller measure—cask ?

[4] See above, pp. 228 f., n. 1.

[5] The words omitted cannot be construed in the Hebrew, '28 banerren, literally *and not you* (acc.) *to Me.* Hitzig, etc., propose to read DR8 and render *there was none with you* who turned *to Me.* Others propose DPJ'N, as *if none of you* turned *to Me.* Others retain D3n8 and render *as for you.* The versions LXX. Syr., Vulg. *ye will not return* or *did not return to Me,* reading perhaps for bane JV, DD-P which is found in Amos iv. 9, of which the rest of the verse is an echo. Wellhausen deletes the whole verse as a gloss. It is certainly suspicious, and remarkable in that the LXX. text has already introduced two citations from Amos. See above on ver. 14.

[6] Heb. *from this day backwards.*

ninth month 1), before the day of the foundation of the Temple of Jehovah[8]*—lay your hearts* to that time ! *is*

[1] The date Wellhausen thinks was added by a later hand.

[1] This is the ambiguous clause on different interpretations of which so much has been founded: mnt22'0 1971'84' oPD792. Does this clause, in simple parallel to the previous one, describe the day no which the prophet was speaking, *the twenty-fourth dey of the ninth month,* the *terminus a quo* of the people's retrospect ? In that case Haggai regards the foundation-stone of the Temple as laid on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month 520 B.C., and does not know, or at least ignores, any previous laying of a foundation-stone. So Kuenen, Kosters, Andre, etc. Or does ()7 *signify up to the time the foundation-stone was laid,* and state a *terminus ad quem* for the people's retrospect? So Ewald and others, who therefore find in the verse a proof that Haggai knew of an earlier laying of the foundation-stone. But that o‡ is ever used for m cannot be proved, and indeed is disproved by Jer. vii. 7, where it occurs in contrast to i. Van Hoonacker finds the same, but in a more subtle translation of o> D, he says, is never used except of a date distant from the speaker or writer of it; D2 (if I understand him aright) refers therefore to a date previous to Haggai to which the people's thoughts are directed by the ? and then brought back from it to the date at which he was speaking by means of the D: " la preposition 7 signifie la direction de 1'esprit vers une époque du pass6 d'o il est ramend par la preposition ID." But surely D can be used (as indeed Haggai has just used it) to signify extension backwards from the standpoint of the speaker; and although in the passages cited by Van Hoonacker of the use of > it always refers to a past date—Deut. ix. 7, Judg. xix. 30, 2 Sam. vi. 11, Jer. vii. 7 and 25—still, as it is there nothing but a pleonastic form for JO, it surely might be employed as D is sometimes employed for departure from the present backwards. Nor in any case is it used to express what Van Hoonacker seeks to draw from it here, the idea of direction of the mind to a past event and then an immediate return from that. Had Haggai wished to express that idea he would have phrased it thus: nin orn 'm mm ' 25n D%' w*; on ? (as Kosters remarks). Besides, as Kosters has pointed out (pp. 7ff. of the Germ. trans. of *Het Herstel,* etc.), even if Van Hoonacker's translation of D> were correct, the context would show that it might refer only to a laying of the foundation-stone since Haggai's first address to the people, and therefore the question of an earlier foundation-stone under Cyrus would remain unsolved. Consequently Haggai ii. 18 cannot be quoted as a proof of the latter. See above, p. 216.

there yet any *seed in the barn?*[1] *And as yet*[1] *the vine, the fig-tree, the pomegranate and the olive have not borne* fruit *From this day I will bless thee.*

This then is the substance of the whole message. On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, somewhere in our December, the Jews had been discouraged that their attempts to build the Temple, begun three months before,[3] had not turned the tide of their misfortunes and produced prosperity in their agriculture. Haggai tells them, there is not yet time for the change to work. If contact with a holy thing has only a slight effect, but contact with an unclean thing has a much greater effect (verses 1I-13), then their attempts to build the Temple must have less good influence upon their condition than the bad influence of all their past devotion to themselves and their secular labours. That is why adversity still continues, but courage1 from this day on God will bless. The whole message is, therefore, opportune to the date at which it was delivered, and comes naturally on the back of Haggai's previous oracles. Andree's reason for assigning it to another writer, on the ground of its breaking the connection, does not exist.[4]

These poor colonists, in their hope deferred, were learning the old lesson, which humanity finds so hard to understand, that repentance and new-born zeal do not immediately work a change upon our material condition; but the natural consequences of sin often outweigh the influence of conversion, and though devoted to God and very industrious we may still

[1] **Meaning *there is none.***

[2] mm or in for m, after LXX. ***Kal el tri.***

*** The twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, according to chap.i. 15.**

[4] **See above, p. 228.**

be punished for a sinful past. Evil has an infectious power greater than that of holiness. Its effects are more extensive and lasting.[1] It was no bit of casuistry which Haggai sought to illustrate by his appeal to the priests on the ceremonial law, but an ethical truth deeply embedded in human experience.

4. THE REINVESTMENT OF ISRAEL'S HOPE (Chap. ii 20-23).

On the same day Haggai published another oracle, in which he put the climax to his own message by re-investing in Zerubbabel the ancient hopes of his people. When the monarchy fell the Messianic hopes were naturally no longer concentrated in the person of a king; and the great evangelist of the Exile found the elect and anointed Servant of Jehovah in the people as a whole, or in at least the pious part of them, with functions not of political government but of moral influence and instruction towards all the peoples of the earth. Yet in the Exile Ezekiel still predicted an individual Messiah, a son of the house of David; only it is significant that, in his latest prophecies delivered after the overthrow of Jerusalem, Ezekiel calls him not *king*[2] any more, but *prince*[2].

[1] **"For I believe the devil's voice**
Sinks deeper in our ear,
Than any whisper sent from heaven,
However sweet and clear."

*** Only in xxxiv. 24, xxxvii. 22, 24.**

*** wi/3l : cf. Skinner, *EwkUl* (Expositor's Bible Series), pp. 447 ff., who, however, attributes the diminution of the importance of the civil head in Israel, not to the feeling that he would henceforth always be subject to a foreign emperor, but to the conviction that in the future he will be "overshadowed by the personal presence of Jehovah in the midst of His people."**

After the return of Sheshbazzar to Babylon this position was virtually filled by Zerubbabel, a grandson of Jehoiakin, the second last king of Judah, and appointed by the Persian king Pehah or Satrap of Judah. Him Haggai now formally names the elect servant of Jehovah. In that overturning of the kingdoms of the world which Haggai had predicted two months before, and which he now explains as their mutual destruction by war, Jehovah of Hosts will make Zerubbabel His signet-ring, inseparable from Himself and the symbol of His authority.

And the word of Jehovah came a second time to[1] *Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the* ninth *months saying: Speak to Zerubbabel^ Satrap of Judah^ saying: I am about to shake the heavens and the earth*[2]* *and I will overturn the thrones*[3] *of kingdoms^ and will shatter the power of the kingdoms of the Gentiles^ and will overturn chariots*[4] *and their riders^ and horses and their riders will come down, every man by the sword of his brother. In that day—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts—I will take Zerubbabel^ son of Shdaltfe^ My servant—oracle of Jehovah—and will make him like a signet-ring; for thee have I chosen—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts.*

The wars and mutual destruction of the Gentiles, of which Haggai speaks, are doubtless those revolts of races and provinces, which threatened to disrupt the Persian Empire upon the accession of Darius in 521. Persians, Babylonians, Medes, Armenians, the Sacae and others rose together or in succession. In four years Darius quelled them all, and reorganised his

[1] **See above, p. 227.**

2 **LXX. enlarges:** *and the sea and the dry land.*

[a] **Heb. sing, collect. LXX plural.**

[4] **Again a sing. coll.**

empire before the Jews finished their Temple. Like all the Syrian governors, Zerubbabel remained his poor lieutenant and submissive tributary. History rolled westward into Europe. Greek and Persian began their struggle for the control of its future, and the Jews fell into an obscurity and oblivion unbroken for centuries. The *signet-ring of Jehovah* was not acknowledged by the world—does not seem even to have challenged its briefest attention. But Haggai had at least succeeded in asserting the Messianic hope of Israel, always baffled, never quenched, in this re-opening of her life. He had delivered the ancient heritage of Israel to the care of the new Judaism.

Haggai's place in the succession of prophecy ought now to be clear to us. The meagreness of his words and their crabbed style, his occupation with the construction of the Temple, his unfulfilled hope in Zerubbabel, his silence on the great inheritance of truth delivered by his predecessors, and the absence from his prophesying of all visions of God's character and all emphasis upon the ethical elements of religion—these have moved some to depress his value as a prophet almost to the vanishing point Nothing could be more unjust. In his opening message Haggai evinced the first indispensable power of the prophet: to speak to the situation of the moment, and to succeed in getting men to take up the duty at their feet; in another message he announced a great ethical principle; in his last he conserved the Messianic traditions of his religion, and though not less disappointed than Isaiah in the personality to whom he looked for their fulfilment, he succeeded in passing on their hope undiminished to future ages.

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Not by might, and not by force, but by My Spirit, saith Jehovah of Hosts.

Be not afraid, strengthen your hands / Speak truth, every man to his neighbour; truth and wholesome judgment judge ye in your gates, and in your hearts plan no evil for each other, nor take pleasure in false swearing, for all these things do I hate—oracle of Jehovah.

CHAPTER XIX

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH {L—VHE}

THE Book of Zechariah, consisting of fourteen chapters, falls clearly into two divisions: *First*, chaps, i.—viii., ascribed to Zechariah himself and full of evidence for their authenticity; *Second*, chaps, ix.—xiv., which are not ascribed to Zechariah, and deal with conditions different from those upon which he worked. The full discussion of the date and character of this second section we shall reserve till we reach the period at which we believe it to have been written. Here an introduction is necessary only to chaps, i.—viii.

These chapters may be divided into five sections.

1. Chap. i. 1-6.—A Word of Jehovah which came to Zechariah in the eighth month of the second year of Darius, that is in November 520 B.C., or between the second and the third oracles of Haggai.[1] In this the prophet's place is affirmed in the succession of the prophets of Israel. The ancient prophets are gone, but their predictions have been fulfilled in the calamities of the Exile, and God's Word abides for ever.

II. Chap. i. 7—vi. 9.—A Word of Jehovah which came to Zechariah on the twenty-fourth of the eleventh month of the same year, that is January or February 519, and which he reproduces in the form of eight Visions by night. (1) The Vision of the Four Horsemen : God's new mercies to Jerusalem (chap. i. 7-17). (2) The Vision of the Four Horns, or Powers of the World, and the Four Smiths, who smite them down (ii. 1-4 Heb., but in the Septuagint and in the English

[1] See above, pp. 235 ff.

Version i. 18-21). (3) The Vision of the Man with the Measuring Rope: Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, no longer as a narrow fortress, but spread abroad for the multitude of her population (chap. ii. 5*9 Heb., ii. 1-5 LXX. and Eng.). To this Vision is appended a lyric piece of probably older date calling upon the Jews in Babylon to return, and celebrating the joining of many peoples to Jehovah, now that He takes up again His habitation in Jerusalem (chap. ii. 10-17 Heb., ii. 6-13 LXX. and Eng.). (4) The Vision of Joshua, the High Priest, and the Satan or Accuser: the Satan is rebuked, and Joshua is cleansed from his foul garments and clothed with a new turban and festal apparel; the land is purged and secure (chap. iii.). (5) The Vision of the Seven-Branched Lamp and the Two Olive-Trees (chap. iv. 1-6a, 106-14) : into the centre of this has been inserted a Word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel (w. 6b-1oa), which interrupts the Vision and ought probably to come at the close of it. (6) The Vision of the Flying Book: it is the curse of the land, which is being removed, but after destroying the houses of the wicked (chap. v. 1-4). (7) The Vision of the Bushel and the Woman: that is the guilt of the land and its wickedness; they are carried off and planted in the land of Shinar (v. 5-11). (8) The Vision of the Four Chariots: they go forth from the Lord of all the earth, to traverse the earth and bring His Spirit, or anger, to bear on the North country (chap. vi. 1-8).

III. Chap. vi. 9-15.—A Word of Jehovah, undated (unless it is to be taken as of the same date as the Visions to which it is attached), giving directions as to the gifts sent to the community at Jerusalem from the Babylonian Jews. A crown is to be made from the silver and gold, and, according to the text, placed upon the bead of Joshua. But, as we shall see,[1] the text gives evident signs of having been altered in the interest of the High Priest; and probably the crown was meant for Zerubbabel, at whose right hand the priest is to stand, and there shall be a counsel of peace between the two of them. The far-away shall come and assist at the building of the Temple. This Section breaks off in the middle of a sentence.

IV. Chap. vii.—The Word of Jehovah which came to Zechariah on the fourth of the ninth month of the fourth year of Darius, that is nearly two years after the date of the Visions. The Temple was approaching completion; and an inquiry was addressed to the priests who were in it and to the prophets concerning the Fasts, which had been maintained during the Exile, while the Temple lay desolate (chap. vii. 1-3). This inquiry drew from Zechariah a historical explanation of how the Fasts arose (chap. vii. 4-14).

V. Chap. viii.—Ten short undated oracles, each introduced by

[1] Below, p. 308.

the same formula, *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,* and summarising all Zechariah's teaching since before the Temple began up to the question of the cessation of the Fasts upon its completion—with promises for the future. (1) A Word affirming Jehovah's new zeal for Jerusalem and His Return to her (vv. i, 2). (2) Another of the same (ver. 3). (3) A Word promising fulness of old folk and children in her streets (w. 4, 5). (4) A Word affirming that nothing is too wonderful for Jehovah (ver. 6). (5) A Word promising the return of the people from east and west (w. 7, 8). (6 and 7) Two Words contrasting, in terms similar to Haggai i., the poverty of the people before the foundation of the Temple with their new prosperity: from a curse Israel shall become a blessing. This is due to God's anger having changed into a purpose of grace to Jerusalem. But the people themselves must do truth and justice, ceasing from perjury and thoughts of evil against each other (w. 9-17)- (8) A Word which recurs to the question of Fasting, and commands that the four great Fasts, instituted to commemorate the siege and overthrow of Jerusalem, and the murder of Gedaliah„ be changed to joy and gladness (vv. 18„ 19). (9) A Word predicting the coming of the Gentiles to the worship of Jehovah at Jerusalem (w. 20-22). (10) Another of the same (ver. 23).

There can be little doubt that, apart from the few interpolations noted, these eight chapters are genuine prophecies of Zechariah, who is mentioned in the Book of Ezra as the colleague of Haggai, and contemporary of Zerubbabel and Joshua at the time of the rebuilding of the Temple.[1] Like the oracles of Haggai, these prophecies are dated according to the years of Darius the king, from his second year to his fourth. Although they may contain some of the exhortations to build the Temple, which the Book of Ezra informs us that Zechariah made along with Haggai, the most of them presuppose progress in the work, and seek to assist it by historical retrospect and by glowing hopes of the Messianic effects of its completion. Their allusions suit exactly the years to which they are

[1] Ezra v. i, vi. 14.

assigned. Darius is king. The Exile has lasted about seventy years.[1] Numbers of Jews remain in Babylon,[1] and are scattered over the rest of the world.[8] The community at Jerusalem is small and weak: it is the mere colony of young men and men in middle life who came to it from Babylon; there are few children and old folk.[4] Joshua and Zerubbabel are the heads of the community, and the pledges for its future.[5] The exact conditions are recalled as recent which Haggai spoke of a few years before.[5] Moreover, there is a steady and orderly progress throughout the prophecies, in harmony with the successive dates at which they were delivered. In November 520 they begin with a cry to repentance and lessons drawn from the past of prophecy.[7] In January 519 Temple and City are still to be built.[5] Zerubbabel has laid the foundation; the completion is yet future.[8] The prophet's duty is to quiet the people's apprehensions about the state of the world,[10] to provoke their zeal,[11] give them confidence in their great men,[11] and, above all, assure them that God is returned to them[18] and their sin pardoned.[14] But in December 518 the Temple is so far built that the priests are said to belong to it; there is no

[1] i. 12, vii. 5 : reckoning in round numbers from 590, midway between the two Exiles of 597 and 586, that brings us to about 520, the second year of Darius.

* ii. 6 (Eng., Heb. 10). On the question whether the Book of Zechariah gives no evidence of a previous Return from Babylon see above, pp. 208 £

• viii. 7, etc.

[4] viii. 4, 5.

* iii. 1-10, iv. 6-10, vL n ff. 12 iii., iv.

• viii. 9, ia

‘ i. 1-6.

• i. 7-17.

• iv. 6-10,

10 i. 7-21 (Eng., Heb. i. 7—ii. 4).

[11] iv. 6 ff.

[1]i. 16.

[14] v.

“ vii. 3.

occasion for continuing the fasts of the Exile,[1] the future has opened and the horizon is bright with the Messianic hopes? Most of all, it is felt that the hard struggle with the forces of nature is over, and the people are exhorted to the virtues of the civic life? They have time to lift their eyes from their work and see the nations coming from afar to Jerusalem.[4]

These features leave no room for doubt that the great bulk of the first eight chapters of the Book of Zechariah are by the prophet himself, and from the years to which he assigns them, November 520 to December 518. The point requires no argument.

There are, however, three passages which provoke further examination—two of them because of the signs they bear of an earlier date, and one because of the alteration it has suffered in the interests of a later day in Israel's history.

The lyric passage which is appended to the Second Vision (chap. ii. 10-17 Heb., 6-13 LXX and Eng.) suggests questions by its singularity: there is no other such among the Visions. But in addition to this it speaks not only of the Return from Babylon as still future [5]—this might still be said after the First Return of the exiles in 536*—but it differs from the language of all the Visions proper in describing the return of Jehovah Himself to Zion as still future. The whole, too, has the ring of the great odes in Isaiah xl.—lv., and seems to reflect the same situation, upon the eve

[1] vii. 1-7, viii, 18, 19. ■ viii. 16, 17.

* viii. 20-23. [4] viii. 20-23.

* ii. 10 f. Heb., 6 f. LXX. and Eng.

* Though the expression *I haw scattered you to the four winds of heaven* seems to imply the Exile before any return.

of Cyrus' conquest of Babylon. There can be little doubt that we have here inserted in Zechariah's Visions a song of twenty years earlier, but we must confess inability to decide whether it was adopted by Zechariah himself or added by a later hand.[1]

Again, there are the two passages called the Word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, chap. iv. 6b-10a;; and the Word of Jehovah concerning the gifts which came to Jerusalem from the Jews in Babylon, chap. vi. 9-15. The first, as Wellhausen has shown,* is clearly out of place; it disturbs the narrative of the Vision, and is to be put at the end of the latter. The second is undated, and separate from the Visions. The second plainly affirms that the building of the Temple is still future. The man whose name is Branch or Shoot is designated: *and he shall build the Temple of Jehovah.* The first is in the same temper as the first two oracles of Haggai. It is possible then that these two passages are not, like the Visions with which they are taken, to be dated from 519, but represent that still earlier prophesying of Zechariah with which we are told he assisted Haggai in instigating the people to begin to build the Temple.

The style of the prophet Zechariah betrays special features almost only in the narrative of the Visions. Outside these his language is simple, direct and pure, as it could not but be, considering how much of it is drawn from, or modelled upon, the older prophets,[8]

[1] **For the bearing of this on Kosters* theory of the Return see pp. 211 f.**

[2] **See below, p. 300.**

*** Outside the Visions the prophecies contain these echoes or repetitions of earlier writers: chap. i. 1-6 quotes the constant refrain**

and chiefly Hosea and Jeremiah. Only one or two lapses into a careless and degenerate dialect show us how the prophet might have written, had he not been sustained by the music of the classical periods of the language.[1]

This directness and pith is not shared by the language in which the Visions are narrated.[1] Here the style is involved and redundant. The syntax is loose; there is a frequent omission of the copula, and of other means by which, in better Hebrew, connection and conciseness are sustained. The formulas, *thus saith* and *sayings* are repeated to weariness. At the same time it is fair to ask, how much of this redundancy was due to Zechariah himself? Take the Septuagint version. The Hebrew text, which it followed, not only included a number of repetitions of the formulas, and of the designations of the personages introduced into the Visions, which do not occur in the Massoretic text,[8]

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of prophetic preaching before the Exile, and in chap. vii. 7-14 (ver. 8 must be deleted) is given a summary of that preaching; in chap, viii. ver. 3 echoes Isa. i. 21, 26, *city 0/ troths* and Jer. xxxi. 23, *mountain of holiness* (there is really no connection, as Kuenen holds, between ver. 4 and Isa. lxv. 20; it would create more interesting questions as to the date of the latter if there were); ver. 8 is based on Hosea ii. 15 Heb., 19 Eng., and Jer. xxxi. 33; ver. 12 is based on Hosea ii. 21 f. (Heb. 23 f.); with ver. 13 compare Jer. xlii. 18, *a curse*; w. 21 fit with Isa. ii. 3 and Micah iv. 2.

[1] *Eg.* vii. 5, "4 R2% for 7 oPPS . cf Ewald, ^*ytttax*, § 3156. The curious use of the acc. in the following verse is perhaps only apparent; part of the text may have fallen out.

*** Though there are not wanting, of course, echoes here as in the other prophecies of older writings, *tg.* i. 12, 17.**

• D82, *saying,* ii. 8 (Gr. ii. 4); iv. 5, *And the angtl who spoke with mt said*; i. 17, cf. vi. 5. *All* is inserted in i. II, iit 9; *lord* in ii. 2; *of hosts* (after *Jthovah)* viii. 17; and there are other instances of palpable expansion, *tg,* i. 6, 8, ii. 4 bis, 6, viii. 19.

but omitted some which are found in the Massoretic text.[1] These two sets of phenomena prove that from an early date the copiers of the original text of Zechariah must have been busy in increasing its redundancies. Further, there are still earlier intrusions and expansions, for these are shared by both the Hebrew and the Greek texts : some of them very natural efforts to clear up the personages and conversations recorded in the dreams,[8] some of them stupid mistakes in understanding the drift of the argument.[8] There must of course have been a certain amount of redundancy in the original to provoke such aggravations of it, and of obscurity or tortuousness of style to cause them to be deemed necessary. But it would be very unjust to charge all the faults of our present text to Zechariah himself, especially when we find such force and simplicity in the passages outside the Visions. Of course the involved and misty subjects of the latter naturally forced upon the description of them a laboriousness of art, to which there was no provocation in directly exhorting the people to a pure life, or in straightforward predictions of the Messianic era.

Beyond the corruptions due to these causes, the text of Zechariah i.—viii. has not suffered more than that of our other prophets. There are one or two clerical errors;[4] an occasional preposition or person of a verb needs to be amended. Here and there the text has

[1] *Eg.* ii. 2, iv. 2, 13, v. % vi. 12 bis, vii. 8: cf also vi. 13.

[8] i 8 ff,, iii. 4 ff.: cf. also vi. 3 with w. 6 f.

[8] *E.g.* (but this is outside the Visions) the very flagrant misunderstanding to which the insertion of vii, 8 is due.

[4] v. 6, D3W for DX as in LXX, and the last words of v. 11; perhaps vi. 10; and almost certainly vii. 2a.

been disarranged;[1] and as already noticed, there has been one serious alteration of the original?

From the foregoing paragraphs it must be apparent what help and hindrance in the reconstruction of the text is furnished by the Septuagint. A list of its variant readings and of its mistranslations is appended.[8]

[1] **Chap. iv. On 6a, 106-14 should immediately follow, and 6b-10a come after 14.**

[8] **vi. 11 ff. See below, pp. 308 £**

[1] **Chief variants: i. 8, 10; ii. 15; iii. 4; iv. 7, 12; v. 1, 3, 4, 9; vi. 10, 13; vii. 3; viii. 8, 9, 12, 20. Obvious mistranslations or misreadings: ii. 9, 10, 15, 17; iii. 4; iv. 7, 10; v. 1,4,9; vi. 10 cf. 14; vii. 3.**

CHAPTER XX

ZECHARIAH THE PROPHET

ZICHARIAH i. 1-6, etc.; EZRA V. t, vi. 14

ZECHARIAH is one of the prophets whose personality as distinguished from their message exerts some degree of fascination on the student. This is not due, however, as in the case of Hosea or Jeremiah, to the facts of his life, for of these we know extremely little; but to certain conflicting symptoms of character which appear through his prophecies.

His name was a very common one in Israel, Zekher-Yah, *Jehovah remembers.*[1] In his own book he is described as *the son of Berekh-Yah^ the son of Iddo,** and in the Aramaic document of the Book of Ezra as *the son of Iddo?* Some have explained this difference by supposing that Berekhyah was the actual father of the prophet, but that either he died early, leaving Zechariah to the care of the grandfather, or else that he was a man of no note, and Iddo was more naturally mentioned as the head of the family. There are several instances in the Old Testament of men being called the sons of their grandfathers:[4] as in these cases the grandfather

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[1] **npet;** LXX. **Zaxaplas.**

*** i i : np?7. In i 7 : *mp17 inppp.**

• Ezra v. i, vi. 14 : ainp-3.

[4] **Gen. xxiv. 47, cf. xxix. 5; i Kings xix. 16, cf. 2 Kings ix, 14, 20.**

was the reputed founder of the house, so in that of Zechariah Iddo was the head of his family when it came out of Babylon and was anew planted in Jerusalem. Others, however, have contested the genuineness of the words *son of Berekh-Yah*$_i$ and have traced their insertion to a confusion of the prophet with Zechariah son of Ybherekh-Yahu, , the contemporary of Isaiah.[1] This is precarious, while the other hypothesis is a very natural one.[1] Whichever be correct, the prophet Zechariah was a member of the priestly family of Iddo, that came up to Jerusalem from Babylon under Cyrus.[1] The Book of Nehemiah adds that in the high-priesthood of Yoyakim, the son of Joshua, the head of the. house of Iddo was a Zechariah.[4] If this be our prophet, then he was probably a young man in 5 20,[6] and had come up as a child in the caravans from Babylon. The Aramaic document of the Book of Ezra[6] assigns to Zechariah a share with Haggai in the work of instigating Zerubbabel and Jeshua to begin the Temple. None of his oracles is dated previous to the beginning of the work in August 520, but we have seen[7] that among those undated there are one or two which by referring to the building of the Temple as still future may

[1] Isa. viii. 2 : 9/929713, This confusion, which existed in early Jewish and Christian times, Knobel, Von Ortenberg, Bleek, Wellhausen and others take to be due to the effort to find a second Zechariah for the authorship of chaps, ix. ff.

2 So Vatke, Konig and many others. Marti prefers it *{Der Prophet Sacharja*$_t$ p. 58). See also Ryle on Ezra v. 1.

[1] Neh. xii. 4.

* *Ib.* 16.

* This is not proved, as Pusey, KOnig *(Emi,* p. 364) and others think, by 1772, or young man, of the Third Vision (ii. 8 Heb., ii. 4 LXX. and Eng.). Cf. Wright, *Zechariah and his Prophtcits*$_t$ p. xvi.

• v. I, vi. 14. 1 Above, p. 260.

contain some relics of that first stage of his ministry. From November 520 we have the first of his dated oracles; his Visions followed in January 519, and his last recorded prophesying in December 518.[1]

These are all the certain events of Zechariah's history. But in the well-attested prophecies he has left we discover, besides some obvious traits of character, certain problems of style and expression which suggest a personality of more than usual interest. Loyalty to the great voices of old, the temper which appeals to the experience, rather than to the dogmas, of the past, the gift of plain speech to his own times,

[1] More than this we do not know of Zechariah. The Jewish and Christian traditions of him are as unfounded as those of other prophets. According to the Jews he was, of course, a member of the mythical Great Synagogue. See above on Haggai, pp. 232 £ As in the case of the prophets we have already treated, the Christian traditions of Zechariah are found in (Pseud-)Epiphanius, *De Vitis Prophttarum*, Dorotheus, and Hesychius, as quoted above, p. 80. They amount to this, that Zechariah, after predicting in Babylon the birth of Zerubbabel, and to Cyrus his victory over Croesus and his treatment of the Jews, came in his old age to Jerusalem, prophesied, died and was buried near Beit-Jibrin—another instance of the curious relegation by Christian tradition of the birth and burial places of so many of the prophets to that neighbourhood. Compare Beit-Zakharya, 12 miles from Beit-Jibrin. Hesychius says he was born in Gilead. Dorotheus confuses him, as the Jews did, with Zechariah of Isa. viii. 1. See above, p. 265, n. 1.

Zechariah was certainly not the Zechariah whom our Lord describes as slain between the Temple and the Altar (Matt xxiii. 35; Luke xi. 51). In the former passage alone is this Zechariah called the son of Barachiah. In the *Evang, Na*ar.* Jerome read *the son of Ythoyada,* Both readings may be insertions. According to 2 Chron. xxiv. 21, in the reign of Joash, Zechariah, the son of Yehoyada the priest, was stoned in the court of the Temple, and according to Josephus (IV. *Wars,* v. 4), in the year 68 A.D. Zechariah son of Baruch was assassinated in the Temple by two zealots. The latter murder may, as Marti remarks (pp. 58 f.), have led to the insertion of Barachiah into Matt, xxiii, 35.

a wistful anxiety about his reception as a prophet[1] combined with the absence of all ambition to be original or anything but the clear voice of the lessons of the past and of the conscience of to-day—these are the qualities which characterise Zechariah's orations to the people. But how to reconcile them with the strained art and obscure truths of the Visions—it is this which invests with interest the study of his personality. We have proved that the obscurity and redundancy of the Visions cannot all have been due to himself. Later hands have exaggerated the repetitions and ravelled the processes of the original. But these gradual blemishes have not grown from nothing: the original style must have been sufficiently involved to provoke the interpolations of the scribes, and it certainly contained all the weird and shifting apparitions which we find so hard to make clear to ourselves. The problem, therefore, remains—how one who had gift of speech, so straight and clear, came to torture and tangle his style; how one who presented with all plainness the main issues of his people's history found it laid upon him to invent, for the further expression of these, symbols so laboured and intricate.

We begin with the oracle, which opens his book and illustrates those simple characteristics of the man that contrast so sharply with the temper of his Visions.

In the eighth months in the second year of Darius, the word of Jehovah came to the prophet Zechariah, son of Berekhyah, son of Iddo, saying: Jehovah was very wroth[8] with your fathers. And thou shalt say unto them: Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Turn ye to Me—oracle of*

[1] i. 13, >5; hr. 9; vi. 15.

[a] LXX. 'A8c. See above, p. 264.

[1] Heb. *angtrtd with angtr*; Gr. *with great anger.*

Jehovah of Hosts—that I may turn to you, saith Jehovah of Hosts / Be not like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying: "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, Turn now from your evil ways and from[1] your evil deeds? but they hearkened not, and paid no attention to Me—oracle of Jehovah. Your fathers, where are they ? And the prophets, do they live for ever ? But[1] My words and My statutes, with which I charged My servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers ? till these turned and said, As Jehovah of Hosts did purpose to do unto us, according to our deeds and according to our ways, so hath He dealt with us.

It is a sign of the new age which we have reached, that its prophet should appeal to the older prophets with as much solemnity as they did to Moses himself. The history which led to the Exile has become to Israel as classic and sacred as her great days of deliverance from Egypt and of conquest in Canaan. But still more significant is what Zechariah seeks from that past; this we must carefully discover, if we would appreciate with exactness his rank as a prophet.

The development of religion may be said to consist of a struggle between two tempers, both of which indeed appeal to the past, but from very opposite motives. The one proves its devotion to the older prophets by adopting the exact formulas of their doctrine, counts these sacred to the letter, and would enforce them in detail upon the minds and circumstances of the new generation. It conceives that truth has been promulgated once for all in forms as enduring as the principles they contain. It fences ancient rites, cherishes old customs and institutions, and when these

[1] As in LXX.

[1] LXX has misunderstood and expanded this verse.

are questioned it becomes alarmed and even savage. The other temper is no whit behind this one in its devotion to the past, but it seeks the ancient prophets not so much for what they have said as for what they have been, not for what they enforced but for what they encountered, suffered and confessed. It asks not for dogmas but for experience and testimony. He who can thus read the past and interpret it to his own day—he is the prophet. In his reading he finds nothing so clear, nothing so tragic, nothing so convincing as the working of the Word of God. He beholds how this came to men, haunted them and was entreated by them. He sees that it was their great opportunity, which being rejected became their judgment. He finds abused justice vindicated, proud wrong punished, and all God's neglected commonplaces achieving in time their triumph. He reads how men came to see this, and to confess their guilt. He is haunted by the remorse of generations who know how they might have obeyed the Divine call, but wilfully did not And though they have perished, and the prophets have died and their formulas are no more applicable, the victorious Word itself still lives and cries to men with the terrible emphasis of their fathers' experience. All this is the vision of the true prophet, and it was the vision of Zechariah.

His generation was one whose chief temptation was to adopt towards the past the other attitude we have described. In their feebleness what could the poor remnant of Israel do but cling servilely to the former greatness ? The vindication of the Exile had stamped the Divine authority of the earlier prophets. The habits, which the life in Babylon had perfected, of arranging and codifying the literature of the past, and

of employing it, in place of altar and ritual, in the stated service of God, had canonised Scripture and provoked men to the worship of its very letter. Had the real prophet not again been raised, these habits might have too early produced the belief that the Word of God was exhausted, and must have fastened upon the feeble life of Israel that mass of stiff and stark dogmas, the literal application of which Christ afterwards found crushing the liberty and the force of religion. Zechariah prevented this—for a time. He himself was mighty in the Scriptures of the past: no man in Israel makes larger use of them. But he employs them as witnesses, not as dogmas; he finds in them not authority, but experience.[1] He reads their testimony to the ever-living presence of God's Word with men. And seeing that, though the old forms and figures have perished with the hearts which shaped them, the Word itself in its bare truth has vindicated its life by fulfilment in history, he knows that it lives still, and hurls it upon his people, not in the forms published by this or that prophet of long ago, but in its essence and direct from God Himself, as His Word for to-day and now. *The fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever? But Mv words and My statutes, with which I charged My servants the prophets, have they not overtaken your fathers ? Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, Be ye not like your fathers, but turn ye to Me that I may turn to you.*

The argument of this oracle might very naturally have been narrowed into a credential for the prophet himself as sent from God. About his reception as

[1] **It is to be noticed that Zechariah appeals to the Torah of the prophets, and does not mention any Torah of the priests. Cf. Smend,** *A T RA. Gtsch.,* **pp. 176 f.**

Jehovah's messenger Zechariah shows a repeated anxiety. Four times he concludes a prediction with the words, *And ye shall know that Jehovah hath sent me*,* as if after his first utterances he had encountered that suspicion and unbelief which a prophet never failed to suffer from his contemporaries. But in this oracle there is no trace of such personal anxiety. The oracle is pervaded only with the desire to prove the ancient Word of God as still alive, and to drive it home in its own sheer force. Like the greatest of his order, Zechariah appears with the call to repent: *Turn ye to Me—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts—that I may turn to you.* This is the pivot on which history has turned, the one condition on which God has been able to help men. Wherever it is read as the conclusion of all the past, wherever it is proclaimed as the conscience of the present, there the true prophet is found and the Word of God has been spoken.

The same possession by the ethical spirit reappears, as we shall see, in Zechariah's orations to the people after the anxieties of building are over and the completion of the Temple is in sight In these he affirms again that the whole essence of God's Word by the older prophets has been moral—to judge true judgment, to practise mercy, to defend the widow and orphan, the stranger and poor, and to think no evil of one another. For the sad fasts of the Exile Zechariah enjoins gladness, with the duty of truth and the hope of peace. Again and again he enforces sincerity and the love without dissimulation. His ideals for Jerusalem are very high, including the conversion of the nations to her God. But warlike ambitions have vanished from them, and

[1] Page 267, n. 1,

his pictures of her future condition are homely and practical Jerusalem shall be no more a fortress, but spread village-wise without walls.[1] Full families, unlike the present colony with its few children and its men worn out in middle life by harassing warfare with enemies and a sullen nature; streets rife with children playing and old folk sitting in the sun; the return of the exiles; happy harvests and springtimes of peace; solid gain of labour for every man, with no raiding neighbours to harass, nor the mutual envies of peasants in their selfish struggle with famine.

It is a simple, hearty, practical man whom such prophesying reveals, the spirit of him bent on justice and love, and yearning for the unharassed labour of the field and for happy homes. No prophet has more beautiful sympathies, a more direct word of righteousness, or a braver heart. *Fast not, but love truth and peace. Truth and wholesome justice set ye up i* your gates. Be not afraid; strengthen your hands! Old men and women shall yet sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand for the fulness of their years; the citfs streets shall be rife with boys and girls at play.*

[1] This picture is given in one of the Visions : the Third.

CHAPTER XXI

THE VISIONS OF ZECHARIAH

TMMASLUM i. 7— vi.

THE Visions of Zechariah do not lack those large and simple views of religion which we have just seen to be the charm of his other prophecies. Indeed it is among the Visions that we find the most spiritual of all his utterances :[1] *Not by mighty and not by force, but by My Spirit, saith Jehovah of Hosts.* The Visions express the need of the Divine forgiveness, emphasise the reality of sin, as a principle deeper than the civic crimes in which it is manifested, and declare the power of God to banish it from His people. The Visions also contain the remarkable prospect of Jerusalem as the City of Peace, her only wall the Lord Himself.[1] The overthrow of the heathen empires is predicted by the Lord's own hand, and from all the Visions there are absent both the turmoil and the glory of war.

We must also be struck by the absence of another element, which is a cause of complexity in the writings of many prophets—the polemic against idolatry. Zechariah nowhere mentions the idols. We have already seen what proof this silence bears for the fact that the community to which he spoke was not that

[1] **iv. 6. Unless this be taken as an earlier prophecy. See above, p. 260.**

[1] **ii. 9, 10 Heb., 5, 6 LXX. and Eng.**

half-heathen remnant of Israel which had remained in the land, but was composed of worshippers of Jehovah who at His word had returned from Babylon? Here we have only to do with the bearing of the fact upon Zechariah's style. That bewildering confusion of the heathen pantheon and its rites, which forms so much of our difficulty in interpreting some of the prophecies of Ezekiel and the closing chapters of the Book of Isaiah, is not to blame for any of the complexity of Zechariah's Visions.

Nor can we attribute the latter to the fact that the Visions are dreams, and therefore bound to be more involved and obscure than the words of Jehovah which came to Zechariah in the open daylight of his people's public life. In chaps. i. 7—vi. we have not the narrative of actual dreams, but a series of conscious and artistic allegories—the deliberate translation into a carefully constructed symbolism of the Divine truths with which the prophet was entrusted by his God. Yet this only increases our problem—why a man with such gifts of direct speech, and such clear views of his people's character and history, should choose to express the latter by an imagery so artificial and involved ? In his orations Zechariah is very like the prophets whom we have known before the Exile, thoroughly ethical and intent upon the public conscience of his time. He appreciates what they were, feels himself standing in their succession, and is endowed both with their spirit and their style. But none of them constructs the elaborate allegories which he does, or insists upon the religious symbolism which he enforces

[1] **See above, p. 214, where this is stated as an argument against Kosters' theory that there was no Return from Babylon in the reign of Cyrus.**

as indispensable to the standing of Israel with God. Not only are their visions few and simple, but they look down upon the visionary temper as a rude stage of prophecy and inferior to their own, in which the Word of God is received by personal communion with Himself, and conveyed to His people by straight and plain words. Some of the earlier prophets even condemn all priesthood and ritual; none of them regards these as indispensable to Israel's right relations with Jehovah; and none employs those superhuman mediators of the Divine truth, by whom Zechariah is instructed in his Visions.

1. THE INFLUENCES WHICH MOULDED THE VISIONS.

The explanation of this change that has come over prophecy must be sought for in certain habits which the people formed in exile. During the Exile several causes conspired to develop among Hebrew writers the tempers both of symbolism and apocalypse. The chief of these was their separation from the realities of civic life, with the opportunity their political leisure afforded them of brooding and dreaming. Facts and Divine promises, which had previously to be dealt with by the conscience of the moment, were left to be worked out by the imagination. The exiles were not responsible citizens or statesmen, but dreamers. They were inspired by mighty hopes for the future, and not fettered by the practical necessities of a definite historical situation upon which these hopes had to be immediately realised. They had a far-off horizon to build upon, and they occupied the whole breadth of it They had a long time to build, and they elaborated the minutest details of their architecture. Consequently their construction of the future of Israel, and their

description of the processes by which it was to be reached, became colossal, ornate and lavishly symbolic. Nor could the exiles fail to receive stimulus for all this from the rich imagery of Babylonian art by which they were surrounded.

Under these influences there were three strong developments in Israel. One was that development of Apocalypse the first beginnings of which we traced in Zephaniah—the representation of God's providence of the world and of His people, not by the ordinary political and military processes of history, but by awful convulsions and catastrophes, both in nature and in politics, in which God Himself appeared, either alone in sudden glory or by the mediation of heavenly armies. The second—and it was but a part of the first—was the development of a belief in Angels: superhuman beings who had not only a part to play in the apocalyptic wars and revolutions; but, in the growing sense, which characterises the period, of God's distance and awfulness, were believed to act as His agents in the communication of His Word to men. And, thirdly, there was the development of the Ritual. To some minds this may appear the strangest of all the effects of the Exile. The fall of the Temple, its hierarchy and sacrifices, might be supposed to enforce more spiritual conceptions of God and of His communion with His people. And no doubt it did. The impossibility of the legal sacrifices in exile opened the mind of Israel to the belief that God was satisfied with the sacrifices of the broken heart, and drew near, without mediation, to all who were humble and pure of heart. But no one in Israel therefore understood that these sacrifices were for ever abolished. Their interruption was regarded as merely temporary even by the most

spiritual of Jewish writers. The Fifty-First Psalm, for instance, which declares that *the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite hear^ 0 Lord, Thou wilt not despise,* immediately follows this declaration by the assurance that *when God builds again the walls of Jerusalem,* He will once more take delight in *the legal sacrifices: burnt offering and whole burnt offering, the oblation of bullocks upon Thine altar^* For men of such views the ruin of the Temple was not its abolition with the whole dispensation which it represented, but rather the occasion for its reconstruction upon wider lines and a more detailed system, for the planning of which the nation's exile afforded the leisure and the carefulness of art described above. The ancient liturgy, too, was insufficient for the stronger convictions of guilt and need of purgation, which sore punishment had impressed upon the people. Then, scattered among the heathen as they were, they learned to require stricter laws and more drastic ceremonies to restore and preserve their holiness. Their ritual, therefore, had to be expanded and detailed to a degree far beyond what we find in Israel's earlier systems of worship. With the fall of the monarchy and the absence of civic life the importance of the priesthood was proportionately enhanced;[1] and the growing sense of God's aloofness from the world, already alluded to, made the more indispensable human, as well as superhuman, mediators between Himself and His people. Consider these things, and it will be clear why prophecy, which with Amos had begun a war against all ritual, and with Jeremiah had achieved a religion absolutely independent of priesthood and Temple, should reappear

[1] Vv. 17 and 19.

after the Exile, insistent upon the building of the Temple, enforcing the need both of priesthood and sacrifice, and while it proclaimed the Messianic King and the High Priest as the great feeders of the national life and worship, finding no place beside them for the Prophet himself.[1]

The force of these developments of Apocalypse, Angelology and the Ritual appears both in Ezekiel and in the exilic codification of the ritual which forms so large a part of the Pentateuch. Ezekiel carries Apocalypse far beyond the beginnings started by Zephaniah. He introduces, though not under the name of angels, superhuman mediators between himself and God. The Priestly Code does not mention angels, and has no Apocalypse; but like Ezekiel it develops, to an extraordinary degree, the ritual of Israel. Both its author and Ezekiel base on the older forms, but build as men who are not confined by the lines of an actually existing system. The changes they make, the innovations they introduce, are too numerous to mention here. To illustrate their influence upon Zechariah, it is enough to emphasise the large place they give in the ritual to the processes of propitiation and cleansing from sin, and the increased authority with which they invest the priesthood. In Ezekiel Israel has still a Prince, though he is not called King. He arranges the cultus,[8] and sacrifices are offered for him and the people,[8] but the priests teach and judge the people.[4] In the Priestly Code[6] the priesthood is more rigorously fenced than by Ezekiel from the laity,

[1] **See Zechariah's Fifth Vision. • xlv. 22.**

*** xliv. iff.** **[4] xliv. 23, 24.**

• Its origin was the Exile, whether its date be before or after the First Return under Cyrus in 537 B.C.

and more regularly graded. At its head appears a High Priest (as he does not in Ezekiel), and by his side the civil rulers are portrayed in lesser dignity and power. Sacrifices are made, no longer as with Ezekiel for Prince and People, but for Aaron and the Congregation ; and throughout the narrative of ancient history, into the form of which this Code projects its legislation, the High Priest stands above the captain of the host, even when the latter is Joshua himself. God's enemies are defeated not so much by the wisdom and valour of the secular powers, as by the miracles of Jehovah Himself, mediated through the priesthood. Ezekiel and the Priestly Code both elaborate the sacrifices of atonement and sanctification beyond all the earlier uses.

2. GENERAL FEATURES OF THE VISIONS.

It was beneath these influences that Zechariah grew up, and to them we may trace, not only numerous details of his Visions, but the whole of their involved symbolism. He was himself a priest and the son of a priest, born and bred in the very order to which we owe the codification of the ritual, and the development of those ideas of guilt and uncleanness that led to its expansion and specialisation. The Visions in which he' deals with these are the Third to the Seventh. As with Haggai there is a High Priest, in advance upon Ezekiel and in agreement with the Priestly Code. As in the latter the High Priest represents the people, and carries their guilt before God.[1] He and his colleagues are pledges and portents of the coming Messiah. But the civil power is not yet diminished

[1] **Fourth Vision, chap, iii.**

before the sacerdotal, as in the Priestly Code. We shall find indeed that a remarkable attempt has been made to alter the original text of a prophecy appended to the Visions,[1] in order to divert to the High Priest the coronation and Messianic rank there described. But any one who reads the passage carefully can see for himself that the crown (a single crown, as the verb which it governs proves[2]) which Zechariah was ordered to make was designed for Another than the priest, that the priest was but to stand at this Other's right hand, and that there was to be concord between the two of them. This Other can only have been the Messianic King, Zerubbabel, as was already proclaimed by Haggai.[3] The altered text is due to a later period, when the High Priest became the civil as well as the religious head of the community. To Zechariah he was still only the right hand of the monarch in government ; but, as we have seen, the religious life of the people was already gathered up and concentrated in him. It is the priests, too, who by their perpetual service and holy life bring on the Messianic era.[4] Men come to the Temple to propitiate Jehovah, for which Zechariah uses the anthropomorphic expression *to make smooth* or *placid His face*^ No more than this is made of the sacrificial system, which was not in full course when the Visions were announced. But the symbolism of the Fourth Vision is drawn from the furniture of the Temple. It is interesting that the great candelabrum seen by the prophet should be like, not

[1] **vi. 9-15.** [2] ii. **20-23.**

* **See ver. 11.** [4] iii. **8.**

• חלה PDN n?n. **The verb (Piel) originally means** *to make weak* **or** *flaccid* **(the Kal means** *to be sick),* **and so** *to soften* **or** *weaken by flattery.* **i Sam. xiii, 12; 1 Kings xiii. 6, etc.**

the ten lights of the old Temple of Solomon, but the seven-branched candlestick described in the Priestly Code. In the Sixth and Seventh Visions, the strong convictions of guilt and uncleanness, which were engendered in Israel by the Exile, are not removed by the sacrificial means enforced in the Priestly Code, but by symbolic processes in the style of the visions of Ezekiel.

The Visions in which Zechariah treats of the outer history of the world are the first two and the last, and in these we notice the influence of the Apocalypse developed during the Exile. In Zechariah's day Israel had no stage for their history save the site of Jerusalem and its immediate neighbourhood. So long as he keeps to this Zechariah is as practical and matter-of-fact as any of the prophets, but when he has to go beyond it to describe the general overthrow of the heathen, he is unable to project that, as Amos or Isaiah did, in terms of historic battle, and has to call in the apocalyptic. A people such as that poor colony of exiles, with no issue upon history, is forced to take refuge in Apocalypse, and carries with it even those of its prophets whose conscience, like Zechariah's, is most strongly bent upon the practical present. Consequently these three historical Visions are the most vague of the eight. They reveal the whole earth under the care of Jehovah and the patrol of His angels. They definitely predict the overthrow of the heathen empires. But, unlike Amos or Isaiah, the prophet does not see by what political movements this is to be effected. The world *is* still *quiet and at peace.*[1] The time is hidden in the Divine counsels; the means, though clearly symbolised in *four smiths* who come forward to smite the horns of the

[1] First Vision, chap. i. 11

heathen,[1] and in a chariot which carries God's wrath to the North,[2] are obscure. The prophet appears to have intended, not any definite individuals or political movements of the immediate future, but God's own supernatural forces. In other words, the Smiths and Chariots are not an allegory of history, but powers apocalyptic. The forms of the symbols were derived by Zechariah from different sources. Perhaps that of the *smiths* who destroy the horns in the Second Vision was suggested by *the smiths of destruction* threatened upon Ammon by Ezekiel.[8] In the horsemen of the First Vision and the chariots of the Eighth, Ewald sees a reflection of the couriers and posts which Darius organised throughout the empire; they are more probably, as we shall see, a reflection of the military bands and patrols of the Persians. But from whatever quarter Zechariah derived the exact aspect of these Divine messengers, he found many precedents for them in the native beliefs of Israel. They are, in short, angels, incarnate as Hebrew angels always were, and in fashion like men. But this brings up the whole subject of the angels, whom he also sees employed as the mediators of God's Word * to him; and that is large enough to be left to a chapter by itself.[4]

We have now before us all the influences which led Zechariah to the main form and chief features of his Visions.

3. Exposition of the Several Visions.

For all the Visions there is one date, *in the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month Shebat, in the second*

[1] Second Vision, ii. 1-4 Heb., i. 18-21 LXX. and Eng.
[1] Eighth Vision, chap. vi. 1-8.
* zxi. 36 Heb., 31 Eng.: *skilful to destroy.* [4] See next chapter.

year of Darius^ that is January or February 519; and one Divine impulse, *the Word of Jehovah came to the prophet Zekharyah, son of Berekhyahu*^ *son of Iddo*, *as follows.*

THE FIRST VISION : **THE** ANGEL-HORSEMEN **(i. 7-17).**

The seventy years which Jeremiah had fixed for the duration of the Babylonian servitude were drawing to a close. Four months had elapsed since Haggai promised that in a little while God would shake all nations.[1] But the world was not shaken: there was no political movement which promised to restore her glory to Jerusalem. A very natural disappointment must have been the result among the Jews. In this situation of affairs the Word came to Zechariah, and both situation and Word he expressed by his First Vision.

It was one of the myrtle-covered glens in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem:[1] Zechariah calls it *the* Glen or Valley-Bottom, either because it was known under that name to the Jews, or because he was himself wont to frequent it for prayer. He discovers in it what seems to be a rendezvous of Persian cavalry-scouts,[8] the leader of the troop in front, and the rest behind him, having just come in with their reports. Soon, however, he is made aware that they are angels, and with that quick, dissolving change both of function

[1] **Jer. xxv. 12; Hag. ii. 7.**

*** Myrtles were once common in the Holy Land, and have been recently found (Hasselquist, *Travels*). For their prevalence near Jerusalem see Neh. viii. 15. They do not appear to have any symbolic value in the Vision.**

*** For a less probable explanation see above, p. 282.**

and figure, which marks all angelic apparitions,[1] they explain to him their mission. Now it is an angel-interpreter at his side who speaks, and now the angel on the front horse. They are scouts of God come in from their survey of the whole earth. The world lies quiet. Whereupon *the angel of Jehovah* asks Him how long His anger must rest on Jerusalem and nothing be done to restore her; and the prophet hears a kind and comforting answer. The nations have done more evil to Israel than God empowered them to do. Their aggravations have changed His wrath against her to pity, and in pity He is come back to her. She shall soon be rebuilt and overflow with prosperity.

The only perplexity in all this is the angels' report that the whole earth lies quiet. How this could have been in 519 is difficult to understand. The great revolts against Darius were then in active progress, the result was uncertain and he took at least three more years to put them all down. They were confined, it is true, to the east and north-east of the empire, but some of them threatened Babylon, and we can hardly ascribe the report of the angels to such a limitation of the Jews' horizon at this time as shut out Mesopotamia or the lands to the north of her. There remain two alternatives. Either these far-away revolts made only more impressive the stagnancy of the tribes of the rest of the empire, and the helplessness of the Jews and their Syrian neighbours was convincingly shown by their inability to take advantage even of the desperate straits to which Darius was reduced; or else in that month of vision Darius had quelled one of the rebellions against him, and for the moment there was quiet in the world.

[1] See pp. 311, 313, etc.

By night I had a vision, and behold I a man riding a brown horse,[1] *and he was standing between the myrtles that are in the Glen;*[1] *and behind him horses brown, bay*[8] *and white. And I said, What are these, my lord ? And the angel who talked with me said, I will show you what these are. And the man who was standing among the myrtles answered and said, These are they whom Jehovah hath sent to go to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of Jehovah who stood among the myrtles! and said, We have gone up and down through the earth, and lo ! the whole earth is still and at peace! And the angel of Jehovah answered and said, Jehovah of Hosts, how long hast Thou no pity for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which*[9] *Thou hast been wroth these seventy years? And Jehovah answered the angel who talked with me! kind words and comforting. And the angel who talked with me said to me, Proclaim now as follows: Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, I am zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion, with a great zeal; but with great wrath am I wroth against the arrogant Gentiles. For I was but a little angry* with Israel, *but*

[1] Ewald omits *riding a brown horst,* as "marring the lucidity of the description, and added from a misconception by an early hand." But we must not expect lucidity in a phantasmagoria like this.

2 n?sp, Meullah, either *shadow* from %%, or for n2sp, *ravine,* or else a proper name. The LXX, which uniformly for D'P10, *myrtles,* reads D', *mountains,* renders n2sD3 VR by *rOt KaraoKlw* Ewald and Hitzig read nasp, Arab, mizhallah, *shadowing* or *tent.*

* Heb. DPw, only here'. For this LXX. gives two kinds, xal *fapol* KOX *rolhot, and dappled and pitbald.* Wright gives a full treatment of the question, pp. 531 ff. He points out that the cognate word in Arabic means sorrel, or yellowish red.

[4] *Who stood among tht myrtles* omitted by Nowack.

[4] Isa. zxxvii. 29; Jer. xlviii. 11; Psalm cxxiii. 4; Zeph. i. 12.

• Or *for.*

Who talked with me omitted by Nowack.

they aggravated the evil.[1] *Therefore thus saith Jehovah, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies. My house shall be built in her—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts—and the measuring line shall be drawn over Jerusalem. Proclaim yet again, saying: Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, My cities shall yet overflow with prosperity, and Jehovah shall again comfort Zion, and again make choice of Jerusalem.*

Two things are to be noted in this oracle. No political movement is indicated as the means of Jerusalem's restoration: this is to be the effect of God's free grace in returning to dwell in Jerusalem, which is the reward of the building of the Temple. And there is an interesting explanation of the motive for God's new grace: in executing His sentence upon Israel, the heathen had far exceeded their commission, and now themselves deserved punishment. That is to say, the restoration of Jerusalem and the resumption of the worship are not enough for the future of Israel. The heathen must be chastised. But Zechariah does not predict any overthrow of the world's power, either by earthly or by heavenly forces. This is entirely in harmony with the insistence upon peace which distinguishes him from other prophets.

THE SECOND VISION: THE FOUR HORNS AND THE FOUR SMITHS (ii. 1-4 Heb., i. 18-21 Eng.).

The Second Vision supplies what is lacking in the First, the destruction of the tyrants who have oppressed Israel. The prophet sees four horns, which, he is told by his interpreting angel, are the powers that have scattered Judah. The many attempts to identify these with four heathen nations are ingenious but futile.

[1] **Heb.** ***helped for tvil, or till it became a calamity.***

" *Four* horns were seen as representing the totality of Israel's enemies—her enemies from all quarters."[1] And to destroy these horns four smiths appear. Because in the Vision the horns are of iron, in Israel an old symbol of power, the first verb used of the action can hardly be, as in the Hebrew text, to terrify. The Greek reads *sharpen,* and probably some verb meaning to *cut* or *chisel* stood in the original.[8]

And I lifted mine eyes and looked, and lo ! four horns. And I said to the angel who spoke with me, What are these ? And he said to me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem? And Jehovah showed me four smiths. And I said, What are these coming to do ? And He spake, saying, These are the horns which scattered Judah, so that none lifted up his head;[4] and these are come to .. J them, to strike down the horns of the nations, that lifted the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.

THE THIRD VISION: THE CITY OF PEACE (ii. 5-9 Heb., ii. 1-5 Eng.).

Like the Second Vision, the Third follows from the First, another, but a still more significant, supplement.

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[1] **Marcus Dods, *Hag., Ztch. and Mal.,* p. 71. Orelli : " In distinction from Daniel, Zechariah is fond of a simultaneous survey, not the presenting of a succession."**

2 For the symbolism of iron horns see Micah iv. 13, and compare Orelli's note, in which it is pointed out that the destroyers must be smiths as in Isa. xliv. 12, *worknun of iron,* and not as in LXX. *carpenters.*

*** Wellhausen and Nowack delete *Israel and Jerusalem;* the latter does not occur in Codd. A, Q, of Septuagint.**

[4] Wellhausen reads, after Mal. ii. 9, w 'D3, *so that it lifted not its head;* but in that case we should not find]n, but npi,

• mhn, but LXX. read mhn, and either that or some verb of cutting must be read.

The First had promised the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and now the prophet beholds *a young man*—by this term he probably means *a servant* or *apprentice*—who is attempting to define the limits of the new city. In the light of what this attempt encounters, there can be little doubt that the prophet means to symbolise by it the intention of building the walls upon the old lines, so as to make Jerusalem again the mountain fortress she had previously been. Some have considered that the young man goes forth only to see, or to show, the extent of the city in the approaching future. But if this had been his motive, there would have been no reason in interrupting him with other orders. The point is, that he has narrow ideas of what the city should be, and is prepared to define it upon its old lines of a fortress. For the interpreting angel who *comes forward*[1] is told by another angel to run and tell the young man that in the future Jerusalem shall be a large unwalled town, and this, not only because of the multitude of its population, for even then it might still have been fortified like Niniveh, but because Jehovah Himself shall be its wall. The young man is prevented, not merely from making it small, but from making it a citadel. And this is in conformity with all the singular absence of war from Zechariah's Visions, both of the future deliverance of Jehovah's people and of their future duties before Him. It is indeed remarkable how Zechariah not only develops none of the warlike elements of earlier Messianic prophecies, but tells us here of how God Himself actually prevented their repetition, and insists again and again

[1] **The Hebrew, literally *corms forth,* is the technical term throughout the Visions for the entrance of the figures upon the stage of vision.**

only on those elements of ancient prediction which had filled the future of Israel with peace.

And I lifted mine eyes and looked, and lo! a man with a measuring rope in his hand. So I said, Whither art thou going ? And he said to me, To measure Jerusalem: to see how much its breadth and how much its length should be. And lol the angel who talked with me came forward^ and another angel came forward to meet him. And he said to him, Run and speak to yonder young man thus: Like *a number of open villages shall Jerusalem remain, because of the multitude of men and cattle in the midst of her. And I Myself will be to her—oracle of Jehovah—a wall of fire round about, and for glory will I be in her midst.*

In this Vision Zechariah gives us, with his prophecy, a lesson in the interpretation of prophecy. His contemporaries believed God's promise to rebuild Jerusalem, but they defined its limits by the conditions of an older and a narrower day. They brought forth their measuring rods, to measure the future by the sacred attainments of the past. Such literal fulfilment of His Word God prevented by that ministry of angels which Zechariah beheld. He would not be bound by those forms which His Word had assumed in suitableness to the needs of ruder generations. The ideal of many of the returned exiles must have been that frowning citadel, those gates of everlastingness,[2] which some of them celebrated in Psalms, and from which the hosts of Sennacherib had been broken and swept back as the angry sea is swept from the fixed line of Canaan's coast.[8] What had been enough for David and Isaiah was

[1] LXX. iornke, *stood up*: adopted by Nowack.

[2] Psalm xxiv. [3] Isa. zvii.12-14.

enough for them, especially as so many prophets of the Lord had foretold a Messianic Jerusalem that should be a counterpart of the historical. But God breaks the letter of His Word to give its spirit a more glorious fulfilment. Jerusalem shall not *be builded as a city that is compact together,*[1] but open and spread abroad village-wise upon her high mountains, and God Himself her only wall.

The interest of this Vision is therefore not only historical. For ourselves it has an abiding doctrinal value. It is a lesson in the method of applying prophecy to the future. How much it is needed we must feel as we remember the readiness of men among ourselves to construct the Church of God upon the lines His own hand drew for our fathers, and to raise again the bulwarks behind which they sufficiently sheltered His shrine. Whether these ancient and sacred defences be dogmas or institutions, we have no right, God tells us, to cramp behind them His powers for the future. And the great men whom He raises to remind us of this, and to prevent by their ministry the timid measurements of the zealous but servile spirits who would confine everything to the exact letter of ancient Scripture—are they any less His angels to us than those ministering spirits whom Zechariah beheld preventing the narrow measures of the poor apprentice of his dream ?

To the Third Vision there has been appended the only lyrical piece which breaks the prose narrative of the Visions. We have already seen that it is a piece of earlier date. Israel is addressed as still scattered to the four winds of heaven, and still inhabiting Babylon.

[1] Psalm cxxii. 3.

While in Zechariah's own oracles and visions Jehovah has returned to Jerusalem, His return according to this piece is still future. There is nothing about the Temple: God's holy dwelling from which He has roused Himself is Heaven. The piece was probably inserted by Zechariah himself: its lines are broken by what seems to be a piece of prose, in which the prophet asserts his mission, in words he twice uses elsewhere. But this is uncertain.

Ho, ho! Flee from the Land of the North
(oracle of JehovaK) ;
For as the four winds have I spread you abroad[1]
(oracle of JehovaK).
Ho! to Zion escape, thou inhabitress of Babel?
For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts[9] *to the nations that plunder you (for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye), that, lo I I am about to wave My hand over them, and they shall be plunder to their own servants, and ye shall know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me.*
Sing out and rejoice, O daughter of Zion;
For, lo! I come, and will dwell in thy midst (oracle of JehovaK).
And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day,
And shall be to Him[4] *a people.*

[1] Some codd. read *with ths four winds.* LXX. *from ths four winds will I gathsr y*(συνάξω ὑμᾶς), and this is adopted by Wellhausen and Nowack. But it is probably a later change intended to adapt the poem to its new context.

3 *Dwellsr of ths daughtsr of Babel.* But n2, *daughter,* is mere dittography of the termination of the preceding word.

* A curious phrase here occurs in the Heb. and versions, *Aftsr glory hath He ssnt ms,* which we are probably right in omitting. In any case it is a parenthesis, and ought to go not with *ssnt ms* but with *saith Jehovah of Hosts.*

[4] So LXX. Heb. *to ms.*

And I will dwell in thy midst
{And thou shalt know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me to thee).
*And Jehovah will make Judah His heritage^*
His portion shall be upon holy soil$_9$
And make choice once more of Jerusalem.
Silence$_9$ all flesh$_9$ before Jehovah;[1]
For He hath roused Himself up from His holy dwelling.

THE FOURTH VISION : THE HIGH PRIEST AND THE SATAN (Chap. iii.).

The next Visions deal with the moral condition of Israel and their standing before God. The Fourth is a judgment scene. The Angel of Jehovah, who is not to be distinguished from Jehovah Himself,' stands for judgment, and there appear before him Joshua the High Priest and the Satan or Adversary who has come to accuse him. Now those who are accused by the Satan—see next chapter of this volume upon the Angels of the Visions—are, according to Jewish belief, those who have been overtaken by misfortune. The people who are standing at God's bar in the person of their High Priest still suffer from the adversity in which Haggai found them, and the continuance of which so disheartened them after the Temple had begun. The evil seasons and poor harvests tormented their hearts with the thought that the Satan still slandered them in the court of God. But Zechariah

[1] **Cf. Zepb. i. 7; Hab. ii. 20. [14] Among the Arabians, after the slaughter of the sacrificial victim, the participants stood for some time in silence about the altar. That was the moment in which the Deity approached in order to take His share in the sacrifice" (Smend, *A. T. RA. Gtsch.*, p. 124).** * **Cf. vv. 1 and 2.**

comforts them with the vision of the Satan rebuked. Israel has indeed been sorely beset by calamity, a brand much burned, but now of God's grace plucked from the fire. The Satan's role is closed, and he disappears from the Vision.[1] Yet something remains : Israel is rescued, but not sanctified. The nation's troubles are over: their uncleanness has still to be removed. Zechariah sees that the High Priest is clothed in filthy garments, while he stands before the Angel of Judgment The Angel orders his servants, those *that stand before him*,* to give him clean festal robes. And the prophet, breaking out in sympathy with what he sees, for the first time takes part in the Visions. *Then I said, Let them also put a clean turban on his head—the* turban being the headdress, in Ezekiel of the Prince of Israel, and in the Priestly Code of the High Priest.[8] This is done, and the national effect of his cleansing is explained to the High Priest. If he remains loyal to the law of Jehovah, he, the representative of Israel, shall have right of entry to Jehovah's presence among the angels who stand there. But more, he and his colleagues the priests are a portent of the coming of the Messiah—*the Servant of Jehovah, the Branch,* as he has been called by many prophets.[4] A stone has already been set before Joshua,

[1] See below, p. 318.

* In this Vision the verb *to stand before* is used in two technical senses : (a) of the appearance of plaintiff and defendant before their judge (w. 1 and 3); (6) of servants before their masters (w. 4 and 7).

• See below, p. 294, n. 7.

[4] Isa. iv. 2, xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15; Isa. liit 2. Stade *(Gtsdi, dss Volkts Isr,*$_t$ II. 125), followed by Marti *(Dtr Proph. Sach*^ 85 n.), suspects the clause *I will bring in My Servant the Branch* as a later interpolation, entangling the construction and finding in this section no further justification.

with seven eyes upon it. God will engrave it with inscriptions, and on the same day take away the guilt of the land. Then shall be the peace upon which Zechariah loves to dwell.

And he showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the Angel of Jehovah, and the Satan[1] *standing at his right hand to accuse him.*[1] *And Jehovah*[3] *said to the Satan: Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan ! Jehovah who makes choice of Jerusalem rebuke thee! Is not this a brand saved from the fire? But Joshua was clothed in foul garments while he stood before the Angel. And he*—the Angel—*answered and said to those who stood in his presence, Take the foul garments from off him (and he said to him, See, I have made thy guilt to pass away from thee),** *and clothe him*[3] *in fresh clothing. And I said*[3] *Let them put a clean turban*[1] *on his head.*

[1] Or *Adversary**, see p. 317.

3 *To Satan him : slander,* or *accuse, him.*

* That is *the Angel of Jehovah,* which Wellhausen and Nowack read; but see below, p. 314.

[4] This clause interrupts the Angel's speech to the servants. Wellh. and Nowack omit it ah : cf. 2 Saml xii. 13; Job vii. 21.

[1] So LXX. Heb. has a degraded grammatical form, *dothe thyself* which has obviously been made to suit the intrusion of the previous clause, and is therefore an argument against the authenticity of the latter.

• LXX. omits *I said* and reads *Let them put* as another imperative, *Do ye put,* following on the two of the previous verse. Wellhausen, adopts this (reading ww for 10'27). Though it is difficult to see how De dropped out of the text if once there, it is equally so to understand why if not original it was inserted. The whole passage has been tampered with. If we accept the Massoretic text, then we have a sympathetic interference in the vision of the dreamer himself which is very natural; and he speaks, as is proper, not in the direct, but indirect, imperative, *Let them put.*

7 MN7, the headdress of rich women (Isa. iii. 23), as of eminent men (Job xxix. 14), means something wound round and round the head f the use of 3% to form like a ball in Isa. xxii. 18, and

And they put the clean turban upon his head, and clothed him with garments, the Angel of Jehovah standing up the while.[1] *And the Angel of Jehovah certified unto Joshua, saying: Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, If in My ways thou walkest, and if My charges thou keepest in charge, then thou also shalt judge My house, and have charge of My courts, and I will give thee entry * among these who stand in My presence. Hearken now, O Joshua, high priest, thou and thy fellows who sit before thee are men of omen, that, lol I am about to bring My servant, Branch. For see the stone which I have set before Joshua, one stone with seven eyes? Lo, I will etch the engraving upon it (oracle of Jehovah), and I will wash away the guilt of that land in one day. In that day (oracle of Jehovah of Hosts) ye will invite one another in under vine and under fig-tree.*

The theological significance of the Vision is as clear as its consequences in the subsequent theology and symbolism of Judaism. The uncleanness of Israel which infests their representative before God is not defined. Some[4] hold that it includes the guilt of

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the use of ' van' (to wind) to express the putting on of the headdress (Ezek. xvi. 10, etc.). Hence *turban* seems to be the proper rendering. Another form from the same root, nDJYD, , is the name of the headdress of the Prince of Israel (Ezek. xxi. 31) ; and in the Priestly Codex of the Pentateuch the headdress of the high priest (Exod. xxviii. 37, etc.).

[1] Wellhausen takes the last words of ver. 5 with ver. 6, reads TD7' and renders *And the Angel of Jehovah stood up* or *slipped forward.* But even if '727 ' be read, the order of the words would require translation in the pluperfect, which would come to the same as the original text. And if Wellhausen's proposal were correct the words *Angel of Jehovah* in ver. 6 would be superfluous.

*** Read DP2p (Smend, *A. T. Rei. Gesch.*, p. 324, n. 2).**

• Or *facets.*

[4] *E.g.* Marti, *Der Prophet Sacharja*, p. 83.

Israel's idolatry. But they have to go back to Ezekiel for this, and we have seen that Zechariah nowhere mentions or feels the presence of idols among his people. The Vision itself supplies a better explanation. Joshua's filthy garments are replaced by festal and official robes. He is warned to walk in the whole law of the Lord, ruling the Temple and guarding Jehovah's court. The uncleanness was the opposite of all this. It was not ethical failure: covetousness, greed, immorality. It was, as Haggai protested, the neglect of the Temple, and of the whole worship of Jehovah. If this be now removed, in all fidelity to the law, the High Priest shall have access to God, and the Messiah will come. The High Priest himself shall not be the Messiah —this dogma is left to a later age to frame. But before God he will be as one of the angels, and himself and his faithful priesthood omens of the Messiah. We need not linger on the significance of this for the place of the priesthood in later Judaism. Note how the High Priest is already the religious representative of his people: their uncleanness is his; when he is pardoned and cleansed, *the uncleanness of the land* is purged away. In such a High Priest Christian theology has seen the prototype of Christ.

The stone is very difficult to explain. Some have thought of it as the foundation-stone of the Temple, which had already been employed as a symbol of the Messiah and which played so important a part in later Jewish symbolism.[1] Others prefer the top-stone of the Temple, mentioned in chap. iv. 7,3 and others an altar or substitute for the ark.[8] Again, some take it

[1] **Hitzig, Wright and many others. On the place of this stone in the legends of Judaism see Wright, pp. 75 i.**

[1] **Ewald, Marcus Dods. * Von Orelli, Volck.**

to be a jewel, either on the breastplate of the High Priest,[1] or upon the crown afterwards prepared for Zerubbabel.[2] To all of these there are objections. It is difficult to connect with the foundation-stone an engraving still to be made; neither the top-stone of the Temple, nor a jewel on the breastplate of the priest, nor a jewel on the king's crown, could properly be said to be set *before* the High Priest. We must rather suppose that the stone is symbolic of the finished Temple.[3] The Temple is the full expression of God's providence and care—His *seven eyes.* Upon it shall His will be engraved, and by its sacrifices the uncleanness of the land shall be taken away.

THE FIFTH VISION: THE TEMPLE CANDLESTICK AND THE TWO OLIVE-TREES (Chap. iv.).

As the Fourth Vision unfolded the dignity and significance of the High Priest, so in the Fifth we find discovered the joint glory of himself and Zerubbabel, the civil head of Israel. And to this is appended a Word for Zerubbabel himself. In our present text this Word has become inserted in the middle of the Vision, w. *6b-ioa;* in the translation which follows it has been removed to the end of the Vision, and the reasons for this will be found in the notes.

The Vision is of the great golden lamp which stood in the Temple. In the former Temple, light was supplied by ten several candlesticks.[4] But the Levitical Code ordained one seven-branched lamp, and such appears to have stood in the Temple built while

[1] **Bredenkamp.**

[2] **Wellhausen, *in loco,* and Smend, *A. T. Rd. Gcsch.,* 345.**

[3] **So Marti, p. 88.**

[4] **I Kings vii. 49.**

Zechariah was prophesying.[1] The lamp Zechariah sees has also seven branches, but differs in other respects, and especially in some curious fantastic details only possible in dream and symbol. Its seven lights were fed by seven pipes from a bowl or reservoir of oil which stood higher than themselves, and this was fed, either directly from two olive-trees which stood to the right and left of it, or, if ver. 12 be genuine, by two tubes which brought the oil from the trees.

The seven lights are the seven eyes of Jehovah—if, as we ought, we run the second half of ver. 10 on to the first half of ver. 6. The pipes and reservoir are given no symbolic force; but the olive-trees which feed them are * called *the two sons of oil which stand before the Lord of all the earth.* These can only be the two anointed heads of the community—Zerubbabel, the civil head, and Joshua, the religious head. Theirs was the equal and co-ordinate duty of sustaining the Temple, figured by the whole candelabrum, and ensuring the brightness of the sevenfold revelation. The Temple, that is to say, is nothing without the monarchy and the priesthood behind it; and these stand in the immediate presence of God. Therefore this Vision, which to the superficial eye might seem to be a glorification of the mere machinery of the Temple and its ritual, is rather to prove that the latter derive all their power from the national institutions which are behind them, from the two representatives of the people who in their turn stand before God Himself. The Temple so near completion will not of itself reveal God: let not the Jews put their trust in it, but in the life behind it. And for ourselves the lesson of the Vision is that which Christian theology

[1] 1 Macc. i. 21; iv. 49, 50. Josephus, XIV. *Ant.* iv. 4.

has been so slow to learn, that God's revelation under the old covenant shone not directly through the material framework, but was mediated by the national life, whose chief men stood and grew fruitful in His presence.

One thing is very remarkable. The two sources of revelation are the King and the Priest. The Prophet is not mentioned beside them. Nothing could prove more emphatically the sense in Israel that prophecy was exhausted.

The appointment of so responsible a position for Zerubbabel demanded for him a special promise of grace. And therefore, as Joshua had his promise in the Fourth Vision, we find Zerubbabel's appended to the Fifth. It is one of the great sayings of the Old Testament: there is none more spiritual and more comforting. Zerubbabel shall complete the Temple, and those who scoffed at its small beginnings in the day of small things shall frankly rejoice when they see him set the top-stone by plummet in its place. As the moral obstacles to the future were removed in the Fourth Vision by the vindication of Joshua and by his cleansing, so the political obstacles, all the hindrances described by the Book of Ezra in the building of the Temple, shall disappear. *Before Zerubbabel the great mountain shall become a plain.* And this, because he shall not work by his own strength, but the Spirit of Jehovah of Hosts shall do everything. Again we find that absence ot expectation in human means, and that full trust in God's own direct action, which characterise all the prophesying of Zechariah.

Then the angel who talked with me returned and roused me like a man roused out of his sleep. And he said to me, What seest thou ? And I said, I see, and lo I a

candlestick all of gold, and its bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps on it, and seven[1] *pipes to the lamps which are upon it. And two olive-trees stood over against it, one on the right of the bowl,*[1] *and one on the left. And I began*[8] *and said to the angel who talked with me? What be these, my lord? And the angel who talked with me answered and said, Knowest thou not what these be ? And I said, No, my lord / And he answered and said to me,*[6] *These seven are the eyes of Jehovah, which sweep through the whole earth. And I asked and said to him, What are these two olive-trees on the right of the candlestick and on its left? And again I asked and said to him, What are the two olive-branches which are beside the two golden tubes that pour forth the oil*[6] *from them?'*[1] *And he said to me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord! And he said, These are the two sons of oil which stand before the Lord of all the earth.*

This is Jehovah's Word to Zerubbabel, and it says:[8] *Not by might, and not by force, but by My Spirit, saith*

[1] **LXX, Heb. has *seven sevens* of pipes.**

2 Wellhausen reads *its right* and deletes *the bowl.*

*** ינ- ny is not only *to answer*, but to take part in a conversation, whether by starting or continuing it. LXX. rightly xnpornca.**

[4] **Heb. *saying.***

*** In the Hebrew text, followed by the ancient and modern versions, including the English Bible, there here follows 6b-10a, the Word to Zerubbabel. They obviously disturb the narrative of the Vision, and Wellhausen has rightly transferred them to the end of it, where they come in as naturally as the word of hope to Joshua comes in at the end of the preceding Vision. Take them away, and, as can be seen above, ver. 1Ob follows quite naturally upon *6a.***

• Heb. *gold.* So LXX.

' Wellhausen omits the whole of this second question (ver. 12) as intruded and unnecessary. So also Smend as a doublet on ver. 11 (*A. T. Rei. Gesch.*, 343 n.). So also Nowack.

*** Heb. *saying.***

Jehovah of Hosts. What art thou, O great mountain ? Before Zerubbabel be thou level! And he[1] *shall bring forth the top-stone with shoutings, Grace, grace to it!*[1] *And the Word of Jehovah came to me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house, and his hands shall complete it, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me to you. For whoever hath despised the day of small things, they shall rejoice when they see the plummet*[3] *in the hand of Zerubbabel.*

THE SIXTH VISION : THE WINGED VOLUME (Chap. v. 1-4).

The religious and political obstacles being now removed from the future of Israel, Zechariah in the next two Visions beholds the land purged of its crime and wickedness. These Visions are very simple, if somewhat after the ponderous fashion of Ezekiel.

The first of them is the Vision of the removal of the curse brought upon the land by its civic criminals, especially thieves and perjurers—the two forms which crime takes in a poor and rude community like the colony of the returned exiles. The prophet tells us he beheld a roll flying. He uses the ordinary Hebrew name for the rolls of skin or parchment upon which writing was set down. But the proportions of its colossal size—twenty cubits by ten—prove that it was not a cylindrical but an oblong shape which he saw. It consisted, therefore, of sheets laid on each other like

[1] LXX. *1.*

* Or *Fair, fair is i* / Nowack.

• *The stone, the leaden.* Marti, *St u. Kr.*, 1892, p. 213 n., takes *the leaden* for a gloss, and reads simply *the stone, i.e.* the top-stone; but the plummet is the last thing laid to the building to test the straightness of the top-stone.

our books, and as our word "volume," which originally meant, like his own term, a roll, means now an oblong article, we may use this in our translation. The volume is the record of the crime of the land, and Zechariah sees it flying from the land. But it is also the curse upon this crime, and so again he beholds it entering every thiefs and perjurer's house and destroying it. Smend gives a possible explanation of this: "It appears that in ancient times curses were written on pieces of paper and sent down the wind into the houses"[1] of those against whom they were directed. But the figure seems rather to be of birds of prey.

And I turned and lifted my eyes and looked, and lo / a volume[1] flying. And he said unto me, What dost thou see? And I said, I see a volume flying, its length twenty cubits and its breadth ten. And he said unto me, This is the curse that is going out upon the face of all the land. For every thief is hereby purged away from hence^ and every perjurer is hereby purged away

[1] *A. T. Rei. Gesch.*, 312 n.

2 on2a, *roll* or *volume.* LXX. *bphraror, sickle,* 740.

• A group of difficult expressions. The verb n2? is Ni. of a root which originally had the physical meaning to *dean out of a place,* and this Ni. is so used of a plundered town in Isa. iii. 26. But its more usual meaning is to be spoken free from guilt (Psalm xix. 14, etc.). Most commentators take it here in the physical sense, Hitzig quoting the use of *Kaffapl^* in Mark vii. 19. Mb? np are variously rendered. ND is mostly understood as locative, *hence, ie.,* from the land just mentioned, but some take it with *steal* (Hitzig), some with *deemed out* (Ewald, Orelli, etc.). Dp is rendered *like it* —the flying roll (Ewald, Orelli), which cannot be, since the roll flies upon the face of the land, and the sinner is to be purged out of it; or in accordance with the roll or its curse (Jerome, Kohler). But Wellhausen reads nt? n, and takes n2? in its usual meaning and in the past tense, and renders *Every thief has for long remained unpunished;* and so in the next clause. So, too, Nowack. LXX. *Every thief shall be condemned to death, ten Bar^rov rihverai*

from hence. I have sent it forth—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts—and it shall enter the thief's house and the house of him that hath sworn falsely by My name, and it shall roost[1] in the midst of his house and consume it, with its beams and its stones.

THE SEVENTH VISION: THE WOMAN IN THE BARREL (Chap. v. 5-11).

It is not enough that the curse fly from the land after destroying every criminal. The living principle of sin, the power of temptation, must be covered up and removed. This is the subject of the Seventh Vision.

The prophet sees an ephah, the largest vessel in use among the Jews, of more than seven gallons capacity, and round[8] like a barrel. Presently the leaden top is lifted, and the prophet sees a woman inside. This is Wickedness, feminine because she figures the power of temptation. She is thrust back into the barrel, the leaden lid is pushed down, and the whole carried off by two other female figures, winged like the strong, far-flying stork, into the land of Shinar, "which at that time had the general significance of the counterpart of the Holy Land,"[4] and was the proper home of all that was evil.

And the angel of Jehovah who spake with me came

[1] Heb. *lodge, pass the night:* cf. Zeph. ii. 14 (above, p. 65), *pelican and bittern shall roost upon the capitals.*

2 Smend sees a continuation of Ezekiel's idea of the guilt of man overtaking him (iii. 20, xxxiv.). Here God's curse does all.

[8] This follows from the shape of the disc that fits into it. Seven gallons are seven-eighths of the English bushel: that in use in Canada and the United States is somewhat smaller.

[4] Ewald.

fonoard[x] *and said to me., Lift now thine eyes and see what this is that comes forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is a bushel coming forth. And he said, This is their transgression*[8] *in all the land.*[3] *And behold ! the round leaden* top *was lifted up, and lol*[3] *a woman sitting inside the bushel. And he said, This is the Wickedness, and he thrust her back into the bushel, and thrust the leaden disc upon the mouth of it. And I lifted mine eyes and looked, and to I two women came forth with the wind in their wings, fo? they had wings like storks wings, and they bore the bushel betwixt earth and heaven. And I said to'the angel that talked with me, Whither do they carry the bushel? And he said to me, To build it a house in the land of Shin'ar, that it may be fixed and brought to rest there on a place of its own.*[3]

We must not allow this curious imagery to hide from us its very spiritual teaching. If Zechariah is weighted in these Visions by the ponderous fashion of Ezekiel, he has also that prophet's truly moral spirit. He is not contented with the ritual atonement for sin,

[1] Upon the stage of vision.

• For Heb. D,1 read 0}^ with LXX.

' By inserting i now after no in ver. 5, and deleting nesn . . .ר Den in ver. 6, Wellhausen secures the more concise text: *And see what this bushel is that conus forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, That is ths evil of the people in the whole land.* But to reduce the redundancies of the Visions is to delete the most characteristic feature of their style. Besides, Wellhausen's result gives no sense. The prophet would not be asked to see what a bushel is: the angel is there to tell him this. So Wellhausen in his translation has to omit the HD of ver. 5, while telling us in his note to replace nown after it. His emendation is, therefore, to be rejected. Nowack, however, accepts it

* LXX. Heb. *this.*

* In the last clause the verbal forms are obscure if not corrupt. LXX. *Kid trouuaga* [illegible] *IKSI* ~ ÐP 774 120? ; but see Ewald, *Syntax,* 131 d.

nor with the legal punishment of crime. The living power of sin must be banished from Israel; and this cannot be done by any efforts of men themselves, but by God's action only, which is thorough and effectual. If the figures by which this is illustrated appear to us grotesque and heavy, let us remember how they would suit the imagination of the prophet's own day. Let us lay to heart their eternally valid doctrine, that sin is not a formal curse, nor only expressed in certain social crimes, nor exhausted by the punishment of these, but, as a power of attraction and temptation to all men, it must be banished from the heart, and can be banished only by God.

THE EIGHTH VISION: THE CHARIOTS OF THE FOUR WINDS (Chap. vi. 1-8).

As the series of Visions opened with one of the universal providence of God, so they close with another of the same. The First Vision had postponed God's overthrow of the nations till His own time, and this the Last Vision now describes as begun, the religious and moral needs of Israel having meanwhile been met by the Visions which come between, and every obstacle to God's action for the deliverance of His people being removed.

The prophet sees four chariots, with horses of different colour in each, coming out from between two mountains of brass. The horsemen of the First Vision were bringing in reports: these chariots are coming forth with their commissions from the presence of the Lord of all the earth. They are the four winds of heaven, servants of Him who maketh the winds His angels. They are destined for different quarters of the world. The prophet has not been admitted to

the Presence, and does not know what exactly they have been commissioned to do; that is to say, Zechariah is ignorant of the actual political processes by which the nations are to be overthrown and Israel glorified before them. But his Angel-interpreter tells him that the black horses go north, the white west, and the dappled south, while the horses of the fourth chariot, impatient because no direction is assigned to them, are ordered to roam up and down through the earth. It is striking that none are sent eastward.[1] This appears to mean that, in Zechariah's day, no power oppressed or threatened Israel from that direction; but in the north there was the centre of the Persian Empire,„ to the south Egypt, still a possible master of the world, and to the west the new forces of Europe that in less than a generation were to prove themselves a match for Persia. The horses of the fourth chariot are therefore given the charge to exercise supervision upon the whole earth—unless in ver. 7 we should translate, not *earthy* but *land*$_f$ and understand a commission to patrol the land of Israel. The centre of the world's power is in the north, and therefore the black horses, which are dispatched in that direction, are explicitly described as charged to bring God's spirit, that is His anger or His power, to bear on that quarter of the world.

And once more [3]*1 lifted mine eyes and looked, and lo !' four chariots coming forward from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of brass. In*

[1] **Wellhausen suggests that in the direction assigned to the white horses, B'n (ver. 6), which we have rendered *westward,* we might read bpn ⅁, *land of the tasty* and that from ver. 7 *tht west* has probably fallen out after *they go forth**

2 Heb. *1 turned again and.*

the first chariot were brown horses, and in the second chariot black horses, and in the third chariot white horses, and in the fourth chariot dappled . . .[1] *horses. And I broke in and said to the angel who talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said to me, These be the four winds of heaven that come forth from presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth?* That *with the black horses goes forth to the land of the north, while the white go out west*[9] *(?), and the dappled go to the land of the south. And the . . .*[4] *go forth and seek to go, to march up and down on the earth. And he said, Go, march up and down on the earth; and they marched up and down on the earth. And he called me and spake to me, saying, See they that go forth to the land of the north have brought my spirit to bear*[9] *on the land of the north.*

THE RESULT OF THE VISIONS: THE CROWNING OF THE KING OF ISRAEL (Chap. vi. 9-15).

The heathen being overthrown, Israel is free, and may have her king again. Therefore Zechariah is ordered—it would appear on the same day as that on which he received the Visions—to visit a certain deputation from the captivity in Babylon, Heldai, Tobiyah and Yedayah, at the house of Josiah the son

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[1] **Hebrew reads D'ŞDN, *strong*; LXX *papol, *dappled,* and for the previous D*174, *spotted* or *dappled,* it reads roxlXǫt, *piebald.* Perhaps we should read bon (cf. Isa. Ixiii. 1), *dark red* or *sorrel,* with *grey spots.* So Ewald and Orelli, Wright keeps *strong.***

[2] **Wellhausen, supplying 9 before J2ŢT, renders *These go forth to the four winds of heaven after they have presented themselves,* etc.**

[*] **Heb. *behind them.***

[*] **O'YDN, the second epithet of the horses of the fourth chariot, ver. 3. See note there.**

[1] **Or *anger to bear,* Heb. *rest.***

of Zephaniah, where they have just arrived; and to select from the gifts they have brought enough silver and gold to make circlets for a crown. The present text assigns this crown to Joshua, the high priest, but as we have already remarked, and will presently prove in the notes to the translation, the original text assigned it to Zerubbabel, the civil head of the community, and gave Joshua, the priest, a place at his right hand—the two to act in perfect concord with each other. The text has suffered some other injuries, which it is easy to amend; and the end of it has been broken off in the middle of a sentence.

And the Word of Jehovah came to me, saying: Take from the G6lah? from Heldai and from Tohiyah and from Yedayah; and do thou go on the same day, yea, go thou to the house of Yosiyahu, son of ^ephanyah, whither they have arrived from Babylon? And thou shalt take silver and gold, and make a crown, and set it on the head of. . ? And say to him : Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts,*

[1] **The collective name for the Jews in exile.**

[2] **LXX.** ***Tapb*** **TGv** ***dpx.6vrw_f*** **annp; but since an accusative is wanted to express the articles taken, Hitzig proposes to read apnp,** ***My precious things.*** **The LXX. reads the other two names Kal** ***rapb*** **TOr** ***xpnoluow aMjt Kal TAph rOr reyoxro avri.***

*** The construction of ver. 10 is very clumsy; above it is rendered literally. Wellhausen proposes to delete** ***and do thou go . . . to the house of,*** **and take Yosiyahu's name as simply a fourth with the others, reading the last clause** ***who have come from Babylon.*** **This is to cut, not disentangle, the knot**

[4] **The Hebrew text here has** ***Joshua son ofjehosadak, the high priest,*** **but there is good reason to suppose that the crown was meant for Zerubbabel, but that the name of Joshua was inserted instead in a later age, when the high priest was also the king—see below, note. For these reasons Ewald had previously supposed that the whole verse was genuine, but that there had fallen out of it the words** ***and on the head of Zerubbabel.*** **Ewald found a proof of this in the plural form mop, which he rendered** ***crowns.*** **(So also Wildeboer,** ***A. T,***

Lol a man called Branch; from his roots shall a branch come, and he shall build the Temple of Jehovah, Yea, he shall build Jehovahs Temple; and he shall wear the royal majesty and sit and rule upon his throne, and* Joshua[2] *shall be priest on his right hand^ and there will be a counsel of peace between the two of them? And the crown shall be for Heldai[h] and Tobiyah and Yeddyah, and for the courtesy • of the son of Sephanyah, for a memorial in the Temple of Jehovah, And the far-away shall come and build at the Temple of Jehovah, and ye shall know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me to you; and it shall be if ye hearken to the voice of Jehovah your God.*

*Utteratur^* p. 297.) But ny is to be rendered *crown*; see ver. 11, where it is followed by a singular verb. The plural form refers to the several circlets of which it was woven.

[1] Some critics omit the repetition.

[9] So Wellhausen proposes to insert The name was at least understood in the original text

* So LXX. Heb. *on his throne.*

[1] With this phrase, vouched for by both the Heb. and the Sept., the rest of the received text cannot be harmonised. There were two: one is the priest just mentioned who is to be at the right hand of the crowned. The received text makes this crowned one to be the high priest Joshua. But if there are two and the priest is only secondary, the crowned one must be Zerubbabel, whom Haggai has already designated as Messiah. Nor is it difficult to see why, in a later age, when the high priest was sovereign in Israel, Joshua's name should have been inserted in place of Zerubbabel's, and at the same time the phrase *priest at his right hand,* to which the LXX. testifies in harmony with *the two of them,* should have been altered to the reading of the received text, *priest upon his throne,* With the above agree Smend, *A, T. Rel, Gesch.,* 343 n., and Nowack.

[1] Heb. D2n, Hlem, but the reading Heldai, 'n, is proved by the previous occurrence of the name and by the LXX. reading here, *rob ibrouvovcw, i.e.* from root 1?n, *to last.*

•in, but Wellhausen and others take it as abbreviation or misreading for the name of Yosiyahu (see ver. 10).

7 Here the verse and paragraph break suddenly off in the middle of a sentence. On the passage see Smend, 343 and 345.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ANGELS OF THE VISIONS

ZECHARIAH i 7—vi. 8

AMONG the influences of the Exile which contributed the material of Zechariah's Visions we included a considerable development of Israel's belief in Angels. The general subject is in itself so large, and the Angels play so many parts in the Visions, that it is necessary to devote to them a separate chapter.

From the earliest times the Hebrews had conceived their Divine King to be surrounded by a court of ministers, who besides celebrating His glory went forth from His presence to execute His will upon earth. In this latter capacity they were called Messengers, Male'akim, which the Greeks translated Angeloi, and so gave us our Angels. The origin of this conception is wrapt in obscurity. It may have been partly due to a belief, shared by all early peoples, in the existence of superhuman beings inferior to the gods,[1] but even without this it must have sprung up in the natural tendency to provide the royal deity of a people with a court, an army and servants. In the pious minds of early Israel there must have been a kind of necessity to believe and develop this—a necessity imposed *firstly* by the belief in Jehovah's residence as confined to one

[1] So Robertson Smith, art. "Angels" in the *Encyc. Brit*^ 9th ed.

spot, Sinai or Jerusalem, from which He Himself went forth only upon great occasions to the deliverance of His people as a whole; and *secondly* by the unwillingness to conceive of His personal appearance in missions of a menial nature, or to represent Him in the human form in which, according to primitive ideas, He could alone hold converse with men.

It can easily be understood how a religion, which was above all a religion of revelation, should accept such popular conceptions in its constant record of the appearance of God and His Word in human life. Accordingly, in the earliest documents of the Hebrews, we find angels who bring to Israel the blessings, curses and commands of Jehovah.[1] Apart from this duty and their human appearance, these beings are not conceived to be endowed either with character or, if we may judge by their namelessness,[9] with individuality. They are the Word of God personified. Acting as God's mouthpiece, they are merged in Him, and so completely that they often speak of themselves by the Divine *I?* " The *function* of an Angel so overshadows his *personality* that the Old Testament does not ask who or what this Angel is, but what he does. And the answer to the last question is, that he represents God to man so directly and fully that when he speaks or acts God Himself is felt to speak or act." [4] Besides the carriage of the Divine Word, angels bring back to their Lord report of all that happens: kings are said, in popular language, to be *as wise as the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all the things that are in the earth* * They are also employed in the deliverance and discipline

[1] **So already in Deborah's Song, Judg. v. 23, and throughout both J and E.**

[2] **Cf. especially Gen. xxxii. 29.**

[4] **Robertson Smith, as above.**

* **Judg. vi. 12 ff.**

* **2 Sam. xiv. 20.**

of His people.[1] By them come the pestilence,[3] and the restraint of those who set themselves against God's will.[8]

Now the prophets before the Exile had so spiritual a conception of God, worked so immediately from His presence, and above all were so convinced of His personal and practical interest in the affairs of His people, that they felt no room for Angels between Him and their hearts, and they do not employ Angels, except when Isaiah in his inaugural vision penetrates to the heavenly palace and court of the Most High.[4] Even when Amos sees a plummet laid to the walls of Jerusalem, it is by the hands of Jehovah Himself,[6] and we have not encountered an Angel in the mediation of the Word to any of the prophets whom we have already studied. But Angels reappear, though not under the name, in the visions of Ezekiel, the first prophet of the Exile. They are in human form, and he calls them *Men.* Some execute God's wrath upon Jerusalem,® and one, whose appearance is as the appearance of brass, acts as the interpreter of God's will to the prophet, and instructs him in the details of the building of City and Temple.[7] When the glory of Jehovah appears and Jehovah Himself speaks to the prophet out of the Temple, this *Man* stands by the prophet,[8] distinct from the Deity, and afterwards continues his work of explanation. "Therefore," as Dr. Davidson remarks, "it is not the sense of distance

[1] Exod. xiv. 19 (?), xxiii. 20, etc.; Josh. v. 13.

[2] 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17; 2 Kings xix, 35; Exod. xii. 23. In Eccles, v. 6 this destroying angel is the minister of God : cf. Psalm lxxviii. 496, *hurtful angels*—Cheyne, *Origin of Psalter* p. 157.,

* Balaam : Num. xxii. 23, 31.

[4] vi. 2-6.

[5] Vol. I., p. 114.

• ix.

[7] xl. 3 ff.

[8] xliii. 6.

to which God is removed that causes Ezekiel to create these intermediaries." The necessity for them rather arises from the same natural feeling, which we have suggested as giving rise to the earliest conceptions of Angels: the unwillingness, namely, to engage the Person of God Himself in the subordinate task of explaining the details of the Temple. Note, too, how the Divine Voice, which speaks to Ezekiel out of the Temple, blends and becomes one with the *Man* standing at his side. Ezekiel's Angel-interpreter is simply one function of the Word of God.

Many of the features of Ezekiel's Angels appear in those of Zechariah. *The four smiths* or smiters of the four horns recall the six executioners of the wicked in Jerusalem.[1] Like Ezekiel's Interpreter, they are called *Men?* and like him one appears as Zechariah's instructor and guide: *he who talked with me?* But while Zechariah calls these beings *Men*[9] he also gives them the ancient name, which Ezekiel had not used, of Male'akim, *messengers, angels.* The Instructor is *the Angel who talked with me.* In the First Vision, *the Man riding the brown horse, the Man that stood among the myrtles,* is *the Angel of Jehovah that stood among the myrtles?* The Interpreter is also called *the Angel of Jehovah,* and if our text of the First Vision be correct, the two of them are curiously mingled, as if both were functions of the same Word of God, and in personality not to be distinguished from each other. The Reporting Angel among the myrtles takes up the duty of the Interpreting

[1] Zech. i. 18 ft.; Ezek. ix. I ff.

[8] Zech. i. 8: so even in the Book of Daniel we have *tht man* Gabriel—ix. 21.

[8] i. 9, 19; ii. 3; iv. 1,4, 5; v. 5,10; vi. 4. But see above, pp. 261 f.

[4] i. 8, 10, II.

Angel and explains the Vision to the prophet. In the Fourth Vision this dissolving view is carried further, and the Angel of Jehovah is interchangeable with Jehovah Himself;[1] just as in the Vision of Ezekiel the Divine Voice from the Glory and the Man standing beside the prophet are curiously mingled. Again in the Fourth Vision we hear of those *who stand in the presence of Jehovah*^ and .in the Eighth of executant angels coming out from His presence with commissions upon the whole earth.[8]

In the Visions of Zechariah, then, as in the earlier books, we see the Lord of all the earth, surrounded by a court of angels, whom He sends forth in human form to interpret His Word and execute His will, and in their doing of this there is the same indistinctness of individuality, the same predominance of function over personality. As with Ezekiel, one stands out more clearly than the rest, to be the prophet's interpreter, whom, as in the earlier visions of angels, Zechariah calls *my lord?* but even he melts into the figures of the rest These are the old and borrowed elements in Zechariah's doctrine of Angels. But he has added to them in several important particulars, which make his Visions an intermediate stage between the Book of Ezekiel and the very intricate angelology of later Judaism.

In the first place, Zechariah is the earliest prophet who introduces orders and ranks among the angels. In his Fourth Vision the Angel of Jehovah is the Divine Judge *before whom*[6] Joshua appears with the Adversary.

[1] **iii. I compared with 2.** *** vi. 5.**

[8] **iii. 6, 7.** [4] **i. 9, etc.**

[a] **iii. I.** ***Stand b^fort*** **is here used forensically: cf. the N.T. phrases to** ***stand bsfors God,*** **Rev. xx. 12;** ***befort tht judgmtnt-stat of Christ,*** **Rom. xiv. 10; and** ***be acquitted,*** **Luke xxi. 36.**

He also has others standing *before him*[1] to execute his sentences. In the Third Vision, again, the Interpreting Angel does not communicate directly with Jehovah, but receives his words from another Angel who has come forth.[1] All these are symptoms, that even with a prophet, who so keenly felt as Zechariah did the ethical directness of God's word and its pervasiveness through public life, there had yet begun to increase those feelings of God's sublimity and awfulness, which in the later thought of Israel lifted Him to so far a distance from men, and created so complex a host of intermediaries, human and superhuman, between the worshipping heart and the Throne of Grace. We can best estimate the difference in this respect between Zechariah and the earlier prophets whom we have studied by remarking that his characteristic phrase *talked with me,* literally *spake in* or *by me*^ which he uses of the Interpreting Angel, is used by Habakkuk of God Himself.[8] To the same awful impressions of the Godhead is perhaps due the first appearance of the Angel as intercessor. Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah themselves directly interceded with God for the people; but with Zechariah it is the Interpreting Angel who intercedes, and who in return receives the Divine comfort.[4] In this angelic function, the first of its kind in Scripture, we see the small and explicable beginnings of a belief destined to assume enormous dimensions in the development of the Church's worship. The supplication of Angels, the faith in their intercession and in

[1] **iii. 4. Here the phrase is used domestically of servants in the presence of their master. See above, p. 293, n. 2.**

*** ii. 3,4.**

' Hab. ii. 1: cf. also Num. xii. 6-9.

[4] First Vision, i. 12.

the prevailing prayers of the righteous dead, which has been so egregiously multiplied in certain sections of Christendom, may be traced to the same increasing sense of the distance and awfulness of God, but is to be corrected by the faith Christ has taught us of the nearness of our Father in Heaven, and of His immediate care of His every human child.

The intercession of the Angel in the First Vision is also a step towards that identification of special Angels with different peoples which we find in the Book ot Daniel. This tells us of heavenly princes not only for Israel—*Michael, your prince, the great prince which standeth up for the children of thy people**—but for the heathen nations, a conception the first beginnings of which we see in a prophecy that was perhaps not far from being contemporaneous with Zechariah? Zechariah's Vision of a hierarchy among the angels was also destined to further development The head of the patrol among the myrtles, and the Judge-Angel before whom Joshua appears, are the first Archangels. We know how these were further specialised, and had even personalities and names given them by both Jewish and Christian writers?

Among the Angels described in the Old Testament, we have seen some charged with powers of hindrance and destruction—*a troop of angels of evil?* They too are the servants of God, who is the author of all evil as well as good,[6] and the instruments of His wrath.

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[1] **x. 21, xii. I.**

*** Isa. xxiv. 21.**

[5] **Book of Daniel x., xii. ; Tobit xii. 15; Book of Enoch *passim;* Jude 9; Rev.** viii, **2, etc.**

[4] **Psalm ixxviii. 49. See above, p, 312, n. 2.**

*** Amos** iii, **6.**

But the temptation of men is also part of His Providence. Where wilful souls have to be misled, the *spirit* who does so, as in Ahab's case, comes from Jehovah's presence.[1] All these spirits are just as devoid of character and personality as the rest of the angelic host. They work evil as mere instruments: neither malice nor falseness is attributed to themselves. They are not rebel nor fallen angels, but obedient to Jehovah. Nay, like Ezekiel's and Zechariah's Angels of the Word, the Angel who tempts David to number the people is interchangeable with God Himself.[2] Kindred to the duty of tempting men is that of discipline, in its forms both of restraining or accusing the guilty, and of vexing the righteous in order to test them. For both of these the same verb is used, "to satan,"[8] in the general sense of *withstanding*, or antagonising. The Angel of Jehovah stood in Balaam's way *to satan him.*[k] The noun, *the Satan*, is used repeatedly of a human foe.[6] But in two passages, of which Zechariah's Fourth Vision is one, and the other the Prologue to Job,® the name is given to an Angel, one of *the sons of Elohim*, or Divine powers who receive their commission from Jehovah. The noun is not yet, what it afterwards became/ a proper name; but has the definite article, *the Adversary* or *Accuser*—that is, the Angel to whom that function

[1] **1 Kings xxii. 20 ff.**

[3] **2 Sam. xxiv. 1; 1 Chron. xxi. 1. Though here difference of age between the two documents may have caused the difference of view.**

[s] **There are two forms of the verb, OP, satan, and D&M, satam, the latter apparently the older.**

[4] **Num. xxii. 22, 32.**

8 **1 Sam. xxix. 4; 2 Sam. xix. 23 Heb., 22 Eng.; 1 Kings v. 18, xi. 14, etc.**

• **Zech. iii. I ff.; Job i. 6 ff. * 1 Chron. xxi. 1.**

was assigned. With Zechariah his business is the official one of prosecutor in the supreme court of Jehovah, and when his work is done he disappears. Yet, before he does so, we see for the first time in connection with any angel a gleam of character. This is revealed by the Lord's rebuke of him. There is something blameworthy in the accusation of Joshua: not indeed false witness, for Israel's guilt is patent in the foul garments of their High Priest, but hardness or malice, that would seek to prevent the Divine grace. In the Book of Job *the Satan* is also a function, even here not a fallen or rebel angel, but one of God's court,[1] the instrument of discipline or chastisement. Yet, in that he himself suggests his cruelties and is represented as forward and officious in their infliction, a character is imputed to him even more clearly than in Zechariah's Vision. But the Satan still shares that identification with his function which we have seen to characterise all the angels of the Old Testament, and therefore he disappears from the drama so soon as his place in its high argument is over.[8]

In this description of the development of Israel's doctrine of Angels, and of Zechariah's contributions to it, we have not touched upon the question whether the development was assisted by Israel's contact with the Persian religion and with the system of Angels which

[1] i. 6b.

[1] See Davidson in *Cambridge Bible for Schools* on Job L 6-12,„ especially on ver. 9: "The Satan of this book may show the beginnings of a personal malevolence against man, but he is still rigidly subordinated to Heaven, and in all he does subserves its interests. His function is as the minister of God to try the sincerity of man; hence when his work of trial is over he is no more found, and no place is given him among the *dramatis persona of* the poem."

the latter contains. For several reasons the question is a difficult one. But so far as present evidence goes, it makes for a negative answer. Scholars, who are in no way prejudiced against the theory of a large Persian influence upon Israel, declare that the religion of Persia affected the Jewish doctrine of Angels "only in secondary points," such as their "number and personality, and the existence of demons and evil spirits."[1] Our own discussion has shown us that Zechariah's Angels, in spite of the new features they introduce, are in substance one with the Angels of pre-exilic Israel. Even the Satan is primarily a function, and one of the servants of God. If he has developed an immoral character, this cannot be attributed to the influence of Persian belief in a Spirit of evil opposed to the Spirit of good in the universe, but may be explained by the native, or selfish, resentment of Israel against their prosecutor before the bar of Jehovah. Nor can we fail to remark that this character of evil appears in the Satan, not, as in the Persian religion, in general opposition to goodness, but as thwarting that saving grace which was so peculiarly Jehovah's own. And Jehovah said to the Satan, *Jehovah rebuke thee^ O Satan, yea„ Jehovah who hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee! Is not this a brand plucked Jrom the burning?*

[1] **Cheyne,** ***The Origin of the Psalter,*** **p. 272. Read carefully on this point the very important remarks on pp. 270 ff. and 281 £**

CHAPTER XXIII

«THE SEED OF PEACE»

ZECHARIAH vii., viii.

THE Visions have revealed the removal of the guilt of the land, the restoration of Israel to their standing before God, the revival of the great national institutions, and God's will to destroy the heathen forces of the world. With the Temple built, Israel should be again in the position which she enjoyed before the Exile. Zechariah, therefore, proceeds to exhort his people to put away the fasts which the Exile had made necessary, and address themselves, as of old, to the virtues and duties of the civic life. And he introduces his orations to this end by a natural appeal to the experience of the former days.

The occasion came to him when the Temple had been building for two years, and when some of its services were probably resumed.[1] A deputation of Jews appeared in Jerusalem and raised the question of the continuance of the great Fasts of the Exile. Who the deputation were is not certain : probably we ought to delete *Bethel* from the second verse, and read either *ElsaSeser sent Regem-Melekh and his men to the house of Jehovah to propitiate Jehovah*$_t$ or else *the house of El-sar'eser sent Regem-Melekh and his men to propitiate*

[1] C£ **chap. vii. 3:** ***the priests which were of the house of Jehovah.***

Jehovah. It has been thought that they came from the Jews in Babylon: this would agree with their arrival in the ninth month to inquire about a fast in the fifth month. But Zechariah's answer is addressed to Jews in Judaea. The deputation limited their inquiry to the fast of the fifth month, which commemorated the burning of the Temple and the City, now practically restored. But with a breadth of view which reveals the prophet rather than the priest, Zechariah replies, in the following chapter, upon all the fasts by which Israel for seventy years had bewailed her ruin and exile. He instances two, that of the fifth month, and that of the seventh month, the date of the murder of Gedaliah, when the last poor remnant of a Jewish state was swept away.[1] With a boldness which recalls Amos to the very letter, Zechariah asks his people whether in those fasts they fasted at all to their God. Jehovah had not charged them, and in fasting they had fasted for themselves, just as in eating and drinking they had eaten and drunken to themselves. They should rather hearken to the words He really sent them. In a passage, the meaning of which has been perverted by the intrusion of the eighth verse, that therefore ought to be deleted, Zechariah recalls what those words of Jehovah had been in the former times when the land was inhabited and the national life in full course. They were not ceremonial;; they were ethical: they commanded justice, kindness, and the care of the helpless and the poor. And it was in consequence of the people's disobedience to those words that all the ruin came upon them for which they now annually mourned. The moral is obvious if unexpressed. Let them drop their fasts,

[1] Jer. xli. 2; 2 Kings xxv. 25.

and practise the virtues the neglect of which had made their fasts a necessity. It is a sane and practical word, and makes us feel how much Zechariah has inherited of the temper of Amos and Isaiah. He rests, as before, upon the letter of the ancient oracles, but only so as to bring out their spirit. With such an example of the use of ancient Scripture, it is deplorable that so many men, both among the Jews and the Christians, should have devoted themselves to the letter at the expense of the spirit.

And it came to pass in the fourth year of Darius the king, that the Word of Jehovah came to Zechariah on the fourth of the ninth month, Kislev. For there sent to the *house* of Jehovah, *El-safeser and Regem-Melekh and his men,*[1] *to propitiate*[1] *Jehovah, to ask of the priests which were in the house of Jehovah of Hosts and of the prophets as follows: Shall I weep in the fifth month with fasting as I have now done so many years ? And the Word of Jehovah of Hosts came to me: Speak now to all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying: When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh month,*[3] *and this for seventy years, didye fast at all to Me ? And when ye eat and when ye drink, are not ye the eaters and ye the drinkers? Are not these*[4] *the*

[1] **The Hebrew text is difficult if not impossible to construe: *For Bethel sent SaFeser* (without sign of accusative) *and Regem-Melekh and his men.* Wellhausen points out that Sar'eser is a defective name, requiring the name or title of deity in front of it, and Marti proposes to find this in the last syllable of Bethel, and to read 'El-sar'eser. It is tempting to find in the first syllable of Bethel the remnant of the phrase *to the house of Jehovah.***

[1] **To stroke the face or.**

[3] **The fifth month Jerusalem fell, the seventh month Gedaliah was murdered : Jer. lii. 12 f.; 2 Kings xxv. 8 £, 25.**

[4] **So LXX. Heb. has acc. sign before *words,* perhaps implying *is it not rather necessary to do the words ?* etc**

words which Jehovah proclaimed by the hand oj the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and at peace, with her cities round about her, and the Negeb and the Shephelah were inhabited?

[1] Thus spake Jehovah of Hosts: Judge true judgment, and practise towards each other kindness and mercy; oppress neither widow nor orphan, stranger nor poor, and think not evil in your hearts towards one another. Bui they refused to hearken, and turned a rebellious shoulder,[9] and their ears they dulled from listening. And their heart they made adamant, so as not to hear the Torah and the words which Jehovah of Hosts sent through His Spirit by the hand of the former prophets; and there was great wrath from Jehovah oj Hosts. And it came to pass that, as He had called and they heard not, so they shall call and I will not hear, said Jehovah of Hosts, but I will whirl[9] them away among nations whom they know not. And the land was laid waste behind them, without any to pass to and fro, and they made the pleasant land desolate.

There follow upon this deliverance ten other short oracles: chap, viii. Whether all of this decalogue are to be dated from the same time as the answer to the deputation about the fasts is uncertain. Some of them appear rather to belong to an earlier date, for they reflect the situation, and even the words, of Haggai's oracles, and represent the advent of Jehovah to Jerusalem as still future. But they return to the

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[1] **Omit here ver. 8, *Avid the Word of Jthovah cams to Zschariah, saying.* It is obviously a gloss by a scribe who did not notice that the "ID8¦n2 of ver. 9 is God's statement by the former prophets.**

[1] **CX the phrase *with one shouldsr, i.f.* unanimously.**

[9] **So Heb. and LXX.. ; but perhaps we ought to point *and I whirled thsm away,* taking the clause with the next.**

question of the fasts, treating it still more comprehensively than before, and they close with a promise, fitly spoken as the Temple grew to completion, of the coming of the heathen to worship at Jerusalem.

We have already noticed the tender charm and strong simplicity of these prophecies,[1] and there is little now to add except the translation of them. As with the older prophets, and especially the great Evangelist of the Exile, they start from the glowing love of Jehovah for His people, to which nothing is impossible; they promise a complete return of the scattered Jews to their land, and are not content except with the assurance of a world converted to the faith of their God. With Haggai Zechariah promises the speedy end of the poverty of the little colony; and he adds his own characteristic notes of a reign of peace to be used for hearty labour, bringing forth a great prosperity. Only let men be true and just and kind, thinking no evil of each other,' as in those hard days when hunger and the fierce rivalry for sustenance made every one's neighbour his enemy, and the petty life, devoid of large interests for the commonweal, filled their hearts with envy and malice. For ourselves the chief profit of these beautiful oracles is their lesson that the remedy for the sordid tempers and cruel hatreds, engendered by the fierce struggle for existence, is found in civic and religious hopes, in a noble ideal for the national life, and in the assurance that God's Love is at the back of all, with nothing impossible to it. Amid these glories, however, the heart will probably thank Zechariah most for his immortal picture of the

[1] See above, pp. 271 .

[1] Cf. especially Isa. xl. ff.

streets of the new Jerusalem: old men and women sitting in the sun, boys and girls playing in all the open places. The motive of it, as we have seen, was found in the circumstances of his own day. Like many another emigration, for religion's sake, from the heart of civilisation to a barren coast, the poor colony of Jerusalem consisted chiefly of men, young and in middle life. The barren years gave no encouragement to marriage. The constant warfare with neighbouring tribes allowed few to reach grey hairs. It was a rough and a hard society, unblessed by the two great benedictions of life, childhood and old age. But this should all be changed, and Jerusalem filled with placid old men and women, and with joyous boys and girls. The oracle, we say, had its motive in Zechariah's day. But what an oracle for these times of ours! Whether in the large cities of the old world, where so few of the workers may hope for a quiet old age, sitting in the sun, and the children's days of play are shortened by premature toil and knowledge of evil; or in the newest fringes of the new world, where men's hardness and coarseness are, in the struggle for gold, unawed by reverence for age and unsoftened by the fellowship of childhood,—Zechariah's great promise is equally needed. Even there shall it be fulfilled if men will remember his conditions—that the first regard of a community, however straitened in means, be the provision of religion, that truth and whole-hearted justice abound in the gates, with love and loyalty in every heart towards every other.

And the Word of Jehovah of Hosts came, saying:—

1. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: I am jealous for Zion with a great jealousy, and with great anger am I jealous for her.*

2. *Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned to Zion, and I dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the City of Troth[1] and the mountain of Jehovah of Hosts the Holy Mountain.*

3. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Old men and old women shall yet sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand, for fulness of days; and the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in her streets.*

4. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Because it seems too wonderful to the remnant of this people in those days, shall it also seem too wonderful to Me ?—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts.*

5. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Lol I am about to save My people out of the land of the rising and out of the land of the setting of the sun; and I will bring them home, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and they shall be to Me for a people? and I will be to them for God, in troth and in righteousness.*

6. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Strengthen your hands, O ye who have heard in such days such words from the mouth of the prophets, since[8] the day when the House of Jehovah of Hosts was founded: the sanctuary was to be built! For before those days there was no gain for man? and none to be* made *by cattle; and neither for him that went out nor for him that came in was there any peace from the adversary, and I set every man's hand against his neighbour. But not now as in the past*

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[1] **Isa. i. 26.**

[3] **Not merely *My ptoplt* (Wellhausen), but their return shall constitute them a people once more. The quotation is from Hosea ii. 25.**

• **So LXX.**

[4] ***But he that madt wagts wadt thtm to put thtm into a bag with holts,* Haggai i. 6.**

days am 1 towards the remnant of this people—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts. For I am sowing the seed of peace? The vine shall yield her fruit, and the land yield her increase, and the heavens yield their dew, and I will give them all for a heritage to the remnant of this people. And it shall come to pass, that as ye have been a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you and ye shall be a blessing! Be not afraid, strengthen your hands !

7. For thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: As I have planned to do evil to you, for the provocation your fathers gave Me, saith Jehovah of Hosts, and did not relent, so have I turned and planned in these days to do good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah. Be not afraid! These are the things which ye shall do: Speak truth to one another; truth and wholesome judgment decree ye in your gates; and plan no evil to each other in your hearts, nor take pleasure in false swearing: for it is all these that I hate—oracle of Jehovah.

And the Word of Jehovah of Hosts came to me, saying :—

8. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: The fast of the fourth* month, *and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall become to the house of fudah joy and gladness and happy feasts? But love ye truth and peace.*

9. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: There shall yet come peoples and citizens of great cities; and the citizens of*

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1 **Read DWn nii ‘ for 012n U ‘ ‘ of the text, *for the seed of peace.* The LXX. makes it a verb. Cf. Hosea ii. 23 ff., which the next clauses show to be in the mind of our prophet. Klostermann and Nowack prefer D?P mgit, her (the remnant's) *seed shall be peace.***

9 **In the tenth month the siege of Jerusalem had begun (2 Kings xxv. 1); on the ninth of the fourth month Jerusalem was taken**

one city[1] *will go to another city, saying: " Let us go to propitiate Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of Hostel" " I will go too !*[n] *And many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of Hosts in Jerusalem and to propitiate Jehovah.*

io. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: In those days ten men, of all languages of the nations, shall take hold of the skirt of a Jew and say, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*

(Jer. xxxix. 2); on the seventh of the fifth City and Temple were burnt down (2 Kings xxv. 8); m the seventh month Gedaliah was assassinated and the poor relics of a Jewish state swept from the land (Jer. xli.). See above, pp. 30 ff.

[1] **LXX.** ***the citizens offive cities will go to one.***

U MALACHI”

Haw we not all One Father ? Why then art we unfaithful to tach other?

The lips of a Priest guard knowledge^ and men seek instruction from his mouthy for he is the Angel of Jehovah of Hosts,

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BOOK OF "MALACHI

THIS book, the last in the arrangement of the prophetic canon, bears the title: *Burden* or *Oracle of the Word of Jehovah to Israel by the hand of maWakhi.* Since at least the second century of our era the word has been understood as a proper name, Malachi or Malachias. But there are strong objections to this, as well as to the genuineness of the whole title, and critics now almost universally agree that the book was originally* anonymous.

It is true that neither in form nor in meaning is there any insuperable obstacle to our understanding "¶ malĕ'akhi" as the name of a person. If so, however, it cannot have been, as some have suggested, an abbreviation of MalS 'akhiyah, for, according to the analogy of other names of such formation, this could only express the impossible meaning *Jehovah is Angel.*[1] But, as it stands, it might have meant *My Angel* or *Messenger,* or it may be taken as an adjective,

[1] יהוה2820 ơr 182D. To judge from the analogy of other cases of the same formation (eg. , Abiyah . = Jehovah is Father, and not Father of Jehovah), this name, if ever extant, could not have borne the meaning, which Robertson Smith, Cornill, Kirkpatrick, etc., suppose it must have done, of *Angel of Jehovah,* These scholars, it should be added, oppose, for various reasons, the theory that it is a proper name.

Angelicus.[1] Either of these meanings would form a natural name for a Jewish child, and a very suitable one for a prophet. There is evidence, however, that some of the earliest Jewish interpreters did not think of the title as containing the name of a person. The Septuagint read *by the hand of His messenger?* "mal'akho"; and the Targum of Jonathan, while retaining "mal'akhi," rendered it *My messenger,* adding that it was Ezra the Scribe who was thus designated.[3] This opinion was adopted by Calvin.

Recent criticism has shown that, whether the word was originally intended as a personal name or not, it was a purely artificial one borrowed from chap. iii. i, *Behold, I send My messenger,* "malĕ 'akhi," for the title, which itself has been added by the editor of the Twelve Prophets in the form in which we now have them. The peculiar words of the title, *Burden* or *Oracle of the Word of fehovah,* occur nowhere else than in the titles of the two prophecies which have been appended to the Book of Zechariah, chap. ix. I and chap. xii. 1, and immediately precede this Book of "Malachi." In chap, ix. i *the Word of Jehovah* belongs to the text; *Burden* or *Oracle* has been inserted before it as a title ; then the whole phrase has been inserted as a title in chap. xii. 1. These two pieces are anonymous, and nothing is more likely than that another anonymous prophecy should

[1] Cf. the suggested meaning of Haggai, Festus. Above, p. 231.

* And added the words, *lay* it *to your hearts* dryehovadrof* θέσθε 8h M ras rapblaf dpub. Bachmann {A. T. Untersuch., Berlin, 1894,, PP- 109 ff.) takes this added clause as a translation of 327 ושימו, and suggests that it may be a corruption of an original 327 ושמו, *and his name was Kaleb.* But the reading ושימו is not the exact equivalent of the Greek phrase.

•saP Mpy 'nn '2879

have received, when attached to them, the same heading.[1] The argument is not final, but it is the most probable explanation of the data, and agrees with the other facts. The cumulative force of all that we have stated—the improbability of male'akhi being a personal name, the fact that the earliest versions do not treat it as such, the obvious suggestion for its invention in the mal'akhi of chap. iii. i, the absence of a father's name and place of residence, and the character of the whole title—is enough for the opinion rapidly spreading among critics that our book was, like so much more in the Old Testament, originally anonymous? The author attacks the religious authorities of his day; he belongs to a pious remnant of his people, who are overborne and

[1] See Stade, *Z.A.T.W.* 1881, p. 14; 1882, p. 308; Cornill, *Einleitung*, 4th ed., pp. 207 f.

3 So (besides Calvin, who takes it as a title) even Hengstenberg in his *Christology of the O.T.*, Ewald, Kuenen, Reuss, Stade, Rob. Smith, Cornill, Wellhausen, Kirkpatrick (probably), Wildeboer, Nowack. On the other side Hitzig, Vatke, Nfigelsbach and Volck (in Herzog), Von Orelli, Pusey and Robertson hold it to be a personal name—Pusey with this qualification, "that the prophet may have framed it for himself," similarly Orelli. They support their opinion by the fact that even the LXX. entitle the book Makaxas; that the word was regarded as a proper name in the early Church, and that it is a possible name for a Hebrew. In opposition to the hypothesis that it was borrowed from chap. iii. I, Hitzig suggests the converse that in the latter the prophet plays upon his own name. None of these critics, however, meets the objections to the name drawn from the peculiar character of the title and its relations to Zech. ix. I, xii. 1. The supposed name of the prophet gave rise to the legend supported by many of the Fathers that Malachi, like Haggai and John the Baptist, was an incarnate angel. This is stated and condemned by Jerome, *Comm. ad Hag.* i. 13, but held by Origen, Tertullian and others. The existence of such anopinion is itself proof for the impersonal character of the name. As in the case of the rest of the prophets, Christian tradition furnishes the prophet with the outline of a biography. See (Pseud-) Epiphanius and other writers quoted above, p. 232.

perhaps oppressed by the majority.[1] In these facts, which are all we know of his personality, he found sufficient reason for not attaching his name to his prophecy.

The book is also undated, but it reflects its period almost as clearly as do the dated Books of Haggai and Zechariah. The conquest of Edom by the Nabateans, which took place during the Exile,[1] is already past.[8] The Jews are under a Persian viceroy.[4] They are in touch with a heathen power, which does not tyrannise over them, for this book is the first to predict no judgment upon the heathen, and the first, moreover, to acknowledge that among the heathen the true God is worshipped *from the rising to the setting of the sun.*[6] The only judgment predicted is one upon the false and disobedient portion of Israel, whose arrogance and success have cast true Israelites into despair.[8] All this reveals a time when the Jews were favourably treated by their Persian lords. The reign must be that of Artaxerxes Longhand, 464—424.

The Temple has been finished/ and years enough have elapsed to disappoint those fervid hopes with which about 518 Zechariah expected its completion. The congregation has grown worldly and careless. In particular the priests are corrupt and partial in the administration of the Law.[8] There have been many

[1] iii. 16 ff.

[1] See above on Obadiah, p. 169, and below on the passage itself.

• i 2-5 . [4] i. 8.

[5] L 11 : the verbs here are to be taken in the present, not as in A.V. in the future, tense.

• *Passim:* especially iii. 13 ff,, 24. i 10; iii. 1, 10. * ii. 1-9.

marriages with the heathen women of the land;[1] and the laity have failed to pay the tithes and other dues to the Temple.' These are the evils against which we find strenuous measures directed by Ezra, who returned from Babylon in 458/ and by Nehemiah, who visited Jerusalem as its governor for the first time in 445 and for the second time in 433. Besides, "the religious spirit of the book is that of the prayers of Ezra and Nehemiah. A strong sense of the unique privileges of the children of Jacob, the objects of electing love,[4] the children of the Divine Father,[6] is combined with an equally strong assurance of Jehovah's righteousness amidst the many miseries that pressed on the unhappy inhabitants of Judaea. . . . Obedience to the Law is the sure path to blessedness."[6] But the question still remains whether the Book of "Malachi" prepared for, assisted or followed up the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah. An ancient tradition already alluded to[7] assigned the authorship to Ezra himself.

Recent criticism has been divided among the years immediately before Ezra's arrival in 458, those immediately before Nehemiah's first visit in 445, those between his first government and his second, and those after Nehemiah's disappearance from Jerusalem. But the years in which Nehemiah held office may be excluded, because the Jews are represented as bringing gifts to the governor, which Nehemiah tells us he did not allow to be brought to him.[8] The whole question

[1] ii. 10-16. [4] i. 2.
[4] Hi. 7-12. [1] ii. 10.
[6] See above, pp. 195 f. v
[c] ii. 17—iii. 12; Hi. 22 f., Eng. iv. The above sentences are from Robertson Smith, art. "Malachi," *Encyc. Brit.*, 9th ed.
[7] Above, p. 332, n. 3. [8] "Mal." i. 8; Neb. v.

depends upon what Law was in practice in Israel when the book was written. In 445 Ezra and Nehemiah, by solemn covenant between the people and Jehovah, instituted the code which we now know as the Priestly Code of the Pentateuch. Before that year the ritual and social life of the Jews appear to have been directed by the Deuteronomic Code. Now the Book of "Malachi" enforces a practice with regard to the tithes, which agrees more closely with the Priestly Code than it does with Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy commands that every third year the whole tithe is to be given to the Levites and the poor who reside *within the gates* of the giver, and is there to be eaten by them. "Malachi" commands that the whole tithe be brought into the storehouse of the Temple for the Levites in service there; and so does the Priestly Code.[1] On this ground many date the Book of "Malachi" after 445? But "Malachi's" divergence from Deuteronomy on this point may be explained by the fact that in his time there were practically no Levites outside Jerusalem; and it is to be noticed that he joins the tithe with the trmah or heave-offering exactly as Deuteronomy does.[8] On other points of the Law he agrees rather with Deuteronomy than with the Priestly Code. He follows Deuteronomy in calling the priests *sons oj Levi*;* while the Priestly Code limits the priesthood to the sons of Aaron. He seems to quote Deuteronomy

[1] Deut. xii. II, xxvi. 12; "Mal." iii. 8; 10; Num. xviii, 21 ff. (P).

[2] Vatke (contemporaneous with Nehemiah), Schrader, Keil, Kuenen (perhaps in second governorship of Nehemiah, but see above, p. 335, for a decisive reason against this), Kohler, Driver, Von Orelli (between Nehemiah's first and second visit), Kirkpatrick, Robertson.

[3] Deut. xii. 11. In P trmah is a due paid to priests as distinct from Levites.

[4] ii 4-8: cf. Deut. xxxiii, 8.

when forbidding the oblation of blind, lame and sick beasts;[1] appears to differ from the Priestly Code which allows the sacrificial beast to be male or female, when he assumes that it is a male ;[s] follows the expressions of Deuteronomy and not those of the Priestly Code in detailing the sins of the people;[8] and uses the Deuteronomic phrases *the Law of Moses, My servant Moses, statutes and judgments,* and *Horeb* for the Mount of the Law.[4] For the rest, he echoes or implies only Ezekiel and that part of the Priestly Code [8] which is regarded as earlier than the rest, and probably from the first years of exile. Moreover he describes the Torah as not yet fully codified? The priests still deliver it in a way improbable after 445. The trouble of the heathen marriages with which he deals (if indeed the verses on this subject be authentic and not a later intrusion[7]) was that which engaged Ezra's attention on his arrival in 458, but Ezra found that it had already for some time been vexing the heads of the community. While, therefore, we are obliged to date the Book of "Malachi" before 445 B.C., it is uncertain whether it preceded or

[1] L 8; Deut. xv. 21. ' i 14; Lev. iii. 1, 6.

• iii, 5 ; Deut. v. Il ff., xviii. 10, xxiv. 17 ff.; Lev. xix. 31, 33 f., xx. 6.

[4] iii. 22 Heb., iv. 4 Eng. *Law of MOMS* and *Moses My servant* are found only in the Deuteronomistic portions of the Hexateuch and historical books and here. In P Sinai is the Mount of the Law. To the above may be added *segullah*, iii. 17, which is found in the Pentateuch only outside P and in Psalm cxxxv. 4. All these resemblances between "Malachi" and Deuteronomy and "Malachi's diver, gences from P are given in Robertson Smith's *OH Test, in the Jewish Church,* 2nd ed., 425 ff.: cf. 444 ff.

• Lev. xvii.—xxvi. From this and Ezekiel he received the conception of the profanation of the sanctuary by the sins of the people—ii. II: cf also ii. 2, iii. 3, 4, for traces of Ezekiel's influence.

• ii. 6 ff [7] See below, pp. 340, 363, 365.

followed Ezra's attempts at reform in 458. Most critics now think that it preceded them.[1]

The Book of "Malachi" is an argument with the prophet's contemporaries, not only with the wicked among them, who in forgetfulness of what Jehovah is corrupt the ritual, fail to give the Temple its dues, abuse justice, marry foreign wives,[2] divorce their own, and commit various other sins; but also with the pious, who, equally forgetful of God's character, are driven by the arrogance of the wicked to ask, whether He loves Israel, whether He is a God of justice, and to murmur that it is vain to serve Him. To these two classes of his contemporaries the prophet has the following answers. God does love Israel. He is worshipped everywhere among the heathen. He is the Father of all Israel. He will bless His people when they put away all abuses from their midst and pay their religious dues; and His Day of Judgment is coming, when the good shall be separated from the wicked. But before it come, Elijah the prophet will be sent to attempt the conversion of the wicked, or at least to call the nation to decide for Jehovah. This argument is pursued in seven or perhaps eight paragraphs, which do not show much consecutiveness, but are addressed, some to the wicked, and some to the despairing adherents of Jehovah.

1. Chap. i. 2-5.—To those who ask how God loves Israel, the proof of Jehovah's election of Israel is shown in the fall of the Edomites.

[1] **Herzfeld, Bleek, Stade, Kautzsch (probably), Wellhausen (*Gesch.*, p. 125), Nowack before the arrival of Ezra, Cornill either soon before or soon after 458, Robertson Smith either before or soon after 445. Hitzig at first put it before 458, but was afterwards moved to date it after 358, as he took the overthrow of the Edomites described in chap. i. 2-5 to be due to a campaign in that year by Artaxerxes Ochus (cf, Euseb., *Chron*., II. 221).** [1] **But see below, pp. 340, 365.**

2. Chap. i. 6-14.—Charge against the people of dishonouring their God, whom even the heathen reverence.

3. Chap. ii. 1-9.—Charge against the priests, who have broken the covenant God made of old with Levi, and debased their high office by not reverencing Jehovah, by misleading the people and by perverting justice. A curse is therefore fallen on them—they are contemptible in the people's eyes.

4. Chap. ii. 10-16.—A charge against the people fortheir treachery to each other; instanced in the heathen marriages, if the two verses, 11 and 12, upon this be authentic, and in their divorce of their wives.

5. Chap. ii. 17—iii. 5 or 6.—Against those who in the midst of such evils grow sceptical about Jehovah. His Angel, or Himself, will come *first* to purge the priesthood and ritual that there may be pure sacrifices, and *second* to rid the land of its criminals and sinners.

6. Chap. iii. 6 or 7-12.—A charge against the people of neglecting tithes. Let these be paid, disasters shall cease and the land be blessed.

7. Chap. iii. 13-21 Heb., Chap. iii. 13—iv. 2 LXX. and Eng.—Another charge against the pious for saying it is vain to serve God. God will rise to action and separate between the good and bad in the terrible Day of His coming.

8. To this, Chap. iii. 22-24 Heb., Chap. iv. 3-5 Eng., adds a call to keep the Law, and a promise that Elijah will be sent to see whether he may not convert the people before the Day of the Lord comes upon them with its curse.

The authenticity of no part of the book has been till now in serious question. Bhme,[1] indeed, took the last three verses for a later addition, on account of their Deuteronomic character, but, as Kuenen points out, this is in agreement with other parts of the book. Sufficient attention has not yet been paid to the question of the integrity of the text. The Septuagint offers a few emendations.[3] There are other passages obviously or probably corrupt.[8] The text of the title, as we have seen, is uncertain, and probably a later addition. Professor Robertson Smith has called attention to

[1] *Z.A.TW^* 1887, 210 f.

[*] i. 11, for 7112 3edo£aara<; perhaps ii. 12, T'for "Ip; perhaps iii. 8 ff., for P3P apy; 16, for I rara.

[3] i. 11 ff.; ii. 3, and perhaps 12, 15.

chap. it 16, where the Massoretic punctuation seems to have been determined with the desire to support the rendering of the Targum "if thou hatest her put her away," and so pervert into a permission to divorce a passage which forbids divorce almost as clearly as Christ Himself did. But in truth the whole of this passage, chap. ii. 10-16,, is in such a curious state that we can hardly believe in its integrity. It opens with the statement that God is the Father of all us Israelites, and with the challenge, why then are we faithless to each other ?—ver. 10. But w. 11 and 12 do not give an instance of this: they describe the marriages with the heathen women of the land, which is not a proof of faithlessness between Israelites. Such a proof is furnished only by w. 13-16, with their condemnation of those who divorce the wives of their youth. The verses, therefore, cannot lie in their proper order, and vv. 13-16 ought to follow immediately upon ver. 10. This raises the question of the authenticity of w. 11 and 12, against the heathen marriages. If they bear such plain marks of having been intruded into their position, we can understand the possibility of such an intrusion in subsequent days, when the question of the heathen marriages came to the front with Ezra and Nehemiah. Besides, these verses 11 and 12 lack the characteristic mark of all the other oracles of the book: they do not state a general charge against the people, and then introduce the people's question as to the particulars of the charge. On the whole, therefore, these verses are suspicious. If not a later intrusion, they are at least out of place where they now lie. The peculiar remark in ver. 13, *and this secondly ye do,* must have been added by the editor to whom we owe the present arrangement.

CHAPTER XXV

FROM ZECHARIAH TO ^MALACHI"

BETWEEN the completion of the Temple in 516 and the arrival of Ezra in 458, we have almost no record of the little colony round Mount Zion. The Jewish chronicles devote to the period but a few verses of unsupported tradition.[1] After 517 we have nothing from Zechariah himself;; and if any other prophet appeared during the next half-century, his words have not survived. We are left to infer what was the true condition of affairs, not less from this ominous silence than from the hints which are given to us in the writings of "[Malachi," Ezra and Nehemiah after the period was over. Beyond a partial attempt to rebuild the walls of the city in the reign of Artaxerxes I./ there seems to have been nothing to record. It was a period of disillusion, disheartening and decay. The completion of the Temple did not bring in the Messianic era. Zerubbabel, ,whom Haggai and Zechariah had

[1] Ezra iv. 6-23.

[1] This is recorded in the Aramean document which has been incorporated in our Book of Ezra, and there is no reason to doubt its reality. In that document we have already found, in spite of its comparatively late date, much that is accurate history. See above, p. 212. And it is clear that, the Temple being finished, the Jews must have drawn upon themselves the same religious envy of the Samaritans which had previously delayed the construction of the

crowned as the promised King of Israel, died without reaching higher rank than a minor satrapy in the Persian Empire, and even in that he appears to have been succeeded by a Persian official.[1] The re-migrations from Babylon and elsewhere, which Zechariah predicted, did not take place. The small population of Jerusalem were still harassed by the hostility, and their morale sapped by the insidiousness, of their Samaritan neighbours: they were denied the stimulus, the purgation, the glory of a great persecution. Their Persian tyrants for the most part left them alone. The world left them alone. Nothing stirred in Palestine except the Samaritan intrigues. History rolled away westward, and destiny seemed to be settling on the Greeks. In 490 Miltiades defeated the Persians at Marathon. In 480 Thermopylae was fought and the Persian fleet broken at Salamis. In 479 a Persian army was destroyed at Plata, and Xerxes lost Europe and most of the Ionian coast In 460 Athens sent an expedition to Egypt to assist the Egyptian revolt against Persia, and in 457 "her slain fell in Cyprus, in Egypt, in Phoenicia, at Hali, in JEgina, and in Megara in the same year."

Thus severely left to themselves and to the petty hostilities of their neighbours, the Jews appear to have sunk into a careless and sordid manner of life. They

Temple. To meet it, what more natural than that the Jews should have attempted to raise the walls of their city ? It is almost impossible to believe that they who had achieved the construction of the Temple in 516 should not, in the next fifty years, make some effort to raise their fallen walls. And indeed Nehemiah's account of his own work almost necessarily implies that they had done so, for what he did after 445 was not to build new walls, but rather to repair shattered ones.

[1] See above, p. 335, n. 8, and below, p. 354, on " Mal." i.[1]8

entered the period, it is true, with some sense of their distinction.[1] In exile they had suffered God's anger,[2] and had been purged by it. But out of discipline often springs pride, and there is no subtler temptation of the human heart. The returned Israel felt this to the quick, and it sorely unfitted them for encountering the disappointment and hardship which followed upon the completion of the Temple. The tide of hope, which rose to flood with that consummation, ebbed rapidly away, and left God's people struggling, like any ordinary tribe of peasants, with bad seasons and the cruelty of their envious neighbours. Their pride was set on edge, and they fell, not as at other periods of disappointment into despair, but into a bitter carelessness and a contempt of their duty to God. This was a curious temper, and, so far as we know, new in Israel. It led them to despise both His love and His holiness.[8] They neglected their Temple dues, and impudently presented to their God polluted bread and blemished beasts which they would not have dared to offer to their Persian governor.[4] Like people like priest: the priesthood lost not reverence only, but decency and all conscience of their office.[8] They *despised the Table of the Lord,* ceased to instruct the people and grew partial in judgment. As a consequence they became contemptible in the eyes of the community. Immorality prevailed among all classes: *every man dealt treacherously with his brother?* Adultery, perjury, fraud and the oppression of the poor were very rife.

One particular fashion, in which the people's wounded

[1] Cf. Stade, *Gesch, des Folkes Israel,* II., pp. 128-138, the best account of this period.

[1] "Mal."iii. 14.

[•] "Mal."i 2,6; iii. 81,

[4] *Id,* i. 7 f., 12-14.

[•] *Id,* i. 6 f., ii.

[*] *Id,* ii. 10.

pride spited itself, was the custom of marriage which even the best families contracted with the half-heathen *people of the land.* Across Judah there were scattered the descendants of those Jews whom Nebuchadrezzar had not deemed worth removing to Babylon. Whether regarded from a social or a religious point of view, their fathers had been the dregs of the old community. Their own religion, cut off as they were from the main body of Israel and scattered among the old heathen shrines of the land, must have deteriorated still further; but in all probability they had secured for themselves the best portions of the vacant soil, and now enjoyed a comfort and a stability of welfare far beyond that which was yet attainable by the majority of the returned exiles. More numerous than these dregs of ancient Jewry were the very mixed race of the Samaritans. They possessed a rich land, which they had cultivated long enough for many of their families to be settled in comparative wealth. With all these half-pagan Jews and Samaritans, the families of the true Israel, as they regarded themselves, did not hesitate to form alliances, for in the precarious position of the colony, such alliances were the surest way both to wealth and to political influence. How much the Jews were mastered by their desire for them is seen from the fact that, when the relatives of their half-heathen brides made it a condition of the marriages that they should first put away their old wives, they readily did so. Divorce became very frequent, and great suffering was inflicted on the native Jewish women.[1]

So the religious condition of Israel declined for nearly

[1] "Mal."ii, 10-16.

two generations, and then about 460 the Word of God, after long silence, broke once more through a prophet's lips.

We call this prophet " Malachi," following the error of an editor of his book, who, finding it nameless, inferred or invented that name from its description of the priest as the "' Male'ach,"' or *messenger^ of the Lord of Hosts,*[1] But the prophet gave himself no name. Writing from the midst of a poor and persecuted group of the people, and attacking the authorities both of church and state, he preferred to publish his charge anonymously. His name was in *the Lord's own book of remembrance?*

The unknown prophet addressed himself both to the sinners of his people, and to those querulous adherents of Jehovah whom the success of the sinners had tempted to despair in their service of God. His style shares the practical directness of his predecessors among the returned exiles. He takes up one point after another, and drives them home in a series of strong, plain paragraphs of prose. But it is sixty years since Haggai and Zechariah, and in the circumstances we have described, a prophet could no longer come forward as a public inspirer of his nation. Prophecy seems to have been driven from public life, from the sudden enforcement of truth in the face of the people to the more deliberate and ordered argument which marks the teacher who works in private. In the Book of " Malachi" there are many of the principles and much of the enthusiasm of the ancient Hebrew seer. But the discourse is broken up into formal

[1] **For proof of this see above, pp.** 3311

• **"Mal." Hi. 16.**

paragraphs, each upon the same academic model. First a truth is pronounced, or a charge made against the people ; then with the words *but ye will say* the prophet states some possible objection of his hearers, proceeds to answer it by detailed evidence, and only then drives home his truth, or his charge, in genuine prophetic fashion. To the student of prophecy this peculiarity of the book is of the greatest interest, for.it is no merely personal idiosyncrasy. We rather feel that prophecy is now assuming the temper of the teacher. The method is the commencement of that which later on becomes the prevailing habit in Jewish literature. Just as with Zephaniah we saw prophecy passing into Apocalypse, and with Habakkuk into the speculation of the schools of Wisdom, so now in "' Malachi'" we perceive its transformation into the scholasticism of the Rabbis.

But the interest of this change of style must not prevent us from appreciating the genuine prophetic spirit of our book. Far more fully than, for instance, that of Haggai, to the style of which its practical simplicity is so akin, it enumerates the prophetic principles : the everlasting Love of Jehovah for Israel, the Fatherhood of Jehovah and His Holiness, His ancient Ideals for Priesthood and People, the need of a Repentance proved by deeds, the consequent Promise of Prosperity, the Day of the Lord, and Judgment between the evil and the righteous. Upon the last of these the book affords a striking proof of the delinquency of the people during the last half-century, and in connection with it the prophet introduces certain novel features. To Haggai and Zechariah the great Tribulation had closed with the Exile and the rebuilding of the Temple : Israel stood on the margin of the Messianic age. But

the Book of " Malachi" proclaims the need of another judgment as emphatically as the older prophets had predicted the Babylonian doom. "Malachi'" repeats their name for it, *the great and terrible Day of Jehovah,* But he does not foresee it, as they did, in the shape of a historical process. His description of it is pure Apocalypse—*the fire of the smelter and the fullers acid: the day that bums like a furnace*^ when all wickedness is as stubble, and all evil men are devoured, but to the righteous *the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings,* and they shall tread the wicked under foot.[1] To this the prophet adds a novel promise. God is so much the God of love,[8] that before the Day comes He will give His people an opportunity of conversion. He will send them Elijah the prophet to change their hearts, that He may be prevented from striking the land with His Ban.

In one other point the book is original, and that is in its attitude towards the heathen. Among the heathen, it boldly says, Jehovah is held in higher reverence than among His own people.[8] In such a statement we can hardly fail to feel the influence upon Israel of their contact, often close and personal, with their wise and mild tyrants the Persians. We may emphasise the verse as the first note of that recognition of the real religiousness, of the heathen, which we shall find swelling to such fulness and tenderness in the Book of Jonah.

Such are in brief the style and the principles of the Book of " Malachi," whose separate prophecies we may now proceed to take up in detail.

• iii. 2, 19 ff. Heb., iv. i ff. Eng.
iii. 6. • i. 11.

CHAPTER XXVI

PROPHECY WITHIN THE LAW

MALACHI * i.—iv.

BENEATH this title we may gather all the eight sections of the Book of " Malachi." They contain many things of perennial interest and validity: their truth is applicable, their music is still musical, to ourselves. But their chief significance is historical. They illustrate the development of prophecy *within* the Law. Not *under* the Law, be it observed. For if one thing be more clear than another about "Malachi's" teaching, it is that the spirit of prophecy is not yet crushed by the legalism which finally killed it within Israel. " Malachi" observes and enforces the demands of the Deuteronomic law under which his people had lived since the Return from Exile. But he traces each of these to some spiritual principle, to some essential of religion in the character of Israel's God, which is either doubted or neglected by his contemporaries in their lax performance of the Law. That is why we may entitle his book Prophecy within the Law.

The essential principles of the religion of Israel which had been shaken or obscured by the delinquency of the people during the half-century after the rebuilding of

the Temple were three—the distinctive Love of Jehovah for His people, His Holiness, and His Righteousness. The Book of "Malachi" takes up each of these in turn, and proves or enforces it according as the people have formally doubted it or in their carelessness done it despite.

I. GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL AND HATRED OF EDOM (Chap. i. 2-5).

He begins with God's Love, and in answer to the disappointed[1] people's cry, *Wherein hast Thou loved us ?* he does not, as the older prophets did, sweep the whole history of Israel, and gather proofs of Jehovah's grace and unfailing guidance in all the great events from the deliverance from Egypt to the deliverance from Babylon. But he confines himself to a comparison of Israel with the Gentile nation, which was most akin to Israel according to the flesh, their own brother Edom. It is possible, of course, to see in this a proof of our prophet's narrowness, as contrasted with Amos or Hosea or the great Evangelist of the Exile. But we must remember that out of all the history of Israel "Malachi" could not have chosen an instance which would more strongly appeal to the heart of his contemporaries. We have seen from the Book of Obadiah how ever since the beginning of the Exile Edom had come to be regarded by Israel as their great antithesis.[1] If we needed further proof of this we should find it in many Psalms of the Exile, which like the Book of Obadiah remember with bitterness the hostile part that Edom played in the day of Israel's calamity. The two nations were

[1] **See above, p. 343.**

*** See above, Chapter XIV. on "Edom and Israel."**

utterly opposed in genius and character. Edom was a people of as unspiritual and self-sufficient a temper as ever cursed any of God's human creatures. Like their ancestor they were *profane?* without repentance, humility or ideals, and almost without religion. Apart, therefore, from the long history of war between the two peoples, it was a true instinct which led Israel to regard their brother as representative of that heathendom against which they had to realise their destiny in the world as God's own nation. In choosing the contrast of Edom's fate to illustrate Jehovah's love for Israel, "[1] Malachi" was not only choosing what would appeal to the passions of his contemporaries, but what is the most striking and constant antithesis in the whole history of Israel: the absolutely diverse genius and destiny of these two Semitic nations who were nearest neighbours and, according to their traditions, twin-brethren after the flesh. If we keep this in mind we shall understand Paul's use of the antithesis in the passage in which he clenches it by a quotation from "[1] Malachi ": *as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated?* In these words the doctrine of the Divine election of individuals appears to be expressed as absolutely as possible. But it would be unfair to read the passage except in the light of Israel's history. In the Old Testament it is a matter of fact that the doctrine of the Divine preference of Israel to Esau appeared only after the respective characters of the nations were manifested in history, and that it grew more defined and absolute only as history discovered

[1] Heb. xii, 16.

* Romans ix. 13. The citation is from the LXX.: τὸν Ἰακὼβ ἠγάπησα, τὸν δὲ Ἠσαῦ ἐμίσησα. *eulongû.*

more of the fundamental contrast between the two in genius and destiny.[1] In the Old Testament,, therefore, the doctrine is the result, not of an arbitrary belief in God's bare fiat, but of historical experience; although, of course, the distinction which experience proves is traced back, with everything else of good or evil that happens, to the sovereign will and purpose of God. Nor let us forget that the Old Testament doctrine of election is of election to service only. That is to say, the Divine intention in electing covers not the elect individual or nation only, but the whole world and its needs of God and His truth.

The event to which "' Malachi " appeals as evidence for God's rejection of Edom is *the desolation of* the latter's ancient *heritage^ and* the abandonment of it to the *jackals of the desert.* Scholars used to think that these vague phrases referred to some act of the Persian kings: some removal of the Edomites from the lands of the Jews in order to make room for the returned exiles? But " Malachi " says expressly that. it was Edom's own *heritage* which was laid desolate. This can only be Mount Esau or Se'ir,, and the statement that it was delivered *to the jackals of the desert* proves that the reference is to that same expulsion of Edom from their territory by the Nabatean Arabs which we have already seen the Book of Obadiah relate about the beginning of the Exile?

[1] **This was mainly *after* the beginning of exile. Shortly before that Deut. xxiii, 7 says: *Thou shall not abhor an Edoniite, jor he is thy brother.***

* **So even so recently as 1888, Stade, *Gesch. des Volkes Israd,* II., p. 112.**

• **See above, p. 169. This interpretation is there said to be Wellhausen's; but Cheyne, in a note contributed to the *Z.A.T.W.*,**

But it is now time to give in full the opening passage of "Malachi," in which he appeals to this important event as proof of God's distinctive love for Israel, and, "Malachi" adds, of His power beyond Israel's border ("Mal." chap. i. 2-5).

I have loved you, saith Jehovah. But ye say, "Wherein hast Thou loved us?[u] Is not Esau brother to Jacob?—oracle of Jehovah—and I have lovedJacob and Esau have I hated. I have made his mountains desolate[v] and given his heritage to the jackals of the desert. Should the people of *Edom say*[1], "*We are destroyed, but we will rebuild the waste places," thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, They may build, but I will pull down: men shall call them "The Border of Wickedness" and "The People with whom Jehovah is wroth for ever.*[n] *And your eyes shall see it, and yourselves shall say,* [u] *Great is Jehovah beyond Israels border".*

2. "HONOUR THY FATHER" (Chap. i 6-14).

From God's Love, which Israel have doubted, the prophet passes to His Majesty or Holiness, which they have wronged. Now it is very remarkable that the relation of God to the Jews in which the prophet should see His Majesty illustrated is not only His lordship over them but His Fatherhood : *A son honours a father, and a servant his lord; but ij I be Father, where is My honour ? and if I be Lord, where is there*

1894, p. 14% points out that Grtz, in an article "Die Anfange der Nabater-Herrschaft" in the *Monatschrift fur Wisssnschaft u. GrschicMt dis Judenthums,* 1875, pp. 60-66, had already explained "Mal," i. 1-5 as describing the conquest of Edom by the Nabateans. This is adopted by Buhl in his *Gtsch. dsr EdowuUr,* p. 79.

[1] The verb in the feminine indicates that the population of Edom is meant.

reverence for Me? saith Jehovah of Hosts.[1] We are so accustomed to associate with the Divine Fatherhood only ideas of love and pity that the use of the relation to illustrate not love but Majesty, and the setting of it in parallel to the Divine Kingship, may seem to us strange. Yet this was very natural to Israel. In the old Semitic world, even to the human parent, honour was due before love. *Honour thy father and thy mother,* said the Fifth Commandment; and when, after long shyness to do so, Israel at last ventured to claim Jehovah as the Father of His people, it was at first rather with the view of increasing their sense of His authority and their duty of reverencing Him, than with the view of bringing Him near to their hearts and assuring them of His tenderness. The latter elements, it is true, were not absent from the conception. But even in the Psalter, in which we find the most intimate and tender fellowship of the believer with God, there is only one passage in which His love for His own is compared to the love of a human father? And in the other very few passages of the Old Testament where He is revealed or appealed to as the Father of the nation, it is, with two exceptions,[3] in order either to emphasise His creation of Israel or His discipline. So in Jeremiah,[4] and in an anonymous prophet of the same period perhaps as "Malachi."[5] This hesitation to ascribe to God the name of Father, and

[1] i. 6.

[2] Psalm ciii. 9. In Psalm lxziii. 15 believers are called *His children}* but elsewhere sonship is claimed only for the king—ii. 7, lxxxix. 27.f.

[3] Hosea zi Iff. (though even here the idea of discipline is present) and Isa. lxiii. 16. [4] iii. 4.

[5] Isa. lziv. 8, cf. Deut. xxxii. 11 where the discipline of Israel by

this severe conception of what Fatherhood meant, was perhaps needful for Israel in face of the sensuous ideas of the Divine Fatherhood cherished by their heathen neighbours.[1] But, however this may be, the infrequency and austerity of Israel's conception of God's Fatherhood, in contrast with that of Christianity, enables us to understand why " Malachi " should employ the relation as proof, not of the Love, but of the Majesty and Holiness of Jehovah.

This Majesty and this Holiness have been wronged, he says, by low thoughts of God's altar, and by offering upon it, with untroubled conscience, cheap and blemished sacrifices. The people would have been ashamed to present such to their Persian governor: how can God be pleased, with them ? Better that sacrifice should cease than that such offerings should be presented in such a spirit! *Is there no one,* cries the prophet, *to close the doors* of the Temple altogether, so that *the altar* smoke not *in vain ?*

The passage shows us what a change has passed over the spirit of Israel since prophecy first attacked the sacrificial ritual. We remember how Amos would have swept it all away as an abomination to God? So, too, Isaiah and Jeremiah. But their reason for this was very different from " Malachi's." Their contemporaries were assiduous and lavish in sacrificing, and were devoted to the Temple and the ritual with a fanaticism which made them forget that Jehovah's demands upon His people were righteousness and

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Jehovah, shaking them out of their desert circumstance and tempting them to their great career in Palestine, is likened to the father-eagle's training of his new-fledged brood to fly: A.V. mother-eagle.

[1] Cf. Cheyne, *Origin of tht PsalUr,* p. 305, n. O.

*** Vol. I., Chap. IX**

the service of the weak. But "[Malachi"' condemns his generation for depreciating the Temple„ and for being stingy and fraudulent in their offerings.. Certainly the post-exilic prophet assumes a different attitude to the ritual from that of his predecessors in ancient Israel. They wished it all abolished„ and placed the chief duties of Israel towards God in civic justice and mercy. But he emphasises it as the first duty of the people towards God, and sees in their neglect the reason of their misfortunes and the cause of their coming doom. In this change which has come over prophecy we must admit the growing influence of the Law. From Ezekiel onwards the prophets become more ecclesiastical and legal. And though at first they do not become less ethical, yet the influence which was at work upon them was of such a character as was bound in time to engross their interest, and lead them to remit the ethical elements of their religion to a place secondary to the ceremonial. We see symptoms of this even in "[Malachi," we shall find more in Joel, and we know how aggravated these symptoms afterwards became in all the leaders of Jewish religion. At the same time we ought to remember that this change of emphasis, which many will think to be for the worse, was largely rendered necessary by the change of temper in the people to whom the prophets ministered. "‘ Malachi " found among his contemporaries a habit of religious performance which was not only slovenly and indecent, but mean and fraudulent, and it became his first practical duty to attack this. Moreover the neglect of the Temple was not due to those spiritual conceptions of Jehovah and those moral duties He demanded, in the interests of which the older prophets had

condemned the ritual. At bottom the neglect of the Temple was due to the very same reasons as the superstitious zeal and fanaticism in sacrificing which the older prophets had attacked—false ideas, namely, of God Himself, and of what was due to Him from His people. And on these grounds, therefore, we may say that "Malachi" was performing for his generation as needful and as Divine a work as Amos and Isaiah had performed for theirs. Only, be it admitted, the direction of "Malachi's" emphasis was more dangerous for religion than that of the emphasis of Amos or Isaiah. How liable the practice he inculcated was to exaggeration and abuse is sadly proved in the later history of his people: it was against that exaggeration, grown great and obdurate through three centuries, that Jesus delivered His most unsparing words.

A son honours a father, and a servant his lord. But if I am Father, where is My honour ? and if I am Lord, where is reverence for Me ? saith Jehovah of Hosts to you, O priests, who despise My Name. Ye say, "How then *have we despised Thy Name?*[n] *Ye are bringing polluted food to Mine Altar. Ye say, "'How have we polluted Thee ?"*[1] *By saying*[*], "'The Table of Jehovah may be despised" ; and when ye bring a blind* beast *to sacrifice, "No harm I" or when ye bring a lame or sick one, 'No harm!*[nz] *Pray, take it to thy Satrap: will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person ? saith*

[1] **Or used polluted things with respect to Thee. For similar construction see Zech. vii. 5 : mnpy. This in answer to Wellhausen, who, on the ground that the phrase gives 7803 a wrong object and destroys the connection, deletes it. Further he takes 283D, not in the sense of pollution, but as equivalent to n23, *despised.***

[1] **Obviously *in their hearts - thinking.***

[*] **LXX. is *there no harm ?***

Jehovah of Hosts. But now, propitiate[1] *God, that He may be gracious to us. When* things like *this come from your hands, can He accept your persons ? saith Jehovah of Hosts. Who is there among you to close the doors* of the Temple altogether, *that ye kindle not Mine Altar in vain ? I have no pleasure in you, saith Jehovah of Hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hands. For from the rising of the sun and to its setting My Name is glorified*^ *among the nations; and in every sacred place*[8] *incense is offered to My Name, and a pure offering*^ *for great is My Name among the nations, saith Jehovah of Hosts. But ye are profaning it, in that ye think*[6] *that the Table of the Lord is polluted, and*^ *its food contemptible. And ye say, What a weariness ! and ye sniff at it,*[1] *saith Jehovah of Hosts.* When *ye bring what has been plundered,*[3] *and the lame and the diseased, yea,* when *ye* so *bring an offering, can I accept it with grace from your hands ? saith Jehovah. Cursed be the cheat in whose flock is a male* beast *and he vows it? and*

[1] *Pacify the face of* as in Zechariah.

[8] So LXX. Heb. *is greai,* but the phrase is probably written by mistake from the instance further on: *is glorified* could scarcely have been used in the very literal version of the LXX. unless it had been found in the original.

[8] DIpD, here to be taken in the sense it bears in Arabic of *sacred place.* See on Zeph. ii. 11: above, p. 64, n. 8.

[4] Wellhausen deletes 23D as a gloss on]DpD, and the vau before Him Heb. *say.*

[8] Heb. also has 121, found besides only in Keri of Isa. Ivii. 19. But Robertson Smith *(O.T.J.C.,* 2, p. 444) is probably right in considering this an error for /22, which has kept its place after the correction was inserted.

This clause is obscure, and comes in awkwardly before that which follows it. Wellhausen omits.

[8] 2914. Wellhausen emends npa-ne, borrowing the first three letters from the previous word. LXX. pryuara.

[8] LXX.

slays for the Lord a miserable beast,[1] *For a great King am I, saith Jehovah of Hosts, and My Name is reverenced among the nations.*

Before we pass from this passage we must notice in it one very remarkable feature—perhaps the most original contribution which the Book of "Malachi" makes to the development of prophecy. In contrast to the irreverence of Israel and the wrong they do to Jehovah's Holiness, He Himself asserts that not only is *His Name great and glorified among the heathen, from the rising to the setting of the sun,* but that *in every sacred place incense and a pure offering are offered to His Name.* This is so novel a statement, and, we may truly say, so startling, that it is not wonderful that the attempt should have been made to interpret it, not of the prophet's own day, but of the Messianic age and the kingdom of Christ. So, many of the Christian Fathers, from Justin and Irenaeus to Theodoret and Augustine;[8] so, our own Authorised Version, which boldly throws the verbs into the future ; and so, many modern interpreters like Pusey, who declares that the style is "a vivid present such as is often used to describe the future; but the things spoken of show it to be future." All these take the passage to be an anticipation of Christ's parables declaring the rejection of the Jews and ingathering of the Gentiles to the kingdom of heaven, and of the argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the bleeding and defective offerings of the Jews were abrogated by the sacrifice of the Cross. But such an exegesis is only possible by perverting the text and misreading the whole argument of the prophet Not only are the verbs of the original

[1] **Cf. Lev. iii. I, 6.**

* **Quoted by Pusey,** ***in loco.***

in the present tense—so also in the early versions—but the prophet is obviously contrasting the contempt of God's own people for Himself and His institutions with the reverence paid to His Name among the heathen. It is not the mere question of there being righteous people in every nation, well-pleasing to Jehovah because of their lives. The very sacrifices of the heathen are pure and acceptable to Him. Never have we had in prophecy, even the most far-seeing and evangelical, a statement so generous and so catholic as this. Why it should appear only now in the history of prophecy is a question we are unable to answer with certainty. Many have seen in it the result of Israel's intercourse with their tolerant and religious masters the Persians. None of the Persian kings had up to this time persecuted the Jews, and numbers of pious and large-minded Israelites must have had opportunity of acquaintance with the very pure doctrines of the Persian religion, among which it is said that there was already numbered the recognition of true piety in men of all religions.[1] If Paul derived from his Hellenic culture the knowledge which made it possible for him to speak as he did in Athens of the religiousness of the Gentiles, it was just as probable that Jews who had come within the experience of a still purer Aryan faith should utter an even more emphatic acknowledgment that the One True God had those who served Him in spirit and in truth all over the world. But, whatever foreign influences may have ripened such a faith in Israel, we must not forget that its roots were struck deep in the native soil of their religion. From the first they had known their God as

[1] See Cheyne, *Origin of the Psalter,* 292 and 305 f.

a God of a grace so infinite that it was impossible it should be exhausted on themselves. If His righteousness, as Amos showed, was over all the Syrian states, and His pity and His power to convert, as Isaiah showed, covered even the cities of Phoenicia, the great Evangelist of the Exile could declare that He quenched not the smoking wicks of the dim heathen faiths.

As interesting, however, as the origin of "Malachi's" attitude to the heathen, are two other points about it In the first place, it is remarkable that it should occur, especially in the form of emphasising the purity of heathen sacrifices, in a book which lays such heavy stress upon the Jewish Temple and ritual. This is a warning to us not to judge harshly the so-called legal age of Jewish religion, nor to despise the prophets who have come under the influence of the Law. And in the second place, we perceive in this statement a step towards the fuller acknowledgment of Gentile religiousness which we find in the Book of Jonah. It is strange that none of the post-exilic Psalms strike the same note. They often predict the conversion of the heathen; but they do not recognise their native reverence and piety. Perhaps the reason is that in a body of song, collected for the national service, such a feature would be out of place.

3. THE PRIESTHOOD OF KNOWLEDGE (Chap. ii. 1-9).

In the third section of his book "Malachi" addresses himself to the priests. He charges them not only with irreverence and slovenliness in their discharge of the Temple service—for this he appears to intend by the phrase *filth of your feasts*—but with the neglect of their intellectual duties to the people. *The lips of a priest guard knowledge, and men seek instruction from*

his mouth, for he is the Angel—the revealing Angel—*of Jehovah of Hosts.* Once more, what a remarkable saying to come from the legal age of Israel's religion, and from a writer who so emphasises the ceremonial law! In all the range of prophecy there is not any more in harmony with the prophetic ideal. How needed it is in our own age !—needed against those two extremes of religion from which we suffer, the limitation of the ideal of priesthood to the communication of a magic grace, and its evaporation in a vague religiosity from which the intellect is excluded as if it were perilous, worldly and devilish.[1] "Surrender of the intellect" indeed ! This is the burial of the talent in the napkin, and, as in the parable of Christ, it is still in our day preached and practised by the men of one talent. Religion needs all the brains we poor mortals can put into it. There is a priesthood of knowledge, a priesthood of the intellect, says "Malachi," and he makes this a large part of God's covenant with Levi. Every priest of God is a priest of truth; and it is very largely by the Christian ministry's neglect of their intellectual duties that so much irreligion prevails. As in "Malachi's" day, so now, "the laity take hurt and hindrance by our negligence."[2] And just as he points out, so with ourselves, the consequence is the growing indifference with which large bodies of the Christian ministry are regarded by the thoughtful portions both of our labouring and professional classes. Were the ministers of all the Churches to awake to their ideal

[1] *Isaiah i.—xxxix.* (Expositor's Bible), p. 188.

[2] See most admirable remarks on this subject in Archdeacon Wilson's *Essays and Addresses,* No. III. "The Need of giving Higher Biblical Teaching, and Instruction on the Fundamental Questions of Religion and Christianity." London: Macmillan, 1887.

in this matter, there would surely come a very great revival of religion among us.

And now this Charge for you, O priests: If ye hear not, and lay not to heart to give glory to My Name, saith Jehovah of Hosts, I will send upon you the curse, ana will curse your blessings—yea, I have cursed them[1]*—far none of you layeth it to heart. Behold, I .. . you . . 3 and I will scatter filth in your faces, the filth of your feasts. .. .3 And ye shall know that I have sent to you this Charge, to be My covenant with Levi,* saith Jehovah of Hosts. My covenant was with him life and peace? and I gave them to him, fear and he feared Me, ana humbled himself before My Name? The revelation of truth was in his mouth, and wickedness was not fauna upon his lips. In whole-heartedness*[1] *and integrity he walked with Me, and turned many from iniquity. Fot the lips of a priest guard knowledge, and men seek instruction* [8] *from his mouth, for he is the Angel of*

[1] **Doubtful. LXX. adds Kal &ecxedcw *rv eihav bplv xal* O6K *Eorat e buv:* obvious redundancy, if not mere dittography.**

*** An obscure phrase, yzorne D22 ' ' ,2 277, *BehoU, I rebuke you the seed.* LXX. *Behold, I separate from you the arm* or *shoulder,* reading tr for JHT and perhaps U11 for 71, both of which readings Wellhausen adopts, and Ewald the former. The reference may be to the arm of the priest raised in blessing. Orelli reads *seed—posterity.* It may mean the whole *seed* or *class* or *kind* of the priests. The next clause tempts one to suppose that gm-ne contains the verb of this one, as if scattering something.**

*** Heb. 124 Dan &yy, *and one shall bear you to it.* Hitzig: filth shall be cast on them, and they on the filth.**

[4] Others would render *My covenant being with Levi.* Wellhausen: *for My covenant was with Levi.* But this new Charge or covenant seems contrasted with a former covenant in the next verse.

• Num. xxv. 12.

[4] This sentence is a literal translation of the Hebrew. With other punctuation Wellhausen renders *My covenant was with him, life and peace I gave them to him, fear ...*

[T] Or *peace,* D?7. • Or *revelation,* Torah.

Jehovah of Hosts. But ye have turned from the way, ye have tripped up many by the Torah, ye have spoiled the covenant of Levi, saith Jehovah of Hosts. And I on My part[1] *have made you contemptible to all the people, and abased in proportion as ye kept not My ways and had respect of persons in* delivering your *Torah.*

4. THE CRUELTY OF DIVORCE (Chap. ii, 10-17).

In his fourth section, upon his countrymen's frequent divorce of their native wives in order to marry into the influential families of their half-heathen neighbours,[8] "Malachi" makes another of those wide and spiritual utterances which so distinguish his prophecy and redeem his age from the charge of legalism that is so often brought against it. To him the Fatherhood of God is not merely a relation of power and authority, requiring reverence from the nation. It constitutes the members of the nation one close brotherhood, and against this divorce is a crime and unnatural cruelty. Jehovah makes the *wife of a man's youth his mate* for life *and his wife by covenant.* He *hates divorce,* and His altar is so wetted by the tears of the wronged women of Israel that the gifts upon it are no more acceptable in His sight No higher word on marriage was spoken except by Christ Himself. It breathes the spirit of our Lord's utterance: if we were sure of the text of ver. 15, we might almost say that it anticipated the letter. Certain verses, 1I-13a, which disturb the argument by bringing in the marriages with heathen wives are omitted in the following translation, and will be given separately.

Have we not all One Father? Hath not One God

[1] "8/02 : cf. Amos iv. [2] See above, p. 344.

created us ? Why then are we unfaithful to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers ? . .[1] *Ye cover with tears the altar of Jehovah, with weeping and with groaning, because respect is no longer had to the offerings and acceptable gifts are not taken from your hands. And ye say, " Why ?" Because Jehovah has been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, with whom thou hast broken faith, though she is thy mate* [3] *and thy wife by covenant. And . . .*[3] *And what is the one seeking? A Divine Seed. Take heed, then, to your spirit, and be not unfaithful to the wife of thy youth.* For I hate*

[1] **Here occur the two verses and a clause, 11-130, upon the foreign marriages, which seem to be an intrusion.**

*** See Vol. I., p. 259.**

[1] **Heb. literally:** ***And not one did^ and a remnant of spirit was his;*** **which (1) A.V. renders:** ***And did not he make one ? Yet he had the residue of the spirit,*** **which Pusey accepts and applies to Adam and Eve, interpreting the second clause as** ***the breath of life,*** **by which Adam** ***became a living soul*** **(Gen. ii. 7). In Gen. i. 27 Adam and Eve are called one. In that case the meaning would be that the law of marriage was prior to that of divorce, as in the words of our Lord, Matt xix. 4*6. (2) The Hebrew might be rendered,** ***Not one has done this who had any spirit left in him.*** **So Hitzig and Orelli. In that case the following clauses of the verse are referred to Abraham.** ***" But what about the One ?"*** **(LXX insert** ***ye say*** **after** ***But)*****—the one who did put away his wife. Answer:** ***He was seeking a Divine seed.*** **The objection to this interpretation is that Abraham did not cast off the wife of his youth, Sarah, but the foreigner Hagar. (3) Ewald made a very different proposal:** ***And has not One created them, and all the Spirit*** **(cf. Zeph. i. 4)** ***is His ? And what doth the One seek ? A Divine seed.*** **So Reinke. Similarly Kirkpatrick** ***(Doct. of the Proph.,*** **p. 502):** ***A nd did not One make*** **[you both] ?** ***And why*** **[did]** ***the One*** **[do so] ?** ***Seeking a goodly seed.*** **(4) Wellhausen goes further along the same line. Reading ׳on for 871, and ך for nen, and 17 for 12,„ he translates :** ***Hath not the same God created and sustained your (?׳our) breath ? And what does He desire ? A seed of God.***

[4] **Literally:** ***let none be unfaithful to the wife of thy youth,*** **a curious instance of the Hebrew habit of mixing the pronominal references. Wellhausen's emendation is unnecessary.**

divorce, saith Jehovah, God of Israel, and that a man cover his clothing[1] *with cruelty, saith Jehovah of Hosts. So take heed to your spirit, and deal not faithlessly.*

The verses omitted in the above translation treat of the foreign marriages, which led to this frequent divorce by the Jews of their native wives. So far, of course, they are relevant to the subject of the passage. But they obviously disturb its argument, as already pointed out? They have nothing to do with the principle from which it starts that Jehovah is the Father of the whole of Israel. Remove them and the awkward clause in ver. 13a, by which some editor has tried to connect them with the rest of the paragraph, and the latter runs smoothly. The motive of their later addition is apparent, if not justifiable. Here they are by themselves:—

Judah was faithless, and abomination was practised in Israel[3] *and in Jerusalem, for Judah hath defiled the sanctuary of Jehovah, which was dear to Him, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. May Jehovah cut off from the man, who doeth this, witness and champion * from the tents of Jacob, and offerer of sacrifices to Jehovah of Hosts.*[6]

5. "WHERE IS THE GOD OF JUDGMENT?" (Chap. ii. 17—iii. 5).

In this section "Malachi" turns from the sinners of his people to those who weary Jehovah with the

[1] **See Gesenius and Ewald for Arabic analogies for the use ox clothing — wife.**

[2] **See above, p. 340.** *** Wellhausen omits.**

[4] **Heb. nan *Y, caller, and answerer.* But LXX. read 7, *witness* (see iii. 5), though it pointed it differently.**

• **13a, *But secondly ye do this,* is the obvious addition of the editor in order to connect his intrusion with what follows.**

complaint that sin is successful, or, as they put it, *Every one that does evil is good in the eyes of Jehovah, and He delighteth in them;* and again, *Where is the God of Judgment?* The answer is, The Lord Himself shall come. His Angel shall prepare His way before Him, and suddenly shall the Lord come to His Temple. His coming shall be for judgment, terrible and searching. Its first object (note the order) shall be the cleansing of the priesthood, that proper sacrifices may be established, and its second the purging of the immorality of the people. Mark that although the coming of the Angel is said to precede that of Jehovah Himself, there is the same blending of the two as we have seen in previous accounts of angels.[1] It is uncertain whether this section closes with ver. 5 or 6: the latter goes equally well with it and with the following section.

Ye have wearied Jehovah with your words; and ye say, "In what have we wearied Him?'" *In that ye say, "Every one that does evil is good in the eyes of Jehovah, and He delighteth in them," or else, "'Where is the God of Judgment ?'" Behold, I will send My Angel, to prepare the way before Me, and suddenly shall come to His Temple the Lord whom ye seek and the Angel of the Covenant whom ye desire. Behold, He comes ! saith Jehovah of Hosts. But who may bear the day of His coming, and who stand when He appears ? For He is like the fire of the smelter and the acid of the fullers. He takes His seat to smelt and to purge; 3 and He will purge the sons of Levi, and wash them out like gold or silver,*

[1] See above, pp. 311, 313 f.

* Delete *silver:* the longer LXX. text shows how easily it was added.

and they shall be to Jehovah bringers of an offering in righteousness. And the offering of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to Jehovah, as in the days of old and as in long past years. And I will come near you to judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and 'the adulterers and the perjurers, and against those who wrong the hireling in his wage, and the widow and the orphan, and oppress the stranger, and fear not Me, saith Jehovah of Hosts.

6. REPENTANCE BY TITHES (Chap. iii. 6-12).

This section ought perhaps to follow on to the preceding. Those whom it blames for not paying the Temple tithes may be the sceptics addressed in the previous section, who have stopped their dues to Jehovah out of sheer disappointment that He does nothing. And ver. *6*, which goes well with either section, may be the joint between the two. However this be, the new section enforces the need of the people's repentance and return to God, if He is to return to them. And when they ask, how are they to return, "Malachi" plainly answers, By the payment of the tithes they have not paid. In withholding these they robbed God, and to this, their crime, are due the locusts and bad seasons which have afflicted them. In our temptation to see in this a purely legal spirit, let us remember that the neglect to pay the tithes was due to a religious cause, unbelief in Jehovah, and that the return to belief in Him could not therefore be shown in a more practical way than by the payment of tithes. This is not prophecy subject to the Law, but prophecy employing the means and vehicles of grace with which the Law at that time provided the people.

For I Jehovah have not changed, but ye sons of Jacob have not done with (?).[1] *In the days of your fathers ye turned from My statutes and did not keep* them. *Return to Me, and I will return to you, saith Jehovah of Hosts. But you say, "How then shall we return ?" Can a man rob*[2] *God ? yet ye are robbing Me. But ye say, "In what have we robbed Thee ?" In the tithe and the tribute? With the curse are ye cursed, and yet Me ye are robbing, the whole people of you. Bring in the whole tithe to the storehouse, that there may be provision*[4] *in My House, and pray, prove Me in this, saith Jehovah of Hosts—whether I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour blessing upon you till there is no more need. And I will check for you the devourer*^ *and he shall not destroy for you the fruit of the ground, nor the vine in the Jield miscarry, saith Jehovah of Hosts. And all nations shall call you happy, for ye shall be a land of delight, saith Jehovah of Hosts.*

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[1] ***Made an end of,*** **reading the verb as Piel (Orelli). LXX.** ***refrain from. Your sins*** **are understood, the sins which have always characterised the people. LXX connects the opening of the next verse with this, and with a different reading of the first word translates** ***from the sins of your fathers.***

[1] **Heb.** ובזתי **here and Prov. xxii. 32. LXX read** Spy, ***supplant, cheat,*** **which Wellhausen adopts.**

* **npp,** ***the heave offering*** **the tax or tribute given to the sanctuary or priests and associates with the tithes, as here in Deut. xii. 11, to be eaten by the offerer** ***(ib.*** **17), but in Ezekiel by the priests (xliv. 30); taken by the people and the Levites to the Temple treasury for the priests (Neh. x. 38, xii. 44) : corn, wine and oil. In the Priestly Writing it signifies the part of each sacrifice which was the priests' due. Ezekiel also uses it of the part of the Holy Land that fell to the prince and priests.**

[4] **3ן in its later meaning: cf. Job xxiv. 5; Prov. xxxi. 15.**

* **Zx locust**

7. THE JUDGMENT TO COME

(Chap. iii. 13-21 Heb., iii. 13—iv. 2 Eng.).

This is another charge to the doubters among the pious remnant of Israel, who, seeing the success of the wicked, said it is vain to serve God. Deuteronomy was their Canon, and Deuteronomy said that if men sinned they decayed, if they were righteous they prospered. How different were the facts of experience I The evil men succeeded: the good won no gain by their goodness, nor did their mourning for the sins of their people work any effect. Bitterest of all, they had to congratulate wickedness in high places, and Jehovah Himself suffered it to go unpunished. *Such things,* says "Malachi," *spake they that feared God to each other*—tempted thereto by the dogmatic form of their religion, and forgetful of all that Jeremiah and the Evangelist of the Exile had taught them of the value of righteous sufferings. Nor does "Malachi" remind them of this. His message is that the Lord remembers them, has their names written before Him, and when the day of His action comes they shall be separated from the wicked and spared. This is simply to transfer the fulfilment of the promise of Deuteronomy to the future and to another dispensation. Prophecy still works within the Law.

The Apocalypse of this last judgment is one of the grandest in all Scripture. To the wicked it shall be a terrible fire, root and branch shall they be burned out, but to the righteous a fair morning of God, as when dawn comes to those who have been sick and sleepless through the black night, and its beams bring healing, even as to the popular belief of Israel it was

the rays of the morning sun which distilled the dew.[1] They break into life and energy, like young calves leaping from the dark pen into the early sunshine. To this morning landscape a grim figure is added. They shall tread down the wicked and the arrogant like ashes beneath their feet.

Your words are hard upon Me, saith Jehovah. Ye say, "What have we said against Thee?" Ye have said, "It is vain to serve God," and "What gain is it to us to have kept His charge, or to have walked in funeral garb before Jehovah of Hosts? Even now we have got to congratulate the arrogant; yea, the workers of wickedness are fortified; yea, they tempt God and escape!" Such things spake they that fear Jehovah to each other. But Jehovah gave ear and heard, and a book of remembrance[1] was written before Him about those who fear Jehovah, and those who keep in mind[6] His Name. And they shall be Mine own property, saith Jehovah of Hosts, in the day when I rise to action,[6] and I will spare them even as a man spares his son that serves him. And ye shall once more see the difference *between righteous and wicked, between him that serves God and him that does not serve Him.*

For, lo! the day is coming that shall burn like a furnace, and all the overweening and every one that works wickedness shall be as stubble, and the day that is coming shall devour them, saith Jehovah of Hosts, so

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[1] *A book of lights.* See *Isaiah i—xrxrix.* (Expositor's Bible), pp. 448 f.

* So LXX.; Heb. *thtn.* * Ezek. xiii. 9.

[4] an, *to think, plan,* has much the same meaning as here in Isa. xiii. 17, xxxiii, 8, liii. 3.

* Heb. *whsn I am doing**, but in the sense in which the word is used of Jehovah's decisive and final doing. Psalms xx., xxxii., etc.

that there be left them neither root nor branch. But to you that fear My Name the Sun of Righteousness shall rise with healing in His wings, and ye shall go forth and leap[1] *like calves of the stall? And ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be as ashes*[8] *beneath the soles of your feet, in the day that I* begin to *do, saith Jehovah of Hosts.*

8. THE RETURN OF ELIJAH

(Chap. iii. 22-24 Heb., iv. 3-5 Eng.).

With his last word the prophet significantly calls upon the people to remember the Law. This is their one hope before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. But, in order that the Law may have full effect, Prophecy will be sent to bring it home to the hearts of the people—Prophecy in the person of her founder and most drastic representative. Nothing could better gather up than this conjunction does that mingling of Law and of Prophecy which we have seen to be so characteristic of the work of "Malachi." Only we must not overlook the fact that "Malachi" expects this prophecy, which with the Law is to work the conversion of the people, not in the continuance of the prophetic succession by the appearance of original personalities, developing further the great principles of their order, but in the return of the first prophet Elijah This is surely the confession of Prophecy that the number of her servants is exhausted and her message to Israel fulfilled. She can now do no more for the people than she has done. But she will summon up

1 Hab. i. 8.

[1] See note to Amos vi. 4: Vol. p. 174, l. 3.

[8] Or *dust.*

her old energy and fire in the return of her most powerful personality, and make one grand effort to convert the nation before the Lord come and strike it with judgment.

Remember the Torah of Moses, My servant, with which I charged him in Horeb for all Israel: statutes and judgments. Lo ! I am sending to you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of Jehovah. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the heart of the sons to their fathers, ere l come and strike the land with the Ban.

"Malachi" makes this promise of the Law in the dialect of Deuteronomy: *statutes and judgments with which Jehovah charged Moses for Israel.* But the Law he enforces is not that which God delivered to Moses on the plains of Shittim, but that which He gave him in Mount Horeb. And so it came to pass. In a very few years after "Malachi" prophesied Ezra the Scribe brought from Babylon the great Levitical Code, which appears to have been arranged there, while the colony in Jerusalem were still organising their life under the Deuteronomic legislation. In 444 B.C. this Levitical Code, along with Deuteronomy, became by covenant between the people and their God their Canon and Law. And in the next of our prophets, Joel, we shall find its full influence at work.

JOEL

The Day of Jehovah is great and very awful, and who may abide it ?

But now the oracle of Jehovah—Turn ye to Me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning. And rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn to Jehovah your God, for gracious and merciful is He, long-suffering and abounding in love,

CHAPTER XXVII

THE BOOK OF JOEL

IN the criticism of the Book of Joel there exist differences of opinion—upon its date, the exact reference of its statements and its relation to parallel passages in other prophets—as wide as even those by which the Book of Obadiah has been assigned to every century between the tenth and the fourth before Christ.[1] As in the case of Obadiah, the problem is not entangled with any doctrinal issue or question of accuracy; but while we saw that Obadiah was not involved in the central controversy of the Old Testament, the date of the Law, not a little in Joel turns upon the latter. And, besides, certain descriptions raise the large question between a literal and an allegorical interpretation. Thus the Book of Joel carries the student further into the problems of Old Testament Criticism, and forms an even more excellent introduction to the latter, than does the Book of Obadiah.

1. THE DATE OF THE BOOK.

In the history of prophecy the Book of Joel must be either very early or very late, and with few exceptions the leading critics place it either before 800 B.C. or after 500. So great a difference is due to most

[1] See above, Chap. XIII.

substantial reasons. Unlike every other prophet, except Haggai, "Malachi" and "Zechariah" ix.—xiv., Joel mentions neither Assyria, which emerged upon the prophetic horizon about 760,[1] nor the Babylonian Empire, which had fallen by 537. The presumption is that he wrote before 760 or after 537. Unlike all the prophets, too,[8] Joel does not charge his people with civic or national sins; nor does his book bear any trace of the struggle between the righteous and unrighteous in Israel, nor of that between the spiritual worshippers of Jehovah and the idolaters. The book addresses an undivided nation, who know no God but Jehovah; and again the presumption is that Joel wrote before Amos and his successors had started the spiritual antagonisms which rent Israel in twain, or after the Law had been accepted by the whole people under Nehemiah.[8] The same wide alternative is suggested by the style and phraseology. Joel's Hebrew is simple and direct. Either he is an early writer, or imitates early writers. His book contains a number of phrases and verses identical, or nearly identical, with those of prophets from Amos to[4] [4] Malachi." Either they all borrowed from Joel, or he borrowed from them.[4]

Of this alternative modern criticism at first preferred the earlier solution, and dated Joel before Amos. So Credner in his Commentary in 1831, and following

[1] See Vol. 1. The Assyria of "Zech." x. II is Syria. See below.

* The two exceptions, Nahum and Habakkuk, are not relevant to this question. Their dates are fixed by their references to Assyria and Babylon.

* See Rob. Smith, art. "Joel," *Ewyc. Brit,*

[4] So obvious is this alternative that all critics may be said to grant it, except KOnig *(Einl,)*, on whose reasons for placing Joel in the end of the seventh century see below, p. 386, n. 5. Kessner *(Das ZeitatUr dtr Proph,Joel* (1888) deems the date unprovable.

him Hitzig, Bleek, Ewald, Delitzsch, Keil, Kuenen (up to 1864),[1] Pusey and others. So, too, at first some living critics of the first rank, who, like Kuenen, have since changed their opinion. And so, even still, Kirkpatrick (on the whole), Von Orelli, Robertson,[8] Stanley Leathes and Sinker.[8] The reasons which these scholars have given for the early date of Joel are roughly as follows.[4] His book occurs among the earliest of the Twelve : while it is recognised that the order of these is not strictly chronological, it is alleged that there is a division between the pre-exilic and post-exilic prophets, and that Joel is found among the former. The vagueness of his representations in general, and of his pictures of the Day of Jehovah in particular, is attributed to the simplicity of the earlier religion of Israel, and to the want of that analysis of its leading conceptions which was the work of later prophets.[8] His horror of the interruption of the daily offerings in the Temple, caused by the plague of locusts,® is ascribed to a fear which pervaded the primitive ages of all peoples? In Joel's attitude towards other nations, whom he condemns to judgment, Ewald saw "the old unsubdued warlike spirit of the times of Deborah and David." The prophet's absorption in the ravages of the locusts is held to reflect the feeling of a purely agricultural community, such as Israel was

[1] See *The Religion of Israel,* Vol. I., pp. 86 f.

[1] The *O.T. and its Contents,* p. 105.

* *Lex Mosaica,* pp. 422, 450.

[4] See especially Ewald on Joel in his *Prophets of the O,T,* and Kirkpatrick's very fair argument in *Doctrine of the Prophets,* pp. 57 ff.

* On Joel's picture of the Day of Jehovah Ewald says: " We have it here in its first simple and clear form, nor has it become a subject of ridicule as in Amos."

• i. *9,* 13, 16, ii. 14.

[7] So Ewald.

before the eighth century. The absence of the name of Assyria from the book is assigned to the same unwillingness to give the name as we see in Amos and the earlier prophecies of Isaiah, and it is thought by some that, though not named, the Assyrians are symbolised by the locusts. The absence of all mention of the Law is also held by some to prove an early date: though other critics, who believe that the Levitical legislation was extant in Israel from the earliest times, find proof of this in Joel's insistence upon the daily offering. The absence of all mention of a king and the prominence given to the priests are explained by assigning the prophecy to the minority of King Joash of Judah, when Jehoyada the priest was regent;[1] the charge against Egypt and Edom of spilling innocent blood by Shishak's invasion of Judah,[8] and by the revolt of the Edomites under Jehoram;[8] the charge against the Philistines and Phoenicians by the Chronicler's account of Philistine raids[4] in the reign of Jehoram of Judah, and by the oracles of Amos against both nations; 5 and the mention of the Vale of Jehoshaphat by that king's defeat of Moab, Ammon and Edom in the Vale of Berakhah.6' These allusions being recognised, it was deduced from them that the parallels between Joel and Amos were due to Amos having quoted from Joel.'

[1] 2 Kings xi. 4-21.
[1] I Kings xiv. 25 f.: cf. Joel iii. 176, 19.
3 2 Kings viii. 20-22: cf. Joel iii. 19.
[4] 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17, xxii. 1 : cf. Joel iii. 4-6.
[1] Amos i.: c£ Joel iii. 4-6.
* 2 Chron. xx., especially 26 : cf. Joel iii. 2.
' Joel iii. (Eng.; iv. Heb.) 16; Amos i. 2. For a list of the various periods to which Joel has been assigned by supporters of this early date see Kuenen, $ 68.

These reasons are not all equally cogent,[1] and even the strongest of them do not prove more than the possibility of an early date for Joel.[1] Nor do they meet every historical difficulty. The minority of Joash, upon which they converge, fell at a time when Aram was not only prominent to the thoughts of Israel, but had already been felt to be an enemy as powerful as the Philistines or Edomites. But the Book of Joel does not mention Aram. It mentions the Greeks,[8] and, although we have no right to say that such a notice was impossible in Israel in the ninth century, it was not only improbable, but no other Hebrew document from before the Exile speaks of Greece, and in particular Amos does not when describing the Phoenicians as slave-traders.[4] The argument that the Book of Joel must be early because it was placed among the first six of the Twelve Prophets by the arrangers of the Prophetic Canon, who could not have forgotten Joel's date had he lived after 450, loses all force from the fact that in the same group of pre-exilic prophets we find the exilic Obadiah and the post-exilic Jonah, both of them in precedence to Micah.

The argument for the early date of Joel is, therefore, not conclusive. But there are besides serious objections to it, which make for the other solution of the alternative we started from, and lead us to place Joel after the establishment of the Law by Ezra and Nehemiah in 444 B.C.

[1] The reference of Egypt in iii 19 to Shishak's invasion appears particularly weak.

[*] Cf. Robertson, *O. T. and its Contents,* 105, and Kirkpatrick's cautious, though convinced, statement of the reasons for an early date.

[•] iii. 6 (Heb. iv. 6).

[4] Amos i. 9.

A post-exilic date was first proposed by Vatke,[1] and then defended by Hilgenfeld,[2] and by Duhm in 1875.[3] From this time the theory made rapid way, winning over many who had previously held the early date of Joel, like Oort,[4] Kuenen,[5] A. B. Davidson,[6] Driver and Cheyne/ perhaps also Wellhausen,[8] and finding acceptance and new proofs from a gradually increasing majority of younger critics, Merx/ Robertson Smith,[10] Stade,[11] Matthes and Scholz,[18] Holzinger,[18] Farrar,[14] Kautzsch,[14] Cornill,"[15] Wildeboer," [17] G. B. Gray[18] and Nowack.[18] The reasons which have led to this formidable change of opinion in favour of the late date of the Book of Joel are as follows.

In the first place, the Exile of Judah appears in it as already past. This is proved, not by the ambiguous phrase, *when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah*

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[1] *Bibi. Thtol.*, I., p. 462 ; *Einl.*, pp. 675 ff.

[2] *Ztschr. f wisstnsch. Theol.*, X., Heft 4.

[3] *Thtol. dtr Proph.*, pp. 275 ff.

[4] *Theol. Tijd.*, 1876, pp. 362 ff. (not seen),

[5] *Onders.*, § 68.

[6] *Expositor*, 1888, Jan.—June, pp. 198 ff

[7] See Cheyne, *Origin of Psaltsr*, xx.; Driver, *Introd.*, in the sixth edition of which, 1897, he supports the late date of Joel more strongly than in the first edition, 1892.

[8] Wellhausen allowed the theory of the early date of Joel to stand in his edition of Bleek's *Einleitung*, but adopts the late date in his own *Klsins Propheten.*

[9] *Dis Prophstis des Joels u. ihre Ausleger*, 1879.

[10] *Encyc. Brit.*, art. "Joel," 1881.

[11] *Gesch.*, II. 207.

[12] *Thsol. Tijdsdtr.*, 1885, p. 151; *Comm.*, 1885 (neither seen).

[13] " Sprachcharakter u: Abfassungszeit des B. Joels " in *Z.A.T.W.*, 1889, pp. 89 ff.

[14] *Minor Prophsts.*

[15] *Bibsl.*

[16] *Einisit.*

[17] *Littsratnr des A. T.*

[18] *Expositor*, September 1893.

[19] *Comm.*, 1897.

and Jerusalem,[1] but by the plain statement that *the heathen have scattered Israel among the nations and divided their land?* The plunder of the Temple seems also to be implied.[8] Moreover, no great world-power is pictured as either threatening or actually persecuting God's people; but Israel's active enemies and enslavers are represented as her own neighbours, Edomites, Philistines and Phoenicians, and the last are represented as selling Jewish captives to the Greeks. All this suits, if it does not absolutely prove, the Persian age, before the reign of Artaxerxes Ochus, who was the first Persian king to treat the Jews with cruelty.[4] The Greeks, Javan, do not appear in any Hebrew writer before the Exile ;[5] the form in which their name is given by Joel, B'ne ha-Jevanim, has admittedly a late sound about it,[6] and we know from other sources that it was in the fifth and fourth centuries that Syrian slaves were in demand in Greece.[7] Similarly with the internal condition of the Jews as reflected in Joel No king is

[1] iv. (Heb.; iii. Eng.) 1. For this may only mean *turn again the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem.*

[1] iv. (Heb.; iii. Eng.) 2. The supporters of a pre-exilic date either passed this over or understood it of incursions by the heathen into Israel's territories in the ninth century. It is, however, too universal to suit these. • iv. (Heb.; iii. Eng.) 5.

[4] Kautzsch dates after Artaxerxes Ochus, and *c.* 350.

* Ezekiel (xxvii. 13, 19) is the first to give the name Javan, *i.e.* IaFv, , or Ionian (earlier writers name Egypt, Edom, Arabia and Phoenicia as the great slave-markets: Amos i.; Isa. xi. 11; Deut. xxviii. 68); and Greeks are also mentioned in Isa. Ixvi. 19 (a post-exilic passage); Zech. ix. 13; Dan. viii. 21, x. 20, xi. 2; I Chron. i. 5, 7, and Gen. x. 2. See below, Chap. XXXI.

• ovm 52 instead of m'"3, just as the Chronicler gives mmpn 22; for mp"2: see Wildeboer, p. 348, and Matthes, quoted by Holzinger, p. 94.

' Movers, *Phen. AUerthum.*^ 11. 1, pp. 70 *aqq.*: which reference I owe to R. Smith's art. in the *Encyc. Brit.*

mentioned; but the priests are prominent, and the elders are introduced at least once.[1] It is an agricultural calamity, and that alone, unmixed with any political alarm, which is the omen of the coming Day of the Lord. All this suits the state of Jerusalem under the Persians. Take again the religious temper and emphasis of the book. The latter is laid, as we have'seen, very remarkably upon the horror of the interruption by the plague of locusts of the daily meal and drink offerings, and in the later history of Israel the proofs are many of the exceeding importance with which the regularity of this was regarded.[2] This, says Professor A. B. Davidson, " is very unlike the way in which all other prophets down to Jeremiah speak of the sacrificial service." The priests, too, are called to take the initiative; and the summons to a solemn and formal fast, without any notice of the particular sins of the people or exhortations to distinct virtues, contrasts with the attitude to fasts of the earlier prophets, and with their insistence upon a change of life as the only acceptable form of penitence.[8] And another contrast with the earliest prophets is seen in the general apocalyptic atmosphere and colouring of the Book of Joel, as well

[1] With these might be taken the use of >np' (ii. 16)' in its sense of a gathering for public worship. The word itself was old in Hebrew, but as time went on it came more and more to mean the convocation of the nation for worship or deliberation. Holzinger, pp. 105 f.

[2] Cf. Neh. x. 33; Dan. viii. 11, xi. 31, xii. 11. Also Acts xxvi. 7 ': rd Swexdvlov 'hulv 'b iKrwela vtera KO! 'vi/dpa* Xarp^ov, Also the passages in Jos., XIV. *Ant.* iv. 3, xvi. 2, in which Josephus mentions the horror caused by the interruption of the daily sacrifice by famine in the last siege of Jerusalem, and adds that it had happened in no previous siege of the city.

[8] Cf. Jer. xiv. 12; Isa. Iviii. 6; Zech. vii. 5, vi. 11, 19, with Neh. i. 4, ix. 1; Ezra viii. 21; Jonah iii. 5, 7 ; Esther iv. 3, 16, ix. 31; Dan. ix. 3.

as in some of the particular figures in which this is expressed, and which are derived from later prophets like Zephaniah and Ezekiel.[1]

These evidences for a late date are supported, on the whole, by the language of the book. Of this Merx furnishes many details, and by a careful examination, which makes due allowance for the poetic form of the book and for possible glosses, Holzinger has shown that there are symptoms in vocabulary, grammar and syntax which at least are more reconcilable with a late than with an early date.[2] There are a number of Aramaic words, of Hebrew words used in the sense in which they are used by Aramaic, but by no other Hebrew, writers, and several terms and constructions which appear only in the later books of the Old Testament or very seldom in the early ones.[3] It is true that these do not stand in a large proportion to the rest of Joel's vocabulary and grammar, which is classic and suitable to an early period of the literature; but this may be accounted for by the large use which the prophet makes of the very words of earlier writers.

[1] The gathering of the Gentiles to judgment, Zeph. iii. 8 (see above, p. 69) and Ezek. xxxviii. 22; the stream issuing from the Temple to fill the Wady ha-Shittim, Ezek. xlvii. 1 ff., cf. Zech. xiv. 8; the outpouring of the Spirit, Ezek. xxxix. 29.

[2] *Z.A.T.W.*, 1889, pp. 89-136. Holzinger's own conclusion is stated more emphatically than above.

[3] For an exhaustive list the reader must be referred to Holzinger's article (cf. Driver, *Introd.*, sixth edition; *Jotl and Amos*, p. 24; G. B. Gray, *Expositor*, September 1893, p. 212). But the following (a few of which are not given by Holzinger) are sufficient to prove the conclusion come to above : i. 2, iv. 4, DN) • • • Q—this is the form of the disjunctive interrogative in later O. T. writings, replacing the earlier DK • • • q; ii. 8, 8 only here in O. T., but frequent in Aram.; 13, UD) in Ni. only from Jeremiah onwards, Qal only in two passages before Jeremiah and in a number after him; 18, Mnx, if

Take this large use into account, and the unmistakable Aramaisms of the book become even more emphatic in their proof of a late date.

The literary parallels between Joel and other writers are unusually many for so small a book. They number at least twenty in seventy-two verses. The other books of the Old Testament in which they occur are about twelve. Where one writer has parallels with many, we do not necessarily conclude that he is the borrower, unless we find that some of the phrases common to both are characteristic of the other writers, or that, in his text of them, there are differences from theirs which may reasonably be reckoned to be of a later origin. But that both of these conditions are found in the parallels between Joel and other prophets has been shown by Prof. Driver and Mr. G. B. Gray. "Several of the parallels—either in their entirety or by virtue of certain words which they contain—have their affinities solely or chiefly in the later writings. But the significance [of this] is increased when the very difference between a passage in Joel and its

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the correct reading, occurs only in the latest O. T. writings, the Qal only in these and Aram.; ii 2, iv. (Heb.; iii. Eng.) 20, mi mi first in Deut. xxxii. 7, and then exilic and post-exilic frequently; 8, n?0, a late word, only in Job xxxiii. 18, xxxvi. 12, 2 Chron. xxiii. 10, xxxii, 5, Neh. iii. 15, iv. 11, 17; 20, Aib, *t9ui*, only in 2 Chron. xx. 16 and Eccles., Aram, of Daniel, and post Bibi. Aram, and Heb.; iv. (Heb.; iii. Eng.) 4, 2 201, cf. 2 Chron. xx. 11; 10, no, see below on this verse; 11, nrn, Aram.; 13, 20/2, in Hebrew to cook (cf. Ezek. xxiv. 5), and in other forms always with that meaning down to the Priestly Writing and "Zech." ix.—xiv., is used here in the sense of *ripen,* which is frequent in Aram., but does not occur elsewhere in O. T. Besides, Joel uses for the first personal pronoun "8—ii. 27 (bis), iv. 10, 17—which is by far the most usual form with later writers, and not 28, preferred by pre-exilic writers. (See below on the language of Jonah.)

parallel in another book consists in a word or phrase characteristic of the later centuries. That a passage in a writer of the ninth century should differ from its parallel in a subsequent writer by the presence of a word elsewhere confined to the later literature would be strange; a single instance would not, indeed, be inexplicable in view of the scantiness of extant writings; but every additional instance—though itself not very convincing—renders the strangeness greater." And again, "the variations in some of the parallels as found in Joel have other common peculiarities. This also finds its natural explanation in the fact that Joel quotes : for that the *same* author even when quoting from different sources should quote with variations of the same character is natural, but that *different* authors quoting from a common source should follow the same method of quotation is improbable."[1] "While in some of the parallels a comparison discloses indications that the phrase in Joel is probably the later, in other cases, even though the expression may in itself be met with earlier, it becomes frequent only in a later age, and the use of it by Joel increases the presumption that he stands by the side of the later writers." [1]

In face of so many converging lines of evidence, we shall not wonder that there should have come about so great a change in the opinion of the majority of critics on the date of Joel, and that it should now be assigned by them to a post-exilic date. Some place it in the sixth century before Christ,[8] some in the first

[1] G. B. Gray, *Expositor,* September 1893, pp. 213 f For the above conclusions ample proof is given in Mr. Gray's detailed examination of the parallels: pp. 214 ff.

[2] Driver, *Jot 1 and Amos,* p. 27.

[1] Scholz and Rosenzweig (not seen).

half of the fifth before " Malachi" and Nehemiah,[1] but the most after the full establishment of the Law by Ezra and Nehemiah in 444 B.c.[3] It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to decide. Nothing certain can be deduced from the mention of the *city wall* in chap. ii. 9, from which Robertson Smith and Cornill infer that Nehemiah's walls were already built. Nor can we be sure that Joel quotes the phrase, *before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come,* from " Malachi," [8] although this is rendered probable by the character of Joel's other parallels. But the absence of all reference to the prophets as a class, the promise of the rigorous exclusion oi foreigners from Jerusalem,[4] the condemnation to judgment of all the heathen, and the strong apocalyptic character of the book, would incline us to place it after Ezra rather than before. How far after, it is impossible to say, but the absence of feeling against Persia requires a date before the cruelties inflicted by Artaxerxes about 360/

[1] Hilgenfeld, Duhm, Oort. Driver puts it "most safely shortly after Haggai and Zechariah i.—viii., c 500 B.C."

• Vernes, Robertson Smith, Kuenen, Matthes, Cornill, Nowack, etc.

* Joel iii. 4 (Heb.; Eng. it 31); "Mal." iv. 5.

[4] iii. (Eng.; iv. Heb.) 17.

8 Perhaps this is the most convenient place to refer to KOnig's proposal to place Joel in the last years of Josiah. Some of his arguments *(e.g.* that Joel is placed among the first of the Twelve) we have already answered. He thinks that i. 17-20 suit the great drought in Josiah's reign (Jer. xiv. 2-6), that the name given to the locusts, mDEn, ii. 20, is due to Jeremiah's enemy *from the north,* and that the phrases *return with all your heart,* ii. 12, and *return to Jehovah your God,* 13, imply a period of apostasy. None of these conclusions is necessary. The absence of reference to the *high places* finds an analogy in Isa. i. 13; the nnp is mentioned in Isa. i. 13: if Amos viii. 5 testifies to observance of the Sabbath, and Nahum ii. 1 to other festivals, who can say a pre-exilic prophet would not be interested in the meal and drink offerings? But surely no pre-exilic prophet

One solution, which has lately been offered for the problems of date presented by the Book of Joel, deserves some notice. In his German translation of Driver's *Introduction to the Old Testament*[1] Rothstein questions the integrity of the prophecy, and alleges reasons for dividing it into two sections. Chaps, i. and ii. (Heb.; i.—ii. 27 Eng.) he assigns to an early author, writing in the minority of King Joash, but chaps, iii. and iv. (Heb.; ii. 28—iii. Eng.) to a date after the Exile, while ii. 20, which, it will be remembered, Robertson Smith takes as a gloss, he attributes to the editor who has joined the two sections together. His reasons are that chaps, i. and ii. are entirely taken up with the physical plague of locusts, and no troubles from heathen are mentioned; while chaps, iii. and iv. say nothing of a physical plague, but the evils they deplore for Israel are entirely political, the assaults of enemies. Now it is quite within the bounds of possibility that chaps, iii. and iv. are from another hand than chaps, i. and ii.: we have nothing to disprove that But, on the other hand, there is nothing to prove it. On the

would have so emphasised these as Joel has done. Nor is Knig's explanation of iv. 2 as of the Assyrian and Egyptian invasion of Judah so probable as that which refers the verse to the Babylonian exile. Nor are Konig's objections to a date after "Malachi" convincing. They are that a prophet near "Malachi's" time must have specified as "Malachi" did the reasons for the repentance to which he summoned the people, while Joel gives none, but is quite general (ii. 13a). But the change of attitude may be accounted for by the covenant and Law of 444. "Malachi" i. 11 speaks of the Gentiles worshipping Jehovah, but not even in Jonah iii. 5 is any relation of the Gentiles to Jehovah predicated. Again, the greater exclusiveness of Ezra and his Law may be the cause. Joel, it is true, as Konig says, does not mention the Law, while "Malachi" does (ii. 8, etc.); but this was not necessary if the people had accepted it in 444. Professor Ryle *(Canon of O.T.*, 106 n.) leaves the question of Joel's date open.

[1] **Pages 333 f. n.**

contrary, the possibility of all four chapters being from the same hand is very obvious. Joel mentions no heathen in the first chapter, because he is engrossed with the plague of locusts. But when this has passed, it is quite natural that he should take up the standing problem of Israel's history—their relation to heathen peoples. There is no discrepancy between the two different subjects, nor between the styles in which they are respectively treated. Rothstein's arguments for an early date for chaps, i. and ii. have been already answered, and when we come to the exposition of them we shall find still stronger reasons for assigning them to the end of the fifth century before Christ The assault on the integrity of the prophecy may therefore be said to have failed, though no one who remembers the composite character of the prophetical books can deny that the question is still open.[1]

2. The Interpretation of the Book: Is it Description, Allegory or Apocalypse?

Another question to which we must address ourselves before we can pass to the exposition of Joel's prophecies is of the attitude and intention of the prophet. Does he describe or predict? Does he give history or allegory ?

Joel starts from a great plague of locusts, which he

[1] Vernes, *Histoire des Idees Messiantques deltas Alexandre,* pp. 13 ff., had already asserted that chaps. L and ii. must be by a different author from chaps, iii. and iv., because the former has to do wholly with the writer's present, with which the latter has no connection whatever, but it is entirely eschatological. But in his *Melanges de Crit. Relig.,* pp. 218 ff, Vernes allows that his arguments are not conclusive, and that all four chapters may have come from the same hand.

describes not only in the ravages they commit upon the land, but in their ominous foreshadowing of the Day of the Lord. They are the heralds of God's near judgment upon the nation. Let the latter repent instantly with a day of fasting and prayer. Peradventure Jehovah will relent, and spare His people. So far chap, i 2—ii. 17. Then comes a break. An uncertain interval appears to elapse; and in chap, ii. 18 we are told that Jehovah's zeal for Israel has been stirred, and He has had pity on His folk. Promises follow, *first,* of deliverance from the plague and of restoration of the harvests it has consumed, and *second,* of the outpouring of the Spirit on all classes of the community: chap. ii. 17-32 (Eng.; ii. 17—iii. Heb.). Chap. iii. (Eng.; iv. Heb.) gives another picture of the Day of Jehovah, this time described as a judgment upon the heathen enemies of Israel. They shall be brought together, condemned judicially by Him, and slain by His hosts, His "supernatural" hosts. Jerusalem shall be freed from the feet of strangers, and the fertility of the land restored.

These are the contents of the book. Do they describe an actual plague of locusts, already experienced by the people ? Or do they predict this as still to come? And again, are the locusts which they describe real locusts, or a symbol and allegory of the human foes of Israel ? To these two questions, which in a measure cross and involve each other, three kinds of answer have been given.

A large and growing majority of critics of all schools[1] hold that Joel starts, like other prophets, from the facts of experience. His locusts, though described

[1] *Lt.* **Hitzig, Vatke, Ewald, Robertson Smith, Kuenen, , Kirkpatrick, Driver, Davidson, Nowack, etc.**

with poetic hyperbole—for are they not the vanguard of the awful Day of God's judgment ?—are real locusts; their plague has just been felt by his contemporaries, whom he summons to repent, and to whom, when they have repented, he brings promises of the restoration of their ruined harvests, the outpouring of the Spirit, and judgment upon their foes. Prediction is therefore found only in the second half of the book (ii. 18 onwards): it rests upon a basis of narrative and exhortation which fills the first half.

But a number of other critics have argued (and with great force) that the prophet's language about the locusts is too aggravated and too ominous to be limited to the natural plague which these insects periodically inflicted upon Palestine. Joel (they reason) would hardly have connected so common an adversity with so singular and ultimate a crisis as the Day of the Lord. Under the figure of locusts he must be describing some more fateful agency of God's wrath upon Israel. More than one trait of his description appears to imply a human army. It can only be one or other, or all, of those heathen powers whom at different periods God raised up to chastise His delinquent people; and this opinion is held to be supported by the facts that chap. ii. 20 speaks of them as the Northern and chap. iii. (Eng.; iv. Heb.) deals with the heathen. The locusts of chaps, i. and ii. are the same as the heathen of chap. iii. In chaps, i. and ii. they are described as threatening Israel, but on condition of Israel repenting (chap. ii. 18 ff.) the Day of the Lord which they herald shall be their destruction and not Israel's (chap, iii.).[1]

[1] **This allegorical interpretation was a favourite one with the early Christian Fathers : cf. Jerome.**

The supporters of this allegorical interpretation of Joel are, however, divided among themselves as to whether the heathen powers symbolised by the locusts are described as having already afflicted Israel or are predicted as still to come. Hilgenfeld,[1] for instance, says that the prophet in chaps, i. and ii. speaks of their ravages as already past. To him their fourfold plague described in chap. i. 4 symbolises four Persian assaults upon Palestine, after the last of which in 358 the prophecy must therefore have been written? Others read them as still to come. In our own country Pusey has been the strongest supporter of this theory? To him the whole book, written before Amos, is prediction. "[1] It extends from the prophet's own day to the end of time." Joel calls the scourge the Northern: he directs the priests to pray for its removal, that *the heathen may not rule over* God's heritage;[4] he describes the agent as a responsible one;[6] his imagery goes far beyond the effects of locusts, and threatens drought, fire and plague,[6] the assault of cities and the terrifying of peoples? The scourge is to be destroyed in a way physically inapplicable to locusts;[8] and the promises of its removal include the remedy of ravages which mere locusts could not inflict: the captivity of Judah is to be turned, and the land recovered from foreigners who

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[1] *Ztitschr. fir wissensch. Theologie,* i860, pp. 412 f

2 Cambyses 525, Xerxes 484, Artaxerxes Ochus 460 and 458.

[3] In Germany, among other representatives of this opinion, are Bertholdt *(Einl,)* and Hengstenberg *(Christol.,* III. 352 fr.), the latter of whom saw in the four kinds of locusts the Assyrian-Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek and the Roman tyrants of Israel.

[8] ii. 17. [5] i. 19, 20. [6] ii. 2a

[8] ii. 20. [7] Plur. ii. 6.

are to be banished from it.[1] Pusey thus reckons as future the relenting of God, consequent upon the people's penitence : chap. ii. 18 ff. The past tenses in which it is related, he takes as instances of the well-known prophetic perfect, according to which the prophets express their assurance of things to come by describing them as if they had already happened.

This is undoubtedly a strong case for the predictive and allegorical character of the Book of Joel; but a little consideration will show us that the facts on which it is grounded are capable of a different explanation than that which it assumes, and that Pusey has overlooked a number of other facts which force us to a literal interpretation of the locusts as a plague already past, even though we feel they are described in the language of poetical hyperbole.

For, in the first place, Pusey's theory implies that the prophecy is addressed to a future generation, who shall be alive when the predicted invasions of heathen come upon the land. Whereas Joel obviously addresses his own contemporaries. The prophet and his hearers are one. *Before our eyes,* he says, *the food has been cut off?* As obviously, he speaks of the plague of locusts as of something that has just happened. His hearers can compare its effects with past disasters, which it has far exceeded;[8] and it is their duty to hand down the story of it to future generations.[4] Again, his description is that of a physical, not of a political, plague. Fields and gardens, vines and figs, are devastated by being stripped and gnawed. Drought accompanies the locusts, the seed shrivels beneath the clods, the trees languish, the cattle pant for want of water.[6] These are

[1] Hi. (Heb. iv.) i f, 17. [2] i. 16. [3] i. 2 f. [4] i 3. [5] i. 17 ff.

not the trail which an invading army leave behind them. In support of his theory that human hosts are meant, Pusey points to the verses which bid the people pray *that the heathen rule not over them,* and which describe the invaders as attacking cities.[1] But the former phrase may be rendered with equal propriety, *that the heathen make not satirical songs about them;*[1] and as to the latter, not only do locusts invade towns exactly as Joel describes, but his words that the invader steals into houses like *a thief* are far more applicable to the insidious entrance of locusts than to the bold and noisy assault of a storming party. Moreover Pusey and the other allegorical interpreters of the book overlook the fact that Joel never so much as hints at the invariable effects of a human invasion, massacre and plunder. He describes no slaying and no looting ; but when he comes to the promise that Jehovah will restore the losses which have been sustained by His people, he defines them as the years which His army has *eaten?* But all this proof is clenched by the fact that Joel compares the locusts to actual soldiers.[4] They are *like* horsemen, the sound of them is *like* chariots, they run *like* horses, and *like* men of war they leap upon the wall. Joel could never have compared a real army to itself!

The allegorical interpretation is therefore untenable. But some critics, while admitting this, are yet not disposed to take the first part of the book for narrative. They admit that the prophet means a plague of locusts, but they deny that he is speaking of a plague already past, and hold that his locusts are still to come, that they are as much a part of the future as the pouring out of the

[1] ii. 17, ii. 9 ff. • A. B. Davidson, *Expos.,* 1888, pp. 200 f.
[4] ii. 4 ff.

Spirit[1] and the judgment of the heathen in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.[8] All alike, they are signs or accompaniments of the Day of Jehovah, and that Day has still to break. The prophet's scenery is apocalyptic; the locusts are " eschatological locusts," not historical ones. This interpretation of Joel has been elaborated by Dr. Adalbert Merx,, and the following is a summary of his opinions.[8]

After examining the book along all the lines of exposition which have been proposed, Merx finds himself unable to trace any plan or even sign of a plan; and his only escape from perplexity is the belief that no plan can ever have been meant by the author. Joel weaves in one past, present and future, paints situations only to blot them out and put others in their place, starts many processes but develops none. His book shows no insight into God's plan with Israel, but is purely external; the bearing and the end of it is the material prosperity of the little land of Judah. From this Merx concludes that the book is not an original work, but a mere summary of passages from previous prophets, that with a few reflections of the life of the Jews after the Return lead us to assign it to that period of literary culture which Nehemiah inaugurated by the collection of national writings and which was favoured by the cessation of all political disturbance. Joel gathered up the pictures of the Messianic age in the older prophets, and welded them together in one long prayer by the fervid belief that that age was near. But while the older prophets spoke upon the ground of actual fact and rose from this to a majestic picture of the last punishment, the still life of Joel's time had nothing such to offer him and he had to seek another basis for his prophetic flight. It is probable that he sought this in the relation of Type and Antitype. The Antitype he found in the liberation from Egypt, the darkness and the locusts of which he transferred to his canvas from Exodus x. 4-6. The locusts, therefore, are neither real nor symbolic, but ideal. This is the method of the Midrash and Haggada in Jewish literature, which constantly placed over against each other the deliverance from Egypt and the last judgment. It is

[1] Eng. ii. 28 ff., Heb. iii.

[8] Eng. iii., Heb. iv.

• *Die Prophetic des Joel u. ihre Ausleger*, 1879. The following summary and criticism of Merx's views I take from an (unpublished) review of his work which I wrote in 1881.

a method that is already found in such portions of the Old Testament as Ezekiel xxxvii. and Psalm lxxviii. Joel's locusts are borrowed from the Egyptian plagues, but are presented as the signs of the Last Day. They will bring it near to Israel by famine, drought and the interruption of worship described in chap. i. Chap. ii., which Merx keeps distinct from chap, i., is based on a study of Ezekiel, from whom Joel has borrowed, among other things, the expressions *the garden of Eden* and the *Northerner.* The two verses generally held to be historic, 18 and 19, Merx takes to be the continuation of the prayer of the priests, pointing the verbs so as to turn them from perfects into futures.[1] The rest of the book, Merx strives to show, is pieced together from many prophets, chiefly Isaiah and Ezekiel, but without the tender spiritual feeling of the one, or the colossal magnificence of the other. Special nations are mentioned, but in this portion of the work we have to do not with events already past, but with general views, and these not original, but conditioned by the expressions of earlier writers. There is no history in the book : it is all ideal, mystical, apocalyptic. That is to say, according to Merx, there is no real prophet or prophetic fire, only an old man Warming his feeble hands over a few embers that he has scraped together from the ashes of ancient fires, now nearly wholly dead.

Merx has traced Joel's relations to other prophets, and reflection of a late date in Israel's history, with care and ingenuity; but his treatment of the text and exegesis of the prophet's meaning are alike forced and fanciful. In face of the support which the Massoretic reading of the hinge of the book, chap. ii. 18 ff., receives from the ancient versions, and of its inherent probability and harmony with the context, Merx's textual emendation is unnecessary, besides being in itself unnatural? While the very same objections which we have already found valid against the allegorical interpretation equally dispose of this mystical one. Merx outrages the evident features of the book almost as much as Hengstenberg and Pusey have done. He has lifted out of time altogether that which plainly purports to be historical His literary criticism is as unsound as his textual. It is only by ignoring the beautiful poetry of chap. i. that he transplants it to the future. Joel's figures are too vivid, too actual, to be predictive or mystical. And the whole interpretation wrecks itself in

[1] For 8222 etc. he reads KA22" etc.

2 " The proposal of Merx, to change the pointing so as to transform the perfects into futures,... is an exegetical monstrosity."—Robertson Smith, art. "Joel," *Encyc, Brit.*

the same verse as the allegorical, the verse, viz., in which Joel plainly speaks of himself as having suffered with his hearers the plague he describes.[1]

We may, therefore, with confidence conclude that the allegorical and mystical interpretations of Joel are impossible; and that the only reasonable view of our prophet is that which regards him as calling, in chap, i. 2—ii. 17, upon his contemporaries to repent in face of a plague of locusts, so unusually severe that he has felt it to be ominous of even the Day of the Lord; and in the rest of his book, as promising material, political and spiritual triumphs to Israel in consequence of their repentance, either already consummated, or anticipated by the prophet as certain.

It is true that the account of the locusts appears to bear features which conflict with the literal interpretation. Some of these, however, vanish upon a fuller knowledge of the awful degree which such a plague has been testified to reach by competent observers within our own era.* Those that remain may be attributed partly to the poetic hyperbole of Joel's style, and partly to the fact that he sees in the plague far more than itself. The locusts are signs of the Day of Jehovah. Joel treats them as we found Zephaniah treating the Scythian hordes of his day. They are as real as the latter, but on them as on the latter the lurid glare of Apocalypse has fallen, magnifying them and investing them with that air of ominousness which is the sole justification of the allegorical and mystic interpretation of their appearance.

[1] i. 16.

2 Even the comparison of the ravages of the locusts to burning by fire. But probably also Joel means that they were accompanied by drought and forest fires. See below.

To the same sense of their office as heralds of the last day, we owe the description of the locusts as *the Northerner*.[1] The North is not the quarter from which locusts usually reach Palestine, nor is there any reason to suppose that by naming the North Joel meant only to emphasise the unusual character of these swarms. Rather he takes a name employed in Israel since Jeremiah's time to express the instruments of Jehovah's wrath in the day of His judgment of Israel. The name is typical of Doom, and therefore Joel applies it to his fateful locusts.

3. STATE OF THE TEXT AND THE STYLE OF THE BOOK.

Joel's style is fluent and clear, both when he is describing the locusts, in which part of his book he is most original, and when he is predicting, in apocalyptic language largely borrowed from earlier prophets, the Day of Jehovah. To the ease of understanding him we may attribute the sound state of the text and its freedom from glosses. In this, like most of the books of the post-exilic prophets, especially the Books of Haggai, "Malachi" and Jonah, Joel's book contrasts very favourably with those of the older prophets; and that also, to some degree, is proof of the lateness of his date. The Greek translators have, on the whole, understood Joel easily and with little error. In their version there are the usual differences of grammatical construction, especially in the pronominal suffixes and verbs, and of punctuation; but very few bits of expansion and no real additions. These are all noted in the translation below.

[1] ii. 20.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE LOCUSTS AND THE DAY OF THE LORD

JOEL i.—ii. 17

JOEL, as we have seen, found the motive of his prophecy in a recent plague of locusts, the appearance of which and the havoc they worked are described by him in full detail. Writing not only as a poet but as a seer, who reads in the locusts signs of the great Day of the Lord, Joel has necessarily put into his picture several features which carry the imagination beyond the limits of experience. And yet, if we ourselves had lived through such a plague, we should be able to recognise how little license the poet has taken, and that the seer, so far from unduly mixing with his facts the colours of Apocalypse, must have experienced in the terrible plague itself enough to provoke all the religious and monitory use which he makes of it.

The present writer has seen but one swarm of locusts, in which, though it was small and soon swept away by the wind, he felt not only many of the features that Joel describes, but even some degree of that singular helplessness before a calamity of portent far beyond itself, something of that supernatural edge and accent, which, by the confession of so many observers, characterise the locust-plague and the earthquake above

all other physical disasters. One summer afternoon, upon the plain of Hauran, a long bank of mist grew rapidly from the western horizon. The day was dull, and as the mist rose athwart the sunbeams, struggling through clouds, it gleamed cold and white, like the front of a distant snow-storm. When it came near, it seemed to be more than a mile broad, and was dense enough to turn the atmosphere raw and dirty, with a chill as of a summer sea-fog, only that this was not due to any fall in the temperature. Nor was there the silence of a mist. We were enveloped by a noise, less like the whirring of wings than the rattle of hail or the crackling of bush on fire. Myriads upon myriads of locusts were about us, covering the ground, and shutting out the view in all directions. Though they drifted before the wind, there was no confusion in their ranks. They sailed in unbroken lines, sometimes straight, sometimes wavy; and when they passed pushing through our caravan, they left almost no stragglers, except from the last battalion, and only the few dead which we had caught in our hands. After several minutes they were again but a lustre on the air, and so melted away into some heavy clouds in the east.

Modern travellers furnish us with terrible impressions of the innumerable multitudes of a locust-plague, the succession of their swarms through days and weeks, and the utter desolation they leave behind them. Mr. Doughty writes:[1] "' There hopped before our feet a minute brood of second locusts, of a leaden colour, with budding wings like the spring leaves, and born of those gay swarms which a few weeks before had passed over and despoiled the desert. After forty days these

[1] *Arabia Deserta,* p. 307.

also would fly as a pestilence, yet more hungry than the former, and fill the atmosphere." And later : [44] The clouds of the second locust brood which the Aarab call 'Am'dan, *pillars,* flew over us for some days, invaded the booths and for blind hunger even bit our shins."[1] It was [44] a storm of rustling wings."[2] " This year was remembered for the locust swarms and great summer heat."[8] A traveller in South Africa[4] says : [44] For the space of ten miles on each side of the Sea-Cow river and eighty or ninety miles in length, an area of sixteen or eighteen hundred square miles, the whole surface might literally be said to be covered with them." In his recently published book on South Africa, Mr. Bryce writes:—*5*

[44] It is a strange sight, beautiful if you can forget the destruction it brings with it. The whole air, to twelve or even eighteen feet above the ground, is filled with the insects, reddish brown in body, with bright, gauzy wings. When the sun's rays catch them it is like the sea sparkling with light. When you see them against a cloud they are like the dense flakes of a driving snow-storm. You feel as if you had never before realised immensity in number. Vast crowds of men gathered at a festival, countless tree-tops rising along the slope of a forest ridge, the chimneys of London houses from the top of St. Paul's—all are as nothing to the myriads of insects that blot out the sun above and cover the ground beneath and fill the air whichever way one looks. The breeze carries them swiftly past, but they come on in fresh clouds, a host of which there is no end, each of them a harmless

[1] *Arabia Dcscrta,* **p. 335.** [2] *Id.,* **396.** [3] *Id.,* **335.**
[4] **Barrow,** *South Africa,* **p. 257, quoted by Pusey.**
8 *ImprtssiQns of South Africa,* **by James Bryce: Macmillans, 1897.**

creature which you can catch and crush in your hand, but appalling in their power of collective devastation."

And take three testimonies from Syria: " The quantity of these insects is a thing incredible to any one who has not seen it himself; the ground is covered by them for several leagues."[1 0] The whole face of the mountain[3] was black with them. On they came like a living deluge. We dug trenches and kindled fires, and beat and burnt to death heaps upon heaps, but the effort was utterly useless. They rolled up the mountain-side, and poured over rocks, walls, ditches and hedges, those behind covering up and passing over the masses already killed. For some days they continued to pass. The noise made by them in marching and foraging was like that of a heavy shower falling upon a distant forest."[8] "The roads were covered with them, all marching and in regular lines, like armies of soldiers, with their leaders in front; and all the opposition of man to resist their progress was in vain." Having consumed the plantations in the country, they entered the towns and villages. "When they approached our garden all the farm servants were employed to keep them off, but to no avail; though our men broke their ranks for a moment, no sooner had they passed the men, than they closed again, and marched forward through hedges and ditches as before. Our garden finished, they continued their march toward the town, devastating one garden after another. They have also penetrated into most of our rooms : whatever one is doing one hears their noise from without, like

[1] **Volney,** ***Voyage en SyrU,*** **I. 277, quoted by Pusey.**

[1] **Lebanon.**

* **Abridged from Thomson's** ***The Land and tha Book,*** **ed. 1877, Northern Palestine, pp. 416 f**

the noise of armed hosts, or the running of many waters. When in an erect position their appearance at a little distance is like that of a well-armed horseman."[1]

Locusts are notoriously adapted for a plague, "since to strength incredible for so small a creature, they add saw-like teeth, admirably calculated to eat up all the herbs in the land."[8] They are the incarnation of hunger. No voracity is like theirs, the voracity of little creatures, whose million separate appetites nothing is too minute to escape. They devour first grass and leaves, fruit and foliage, everything that is green and juicy. Then they attack the young branches of trees, and then the hard bark of the trunks.[8] "After eating up the corn, they fell upon the vines, the pulse, the willows, and even the hemp, notwithstanding its great bitterness."[4] "The bark of figs, pomegranates and oranges, bitter, hard and corrosive, escaped not their voracity."[6] " They are particularly injurious to the palm-trees ; these they strip of every leaf and green particle, the trees remaining like skeletons with bare branches."[8] " For eighty or ninety miles they devoured every green herb and every blade of grass." " "The gardens outside Jaffa are now completely stripped, even the bark

[1] From Driver's abridgment *{Joel and Amos,* p. 90) of an account in the *Joum. of Sacred Lit.,* October 1865, pp. 235 f.

[8] Morier, *A Second Journey through Persia,* p. 99, quoted by Pusey, from whose notes and Driver's excursus upon locusts in *Joel and Amos* the following quotations have been borrowed.

[*] Shaw's *Travels in Barbary,* 1738, pp. 236-8; Jackson's *Travels to Morocco.*

[4] Adansson, *Voyage au Senegal,* p. 88.

[*] Chenier, *Recherches Historiques sur les Maures,* III., p. 496.

[8] Burckhardt, *Notes,* II. 9a

[7] Barrow, *South Africa,* p. 257.

of the young trees having been devoured, and look like a birch-tree forest in winter."[1] "The bushes were eaten quite bare, though the animals could not have been long on the spot. They sat by hundreds on a bush gnawing the rind and the woody fibres."[2] "Bamboo groves have been stripped of their leaves and left standing like saplings after a rapid bush fire, and grass has been devoured so that the bare ground appeared as if burned."[3] "The country did not seem to be burnt, but to be much covered with snow through the whiteness of the trees and the dryness of the herbs."[4] The fields finished, they invade towns and houses, in search of stores. Victual of all kinds, hay, straw, and even linen and woollen clothes and leather bottles, they consume or tear in pieces.[5] They flood through the open, unglazed windows and lattices: nothing can keep them out.

These extracts prove to us what little need Joel had of hyperbole in order to read his locusts as signs of the Day of Jehovah; especially if we keep in mind that locusts are worst in very hot summers, and often accompany an absolute drought along with its consequence of prairie and forest fires. Some have thought that, in introducing the effects of fire, Joel only means to paint the burnt look of a land after locusts have ravaged it. But locusts do not drink up the streams, nor cause the seed to shrivel in the earth.[6] By these the prophet must mean drought, and by *the flame that has burned all the trees of the field?* the forest fire, finding

[1] *Journ. of Sac. Lit.*, October 1865.
[2] Lichtenstein, *Travels in South Africa.*
[3] *Standard,* December 25th, 1896.
[4] Fr. Alvarez.
[5] Barheb., *Chron. Syr.*, p. 784; Burckhardt, *Notes,* II. 90.
[6] i. 20, 17. [7] i. 19.

an easy prey in the trees which have been reduced to firewood by the locusts' teeth.

Even in the great passage in which he passes from history to Apocalypse, from the gloom and terror of the locusts to the lurid dawn of Jehovah's Day, Joel keeps within the actual facts of experience:—

Day of darkness and murk,
Day of cloud and heavy mist,
Like dawn scattered on the mountains,
A people many and powerful.

No one who has seen a cloud of locusts can question the realism even of this picture: the heavy gloom of the immeasurable mass of them, shot by gleams of light where a few of the sun's imprisoned beams have broken through or across the storm of lustrous wings. This is like dawn beaten down upon the hilltops, and crushed by rolling masses of cloud, in conspiracy to prolong the night. No : the only point at which Joel leaves absolute fact for the wilder combinations of Apocalypse is at the very close of his description, chap. ii. io and n, and just before his call to repentance. Here we find, mixed with the locusts, earthquake and thunderstorm ; and Joel has borrowed these from the classic pictures of the Day of the Lord, using some of the very phrases of the latter:—

Earth trembles before them,
*Heaven quakes^*
Sun and moon become black,
The stars withdraw their shining,
And Jehovah utters His voice before His army.

Joel, then, describes, and does not unduly enhance, the terrors of an actual plague. At first his whole

strength is so bent to make his people feel these, that, though about to call to repentance, he does not detail the national sins which require it In his opening verses he summons the drunkards,[1] but that is merely to lend vividness to his picture of facts, because men of such habits will be the first to feel a plague of this kind. Nor does Joel yet ask his hearers what the calamity portends. At first he only demands that they shall feel it, in its uniqueness and its own sheer force.

Hence the peculiar style of the passage. Letter for letter, this is one of the heaviest passages in prophecy. The proportion in Hebrew of liquids to the other letters is not large; but here it is smaller than ever. The explosives and dentals are very numerous. There are several keywords, with hard consonants and long vowels, used again and again : Shuddadh, ’ābhlah, ‘umlal,, hobhish.. The longer lines, into which Hebrew parallelism tends to run are replaced by a rapid series of short, heavy phrases, falling like blows. Critics have called it rhetoric. But it is rhetoric of a very high order and perfectly suited to the prophet’s purpose. Look at chap. i. 10: Shuddadh sadheh, ’ābhlah ’adhamah, shuddadh daghan, hdbhish tirdsh, ‘umlal yiṣhar.[2] Joel loads his clauses with the most leaden letters he can find, and drops them in quick succession, repeating the same heavy word again and again, as if he would stun the careless people into some sense of the bare, brutal weight of the calamity which has befallen them.

Now Joel does this because he believes that, if his people feel the plague in its proper violence, they must be convinced that it comes from Jehovah. The keynote

[1] i. 5. [2] Cf. i. 12, 13, and many verses in cbap. ii.

of this part of the prophecy is found in chap. i. 15 : "Keshodh mishshaddhai," *like violence from the All-violent doth it come.* "If you feel this as it is, you will feel Jehovah Himself in it By these very blows, He and His Day are near. We had been forgetting how near." Joel mentions no crime, nor enforces any virtue: how could he have done so in so strong a sense that "the Judge was at the door" ? To make men feel that they had forgotten they were in reach of that Almighty Hand, which could strike so suddenly and so hard—Joel had time only to make men feel that, and to call them to repentance. In this we probably see some reflection of the age: an age when men's thoughts were thrusting the Deity further and further from their life; when they put His Law and Temple between Him and themselves; and when their religion, devoid of the sense of His Presence, had become a set of formal observances, the rending of garments and not of hearts. But He, whom His own ordinances had hidden from His people, has burst forth through nature and in sheer force of calamity. He has revealed Himself, El-Shaddhai, *God All-violent* as He was known to their fathers, who had no elaborate law or ritual to put between their fearful hearts and His terrible strength, but cowered before Him, helpless on the stripped soil, and naked beneath His thunder. By just these means did Elijah and Amos bring God home to the hearts of ancient Israel. In Joel we see the revival of the old nature-religion, and the revenge that it was bound to take upon the elaborate systems which had displaced it, but which by their formalism and their artificial completeness had made men forget that near presence and direct action of the Almighty which it is nature's own office to enforce upon the heart.

The thing is true, and permanently valid. Only the great natural processes can break up the systems of dogma and ritual in which we make ourselves comfortable and formal, and drive us out into God's open air of reality. In the crash of nature's forces even our particular sins are forgotten, and we feel, as in the immediate presence of God, our whole, deep need of repentance. So far from blaming the absence of special ethics in Joel's sermon, we accept it as natural and proper to the occasion.

Such, then, appears to be the explanation of the first part of the prophecy, and its development towards the call to repentance, which follows it. If we are correct, the assertion[1] is false that no plan was meant by the prophet. For not only is there a plan, but the plan is most suitable to the requirements of Israel, after their adoption of the whole Law in 445, and forms one of the most necessary and interesting developments of all religion : the revival, in an artificial period, of those primitive forces of religion which nature alone supplies, and which are needed to correct formalism and the forgetfulness of the near presence of the Almighty. We see in this, too, the reason of Joel's archaic style, both of conception and expression: that likeness of his to early prophets which has led so many to place him between Elijah and Amos.[1] They are wrong. Joel's simplicity is that not of early prophecy, but of the austere forces of this revived and applied to the artificiality of a later age.

One other proof of Joel's conviction of the religious meaning of the plague might also have been pled by the earlier prophets, but certainly not in the terms in

[1] Of Merx and others : see above, p. 394.

[1] See above, p. 377.

which Joel expresses it Amos and Hosea had both described the destruction of the country's fertility in their day as God's displeasure on His people and (as Hosea puts it) His divorce of His Bride from Himself.[1] But by them the physical calamities were not threatened alone: banishment from the land and from enjoyment of its fruits was to follow upon drought, locusts and famine. In threatening no captivity Joel differs entirely from the early prophets. It is a mark of his late date. And he also describes the divorce between Jehovah and Israel, through the interruption of the ritual by the plague, in terms and with an accent which could hardly have been employed in Israel before the Exile. After the rebuilding of the Temple and restoration of the daily sacrifices morning and evening, the regular performance of the latter was regarded by the Jews with a most superstitious sense of its indispensableness to the national life. Before the Exile, Jeremiah, for instance, attaches no importance to it, in circumstances in which it would have been not unnatural for him, priest as he was, to do so.[2] But after the Exile, the greater scrupulousness of the religious life, and its absorption in ritual, laid extraordinary emphasis upon the daily offering, which increased to a most painful degree of anxiety as the centuries went on.[3] The New Testament speaks of *the Twelve Tribes constantly serving God day and night;*[4] and Josephus, while declaring that in no siege of Jerusalem before the last did the interruption ever take place in spite of the stress of famine and war combined, records the

[1] See Vol. I., pp. 242, 245 f.

[2] Jer. xiv.

[3] Cf. Ezek. xlvi. 15 on the Thamid, and Neh. x. 33; Dan. viii. 11, xi. 31, xii. 11: cf. p. 382.

[4] Acts xxvi. 7.

awful impression made alike on Jew and heathen by the giving up of the daily sacrifice on the 17th of July, A.D. 70, during the investment of the city by Titus.[1] This disaster, which Judaism so painfully feared at every crisis in its history, actually happened, Joel tells us, during the famine caused by the locusts. *Cut off are the meal and the drink offerings from the house of Jehovah? Is not food cut off from our eyes, joy and gladness from the house of our God ?*[8] *Perhaps He will turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him, meal and drink offering for Jehovah our God?* The break "of the continual symbol of gracious intercourse between Jehovah and His people, and the main office of religion," means divorce between Jehovah and Israel. *Wail like a bride girt in sackcloth for the husband of her youth I Wail, O ministers of the altar, O ministers of God!** This then was another reason for reading in the plague of locusts more than a physical meaning. This was another proof, only too intelligible to scrupulous Jews, that the great and terrible Day of the Lord was at hand.

Thus Joel reaches the climax of his argument. Jehovah is near, His Day is about to break. From this it is impossible to escape on the narrow path of disaster by which the prophet has led up to it But beneath that path the prophet passes the ground of a broad truth, and on that truth, while judgment remains still as real, there is room for the people to turn from it If experience has shown that God is in the present, near and inevitable, faith remembers that He is there not willingly for judgment, but with all His ancient

[1] XIV. *Anlt.* iv. 3, xvi. 2; VI. *Wars* ii. I. [4] ii. 14.

* i. 9, 13. • i. 8, 13.
* 1. 16.

feeling for Israel and His zeal to save her. If the people choose to turn, Jehovah, as their God and as one who works for their sake, will save them. Of this God assures them by His own word. For the first time in the prophecy He speaks for Himself. Hitherto the prophet has been describing the plague and summoning to penitence. *Bui now oracle of Jehovah of Hosts.*[1] The great covenant name, *Jehovah your God,* is solemnly repeated as if symbolic of the historic origin and age-long endurance of Jehovah's relation to Iśrael; and the very words of blessing are repeated which were given when Israel was called at Sinai and the covenant ratified:—

For He is gracious and merciful,
Long-suffering and plenteous in leal love,
And relents Him of the evil

He has threatened upon you. Once more the nation is summoned to try Him by prayer: the solemn prayer of all Israel, pleading that He should not give His people to reproach.

The Word of Jehovah
which came to Jdel the son of PeihiP el?

Hear this, ye old men,
And give ear, all inhabitants of the land!
Has the like been in your days,
Or in the days of your fathets ?
Tell it to your children,
And your children to their children,
And their children to the generation that follows.

1 ii. 12. * LXX. Ba@ovhX.

That which the Shearer left the Swarmer hath eaten.
And that which the Swarmer left the Lapper hath eaten,
And that which the Lapper left the Devourer hath eaten.

These are four different names for locusts, which it is best to translate by their literal meaning. Some think that they represent one swarm of locusts in four stages of development, but this cannot be, because the same swarm never returns upon its path, to complete the work of destruction which it had begun in an earlier stage of its growth. Nor can the first-named be the adult brood from whose eggs the others spring, as Doughty has described,[1] for that would account only for two of the four names. Joel rather describes successive swarms of the insect, without reference to the stages of its growth, and he does so as a poet, using, in order to bring out the full force of its devastation, several of the Hebrew names, that were given to the locust as epithets of various aspects of its destructive power. The names, it is true, cannot be said to rise in climax, but at least the most sinister is reserved to the last.[8]

Rouse ye, drunkards, and weep,
And wail, all ye bibbers of wine !
The new wine is cut off from your mouth f
For a nation is come up on My land,
Powerful and numberless;

[1] **See above, pp. 399 f.**

* **7on from 2n, used in the O.T. only in Deut. xxviii. 38, *to devour}* but in post-biblical Hebrew *to utterly destroy, bring to an end. Talmud Jems.*.* Taanith III. *66d*, "Why is the locust called 7n? Because it brings everything to an end."**

His teeth are the teeth of the lion,
And the fangs[1] of the lioness his.
My vine he has turned to waste,
And My fig-tree to splinters;
He hath peeled it and strawed it,
Bleached are its branches I

Wail as a bride girt in sackcloth for the spouse of her youth.
Cut off are the meal and drink offerings from the house of Jehovah !
In grief are the priests, the ministers of Jehovah.
The fields are blasted^ the ground is in grief
Blasted is the corn, abashed is the new wine, the oit pines away.
Be ye abashed, O ploughmen !
Wail, O vine-dressers,
For the wheat and the barley;
The harvest is lost from the field !
The vine is abashed, and the fig-tree is drooping;
Pomegranate, palm too and apple,
All trees of the field are dried up:
Yea, *i°y* is *abashed* and *away from the children of men.*

In this passage the same feeling is attributed to men and to the fruits of the land: *In griej are the priests, the ground is in grief* And it is repeatedly said that all alike are *abashed.* By this heavy word we have sought to render the effect of the similarly sounding " hObhisha," that our English version renders *ashamed.* It signifies to be frustrated, and so *dis-*

[1] **A.V.** ***cheek-teeth,*** **R.V.** ***jaw-teeth,*** **or** ***eye-teeth.*** **" Possibly (from the Arabic)*projectors"**. Driver.**

heartened^ put out: soured would be an equivalent, applicable to the vine and to joy and to men's hearts.

Put on mourning, *O priests, beat the breast;*
Wail, ye ministers of the altar;
Come, lie down in sackcloth, 0 ministers of my God:
For meal-offering and drink-offering are cut off
from the house of your God.

Hallow a fast, summon an assembly,
Gather[1] *all the inhabitants of the land to the house of your God;*
And cry to Jehovah:
"Alas for the Day! At hand is the Day of Jehovah !
And as vehemence from the Vehement[8] *doth it come."*
Is not food cut off from before us,
Gladness and joy from the house of our God?
The grains shrivel under their hoes?
The garners are desolate, the barns broken down,
*For the com is withered—what shall we put in them?**
The herds of cattle huddle together,[5] *fot they have no pasture;*

[1] Heb. text inserts *elders,* which may be taken as vocative, or with the LXX. as accusative, but after the latter we should expect *and.* Wellhausen suggests its deletion, and Nowack regards it as an intrusion. For DDK Wellhausen reads DDKn, *be ye gathered.*

3 Keshodh mishshaddhai (Isa. xiii. 6); Driver, *as overpowering from the Overpowerer.*

[8] A.V. *clods.* DMDD: the meaning is doubtful, but the corresponding Arabic word means *besom* or *shovel* or *{P.E.F.Q.,* 1891, p. 111, with plate) *hoe,* and the Aram. *shovel.* See Driver's note.

[4] Reading, after the LXX. *rl drro@hcoue avros* (probably an error for *b abrott),* ינה נא נהו for the Massoretic נהנה נאנח הד *How the beasts sob!* to which A.V. and Driver adhere.

[8] *Lit. press themselves* in perplexity.

Yea, the flocks of sheep are forlorn,[1]
To Thee, Jehovah^ do I cry:
For fire has devoured the pastures of the steppes[1]*,*
And the flame hath scorched all the trees of the field.
The wild beasts pant up to Thee:
For the watercourses are dry,
And fire has devoured the pastures of the steppes.

Here, with the close of chap, i., Joel's discourse takes pause, and in chap. ii. he begins a second with another call to repentance in face of the same plague. But the plague has progressed. The locusts are described now in their invasion not of the country but of the towns, to which they pass after the country is stripped. For illustration of the latter see above, p. 401. The *horn* which is to be blown, ver. 1, is an *alarm horn*;* to warn the people of the approach of the Day of the Lord, and not the Shophar which called the people to a general assembly, as in ver. 15.

Blow a horn in Zion,
Sound the alarm in My holy mountain I
Let all inhabitants of the land tremble,
For the Day of Jehovah comes—it is near !
*Day of darkness and murk, day of cloud and heavy mist.**
Like dawn scattered on the mountains,*

[1] **Reading, with Wellhausen and Nowack ("perhaps rightly," Driver) 10073 for 10027282, *art guilty* or *punishtd.***

2 21D, usually rendered *wilderness* or *dtstrt,* but literally *place when the shttp art driven,* land not cultivated. See *Hist. Gtcg.,* p. 656.

• See on Amos iii. 6: Vol. I., p. 82.

[4] Zeph. i. 15. See above, p. 58.

• MDI in Qal to spread abroad, but the passive is here to be taken in the same sense as the Ni, in Ezek, xvii. 21, *dispersed.* The figure

A people many and powerful;
Its like has not been from of old,
And shall not again be for years of generation upon generation.
Before it the fire devours;
And behind the flame consumes.
Like the garden of Eden is the land in front,
And behind it a desolate desert;
Yea, it lets nothing escape.
Their visage is the visage of horses,
And like horsemen they run.
They rattle like chariots over the tops of the hills,
Like the crackle of flames devouring stubble,
Like a powerful people prepared for battle.
Peoples are writhing before them,
Every face gathers blackness.

Like warriors they run,
Like fighting-men they come up the wall;
They march every man by himself
And they rave not their paths.
None jostles his comrade,
They march every man on his track,
And plunge through the missiles unbroken.

is of dawn crushed by and struggling with a mass of cloud and mist, and expresses the gleams of white which so often break through a locust cloud. See above, p. 404.

[1] So travellers have described the effect of locusts. See above, p. 403.

[2] Ezek. xxxvi. 35.

[3] Heb. *in his own ways.*

[4] נִבְצָר, an impossible metaphor, so that most read נָבַץ, a root found only in Micah vii. 3 (see Vol. I., p. 428), *to twist* or *tangle;* but Wellhausen reads פָּנַי, *twist,* Eccles. vii. 13.

[5] Heb. *highroad,* as if defined and heaped up for him alone.

[6] See above, p. 401.

They scour the city, run upon the walls,
Climb into the houses, and enter the windows like a thief.
Earth trembles before them.
Heaven quakes,
Sun and moon become black,
The stars withdraw their shining.
And Jehovah utters His voice before His army:
For very great is His host;
Yea, powerful is He that performeth His word.
Great is the Day of Jehovah, and very awful:
Who may abide it?[1]

But now hear *the oracle of Jehovah:*
Turn ye to Me with all your heart,
And with fasting and weeping and mourning.
Rend ye your hearts and not your garments,
And turn to Jehovah your God:
For He is gracious and merciful,
Long-suffering and plenteous in love,
And relents of the evil.
Who knows but He will turn and relent,
And leave behind Him a blessing,
Meal-offering and drink-offering to Jehovah your God?

Blow a horn in Zion,
Hallow a fast, summon the assembly I
Gather the people, hallow the congregation,
Assemble the old men, gather the children, and infants at the breast;*
Let the bridegroom come forth from his chamber,

[1] **Zeph. i. 14; "Mal." iii. 2.**

*** So (and not *elders)* in contrast to children.**

And the bride from her bower.[1]
Let the priests, the ministers of Jehovah, weep between porch and altar;
Let them say, Spare, 0 Jehovah, Thy people,
And give not Thine heritage to dishonour, for the heathen to mock them:[8]
Why should it be said among the nations, Where is their God ?

[1] ***Canopy*** **or** ***pavilion,*** **bridal tent.**

* **03 2002, which may mean either** ***rule over them*** **or** ***mock them,*** **but the parallelism decides for the latter.**

CHAPTER XXIX

PROSPERITY AND THE SPIRIT

JOEL ii. 18-32 (Eng.; ii. 18—iii. Heb.)

THEN did Jehovah become jealous for His land, and took pity upon His people—with these words Joel opens the second half of his book. Our Authorised Version renders them in the future tense, as the continuation of the prophet's discourse, which had threatened the Day of the Lord, urged the people to penitence, and now promises that their penitence shall be followed by the Lord's mercy. But such a rendering forces the grammar;[1] and the Revised English Version is right in taking the verbs, as the vast majority of critics do, in the past. Joel's call to repentance has closed, and has been successful. The fast has been hallowed, the

[1] **A.V., adhering to the Massoretic text, in which the verbs are pointed for the past, has evidently understood them as instances of the prophetic perfect. But "this is grammatically indefensible": Driver, *in loco;* see his Heb. *Tenses,* $ 82, *Obs.* Calvin and others, who take the verbs of ver. 18 as future, accept those of the next verse as past and with it begin the narrative. But if God's answer to His people's prayer be in the past, so must His jealousy and pity. All these verbs are in the same sequence of time. Merx proposes to change the vowel-points of the verbs and turn them into futures. But see above, p. 395. Ver. 21 shows that Jehovah's action is past, and Nowack points out the very unusual character of the construction that would foUow from Men's emendation. Ewald, Hitzig, Kuenen, Robertson Smith, Davidson, Robertson, Steiner, Wellhausen, Driver, Nowack, etc., all take the verbs in the past**

prayers are heard. Probably an interval has elapsed between w. 17 and 18, but in any case, the people having repented, nothing more is said of their need of doing so, and instead we have from God Himself a series of promises, w. 19-27, in answer to their cry for mercy. These promises relate to the physical calamity which has been suffered. God will destroy the locusts, still impending on the land, and restore the years which His great army has eaten. There follows in vv. 28-32 (Eng.; Heb. chap, iii.) the promise of a great outpouring of the Spirit on all Israel, amid terribly manifestations in heaven and earth.

1. THE RETURN OF PROSPERITY (ii. 19-27).

And Jehovah answered and said to His people :
*Lo, I will send you com and wine and oil^*
And your fill shall ye have of them;
And I will not again make you a reproach among the heathen.
And the Northern Foe[1] *willl remove far from you ;*
And I will push him into a land barren and waste,
*His van to the eastern sea and his rear to the western,**
Till the stench of him rises,[9]
Because he hath done greatly.

[1] **This is scarcely a name for the locusts, who, though they might reach Palestine from the N.E. under certain circumstances, came generally from -E. and S.E. But see above, p. 397: so Kuenen, Wellhausen, Nowack. W. R. Smith suggests the whole verse as an allegorising gloss. Hitzig thought of the locusts only, and rendered min A *ἰν^wucos*, Acts xxvii. 14; but this is not proved.**

*** *Lt.* the Dead Sea (Ezek. xlvii. 18; Zech. xiv. 8) and the Mediterranean.**

• The construction shows that the clause preceding this, WN3 n2, is a gloss. So Driver. But Nowack gives the other clause as the gloss.

Locusts disappear with the same suddenness as they arrive. A wind springs up and they are gone.[1] Dead Sea and Mediterranean are at the extremes of the compass, but there is no reason to suppose that the prophet has abandoned the realism which has hitherto distinguished his treatment of the locusts. The plague covered the whole land, on whose high watershed the winds suddenly veer and change. The dispersion of the locusts upon the deserts and the opposite seas was therefore possible at one and the same time. Jerome vouches for an instance in his own day. The other detail is also true to life. Jerome says that the beaches of the two seas were strewn with putrifying locusts, and Augustine [2] quotes heathen writers in evidence of large masses of locusts, driven from Africa upon the sea, and then cast up on the shore, which gave rise to a pestilence. "The south and east winds," says Volney of Syria, "drive the clouds of locusts with violence into the Mediterranean, and drown them in such quantities, that when their dead are cast on the shore they infect the air to a great distance."[8] The prophet continues, celebrating this destruction of the locusts as if it were already realised—*the Lord hath done greatly*, ver. 21. That among the blessings he mentions a full supply of rain proves that we were right in interpreting him to have spoken of drought as accompanying the locusts.[4]

Fear not, O Land! Rejoice and be glad,
For Jehovah hath done greatly!
Fear not, O beasts of the field !

[1] Nah. iii. 17; Exod. x. 19. [4] i. 17-20 : see above, p. 403.
[2] *De Civitate Dei,* III. 31. [5] Prophetic past: Driver.
[8] I. 278, quoted by Pusey.

For the pastures of the steppes are springing with new grass,
The trees bear their fruit,
Fig-tree and vine yield their substance.
O sons of Zion, be glad,
And rejoice in Jehovah your God:
*For He hath given you the early rain in normal measure;**

[1] Opinion is divided as to the meaning of this phrase: np1s2 = *for righteousness.* A. There are those who take it as having a *moral* reference; and (l) this is so emphatic to some that they render the word for *early rain,* HDD, which also means *teacher* or *revealer,* in the latter significance. So (some of them applying it to the Messiah) Targum, Symmachus, the Vulgate, *doctorrm justifies,* some Jews, *eg.* Rashi and Abarbanel, and some moderns, *rg.* (at opposite extremes) Pusey and Merx. But, as Calvin points out (this is another instance of his sanity as an exegete, and refusal to be led by theological presuppositions : he says, " I do not love strained expositions"), this does not agree with the context, which speaks not of spiritual but wholly of physical blessings. (2) Some, who take np as *early rain,* give np1s? the meaning *for righteousness, ad justitiam,* either in the sense that God will give the rain as a token of His own righteousness, or in order to restore or vindicate the people's righteousness (so Davidson, *Expositor,* 1888,p. 203 n), in the frequent sense in which np% is employed in Isa. xl. ff. (see *Isaiah xl.—Ixvi.,* Expositor's Bible, pp. 219 ff.). Cf. Hosea x. 13, ps ; above, Vol. I., p. 289, n. 2. This of course is possible, especially in view of Israel having been made by their plagues a reproach among the heathen. Still, if Joel had intended this meaning, he would have applied the phrase, not to the *rarly rain* only, but to the whole series of blessings by which the people were restored to their standing before God. B. It seems, therefore, right to take np1s? in a purely physical sense, of the measure or quality of the *rarly rain.* So even Calvin, *rain according to what is just* or *fit;* A.V. *moderately* (inexact); R.V. *in just measure*; Siegfried-Stade *sufficient.* The root-meaning of PT3 is probably *according to norm* (cf. *Isaiah xl.—Ixvi.,* p. 215), and in that case the meaning would be *rain of normal quantity.* This too suits the parallel in the next clause : *as formerly.* In Himyaritic the word is applied to good harvests. A man prays to God for oha 2PDN OPT%, *full* or *good harvests and fruits: Corp. Inscr. Sem.,* Pars Quarta, Tomus I., No. 2, lin. 1-5; cf. the note.

And poured[1] *on you winter rain*[2] *and latter rain as before?*
And the threshing-floors shall be full of wheat,
And the vats stream over with new wine and oil.
And I will restore to you the years which the Swarmer has eaten,
The Lapper, the Devourer and the Shearer,
My great army whom I sent among you.
And ye shall eat your food and be full,
And praise the Name of Jthovah your God,
Who hath dealt so wondrously with you;
And My people shall be abashed nevermore.
Ye shall know I am in the midst of Israel,
That I am Jehovah your God and none else;
And nevermore shall My people be abashed.

2. THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT

(ii. 28-32 Eng.; iii. Heb.).

Upon these promises of physical blessing there follows another of the pouring forth of the Spirit: the prophecy by which Joel became the Prophet of Pentecost, and through which his book is best known among Christians.

When fertility has been restored to the land, the seasons again run their normal courses, and the people eat their food and be full—*It shall come to pass after these things, I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh.* The order of events makes us pause to question : does Joel mean to imply that physical prosperity must

[1] **Driver,** ***in loco.***

*** Heb. also repeats here** ***early rain,*** **but redundantly.**

• neena, ***in the first.*** **A.V. adds** ***month.*** **But LXX. and Syr. read n32M5, which is probably the correct reading,** ***as before*** **or** ***formerly.***

precede spiritual fulness ? It would be unfair to assert that he does, without remembering what he understands by the physical blessings. To Joel these are the token that God has returned to His people. The drought and the famine produced by the locusts were signs of His anger and of His divorce of the land. The proofs that He has relented, and taken Israel back into a spiritual relation to Himself, can, therefore, from Joel's point of view, only be given by the healing of the people's wounds. In plenteous rains and full harvests God sets His seal to man's penitence. Rain and harvest are not merely physical benefits, but religious sacraments: signs that God has returned to His people, and that His zeal is again stirred on their behalf.[1] This has to be made clear before there can be talk of any higher blessing. God has to return to His people and to show His love for them before He pours forth His Spirit upon them. That is what Joel intends by the order he pursues, and not that a certain stage of physical comfort is indispensable to a high degree of spiritual feeling and experience. The early and latter rains, the fulness of corn, wine and oil, are as purely religious to Joel, though not so highly religious, as the phenomena of the Spirit in men.

But though that be an adequate answer to our question so far as Joel himself is concerned, it does not exhaust the question with regard to history in general. From Joel's own standpoint physical blessings may have been as religious as spiritual; but we must go further, and assert that for Joel's anticipation of the baptism of the Spirit by a return of prosperity

[1] i. 18.

there is an ethical reason and one which is permanently valid in history. A certain degree of prosperity, and even of comfort, is an indispensable condition of that universal and lavish exercise of the religious faculties, which Joel pictures under the pouring forth of God's Spirit.

The history of prophecy itself furnishes us with proofs of this. When did prophecy most flourish in Israel? When had the Spirit of God most freedom in developing the intellectual and moral nature of Israel? Not when the nation was struggling with the conquest and settlement of the land, not when it was engaged with the embarrassments and privations of the Syrian wars; but an Amos, a Hosea, an Isaiah came forth at the end of the long, peaceful and prosperous reigns of Jeroboam II. and Uzziah. The intellectual strength and liberty of the great Prophet of the Exile, his deep insight into God's purposes and his large view of the future, had not been possible without the security and comparative prosperity of the Jews in Babylon, from among whom he wrote. In Haggai and Zechariah, on the other hand, who worked in the hunger-bitten colony of returned exiles, there was no such fulness of the Spirit Prophecy, we saw,[1] was then starved by the poverty and meanness of the national life from which it rose. All this is very explicable. When men are stunned by such a calamity as Joel describes, or when they are engrossed by the daily struggle with bitter enemies and a succession of bad seasons, they may feel the need of penitence and be able to speak with decision upon the practical duty of the moment, to a degree not attainable in better

[1] Above, p. 189.

days, but they lack the leisure, the freedom and the resources amid, which their various faculties of mind and soul can alone respond to the Spirit's influence.

Has it been otherwise in the history of Christianity ? Our Lord Himself found His first disciples, not in a hungry and ragged community, but amid the prosperity and opulence of Galilee. They left all to follow Him and achieved their ministry in poverty and persecution, but they brought to that ministry the force of minds and bodies trained in a very fertile land and by a prosperous commerce.[1] Paul, in his apostolate, sustained himself by the labour of his hands, but he was the child of a rich civilisation and the citizen of a great empire. The Reformation was preceded by the Renaissance, and on the Continent of Europe drew its forces, not from the enslaved and impoverished populations of Italy and Southern Austria, but from the large civic and commercial centres of Germany. An acute historian, in his recent lectures on the *Economic Interpretation of History*,* observes that every religious revival in England has happened upon a basis of comparative prosperity. He has proved "the opulence of Norfolk during the epoch of Lollardy," and pointed out that "the Puritan movement was essentially and originally one of the middle classes, of the traders in towns and of the farmers in the country"; that the religious state of the Church of England was never so low. as among the servile. and beggarly clergy of the seventeenth and part of the eighteenth centuries ; that the Nonconformist bodies who kept religion alive during this period were closely identified with the

[1] Cf. *Hist. Geog.*, Chap. XXL, especially p. 463.

[1] By Thorold Rogers, pp. 80 ff.

leading movements of trade and finance ;1 and that even Wesley's great revival of religion among the labouring classes of England took place at a time when prices were far lower than in the previous century, wages had slightly risen and "most: labourers were small occupiers; there was therefore in the comparative plenty of the time an opening for a religious movement among the poor, and Wesley was equal to the occasion." He might have added that the great missionary movement of the nineteenth century is contemporaneous with the enormous advance of our commerce and our empire.

On the whole, then, the witness of history is uniform. Poverty and persecution, *famine, nakedness^ peril and sword,* put a keenness upon the spirit of religion, while luxury rots its very fibres; but a stable basis of prosperity is indispensable to every social and religious reform, and God's Spirit finds fullest course in communities of a certain degree of civilisation and of freedom from sordidness.

We may draw from this an impressive lesson for our own day. Joel predicts that, upon the new prosperity of his land, the lowest classes of society shall be permeated by the spirit of prophecy. Is it not part of the secret of the failure of Christianity to enlist large portions of our population, that the basis of their life is so sordid and insecure ? Have we not yet to learn from the Hebrew prophets, that some amount of freedom in a people and some amount of health are indispensable to a revival of religion ? Lives which are strained and starved, lives which are passed in rank discomfort and under grinding poverty, without the

1 *E^.* **the Quakers and the Independents. The Independents of the seventeenth century " were the founders of the Bank of England."**

possibility of the independence of the individual or of the sacredness of the home, cannot be religious except in the most rudimentary sense of the word. For the revival of energetic religion among such lives we must wait for a better distribution, not of wealth, but of the bare means of comfort, leisure and security. When, to our penitence and our striving, God restores the years which the locust has eaten, when the social plagues of rich men's selfishness and the poverty of the very poor are lifted from us, then may we look for the fulfilment of Joel's prediction—*even upon all the slaves and upon the handmaidens will I pour out My Spirit in those days.*

The economic problem, therefore, has also its place in the warfare for the kingdom of God.

And it shall be that after such things, I will pour out
My Spirit on all flesh;
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions:
And even upon all the slaves and the handmaidens
in those days will I pour out My Spirit.
And I will set signs in heaven and on earth,
Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.
The sun shall be turned to darkness,
And the moon to blood,
Before the coming of the Day oj Jehovah, the great
and the awful.
And it shall be that every one who calls on the name
of Jehovah shall be saved:
For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be a
remnant, as Jehovah hath spoken,
And among the fugitives those *whom Jehovah calleth.*

This prophecy divides into two parts—the outpouring of the Spirit, and the appearance of the terrible Day of the Lord.

The Spirit of God is to be poured *on all flesh*, says the prophet. By this term, which is sometimes applied to all things that breathe, and sometimes to mankind as a whole,[1] Joel means Israel only: the heathen are to be destroyed.[8] Nor did Peter, when he quoted the passage at the Day of Pentecost, mean anything more. He spoke to Jews and proselytes : *for the promise is to you and your children^ and to them that are afar off:* it was not till afterwards that he discovered that the Holy Ghost was granted to the Gentiles, and then he was unready for the revelation and surprised by it[8] But within Joel's Israel the operation of the Spirit was to be at once thorough and universal. All classes would be affected, and affected so that the simplest and rudest would become prophets.

The limitation was therefore not without its advantages. In the earlier stages of all religions, it is impossible to be both extensive and intensive. With a few exceptions, the Israel of Joel's time was a narrow and exclusive body, hating and hated by other peoples. Behind the Law it kept itself strictly aloof. But without doing so, Israel could hardly have survived or prepared itself at that time for its influence on the world. Heathenism threatened it from all sides with the most insidious of infections; and there awaited it in the near future a still more subtle and powerful means of disintegration. In the wake of Alexander's

[1] AU living things, Gen. vi. 17, 19, etc.; mankind, Isa. xl. 5, xlix. 26. See Driver's note.

2 Next chapter. * Acts x. 45.

expeditions, Hellenism poured across all the East. There was not a community nor a religion, save Israel's, which was not Hellenised. That Israel remained Israel, in spite of Greek arms and the Greek mind, was due to the legalism of Ezra and Nehemiah, and to what we call the narrow enthusiasm of Joel. The hearts which kept their passion so confined felt all the deeper for its limits. They would be satisfied with nothing less than the inspiration of every Israelite, the fulfilment of the prayer of Moses: *Would to God that all Jehovah's people were prophets I* And of itself this carries Joel's prediction to a wider fulfilment. A nation of prophets is meant for the world. But even the best of men do not see the full force of the truth God gives to them, nor follow it even to its immediate consequences. Few of the prophets did so, and at first none of the apostles. Joel does not hesitate to say that the heathen shall be destroyed. He does not think of Israel's mission as foretold by the Second Isaiah; nor of "Malachi's" vision of the heathen waiting upon Jehovah. But in the near future of Israel there was waiting another prophet to carry Joel's doctrine to its full effect upon the world, to rescue the gospel of God's grace from the narrowness of legalism and the awful pressure of Apocalypse, and by the parable of Jonah, the type of the prophet nation, to show to Israel that God had granted to. the Gentiles also repentance unto life.

That it was the lurid clouds of Apocalypse, which thus hemmed in our prophet's view, is clear from the next verses. They bring the terrible manifestations of God's wrath in nature very closely upon the lavish outpouring of the Spirit: *the sun turned to darkness and the moon to blood, the great and terrible Day*

of the Lord. Apocalypse must always paralyse the missionary energies of religion. Who can think of converting the world, when the world is about to be convulsed ? There is only time for a remnant to be saved.

But when we get rid of Apocalypse, as the Book of Jonah does, then we have time and space opened up again, and the essential forces of such a prophecy of the Spirit as Joel has given us burst their national and temporary confines, and are seen to be applicable to all mankind.

CHAPTER XXX

THE JUDGMENT OF THE HEATHEN

JOEL iii. (Eng.; iv. Heb.)

HITHERTO Joel has spoken no syllable of the heathen, except to pray that God by His plagues will not give Israel to be mocked by them. But in the last chapter of the Book we have Israel's captivity to the heathen taken for granted, a promise made that it will be removed and their land set free from the foreigner. Certain nations are singled out for judgment, which is described in the terms of Apocalypse; and the Book closes with the vision, already familiar in prophecy, of a supernatural fertility for the land.

It is quite another horizon and far different interests from those of the preceding chapter. Here for the first time we may suspect the unity of the Book, and listen to suggestions of another authorship than Joel's. But these can scarcely be regarded as conclusive. Every prophet, however national his interests, feels it his duty to express himself upon the subject of foreign peoples, and Joel may well have done so. Only, in that case, his last chapter was delivered by him at another time and in different circumstances from the rest of his prophecies. Chaps, i.—ii. (Eng.; i.—iii. Heb.) are complete in themselves. Chap. iii. (Eng.;

iv. Heb.) opens without any connection of time or subject with those that precede it.[1]

The time of the prophecy is a time when Israel's fortunes are at low ebb,[8] her sons scattered among the heathen, her land, in part at least, held by foreigners. But it would appear (though this is not expressly said, and must rather be inferred from the general proofs of a post-exilic date) that Jerusalem is inhabited. Nothing is said to imply that the city needs to be restored.[8]

All the heathen nations are to be brought together for judgment into a certain valley, which the prophet calls first the Vale of Jehoshaphat and then the Vale of Decision. The second name leads us to infer that the first, which means *Jehovah-judges*, is also symbolic. That is to say, the prophet does not single out a definite valley already called * Jehoshaphat In all probability, however, he has in his mind's eye some vale in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, for since Ezekiel[4] the judgment of the heathen in face of Jerusalem has been a standing feature in Israel's vision of the last things; and as no valley about that city lends itself to the picture of judgment so well as the valley of the Kedron with the slopes of Olivet, the name Jehoshaphat has naturally been applied to it? Cer-

[1] I am unable to feel Driver's and Nowack's arguments for a connection conclusive. The only reason Davidson gives is (p. 204) that the judgment of the heathen is an essential element in the Day of Jehovah, a reason which does not make Joel's authorship of the last chapter certain, but only possible.

3 The phrase of ver. 1, *when I turn again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,* may be rendered *when I restore the fortunes of Israel,*

* See above, p. 386, especially n. 5. [4] xxxviii.

* Some have unnecessarily thought of the Vale of Berakhah, in which Jehoshaphat defeated Moab, Ammon and Edom (2 Chron. xx.).

tain nations are singled out by name. These are not Assyria and Babylon„ which had long ago perished, nor the Samaritans, Moab and Ammon, which harassed the Jews in the early days of the Return from Babylon, but Tyre, Sidon, Philistia, Edom and Egypt. The crime of the first three is the robbery of Jewish treasures, not necessarily those of the Temple, and the selling into slavery of many Jews. The crime of Edom and Egypt is that they have shed the innocent blood of Jews. To what precise events these charges refer we have no means of knowing in our present ignorance of Syrian history after Nehemiah. That the chapter has no explicit reference to the cruelties of Artaxerxes Ochus in 360 would seem to imply for it a date earlier than that year. But it is possible that ver. 17 refers to that, the prophet refraining from accusing the Persians for the very good reason that Israel was still under their rule.

Another feature worthy of notice is that the Phoenicians are accused of selling Jews to the sons of the Jevanim, lonians or Greeks.[1] The latter lie on the far horizon of the prophet,* and we know from classical writers that from the fifth century onwards numbers of Syrian slaves were brought, to Greece. The other features of the chapter are borrowed from earlier prophets.

For, behold, in those days and in that time,
When I bring again the captivity[8] *of Judah and Jerusalem,*
I will also gather all the nations,
*And bring them down to the Vale of Jehoshaphat; **

[1] See above, p. 381, nn. 5, 6. • Or *turn again tht fortunes.*
* Ver. 6b. [4] *JthovahJudgfS,* See above, p. 433.

*And I will enter into judgment with them there^*
For My people and for My heritage Israel,
Whom they have scattered among the heathen.
And My land have they divided.
And they have cast lots for My people:[1]
They have given a bey for a harlot;*
And a girl have they sold for wine and drunk it.
And again, what are ye to Me, Tyre and Sidon and all circuits of Philistia ? '
Is it any deed of Mine ye are repaying?
Or are ye doing anything to Me ?[4]
Swiftly, speedily will I return your deed on your head.
Who have taken My silver and My gold,
And My goodly jewels ye have brought into your palaces.
The sons of Judah and the sons of Jerusalem have ye sold to the sons of the Greeks,
In order that ye might set them as far as possible *from their own border.*
Lo / I will stir them up from the place to which ye have sold them,
And I will return your deed upon your head.
I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hands of the sons of Judah,
*And they shall sell them to the Shebans^*
To a nation far off; for Jehovah hath spoken.

[1] **See above, Obadiah 11 and Nahum iii. io.**

[1] **no. Oort suggests nr2, *for food.***

* **Geliloth, the plural feminine of Galilee—the *circuit* (of the Gentiles). *Hist. Gsog^* p. 413.**

[4] **Seii, *that I must repay.***

* **LXX. *they shall give them into captivity.***

Proclaim this among the heathen, hallow a war,
Wake up the warriors, let all the fighting-men
muster and go up .*
Beat your ploughshares into swords,
And your pruning-hooks into lances.
Let the weakling say, I am strong.
. . . [2] *and come, all ye nations round about,*
And gather yourselves together.
Thither bring down Thy warriors, Jehovah.
Let the heathen be roused,
And come up to the Vale of Jehoshaphat,
For there will I sit to judge all the nations round
about.
Put in the sickle,[1] *for ripe is the harvest.*
Come, get you down; for the press is full,
The vats overflow, great is their wickedness.
Multitudes, multitudes in the Vale of Decision f
For near is Jehovah's day in the Vale of Decision.
Sun and moon have turned black,
And the stars withdrawn their shining.
Jehovah thunders from Zion,
*And from Jerusalem gives * forth His voice:*
Heaven and earth do quake.
But Jehovah is a refuge to His people,
And for a fortress to the sons of Israel.
And ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God,
Who dwell in Zion, the mount of My holiness;
And Jerusalem shall be holy,
Strangers shall not pass through her again.

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[1] **Technical use of *vby,* to go up to war.**

[1] **w, not found elsewhere, but supposed to mean *gather.* Ci. Zeph. it i. Others read wn, *hasten* (Driver); Wellhausen ry.**

21D, only here and in Jer. 1. 16: other Heb. word for sickle hermesh (Deut zvi. 9, xxiii. 26). [4] **Driver, future.**

And it shall be on that day
The mountains shall drop sweet wine,
And the hills be liquid with milk.
And all the channels of Judah flow with water;
A fountain shall spring from the house of Jehovah,
And shall water the Wady of Shittim.[1]
Egypt shall be desolation,
And Edom desert-land,
For the outrage done *to the children of Judah,*
Because they shed innocent blood in their land.
Judah shall abide peopled *for ever,*
And Jerusalem for generation upon generation.
And I will declare innocent their blood[1]*, which I have not declared innocent.*
By[1] *Jehovah who dwelleth in Zion.*

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[1] **Not the well-known scene of early Israel's camp across Jordan, but it must be some dry and desert valley near Jerusalem (so most comm.). Nowack thinks of the Wadi el Sant on the way to Askalon, but this did not need watering and is called the Vale of Elah.**

3 Men applies this to the Jews of the Messianic era. LXX, read ἐκζητήσω = נִקַּמְתִּי. So Syr. Cf 2 Kings ix. 7.

Steiner: *Shall I have their blood unpunished? I will not have it unpunished.* Nowack deems this to be unlikely, and suggests, *I will avenge their blood; I will not leave unpunished* the shedders of it

*** Heb. construction is found also in Hosea xii. 5.**

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CHAPTER XXXI

ISRAEL AND THE GREEKS

APART from the author of the tenth chapter of Genesis, who defines Javan or Greece as the father of Elishah and Tarshish, of Kittim or Cyprus and Rodanim or Rhodes,[1] the first Hebrew writer who mentions the Greeks is Ezekiel,[3] *c.* 580 B.C. He describes them as engaged in commerce with the Phoenicians, who bought slaves from them. Even while Ezekiel wrote in Babylonia, the Babylonians were in touch with the Ionian Greeks through the Lydians.[3] The latter were overthrown by Cyrus about 545, and by the beginning of the next century the Persian lords of Israel were in close struggle with the Greeks for the supremacy of the world, and had virtually been defeated so far as concerned Europe, the west of Asia Minor, and the sovereignty of the Mediterranean and Black Seas. In 460 Athens sent an expedition to Egypt to assist a revolt against Persia, and even before that Greek fleets had scoured the

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[1] **Gen. x. 2, 4. ny Javan, is IaFoor, or law, the older form of the name of the Ionians, the first of the Greek race with whom Eastern peoples came into contact. They are perhaps named on the Tell-el-Amarna tablets as "Yivana," serving [14] in the country of Tyre" (& 1400 B.C.) ; and on an inscription of Sargon *(c,* 709) Cyprus is called YAvanu. 3 xxvii. 13.**

[1] ***Isaiah xL—Ixvi,*** **(Expositor's Bible), 108 f**

Levant and Greek soldiers, though in the pay of Persia, had trodden the soil of Syria. Still Joel, writing towards 400 B.C., mentions Greece[1] only as a market to which the Phoenicians carried Jewish slaves; and in a prophecy which some take to be contemporary with Joel, Isaiah lxvi., the coasts of Greece are among the most distant of Gentile lands? In 401 the younger Cyrus brought to the Euphrates to fight against Artaxerxes Mnemon the ten thousand Greeks whom, after the battle of Cunaxa, Xenophon led north to the Black Sea. For nearly seventy years thereafter Athenian trade slowly spread eastward, but nothing was yet done by Greece to advertise her to the peoples of Asia as a claimant for the world's throne. Then suddenly in 334 Alexander of Macedon crossed the Hellespont, spent a year in the conquest of Asia Minor, defeated Darius at Issusin 332, took Damascus, Tyre and Gaza, overran the Delta and founded Alex-

[1] ii. 6 (Eng.; iv. 6 Heb.).

* The sense of distance between the two peoples was mutual Writing in the middle of the fifth century B.C., Herodotus has heard of the Jews only as a people that practise circumcision and were defeated by Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo (11. 104, 159; on the latter passage see *Hist. Geog.*, p. 405 n.). He does not even know them by name. The fragment of Chrilos of Samos, from the end of the fifth century, which Josephus cites *{Contra Apiontnt,* 1. 22) as a reference to the Jews, is probably of a people in Asia Minor. Even in the last half of the fourth century and before Alexander's campaigns, Aristotle knows of the Dead Sea only by a vague report *{Mstsor.*, II. iii. 39). His pupil Theophrastus *{d.* 287) names and describes the Jews (Porphyr. *ds Abstinsntia,* II. 26; Eusebius, *Prtpar. Evang.*, IX. 2: cf. Josephus, *C. Apian.)* I. 22); and another pupil, Clearchus of Soli, records the mention by Aristotle of a travelled Jew of Cle-Syria, but "Greek in soul as in tongue," whom the great philosopher had met, and learned from him that the Jews were descended from the philosophers of India (quoted by Josephus, *C. Apion.*, I. 22).

andria. In 331 he marched back over Syria, crossed the Euphrates, overthrew the Persian Empire on the field of Arbela, and for the next seven years till his death in 324 extended his conquests to the Oxus and the Indus. The story, that on his second passage of Syria Alexander visited Jerusalem,[1] is probably false. But he must have encamped repeatedly within forty miles of it, and he visited Samaria.[9] It is impossible that he received no embassy from a people who had not known political independence for centuries and must have been only too ready to come to terms with the new lord of the world. Alexander left behind him colonies of his veterans, both to the east and west of the Jordan, and in his wake there poured into all the cities of the Syrian seaboard a considerable volume of Greek immigration.[9] It is from this time onward that we find in Greek writers the earliest mention of the Jews by name. Theophrastus and Clearchus of Soli, disciples of Aristotle, both speak of them ; but while the former gives evidence of some knowledge of their habits, the latter reports that in the perspective of his great master they had been so distant and vague as to be confounded with the Brahmins of India, a confusion which long survived among the Greeks.[4]

Alexander's death delivered his empire to the ambitions of his generals, of whom four contested for the mastery of Asia and Egypt—Antigonus, Ptolemy, Lysimachus and Seleucus. Of these Ptolemy and Seleucus emerged victorious, the one in possession of Egypt, the other of Northern Syria and the rest of

[1] Jos., XI. *Antt.* iv. 5.
[2] *Hist. Gsog.*, p. 347.
[3] *Hist. Geog.*, pp. 593 f
[4] See above, p. 440, n. 2.

Asia. Palestine lay between them, and both in the wars which led to the establishment of the two kingdoms and in those which for centuries followed, Palestine became the battle-field of the Greeks.

Ptolemy gained Egypt within two years of Alexander's death, and from its definite and strongly entrenched territory he had by 320 conquered Syria and Cyprus. In 315 or 314 Syria was taken from him by Antigonus,, who also expelled Seleucus from Babylon. Seleucus fled to Egypt and stirred up Ptolemy to the reconquest of Syria. In 312 Ptolemy defeated Demetrius, the general of Antigonus, at Gaza, but the next year was driven back into Egypt by Antigonus himself. Meanwhile Seleucus regained Babylon.[1] In 311 the three made peace with each other, but Antigonus retained Syria. In 306 they assumed the title of kings, and in the same year renewed their quarrel. After a naval battle Antigonus wrested Cyprus from Ptolemy, but in 301 he was defeated and slain by Seleucus and Lysimachus at the battle of Ipsus in Phrygia. His son Demetrius retained Cyprus and part of the Phoenician coast till 287, when he was forced to yield them to Seleucus, who had moved the centre of his power from Babylon to the new Antioch on the Orontes, with a seaport at Seleucia. Meanwhile in 301 Ptolemy had regained what the Greeks then knew as Coele-Syria, that is all Syria to the south of Lebanon except the Phoenician coast? Damascus belonged to Seleucus. But Ptolemy was not allowed to retain Palestine in peace, for in 297 Demetrius appears to have invaded it, and Seleucus, especially

[1] Hence the Seleucid era dates from 312.

[2] *Hist. Geo.*, 538.

after his marriage with Stratonike, the daughter of Demetrius, never wholly resigned his claims to it.[1] Ptolemy, however, established a hold upon the land, which continued practically unbroken for a century, and yet during all that time had to be maintained by frequent wars, in the course of which the land itself must have severely suffered (264—248).

Therefore, as in the days of their earliest prophets, the people of Israel once more lay between two rival empires. And as Hosea and Isaiah pictured them in the eighth century, the possible prey either of Egypt or Assyria, so now in these last years of the fourth they were tossed between Ptolemy and Antigonus, and in the opening years of the third were equally wooed by Ptolemy and Seleucus. Upon this new alternative of tyranny the Jews appear to have bestowed the actual names of their old oppressors. Ptolemy was Egypt to them; Seleucus, with one of his capitals at Babylon, was still Assyria, from which came in time the abbreviated Greek form of Syria? But, unlike the ancient empires, these new rival lords were of one race. Whether the tyranny came from Asia or Africa, its quality was Greek; and in the sons of Javan the Jews saw the successors of those world-powers of Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia, in

[1] Cf. Ewald, *Hist.* (Eng. Ed.), V. 226

3 Asshur or Assyria fell in 607 (as we have seen), but her name was transferred to her successor Babylon (2 Kings xxiii. 29; Jer. ii. 18; Lam. v. 6), and even to Babylon's successor Persia (Ezra vi. 22). When Seleucus secured what was virtually the old Assyrian Empire with large extensions to Phrygia on the west and the Punjaub on the east, the name would naturally be continued to his dominion, especially as his first capital was Babylon, from his capture of which in 312 the Seleucid era took its start. There is actual record of this. Brugsch *(Gesch. Asg.* p. 218) states that in the

which had been concentrated against themselves the whole force of the heathen world. Our records of the times are fragmentary, but though Alexander spared the Jews it appears that they had not long to wait before feeling the force of Greek arms. Josephus quotes[1] from Agatharchides of Cnidos (180—145 B.C.) to the effect that Ptolemy I. surprised Jerusalem on a Sabbath day and easily took it; and he adds that at the same time he took a great many captives from the hill-country of Judaea, from Jerusalem and from Samaria, and led them into Egypt. Whether this was in 320 or 312 or 301[*] we cannot tell. It is possible that the Jews suffered in each of these Egyptian invasions of Syria, as well as during the southward marches of Demetrius and Antigonus. The later policy, both of the Ptolemies, who were their lords, and of the Seleucids, was for a long time exceedingly friendly to Israel. Their sufferings from the Greeks were therefore probably over by 280, although they cannot have remained unscathed by the wars between 264 and 248.

The Greek invasion, however, was not like the Assyrian and Babylonian, of arms alone; but of a force of intellect and culture far surpassing even the influences which the Persians had impressed upon the

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hieroglyphic inscriptions of the Ptoleman period the kingdom of the Seleucids is called Asharu (cf. Stade, *Z.A.T.W.*, 1882, p. 292, and Cheyne, *Book of Psalms*, p. 253, and *Introd, to Book of Isaiah* p. 107, n. 3). As the Seleucid kingdom shrank to this side of the Euphrates, it drew the name Assyria with it But in Greek mouths this had long ago (cf. Herod.) been shortened to Syria : Herodotus also appears to have applied it only to the west of the Euphrates. Cf. *Hist, Gtog.*, pp. 3 f.

[1] XII. *Antt,* i.: cf. *Con. Afton.*, I. 22.

[*] See above, p. 442. Eusebius, *Chron. Arm.*, II. 225, assigns it to 320.

religion and mental attitude of Israel. The ancient empires had transplanted the nations of Palestine to Assyria and Babylonia. The Greeks did not need to remove them to Greece; for they brought Greece to Palestine. "'The Orient," says Wellhausen, "' became their America." They poured into Syria, infecting, exploiting, assimilating its peoples. With dismay the Jews must have seen themselves surrounded by new Greek colonies, and still more by the old Palestinian cities Hellenised in polity and religion. The Greek translator of Isaiah ix. 12 renders Philistines by Hellenes. Israel were compassed and penetrated by influences as subtle as the atmosphere: not as of old uprooted from their fatherland, but with their fatherland itself infected and altered beyond all powers of resistance. The full alarm of this, however, was not felt for many years to come. It was at first the policy both of the Seleucids and the Ptolemies to flatter and foster the Jews. They encouraged them to feel that their religion had its own place beside the forces of Greece, and was worth interpreting to the world. Seleucus 1. gave to Jews the rights of citizenship in Asia Minor and Northern Syria; and Ptolemy I. atoned for his previous violence by granting them the same in Alexandria. In the matter of the consequent tribute Seleucus respected their religious scruples; and it was under Ptolemy Philadelphus (283—247), if not at his instigation, that the Law was first translated into Greek.

To prophecy, before it finally expired, there was granted the opportunity to assert itself, upon at least the threshold of this new era of Israel's history.

We have from the first half-century of the era perhaps three or four, but certainly two, prophetic

pieces. By many critics Isaiah xxiv.—xxvii. are assigned to the years immediately following Alexander's campaigns. Others assign Isaiah xix. 16-25 to the last years of Ptolemy I.[1] And of our Book of the Twelve Prophets, the chapters attached to the genuine prophecies of Zechariah, or chaps, ix.—xiv. of his book, most probably fall to be dated from the contests of Syria and Egypt for the possession of Palestine; while somewhere about 300 is the most likely date for the Book of Jonah.

In " Zech." ix.—xiv. we see prophecy perhaps at its lowest ebb. The clash with the new foes produces a really terrible thirst for the blood of the heathen: there are schisms and intrigues within Israel which in our ignorance of her history during this time it is not possible for us to follow: the brighter gleams, which contrast so forcibly with the rest, may be more ancient oracles that the writer has incorporated with his own stern and dark Apocalypse.

In the Book of Jonah, on the other hand, we find a spirit and a style in which prophecy may not unjustly be said to have given its highest utterance. And this alone suffices, in our uncertainty as to the exact date of the book, to take it last of all our Twelve. For "in this book," as Cornill has finely said, " the prophecy of Israel quits the scene of battle as victor, and as victor in its severest struggle—that against self."

[1] **Cheyne,** ***Introd. to Book of Isaiah,*** **p. 105.**

ZECHARIAH

(x.-XIV.)

LOf iky King cometh to thee, vindicated and victorious, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the fool of an ass.

Up, Sword, against My Shepherd ! . . . Smite the Shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered!

And I will pour upon the house of David and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look to Him whom they have pierced; and they shall lament for Him, as with lamentation for an only son, and bitterly grieve fbr Him, as with grief for a first-born.

CHAPTER XXXII

CHAPTERS IX.—XIV. OF M ZECHARIAH

WE saw that the first eight chapters of the Book of Zechariah were, with the exception of a few verses, from the prophet himself. No one has ever doubted this. No one could doubt it: they are obviously from the years of the building of the Temple, 520—516 B.C. They hang together with a consistency exhibited by few other groups of chapters in the Old Testament.

But when we pass into chap. ix. we find ourselves in circumstances and an atmosphere altogether different Israel is upon a new situation of history, and the words addressed to her breathe another spirit. There is not the faintest allusion to the building of the Temple—the subject from which all the first eight chapters depend. There is not a single certain reflection of the Persian period, under the shadow of which the first eight chapters were all evidently written. We have names of heathen powers mentioned, which not only do not occur in the first eight chapters, but of which it is not possible to think that they had any interest whatever for Israel between 520 and 516: Damascus, Hadrach,, Hamath, Assyria, Egypt and Greece. The peace, and the love of peace, in which Zechariah wrote, has disappeared.[1] Nearly everything

[1] **Except in the passage ix. 1012, which seems strangely out of place in the rest of ix.—xiv.**

breathes of war actual or imminent The heathen are spoken of with a ferocity which finds few parallels in the Old Testament There is a revelling in their blood, of which the student of the authentic prophecies of Zechariah will at once perceive that gentle lover of peace could not have been capable. And one passage figures the imminence of a thorough judgment 'upon Jerusalem, very different from Zechariah's outlook upon his people's future from the eve of the completion of the Temple. It is not surprising, therefore, that one of the earliest efforts of Old Testament criticism should have been to prove another author than Zechariah for chaps, ix.—xiv. of the book called by his name.

The very first attempt of this kind was made so far back as 1632 by the Cambridge theologian Joseph Mede,[1] who was moved thereto by the desire to vindicate the correctness of St. Matthew's ascription[2] of "' Zech." xi. 13 to the prophet Jeremiah. Mede's effort was developed by other English exegetes. Hammond assigned chaps, x.—xii, Bishop Kidder' and William Whiston, the translator of Josephus, chaps, ix.—xiv., to Jeremiah. Archbishop Newcome[4] divided them, and sought to prove that while chaps, ix.—xi. must have been written before 721, or a century earlier than Jeremiah, because of the heathen powers they name, and the divisions between Judah and Israel, chaps, xii—xiv. reflect the imminence of the Fall of Jerusalem. In 1784 Flgge5 'offered independent proof

[1] *Works,* 4th ed. 1677, pp. 786 f. (1632), 834. Mede died 1638.

[8] Matt, xxvii. 9.

[1] *DtmonstraHon of the Mtssias,* 1700.

[4] *An Attempt towards an Improved Version of the Twelve Minor Prophets,* 1785 (not seen). See also Wright on Archbishop Seeker.

8 *Die Weissagungen, welche bei den Schriften des Proph, Sacharja beygebogen sind, ubersetst,* etc., Hamburg (not seen).

that chaps. ix.—xiv. were by Jeremiah; and in 1814 Bertholdt[1] suggested that chaps. ix.—xi. might be by Zechariah the contemporary of Isaiah, and on that account attached to the prophecies of his younger namesake. These opinions gave the trend to the main volume of criticism, which, till fifteen years ago, deemed "Zech." ix.—xiv. to be pre-exilic. So Hitzig, who at first took the whole to be from one hand, but afterwards placed xii.—xiv. by a different author under Manasseh. So Ewald, Bleek, Kuenen (at first), Samuel Davidson, Schrader, Duhm (in 1875), and more recently Kdnig and Orelli, who assign chaps, ix.—xi. to the reign of Ahaz, but xii.—xiv. to the eve of the Fall of Jerusalem, or even a little later.

Some critics, however, remained unmoved by the evidence offered for a pre-exilic date. They pointed out in particular that the geographical references were equally suitable to the centuries after the Exile. Damascus, Hadrach and Hamath, though politically obsolete by 720, entered history again with the campaigns of Alexander the Great in 332—331, and the establishment of the Seleucid kingdom in Northern Syria.[4] Egypt and Assyria[5] were names used after the Exile for the kingdom of the Ptolemies, and for those powers which still threatened Israel from the north, or Assyrian quarter. Judah and Joseph or Ephraim[5] were names still used after the Exile to express the whole of God's Israel; and in chaps, ix.—xiv. they are presented, not divided as before 721, but united. None of the chapters give a hint of any king in Jerusalem ; and all of them, while representing

[1] *Ein Uitung in A. u. N. T.* (not seen). [4] See above. Chap. XXXI.
[1] Isa. viii. 2. See above, p. 265. [*] x. 10.
[,] ix. 1. [•] ix. 10, 13, etc.

the great Exile of Judah as already begun, show a certain dependence in style and even in language upon Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Isaiah xl.—lxvi. Moreover the language is post-exilic, sprinkled with Aramaisms and with other words and phrases used only, or mainly, by Hebrew writers from Jeremiah onwards.

But though many critics judged these grounds to be sufficient to prove the post-exilic origin of "Zech." ix.—xiv., they differed as to the author and exact date of these chapters. Conservatives like Hengstenberg,[1] Delitzsch, Keil, Kohler and Pusey used the evidence to prove the authorship of Zechariah himself after 516, and interpreted the references to the Greek period as pure prediction. Pusey says[8] that chaps, ix.—xi. extend from the completion of the Temple and its deliverance during the invasion of Alexander, and from the victories of the Maccabees, to the rejection of the true shepherd and the curse upon the false; and chaps, xi.—xii. " from a future repentance for the death of Christ to the final conversion of the Jews and Gentiles."[8]

But on the same grounds Eichhorn saw in the chapters not a prediction but a reflection of the Greek period. He assigned chaps, ix. and x. to an author in the time of Alexander the Great; xi.—xiii. 6 he placed a little later, and brought down xiii. 7—xiv. to the Maccabean period. Bdttcher[6] placed the whole in the wars of Ptolemy and Seleucus after Alexander's death; and Vatke, who had at first selected a date in the reign of Artaxerxes Longhand, 464—425, finally decided for the Maccabean period, 170 ff.®

[1] *Dan. u. Sacharja.* [4] *Einl.* in the beginning of the century.
* Page 503. [4] *Nnu Exeg. krit. AehrtnUst a. A. T.,* 1864.
[4] See Addenda, p. 462. [4] *Einl.,* 1882, p. 709.

In recent times the most thorough examination of the chapters has been that by Stade,[1] and the conclusion he comes to is that chaps, ix.—xiv. are all from one author, who must have written during the early wars between the Ptolemies and Seleucids about 280 B.C., but employed, especially in chaps, ix., x., an earlier prophecy. A criticism and modification of Stade's theory is given by Kuenen. He allows that the present form of chaps, ix.—xiv. must be of post-exilic origin: this is obvious from the mention of the Greeks as a world-power; the description of a siege of Jerusalem by *all* the heathen; the way in which (chaps, ix. Ilf,, but especially x. 6-9) the captivity is presupposed, if not of all Israel, yet of Ephraim; the fact that the House of David are not represented as governing; and the thoroughly priestly character of all the chapters. But Kuenen holds that an ancient prophecy of the eighth century underlies chaps, ix.—xi., xiii. 7-9, in which several actual phrases of it survive ;[1] and that in their present form xii.—xiv. are older than ix.—xi., and probably by a contemporary of Joel, about 400 B.C.

In the main Cheyne/ Cornill,[1] Wildeboer[6] and Staerk • adhere to Stade's conclusions. Cheyne proves the unity of the six chapters and their date *before* the Maccabean period. Staerk brings down xi. 4-17 and

[1] **Z.A.T.W., 1881, 1882. See further proof of the late character of language and style, and of the unity, by Eckardt, Z^.T.W., 1893,, pp. 76 ff.**

*** $ 81, n. 3, 10. See p. 457, end of note 2.**

*** *Jewish Quart. Review*, 1889.**

*** *Einl****.

*** *A. T. Utt.***

*** *Untersuchung fiber die Kompositeon u. Abfassungseeit von Zach.* 9-14,, etc. Halle, 1891 (not seen).**

xii 7-9 to 171 B.C. Wellhausen ...roues for the unity, ...times. Driver judges and assigns it to the Macca... ation zii 7-9, as not ix.—xi., with its natural conpnyai_xiv., as certainly earlier than 333 ; and the... res 300. Rubinkam[1] post-exilic, and probacly frOp 1e the rest in that of places ix. I-10 in Alexanders, 21 of it to the latter, the Maccabees, but ZeydneN.A--evilic character of Kirkpatrick,[8] after showing he... it to a different all the chapters, favours assigning ito the question of author from xii.—xiv. Asserting that, ...finite answer, the exact date it is impossible to give a d... Considerable he thinks that the whole may be with ...ty years probability assigned to the first sixty or seveix ...place of the Exile, and is therefore in its proper ...lk to between Zechariah and " Malachi." The reference the sons of Javan he takes to be a gloss, probably added in Maccabean times.[4]

It will be seen from this catalogue of conclusions that the prevailing trend of recent criticism has been to assign "i Zech. " ix.—xiv. to post-exilic times, and to a different author from chaps, i.—viii.; and that while a few critics maintain a date soon after the Return, the bulk are divided between the years following Alexander's campaigns and the time of the Maccabean struggles.[6]

There are, in fact, in recent years only two attempts to support the conservative position of Pusey and Hengstenberg that the whole book is a genuine work of Zechariah the son of Iddo. One of these is by C. H. H. Wright in his Bampton Lectures. The

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[1] 1892: quoted by Wildeboer. * 1893 : quoted by Wildeboer.

• *Doctrine of the Prophets,* 438 ff., in which the English reader will find a singularly lucid and fair treatment of the question. See, too, Wright.

[1] Page 472, Note A. [5] Kautzsch—the Greek period.

other is by George L. Robinson, now Professor at Toronto, in a reprint (1896) from the *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*^ which offers a valuable history of the discussion of the whole question from the days of Mede, with a careful argument of all the evidence on both sides. The very original conclusion is reached that the chapters reflect the history of the years 518—516 B.C.

In discussing the question, for which our treatment of other prophets has left us too little space, we need not open that part of it which lies between a pre-exilic and a post-exilic date. Recent criticism of all schools and at both extremes has tended to establish the latter upon reasons which we have already stated,[1] and for further details of which the student may be referred to Stade's and Eckardt's investigations in the *Zeitschriftfilr A. T. Wissenschaft* and to Kirkpatrick's impartial summary. There remain the questions of the unity of chaps, ix.—xiv.; their exact date or dates after the Exile, and as a consequence of this their relation to the authentic prophecies of Zechariah in chaps, i.—viii.

On the question of unity we take first chaps, ix.—xi.„ to which must be added (as by most critics since Ewald) xiii. 7-9, which has got out of its place as the natural continuation and conclusion of chap. xi.

Chap. ix. 1-8 predicts the overthrow of heathen neighbours of Israel, their possession by Jehovah and His safeguard of Jerusalem. Vv. 9-12 follow with a prediction of the Messianic King as the Prince of Peace; but then come vv. 13-17, with no mention of the King, but Jehovah appears alone as the hero of

[1] Above, pp. 451 f.

His people against the Greeks, and there is indeed sufficiency of war and blood. Chap. x. makes a new start: the people are warned to seek their blessings from Jehovah, and not from Teraphim and diviners, whom their false shepherds follow. Jehovah, visiting His flock, shall punish these, give proper rulers, make the people strong and gather in their exiles to fill Gilead and Lebanon. Chap. xi. opens with a burst of war on Lebanon and Bashan and the overthrow* of the heathen (w. 1-3), and follows with an allegory, in which the prophet first takes charge from Jehovah of the people as their shepherd, but is contemptuously treated by them (4-14), and then taking the guise of an evil shepherd represents what they must suffer from their next ruler (15-17). This tyrant, however, shall receive punishment, two-thirds of the nation shall be scattered, but the rest, further purified, shall be God's own people (xiii. 7-9).

In the course of this prophesying there is no conclusive proof of a double authorship. The only passage which offers strong evidence for this is chap. ix. The verses predicting the peaceful coming of Messiah (9-12) do not accord in spirit with those which follow predicting the appearance of Jehovah with war and great shedding of blood. Nor is the difference altogether explained, as Stade thinks, by the similar order of events in chap, x., where Judah and Joseph are first represented as saved and brought back in ver. 6, and then we have the process of their redemption and return described in vv. 7ff. Why did the same writer give statements of such very different temper as chap. ix. 9-12 and 13-17? Or, if these be from different hands, why were they ever put together ? Otherwise there is no reason for breaking

up chaps. ix.—xi., xiii. 7-9. Rubinkam, who separates ix. 1-10 by a hundred and fifty years from the rest; Bleek, who divides ix. from x.; and Staerk, who separates ix.—xi. 3 from the rest, have been answered by Robinson and others.[1] On the ground of language, grammar and syntax, Eckardt has fully proved that ix.—xi. are from the same author of a late date, who, however, may have occasionally followed earlier models and even introduced their very phrases.[1]

More supporters have been found for a division of authorship between chaps, ix.—xi., xiii. 7-9, and chaps, xii.—xiv. (less xiii. 7-9). Chap. xii. opens with a title of its own. A strange element is introduced into the historical relation. Jerusalem is assaulted not by the heathen only, but by Judah, who, however, turns on finding that Jehovah fights for Jerusalem, and is saved by Jehovah before Jerusalem in order that the latter may not boast over it (xii. 1-9). A spirit of grace and supplication is poured upon the guilty city, a fountain opened for uncleanness, idols abolished, and the prophets, who are put on a level with them, abolished too, where they do not disown their profession (xii. 10—xiii. 6). Another assault of the heathen on Jerusalem is described, half of the people being taken captive. Jehovah appears, and by a great earthquake saves the rest. The land is transformed. And then the prophet goes back to the defeat of the heathen assault on the city, in which Judah is again described as taking part; and the surviving heathen are converted, or, if they refuse to be, punished by the withholding of rain.

[1] **Robinson, pp. 76 ff.**

[8] ***Z.A.T.W.J*, 1893, 76 ff. See also the summaries of linguistic evidence given by Robinson. Kuenen finds in ix.—xi. the following pre-exilic elements : ix. 1-5, 8*10, 13a (?) ; x. 1 f., 10 f.; xL 4-14 or 17.**

Jerusalem is holy to the Lord (xiv.). In all this there is more that differs from chaps, ix.—xi., xiii. 7-9, than the strange opposition of Judah and Jerusalem. Ephraim, or Joseph, is not mentioned, nor any return of exiles, nor punishment of the shepherds, nor coming of the Messiah,[1] the latter's place being taken by Jehovah. But in answer to this we may remember that the Messiah, after being described in ix. 9-12, is immediately lost behind the warlike coming of Jehovah. Both sections speak of idolatry, and of the heathen, their punishment and conversion, and do so in the same apocalyptic style. Nor does the language of the two differ in any decisive fashion. On the contrary, as Eckardt[1] and Kuiper have shown, the language is on the whole an argument for unity of authorship.[8] There is, then, nothing conclusive against the position, which Stade so clearly laid down and strongly fortified, that chaps, ix.—xiv. are from the same hand, although, as he admits, this cannot be proved with absolute certainty. So also Cheyne : " With perhaps one or two exceptions, chaps, ix.—xi. and xii.—xiv. are so closely welded together that even analysis is impossible." [4]

The next questions we have to decide are whether chaps, ix.—xiv. offer any evidence of being by Zechariah, the author of chaps, i.—viii., and if not to what other post-exilic date they may be assigned.

It must be admitted that in language and in style the two parts of the Book of Zechariah have features in common. But that these have been exaggerated by defenders of the unity there can be no doubt. We

[1] Kuenen,

[3] See above, p. 453,11. 1.

[4] See also Robinson.

* *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1889, p. 81.

cannot infer anything from the fact[1] that both parts contain specimens of clumsy diction, of the repetition of the same word, of phrases (not the same phrases) unused by other writers;[1] or that each is lavish in vocatives; or that each is variable in his spelling. Resemblances of that kind they share with other books: some of them are due to the fact that both sections are post-exilic. On the other hand, as Eckardt has clearly shown, there exists a still greater number of differences between the two sections, both in language and in style.[8] Not only do characteristic words occur in each which are not found in the other, not only do chaps. ix.—xiv. contain many more Aramaisms than chaps, i.—viii., and therefore symptoms of a later date; but both parts use the same words with more or less different meanings, and apply different terms to the same objects. There are also differences of grammar, of favourite formulas, and of other features of the phraseology, which, if there be any need, complete the proof of a distinction of dialect so great as to require to account for it distinction of authorship.

The same impression is sustained by the contrast of the historical circumstances reflected in each of the two sections. Zech. i.—viii. were written during the building of the Temple. There is no echo of the latter in "Zech."' ix.—xiv. Zech. i.—viii. picture the whole earth as at peace, which was true at least of all Syria : they portend no danger to Jerusalem from the heathen, but describe her peace and fruitful expansion in terms most suitable to the circumstances imposed upon her

[1] As Robinson, *s.g.*, does.

* E.g. *holy land,* ii. 16, and *Mount of Olives,* xiv. 4.

• *Op, cit,,* 103-109 : cf. Driver, *Introd.*,* 354.

by the solid and clement policy of the earlier Persian kings. This is all changed in " Zech." ix.—xiv. The nations are restless; a siege of Jerusalem is imminent, and her salvation is to be assured only by much war and a terrible shedding of blood. We know exactly how Israel fared and felt in the early sections of the Persian period: her interests in the politics of the world, her feelings towards her governors and her whole attitude to the heathen were not at that time those which are reflected in "Zech." ix.—xiv.

Nor is there any such resemblance between the religious principles of the two sections of the Book of Zechariah as could prove identity of origin. That both are spiritual, or that they have a similar expectation of the ultimate position of Israel in the history of the world, proves only that both were late offshoots from the same religious development, and worked upon the same ancient models. Within these outlines, there are not a few divergences. Zech. i.—viii. were written before Ezra and Nehemiah had imposed the Levitical legislation upon Israel; but Eckardt has shown the dependence on the latter of " Zech." ix.—xiv.

We may, therefore, adhere to Canon Driver's assertion, that Zechariah in chaps, t—viii., "uses a different phraseology, evinces different interests and moves in a different circle of ideas from those which prevail in chaps, ix.—xiv."[1] Criticism has indeed been justified in separating, by the vast and growing majority of its opinions, the two sections from each other. This was one of the earliest results which modern criticism achieved, and the latest researches have but established it on a firmer basis.

[1] *Introd.* p. 354.

If, then, chaps, ix.—xiv. be not Zechariah's, to what date may we assign them ? We have already seen that they bear evidence of being upon the whole later than Zechariah, though they appear to contain fragments from an earlier period. Perhaps this is all we can with certainty affirm. Yet something more definite is at least probable. The mention of the Greeks„ not as Joel mentions them about 400, the most distant nation to which Jewish slaves could be carried, but as the chief of the heathen powers, and a foe with whom the Jews are in touch and must soon cross swords,[1] appears to imply that the Syrian campaign of Alexander is happening or has happened, or even that the Greek kingdoms of Syria and Egypt are already contending for the possession of Palestine. With this agrees the mention of Damascus, Hadrach and Hamath, the localities where the Seleucids had their chief seats.[8] In that case Asshur would signify the Seleucids and Egypt the Ptolemies :[8] it is these, and not Greece itself, from whom the Jewish exiles have still to be redeemed. All this makes probable the date which Stade has proposed for the chapters, between 300 and 280 B.C. To bring them further down, to the time of the Maccabees, as some have tried to do, would not be impossible so far as the historical allusions are concerned; but had they been of so late a date as that, viz. 170 or 160, we may assert that they could not have found a place in the prophetic canon, which was closed by 200, but must have fallen along with Daniel into the Hagiographa.

The appearance of these prophecies at the close of the Book of Zechariah has been explained, not quite satisfactorily, as follows. With the Book of "' Malachi'"

[1] ix. 13. * ix. 11 • x. 11. See above, p. 451*

they formed originally three anonymous pieces,[1] which because of their anonymity were set at the end of the Book of the Twelve. The first of them begins with the very peculiar construction "Massa' Debar Jehovah," *oracle of the word of Jehovah*^ which, though partly belonging to the text, the editor read as a title, and attached as a title to each of the others. It occurs nowhere else. The Book of "Malachi" was too distinct in character to be attached to another book, and soon came to have the supposed name of its author added to its title.[1] But the other two pieces fell, like all anonymous works, to the nearest writing with an author's name. Perhaps the attachment was hastened by the desire to make the round number of Twelve Prophets.

[1] **See above, pp. 331 ff., for proof of the original anonymity of the Book of "Malachi."**

• **Above, p. 331.**

ADDENDA.

Whiston's work (p. 450) is ***An Essay towards restoring ths Trw Text of the O. T, and for vindicating the Citations made thence in the N. T.,*** **1722, pp. 93 ff. (not seen). Besides those mentioned on p. 452 (see n. 3) as supporting the unity of Zechariah there ought to be named De Wette, Umbreit, von Hoffmann, Ebrard, etc. Kuiper's work (p. 458) is** ***Zacharia*** **9-14, Utrecht, 1894 (not seen). Nowack's conclusions are : ix.—xh 3 date from the Greek period (we cannot date them more exactly, unless ix. 8 refers to Ptolemy's capture of Jerusalem in 320); xi., xiii. 7-9, are post-exilic; xii.—xiii, 6 long after Exile; xiv. long after Exile, later than "Malachi."**

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE CONTENTS OF "ZECHARIAH" IX.—XIV

FROM the number of conflicting opinions which prevail upon the subject, we have seen how impossible it is to decide upon a scheme of division for "Zech." ix.—xiv. These chapters consist of a number of separate oracles, which their language and general conceptions lead us on the whole to believe were put together by one hand, and which, with the possible exception of some older fragments, reflect the troubled times in Palestine that followed on the invasion of Alexander the Great. But though the most of them are probably due to one date and possibly come from the same author, these oracles do not always exhibit a connection, and indeed sometimes show no relevance to each other. It will therefore be simplest to take them piece by piece, and, before giving the translation of each, to explain the difficulties in it and indicate the ruling ideas.

1. THE COMING OF THE GREEKS (ix. 1-8).

This passage runs exactly in the style of the early prophets. It figures the progress of war from the north of Syria southwards by the valley of the Orontes to Damascus, and then along the coasts of Phoenicia and the Philistines. All these shall be devastated, but Jehovah will camp about His own House and

it shall be inviolate. This is exactly how Amos or Isaiah might have pictured an Assyrian campaign, or Zephaniah a Scythian. It is not surprising, therefore, that even some of those who take the bulk of "Zech." ix.—xiv. as post-exilic should regard ix. 1-5 as earlier even than Amos, with post-exilic additions only in w. 6-8.[1] This is possible. Vv. 6-8 are certainly post-exilic, because of their mention of the half-breeds, and their intimation that Jehovah will take unclean food out of the mouth of the heathen; but the allusions in w. 1-5 suit an early date. They equally suit, however, a date in the Greek period. The progress of war from the Orontes valley by Damascus and thence down the coast of Palestine follows the line of Alexander's campaign in 332, which must also have been the line of Demetrius in 315 and of Antigonus in 311. The evidence of language is mostly in favour of a late date? If Ptolemy I. took Jerusalem in 320,[8] then the promise, no assailant shall return (ver. 8), is probably later than that.

In face then of Alexander's invasion of Palestine, or of another campaign on the same line, this oracle repeats the ancient confidence of Isaiah. God rules: His providence is awake alike for the heathen and for Israel. *Jehovah hath an eye for mankind^ and all the tribes of Israeli* The heathen shall be destroyed, but Jerusalem rest secure; and the remnant of the heathen be converted, according to the Levitical notion, by having unclean foods taken out of their mouths.

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[1] So Staerk, who thinks Amos L made use of w. 1-5.

* ix. 1, DTK, *mankind,* in contrast to the tribes of Israel; 3, nn„ *eold;* 5, 22' as passive, cf xii. 6; 221, , Hi. of 293,, in passive sense only after Jeremiah (cf. above, p. 412, on Joel); in 2 Sam. xix. 6 Hosea ii 7, it is active. [5] See p. 442. [4] ix. 1.

Oracle.

The Word of Jehovah is on the land of Hadrach, and Damascus is its goal[1]*—for Jehovah hath an eye* upon *the heathen J and all the tribes of Israel—and on*[8] *Hamath,* which *borders upon it, Tyre and Sidon, for they were very wise.** *And Tyre built her a fortress, and heaped up silver like dust, and gold like the dirt of the streets, Lo, the Lord will dispossess her, and strike her rampart*[&] *into the sea, and she shall be consumed in fire. Ashḳlon shall see and shall fear, and Gaza writhe in anguish, and Ekron, for her confidence • is abashed, and the king shall perish from Gaza and Ashḳlon lie uninhabited Half breeds*[7] *shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut down the pride of the Philistines. And I will take their blood from their mouth and their abominations from between their teeth? and even they shall be left for our God, and shall become like a clan in Judah, and Ekron shall be as the Jebusite. And I shall encamp for a guard*[9] *to My House, so that none pass by or return, and no*

[1] **Heb.** *resting-place*: **cf. Zech. vi. 8,** *bring Mine anger to rest.* **This meets the objection of Bredenkamp and others, that nmb is otherwise used of Jehovah alone, in consequence of which they refer the suffix to Him.**

* **The expression** *hath an eye* **is so unusual that Klostermann,** *Theo. Litt. Zeit.,* **1879, 566 (quoted by Nowack), proposes to read for 1'9 'y,** *Jehovah'3 are the cities of the heathen.* **For DT,** *mankind,* **as** *- heathen* **cf. Jer. xxxii. 20.** * **Ct Nahum iii. 8; Isa. xxvi. 1.**

• **So LXX : Heb.** *also.* • **Read npap.**

[4] **So LXX.: Heb. has verb in sing.** [7] **Deut. xxiii,3 (Heb., 2 Eng.).**

' **The prepositions refer to the half-breeds. Ezekiel uses the term** *to eat upon the blood, i.e.* **meat eaten without being ritually slain and consecrated, for illegal sacrifices (xxxiii. 35: cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 32 f.; Lev. xix. 26, xvii. 11-14).**

[9] **nasp for May79 ; but to be amended to nayp, 1 Sam. xiv. 12,** *a military post.* **Ewald reads nasp,** *rampart.* **LXX.** *dvdornua* **- na*p.**

assailant again pass upon them, for now do I regard it with Mine eyes.

2. THE PRINCE OF PEACE (ix. 9-12).

This beautiful picture, applied by the Evangelist with such fitness to our Lord upon His entry to Jerusalem, must also be of post-exilic date. It contrasts with the warlike portraits of the Messiah drawn in pre-exilic times, for it clothes Him with humility and with peace. The coming King of Israel has the attributes already imputed to the Servant of Jehovah by the prophet of the Babylonian captivity. The next verses also imply the Exile as already a fact On the whole, too, the language is of a late rather than of an early date.[1] Nothing in the passage betrays the exact point of its origin after the Exile.

The epithets applied to the Messiah are of very great interest He does not bring victory or salvation, but is the passive recipient of it? This determines the meaning of the preceding adjective, *righteous,* which has not the moral sense of *justice,* but rather that of *vindication,* in which *righteousness* and *righteous* are so frequently used in Isa. xl.—lv.[8] He is *lowly,* like the Servant of Jehovah; and comes riding not the horse, an animal for war, because the next verse says that horses and chariots are to be removed from Israel,[4]

[1] ix. 10, 2, cf. Dan. xi. 4; נא ADR only in late writings (unless Deut. xxxiii. 17 be early)—see Eckardt, p. 80; 12, ns3 is dra Xeybuevov; the last clause of 12 is based on Isa. lxi. 7. If our interpretation of P% and yen be right, they are also symptoms of a late date.

[1] ye (verr. 9): the passive participle.

[3] Cf. *Isaiah xl.—lxvi.* (Expositor's Bible), p. 219.

[4] Why *chariot from Ephraim* and *horse from Jerusalem* is explained in *Hist. Geog.,* pp. 329-331.

but the ass, the animal not of lowliness, as some have interpreted, but of peace. To this day in the East asses are used, as they are represented in the Song of Deborah, by great officials, but only when these are upon civil, and not upon military, duty.

It is possible that this oracle closes with ver. 10, and that we should take w. 11 and 12, on the deliverance from exile, with the next.

Rejoice mightily, daughter of Zion ! shout aloud, daughter of Jerusalem ! Lo, thy King cometh to thee^ vindicated and victorious^ meek and riding on an ass^ and on a colt the she-asd foal? And I[1] *will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem, and the war-bow shall be cut off, and He shall speak peace to the nations, and His rule shall be from sea to sea and from the river even to the ends of the earth. Thou, too,—by thy covenant-blood? I have set free thy prisoners from the pit? Return to the fortress, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I proclaim: Double will I return to thee?*

3. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE GREEKS (ix. 13-17).

The next oracle seems singularly out of keeping with the spirit of the last, which declared the arrival of the Messianic peace, while this represents Jehovah as using Israel for His weapons in the slaughter of

[1] See above. [3] Son of she-asses.

3 Symbol of peace as the horse was of war. [4] Mass.: LXX. *He.*

* Heb. *blood of thy covenant,* but the suffix refers to the whole phrase (Duhm, *Theol. dev Proph^* p. 143). The covenant is Jehovah's; the blood, that which the people shed in sacrifice to ratify the covenant.

[4] Heb. adds *there is no water in it,* but this is either a gloss, or perhaps an attempt to make sense out of a dittography of ‫,מים‬ or a corruption of *nons shall be ashamed. '* Isa. lxi. 7.

the Greeks and heathens, in whose blood they shall revel. But Stade has pointed out how often in chaps, ix.—xiv. a result is first stated and then the oracle goes on to describe the process by which it is achieved. Accordingly we have no ground for affirming ix 13-17 to be by another hand than ix 9-12. The apocalyptic character of the means by which the heathen are to be overthrown, and the exultation displayed in their slaughter, as in a great sacrifice (ver. 15), betray Israel in a state of absolute political weakness, and therefore suit a date after Alexander's campaigns, which is also made sure by the reference to the *sons of Javan*, as if Israel were now in immediate contact with them. Kirkpatrick's note should be read, in which he seeks to prove *the sons of Javan* a late gloss;[1] but his reasons do not appear conclusive. The language bears several traces of lateness?

For I have drawn Judah for My bow, I have charged it *with Ephraim; and I will urge thy sons, O Zion, against the sons of*[3] *Javan, and make thee like the sword of a hero. Then will Jehovah appear above them*[9] *and His shaft shall go forth like lightning; and the Lord Jehovah shall blow a blast on the trumpet, and travel in the storms of the south.* Jehovah will protect them, and they shall devour* **(?)5** *and trample ...* [4] *and they*

[1] *Doctrine of the Prophsts,* Note A, p. 472.

* 14, on o see Eckardt; 15, mnr„ Aramaism; 035 is late; 17, Dbwnn, only here and Psalm lx. 6; 212, probably late.

* So LXX. : Heb. reads, *thy softs, O Javan.*

[4] LXX. iv *adhy rs dreifs a^roO, tn ths tossing of His threat,* ny: n (?) or ryn wa. It is natural to see here a reference to the Theophanies of Hab. iii. 3, Deut. xxxiii. (see above, pp. 150 f).

8 Perhaps 1772], *oyercones them.* LXX. xaravaXcovcu.

[4] Heb. *stones of a sling,* U7P "28. Wellhausen and Nowack read *sons,* "2 but what then is J2p ?

shall drink their blood[1] *like wine, and be drenched with it, like a bowl and like the corners of the altar. And Jehovah their God will give them victory in that day. . . .*[3] *How good it*[9] *is, and how beautiful! Corn shall make the young men flourish and new wine the maidens.*

4. AGAINST THE TERAPHIM AND SORCERERS (x. 1, 2).

This little piece is connected with the previous one only through the latter's conclusion upon the fertility of the land, while this opens with rain, the requisite of fertility. It is connected with the piece that follows only by its mention of the shepherdless state of the people, the piece that follows being against the false shepherds. These connections are extremely slight. Perhaps the piece is an independent one. The subject of it gives no clue to the date. Sorcerers are condemned both by the earlier prophets, and by the later.[4] Stade points out that this is the only passage of the Old Testament in which the Teraphim are said to speak? The language has one symptom of a late period?

After emphasising the futility of images, enchantments and dreams, this little oracle says, therefore the

[1] Reading DD for Heb. wm, *and roar.*

* Heb. *lihè a flock of sheep His people,* (but how is one to construe this with the context ?) *for (? like) stones of a diadem lifting themselves ap (? shimmering) over His land.* Wellhausen and Nowack delete *for stones . . . shimmering* as a gloss. This would leave *like a flock of sheep His people in His land,* to which it is proposed to add *He will feed.* This gives good sense.

• Wellhausen, reading na, fem. suffix for neuter. Ewald and others *He.* Hitzig and others *they,* the people.

[4] Of these cf. "' Mat * ii, 5; the late Jer. xliv. 8 ff.; Isa. ixv. 3-5; and, in the Priestly Law, Lev. xix. 31, xx. 6.

[5] *Z.A.T.W.,* I. 60. He compares this verse with 1 Sam. xv. 23. In Ezek. xxi. 26 they give oracles.

• rn, *lightning-flash,* only here and in Job xxviii. 26, xxxviii. 25.

people wander like sheep: they have no shepherd. Shepherd in this connection cannot mean civil ruler, but must be religious director.

Ask from Jehovah rain in the time of the latter rain.[1] *Jehovah is the maker of the lightning-flashes, and the winter rain He gives to them—to every man herbage in the field. But the Teraphim speak nothingness, and the sorcerers see lies, and dreams discourse vanity, and they comfort in vain. Wherefore they wander* (?)3 ' *like a flock of sheep, and flee about J for there is no shepherd.*

5. AGAINST EVIL SHEPHERDS (x. 3-12).

The unity of this section is more apparent than its connection with the preceding, which had spoken of the want of a shepherd, or religious director, of Israel, while this is directed against their shepherds and leaders, meaning their foreign tyrants.[4] The figure is taken from Jeremiah xxiii. I ff., where, besides, *to visit upon*[6] is used in a sense of punishment, but the simple *visit* • in the sense of to look after, just as within ver. 3 of this tenth chapter. Who these foreign tyrants are is not explicitly stated, but the reference to Egypt and Assyria as lands whence the Jewish captives shall be brought home, while at the same time there is a Jewish nation in Judah, suits only the Greek period, after Ptolemy had taken so many Jews to

[1] **LXX. read : *in season early rain and latter rain.***

* ' **ID3„ used of a nomadic life in Jer. xxxi. 24 (23), and so it is possible that in a later stage of the language it had come to mean to wander or stray. But this is doubtful, and there may be a false reading, as appears from LXX. ἐξηράνθησαν.**

• **For 297 read wn. The LXX. ἐκακώθησαν read in.**

[4] **There can therefore be none of that connection between the two pieces which Kirkpatrick assumes (p. 454 and note 2).**

*[2] ' ΠΡD • nx ΠΡD

Egypt,[1] and there were numbers still scattered throughout the other great empire in the north, to which, as we have already seen, the Jews applied the name of Assyria. The reference can hardly suit the years after Seleucus and Ptolemy granted to the Jews in their territories the rights of citizens. The captive Jews are to be brought back to Gilead and Lebanon. Why exactly these are mentioned, and neither Samaria nor Galilee, forms a difficulty, to whatever age we assign the chapter. The language of x. 3-12 has several late features.[1] Joseph or Ephraim, here and elsewhere in these chapters, is used of the portion of Israel still in captivity, in contrast to Judah, the returned community.

The passage predicts that Jehovah will change His poor leaderless sheep, the Jews, into war-horses, and give them strong chiefs and weapons of war. They shall overthrow the heathen, and Jehovah will bring back His exiles. The passage is therefore one with chap. ix.

My wrath is hot against the shepherds, and I will make visitation on the he-goats:[8] *yea, Jehovah of Hosts will* visit His flock, the house of Judah, and will make them like His splendid war-horses. From Him the corner-stone, from Him the stay;* from Him the war-bow, from Him the oppressor—shall go forth together. And in battle shall they trample on heroes as on the dirt*

[1] See above, p. 444.

* x. 5, D13, Eckardt, p. 82; 6, 12, 33, PL, cf. Eccles, x. 10, where it alone occurs besides here; 5, II w2n7 in passive sense.

* As we should say, *Mbwtthtrs*: cf. Isa. xiv. 9, also a late meaning.

[4] So LXX, reading TPBPD for ⁊PD".

* *Comtrstofu* as name for a chief: cf. Judg. xx. 2; 1 Sam. xiv. 38; Isa. xix. 13. *Stay* or *tent-pin,* Isa. xxii. 23. *From Him,* others *from them.*

of the streets^ and fight, for Jehovah is with them, and the riders on horses shall be abashed. And the house of Judah will I make strong and work salvation for the house of Joseph, and bring them back^ for I have pify for them[3], and they shall be as though I had not put them away[3], for I am Jehovah their God[3] and I will hold converse with them[3] And Ephraim shall be as heroes[3] and their heart shall be glad as with wine[f] and their children shall behold and be glad: their heart shall rejoice in Jehovah. I will whistle for them and gather them in, for I have redeemed them, and they shall be as many as they once were. I scattered them[3] among the nations, but among the far-away they think of Me, and they will bring up[3] their children, and come back. Andi will fetch them home from the land of Mi^raim, and from Asshur[r] will I gather them, and to the land of Gilead and Lebānon will I bring them in, though these *be not found* sufficient *for them. And they[3] shall pass through the sea of Egypt,[3] and He shall smite the sea of breakers, and all the deeps of the Nile shall be dried, and the pride of Assyria brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt swept aside. And their strength[10] shall*

[1] **Read ormp and Dwp (Wellhausen).**

* **Read oniapa for the Mass. oniatm,** *and I will matt Hum to dwell.*

[a] **onom and onnt, or? and DoM, key-words of Hosea i.—iii.**

[4] **LXX.; sing. Heb.**

* **Changing the Heb. points which make the verb future. See Nowack's note.**

[4] **With LXX. read am for Mass. a'm.**

' **See above, pp. 451, 471.**

[4] **So LXX.; Mass. sing.**

[9] **Heb. ms,** *narrow* SM: **so LXX., but Wellhausen suggests DYED, which Nowack adopts.**

[10] **DHW for am**

be in Jehovah, and in His Name shall they boast themselves [1]*—oracle of Jehovah.*

6. WAR UPON THE SYRIAN TYRANTS (xi. 1-3).

This is taken by some with the previous chapter, by others with the passage following. Either connection seems precarious. No conclusion as to date can be drawn from the language. But the localities threatened were on the southward front of the Seleucid kingdom. *Open, Lebānon, thy doors* suits the Egyptian invasions of that kingdom. To which of these the passage refers cannot of course be determined. The shepherds are the rulers.

Open, Lebānon, thy doors, that the fire may devour in thy cedars. Wail, O pine-tree, for the cedar is fallen;[3] *wail, O oaks of Bashan,for fallen is the impenetrable*[1] *wood. Hark to the wailing of the shepherds / for their glory is destroyed. Hark how the lions, roar I for blasted is the pride*[k] *of Jordan.*

7. THE REJECTION AND MURDER OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD (xi. 4-17, xiii. 7-9).

There follows now, in the rest of chap, xi., a longer oracle, to which Ewald and most critics after him have suitably attached chap. xiii. 7-9.

This passage appears to rise from circumstances similar to those of the preceding and from the same circle of ideas. Jehovah's people are His flock and

[1] **For wnm read 19nny, with L,XX. and Syr.**

* **Heb. adds here a difficult clause,** *for nobles art wasted.* **Probably a gloss.**

• **After the Keṛi.**

[4] **I.e.** *ranAness;* **applied to the thick vegetation in the larger bed of the stream : see** *Hist. Gtog.,* **p. 484.**

have suffered. Their rulers are their shepherds; and the rulers of other peoples are their shepherds. A true shepherd is sought for Israel in place of the evil ones which have distressed them. The language shows traces of a late date.[1] No historical allusion is obvious in the passage. The *buyers* and *sellers* of God's sheep might reflect the Seleucids and Ptolemies between whom Israel were exchanged for many years, but probably mean their native leaders. The *three shepherds cut off in a month* were interpreted by the supporters of the pre-exilic date of the chapters as Zechariah and Shallum (2 Kings xv. 8-13), and another whom these critics assume to have followed them to death, but of him the history has no trace. The supporters of a Maccabean date for the prophecy recall the quick succession of high priests before the Maccabean rising. The *one month* probably means nothing more than a very short time.

The allegory which our passage unfolds is given, like so many more in Hebrew prophecy, to the prophet himself to enact It recalls the pictures in Jeremiah and Ezekiel of the overthrow of the false shepherds of Israel, and the appointment of a true shepherd? Jehovah commissions the prophet to become shepherd to His sheep that have been so cruelly abused by their guides and rulers. Like the shepherds of Palestine,

[1] xi. 5, ‏עשר‎, Hiph., but intransitive, *grow rich;* 6, ‏עפר‎; 7, 10, ‏דעת‎ (?); 8, ‏ירח‎, Aram.; 13, ‏יקר‎, Aram., Jer. xx. 5, Ezek. xxii. 25, Job xxviii. 10; in Esther ten, in Daniel four times (Eckardt); xii. 7, ‏נפץ‎, one of the marks of the affinity of the language of H Zech." ix.—xiv. to that of the Priestly Code (cf. Lev. v. 21, xviii, 20, etc.), but in P it is concrete, here abstract; ons; 8, ‏מן‎, see Eckardt, p.85.

2 Jer. xxiii. 1-8; Ezek. xxxiv., xxxvii. 24 ff.: cf. Kirkpatrick, p. 462.

the prophet took two staves to herd his flock. He called one *Grace,* the other *Union.* In a month he cut off three shepherds—both *month* and *three* are probably formal terms. But he did not get on well with his charge. They were wilful and quarrelsome. So he broke his staff Grace, in token that his engagement was dissolved. The dealers of the sheep saw that he acted for God. He asked for his wage, if they cared to give it. They gave him thirty pieces of silver, the price of an injured slave,[1] which by God's command he cast into the treasury of the Temple, as if in token that it was God Himself whom they paid with so wretched a sum. And then he broke his other staff, to signify that the brotherhood between Judah and Israel was broken. Then, to show the people that by their rejection of the good shepherd they must fall a prey to an evil one, the prophet assumed the character of the latter. But another judgment follows. In chap, xiii,. 7-9 the good shepherd is smitten and the flock dispersed.

The spiritual principles which underlie this allegory are obvious. God's own sheep, persecuted and helpless though they be, are yet obstinate, and their obstinacy not only renders God's good-will to them futile, but causes the death of the one man who could have done them good. The guilty sacrifice the innocent, but in this execute their own doom. That is a summary of the history of Israel. But had the writer of this allegory any special part of that history in view ? Who were the *dealers of the flock?*

Thus saith Jehovah my God:[9] *Shepherd the flock op slaughter, whose purchasers slaughter them impenitently,*

[1] **Exod. xxi. 32.** [9] LXX. ***God of Hosts.***

and whose sellers say,[1] Blessed be Jehovah, for I am rich I—and their shepherds do not spare them. [For I will no more spare the inhabitants of the land—oracle of Jehovah; but lo ! I am about to give mankind[1] over, each into the hand of his shepherd, and into the hand of his king; and they shall destroy the land, and I will not secure it from their hands}} And I shepherded the flock of slaughter for the sheep merchants^ and I took to me two staves—the one I called Grace, and the other I called Union [6]—and so I shepherded the sheep. And I destroyed the three shepherds in one month. Then was my soul vexed with them, and they on their part were displeased with me. And I said: I will not shepherd you: what is dead, let it die; and what is destroyed, let it be destroyed; and those that survive, let them devour one another's flesh / And I took my staff Grace, and I brake it so as to annul my covenant which I made with all the peoples} And in that day it was annulled, and the dealers of the sheep,* who watched me, knew that it was Jehovah's word. And I*

[1] Read plural with LXX.

* That is the late Hebrew name for the heathen: cf ix. i.

• Heb. anp2, *neighbour**, read np

[4] Many take this verse as an intrusion. It certainly seems to add nothing to the sense and to interrupt the connection, which is clear when it is removed.

• Heb. nisg‖ ' 122, *wherefore the miserable of the flock,* which makes no sense. But LXX. read els Thi Kavadrn, and this suggests the Heb. 11359, *to the Canaanites,* i.e.. *merchants, of the sheep*: so in ver. II.

• Lit *Bands.*

[7] The sense is here obscure. Is the text sound? In harmony with the context D'Dp ought to mean *tribes of Israel.* But every passage in the O.T. in which D'DP might mean *tribes* has been shown to have a doubtful text: Deut. xxxii. 8, xxxiii. 3; Hosea x 14; Micah i. 2.

* See above, note 5, on the same mis-read phrase in ver. 7.

said to them, If it be good in your sight, give me my wage, and if it be not good, let it go / And they weighed out my wage, thirty pieces of silver. Then said Jehovah to me, Throw it into the treasury[1] *(the precious wage at which I*[9] *had been valued of them). So I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the House of Jehovah, to the treasury? And I brake my second staff, Union, so as to dissolve the brotherhood between Judah and Israel? And Jehovah said to me: Take again to thee the implements of a worthless shepherd: for lo ! I am about to appoint a shepherd over the land; the destroyed he will not visit, the . . J he will not seek out, the wounded he will not heal, the. . . he will not cherish, but he will devour the flesh of the fat and... J*

Woe to My worthless[8] *shepherd, that deserts the flock ! The sword be upon his arm and his right eye ! May his arm wither, and his right eye be blinded.*

Upon this follows the section xiii. 7-9, which develops the tragedy of the nation to its climax in the murder of the good shepherd.

Up, Sword, against My shepherd and the man My

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[1] Heb. y17], *the potter.* LXX. *xuvevrhpov, smelting furnace.* Read psi by change of K for *: the two are often confounded; see n. 3.

2 Wellhausen and Nowack read *thou hast bssn valued of them.* But there is no need of this. The clause is a sarcastic parenthesis spoken by the prophet himself.

* Again Heb. *the potter,* LXX. *ths smelting furnace,* as above in ver. 13. The additional clause *House of God* proves how right it is to read *the treasury,* and disposes of the idea that *to throw to the potter* was a proverb for throwing away.

[4] Two codd. read *Jerusalem,* which Wellhausen and Nowack adopt.

[5] Heb. 720, *the scattered.* LXX. rv *ieKoprlcfievor.*

n280, obscure: some translate *the sound* or *stable.*

" Heb. *and their hoofs he will tear (J).*

J For Heb. 2tan read as in ver. 15 Hneen.

compatriot[1]*—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts. Smite*[1] *the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered; and I will turn My hand against the little ones.*[9] *And it shall come to pass in all the land—oracle of Jehovah—that two-thirds shall be cut off in it, and perish, but a third shall be left in it. And I shall bring the third into the fire, and smelt it as* men *smelt silver and try it as* men *try gold. It shall call upon My Name, and I will answer it. And I will* say, It is My people, and it will say, Jehovah my God I*

8. JUDAH *versus* JERUSALEM (xii. 1-7).

A title, though probably of later date than the text,[6] introduces with the beginning of chap. xii. an oracle plainly from circumstances different from those of the preceding chapters. The nations, not particularised as they have been, gather to the siege of Jerusalem, and, very singularly, Judah is gathered with them against her own capital. But God makes the city like one of those great boulders, deeply embedded, which husbandmen try to pull up from their fields, but it tears and wounds the hands of those who would remove it. Moreover God strikes with panic all the besiegers, save only Judah, who, her eyes being opened, perceives that God is with Jerusalem and turns to her help. Jerusalem remains in her place; but the glory of the victory is first Judah's, so that the house of David may not have too much fame nor boast over the country districts. The writer doubtless alludes to some temporary schism between the capital and country caused

[1] n'y : only in Lev. and here.
[8] 1i. Perhaps we should read nas, *I stmts,* with Matt. xxvi. 31.
[8] Some take this as a promise: *turn My hand towards thtlittk onrs.*
[4] LXX. Heb. Dx, but the 1, has fallen from the front of it.
[8] See above, p. 462.

by the arrogance of the former. But we have no means of knowing when this took place. It must often have been imminent in the days both before and especially after the Exile, when Jerusalem had absorbed all the religious privilege and influence of the nation. The language is undoubtedly late.[1]

The figure of Jerusalem as a boulder, deeply bedded in the soil, which tears the hands that seek to remove it, is a most true and expressive summary of the history of heathen assaults upon her. Till she herself was rent by internal dissensions, and the Romans at last succeeded in tearing her loose, she remained planted on her own site.[1] This was very true of all the Greek period. Seleucids and Ptolemies alike wounded themselves upon her. But at what period did either of them induce Judah to take part against her ? Not in the Maccabean.

Oracle of the Word of Jehovah upon Israel.

Oracle of Jehovah, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earthy and formed the spirit of man within him: Lo, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of reeling for all the surrounding peoples, and even Judah[1] shall

[1] , xii. 2, M2, a noun not found elsewhere in O. T. We found the verb in Nahum ii. 4 (see above, p. 106), and probably in Hab. ii. 16 for 5nm (see above, p. 147, n. 3): it is common in Aramean; other forms belong to later Hebrew (cf. Eckardt, p. 85). 3, bwi is used in classic Heb. only of intentional cutting and tattooing of oneself; in the sense of *wounding* which it has here it is frequent in Aramean. 3 has besides nopyo]3K, not found elsewhere. 4 has three nouns terminating in n, two of them—nnon, *panic,* and nv, judicial *blindness*—in O. T. only found here and in Deut. xxviii. 28, the former also in Aramean. 7, xS wo> is also cited by Eckardt as used only in Ezek. xix. 6, xxvi. 20, and four times in Psalms.

[1] xii. 6, mnnn.

* The text reads *against* Judah, as if it with Jerusalem suffered

*be at the siege of Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in that day that I will make Jerusalem a stone to be lifted[1] by all the peoples—all who lift it do indeed wound[1] themselves—and there are gathered against it all nations of the earth. In that day—oracle of Jehovah—I will smite every horse with panic, and their riders with madness; but as for the house of Judah, I will open its[1] tyes, though every horse of the peoples I smite with blindness. Then shall the chiefs[4] of Judah say in their hearts, .. *: the inhabitants of Jerusalem through Jehovah of Hosts their God. In that day will I make the districts of Judah like a pan of fire among timber and like a torch among sheaves, so that they devour right and left all the peoples round about, but Jerusalem shall still abide on its*

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the siege of the heathen. But (i) this makes an unconstruable clause, and (2) the context shows that Judah was *against* Jerusalem. Therefore Geiger *QUrschrift*$_9$ p. 58) is right in deleting *2,* , and restoring to the clause both sense in itself and harmony with the context It is easy to see why 2ẏ was afterwards introduced. LXX. *Kal b rj Tovval.*

[1] Since Jerome, commentators have thought : of a stone by throwing or lifting which men try their strength, what we call a "putting stone.[0] But is not the idea rather of one of the large stones half-buried in the earth which it is the effort of the husbandman to tear from its bed and carry out of his field before he ploughs it ? Keil and Wright think of a heavy stone for building. This is not so likely.

3 bi, elsewhere only in Lev. xxi. . 5, is there used of intentional cutting of oneself as a sign of mourning. Nowack takes the clause as a later intrusion; but there is no real reason for this.

*** Heb. *upon Judah will I heep My syss open* to protect him, and this has analogies, Job xiv. 3, Jer. xxxii. 19. But the reading *its eyes,* which is made by inserting a 1 that might easily have dropped out through confusion with the initial 1 of the next word, has also analogies (Isa. xlii. 7, etc.), and stands in better parallel to the next clause, as well as to the clauses describing the panic of the heathen.**

[4] Others read 'R288, *thousands,* i.e *districts.*

[4] Heb. *I will find ms*; LXX ebphooner davros.

own site.[1] *And Jehovah shall first give victory to the tents*[2] *of Judah, so that the fame of the house of David and the fame of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not too great in contrast to Judah.*

9. FOUR RESULTS OF JERUSALEM'S DELIVERANCE (xii. 8—xiii. 6).

Upon the deliverance of Jerusalem, by the help of the converted Judah, there follow four results, each introduced by the words that it happened *in that day* (xii. 8, 9, xiii. 1, 2). First, the people of Jerusalem shall themselves be strengthened. Second, the hostile heathen shall be destroyed, but on the house of David and all Jerusalem the spirit of penitence shall be poured, and they will lament for the good shepherd whom they slew. Third, a fountain for sin and uncleanness shall be opened. Fourth, the idols, the unclean spirit, and prophecy, now so degraded, shall all be abolished. The connection of these oracles with the preceding is obvious, as well as with the oracle describing the murder of the good shepherd (xiii. 7-9). When we see how this is presupposed by xii. 9 ff., we feel more than ever that its right place is between chaps, xi. and xii. There are no historical allusions. But again the language gives evidence of a late date? And throughout the passage there is a repetition of formal phrases

[1] Hebrew adds a gloss: *inJ^rusaUm.*

[3] The population in time of war.

* xii. 10, mi '1DP„ not earlier than Ezek. xxxix. 29, Joel iii. 1, 2 (Heb.); bunn, only in Job, Proverbs, Psalms and Daniel; ~l on„ an intrans. Hiph.; xiii. 1, mpD, *fountain^* before Jeremiah only in Hosea xiii. 15 (perhaps a late intrusion), but several times in post-exilic writings instead of pre-exilic 32 (Eckardt) ; 734, only after Ezekiel; 3, cf. xii. 10, '1p1, chiefly, but not only, in post-exilic writings.

which recalls the Priestly Code and the general style of the post-exilic age.[1] Notice that no king is mentioned, although there are several points at which, had he existed, he must have been introduced.

1. The first of the four effects of Jerusalem's deliverance from the heathen is the promotion of her weaklings to the strength of her heroes, and of her heroes to divine rank (xii. 8). *In that day Jehovah will protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the lame among them shall in that day be like David* himself, *and the house of David like God, like the Angel of Jehovah before them.*

2. The second paragraph of this series very remarkably emphasises that upon her deliverance Jerusalem shall not give way to rejoicing, but to penitent lamentation for the murder of him whom she has pierced—the good shepherd whom her people have rejected and slain. This is one of the few ethical strains which run through these apocalyptic chapters. It forms their highest interest for us. Jerusalem's mourning is compared to that for *Hadad-Rimmon in the valley* or *plain of Megiddo.* This is the classic battle-field of the land, and the theatre upon which Apocalypse has placed the last contest between the hosts of God and the hosts of evil? In Israel's history it had been the ground not only of triumph but of tears. The greatest tragedy of that history, the defeat and death of the righteous Josiah, took place there;[2] and since the earliest Jewish interpreters the *mourning of Hadad-Rimmon in the*

[1] See especially xii. 12 ff., which is very suggestive of the Priestly Code.

*Hist. Geog^* Chap. XIX. On the name *plain of Megiddo* see especially notes, p. 386.

[2] 2 Chron. xxxv. 22 ff.

valley of Megiddo has been referred to the mourning for Josiah.[1] Jerome identifies Hadad-Rimmon with Rummni,[2] a village on the plain still extant, close to Megiddo. But the lamentation for Josiah was at Jerusalem; and it cannot be proved that Hadad-Rimmon is a place-name. It may rather be the name of the object of the mourning, and as Hadad was a divine name among Phoenicians and Arameans, and RimmOn the pomegranate was a sacred tree, a number of critics have supposed this to be a title of Adonis, and the mourning like that excessive grief which Ezekiel tells us was yearly celebrated for Tammuz.[3] This, however, is not fully proved.[4] Observe, further, that while the reading Hadad-Rimmon is by no means past doubt, the sanguine blossoms and fruit of the pomegranate, "red-ripe at the heart," would naturally lead to its association with the slaughtered Adonis.

And it shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations who have come in upon Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look to him whom they have pierced; and they shall lament for him, as with lamentation for an only son, and bitterly grieve for him, as with grief for a first-born. In that day lamentation shall be as great in Jerusalem as the lamenta-*

[1] **Another explanation offered by the Targum is the mourning for "Ahab son of Omri, slain by Hadad-Rimmon son of Tab-Rimmon."**

[2] **LXX. gives for Hadad-Rimmon only the second part, *po@v.***

[3] **Ezek. viii. 14.**

[4] **Baudissin, *Studien* s. *Sem. RA. Gtsck.*, 1. 295 fr.**

*** Heb. *Mt*; several codd. *him:* some read '28, *to* (him) *whom they have pierced}* but this would require the elision of the sign of the acc. before *who.* Wellhausen and others think something has fallen from the text.**

lion for Hadad-Rimmon[1] *in the valley of Megiddo. And the land shall moum, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Levi "by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei*[1] *by itself and their wives by themselves; all the families who are left, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.*

3. The third result of Jerusalem's deliverance from the heathen shall be the opening of a fountain of cleansing. This purging of her sin follows fitly upon her penitence just described. *In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David, and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.*[1]

4. The fourth consequence is the removal of idolatry, of the unclean spirit and of the degraded prophets from her midst The last is especially remarkable: for it is not merely false prophets, as distinguished from true, who shall be removed; but prophecy in general. It is singular that in almost its latest passage the prophecy of Israel should return to the line of its earliest representative, Amos, who refused to call himself prophet. As in his day, the prophets had become mere professional and mercenary oracle-mongers, abjured to the point of death by their own ashamed and wearied relatives.

And it shall be in that day—oracle of Jehovah of Hosts—I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall not be remembered any more. And also the prophets and the unclean spirit will I expel

[1] See above, p. 482. [s] Cf. Ezek zxzvi, 25, xlvii. 1.
* LXX. Zvuev.

from the land. And it shall come to pass, if any man prophesy again, then shall his father and mother who begat him say to him, Thou shall not live, for thou speakest falsehood in the name of Jehovah; and his father and mother who begat him shall stab him for his prophesying. And it shall be in that day that the prophets shall be ashamed of their visions when they prophesy, and shall not wear the leather cloak in order to lie. And he will say, No prophet am I! A tiller of the ground I am, for the ground is my possession[1] *from my youth up. And they shall say to him, What are these wounds in*[1] *thy hands? and he shall say, What 1 was wounded with in the house of my lovers !*

10. JUDGMENT OF THE HEATHEN AND SANCTIFICATION OF JERUSALEM (xiv.).

In another apocalyptic vision the prophet beholds Jerusalem again beset by the heathen. But Jehovah Himself intervenes, appearing in person, and an earthquake breaks out at His feet. The heathen are smitten, as they stand, into mouldering corpses. The remnant of them shall be converted to Jehovah and take part in the annual Feast of Booths. If any refuse they shall be punished with drought But Jerusalem shall abide in security and holiness: every detail of her equipment shall be consecrate. The passage has many resemblances to the preceding oracles.[8] The language is undoubtedly late, and the figures are borrowed from other prophets, chiefly Ezekiel. It is a characteristic specimen of the Jewish Apocalypse. The destruction of the heathen is described in verses of terrible grim-

[1] Read 92¹np7 for the Mass, wpn oT: so Wellhausen.
' Heb. *bfiwttn.* • But see below, p. 49a

ness: there is no tenderness nor hope exhibited for them. And even in the picture of Jerusalem's holiness we have no really ethical elements, but the details are purely ceremonial.

Lo! a day is coming for Jehovah^ when thy spoil will be divided in thy midst. And I will gather all the nations to besiege Jerusalem, and the city will be taken and the houses plundered and the -women ravished, and the half of the city shall go into captivity, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. And Jehovah shall go forth and do battle with those nations, as in the day when He fought in the day of contest. And His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives which is over against Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split into halves from east to west by a very great ravine, and half of the Mount will slide northwards and half southwards. . . . ,3 for the ravine of mountains[3] shall extend to [9]A^al,^ and ye shall flee as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah;[3] and Jehovah my God will come and[3] all the holy ones with Him} And in that day there shall not be light, . . .

[1] mn: or *belonging to Jehovah;* or like the *Lamed auctoris* or Lamed when construed with passive verbs (see Oxford *Heb.-Eng. Dictionary,* pp. 513 and 514, col *i),/rom, by means of, Jehovah,*

* Heb.: *and ye shall flee, the ravine of My mountains.* The text is obviously corrupt, but it is difficult to see how it should be repaired. LXX., Targ. Symmachus and the Babylonian codd. (Baer, p. 84) read DPP2, *shall be closed,* for DDDM], *ye shall flee,* and this is adopted by a number of critics (Bredenkamp, Wellhausen, Nowack). But it is hardly possible before the next clause, which says the valley extends to 'Asal.

* Wellhausen suggests the ravine (R*) of Hinnom.

*23, place-name: cf. >4, name of a family of Benjamin, viii. 37 f., ix. 43 f.; and 7547 n, Micah i. 11. Some would read 254, the adverb *near by,*

[9] Amos L 1. • LXX [7] LXX ; Heb. *thee,*

congeal And it shall be one*[1] *day—it is known to Jehovah*—neither day nor night; and it shall come to pass that at evening time there shall be light.*

And it shall be in that day that living waters shall flow forth from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea: both *in summer and in winter shall it be. And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day Jehovah will be One and His Name One. All the land shall be changed to plain?from Geba to Rimmon? south of Jerusalem; but she shall be high and abide in her place* from the Gate of Benjamin up to the place of the First Gate$_9$ up to the Corner Gate$_9$ and from the Tower of Hanan'el as far as the Kings Winepresses. And they shall dwell in it$_9$ and there shall be no more Ban? and Jerusalem shall abide in security. And this shall be the stroke with which Jehovah will smite all the peoples who have warred against Jerusalem: He will make their flesh moulder while they still stand upon their feet$_9$ and their eyes shall moulder*

[1] **Heb. Kethibh, papp!' nip; *jewels* (? hardly stars as some have sought to prove from Job xxxi. 26) *grow dead* or *congealed** Heb. Kert, *jewels and frost,* nepM). XXX. *Kal yxn sal=dyos,* Aep? n2, and *cold and frost.* Founding on this Wellhausen proposes to read bin for nhe, and renders, *there shall be neither heat nor cold nor frost.* So Nowack. But it is not easy to see how on ever got changed to Tk.

' ***Unique* or *the same ?***

* **Taken as a gloss by Wellhausen and Nowack.**

[4] **nan, the name for the Jordan Valley, the Ghdr *(Hist. Geog^* pp. 482-484). It is employed, not because of its fertility, but because of its level character. Cf. Josephus' name for it, " the Great Plain " (IV. *Wars* viii. 2; IV. *Antt.* vi. 1) : also I Macc. v. 52, xvi. 11.**

[5] **Geba "long" the limit of Judah to the north, 2 Kings xxiii. 8" *(Hist. Geog.,* pp. 252, 291). Rimmon was on the southern border of Palestine (Josh. xv. 32, xix. 7), the present Umm er Rummamin N. of Beersheba (Rob., *B. R.).***

• **Or *be inhabited as it stands.*** ' **Cf. " Mal." iii. 24 (Heb.).**

in their sockets, and their tongue shall moulder in their mouth.

[And it shall come to pass in that day, there shall be a great confusion from Jehovah among them, and they shall grasp every man the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall be lifted against the hand of his neighbour} And even Judah shall fight against Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be swept up, gold and silver and garments, in a very great mass. These two verses, 13 and 14, obviously disturb the connection, which ver. 15 as obviously resumes with ver. 12. They are, therefore, generally regarded as an intrusion.[1] But why they have been inserted is not clear. Ver. 14 is a curious echo of the strife between Judah and Jerusalem described in chap. xii. They may be not a mere intrusion, but simply out of their proper place : yet, if so, where this proper place lies in these oracles is impossible to determine.]

And even so shall be the plague upon the horses, mules, camels and asses, and all the beasts which are in those camps—just like this plague. And it shall come to pass that all that survive of all the nations who have come up against Jerusalem, shall come up from year to year to do obeisance to King Jehovah of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths. And it shall come to pass that whosoever of all the races of the earth will not come up to Jerusalem to do obeisance to King Jehovah of Hosts, upon them there shall be no rain. And if the race of Egypt go not up nor come in, upon them also shall[9] *come the plague, with which Jehovah shall strike the nations that go not*

[1] **Ezek. xxxviii. 21.**

• **So Wellhausen and Nowack.**

* **So LXX. and Syr. The Heb. text inserts a *not.***

up to keep the Feast of Booths. Such shall be the punishment[1] *of Egypt*$_f$ *and the punishment of all nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Booths.*

The Feast of Booths was specially one of thanksgiving for the harvest; that is why the neglect of it is punished by the withholding of the rain which brings the harvest But such a punishment for such a neglect shows how completely prophecy has become subject to the Law. One is tempted to think what Amos or Jeremiah or even " Malachi" would have thought of this. Verily all the writers of the prophetical books do not stand upon the same level of religion. The writer remembers that the curse of no rain cannot affect the Egyptians, the fertility of whose rainless land is secured by the annual floods of her river. So he has to insert a special verse for Egypt. She also will be plagued by Jehovah, yet he does not tell us in what fashion her plague will come.

The book closes with a little oracle of the most ceremonial description, connected not only in temper but even by subject with what has gone before. The very horses, which hitherto have been regarded as too foreign,[1] or—as even in this group of oracles[1]—as too warlike, to exist in Jerusalem, shall be consecrated to Jehovah. And so vast shall be the multitudes who throng from all the earth to the annual feasts and sacrifices at the Temple, that the pots of the latter shall be as large as the great altar-bowls,[4] and every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be consecrated for use in the ritual. This hallowing of the horses

[1] **neon,** in classic Heb. *sin;* but as in Num. xxxii. 23 and Isa. v. 18, *the punishment that sin brings down.*

2 Hosea xiv. 3.

[4] So Wellhausen.

[a] ix. 10.

raises the question„ whether the passage can be from the same hand as wrote the prediction of the disappearance of all horses from Jerusalem.[1]

In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses^ Holiness unto Jehovah, And the very *pots in the House of Jehovah shall be as the bowls before the altar, Yea^ every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy 'to Jehovah of Hosts, and all who sacrifice shall come and take of them and cook in them. And there shall be no more any pedlar*[1] *in the House of Jehovah of Hosts in that day.*

[1] **ix. io.**

* **Heb.** ***Canaanite.*** **Cf. Christ's action in cleansing the Temple of all dealers (Matt. xxi. 12-14).**

JONAH

"And this is the tragedy of the Book of Jonah, that a Book which is made the means of one of the most sublime revelations of truth in the Old Testament should be known to most only for its connection with a whale."

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE BOOK OF JONAH

THE Book of Jonah is cast throughout in the form of narrative—the only one of our Twelve which is so. This fact, combined with the extraordinary events which the narrative relates, starts questions not raised by any of the rest Besides treating, therefore, of the book's origin, unity, division and other commonplaces of introduction, we must further seek in this chapter reasons for the appearance of such a narrative among a collection of prophetic discourses. We have to ask whether the narrative be intended as one of fact; and if not, why the author was directed to the choice of such a form to enforce the truth committed to him.

The appearance of a narrative among the Twelve Prophets is not, in itself, so exceptional as it seems to be. Parts of the Books of Amos and Hosea treat of the personal experience of their authors. The same is true of the Books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, in which the prophet's call and his attitude to it are regarded as elements of his message to men. No: the peculiarity of the Book of Jonah is not the presence of narrative, but the apparent absence of all prophetic discourse.[1]

Yet even this might be explained by reference to the first part of the prophetic canon—Joshua to Second

[1] Unless the Psalm were counted as such. See below, p. 511.

Kings.[1] These Former Prophets, as they are called, are wholly narrative—narrative in the prophetic spirit and written to enforce a moral. Many of them begin as the Book of Jonah does:[1] they contain stories, for instance, of Elijah and Elisha, who flourished immediately before Jonah and like him were sent with commissions to foreign lands. It might therefore be argued that the Book of Jonah, though narrative, is as much a prophetic book as they are, and that the only reason why it has found a place, not with these histories, but among the Later Prophets, is the exceedingly late date of its composition.[1]

This is a plausible, but not the real, answer to our question. Suppose we were to find the latter by discovering that the Book of Jonah, though in narrative form, is not real history at all, nor pretends to be; but, from beginning to end, is as much a prophetic sermon as any of the other Twelve Books, yet cast in the form of parable or allegory? This would certainly explain the adoption of the book among the Twelve; nor would its allegorical character appear without precedent to those (and they are among the most conservative of critics) who maintain (as the present writer does not) the allegorical character of the story of Hosea's wife.[4]

It is, however, when we pass from the form to the substance of the book that we perceive the full justification of its reception among the prophets. The truth

[1] *Minus* Ruth of course.

[1] Cf. with Jonah i. 1, 'n, Josh, i. i, i Sam. i. I, 2 Sam. i I. The corrupt state of the text of Ezek. .i i does not permit us to adduce it also as a parallel.

[1] See below, p. 496.

* See above, Vol. I., p. 236.

which we find in the Book of Jonah is as full and fresh a revelation of God's will as prophecy anywhere achieves. That God has *granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life*[1] is nowhere else in the Old Testament so vividly illustrated.. it lifts the teaching of the Book of Jonah to equal rank with the second part of Isaiah, and nearest of all our Twelve to the New Testament. The very form in which this truth is insinuated into the prophet's reluctant mind, by contrasting God's pity for the dim population of Nineveh with Jonah's own pity for his perished gourd, suggests the methods of our Lord's teaching, and invests the book with the morning air of that high day which shines upon the most evangelic of His parables.

One other remark is necessary. In our effort to appreciate this lofty gospel we labour under a disadvantage. That is our sense of humour—our modern sense of humour. Some of the figures in which our author conveys his truth cannot but appear to us grotesque. How many have missed the sublime spirit of the book in amusement or offence at its curious details I Even in circles in which the acceptance of its literal interpretation has been demanded as a condition of belief in its inspiration, the story has too often served as a subject for humorous remarks. This is almost inevitable if we take it as history. But we shall find that one advantage of the theory, which treats the book as parable, is that the features, which appear -so grotesque to many, are traced to the popular poetry of the writer's own time and shown to be natural. When we prove this, we shall be able to treat the scenery of the book as we do that of

[1] Acts xi. 8.

some early Christian fresco, in which, however rude it be or untrue to nature, we discover an earnestness and a success in expressing the moral essence of a situation that are not always present in works of art more skilful or more correct

I. THE DATE OF THE BOOK.

Jonah ben-Amittai, from Gath-hepher[1] in Galilee, came forward in the beginning of the reign of Jeroboam II. to announce that the king would regain the lost territories of Israel from the Pass of Hamath to the Dead Sea.[1] He flourished, therefore, about 780, and had this book been by himself we should have had to place it first of all the Twelve, and nearly a generation before that of Amos. But the book neither claims to be by Jonah, nor gives any proof of coming from an eye-witness of the adventures which it describes,[1] nor even from a contemporary of the prophet. On the contrary, one verse implies that when it was written Niniveh had ceased to be a great city.* Now Niniveh fell, and was practically destroyed, in 606 B.c.5 In all ancient history there was no collapse of an imperial city more sudden or so complete.[1] We must therefore date the Book of Jonah some time after 606, when Niniveh's greatness had become what it was to the Greek writers, a matter of tradition.

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[1] **Cf. Gittah-hepher, Josh. xix. 13, by some held to be El Meshhed, three miles north-east of Nazareth. The tomb of Jonah is pointed out there.**

*** 2 Kings xiv. 25.**

*** Cf. Kuenen, *Einl.*, II. 417, 418.**

•iii.3: nn', *was.*

*** See above, pp. 21 ff., 96 ff.**

• Cf. George Smith, *Assyrian Discoverus*, p. 94; Sayce, *Ancisnt Empires of ths East*, p. 141, Cf. previous note

A late date is also proved by the language of the book. This not only contains Aramaic elements which have been cited to support the argument for a northern origin in the time of Jonah himself/ but a number of words and grammatical constructions which we find in the Old Testament, some of them in the later and some only in the very latest writings? Scarcely less decisive are a number of apparent quotations and echoes of passages in the Old Testament, mostly later than the date of the historical Jonah, and

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[1] As. e.g., by Volck, article "Jona" in Herzog's *Real. Encycl.*[1]: the use of 2p for Y8, as in the very early Song of Deborah. But the same occurs in many late passages: Eccles, i. 7, 1I, ii. a1, 22, etc.; Psalms cxxii., cxiv., cxxxv. 2, 8, cxxxvii. 8, cxlvi. 3.

* A. Grammatical constructions:—i. 7, 'D723; 12, 277 : that 23 has not altogether displaced 22782; Kdnig *(Einl.,* 378) thinks a proof of the date of Jonah in the early Aramaic period, iv. 6, the use of 1? for the accusative, cf. Jer. xl. 2, Ezra viii. 24: seldom in earlier Hebrew, I Sam. xxiii. 10, 2 Sam. iii. 30, especially when the object stands before the verb, Isa. xi. 9 (this may be late), 1 Sam. xxii. 7, Job v. 2; but continually in Aramaic, Dan. ii. 10, 12, 14, 24, etc. The first personal pronoun '28 (five times) occurs oftener than '22 (twice), just as in all exilic and post-exilic writings. The numerals ii. I, iii. 3, precede the noun, as in earlier Hebrew.

B. Words:—MJD in PL is a favourite term of our author, ii. 1, iv. 6, 8; is elsewhere in O.T. Hebrew found only in Dan. L 5, 10, 18, 1 Chron. ix. 29, Psalm Ixi. 8; but in O.T. Aramaic HOD Pi. 330 occurs in Ezra vii. 25, Dan. ii. 24, 49, iii. 12, etc. TDD, i. 5, is not elsewhere found in O.T., but is common in later Hebrew and in Aramaic, nwnn, L, 6, *to think,* for the Heb. an, cf. Psalm cxlvi. 4, but Aram, cf Dan. vi. 4 and Targums. DJD in the' sense *to order* or *comfMand,* iii. 7, is found elsewhere in the O.T. only in the Aramaic passages Dan. iii. 10, Ezra vL 1, etc. 131, iv. 11, for the earlier n221 occurs only in later Hebrew, Ezra ii. 64, Neh. vii. 66, 72, 1 Chron. xxix. 7 (Hosea viii. 12, Kethibh is suspected), pne, L 11, 12, occurs only in Psalm cvii. 30, Prov. xxvi, 20. 2Dy, iv. 10, instead of the usual J2. The expression *God of Heaven,* i. 9, occurs only 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23, Psalm cxxzvi. 26, Dan. ii. 18, 19, 44, and frequently in Ezra and Nehemiah.

some of them even later than the Exile.[1] If it could be proved that the Book of Jonah quotes from Joel, that would indeed set it down to a very late date—probably about 300 B.C., the period of the composition of Ezra-Nehemiah, with the language of which its own shows most affinity? This would leave time for its reception into the Canon of the Prophets, which was closed by 200 B.C? Had the book been later it would undoubtedly have fallen, like Daniel, within the Hagiographa.

2. THE CHARACTER OF THE BOOK,

Nor does this book, written so many centuries after Jonah had passed away, claim to be real history. On the contrary, it offers to us all the marks of the parable or allegory. We have, first of all, the residence of

[1] **in chap. iv. there are undoubted echoes of the story of Elijah's depression in I Kings xix., though the alleged parallel between Jonah's tree (iv. 8) and Elijah's broom-bush seems to me forced, iv. 9 has been thought, though not conclusively, to depend on Gen. iv. 6, and the appearance of D'2 mi has been referred to its frequent use in Gen. ii. f. More important are the parallels with Joel: iii. 9 with Joel ii. 14a, and the attributes of God in iv. 2 with Joel ii. 13. But which of the two is the original?**

2 Kleinert assigns the book to the Exile; Ewald to the fifth or sixth century; Driver to the fifth century *{Introd*,* 301) ; Orelli to the last Chaldean or first Persian age; Vatke to the third century. These assign generally to after the Exile: Cheyne *(Thcol, Rev.,* XIV., p. 218: cf. art. "Jonah" in the *Encycl. Brit.'),* KOnig *(Einl.)*, Rob. Smith, Kuenen, Wildeboer, Budde, Cornill, Farrar, etc. Hitzig brings it down as far as the Maccabean age, which is impossible if the prophetic canon closed in 200 B.C., and seeks for its origin in Egypt, "that land of wonders," on account of its fabulous character, and because of the description of the east wind as ntnn (iv. 8), and the name of the gourd, Mp, Egyptian *kiki.* But such a wind and such a plant were found outside Egypt as well. Nowack dates the book after Joel.

[1] **See above, Vol. I., p. 5.**

Jonah for the conventional period of three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, a story not only very extraordinary in itself and sufficient to provoke the suspicion of allegory (we need not stop to argue this), but apparently woven, as we shall see,[1] from the materials of a myth well known to the Hebrews. We have also the very general account of Niniveh's conversion, in which there is not even the attempt to describe any precise event. The absence of precise data is indeed conspicuous throughout the book. "[1] The author neglects a multitude of things, which he would have been obliged to mention had history been his principal aim. He says nothing of the sins of which Niniveh was guilty,[8] nor of the journey of the prophet to Niniveh, nor does he mention the place where he was cast out upon the land, nor the name of the Assyrian king. In any case, if the narrative were intended to be historical, it would be incomplete by the frequent fact, that circumstances which are necessary for the connection of events are mentioned later than they happened, and only where attention has to be directed to them as having already happened."[8] We find, too, a number of trifling discrepancies, from which some critics * have attempted to prove the presence of more than one story in the composition of the book, but which are simply due to the license a writer allows himself when he is telling a tale and not writing a history. Above all, there is the abrupt close to the

[1] Below, pp. 523 ff.

[1] Contrast the treatment of foreign states by Elisha, Amos and Isaiah, etc.

[1] Abridged from pp. 3 and 4 of Kleinert's Introduction to the Book of Jonah in Lange's Series of Commentaries. Eng.. ed., Vol. XVI.

[4] Kohler, *Thtol. Rtv,* Vol. XVI.; Bohme, *Z.A.T.W.*, 1887, pp. 224 ff

story at the very moment at which its moral is obvious.[1] All these things are symptoms of the parable—so obvious and so natural, that we really sin against the intention of the author, and the purpose of the Spirit which inspired him, when we wilfully interpret the book as real history?

3. THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK.

The general purpose of this parable is very clear. It is not, as some have maintained,[3] to explain why

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[1] Indeed throughout the book the truths it enforces are always more pushed to the front than the facts.

[1] Nearly all the critics who accept the late date of the book interpret it as parabolic. See also a powerful article by the late Dr. Dale in the *Expositor*, Fourth Series, Vol. VI., July 1892, pp. I ff. Cf., too, C. H. H. Wright, *Biblical Essays* (1886), pp. 34*98.

[3] Marek (quoted by Kleinert) said: "Scriptum est magna parte historicum sed ita ut in historia ipsa latest maximi vaticinii mysterium, atque ipse fatis suis, non minus quam effatis vatem se verum demonstret." Hitzig curiously thinks that this is the reason why it has been placed in the Canon of the Prophets next to the unfulfilled prophecy of God against Edom. But by the date which Hitzig assigns to the book the prophecy against Edom was at least in a fair way to fulfilment. Riehm *(Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1862, pp. 413 f.): "The practical intention of the book is to afford instruction concerning the proper attitude to prophetic warnings; these, though genuine words of God, may be averted by repentance. Volck (art. "Jona" in Herzog's *Real. Encycl.*) gives the following. Jonah's experience is characteristic of the whole prophetic profession. "We learn from it (i) that the prophet must perform what God commands him, however unusual it appears; (2) that even death cannot nullify his calling; (3) that the prophet has no right to the fulfilment of his prediction, but must place it in God's hand." Vatke *(Einl.*, 688) maintains that the book was written in an apologetic interest, when Jews expounded the prophets and found this difficulty, that all their predictions had not been fulfilled. "The author obviously teaches: (1) since the prophet cannot withdraw from the Divine commission, he is also not responsible for the contents of his predictions; (2) the prophet often announces Divine purposes, which are not fulfilled,

the judgments of God and the predictions of His prophets were not always fulfilled—though this also becomes clear by the way. The purpose of the parable, and it is patent from first to last, is to illustrate the mission of prophecy to the Gentiles, God's care for them, and their susceptibility to His word. More correctly, it is to enforce all this truth upon a prejudiced and thrice-reluctant mind.[1]

Whose was this reluctant mind ? In Israel after the Exile there were many different feelings with regard to the future and the great obstacle which heathendom interposed between Israel and the future. There was the feeling of outraged justice, with the intense conviction that Jehovah's kingdom could not be established save by the overthrow of the cruel kingdoms of this world. We have seen that conviction expressed in the Book of Obadiah. But the nation, which read and cherished the visions of the Great Seer of the Exile,[1] could not help producing among her sons men with hopes about the heathen of a very different kind—men who felt that Israel's mission to the world was not one

because God in His mercy takes back the threat, when repentance follows; (3) the honour of a prophet is not hurt when a threat is not fulfilled, and the inspiration remains unquestioned, although many predictions are not carried out."

To all of which there is a conclusive answer, in the fact that, had the book been meant to explain or justify unfulfilled prophecy, the author would certainly not have chosen as an instance a judgment against Niniveh, because, by the time he wrote, all the early predictions of Niniveh's fall had been fulfilled, we might say, to the very letter.

[1] So even Kimchi; and in modern times De Wette, Delitzsch, Bleek, Reuss, Cheyne, Wright, Kdnig, Farrar, Orelli, etc. So virtually also Nowack. Ewald's view is a little different. He thinks that the fundamental truth of the book is that "true fear and repentance bring salvation from Jehovah." [1] Isa. xl. ff.

of war, but of service in those high truths of God and of His Grace which had been committed to herself. Between the two parties it is certain there was much polemic, and we find this still bitter in the time of our Lord. And some critics think that while Esther, Obadiah and other writings of the centuries after the Return represent the one side of this polemic, which demanded the overthrow of the heathen, the Book of Jonah represents the other side, and in the vexed and reluctant prophet pictures such Jews as were willing to proclaim the destruction of the enemies of Israel, and yet like Jonah were not without the lurking fear that God would disappoint their predictions and in His patience leave the heathen room for repentance.[1] Their dogmatism could not resist the impression of how long God had actually spared the oppressors of His people, and the author of the Book of Jonah cunningly sought these joints in their armour to insinuate the points of his doctrine of God's real will for nations beyond the covenant. This is ingenious and plausible. But in spite of the cleverness with which it has been argued that the details of the story of Jonah are adapted to the temper of the Jewish party who desired only vengeance on the heathen, it is not at all necessary to suppose that the book was the produce of mere polemic. The book is too simple and too grand for that. And therefore those appear more right who conceive that the writer had in view, not a Jewish party, but Israel as a whole in their national reluctance to fulfil their Divine mission to the world? Of them God

[1] So virtually Kuenen, *Eink,* II., p. 423; Smend, *Lthrbuch der A. T. Rtligion3gtschichte,* pp. 408 f, and Nowack.

[3] That the book is a historical allegory is a very old theory. Hermann v. d. Hardt (*JEnigmata Prisci Orbis,* 1723: cf. *Jondus in*

had already said : *Who is blind but My servant, or deaf as My messenger whom I have sent ? ... Who gave Jacob for a spoil and Israel to the robbers ? Did not Jehovah, He against whom we have sinned?—for they would not walk in His ways, neither were they obedient to His law.*[1] Of such a people Jonah is the type. Like them he flees from the duty God has laid upon him. Like them he is, beyond his own land, cast for a set period into a living death, and like them rescued again only to exhibit once more upon his return an ill-will to believe that God had any fate for the heathen except destruction. According to this theory, then, Jonah's disappearance in the sea and the great fish, and his subsequent ejection upon dry land, symbolise the Exile of Israel and their restoration to Palestine.

In proof of this view it has been pointed out that, while the prophets frequently represent the heathen tyrants of Israel as the sea or the sea-monster, one of them has actually described the nation's exile as its swallowing by a monster, whom God forces at last to disgorge his living prey? The full illustration of this will be given

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Carcharia, Israel in Carcathio, 1718, quoted by Vatke, *Einl.,* p. 686) found in the book a political allegory of the history of Manasseh led into exile, and converted, while the last two chapters represent the history of Josiah. That the book was symbolic in some way of the conduct and fortunes of Israel was a view familiar in Great Britain during the first half of this century: see the Preface to the English translation of Calvin on Jonah (1847). Kleinert (in his commentary on Jonah in Lange's Series, Vol. XVI. English translation, 1874) was one of the first to expound with details the symbolising of Israel in the prophet Jonah. Then came the article in the *Theol. Review* (XIV. 1877, pp. 214 ff.) by Cheyne, following Bloch's *Studien s. Gesch. der Sawimlung der althebraischen Litteratur* (Breslau, 1876); but adding the explanation of *the great fish* from Hebrew mythology (see below). Von Orelli quotes Kleinert with approval in the main.

[1] Isa. xlii. 19-24. * Jer. li. 34, 44 f.

in Chapter XXXVI. on " The Great Fish and What it Means." Here it is only necessary to mention that the metaphor was borrowed, not, as has been alleged by many, from some Greek, or other foreign, myth, which, like that of Perseus and Andromeda, had its scene in the neighbourhood of Joppa, but from a Semitic mythology which was well known to the Hebrews, and the materials of which were employed very frequently by other prophets and poets of the Old Testament.[1]

Why, of all prophets, Jonah should have been selected as the type of Israel, is a question hard but perhaps not impossible to answer. In history Jonah appears only as concerned with Israel's reconquest of her lands from the heathen. Did the author of the book say: I will take such a man, one to whom tradition attributes no outlook beyond Israel's own territories, for none could be so typical of Israel, narrow, selfish and with no love for the world beyond herself? Or did the author know some story about a journey of Jonah to Niniveh, or at least some discourse by Jonah against the great city ? Elijah went to Sarepta, Elisha took

[1] That the Book of Jonah employs mythical elements is an opinion that has prevailed since the beginning of this century. But before Semitic mythology was so well known as it is now, these mythical elements were thought to have been derived from the Greek mythology. So Gesenius, De Wette, and even Knobel, but see especially F. C. Baur in Ilgen's *Ztiischrift* for 1837, p. 201. Kuenen *(Einl.* 424) and Cheyne (Theol. *Rev.,* XIV.) rightly deny traces of any Greek influence on Jonah, and their denial is generally agreed in.

Kleinert *{op. cit.,* 10) points to the proper source in the native mythology of the Hebrews: "The sea-monster is by no means an unusual phenomenon in prophetic typology. It is the secular power appointed by God for the scourge of Israel and of the earth (Isa. xxvii. 1) "; and Cheyne *{Thtol. Rev* XIV., "Jonah: a Study in Jewish Folk-lore and Religion ") points out how Jer. li. 34, 44 f., forms the connecting link between the story of Jonah and the popular mythology.

God's word to Damascus: may there not have been, though we are ignorant of it, some connection between Nineveh and the labours of Elisha's successor ? Thirty years after Jonah appeared, Amos proclaimed the judgment of Jehovah upon foreign nations, with the destruction of their capitals; about the year 755 he clearly enforced, as equal with Israel's own, the moral responsibility of the heathen to the God of righteousness. May not Jonah, almost the contemporary of Amos, have denounced Niniveh in the same way? Would not some tradition of this serve as the nucleus of history, round which our author built his allegory ? It is possible that Jonah proclaimed doom upon Niniveh; yet those who are familiar with the prophesying of Amos, Hosea, and, in his younger days, Isaiah, will deem it hardly probable. For why do all these prophets exhibit such reserve in even naming Assyria, if Israel had already through Jonah entered into such articulate relations with Niniveh ? We must, therefore, admit our ignorance of the reasons which led our author to choose Jonah as a type of Israel. We can only conjecture that it may have been because Jonah was a prophet, whom history identified only with Israel's narrower interests. If, during subsequent centuries, a tradition had risen of Jonah's journey to Niniveh or of his discourse against her, such a tradition has probability against it.

A more definite origin for the book than any yet given has been suggested by Professor Budde.[1] The Second Book of Chronicles refers to a *Midrash of the Book of the Kings*[1] for further particulars concerning

[1] *Z.A.TW.*, 1892, pp. 40 f.

[1] 2 Chron. xxiv. 27.

King Joash. A *Midrash*[1] was the expansion, for doctrinal or homiletic purposes, of a passage of Scripture, and *very* frequently took the form, so dear to Orientals, of parable or invented story about the subject of the text. We have examples of Midrashim among the Apocrypha, in the Books of Tobit and Susannah and in the Prayer of Manasseh, the same as is probably referred to by the Chronicler? That the Chronicler himself used the *Midrash of the Book of the Kings* as material for his own book is obvious from the form of the latter and its adaptation of the historical narratives of the Book of Kings? The Book of Daniel may also be reckoned among the Midrashim, and Budde now proposes to add to their number the Book of Jonah. It may be doubted whether this distinguished critic is right in supposing that the book formed the Midrash to 2 Kings xiv. 25 ff (the author being desirous to add to the expression there of Jehovah's pity upon Israel some expression of His pity upon the heathen), or that it was extracted just as it stands, in proof of which Budde points to its abrupt beginning and end. We have seen another reason for the latter;[4] and it is very improbable that the Midrashim, so largely the basis of the Books of Chronicles, shared that spirit of universalism which inspires the Book of Jonah? But we may well believe that it was in some Midrash of the Book of Kings that the author of the Book of Jonah found the basis of the latter part of his immortal work, which too clearly reflects the

[1] CL Driver, *Introduction,* I., p. 497.

[1] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18.

* See Robertson Smith, *Old Test, in the Jewish Church,* pp. 140,154.

[4] See above, pp. 499 f.

[5] CL Smend, *A. T, Rehgibnsgeschichte,* p. 409, n. 1.

fortunes and conduct of all Israel to have been wholly drawn from a Midrash upon the story of the individual prophet Jonah.

4. Our Lord's Use of the Book.

We have seen, then, that the Book of Jonah is not actual history, but the enforcement of a profound religious truth nearer to the level of the New Testament than anything else in the Old, and cast in the form of Christ's own parables. The full proof of this can be made clear only by the detailed exposition of the book. There is, however, one other question, which is relevant to the argument. Christ Himself has employed the story of Jonah. Does His use of it involve His authority for the opinion that it is a story of real facts ?

Two passages of the Gospels contain the words ot our Lord upon Jonah: Matt. xii. 39, 41, and Luke xi. 29, 30.[1] *A generation, wicked and adulterous, seeketh a sign, and sign shall not be given it, save the sign of the*

[1] **Matt. xii. ^-*For as Jonah was in ths btify of the whale three days and thrse nights, so shall the Son of Man bs in ths hsart of ths earth three days and three nights*—is not repeated in Luke xi. 29, 30,, which confines the sign to the preaching of repentance, and is suspected as an intrusion both for this and other reasons, eg. that ver. 40 is superfluous and does not fit in with ver. 41, which gives the proper explanation of the sign; that Jonah, who came by his burial in the fish through neglect of his duty and not by martyrdom, could not therefore in this respect be a type of our Lord. On the other hand, ver. 40 is not unlike another reference of our Lord to His resurrection, John ii. 19 fF. Yet, even if ver. 40 be genuine, the vagueness of the parallel drawn in it between Jonah and our Lord surely makes for the opinion that in quoting Jonah our Lord was not concerned about quoting facts, but simply gave an illustration from a well-known tale. Matt. xvi. 4, where the sign of Jonah is again mentioned, does not explain the sign.**

prophet Jonah, . . . The men of Niniveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation^ and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, a greater than Jonah is here. This generation is an evil generation: it seeketh a sign; and sign shall not be given it, except the sign of Jonah. For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninivites, so also shall the Son of Man be to this generation.

These words, of course, are compatible with the opinion that the Book of Jonah is a record of real fact The only question is, are they also compatible with the opinion that the Book of Jonah is a parable ? Many say No; and they allege that those of us who hold this opinion are denying, or at least ignoring, the testimony of our Lord; or that we are taking away the whole force of the parallel which He drew. This is a question of interpretation, not of faith. We do not believe that our Lord had any thought of confirming or not confirming the historic character of the story. His purpose was purely one of exhortation, and we feel the grounds of that exhortation to be just as strong, when we have proven the Book of Jonah to be a parable. Christ is using an illustration: it surely matters not whether that illustration be drawn from the realms of fact or of poetry. Again and again in their discourses to the people do men use illustrations and enforcements drawn from traditions of the past. Do we, even when the historical value of these traditions is *very* ambiguous, give a single thought to the question of their historical character? We never think of it. It is enough for us that the tradition is popularly accepted and familiar. And we cannot deny to our Lord that which we claim for ourselves.[1] Even

[1] **Take a case. Suppose we tell slothful people that theirs will be**

conservative writers admit this. In his recent Introduction to Jonah Orelli says expressly: " 'It is not, indeed, proved with conclusive necessity that, if the resurrection of Jesus was a physical fact, Jonah's abode in the fish's belly must also be just as historical."[1]

Upon the general question of our Lord's authority in matters of criticism, His own words with regard to personal questions may be appositely quoted: *Man^ who made Me a judge or divider over you ? I am come not to judge . . . but to save.* Such matters our Lord surely leaves to ourselves, and we have to decide them by our reason, our common-sense and our loyalty to truth—of all of which He Himself is the creator, and of which we shall have to render to Him an account at the last. Let us remember this, and we shall use them with equal liberty and reverence. *Bringing every thought into subjection to Christ* is surely just using our knowledge, our reason, and every other intellectual gift which He has given us, with the accuracy and the courage of His own Spirit.

5. THE UNITY OF THE BOOK.

The next question is that of the Unity of the Book. Several attempts have been made to prove from discrepancies, some real and some alleged, that the book is a compilation of stories from several different hands,

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the fate of the man who buried his talent, is this to commit us to the belief that the personages of Christ's parables actually existed ? Or take the homiletic use of Shakespeare's dramas—" as Macbeth did," or "as Hamlet said." Does it commit us to the historical reality of Macbeth or Hamlet ? Any preacher among us would resent being bound by such an inference. And if we resent this for ourselves, how chary we should be about seeking to bind our Lord by it

[1] Eng. trans, of *Tht Twelve Minor Prophets,* p. 172. Consult also Farrar's judicious paragraphs on the subject: *Minor Prophets,* 234 f.

But these essays are too artificial to have obtained any adherence from critics; and the few real discrepancies of narrative from which they start are due, as we have seen, rather to the license of a writer of parable than to any difference of authorship.[1]

In the question of the Unity of the Book, the Prayer or Psalm in chap. ii. offers a problem of its own, consisting as it does almost entirely of passages parallel to others in the Psalter. Besides a number of religious

[1] The two attempts which have been made to divide the Book of Jonah are those by Kohler in the *Thcol. Rw,t* XVI. 139 ff., and by Bohme in the *ZJ.TW.t* VII. 224 ff Kohler first insists on traits of an earlier age (rude conception of God, no sharp boundary drawn between heathens and the Hebrews, etc.), and then finds traces of a late revision : lacuna in i. 2; hesitation in iii. 1, in the giving of the prophets commission, which is not pure Hebrew; change of three days to forty (cf. LXX.); mention of unnamed king and his edict, which is superfluous after the popular movement; beasts sharing in mourning; also in i. 5, 8, 9, 14, ii 2, n?1, iii. 9, iv. 1-4, as disturbing context; also the building of a booth is superfluous, and only invented to account for Jonah remaining forty days instead of the original three; iv. 6, wnh ? 7 mn? for an original 12 750? = to offer him shade; 7, *the worm,t* ng?n, due to a copyist's change of the following m2y2. Withdrawing these, Kohler gets an account of the sparing of Niniveh on repentance following a sentence of doom, which, he says, reflects the position of the city of God in Jeremiah's time, and was due to Jeremiah's opponents, who said in answer to his sentence of doom: If Niniveh could avert her fate, why not Jerusalem ? Bohme's conclusion, starting from the alleged contradictions in the story, is that no fewer than four hands have had to deal with it. A sufficient answer is given by Kuenen *(Einl^* 426 ff), who, after analysing the dissection, says that its "improbability is immediately evident." With regard to the inconsistencies which Bohme alleges to exist in chap. iii. between ver. 5 and w. 6-9, Kuenen remarks that "all that is needed for their explanation is a little good-will"—a phrase applicable to many other difficulties raised with regard to other Old Testament books by critical attempts even more rational than those of Bohme. Comill characterises Bohme's hypothesis as absurd.

phrases, which are too general for us to say that one prayer has borrowed them from another,[1] there are several unmistakeable repetitions of the Psalms.[3]

And yet the Psalm of Jonah has strong features, which, so far as we know, are original to it. The horror of the great deep has nowhere in the Old Testament been described with such power or with such conciseness. So far, then, the Psalm is not a mere string of quotations, but a living unity. Did the author of the book himself insert it where it stands? Against this it has been urged that the Psalm is not the prayer of a man inside a fish, but of one who on dry land celebrates a deliverance from drowning, and that if the author of the narrative himself had inserted it, he would rather have done so after ver. 11, which records the prophet's escape from the fish.[3] And a usual theory of the origin of the Psalm is that a later editor, having found the Psalm ready-made and in a collection where it was perhaps attributed to Jonah,* inserted it after ver. 2, which records that Jonah did pray from the belly of the fish, and inserted it there the more readily, because it seemed right for a book which had found its place among the Twelve Prophets to contribute, as all the others did, some actual discourse of the prophet whose name it bore.[6] This, however, is not probable. Whether the original author found the

[1] ***To Thy holy temple,*** **w. 5 and 8: cf. Psalm v. 8, etc.** ***Tht waters have come round me to*** **my very** ***soul,*** **ver. 6: cf. Psalm lxix. 2.** ***And Thou broughtest up my life,*** **ver. 7 : cf. Psalm xxx, 4.** ***When my soul fainted upon me,*** **ver. 8: cf. Psalm cxlii. 4, etc.** ***With the voice of thanksgiving,*** **ver. 10: cf. Psalm xlii. 5. The refF. are to the Heb. text**

[2] **Cf. ver. 3 with Psalm xviii. 7 ; ver. 4 with Psalm xlii. 8; ver. 5 with Psalm xxxi. 23; ver. 9 with Psalm xxxi. 7, and ver. 10 with Psalm 1. 14.**

[3] **Budde, as above, p. 42.**

[4] **De Wette, Knobel, Kuenen.**

[1] **Budde.**

Psalm ready to his hand or made it, there is a great deal to be said for the opinion of the earlier critics,[1] that he himself inserted it, and just where it now stands. For, from the standpoint of the writer, Jonah was already saved, when he was taken up by the fish—saved from the deep into which he had been cast by the sailors, and the dangers of which the Psalm so vividly describes. However impossible it be for us to conceive of the compilation of a Psalm (even though full of quotations) by a man in Jonah's position,[1] it was consistent with the standpoint of a writer who had just affirmed that the fish was expressly *appointed by* * *Jehovah*^ in order to save his penitent servant from the sea. To argue that the Psalm is an intrusion is therefore not only unnecessary, but it betrays failure to appreciate the standpoint of the writer. Given the fish and the Divine purpose of the fish, the Psalm is intelligible and appears at its proper place. It were more reasonable indeed to argue that the fish itself is an insertion. Besides, as we shall see, the spirit of the Psalm is national; in conformity with the truth underlying the book, it is a Psalm of Israel as a whole.

If this be correct, we have the Book of Jonah as it came from the hands of its author. The text is in wonderfully good condition, due to the ease of the narrative and its late date. The Greek version

[1] *Eg.* **Hitzig.**

• **Luther says of Jonah's prayer, that " he did not speak with these exact words in the belly of the fish, nor placed them so orderly, but he shows how he took courage, and what sort of thoughts his heart had, when he stood in such a battle with death." We recognise in this Psalm "the recollection of the confidence with which Jonah hoped towards God, that since he had been rescued in so wonderful a way from death in the waves, He would also bring him out of the night of his grave into the light of day."**

exhibits the usual proportion of clerical errors and mis-translations/ omissions[9] and amplifications/ with some variant readings[4] and other changes that will be noted in the verses themselves.

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[1] ii. 5, B has Aar for var ; i. 9, for 2 it reads '29, and takes the * to be abbreviation for mn'; ii. 7, for y2 it reads 23, and translates *xdroxoi*; iv. 11, for nath it reads 120, and translates *Kttroucown*.

[*] i. 4, n2 3, perhaps rightly omitted before following 711 J; i. 8, B omits the clause WN3 to 137, probably rightly, for it is needless, though supplied by Codd. A, Q; iii. 9, one verb, *fwrojvfpei*, for on3 21", probably correctly, see below.

[3] L 2, h *xpavyh* rfs xaxlas for onii; ii. 3, rr /MV [illegible] mn; ii. 10, in obedience to another reading; iii. 2, rd *fykTporftr* after nep; iii 8, 2.

[4] ui. 4, 8.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE GREAT REFUSAL

JONAH I

WE have now laid clear the lines upon which the Book of Jonah was composed. Its purpose is to illustrate God's grace to the heathen in face of His people's refusal to fulfil their mission to them. The author was led to achieve this purpose by a parable, through which the prophet Jonah moves as the symbol of his recusant, exiled, redeemed and still hardened people. It is the Drama of Israel's career, as the Servant of God, in the most pathetic moments of that career. A nation is stumbling on the highest road nation was ever called to tread.

Who is blind but My servant,
Or deaf as My messenger whom I have sent?

He that would read this Drama aright must remember what lies behind the Great Refusal which forms its tragedy. The cause of Israel's recusancy was not only wilfulness or cowardly sloth, but the horror of a whole world given over to idolatry, the paralysing sense of its irresistible force, of its cruel persecutions endured for centuries, and of the long famine of Heaven's justice. These it was which had filled Israel's eyes too full of fever to see her duty. Only when we

feel, as the writer himself felt, all this tragic background to his story are we able to appreciate the exquisite gleams which he flashes across it: the generous magnanimity of the heathen sailors, the repentance of the heathen city, and, lighting from above, God's pity upon the dumb heathen multitudes.

The parable or drama divides itself into three parts : The Prophet's Flight and Turning (chap, i.); The Great Fish and What it Means (chap, ii.); and The Repentance of the City (chaps, iii. and iv.).

The chief figure of the story is Jonah, son of Amittai, from Gath-hepher in Galilee, a prophet identified with that turn in Israel's fortunes, by which she began to defeat her Syrian oppressors, and win back from them her own territories—a prophet, therefore, of revenge, and from the most bitter of the heathen wars. *And the word of Jehovah came to Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Up*$_9$ *go to Niniveh*$_9$ *the Great Cify*$_t$ *and cry out against her*$_9$ *for her evil is come up before Me*$_z$ But *he arose to flee.* It was not the length of the road, nor the danger of declaring Niniveh's sin to her face, which turned him, but the instinct that God intended by him something else than Niniveh's destruction ; and this instinct sprang from his knowledge of God Himself. *Ah now*$_9$ *Jehovah*$_9$ *was not my word*$_9$ *while I was yet upon mine own soil, at the time I made ready to flee to Tarshish, this—that I knew that Thou art a God gracious and tender and long-suffering, plenteous in love and relenting of evil?*[1] Jonah interpreted the Word which came to him by the Character which he knew to be behind the Word. This is a significant hint upon the method of revelation.

[1] iv. 2.

It would be rash to say that, in imputing even to the historical Jonah the fear of God's grace upon the heathen, our author were guilty of an anachronism.[1] We have to do, however, with a greater than Jonah —the nation herself. Though perhaps Israel little reflected upon it, the instinct can never have been far away that some day the grace of Jehovah might reach the heathen too. Such an instinct, of course, must have been almost stifled by hatred born of heathen oppression, as well as by the intellectual scorn which Israel came to feel for heathen idolatries. But we may believe that it haunted even those dark periods in which revenge upon the Gentiles seemed most just, and their destruction the only means oi establishing God's kingdom in the world. We know that it moved uneasily even beneath the rigour of Jewish legalism. For its secret was that faith in the essential grace of God, which Israel gained very early and never lost, and which was the spring of every new conviction and every reform in her wonderful development. With a subtle appreciation of all this, our author imputes the instinct to Jonah from the outset. Jonah's fear, that after all the heathen may be spared, reflects the restless apprehension even of the most exclusive of his people—an apprehension which by the time our book

[1] **For the grace of God had been the most formative influence in the early religion of Israel (see Vol. I., p. 19), and Amos, only thirty years after Jonah, emphasised the moral equality of Israel and the Gentiles before the one God of righteousness. Given these two premisses of God's essential grace and the moral responsibility of the heathen to Him, and the conclusion could never have been far away that in the end His essential grace must reach the heathen too. Indeed in sayings not later than the eighth century it is foretold that Israel shall become a blessing to the whole world. Our author, then, may have been guilty of no anachronism in imputing such a foreboding to Jonah.**

was written seemed to be still more justified by God's long delay of doom upon the tyrants whom He had promised to overthrow.

But to the natural man in Israel the possibility of the heathen's repentance was still so abhorrent, that he turned his back upon it. *Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the face of Jehovah.* In spite of recent arguments to the contrary, the most probable location of Tarshish is the generally accepted one, that it was a Phoenician colony at the other end of the Mediterranean. In any case it was far from the Holy Land; and by going there the prophet would put the sea between himself and his God. To the Hebrew imagination there could not be a flight more remote. Israel was essentially an inland people. They had come up out of the desert, and they had practically never yet touched the Mediterranean. They lived within sight of it, but from ten to twenty miles of foreign soil intervened between their mountains and its stormy coast. The Jews had no traffic upon the sea, nor (but for one sublime instance[1] to the contrary) had their poets ever employed it except as a symbol of arrogance and restless rebellion against the will of God? It was all this popular feeling of the distance and strangeness of the sea which made our author choose it as the scene of the prophet's flight from the face of Israel's God. Jonah had to pass, too, through a foreign land to get to the coast: upon the sea he would only be among heathen. This was to be part of his conversion. *He went down to Yapho, and found a ship going to Tarshish^ and paid the fare thereof and embarked on her*

[1] Second Isaiah. See chap. lx.

* See the author's *Hist. Gtog. of ths Holy Land^* pp. 131-134

to get away with her crew[1] *to Tarshish—away from the face of Jehovah.* •

The scenes which follow are very vivid : the sudden wind sweeping down from the very hills on which Jonah believed he had left his God; the tempest; the behaviour of the ship, so alive with effort that the story attributes to her the feelings of a living thing —*she thought she must be broken;* the despair of the mariners, driven from the unity of their common task to the hopeless diversity of their idolatry—*they cried every man unto his own god;* the jettisoning of the tackle of the ship to lighten her (as we should say, they let the masts go by the board); the worn-out prophet in the hull of the ship, sleeping like a stow-away ; the group gathered on the heaving deck to cast the lot; the passenger's confession, and the new fear which fell upon the sailors from it; the reverence with which these rude men ask the advice of him, in whose guilt they feel not the offence to themselves, but the sacredness to God; the awakening of the prophet's better self by their generous deference to him; how he counsels to them his own sacrifice; their reluctance to yield to this, and their return to the oars with increased perseverance for his sake. But neither their generosity nor their efforts avail. The prophet again offers himself, and as their sacrifice he is thrown into the sea.

And Jehovah cast a wind[1] on the sea, and there was a great tempest;[2] and the ship threatened[4] to break up. And the sailors were afraid, and cried every man unto his own god; and they cast the tackle of the ship into the sea, to lighten it from upon them. But Jonah had gone

[1] Heb. *them.*
[2] So LXX. : Heb. *a great wind.*
[3] Heb. *on the sea.*
[4] Lit. *reckoned* or *thought.*

down to the bottom of the ship and lay fast asleep. And the captain of the ship[1] *came to him*$_t$ *and said to him*$_t$ *What art thou doing asleep ? Up, call on thy God; peradventure the God will be gracious to us, that we perish not. And they said every man to his neighbour, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose sake is this evil* come *upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. And they said to him, Tell us now,*[1] *what is thy business, and whence contest thou ? what is thy land, and from what people art thou? And he said to them, A Hebrew am I, and a worshipper of the God of Heaven*[3]*, who made the sea and the dry land. And the men feared greatly, and said to him, What is this thou hast done? (for they knew he was fleeing from the face of Jehovah, because he had told them). And they said to him, What are we to do to thee that the sea cease* raging *against us ? For the sea was surging higher and higher. And he said, Take me and throw me into the sea; so shall the sea cease* raging *against you: for I am sure that it is on my account that this great tempest is* risen *upon you. And the men laboured*[4] *with the oars to bring the ship to land, and they could not, for the sea grew more and more stormy against them. So they called on Jehovah and said, Jehovah, let us not perish, we pray Thee, for the life of this man, neither bring innocent blood upon us: for Thou art Jehovah, Thou doest as Thou pleasest. Then they took up Jonah and cast him into the sea, and the sea stilled from its raging. But the men were*

[1] **Heb.** *ropes.*

The words *for whose sake is this evil* **come** *upon us* **do not occur in LXX and are unnecessary.**

3 Wellhausen suspects this form of the Divine title.

[4] **Heb.** *aug.*

in great awe of Jehovah^ and sacrificed to Him and vowed vows.

How very real it is and how very noble! We see the storm,, and then we forget the storm in the joy of that generous contest between heathen and Hebrew. But the glory of the passage is the change in Jonah himself. It has been called his punishment and the conversion of the heathen. Rather it is his own conversion. He meets again not only God, but the truth from which he fled. He not only meets that truth, but he offers his life for it

The art is consummate. The writer will first reduce the prophet and the heathen whom he abhors to the elements of their common humanity. As men have sometimes seen upon a mass of wreckage or on an ice-floe a number of wild animals, by nature foes to each other, reduced to peace through their common danger, so we descry the prophet and his natural enemies upon the strained and breaking ship. In the midst of the storm they are equally helpless, and they cast for all the lot which has no respect of persons. But from this the story passes quickly, to show how Jonah feels not only the human kinship of these heathen with himself, but their susceptibility to the knowledge of his God. They pray to Jehovah as the God of the sea and the dry land; ; while we may be sure that the prophet's confession, and the story of his own relation to that God, forms as powerful an exhortation to repentance as any he could have preached in Niniveh. At least it produces the effects which he has dreaded. In these sailors he sees heathen turned to the fear of the Lord. All that he has fled to avoid happens there before his eyes and through his own mediation.

The climax is reached, however, neither when Jonah feels his common humanity with the heathen nor when he discovers their awe of his God, but when in order to secure for them God's sparing mercies he offers his own life instead. *Take me up and cast me into the sea; so shall the sea cease from* raging *against you.* After their pity for him has wrestled for a time with his honest entreaties, he becomes their sacrifice.

In all this story perhaps the most instructive passages are those which lay bare to us the method of God's revelation. When we were children this was shown to us in pictures of angels bending from heaven to guide Isaiah's pen, or to cry Jonah's commission to him through a trumpet. And when we grew older, although we learned to dispense with that machinery, yet its infection remained, and our conception of the whole process was mechanical still. We thought of the prophets as of another order of things; we released them from our own laws of life and thought, and we paid the penalty by losing all interest in them. But the prophets were human, and their inspiration came through experience. The source of it, as this story shows, was God. Partly from His guidance of their nation, partly through close communion with Himself, they received new convictions of His character. Yet they did not receive these mechanically. They spake neither at the bidding of angels, nor like heathen prophets in trance or ecstasy, but as *they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* And the Spirit worked upon them first as the influence of God's character,[1] and second

[1] *I knew how Thou art a God gracious.*

through the experience of life. God and life—these are all the postulates for revelation.

At first Jonah fled from the truth, at last he laid down his life for it. So God still forces us to the acceptance of new light and the performance of strange duties. Men turn from these, because of sloth or prejudice, but in the end they have to face them, and then at what a cost I In youth they shirk a self-denial to which in some storm of later life they have to bend with heavier, and often hopeless, hearts. For their narrow prejudices and refusals, God punishes them by bringing them into pain that stings, or into responsibility for others that shames, these out of them. The drama of life is thus intensified in interest and beauty; characters emerge heroic and sublime.

"But, oh the labour,
O prince, the pain!"

Sometimes the neglected duty is at last achieved only at the cost of a man's breath; and the truth, which might have been the bride of his youth and his comrade through a long life, is recognised by him only in the features of Death.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE GREAT FISH AND WHAT IT MEANS—
THE PSALM

JONAH ii

AT this point in the tale appears the Great Fish.

And Jehovah prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

After the very natural story which we have followed, this verse obtrudes itself with a shock of unreality and grotesqueness. What an anticlimax! say some; what a clumsy intrusion ! So it is if Jonah be taken as an individual. But if we keep in mind that he stands here, not for himself, but for his nation, .the difficulty and the grotesqueness disappear. It is Israel's ill-will to the heathen, Israel's refusal of her mission, Israel's embarkation on the stormy sea of the world's politics, which we have had described as Jonah's. Upon her flight from God's will there followed her Exile, and from her Exile, which was for a set period, she came back to her own land, a people still, and still God's servant to the heathen. How was the author to express this national death and resurrection ? In conformity with the popular language of his time, he had described Israel's turning from God's will by her embarkation on a stormy sea, always the symbol of the prophets for

the tossing heathen world that was ready to engulf her; and now to express her exile and return he sought metaphors in the same rich poetry of the popular imagination.

To the Israelite who watched from his hills that stormy coast on which the waves hardly ever cease to break in their impotent restlessness, the sea was a symbol of arrogance and futile defiance to the will of God. The popular mythology of the Semites had filled it with turbulent monsters, snakes and dragons who wallowed like its own waves, helpless against the bounds set to them, or rose to wage war against the gods in heaven and the great lights which they had created; but a god slays them and casts their carcases for meat and drink to the thirsty people of the desert.[1] It is a symbol of the perpetual war between light and darkness; the dragons are the clouds, the slayer the sun. A variant form, which approaches closely to that of Jonah's great fish, is still found in Palestine. In May 1891 I witnessed at Hasbeya, on the western skirts of Hermon, an eclipse of the moon. When the shadow began to creep across her disc, there rose from the village a hideous din of drums, metal pots and planks of wood beaten together; guns were fired, and there was much shouting. I was told that this was done to terrify the great fish which was swallowing the moon, and to make him disgorge her.

Now these purely natural myths were applied by the prophets and poets of the Old Testament to the illustration, not only of Jehovah's sovereignty over the storm and the night, but of His conquest of the heathen

[1] **For the Babylonian myths see Sayce's Hibbert Lectures; George Smith's *Assyrian Discoveries*; and Gunkel, *Schtyfung u. Chaos.***

powers who had enslaved His people.[1] Isaiah had heard in the sea the confusion and rage of the peoples against the bulwark which Jehovah set around Israel ;[3] but it is chiefly from the time of the Exile onward that the myths themselves, with their cruel monsters and the prey of these, are applied to the great heathen powers and their captive, Israel. One prophet explicitly describes the Exile of Israel as the swallowing of the nation by the monster, the Babylonian tyrant, whom God forces at last to disgorge its prey. Israel says:[8] *Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me* and crushed me* ... he hath swallowed me up like the Dragon*$_9$ *filling his belly*$_9$ *from my delights he hath cast me out.* But Jehovah replies:[6] *I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed. . . . My people, go ye out of the midst of her.*

It has been justly remarked by Canon Cheyne that this passage may be considered as the intervening link between the original form of the myth and the application of it made in the story of Jonah.[8] To this the objection might be offered that in the story of Jonah the *great fish* is not actually represented as the means of the prophet's temporary destruction, like the monster in Jeremiah IL, but rather as the vessel of his deliver-

[1] **Passages in which this class of myths are taken in a physical sense are job iii. 8, vii. 12, xxvi. 12, 13, etc., etc.; and passages in which it is applied politically are Isa. xxvii. I, IL 9; Jer. li. 34, 44; Psalm lxxiv., etc. See Gunkel, *Schdpfuug u. Chaos.***

[2] **Chap. xvii. 12-14.**

[3] **Jer. li. 34.**

[4] **Heb. margin, LXX. and Syr.; Heb. text *us.***

* **Jer. It 44. 45-**

[9] **Cheyne, *Thsol. Rsv.*, XIV. See above, p. 503.**

ance.[1] This is true, yet it only means that our author has still further adapted the very plastic material offered him by this much transformed myth. But we do not depend for our proof upon the comparison of a single passage. Let the student of the Book of Jonah read carefully the many passages of the Old Testament, in which the sea or its monsters rage in vain against Jehovah, or are harnessed and led about by Him; or still more those passages in which His conquest of these monsters is made to figure His conquest of the heathen powers,[8]—and the conclusion will appear irresistible that the story of the *great fish* and of Jonah the type of Israel is drawn from the same source. Such a solution of the problem has one great advantage. It relieves us of the grotesqueness which attaches to the literal conception of the story, and of the necessity of those painful efforts for accounting for a miracle which have distorted the common-sense and even the orthodoxy of so many commentators of the book.[8] We are dealing, let us remember, with poetry—a poetry inspired by one of the most sublime truths of the Old Testament, but whose figures are drawn from the legends and myths of the people to whom it is addressed. To treat this as prose is not only to sin against the common-sense which God has given us, but against the simple and obvious intention of the author. It is blindness both to reason and to Scripture.

[1] See above, p. 511, on the Psalm of Jonah.

*** Above, p. 525, n. 1.**

3 It is very interesting to notice how many commentators (*e.g.*. Pusey, and the English edition of Lange) who take the story in its individual meaning, and therefore as miraculous, immediately try to minimise the miracle by quoting stories of great fishes who have swallowed men, and even men in armour, whole, and in one case at least have vomited them up alive I

These views are confirmed by an examination of the Psalm or Prayer which is put into Jonah's mouth while he is yet in the fish. We have already seen what grounds there are for believing that the Psalm belongs to the author's own plan, and from the beginning appeared just where it does now.[1] But we may also point out how, in consistence with its context, this is a Psalm, not of an individual Israelite, but of the nation as a whole. It is largely drawn from the national liturgy? It is full of cries which we know, though they are expressed in the singular number, to have been used of the whole people, or at least of that pious portion of them, who were Israel indeed. True that in the original portion of the Psalm, and by far its most beautiful verses, we seem to have the description of a drowning man swept to the bottom of the sea. But even here, the colossal scenery and the magnificent hyperbole of the language suit not the experience of an individual, but the extremities of that vast gulf of exile into which a whole nation was plunged. It is a nation's carcase which rolls upon those infernal tides that swirl among the roots of mountains and behind the barred gates of earth. Finally, vv. 9 and 10 are obviously a contrast, not between the individual prophet and the heathen, but. between the true Israel, who in exile preserve their loyalty to Jehovah, and those Jews who, forsaking their *covenant-love*, lapse to idolatry. We find many parallels to this in exilic and post-exilic literature.

And Jonah prayed to Jehovah his God from the belly of the fish, and said:—

I cried out of my anguish to Jehovah, and He answered me;

[1] See above, pp. 511 f. [2] See above, p. 511, nn. I, 2.

From the belly of Inferno I sought help—Thou heardest my voice.
For Thou hadst[1] *cast me into the depth, to the heart of the seas, and the flood rolled around me;*
All Thy breakers and billows went over me.
Then I said, I am hurled from Thy sight:
How[8] *shall I ever again look towards Thy holy temple ?*
Waters enwrapped me to the soul; the Deep rolled around me;
The tangle was bound about my head.
I was gone down to the roots of the hills;
Earth and *her bars were behind me for ever.*
But Thou broughtest my life up from destruction, Jehovah my God!
When my soul fainted upon me, I remembered Jehovah,
And my prayer came in unto Thee, to Thy holy temple.
They that observe the idols of vanity.
They forsake their covenant-love.
But to the sound of praise I will sacrifice to Thee;
What I have vowed I will perform.
Salvation is Jehovah!s.

And Jehovah spake to the fish, and it threw up Jonah on the dry land.

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[1] **The grammar, which usually expresses result, more literally runs, *A nd Thou didst cast mt*; but after the preceding verse it must be taken not as expressing consequence but cause.**

* **Read 7'W for ' ms, and with the LXX. take the sentence interrogatively.**

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE REPENTANCE OF THE CITY

JONAH iii 1

HAVING learned, through suffering, his moral kinship with the heathen, and having offered his life for some of them, Jonah receives a second command to go to Niniveh. He obeys, but with his prejudice as strong as though it had never been humbled, nor met by Gentile nobleness. The first part of his story appears to have no consequences in the second.[1] But this is consistent with the writer's purpose to treat Jonah as if he were Israel. For, upon their return from Exile, and in spite of all their new knowledge of themselves and the world, Israel continued to cherish their old grudge against the Gentiles.

And the word of Jehovah came to Jonah the second time, saying, Up, go to Niniveh, the great city, and call unto her with the call which I shall tell thee. And Jonah arose and went to Niniveh, as Jehovah said. Now Niniveh was a city great before God, three dayd journey through and through? *And Jonah began by*

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[1] **Only in iii. I, *second time,* and in iv. 2 are there any references from the second to the first part of the book.**

[s] **The diameter rather than the circumference seems intended by the writer, if we can judge by his sending the prophet *one day's journey through the city.* Some, however, take the circumference as meant, and this agrees with the computation of sixty English miles as the girth of the greater Niniveh described below.**

going through the city one day's journey, and he cried and said, Forty[1] days more and Niniveh shall be overturned.

Opposite to Mosul, the well-known emporium of trade on the right bank of the Upper Tigris, two high artificial mounds now lift themselves from the otherwise level plain. The more northerly takes the name of Kujundschik,, or "little lamb/[1] after the Turkish village which couches pleasantly upon its northeastern slope. The other is called in the popular dialect Nebi Yunus, "Prophet Jonah," after a mosque dedicated to him, which used to be a Christian church; but the official name is Niniveh. These two mounds are bound to each other on the west by a broad brick wall, which extends beyond them both, and is connected north and south by other walls, with a circumference in all of about nine English miles. The interval, including the mounds, was covered with buildings, whose ruins still enable us to form some idea of what was for centuries the wonder of the world. Upon terraces and substructions of enormous breadth rose storied palaces, arsenals, barracks, libraries and temples. A lavish water system spread in all directions from canals with massive embankments and sluices. Gardens were lifted into mid-air, filled with rich plants and rare and beautiful animals. Alabaster, silver, gold and precious stones relieved the dull masses of brick and flashed sunlight from every frieze and battlement The surrounding walls were so broad that chariots could roll abreast on them. The gates, and especially the river gates, were very massive?

[1] LXX. **Codd. B, etc,, read *thru days]* other Codd, have the forty of the Heb. text**

*** For a more detailed description of Niniveh see above on the Book of Nahum, pp. 98 f.**

All this was Niniveh proper, whose glory the Hebrews envied and over whose fall more than one of their prophets exult. But this was not the Niniveh to which our author saw Jonah come. Beyond the walls were great suburbs,[1] and beyond the suburbs other towns, league upon league of dwellings, so closely set upon the plain as to form one vast complex of population, which is known to Scripture as *The Great City.*[1] To judge from the ruins which still cover the ground,[8] the circumference must have been about sixty miles, or three days'journey. It is these nameless leagues of common dwellings which roll before us in the story. None of those glories of Niniveh are mentioned, of which other prophets speak, but the only proofs offered to us of the city's greatness are its extent and its population.[4] Jonah is sent to three days, not of mighty buildings, but of homes and families, to the Niniveh, not of kings and their glories, but of men, women and children, *besides much cattle.* The palaces and temples he may pass in an hour or two, but from sunrise to sunset he treads the dim drab mazes where the people dwell.

When we open our hearts for heroic witness to the truth there rush upon them glowing memories of Moses before Pharaoh, of Elijah before Ahab, of Stephen before the Sanhedrim, of Paul upon Areopagus, of Galileo before the Inquisition, of Luther at the Diet. But it takes a greater heroism to face the

[1] Jonah, Gen. x. 11.

[8] Gen. x. 12, according to which the Great City included, besides Niniveh, at least Resen and Kelach.

[4] And taking the present Kujundschik, Nimrud, Khorsabad and Balawat as the four corners of the district

[1] Hi. 2, iv. II.

people than a king, to convert a nation than to persuade a senate. Princes and assemblies of the wise stimulate the imagination; they drive to bay all the nobler passions of a solitary man. But there is nothing to help the heart, and therefore its courage is all the greater, which bears witness before those endless masses, in monotone of life and colour, that now paralyse the imagination like long stretches of sand when the sea is out, and again terrify it like the resistless rush of the flood beneath a hopeless evening sky.

It is, then, with an art most fitted to his high purpose that our author—unlike all other prophets, whose aim was different—presents to us, not the description of a great military power: king, nobles and armed battalions: but the vision of those monotonous millions. He strips his country's foes of everything foreign, everything provocative of envy and hatred, and unfolds them to Israel only in their teeming humanity.[1]

His next step is still more grand. For this teeming humanity he claims the universal human possibility of repentance—that and nothing more.

Under every form and character of human life, beneath all needs and all habits, deeper than despair and more native to man than sin itself, lies the power of the heart to turn. It was this and not hope that remained at the bottom of Pandora's Box when every other gift had fled. For this is the indispensable secret of hope. It lies in every heart, needing indeed some dream of Divine mercy, however far and vague,

[1] **Compare the Book of Jonah, for instance, with the Book of Nahum.**

to rouse it; but when roused, neither ignorance of God, nor pride, nor long obduracy of evil may withstand it. It takes command of the whole nature of a man, and speeds from heart to heart with a violence, that like pain and death spares neither age nor rank nor degree of culture. This primal human right is all our author claims for the men of Niniveh. He has been blamed for telling us an impossible thing, that a whole city should be converted at the call of a single stranger; and others have started up in his defence and quoted cases in which large Oriental populations have actually been stirred by the preaching of an alien in race and religion; and then it has been replied, "' Granted the possibility, granted the fact in other cases, yet where in history have we any trace of this alleged conversion of all Niniveh ? " and some scoff, " How could a Hebrew have made himself articulate in one day to those Assyrian multitudes?"

How long, O Lord, must Thy poetry suffer from those who can only treat it as prose ? On whatever side they stand, sceptical or orthodox, they are equally pedants, quenchers of the spiritual, creators of unbelief.

Our author, let us once for all understand, makes no attempt to record an historical conversion of this vast heathen city. For its men he claims only the primary human possibility of repentance; expressing himself not in this general abstract way, but as Orientals, to whom an illustration is ever a proof, love to have it done—by story or parable. With magnificent reserve he has not gone further; but only told into the prejudiced faces of his people, that out there, beyond the Covenant, in the great world lying in darkness, there live, not beings created for ignorance and hostility to God, elect for destruction, but men with consciences

and hearts, able to turn at His Word and to hope in His Mercy—that to the farthest ends of the world, and even on the high places of unrighteousness, Word and Mercy work just as they do within the Covenant.

The fashion in which the repentance of Niniveh is described is natural to the time of the writer. It is a national repentance, of course, and though swelling upwards from the people, it is confirmed and organised by the authorities: for we are still in the Old Dispensation, when the picture of a complete and thorough repentance could hardly be otherwise conceived. And the beasts are made to share its observance, as in the Orient they always shared and still share in funeral pomp and trappings.[1] It may have been, in addition, a personal pleasure to our writer to record the part of the animals in the movement See how, later on, he tells us that for their sake also God had pity upon Niniveh.

And the men of Niniveh believed upon God, and cried a fast, and from the greatest of them to the least of them they put on sackcloth. And word came to the king of Niniveh, and he rose off his throne, and cast his mantle from upon him, and dressed in sackcloth and sat in the dust. And he sent criers to say in Niniveh:—

By Order of the King and his Nobles, thus:—Man and Beast, Oxen and Sheep, shall not taste anything, neither eat nor drink water. But let them clothe themselves[3] *in sackcloth, both man and beast, and call upon God with power, and turn every man from his evil way and from* every *wrong which they have in hand. Who*

1 Cf. Herod. IX 24; Joel i. 18; Virgil, Edogue *V., EneidXI,* 89 ff ; Plutarch, *Alix. 72.*

3 LXX.: *and th^ did clothi thentsehfte in sackcloth^* and so on.

knoweth but that God may[1] *yelent and turn from the fierceness of His wrath, that we perish not ?* 2

And God saw their doings, how they turned from their evil way; and God relented of the evil which He said He would do to them, and did it not.

[1] **So LXX. Heb. text:** ***may turn and relent, and turn,***

[9] **The alleged discrepancies in this account have been already noticed. As the text stands the fast and mourning are proclaimed and actually begun before word reaches the king and his proclamation of fast and mourning goes forth. The discrepancies might be removed by transferring the words in ver. 6,** ***and they cried a fast, and from ths greatest of them to the least they clothed themselves in sackcloth,*** **to the end of ver. 8, with a DN? or IDe'| to introduce ver. 9. But, as said above (pp. 499, 510, n. 1), it is more probable that the text as it stands was original, and that the inconsistencies in the order of the narrative are due to its being a tale or parable.**

CHAPTER XXXVIII

ISRAELS, JEALOUSY OF JEHOVAH

JONAH iv

HAVING illustrated the truth, that the Gentiles are capable of repentance unto life, the Book now describes the effect of their escape upon Jonah, and closes by revealing God's full heart upon the matter.

Jonah is very angry that Niniveh has been spared. Is this (as some say) because his own word has not been fulfilled ? In Israel there was an accepted rule that a prophet should be judged by the issue of his predictions: *If thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which Jehovah hath not spoken ?—when a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken presumptuously, thou shalt have no reverence for him*[1] Was it this that stung Jonah ? Did he ask for death because men would say of him that when he predicted Niniveh's overthrow he was false and had not God's word ? Of such fears there is no trace in the story. Jonah never doubts that his word came from Jehovah, nor dreads that other men will doubt There is absolutely no hint of anxiety as to his professional reputation. But, on the contrary, Jonah says that

[1] Deut. xviii. 21, 22.

from the first he had the foreboding, grounded upon his knowledge of God's character, that Nineveh would be spared, and that it was from this issue he shrank and fled to go to Tarshish. In short he could not, either then or now, master his conviction that the heathen should be destroyed. His grief, though foolish, is not selfish. He is angry, not at the baffling of his word, but at God's forbearance with the foes and tyrants of Israel.

Now, as in all else, so in this, Jonah is the type of his people. If we can judge from their literature after the Exile, they were not troubled by the non-fulfilment of prophecy, except as one item of what was the problem of their faith—the continued prosperity of the Gentiles. And this was not, what it appears to be in some Psalms, only an intellectual problem or an offence to their sense of justice. Nor could they meet it always, as some of their prophets did, with a supreme intellectual scorn of the heathen, and in the proud confidence that they themselves were the favourites of God. For the knowledge that God was infinitely gracious haunted their pride; and from the very heart of their faith arose a jealous fear that He would show His grace to others than themselves. To us it may be difficult to understand this temper. We have not been trained to believe ourselves an elect people; nor have we suffered at the hands of the heathen. Yet, at least, we have contemporaries and fellow-Christians among whom we may find still alive many of the feelings against which the Book of Jonah was written. Take the Oriental Churches of to-day. Centuries of oppression have created in them an awful hatred of the infidel, beneath whose power they are hardly suffered to live. The barest justice calls for the overthrow of their oppressors. That these share

a common humanity with themselves is a sense they have nearly lost For centuries they have had no spiritual intercourse with them; to try to convert a Mohammedan has been for twelve hundred years a capital crime. It is not wonderful that Eastern Christians should have long lost power to believe in the conversion of infidels, and to feel that anything is due but their destruction. The present writer once asked a cultured and devout layman of the Greek Church, Why then did God create so many Mohammedans ? The answer came hot and fast: To fill up Hell! Analogous to this were the feelings of the Jews towards the peoples who had conquered and oppressed them. But the jealousy already alluded to aggravated these feelings to a rigour no Christian can ever share. What right had God to extend, to their oppressors His love for a people who alone had witnessed and suffered for Him, to whom He had bound Himself by so many exclusive promises, whom He had called His Bride, His Darling, His Only One ? And yet the more Israel dwelt upon that Love the more they were afraid of it God had been so gracious and so long-suffering to themselves that they could not trust Him not to show these mercies to others. In which case, what was the use of their uniqueness and privilege? What worth was their living any more ? Israel might as well perish.

It is this subtle story of Israel's jealousy of Jehovah, and Jehovah's gentle treatment of it, which we follow in the last chapter of the book The chapter starts from Jonah's confession of a fear of the results of God's lovingkindness and from his persuasion that, as this spread to the heathen, the life of His servant spent in opposition to the heathen was a worthless life; and

the chapter closes with God's own vindication of His Love to His jealous prophet.

It was a great grief to Jonah, and he was angered; and he prayed to Jehovah and said: Ah now, Jehovah, while I was still upon mine own ground, at the time that I prepared to flee to Tarshish, was not this my word, that I knew Thee to be a God gracious and tender, long-suffering and plenteous in love, relenting of evil ? And now, Jehovah, take, I pray Thee, my life from me, for for me death is better than life.

In this impatience of life as well as in some subsequent traits, the story of Jonah reflects that of Elijah. But the difference between the two prophets was this, that while Elijah was very jealous *for* Jehovah, Jonah was very jealous *of* Him. Jonah could not bear to see the love promised to Israel alone, and cherished by her, bestowed equally upon her heathen oppressors. And he behaved after the manner of jealousy and of the heart that thinks itself insulted. He withdrew, and sulked in solitude, and would take no responsibility nor further interest in his work. Such men are best treated by a caustic gentleness, a little humour, a little rallying, a leaving to nature, and a taking unawares in their own confessed prejudices. All these—I dare to think even the humour—are present in God's treatment of Jonah. This is very natural and very beautiful. Twice the Divine Voice speaks with a soft sarcasm : *Art thou very angry?*[1] Then Jonah's affections, turned

[1] **The Hebrew may be translated either, first, *Doest thou well to be angry ?* or second, *Art thou very angry ?* Our versions both prefer the first, though they put the *second* in the margin. The LXX. take the *second.* That the second is the right one is not only proved by its greater suitableness, but by Jonah's answer to the question, *I am very angry,* yea, *even unto death.***

from man and God, are allowed their course with a bit of nature, the fresh and green companion of his solitude; and then when all his pity for this has been roused by its destruction, that very pity is employed to awaken his sympathy with God's compassion for the great city, and he is shown how he has denied to God the same natural affection which he confesses to be so strong in himself. But why try further to expound so clear and obvious an argument?

But Jehovah said, Art thou so *very angry ?* Jonah would not answer—how lifelike is his silence at this point!—*but went out from the city and sat down before it,* and made him there a booth and dwelt beneath it in the shade, till he should see what happened in the city. And Jehovah God prepared a gourd,*[1] *and it grew up above Jonah to be a shadow over his head. . . .*[3] *And Jonah rejoiced in the gourd with a great joy. But as dawn came up the next day God prepared a worm, and* this[4] *wounded the gourd, that it perished. And it came to pass, when the sun rose, that God prepared a dry east-wind,* and the sun smote on JonaWs head, so that he was faint, and begged for himself that he might diej saying, Better my dying than my living I And*

[1] **Heb.** *the city.*

* **PPP, the Egyptian kiki, the Ricinus or Palma Christi. See above, p. 498, n. 2.**

• **Heb. adds** *to saw him rom his evil,* **perhaps a gloss.**

[d] **Heb.** *it.*

[1] **n''. The Targum implies a** *quiet,* **i.e.** *sweltering, east wind.* **Hitzig thinks that the name is derived from the season of ploughing and some modern proverbs appear to bear this out:** *an autumn east wind.* **LXX.** *avysalw.* **Siegfried-Stade:** *a cutting east wind,* **as if from zhn. Steiner emends to n'pn, as if from DD ± *the piercing,* a poetic name of the sun; and Bohme, *Z.A.T.W.,* VII. 256, to nmn, from mn,** *to glow.* **Kohler** *(Theol. Rev.,* **XVI, p. 143) compares thn,** *dried clay.*

: **Heb.:** *begged his life, that he might die.*

God said unto Jonah$_y$ Art thou so very angry about the gourd? And he said$_t$ I am very angry—even unto death! And Jehovah said: Thou carest for a gourd for which thou hast not travailed, nor hast thou brought it up$_f$ a thing that came in a night and in a night has perished.[1] *And shall I not care for Niniveh$_t$ the Great City$_t$*[2] *in which there are more than twelve times ten thousand human beings who know not their right hand from their left$_y$ besides much cattle ?*

God has vindicated His love to the jealousy of those who thought that it was theirs alone. And we are left with this grand vague vision of the immeasurable city, with its multitude of innocent children and cattle, and God's compassion brooding over all.

[1] **Heb.:** *which was the son of a night, and son of a night has perished.* [2] **Gen. x. 12.**

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