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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON
GENESIS

by Adam Clarke.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

HOLY BIBLE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING
OF THE SACRED WRITINGS

BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.

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PREFACE TO THE BOOK OF GENESIS

EVERY believer in Divine revelation finds himself amply justified in taking for granted that the Pentateuch is the work of Moses. For more than 3000 years this has been the invariable opinion of those who were best qualified to form a correct judgment on this subject. The Jewish Church, from its most remote antiquity, has ascribed the work to no other hand; and the Christian Church, from its foundation, has attributed it to the Jewish lawgiver alone. The most respectable heathens have concurred in this testimony, and Jesus Christ and his apostles have completed the evidence, and have put the question beyond the possibility of being doubted by those who profess to believe the Divine authenticity of the New Testament. As to those who, in opposition to all these proofs, obstinately persist in their unbelief, they are worthy of little regard, as argument is lost on their unprincipled prejudices, and demonstration on their minds, because ever wilfully closed against the light. When they have *proved* that Moses is *not* the author of this work, the advocates of Divine revelation will reconsider the grounds of their faith.

That there are a few things in the Pentateuch which *seem* to have been added by a later hand there can be little doubt; among these some have reckoned, perhaps without reason, the following passage, ^{<01216>}**Genesis 12:6**: “And the Canaanite was then in the land”; but see the note on this place. ^{<02114>}**Numbers 21:14**, “In the book of the wars of the Lord,” was probably a marginal note, which in process of time got into the text; see the note on this passage also. To these may be added the *five first verses* of Deuteronomy, chap. i; the *twelfth* of chap. ii; and the *eight* concluding verses of the last chapter, in which we have an account of the death of Moses. These last words could not have been added by Moses himself, but are very probably the work of Ezra, by whom, according to uninterrupted tradition among the Jews, the various books which constitute the canon of the Old Testament were collected and arranged, and such expository notes added as were essential to connect the different parts; but as *he* acted under Divine inspiration, the additions may be considered of equal authority with the text. A few other places might be added, but they are of little importance, and are mentioned in the notes.

The book of GENESIS, Γενεσις, has its name from the title it bears in the *Septuagint*, Βιβλος Γενεσεως, (^{<01000>}Genesis 2:4,) which signifies *the book of the Generation*; but it is called in Hebrew *tyvarb Bereshith*, “*In the beginning*,” from its initial word. It is the most ancient history in the world; and, from the great variety of its singular details and most interesting accounts, is as far superior in its value and importance to all others, as it is in its antiquity. This book contains an account of the creation of the world, and its first inhabitants; the original innocence and fall of man; the rise of religion; the invention of arts; the general corruption and degeneracy of mankind; the universal deluge; the repopling and division of the earth; the origin of nations and kingdoms; and a particular history of the *patriarchs* from *Adam* down to the death of *Joseph*; including a space, at the lowest computation, of 2369 years.

It may be asked how a detail so circumstantial and minute could have been preserved when there was no *writing* of any kind, and when the earth, whose history is here given, had already existed more than 2000 years. To this inquiry a very satisfactory answer may be given. There are only *three* ways in which these important records could have been preserved and brought down to the time of *Moses*: viz., *writing*, *tradition*, and *Divine revelation*. In the antediluvian world, when the life of man was so protracted, there was comparatively little need for writing of any kind, and perhaps no alphabetical writing then existed. *Tradition* answered every purpose to which writing in any kind of characters could be subservient; and the necessity of erecting *monuments* to perpetuate public events could scarcely have suggested itself, as during those times there could be little danger apprehended of any important fact becoming obsolete, as its history had to pass through very few hands, and all these *friends* and *relatives* in the most proper sense of the terms; for they lived in an insulated state under a patriarchal government.

Thus it was easy for *Moses* to be satisfied of the truth of all he relates in the book of *Genesis*, as the accounts came to him through the medium of very few persons. From *Adam* to *Noah* there was but *one man* necessary to the correct transmission of the history of this period of 1656 years. Now this history was, without doubt, perfectly known to *Methuselah*, who lived to see them both. In like manner *Shem* connected *Noah* and *Abraham*, having lived to converse with both; as *Isaac* did with *Abraham* and *Joseph*, from whom these things might be easily conveyed to *Moses* by *Amram*, who was contemporary with *Joseph*. See the *plate*, chap. 11. Supposing,

then, all the curious facts recorded in the book of *Genesis* had no other authority than the *tradition* already referred to, they would stand upon a foundation of credibility *superior* to any that the most reputable of the ancient Greek and Latin historians can boast. Yet to preclude all possibility of mistake, the unerring Spirit of God directed Moses in the selection of his *facts* and the ascertaining of his *dates*. Indeed, the narrative is so simple, so much like truth, so consistent everywhere with itself, so correct in its dates, so impartial in its biography, so accurate in its philosophical details, so pure in its morality, and so benevolent in its design, as amply to demonstrate that it never could have had an *earthly* origin. In this case, also, Moses constructed every thing according to the pattern which God showed him in the mount.

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED GENESIS

- Year before the common era of Christ, 4004.
- Julian Period, 710.
- Cycle of the Sun, 10.
- Dominical Letter, B.
- Cycle of the Moon, 7.
- Indiction, 5.
- Creation from Tisri or September, 1.

CHAPTER 1

First day's work-*Creation of the heavens and the earth, 1, 2. Of the light and its separation from the darkness, 3-5. Second day's work-The creation of the firmament, and the separation of the waters above the firmament from those below it, 6-8. Third day's work-The waters are separated from the earth and formed into seas, &c., 9,10. The earth rendered fruitful, and clothed with trees, herbs, grass, &c., 11-13. Fourth day's work-Creation of the celestial luminaries intended for the measurement of time, the distinction of periods, seasons, &c., 14; and to illuminate the earth, 15. Distinct account of the formation of the sun, moon, and stars, 16-19. Fifth day's work-The creation of fish, fowls, and reptiles in general, 20. Of great aquatic animals, 21. They are blessed so as to make them very prolific, 22, 23. Sixth day's work-Wild and tame cattle created, and all kinds of animals which derive their nourishment from the earth, 24, 25. The creation of man in the image and likeness of God, with the dominion given him over the earth and all inferior animals, 26. Man or Adam, a general name for human beings, including both male and female, 27. Their peculiar blessing, 28. Vegetables appointed as the food of man and all other animals, 29, 30. The judgment which God passed on his works at the conclusion of his creative acts, 31.*

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *xrah taw p̄ymv̄h ta p̄yhl a arb tyvarb Bereshith bara Elohim eth hashshamayim veeth haarets; GOD in the beginning created the heavens and the earth.*

Many attempts have been made to define the term GOD: as to the word itself, it is pure Anglo-Saxon, and among our ancestors signified, not only the Divine Being, now commonly designated by the word, but also *good*; as in their apprehensions it appeared that *God* and *good* were correlative terms; and when they thought or spoke of him, they were doubtless led

from the word itself to consider him as THE GOOD BEING, a fountain of infinite benevolence and beneficence towards his creatures.

A general definition of this great First Cause, as far as human words dare attempt one, may be thus given: The eternal, independent, and self-existent Being: the Being whose purposes and actions spring from himself, without foreign motive or influence: he who is absolute in dominion; the most pure, the most simple, and most spiritual of all essences; infinitely benevolent, beneficent, true, and holy: the cause of all being, the upholder of all things; infinitely happy, because infinitely perfect; and eternally self-sufficient, needing nothing that he has made: illimitable in his immensity, inconceivable in his mode of existence, and indescribable in his essence; known fully only to himself, because an infinite mind can be fully apprehended only by itself. In a word, a Being who, from his infinite wisdom, cannot err or be deceived; and who, from his infinite goodness, can do nothing but what is eternally just, right, and kind. Reader, such is the God of the Bible; but how widely different from the God of most human creeds and apprehensions!

The original word **pyhl a Elohim**, God, is certainly the plural form of **l a El**, or **hl a Eloah**, and has long been supposed, by the most eminently learned and pious men, to imply a *plurality* of Persons in the Divine nature. As this plurality appears in so many parts of the sacred writings to be confined to *three* Persons, hence the doctrine of the TRINITY, which has formed a part of the creed of all those who have been deemed sound in the faith, from the earliest ages of Christianity. Nor are the *Christians* singular in receiving this doctrine, and in deriving it from the first words of Divine revelation. An eminent Jewish rabbin, Simeon ben Joachi, in his comment on the sixth section of Leviticus, has these remarkable words: “Come and see the mystery of the word Elohim; there are *three degrees*, and each degree by itself *alone*, and yet notwithstanding they are all *one*, and *joined together in one*, and are not divided from each other.” See *Ainsworth*. He must be strangely prejudiced indeed who cannot see that the doctrine of a Trinity, and of a Trinity in unity, is expressed in the above words. The verb **arb bara**, he created, being joined in the singular number with this plural noun, has been considered as pointing out, and not obscurely, the *unity* of the Divine Persons in this work of creation. In the ever-blessed Trinity, from the infinite and indivisible unity of the persons, there can be but one will, one purpose, and one infinite and uncontrollable energy.

“Let those who have any doubt whether *pyhl a Elohim*, when meaning the true God, Jehovah, be *plural* or not, consult the following passages, where they will find it joined with adjectives, verbs, and pronouns *plural*.

“^{<01025>}Genesis 1:26 3:22 11:7 20:13 31:7, 53 35:7. “^{<05407>}Deuteronomy 4:7 5:23 ^{<06249>}Joshua 24:19 ^{<00408>}1 Samuel 4:8 ^{<00723>}2 Samuel 7:23 “^{<19806>}Psalms 58:6 ^{<23618>}Isaiah 6:8 ^{<24101>}Jeremiah 10:10 23:36.

“See also ^{<10910>}Proverbs 9:10 30:3 ^{<19302>}Psalms 149:2 ^{<21837>}Ecclesiastes 5:7 12:1; “^{<18101>}Job 5:1 ^{<23618>}Isaiah 6:3 54:5 62:5 ^{<28112>}Hosea 11:12, or ^{<31201>}Hosea 12:1 ^{<30106>}Malachi 1:6 ^{<27618>}Daniel 5:18, 20 7:18, 22.”-PARKHURST.

As the word *Elohim* is the term by which the Divine Being is most generally expressed in the Old Testament, it may be necessary to consider it here more at large. It is a maxim that admits of no controversy, that every noun in the Hebrew language is derived from a *verb*, which is usually termed the *radix* or root, from which, not only the noun, but all the different flections of the verb, spring. This *radix* is the third person singular of the preterite or past tense. The *ideal* meaning of this root expresses some essential property of the thing which it designates, or of which it is an appellative. The root in *Hebrew*, and in its sister language, the *Arabic*, generally consists of *three* letters, and every word must be traced to its root in order to ascertain its genuine meaning, for there alone is this meaning to be found. In Hebrew and Arabic this is essentially necessary, and no man can safely criticise on any word in either of these languages who does not carefully attend to this point.

I mention the *Arabic* with the *Hebrew* for two reasons. 1. Because the two languages evidently spring from the same source, and have very nearly the same mode of construction. 2. Because the deficient roots in the Hebrew Bible are to be sought for in the Arabic language. The reason of this must be obvious, when it is considered that the whole of the Hebrew language is lost except what is in the Bible, and even a part of this book is written in Chaldee. Now, as the *English* Bible does not contain the whole of the *English language*, so the Hebrew Bible does not contain the whole of the Hebrew. If a man meet with an English word which he cannot find in an ample concordance or dictionary to the Bible, he must of course seek for that word in a general English dictionary. In like manner, if a particular form of a Hebrew word occur that cannot be traced to a root in the

Hebrew Bible, because the word does not occur in the third person singular of the past tense in the Bible, it is expedient, it is perfectly lawful, and often indispensably necessary, to seek the deficient root in the Arabic. For as the Arabic is still a living language, and perhaps the most copious in the universe, it may well be expected to furnish those terms which are deficient in the Hebrew Bible. And the reasonableness of this is founded on another maxim, viz., that either the Arabic was derived from the Hebrew, or the Hebrew from the Arabic. I shall not enter into this controversy; there are great names on both sides, and the decision of the question in either way will have the same effect on my argument. For if the *Arabic* were derived from the Hebrew, it must have been when the Hebrew was a *living* and *complete* language, because such is the Arabic now; and therefore all its essential roots we may reasonably expect to find there: but if, as Sir William Jones supposed, the *Hebrew* were derived from the Arabic, the same expectation is justified, the deficient roots in Hebrew may be sought for in the *mother* tongue. If, for example, we meet with a term in our ancient English language the meaning of which we find difficult to ascertain, common sense teaches us that we should seek for it in the *Anglo-Saxon*, from which our language springs; and, if necessary, go up to the *Teutonic*, from which the Anglo-Saxon was derived. No person disputes the legitimacy of this measure, and we find it in constant practice. I make these observations at the very threshold of my work, because the necessity of acting on this principle (seeking deficient Hebrew roots in the Arabic) may often occur, and I wish to speak *once for all* on the subject.

The first sentence in the Scripture shows the propriety of having recourse to this principle. We have seen that the word **אֱלֹהִים** *Elohim* is plural; we have traced our term *God* to its source, and have seen its signification; and also a general definition of the *thing* or *being* included under this term, has been tremblingly attempted. We should now trace the *original* to its *root*, but this root does not appear in the Hebrew Bible. Were the Hebrew a *complete* language, a pious reason might be given for this omission, viz., “As God is without beginning and without cause, as his being is infinite and *underived*, the Hebrew language consults strict propriety in giving *no root* whence his name can be *deduced*.” Mr. Parkhurst, to whose pious and learned labours in Hebrew literature most Biblical students are indebted, thinks he has found the root in **חָלַף** *alah*, *he swore, bound himself by oath*; and hence he calls the ever-blessed Trinity **אֱלֹהִים** *Elohim*, as *being bound by a conditional oath to redeem man, &c., &c.* Most pious minds

will revolt from such a definition, and will be glad with me to find both the *noun* and the *root* preserved in Arabic. ALLAH [Arabic] is the common name for GOD in the Arabic tongue, and often the emphatic [Arabic] is used. Now both these words are derived from the root *alaha*, he worshipped, adored, was struck with astonishment, fear, or terror; and hence, he adored with sacred horror and veneration, cum sacro horrore ac veneratione coluit, adoravit.-WILMET. Hence *ilahon*, fear, veneration, and also *the object of religious fear*, the *Deity*, the supreme God, the *tremendous Being*. This is not a new idea; God was considered in the same light among the ancient Hebrews; and hence Jacob swears by the *fear* of his father Isaac, ⁰¹³¹⁵³ **Genesis 31:53**. To complete the definition, Golius renders *alaha*, *juvit, liberavit, et tutatus fuit*, “he succoured, liberated, kept in safety, or defended.” Thus from the *ideal* meaning of this most expressive root, we acquire the most correct notion of the Divine nature; for we learn that God is the *sole object of adoration*; that the perfections of his nature are such as must *astonish* all those who piously contemplate them, and fill with *horror* all who would dare to give his glory to *another*, or break his commandments; that consequently he should be *worshipped* with *reverence* and *religious fear*; and that every sincere worshipper may expect from him *help* in all his weaknesses, trials, difficulties, temptations, &c.; *freedom* from the power, guilt, nature, and consequences of sin; and to be *supported, defended*, and saved to the uttermost, and to the end.

Here then is one proof, among multitudes which shall be adduced in the course of this work, of the importance, utility, and necessity of tracing up these sacred words to their *sources*; and a proof also, that subjects which are supposed to be out of the reach of the common people may, with a little difficulty, be brought on a level with the most ordinary capacity.

In the beginning] Before the creative acts mentioned in this chapter all was ETERNITY. *Time* signifies *duration* measured by the revolutions of the heavenly bodies: but prior to the creation of these bodies there could be no measurement of duration, and consequently no *time*; therefore *in the beginning* must necessarily mean the commencement of time which followed, or rather was produced by, God’s creative acts, as an effect follows or is produced by a cause.

Created] Caused existence where previously to this moment there was no being. The rabbins, who are legitimate judges in a case of verbal criticism on their own language, are unanimous in asserting that the word *arb bara*

expresses the commencement of the existence of a thing, or egression from nonentity to entity. It does not in its *primary* meaning denote the *preserving* or *new forming* things that had previously existed, as some imagine, but *creation* in the proper sense of the term, though it has some other acceptations in other places. The supposition that God formed all things out of a pre-existing, eternal nature, is certainly absurd, for if there had been an eternal nature besides an eternal God, there must have been two self-existing, independent, and eternal beings, which is a most palpable contradiction.

תא *ta eth hashshamayim*. The word **תא** *ta eth*, which is generally considered as a *particle*, simply denoting that the word following is in the accusative or oblique case, is often understood by the rabbins in a much more extensive sense. “The particle **תא**,” says Aben Ezra, “signifies the *substance* of the thing.” The like definition is given by Kimchi in his *Book of Roots*. “This particle,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “having the *first* and *last* letters of the Hebrew alphabet in it, is supposed to comprise the *sum* and *substance* of *all things*.” “The particle **תא** *eth* (says Buxtorf, Talmudic Lexicon, sub voce) with the cabalists is often mystically put for the *beginning* and the *end*, as **א** alpha and **ו** omega are in the Apocalypse.” On this ground these words should be translated, “God in the beginning created the *substance* of the heavens and the *substance* of the earth,” i.e. the *prima materia*, or first elements, out of which the heavens and the earth were successively formed. The Syriac translator understood the word in this sense, and to express this meaning has used the word [Arabic] *yoth*, which has this signification, and is very properly translated in Walton’s Polyglot, ESSE, *caeli* et ESSE *terrae*, “the *being* or *substance* of the heaven, and the *being* or *substance* of the earth.” St. Ephraim Syrus, in his comment on this place, uses the same Syriac word, and appears to understand it precisely in the same way. Though the Hebrew words are certainly no more than the notation of a *case* in most places, yet understood here in the sense above, they argue a wonderful philosophic accuracy in the statement of Moses, which brings before us, not a *finished* heaven and earth, as every other translation appears to do, though afterwards the process of their formation is given in detail, but merely the *materials* out of which God built the whole system in the six following days.

The heaven and the earth.] As the word $\mu\upsilon\mu\nu$ *shamayim* is plural, we may rest assured that it means more than the *atmosphere*, to express which some have endeavoured to restrict its meaning. Nor does it appear that the atmosphere is particularly intended here, as this is spoken of, ^{<01005>} **Genesis 1:6**, under the term *firmament*. The word *heavens* must therefore comprehend the whole *solar system*, as it is very likely the whole of this was created in these six days; for unless the earth had been the *centre* of a system, the reverse of which is sufficiently demonstrated, it would be unphilosophic to suppose it was created independently of the other parts of the system, as on this supposition we must have recourse to the almighty power of God to suspend the influence of the earth's gravitating power till the fourth day, when the sun was placed in the centre, round which the earth began then to revolve. But as the design of the inspired penman was to relate what especially belonged to our world and its inhabitants, therefore he passes by the rest of the planetary system, leaving it simply included in the plural word *heavens*. In the word *earth* every thing relative to the terraqueærial globe is included, that is, all that belongs to the solid and fluid parts of our world with its surrounding atmosphere. As therefore I suppose the whole solar system was created at this time, I think it perfectly in place to give here a general view of all the planets, with every thing curious and important hitherto known relative to their revolutions and principal affections.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE WHOLE SOLAR SYSTEM

TABLE I.—THE REVOLUTIONS, DISTANCES, &c., &c., OF ALL THE PRIMARY PLANETS

| Names. | Periodical Revolution. | Siderial Revolution. | Mean distance from the Sun in English miles. | Least distance from the Earth in English miles. | Greatest distance from the Earth in English miles. | Diameter in English miles. |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| Sun | Yrs. d. h. m. s. | Yrs. d. h. m. s. | | | | |
| Mercury | 0 87 23 14 33 | 0 87 23 15 40 | 36,073,282 | 93,908,984 | 97,118,538 | 886,473 |
| Venus | 0 224 16 41 27 | 0 224 16 40 11 | 69,088,240 | 58,540,512 | 132,487,077 | 3,191 |
| Earth | 1 0 5 48 48 | 1 0 5 9 12 | 95,513,794 | 26,425,554 | 164,602,024 | 7,630 |
| Moon | 0 27 7 43 5 | 0 27 7 43 12 | 95,513,794 | 232,920 | 254,084 | 2,172 |
| Mars | 1 321 22 18 27 | 1 321 23 30 36 | 145,533,657 | 50,019,873 | 241,047,462 | 4,135 |
| Jupiter | 11 315 14 39 2 | 11 317 14 27 11 | 496,765,289 | 401,251,495 | 582,279,083 | 86,396 |
| Saturn | 29 161 19 16 15 | 29 174 1 51 11 | 911,141,442 | 815,627,647 | 1,006,655,236 | 79,405 |
| Sat. Ring | 29 161 19 16 15 | 29 174 1 51 11 | 911,141,442 | 815,525,205 | 1,006,757,678 | 185,280 |
| Herschel | 83 52 4 0 0 | 83 150 18 0 0 | 1,822,575,228 | 1,727,061,434 | 1,918,089,022 | 34,457 |

| Names. | Proportionate bulk, the Earth being 1. | Time of rotation upon their axis. | Inclination of the axis to the equator. | Attractive power or density, the Earth being 1. | Hourly motion in their orbit, in English miles. |
|-----------|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Sun | 1,384,462 | 25d. 14h. 36m. 0s. | ... | 351,886 | ... |
| Mercury | $\frac{7}{10}$ th | unknown | ... | ... | 111,256 |
| Venus | $\frac{1}{10}$ th | 0 23 21 0 | uncertain | ... | 81,398 |
| Earth | 1 | 0 23 56 4 | 23° 28' 0" | 1 | 75,222 |
| Moon | $\frac{1}{80}$ th | 27 7 43 5 | 1 43 0 | ... | 2,335 |
| Mars | $\frac{1}{10}$ th | 1 0 39 22 | 28 42 0 | ... | 56,212 |
| Jupiter | 1281 greater | 0 9 55 33 | 3 22 0 | 330 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 30,368 |
| Saturn | 995 greater | 0 10 16 1 | 30 0 0 | 103 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 22,351 |
| Sat. Ring | ... | 0 10 32 16 | 30 0 0 | ... | 22,351 |
| Herschel | 801 greater | unknown | unknown | 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 15,846 |

The following Celestial Bodies, commonly called Planets, revolving between Jupiter and Mars, have been recently discovered all that is known of their Magnitude, Surface, Diameter, and Distance, I here subjoin.

| Names. | Mean distance from the Sun. | Least distance from Earth. | Greatest d. dist. from Earth. | Diameter. | Proportional bulk. | Proportional surface. |
|--------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Ceres | 250,000,000 | 155,000,000 | 345,000,000 | 160 | $\frac{1}{171}$ th | $\frac{1}{171}$ th |
| Pallas | 270,000,000 | 175,000,000 | 365,000,000 | 110 | $\frac{1}{171}$ th | $\frac{1}{171}$ th |
| Juno | 285,000,000 | 190,000,000 | 385,000,000 | 119 | $\frac{1}{171}$ th | $\frac{1}{171}$ th |
| Vesta | unknown | unknown | unknown | unknown | unknown | unknown |

TABLE II.—SATELLITES OF JUPITER

| Satellite | Periodic Revolution. | Synodic Revolution. | Distance from Jupiter in semi-diameters of Jupiter. | Dist. from Jupiter in parts of the orbit, by Jupiter's axis. | Diameter from Earth in English miles. | Magnitude from Earth. | Distance from Jupiter in English miles. |
|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| I. | d. h. m. s. 1 18 27 33.555 | d. h. m. s. 1 18 28 35.555 | 5.555 | 1 51 | 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 245,000 |
| II. | 3 13 18 41.555 | 3 13 17 53.555 | 9 | 2 57 | 0.44 | 0.5 | 380,000 |
| III. | 7 3 42 35.555 | 7 3 59 35.555 | 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 4 42 | 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 621,000 |
| IV. | 16 16 32 8.555 | 16 18 51 7.555 | 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 8 16 | 0.75 | 0.8 | 1,693,000 |

| Satellite | h. m. s. | h. m. s. | h. m. s. | h. m. s. | h. m. s. | h. m. s. |
|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| I. | 1 7 55 | 0 35 55 | 401,006,592 | 496,705,280 | 592,024,516 | |
| II. | 1 25 40 | 5 1 33 | 401,982,713 | 496,705,280 | 592,097,805 | |
| III. | 1 47 0 | 3 45 38 | 401,630,368 | 496,705,280 | 592,000,370 | |
| IV. | 2 23 0 | 2 8 2 | 401,138,880 | 496,705,280 | 592,371,992 | |

TABLE III.—SATELLITES OF SATURN

| Satellite | Periodic Revolution. | Synodic Revolution. | Dist. from Saturn in semi-diameters of Saturn. | Dist. from Saturn in parts of the orbit, by Saturn's axis. | Distance from Saturn in English miles. | Distance from Earth in English miles. | Nearest approach to the Earth in English miles. |
|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| VII. | d. h. m. s. 0 22 37 28 | d. h. m. s. 0 22 37 30 | 3.1 | 1.5 | 0 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 112,000 | 815,515,647 |
| VI. | 1 8 53 9 | 1 8 53 24 | 3.65 | 1.75 | 1 40,000 | 140,000 | 815,487,547 |
| V. | 1 21 18 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 21 18 54 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 4.555 | 2.115 | 0 43 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 172,000 | 815,455,647 |
| IV. | 2 17 44 51.555 | 2 17 45 51.555 | 6.555 | 2.115 | 0 56 | 217,000 | 815,410,647 |
| III. | 4 12 25 11.555 | 4 12 27 03.555 | 8.555 | 3.75 | 1 18 | 315,000 | 815,312,647 |
| II. | 15 22 41 15.555 | 15 23 15 22.555 | 20 | 6.415 | 3 0 | 709,000 | 814,918,647 |
| V. | 79 7 53 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 79 22 3 12.555 | 50.555 | 27.115 | 8 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 2,128,000 | 813,501,647 |

TABLE IV.—SATELLITES OF HERSCHEL, OR THE GEORGIUM SIDUS

| Satellite | Periodic Revolution. | Synodic Revolution. | Dist. from Herschel in semi-diameters of Herschel. | Dist. from Herschel in parts of the orbit, of the mean dist. of Herschel from Earth. | Distance from Herschel in English miles. | Least distance from Earth in English miles. | Greatest distance from Earth in English miles. |
|-----------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|---|--|
| I. | d. h. m. s. 5 21 22 22 | d. h. m. s. 5 21 23 0 | 13.555 | 0 55 | 236,450 | 1,730,534,084 | 1,918,315,472 |
| II. | 8 19 57 48 | 8 17 1 39 | 17.555 | 0 38 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 281,051 | 1,730,768,281 | 1,918,382,072 |
| III. | 10 22 58 20 | 10 23 4 0 | 19.555 | 0 38 | 342,784 | 1,730,718,030 | 1,918,431,936 |
| IV. | 13 10 56 29 | 13 11 5 1 | 22.555 | 0 42 | 392,516 | 1,730,668,020 | 1,918,481,536 |
| V. | 28 0 59 4 | 28 1 49 0 | 43.555 | 1 28 | 785,028 | 1,730,274,408 | 1,918,874,000 |
| VI. | 107 7 35 10.57 | 106 40 0 0 | 61.555 | 3 50 | 1,670,057 | 1,730,491,577 | 1,919,050,079 |

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRECEDING TABLES

IN Table I. the quantity or the periodic and sidereal revolutions of the planets is expressed in common years, each containing 365 days; as, e.g., the tropical revolution of Jupiter is, by the table, 11 years, 315 days, 14 hours, 39 minutes, 2 seconds; i.e., the exact number of days is equal to 11 years multiplied by 365, and the extra 315 days added to the product, which make in all 4330 days. The *sidereal* and *periodic* times are also set down to the nearest second of time, from numbers used in the construction of the tables in the third edition of M. de la Lande's *Astronomy*. The columns containing the *mean distance* of the planets from the sun in English miles, and their *greatest* and *least distance* from the earth, are such as result from the best observations of the two last transits of Venus, which gave the solar parallax to be equal to 8 three-fifth seconds of a degree; and consequently the earth's diameter, as seen from the sun, must be the double of 8 three-fifth seconds, or 17 one-fifth seconds. From this last quantity, compared with the apparent diameters of the planets, as seen at a distance equal to that of the earth at her main distance from the sun, the *diameters of the planets in English miles*, as contained in the seventh column, have been carefully computed. In the column entitled "*Proportion of bulk*, the earth being 1," the whole numbers express the number of times the other planet contains more cubic miles, &c., than the earth; and if the number of cubic miles in the earth be given, the number of cubic miles in any planet may be readily found by multiplying the cubic miles contained in the earth by the number in the column, and the product will be the quantity required.

This is a small but accurate sketch of the vast solar system; to describe it fully, even in all its *known* revolutions and connections, in all its astonishing energy and influence, in its wonderful plan, structure, operations, and results, would require more volumes than can be devoted to the commentary itself.

As so little can be said here on a subject so vast, it may appear to some improper to introduce it at all; but to any observation of this kind I must be permitted to reply, that I should deem it unpardonable not to give a general view of the solar system in the very place where its creation is first introduced. If these works be stupendous and magnificent, what must He be who formed, guides, and supports them all by the *word* of his power! Reader, stand in awe of this God, and sin not. Make him thy friend through

the Son of his love; and, when these heavens and this earth are no more, thy soul shall exist in consummate and unutterable felicity.

See the remarks on the *sun*, *moon*, and *stars*, after ^{<01016>}Genesis 1:16. See Clarke's note on "^{<01016>}Genesis 1:16".

Verse 2. The earth was without form and void] The original term **wht** *tohu* and **whb** *bohu*, which we translate *without form and void*, are of uncertain etymology; but in this place, and wherever else they are used, they convey the idea of *confusion* and *disorder*. From these terms it is probable that the ancient Syrians and Egyptians borrowed their gods, *Theuth* and *Bau*, and the Greeks their *Chaos*. God seems at first to have created the elementary principles of all things; and this formed the grand mass of matter, which in this state must be without *arrangement*, or any distinction of parts: a vast collection of indescribably confused materials, of nameless entities strangely mixed; and wonderfully well expressed by an ancient heathen poet:—

*Ante mare et terras, et, quod tegit omnia, caelum,
Unus erat toto naturæ vultus in orbe,
Quem dixere Chaos; rudis indigestaque moles,
Nec quicquam nisi pondus iners; congestaque eodem
Non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum.*
OVID.

*Before the seas and this terrestrial ball,
And heaven's high canopy that covers all,
One was the face of nature, if a face;
Rather, a rude and indigested mass;
A lifeless lump, unfashion'd and unframed,
Of jarring seeds, and justly Chaos named.*
DRYDEN.

The most ancient of the Greeks have spoken nearly in the same way of this crude, indigested state of the primitive chaotic mass.

When this congeries of elementary principles was brought together, God was pleased to spend six days in assimilating, assorting, and arranging the materials, out of which he built up, not only the earth, but the whole of the solar system.

The spirit of God] This has been variously and strangely understood. Some think a *violent wind* is meant, because **j wr**, *ruach* often signifies

wind, as well as *spirit*, as **πνευμα**, does in Greek; and the term *God* is connected with it merely, as they think, to express the *superlative* degree. Others understand by it an *elementary fire*. Others, the *sun*, penetrating and drying up the earth with his rays. Others, the *angels*, who were supposed to have been employed as *agents* in creation. Others, a certain *occult* principle, termed the *anima mundi* or *soul of the world*. Others, a *magnetic attraction*, by which all things were caused to gravitate to a common centre. But it is sufficiently evident from the use of the word in other places, that the Holy Spirit of God is intended; which our blessed Lord represents under the notion of *wind*, **John 3:8**; and which, as a *mighty rushing wind* on the day of pentecost, filled the house where the disciples were sitting, **Acts 2:2**, which was immediately followed by their speaking with other tongues, because they were filled with the *Holy Ghost*, **Acts 2:4**. These scriptures sufficiently ascertain the sense in which the word is used by Moses.

Moved] **tpj rm** *merachepeth*, was brooding over; for the word expresses that tremulous motion made by the hen while either *hatching* her eggs or *fostering* her young. It here probably signifies the communicating a *vital* or *prolific* principle to the waters. As the idea of *incubation*, or hatching an egg, is implied in the original word, hence probably the notion, which prevailed among the ancients, that the world was generated from an egg.

Verse 3. And God said, Let there be light] **rwa yhyw rwa yh** YEHI OR, *vaihi or*. Nothing can be conceived more dignified than this form of expression. It argues at once uncontrollable authority, and omnific power; and in human language it is scarcely possible to conceive that God can speak more like himself. This passage, in the Greek translation of the Septuagint, fell in the way of Dionysius Longinus, one of the most judicious Greek critics that ever lived, and who is highly celebrated over the civilized world for a treatise he wrote, entitled **Περὶ Ὑψους**, Concerning the **SUBLIME**, both in prose and poetry; of this passage, though a heathen, he speaks in the following terms: **-Ταυτη και ο των Ιουδαιων θεσμοθετησ `ουχ ο τυχων ανηρ,** ` επειδη την του θειου δυναμιν κατα την αξιαν εχωρησε, καζεφηνεν ευθυς εν τν εισβολη γραφας των νομων, **ΕΙΠΕΝ Ο ΘΕΟΣ, φησι, τι ΓΕΝΕΣΘΩ φως και εγενετο. ΓΕΝΕΣΘΩ ΓΕ` και εγενετο.** “So likewise the Jewish lawgiver (who was no ordinary man) having conceived a just idea of the Divine power, he

expressed it in a dignified manner; for at the beginning of his laws he thus speaks: GOD SAID-*What?* LET THERE BE LIGHT! *and there was light.* LET THERE BE EARTH! *and there was earth.*”-Longinus, sect. ix. edit. *Pearce.*

Many have asked, “How could light be produced on the *first day*, and the *sun*, the fountain of it, not created till the *fourth day*?” With the various and often unphilosophical answers which have been given to this question I will not meddle, but shall observe that the original word *rwa* signifies not only *light* but *fire*, see ^{<2310>}**Isaiah 31:9** ^{<2412>}**Ezekiel 5:2**. It is used for the SUN, ^{<1832>}**Job 31:26**. And for the *electric fluid* or LIGHTNING, ^{<1857>}**Job 37:3**. And it is worthy of remark that It is used in ^{<2446>}**Isaiah 44:16**, *for the heat, derived from (va esh, the fire. He burneth part thereof in the fire (va wmb bemo esh:) yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha! I have seen the fire, rwa ytyar raithi ur*, which a modern philosopher who understood the language would not scruple to translate, I have received caloric, or an additional portion of the matter of *heat*. I therefore conclude, that as God has diffused the matter of *caloric* or *latent heat* through every part of nature, without which there could be neither vegetation nor animal life, that it is *caloric* or *latent heat* which is principally intended by the original word.

That there is *latent light*, which is probably the same with *latent heat*, may be easily demonstrated: take two pieces of smooth rock crystal, agate, cornelian or flint, and rub them together briskly in the dark, and the latent light or matter of caloric will be immediately produced and become visible. The light or caloric *thus* disengaged does not operate in the same powerful manner as the heat or *fire* which is produced by striking with flint and steel, or that produced by *electric* friction. The existence of this *caloric*-latent or *primitive* light, may be ascertained in various other bodies; it can be produced by the flint and steel, by rubbing two hard sticks together, by hammering cold iron, which in a short time becomes red hot, and by the strong and sudden compression of atmospheric air in a tube. Friction in general produces both *fire* and *light*. God therefore created this universal agent on the first day, because without It no operation of nature could be carried on or perfected.

Light is one of the most astonishing productions of the creative skill and power of God. It is the grand medium by which all his other works are

discovered, examined, and understood, so far as they can be known. Its immense diffusion and extreme velocity are alone sufficient to demonstrate the being and wisdom of God. Light has been proved by many experiments to travel at the astonishing rate of 194,188 miles in *one second* of time! and comes from the sun to the earth in *eight minutes 11 43/50 seconds*, a distance of 95,513,794 English miles.

Verse 4. God divided the light from the darkness.] This does not imply that *light* and *darkness* are two distinct substances, seeing *darkness* is only the *privation* of light; but the words simply refer us by anticipation to the rotation of the earth round its own axis once in *twenty-three hours, fifty-six minutes, and four seconds*, which is the cause of the distinction between day and night, by bringing the different parts of the surface of the earth successively into and from under the solar rays; and it was probably at this moment that God gave this rotation to the earth, to produce this merciful provision of day and night. For the *manner* in which light is supposed to be produced, see ^{<0016>}**Genesis 1:16**, under the word *sun*.

Verse 6. And God said, Let there be a firmament] Our translators, by following the *firmamentum* of the Vulgate, which is a translation of the **στερεωμα** of the Septuagint, have deprived this passage of all sense and meaning. The Hebrew word [**yqr** *rakia*, from [**qr** *raka*, to *spread out as the curtains of a tent or pavilion*, simply signifies an *expanse* or *space*, and consequently that circumambient space or expansion separating the clouds, which are in the higher regions of it, from the seas, &c., which are below it. This we call the *atmosphere*, *the orb of atoms* or inconceivably small particles; but the word appears to have been used by Moses in a more extensive sense, and to include the whole of the planetary vortex, or the space which is occupied by the whole *solar system*.

Verse 10. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas] These two constitute what is called the *terraqeous globe*, in which the earth and the water exist in a most judicious proportion to each other. Dr. Long took the papers which cover the surface of a seventeen inch terrestrial globe, and having carefully separated the land from the sea, he weighed the two collections of papers accurately, and found that the sea papers weighed three hundred and forty-nine grains, and the land papers only one hundred and twenty-four; by which experiment it appears that nearly *three-fourths* of the surface of our globe, from the arctic to the antarctic polar circles, are covered with

water. The doctor did not weigh the parts within the polar circles, because there is no certain measurement of the proportion of land and water which they contain. This proportion of *three-fourths* water may be considered as too great, if not useless; but Mr. Ray, by most accurate experiments made on evaporation, has proved that it requires so much aqueous *surface* to yield a sufficiency of vapours for the purpose of cooling the atmosphere, and watering the earth. See Ray's *Physico-theological Discourses*.

An eminent chemist and philosopher, Dr. *Priestley*, has very properly observed that it seems plain that Moses considered the whole terraqueous globe as being created in a *fluid* state, the earthy and other particles of matter being mingled with the water. The present form of the earth demonstrates the truth of the Mosaic account; for it is well known that if a soft or elastic globular body be rapidly whirled round on its axis, the parts at the poles will be flattened, and the parts on the equator, midway between the north and south poles, will be raised up. This is precisely the shape of our earth; it has the figure of an *oblate spheroid*, a figure pretty much resembling the shape of an *orange*. It has been demonstrated by admeasurement that the earth is flatted at the poles and raised at the equator. This was first conjectured by Sir Isaac Newton, and afterwards confirmed by M. Cassini and others, who measured several degrees of latitude at the equator and near the north pole, and found that the difference perfectly justified Sir Isaac Newton's conjecture, and consequently confirmed the Mosaic account. The result of the experiments instituted to determine this point, proved that the diameter of the earth at the equator is greater by more than *twenty-three* and a *half* miles than it is at the poles, allowing the *polar* diameter to be 1/334th part shorter than the *equatorial*, according to the recent admeasurements of several degrees of latitude made by Messrs. Mechain and Delambre. - *L'Histoire des Mathem.* par M. de la Lande, tom. iv., part v., liv. 6.

And God saw that it was good.] This is the judgment which God pronounced on his own works. They were *beautiful* and *perfect* in their kind, for such is the import of the word **bwc** *tob*. They were in weight and measure perfect and entire, lacking nothing. But the reader will think it strange that this approbation should be expressed *once* on the *first*, *fourth*, *fifth*, and *sixth* days; *twice* on the *third*, and not at all on the *second*! I suppose that the words, *And God saw that it was good*, have been either lost from the conclusion of the eighth verse, or that the clause in the tenth verse originally belonged to the eighth. It appears, from the Septuagint

translation, that the words in question existed originally at the close of the eighth verse, in the copies which they used; for in that version we still find, **καὶ εἶδεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι καλὸν** *And God saw that it was good.* This reading, however, is not acknowledged by any of Kennicott's or Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS., nor by any of the other versions. If the account of the second day stood originally as it does now, no satisfactory reason can be given for the omission of this expression of the Divine approbation of the work wrought by his wisdom and power on that day.

Verse 11. Let the earth bring forth grass-- herb--fruit-tree, &c.] In these general expressions all kinds of vegetable productions are included. *Fruit-tree* is not to be understood here in the restricted sense in which the term is used among us; it signifies all trees, not only those which bear fruit, which may be applied to the use of men and cattle, but also those which had the power of propagating themselves by seeds, &c. Now as God delights to manifest himself in the *little* as well as in the *great*, he has shown his consummate wisdom in every part of the *vegetable* creation. Who can account for, or comprehend, the structure of a single tree or plant? The roots, the stem, the woody fibres, the bark, the rind, the air-vessels, the sap-vessels, the leaves, the flowers, and the fruits, are so many mysteries. All the skill, wisdom, and power of men and angels could not produce a single grain of *wheat*: A serious and reflecting mind can see the grandeur of God, not only in the immense *cedars* on Lebanon, but also in the endlessly varied *forests* that appear through the microscope in the mould of cheese, stale paste, &c., &c.

Verse 12. Whose seed was in itself] Which has the power of multiplying itself by seeds, slips, roots, &c., *ad infinitum*; which contains in itself all the rudiments of the future plant through its endless generations. This doctrine has been abundantly confirmed by the most accurate observations of the best modern philosophers. The astonishing power with which God has endued the vegetable creation to multiply its different species, may be instanced in the seed of the *elm*. This tree produces *one thousand five hundred and eighty-four millions* of seeds; and *each of these seeds* has the power of producing the *same number*. How astonishing is this produce! At first *one* seed is deposited in the earth; from this one a tree springs, which in the course of its vegetative life produces *one thousand five hundred and eighty-four millions of seeds*. This is the *first* generation. The *second* generation will amount to *two trillions, five hundred and nine thousand and fifty-six billions*. The *third* generation will amount to *three thousand*

nine hundred and seventy-four quadrillions, three hundred and forty-four thousand seven hundred and four trillions! And the *fourth* generation from these would amount to *six sextillions two hundred and ninety-five thousand three hundred and sixty-two quintillions, eleven thousand one hundred and thirty-six quadrillions!* Sums too immense for the human mind to conceive; and, when we allow the most confined space in which a tree can grow, it appears that the seeds of the *third* generation from one elm would be many *myriads* of times more than sufficient to stock the whole superficies of all the planets in the solar system! But plants multiply themselves by *slips* as well as by *seeds*. Sir Kenelm Digby saw in 1660 a plant of barley, in the possession of the fathers of the Christian doctrine at Paris, which contained 249 stalks springing from one root or grain, and in which he counted upwards of 18,000 grains. See my experiments on *Tilling* in the Methodist Magazine.

Verse 14. And God said, Let there be lights, &c.] One principal office of these was to divide between day and night. When night is considered a state of comparative *darkness*, how can lights divide or distinguish it? The answer is easy: The sun is the monarch of the day, which is the state of light; the moon, of the night, the state of darkness. The rays of the sun, falling on the atmosphere, are refracted and diffused over the whole of that hemisphere of the earth immediately under his orb; while those rays of that vast luminary which, because of the earth's smallness in comparison of the sun, are diffused on all sides beyond the earth, falling on the opaque disc of the moon, are reflected back upon what may be called the lower hemisphere, or that part of the earth which is opposite to the part which is illuminated by the sun: and as the earth completes a revolution on its own axis in about twenty-four hours, consequently each hemisphere has alternate day and night. But as the solar light reflected from the face of the moon is computed to be 50,000 times less in intensity and effect than the light of the sun as it comes directly from himself to our earth, (for light *decreases* in its intensity as the distance it travels from the sun *increases*,) therefore a sufficient distinction is made between day and night, or light and darkness, notwithstanding each is ruled and determined by one of these *two great lights*; the moon ruling the night, i.e., reflecting from her own surface back on the earth the rays of light which she receives from the sun. Thus both hemispheres are to a certain degree illuminated: the one, on which the sun shines, completely so; this is *day*: the other, on which the sun's light is reflected by the moon, partially; this is *night*. It is true that

both the planets and fixed stars afford a considerable portion of light during the night, yet they cannot be said to *rule* or to predominate by their light, because their rays are quite lost in the superior splendour of the moon's light.

And let them be for signs] **ttal** *leothoth*. Let them ever be considered as continual tokens of God's tender care for man, and as standing proofs of his continual *miraculous* interference; for so the word **ta oth** is often used. And is it not the almighty energy of God that upholds them in being? The sun and moon also serve as *signs* of the different changes which take place in the atmosphere, and which are so essential for all purposes of agriculture, commerce, &c.

For seasons] **myd [wm** *moadim*; For the determination of the times on which the *sacred festivals* should be held. In this sense the word frequently occurs; and it was right that at the very opening of his revelation God should inform man that there were certain festivals which should be annually celebrated to his glory. Some think we should understand the original word as signifying *months*, for which purpose we know the moon essentially serves through all the revolutions of time.

For days] Both the hours of the day and night, as well as the different lengths of the days and nights, are distinguished by the longer and shorter spaces of time the sun is above or below the horizon.

And years.] That is, those grand divisions of time by which all *succession* in the vast lapse of duration is distinguished. This refers principally to a complete revolution of the earth round the sun, which is accomplished in 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 48 seconds; for though the revolution is that of the earth, yet it cannot be determined but by the heavenly bodies.

Verse 16. And God made two great lights] Moses speaks of the sun and moon here, not according to their *bulk* or *solid contents*, but according to the *proportion of light* they shed on the earth. The expression has been cavilled at by some who are as devoid of mental capacity as of candour. "The moon," say they, "is not a *great* body; on the contrary, it is the very smallest in our system." Well, and has Moses said the contrary? He has said it is a *great* LIGHT; had he said otherwise he had not spoken the truth. It is, in reference to the earth, next to the sun himself, the *greatest light* in the solar system; and so true is it that the moon is a *great light*, that it affords more light to the earth than all the planets in the solar system, and

all the innumerable stars in the vault of heaven, put together. It is worthy of remark that on the *fourth* day of the creation the sun was formed, and then “first tried his beams athwart the gloom profound;” and that at the conclusion of the *fourth millenary* from the creation, according to the Hebrew, the Sun of righteousness shone upon the world, as deeply sunk in that mental darkness produced by sin as the ancient world was, while teeming darkness held the dominion, till the sun was created as the dispenser of light. What would the natural world be without the sun? A howling waste, in which neither animal nor vegetable life could possibly be sustained. And what would the moral world be without Jesus Christ, and the light of his word and Spirit? Just what those parts of it now are where his light has not yet shone: “dark places of the earth, filled with the habitations of cruelty,” where error prevails without end, and superstition, engendering false hopes and false fears, degrades and debases the mind of man.

Many have supposed that the *days* of the creation answer to so many thousands of years; and that as God created all in *six* days, and rested the seventh, so the world shall last *six thousand* years, and the *seventh* shall be the eternal rest that remains for the people of God. To this conclusion they have been led by these words of the apostle, ~~61088~~ **2 Peter 3:8**: *One day is with the Lord as a thousand years; and a thousand years as one day.* Secret things belong to God; those that are revealed to us and our children.

He made **the stars also.**] Or rather, *He made the lesser light, with the stars, to rule the night.* See Claudlan *de Raptu* PROSER., lib. ii., v. 44.

*Hic Hyperionis solem de semine nasci
Fecerat, et pariter lunam, sed dispare forma,
Auroræ noctisque duces.*

*From famed Hyperion did he cause to rise
The sun, and placed the moon amid the skies,
With splendour robed, but far unequal light,
The radiant leaders of the day and night.*

OF THE SUN

On the nature of the sun there have been various conjectures. It was long thought that he was a vast *globe of fire* 1,384,462 times larger than the earth, and that he was continually emitting from his body innumerable millions of *fiery* particles, which, being extremely divided, answered for the

purpose of *light* and *heat* without occasioning any *ignition* or *burning*, except when collected in the focus of a convex lens or burning glass. Against this opinion, however, many serious and weighty objections have been made; and it has been so pressed with difficulties that philosophers have been obliged to look for a theory less repugnant to nature and probability. Dr. Herschel's discoveries by means of his immensely magnifying telescopes, have, by the general consent of philosophers, added a *new habitable world* to our system, which is the SUN. Without stopping to enter into *detail*, which would be improper here, it is sufficient to say that these discoveries tend to prove that what we call the *sun* is only the *atmosphere* of that luminary; "that this atmosphere consists of various *elastic fluids* that are more or less lucid and transparent; that as the clouds belonging to our earth are probably decompositions of some of the elastic fluids belonging to the atmosphere itself, so we may suppose that in the vast atmosphere of the sun, similar decompositions may take place, but with this difference, that the decompositions of the elastic fluids of the sun are of a *phosphoric* nature, and are attended by lucid appearances, by giving out light." The body of the sun he considers as hidden generally from us by means of this luminous atmosphere, but what are called the *maculae* or *spots* on the sun are real *openings* in this atmosphere, through which the *opaque body* of the sun becomes visible; that this atmosphere itself is not *fiery* nor *hot*, but is the instrument which God designed to act on the caloric or latent heat; and that heat is only produced by the solar light acting upon and combining with the caloric or matter of fire contained in the air, and other substances which are heated by it. This ingenious theory is supported by many plausible reasons and illustrations, which may be seen in the paper he read before the Royal Society. On this subject see **Clarke's note on "~~Genesis~~ Genesis 1:3"**.

OF THE MOON

There is scarcely any doubt now remaining in the philosophical world that the moon is a *habitable globe*. The most accurate observations that have been made with the most powerful telescopes have confirmed the opinion. The *moon* seems, in almost every respect, to be a body similar to our earth; to have its surface diversified by hill and dale, mountains and valleys, rivers, lakes, and seas. And there is the fullest evidence that our earth serves as a moon to the moon herself, differing only in this, that as the earth's surface is *thirteen times* larger than the moon's, so the moon receives from the earth a light *thirteen times* greater in splendour than that

which she imparts to us; and by a very correct analogy we are led to infer that all the *planets* and their *satellites*, or attendant moons, are *inhabited*, for matter seems only to exist for the sake of intelligent beings.

OF THE STARS

The STARS in general are considered to be *suns*, similar to that in our system, each having an appropriate number of *planets* moving round it; and, as these stars are innumerable, consequently there are innumerable worlds, all dependent on the power, protection, and providence of God. Where the stars are in great abundance, Dr. Herschel supposes they form *primaries* and *secondaries*, i.e., suns revolving about *suns*, as planets revolve about the sun in our system. He considers that this must be the case in what is called the *milky way*, the stars being there in prodigious quantity. Of this he gives the following proof: On August 22, 1792, he found that in forty-one minutes of time not less than 258,000 stars had passed through the field of view in his telescope. What must God be, who has made, governs, and supports so many worlds! For the *magnitudes*, *distances*, *revolutions*, &c., of the *sun*, *moon*, *planets*, and their *satellites*, see the preceding TABLES. See Clarke's note on "~~G-01010~~Genesis 1:1".

Verse 20. Let the waters bring forth abundantly] There is a meaning in these words which is seldom noticed. Innumerable millions of animalcula are found in water. Eminent naturalists have discovered not less than 30,000 in a single drop! How inconceivably small must each be, and yet each a perfect animal, furnished with the whole apparatus of bones, muscles, nerves, heart, arteries, veins, lungs, viscera in general, animal spirits, &c., &c. What a proof is this of the manifold wisdom of God! But the *fecundity* of fishes is another point intended in the text; no creature's are so prolific as these. A TENCH lay 1,000 eggs, a CARP 20,000, and Leuwenhoek counted in a middling sized COD 9,384,000! Thus, according to the purpose of God, *the waters bring forth abundantly*. And what a merciful provision is this for the necessities of man! Many hundreds of thousands of the earth's inhabitants live for a great part of the year on *fish* only. Fish afford, not only a wholesome, but a very nutritive diet; they are liable to few diseases, and generally come in vast quantities to our shores when in their greatest perfection. In this also we may see that the kind *providence* of God goes hand in hand with his creating energy. While he manifests his wisdom and his power, he is making a permanent provision for the sustenance of man through all his generations.

Verse 21. And God created great whales] **μϒl dgh μνϒnth** *hattanninim haggedolim*. Though this is generally understood by the different versions as signifying *whales*, yet the original must be understood rather as a *general* than a *particular* term, comprising all the great aquatic animals, such as the various species of whales, the porpoise, the dolphin, the monoceros or narwal, and the shark. God delights to show himself in *little* as well as in *great* things: hence he forms animals so minute that 30,000 can be contained in one drop of water; and others so *great* that they seem to require almost a whole *sea* to float in.

Verse 22. Let fowl multiply in the earth.] It is truly astonishing with what care, wisdom, and minute skill God has formed the different genera and species of birds, whether intended to live chiefly on land or in water. The structure of a single *feather* affords a world of wonders; and as God made the fowls *that they might fly in the firmament of heaven*, ^{<01012>}**Genesis 1:20**, so he has adapted the *form* of their bodies, and the structure and disposition of their plumage, for that very purpose. The head and neck in flying are drawn principally within the breast-bone, so that the whole under part exhibits the appearance of a ship's hull. The wings are made use of as sails, or rather oars, and the tail as a helm or rudder. By means of these the creature is not only able to preserve the centre of gravity, but also to go with vast speed through the air, either straight forward, circularly, or in any kind of angle, upwards or downwards. In these also God has shown his skill and his power in the *great* and in the *little*-in the vast *ostrich* and *cassowary*, and In the beautiful *humming-bird*, which in plumage excels the splendour of the peacock, and in size is almost on a level with the *bee*.

Verse 24. Let the earth bring forth the living creature, &c.] **hyj vϒn** *nephesh chaiyah*; a general term to express all creatures endued with animal life, in any of its infinitely varied gradations, from the half-reasoning elephant down to the stupid *potto*, or lower still, to the *polype*, which seems equally to share the vegetable and animal life. The word **wtyj** *chaito*, in the latter part of the verse, seems to signify all *wild* animals, as lions, tigers, &c., and especially such as are *carnivorous*, or live on *flesh*, in contradistinction from *domestic* animals, such as are *graminivorous*, or live on grass and other vegetables, and are capable of being tamed, and applied to domestic purposes. See Clarke on ^{<<010129>}**Genesis 1:29**". These latter are probably meant by **hmhb** *behemah* in the text, which we translate cattle, such as horses, kine, sheep, dogs, &c. *Creeping thing*,

cmr *remes*, all the different genera of *serpents*, *worms*, and such animals as have no feet. In *beasts* also God has shown his wondrous skill and power; in the vast *elephant*, or still more colossal *mammoth* or *mastodon*, the whole race of which appears to be extinct, a few skeletons only remaining. This animal, an astonishing effect of God's power, he seems to have produced merely to show what he could do, and after suffering a few of them to propagate, he extinguished the race by a merciful providence, that they might not destroy both man and beast. The mammoth appears to have been a *carnivorous* animal, as the structure of the teeth proves, and of an immense size; from a considerable part of a skeleton which I have seen, it is computed that the animal to which it belonged must have been nearly *twenty-five* feet high, and *sixty* in length! The bones of one toe are entire; the toe upwards of three feet in length. But this skeleton might have belonged to the *megalonyx*, a kind of *sloth*, or *bradypus*, hitherto unknown. Few elephants have ever been found to exceed eleven feet in height. How wondrous are the works of God! But his skill and power are not less seen in the beautiful *chevrotin*, or *tragulus*, a creature of the antelope kind, the smallest of all *bifid* or cloven-footed animals, whose delicate limbs are scarcely so large as an ordinary goose quill; and also in the *shrew mouse*, perhaps the smallest of the many-toed quadrupeds. In the *reptile* kind we see also the same skill and power, not only in the immense snake called *boa constrictor*, the mortal foe and conqueror of the royal tiger, but also in the *cobra de manille*, a venomous serpent, only a little larger than a common sewing needle.

Verse 25. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, &c.]

Every thing both in the animal and vegetable world was made *so* according to its kind, both in *genus* and *species*, as to produce *its own kind* through endless generations. Thus the several races of animals and plants have been kept distinct from the foundation of the world to the present day. This is a proof that all future generations of plants and animals have been seminally included in those which God formed in the beginning.

Verse 26. And God said, Let us make man] It is evident that God intends to impress the mind of man with a sense of something extraordinary in the formation of his body and soul, when he introduces the account of his creation thus; Let US make man. The word **µda** Adam, which we translate *man*, is intended to designate the *species* of animal, as **wtyj** *chaitho*, marks the *wild beasts* that live in general a solitary life;

hmhb *behemah*, domestic or gregarious animals; and **cmr** *remes*, all kinds of *reptiles*, from the largest snake to the microscopic eel. Though the same kind of organization may be found in man as appears in the lower animals, yet there is a variety and complication in the parts, a delicacy of structure, a nice arrangement, a judicious adaptation of the different members to their great offices and functions, a dignity of mien, and a perfection of the whole, which are sought for in vain in all other creatures. See ^{<01082>}**Genesis 3:22**.

In our image, after our likeness] What is said above refers only to the *body* of man, what is here said refers to his *soul*. This was made in the *image* and *likeness* of God. Now, as the Divine Being is infinite, he is neither limited by parts, nor definable by passions; therefore he can have no *corporeal image* after which he made the body of man. The image and likeness must necessarily be intellectual; his mind, his soul, must have been formed after the nature and perfections of his God. The human mind is still endowed with most extraordinary capacities; it was more so when issuing out of the hands of its Creator. God was now producing a spirit, and a spirit, too, formed after the perfections of his own nature. God is the fountain whence this spirit issued, hence the stream must resemble the spring which produced it. God is holy, just, wise, good, and perfect; so must the soul be that sprang from him: there could be in it nothing impure, unjust, ignorant, evil, low, base, mean, or vile. It was created after the image of God; and that image, St. Paul tells us, consisted in *righteousness*, *true holiness*, and *knowledge*, ^{<0024>}**Ephesians 4:24** ^{<51010>}**Colossians 3:10**. Hence man was *wise* in his *mind*, *holy* in his *heart*, and *righteous* in his *actions*. Were even the word of God silent on this subject, we could not infer less from the lights held out to us by reason and common sense. The text tells us he was the work of ELOHIM, the Divine Plurality, marked here more distinctly by the plural pronouns US and OUR; and to show that he was the masterpiece of God's creation, all the persons in the Godhead are represented as united in counsel and effort to produce this astonishing creature.

Gregory Nyssen has very properly observed that the superiority of man to all other parts of creation is seen in this, that all other creatures are represented as the effect of God's *word*, but man is represented as the *work* of God, according to plan and consideration: *Let US make MAN in our IMAGE, after our LIKENESS*. See his Works, vol. i., p. 52, c. 3.

And let them have dominion] Hence we see that the *dominion* was not the *image*. God created man capable of governing the world, and when fitted for the office, he fixed him in it. We see God's tender care and parental solicitude for the comfort and well-being of this masterpiece of his workmanship, in creating the world previously to the creation of man. He prepared every thing for his subsistence, convenience, and pleasure, before he brought him into being; so that, comparing little with great things, the house was built, furnished, and amply stored, by the time the destined tenant was ready to occupy it.

It has been supposed by some that God speaks here to the angels, when he says, Let *us* make man; but to make this a likely interpretation these persons must prove, 1. That angels were then created. 2. That angels could assist in a work of creation. 3. That angels were themselves made in the image and likeness of God. If they were not, it could not be said, *in OUR image*, and it does not appear from any part in the sacred writings that any creature but *man* was made in the image of God. **See Clarke's note on "~~OUR~~ Psalm 8:5".**

Verse 28. And God blessed them] Marked them as being under his especial protection, and gave them power to propagate and multiply their own kind on the earth. A large volume would be insufficient to contain what we *know* of the excellence and perfection of man, even in his present degraded fallen state. Both his body and soul are adapted with astonishing wisdom to their *residence* and *occupations*; and also the *place* of their residence, as well as the surrounding objects, in their diversity, colour, and mutual relations, to the mind and body of this lord of the creation. The contrivance, arrangement, action, and re-action of the different parts of the body, show the admirable skill of the wondrous Creator; while the various powers and faculties of the mind, acting on and by the different organs of this body, proclaim the *soul's* Divine origin, and demonstrate that he who was made in the image and likeness of God, was a transcript of his own excellency, destined to know, love, and dwell with his Maker throughout eternity.

Verse 29. I have given you every herb-for meat.] It seems from this, says an eminent philosopher, that man was originally intended to live upon *vegetables* only; and as no change was made In the structure of men's bodies after the flood, it is not probable that any change was made in the articles of their food. It may also be inferred from this passage that no

animal whatever was originally designed to prey on others; for nothing is here said to be given to any beast of the earth besides *green herbs*.-Dr. Priestley. Before sin entered into the world, there could be, at least, no *violent deaths*, if any death at all. But by the particular structure of the teeth of animals God prepared them for that kind of aliment which they were to subsist on after the FALL.

Verse 31. And, behold, it was very good.] *dam bwc tob meod*, *Superlatively*, or *only good*; as good as they could be. The plan wise, the work well executed, the different parts properly arranged; their nature, limits, mode of existence, manner of propagation, habits, mode of sustenance, &c., &c., properly and permanently established and secured; for every thing was formed to the utmost perfection of its nature, so that nothing could be added or diminished without encumbering the operations of matter and spirit on the one hand, or rendering them inefficient to the end proposed on the other; and God has so done all these marvellous works as to be glorified *in all, by all, and through all*.

And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.] The word *br* [*ereb*, which we translate evening, comes from the root *br* [*arab*, to *mingle*; and properly signifies that state in which neither *absolute darkness* nor *full light* prevails. It has nearly the same grammatical signification with our *twilight*, the time that elapses from the setting of the sun till he is eighteen degrees below the horizon and the last eighteen degrees before he arises. Thus we have the morning and evening twilight, or *mixture* of light and darkness, in which neither prevails, because, while the sun is within eighteen degrees of the horizon, either after his setting or before his rising, the atmosphere has power to refract the rays of light, and send them back on the earth. The Hebrews extended the meaning of this term to the whole duration of night, because it was ever a *mingled* state, the moon, the planets, or the stars, tempering the darkness with some rays of light. From the *ereb* of Moses came the *ερεβος Erebus*, of Hesiod, Aristophanes, and other heathens, which they *deified* and made, with *Nox* or night, the parent of all things.

The morning-rqb boker; From *rqb bakar*, he *looked out*; a beautiful figure which represents the morning as *looking out* at the east, and illuminating the whole of the upper hemisphere.

The evening and the morning were the sixth day.-It is somewhat remarkable that through the whole of this chapter, whenever the division of days is made, the evening always precedes the morning. The reason of this may perhaps be, that darkness was pre-existent to light, (~~ⲁⲓⲟⲓⲟⲩ~~ **Genesis 1:2**, *And darkness was upon the face of the deep*), and therefore time is reckoned from the first act of God towards the creation of the world, which took place before light was called forth into existence. It is very likely for this same reason, that the Jews began their day at six o'clock in the evening in imitation of Moses's division of time in this chapter. *Cæsar* in his Commentaries makes mention of the same peculiarity existing among the Gauls: *Galli se omnes ab Dite patre prognatas prædicant: idque ab Druidibus proditum dicunt: ab eam causam spatia omnis temporis, non numero dierum, sed noctium, finiunt; et dies natales, et mensium et annorum initia sic observant, ut noctem dies subsequatur*; Deuteronomy Bell. Gall. lib. vi. Tacitus likewise records the same of the Germans: *Nec dierum numerum, ut nos, sed noctium computant: sic constituent, sic condicunt, nox ducere diem videtur*; Deuteronomy Mor. Germ. sec. ii. And there are to this day some remains of the same custom in England, as for instance in the word *se'nnight* and *fortnight*. See also *Aeschyl. Agamem.* ver. 273, 287.

Thus ends a chapter containing the most extensive, most profound, and most sublime truths that can possibly come within the reach of the human intellect. How unspeakably are we indebted to God for giving us a revelation of his WILL and of his WORKS! Is it possible to know the mind of God but from himself? It is impossible. Can those things and services which are worthy of and pleasing to an infinitely pure, perfect, and holy Spirit, be ever found out by *reasoning* and *conjecture*? Never! for the Spirit of God alone can know the mind of God; and by this Spirit he has revealed himself to man; and in this revelation has taught him, not only to know the glories and perfections of the Creator, but also his own origin, duty, and interest. Thus far it was essentially necessary that God should reveal his WILL; but if he had not given a revelation of his WORKS, the origin, constitution, and nature of the universe could never have been adequately known. *The world by wisdom knew not God*; this is demonstrated by the writings of the most learned and intelligent heathens. They had no just, no rational notion of the origin and design of the universe. Moses alone, of all ancient writers, gives a consistent and rational account of the creation; an account which has been confirmed by the

investigation of the most accurate philosophers. But *where* did he learn this? “In Egypt.” That is impossible; for the Egyptians themselves were destitute of this knowledge. The remains we have of their old historians, all posterior to the time of Moses, are egregious for their contradictions and absurdity; and the most learned of the Greeks who borrowed from them have not been able to make out, from their conjoint stock, any consistent and credible account. Moses has revealed the mystery that lay hid from all preceding ages, because he was taught it *by the inspiration of the Almighty*. READER, thou hast now before thee the most ancient and most authentic history in the world; a history that contains the first written discovery that God has made of himself to man-kind; a discovery of his own *being*, in his *wisdom, power, and goodness*, in which *thou* and the whole human race are so intimately concerned. How much thou art indebted to him for this discovery he alone can teach thee, and cause thy heart to feel its obligations to his wisdom and mercy. *Read* so as to understand, for these things were written for thy learning; therefore *mark* what thou readest, and *inwardly digest*-deeply and seriously meditate on, what thou hast marked, and *pray* to the Father of lights that he may open thy understanding, that thou mayest know these holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.

God made thee and the universe, and governs all things according to the counsel of his will; that will is infinite goodness, that counsel is unerring wisdom. While under the direction of this counsel, thou canst not err; while under the influence of this will, thou canst not be wretched. Give thyself up to his teaching, and submit to his authority; and, after guiding thee *here* by his counsel, he will at last bring thee to his glory. Every object that meets thy eye should teach thee reverence, submission, and gratitude. The earth and its productions were made for *thee*; and the providence of thy heavenly Father, infinitely diversified in its operations, watches over and provides for thee. Behold the firmament of his power, the sun, moon, planets, and stars, which he has formed, not for himself, for he needs none of these things, but for his intelligent offspring. What endless gratification has he designed thee in placing within thy reach these astonishing effects of his wisdom and power, and in rendering thee capable of searching out their wonderful relations and connections, and of knowing himself, the source of all perfection, by having made thee in his own image, and in his own likeness! It is true thou *art* fallen; but he has found out a ransom. God so loved thee in conjunction with the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Believe on HIM; through him *alone* cometh salvation; and the fair and holy image of God in which thou wast created shall be again restored; he will build thee up as at the first, restore thy judges and counsellors as at the beginning, and in thy second creation, as in thy first, will pronounce thee to be *very good*, and thou shalt show forth the virtues of him by whom thou art created anew in Christ Jesus. Amen.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 2

The seventh day is consecrated for a sabbath, and the reasons assigned, 1-3. A recapitulation of the six days' work of creation, 4-7. the garden of Eden planted, 8. Its trees, 9. Its rivers, and the countries watered by them, 10-14. Adam placed in the garden, and the command given not to eat of the tree of knowledge on pain of death, 15-17. God purposes to form a companion for the man, 18. The different animals brought to Adam that he might assign them their names, 19, 20. The creation of the woman, 21, 22. The institution of marriage, 23, 24. The purity and innocence of our first parents, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. And all the host of them]. The word *host* signifies literally an *army*, composed of a number of companies of soldiers under their respective leaders; and seems here elegantly applied to the various celestial bodies in our system, placed by the Divine wisdom under the influence of the *sun*. From the original word **abx tsaba**, a host, some suppose the *Sabeans* had their name, because of their paying Divine honours to the heavenly bodies. From the Septuagint version of this place, **πας ο κοσμος αυτων**, *all their ornaments*, we learn the true meaning of the word **κοσμος**, commonly translated *world*, which signifies a *decorated* or *adorned* whole or system. And this refers to the beautiful order, harmony, and regularity which subsist among the various parts of creation. This translation must impress the reader with a very favourable opinion of these ancient Greek translators; had they not examined the works of God with a philosophic eye, they never could have given this turn to the original.

Verse 2. On the SEVENTH day God ended, &c.] It is the general voice of Scripture that God finished the whole of the creation in six days, and rested the *seventh!* giving us an example that we might labour *six* days, and rest the *seventh* from all manual exercises. It is worthy of notice that the Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Samaritan, read the *sixth* day instead of the *seventh*; and this should be considered the genuine reading, which appears from these versions to have been originally that of the Hebrew text. How the word *sixth* became changed into *seventh* may be easily conceived from this circumstance. It is very likely that in ancient times all the numerals were signified by *letters*, and not by words at full length. This is the case in

the most ancient Greek and Latin MSS., and in almost all the rabbinical writings. When these numeral letters became changed for words at full length, two letters nearly similar might be mistaken for each other; **W** *vau* stands for *six*, **Z** *zain* for *seven*; how easy to mistake these letters for each other when writing the words at full length, and so give birth to the reading in question.

Verse 3. And God blessed the seventh day] The original word **Ērb** *barach*, which is generally rendered *to bless*, has a very extensive meaning. It is frequently used in Scripture in the sense of *speaking good of* or *to* a person; and hence literally and properly rendered by the Septuagint **εὐλογησεν**, from **ευ**, *good* or *well*, and **λεγω**, *I speak*. So God has spoken *well* of the Sabbath, and *good to them* who conscientiously observe it. *Blessing* is applied both to God and man: when God is said to bless, we generally understand by the expression that he *communicates* some good; but when man is said *to bless God*, we surely cannot imagine that he *bestows* any gifts or confers any benefit on his Maker. When God is said to *bless*, either in the Old or New Testament, it signifies his *speaking good TO man*; and this comprises the whole of his exceeding great and precious *promises*. And when man is said to *bless God*, it ever implies that he *speaks good OF him*, for the giving and fulfilment of his promises. This observation will be of general use in considering the various places where the word occurs in the sacred writings. Reader, God blesses thee when by his promises he *speaks good TO thee*; and thou dost bless him when, from a consciousness of his kindness to thy body and soul, thou art thankful to him, and *speakest good OF his name*.

Because that in it he had rested] **tbv** *shabath*, *he rested*; hence *Sabbath*, the name of the seventh day, signifying *a day of rest*-rest to the body from labour and toil, and rest to the soul from all worldly care and anxieties. He who labours with his *mind* by worldly schemes and plans on the Sabbath day is as culpable as he who labours with his *hands* in his accustomed calling. It is by the authority of God that the Sabbath is set apart for rest and religious purposes, as the six days of the week are appointed for labour. How wise is this provision! It is essentially necessary, not only to the body of man, but to all the animals employed in his service: take this away and the labour is too great, both man and beast would fail under it. Without this consecrated day religion itself would fail, and the human mind, becoming sensualized, would soon forget its origin and end.

Even as a *political* regulation, it is one of the wisest and most beneficent in its effects of any ever instituted. Those who habitually disregard its moral obligation are, to a man, not only good for nothing, but are wretched in themselves, a curse to society, and often end their lives miserably. **See Clarke's note on "^{<02318>}Exodus 20:8"; "^{<02312>}Exodus 23:12"; "^{<02316>}Exodus 24:16"; and See Clarke's note on "^{<02313>}Exodus 31:13";** to which the reader is particularly desired to refer.

As God formed both the mind and body of man on principles of *activity*, so he assigned him proper employment; and it is his decree that the *mind* shall improve by exercise, and the *body* find increase of vigour and health in honest *labour*. He who idles away his time in the *six* days is equally culpable in the sight of God as he who works on the *seventh*. The idle person is ordinarily clothed with rags, and the Sabbath-breakers frequently come to an ignominious death. Reader, beware.

Verse 4. In the day that the Lord God made, &c.] The word **hw̄y** *Yehovah* is for the first time mentioned here. What it signifies see on ^{<02316>}**Exodus 34:5,6**. Wherever this word occurs in the sacred writings we translate it LORD, which word is, through respect and reverence, always printed in capitals. Though our English term *Lord* does not give the particular meaning of the original word, yet it conveys a strong and noble sense. *Lord* is a contraction of the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], *Hlaford*, afterwards written [A.S.] *Loverd*, and lastly *Lord*, from [A.S.] bread; hence our word *loaf*, and [A.S.] *ford*, to supply, to give out. The word, therefore, implies the *giver of bread*, i.e., he who deals out all the necessaries of life. Our ancient English noblemen were accustomed to keep a continual open house, where all their vassals, and all strangers, had full liberty to enter and eat as much as they would; and hence those noblemen had the honourable name of *lords*, i.e., *the dispensers of bread*. There are about *three* of the ancient nobility who still keep up this honourable custom, from which the very name of their nobility is derived. We have already seen, ^{<01010>}**Genesis 1:1**, with what judgment our Saxon ancestors expressed *Deus*, the Supreme Being, by the term *God*; and we see the same judgment consulted by their use of the term *Lord* to express the word *Dominus*, by which terms the Vulgate version, which they used, expresses *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, which we translate LORD GOD. GOD is the *good Being*, and LORD is *the dispenser of bread*, the giver of every good and perfect gift, who liberally *affords* the bread that perisheth to every man, and has amply provided the bread that endures unto eternal life for every human soul. With what

propriety then does this word apply to the Lord Jesus, who is emphatically called *the bread of life; the bread of God which cometh down from heaven, and which is given for the life of the world!* ~~<003>~~ **John 6:33, 48, 51.** What a pity that this most impressive and instructive meaning of a word in such general use were not more extensively known, and more particularly regarded! See the postscript to the *general preface*. I know that Mr. H. Tooke has endeavoured to render this derivation contemptible; but this has little weight with me. I have traced it through the most accredited writers in *Saxony* and on *Saxon* affairs, and I am satisfied that *this* and *this only*, is its proper etymology and derivation.

Verse 5. Every plant of the field before it was in the earth] It appears that God created every thing, not only perfect as it respects its nature, but also in a state of *maturity*, so that every vegetable production appeared at once in full growth; and this was necessary that man, when he came into being, might find every thing ready for his use.

Verse 6. There went up a mist] This passage appears to have greatly embarrassed many commentators. The plain meaning seems to be this, that the aqueous vapours, ascending from the earth, and becoming condensed in the colder regions of the atmosphere, fell back upon the earth in the form of *dews*, and by this means an equal portion of moisture was distributed to the roots of plants, &c. As Moses had said, ~~<003>~~ **Genesis 2:5**, that *the Lord had not caused it to rain upon the earth*, he probably designed to teach us, in ~~<003>~~ **Genesis 2:6**, *how* rain is produced, viz., by the condensation of the aqueous vapours, which are generally through the heat of the sun and other causes raised to a considerable height in the atmosphere, where, meeting with cold air, the watery particles which were before so small and light that they could float in the air, becoming *condensed*, i.e., many drops being driven into one, become too heavy to be any longer suspended, and then, through their own gravity, fall down in the form which we term *rain*.

Verse 7. God formed man of the dust] In the most distinct manner God shows us that man is a *compound* being, having a body and soul distinctly, and separately created; the body out of the dust of the earth, the soul immediately breathed from God himself. Does not this strongly mark that the soul and body are not the *same thing*? The body derives its origin from the *earth*, or as rp[*aphar* implies, the *dust*; hence because it is earthly it is decomposable and perishable. Of the soul it is said, *God breathed into*

his nostrils the breath of life; $\mu\upsilon\upsilon\eta$ $\tau\mu\nu\eta$ *nishmath chaiyim*, the breath of LIVES, i.e., animal and intellectual. While this breath of God expanded the lungs and set them in play, his inspiration gave both spirit and understanding.

Verse 8. A garden eastward in Eden] Though the word $\hat{e}d$ [*Eden* signifies *pleasure* or *delight*, it is certainly the name of a place. See ^{<010416>}**Genesis 4:16** ^{<121912>}**2 Kings 19:12** ^{<23712>}**Isaiah 37:12** ^{<36723>}**Ezekiel 27:23** **Amos 1:5**. And such places probably received their name from their *fertility, pleasant situation, &c.* In this light the Septuagint have viewed it, as they render the passage thus: $\epsilon\phi\upsilon\tau\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\nu$ \omicron $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\delta\epsilon\iota\sigma\omicron\nu$ $\epsilon\nu$ $\epsilon\delta\epsilon\nu$, *God planted a paradise in Eden*. Hence the word *paradise* has been introduced into the New Testament, and is generally used to signify a place of exquisite pleasure and delight. From this the ancient heathens borrowed their ideas of the *gardens of the Hesperides*, where the trees bore golden fruit; the gardens of *Adonis*, a word which is evidently derived from the Hebrew $\hat{e}d$ [*Eden*; and hence the origin of *sacred gardens* or enclosures dedicated to purposes of devotion, some comparatively innocent, others impure. The word *paradise* is not *Greek*; in *Arabic* and *Persian* it signifies a garden, a vineyard, and also the place of the blessed. The Mohammedans say that God created the [Arabic] *Jennet al Ferdoos*, the garden of paradise, from light, and the prophets and wise men ascend thither. Wilmet places it after the root [Arabic] *farada*, to *separate*, especially a person or place, for the purposes of devotion, but supposes it to be originally a Persian word, *vox originis Persicæ quam in sua lingua conservarunt Armeni*. As it is a word of doubtful *origin*, its etymology is uncertain.

Verse 9. Every tree that is pleasant to the sight, &c.] If we take up these expressions literally, they may bear the following interpretation: the tree pleasant to the sight may mean every beautiful tree or plant which for *shape, colour, or fragrance*, delights the senses, such as flowering shrubs, &c.

And good for food] All fruit-bearing trees, whether of the pulpy fruits, as apples, &c., or of the kernel or nut kind, such as dates, and nuts of different sorts, together with all *esulent vegetables*.

The tree of life] $\mu\upsilon\upsilon\eta$ *chaiyim*; of *lives*, or life-giving tree, every *medicinal* tree, herb, and plant, whose healing virtues are of great consequence to man in his present state, when through sin diseases of

various kinds have seized on the human frame, and have commenced that process of dissolution which is to reduce the body to its primitive *dust*. Yet by the use of these *trees of life*-those different vegetable medicines, the health of the body may be preserved for a time, and death kept at a distance. Though the exposition given here may be a general meaning for these general terms, yet it is likely that *this tree of life* which was placed *in the midst of the garden* was intended as an emblem of that life which man should ever live, provided he continued in obedience to his Maker. And probably the use of this tree was intended as the *means* of preserving the body of man in a state of continual vital energy, and an antidote against death. This seems strongly indicated from ^{<01022>}**Genesis 3:22**.

And the tree of knowledge of good and evil.] Considering this also in a merely literal point of view, it may mean any tree or plant which possessed the property of increasing the knowledge of what was in nature, as the esculent vegetables had of increasing bodily vigour; and that there are some ailments which from their physical influence have a tendency to strengthen the understanding and invigorate the rational faculty more than others, has been supposed by the wisest and best of men; yet here much more seems intended, but *what* is very difficult to be ascertained. Some very eminent men have contended that the passage should be understood *allegorically!* and that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil means simply that *prudence*, which is a mixture of knowledge, care, caution, and judgment, which was prescribed to regulate the whole of man's conduct. And it is certain that to *know good and evil*, in different parts of Scripture, means such knowledge and discretion as leads a man to understand what is *fit* and *unfit*, what is not proper to be done and what *should* be performed. But how could the acquisition of such a faculty be a sin? Or can we suppose that such a faculty could be wanting when man was in a state of perfection? To this it may be answered: The prohibition was intended to *exercise* this faculty in man that it should constantly teach him this moral lesson, that there were some things fit and others unfit to be done, and that in reference to this point the tree itself should be both a constant teacher and monitor. The eating of its fruit would not have increased this moral faculty, but the prohibition was intended to exercise the faculty he already possessed. There is certainly nothing unreasonable in this explanation, and viewed in this light the passage loses much of its obscurity. Vitringa, in his dissertation *Deuteronomy arbore prudentiæ in Paradiso, ejusque mysterio*,

strongly contends for this interpretation. See Clarke on “~~01006~~Genesis 3:6”.

Verse 10. A river went out of Eden, &c.] It would astonish an ordinary reader, who should be obliged to consult different commentators and critics on the *situation of the terrestrial Paradise*, to see the vast variety of opinions by which they are divided. Some place it in the third heaven, others in the fourth; some within the orbit of the moon, others in the moon itself; some in the middle regions of the air, or beyond the earth’s attraction; some on the earth, others under the earth, and others within the earth; some have fixed it at the north pole, others at the south; some in Tartary, some in China; some on the borders of the Ganges, some in the island of Ceylon; some in Armenia, others in Africa, under the equator; some in Mesopotamia, others in Syria, Persia, Arabia, Babylon, Assyria, and in Palestine; some have condescended to place it in *Europe*, and others have contended it either exists not, or is invisible, or is merely of a spiritual nature, and that the whole account is to be spiritually understood! That there was such a *place* once there is no reason to doubt; the description given by Moses is too *particular* and *circumstantial* to be capable of being understood in any *spiritual* or *allegorical* way. As well might we contend that the *persons* of Adam and Eve were *allegorical*, as that the *place* of their residence was such.

The most probable account of its situation is that given by Hadrian Reland. He supposes it to have been in Armenia, near the sources of the great rivers *Euphrates*, *Tigris*, *Phasis*, and *Araxes*. He thinks *Pison* was the *Phasis*, a river of Colchis, emptying itself into the Euxine Sea, where there is a city called *Chabala*, the pronunciation of which is nearly the same with that of Havilah, or **hl ywj** *Chavilah*, according to the Hebrew, the *vau w* being changed in Greek to *beta β*. This country was famous for *gold*, whence the fable of the *Golden Fleece*, attempted to be carried away from that country by the heroes of Greece. The *Gihon* he thinks to be the *Araxes*, which runs into the Caspian Sea, both the words having the same signification, viz., a *rapid motion*. The land of Cush, washed by the river, he supposes to be the country of the *Cussæi* of the ancients. The *Hiddekel* all agree to be the *Tigris*, and the other river *Phrat*, or **trp** *Perath*, to be the *Euphrates*. All these rivers rise in the same tract of mountainous country, though they do not arise from one head.

Verse 12. There is bdellium (j l db *bedolach*) and the onyx stone, $\mu\text{hvh} \hat{\text{b}}\text{a}$ eben hashshoham.] Bochart thinks that the *bedolach* or *bdellium* means the *pearl-oyster*; and *shoham* is generally understood to mean the *onyx*, or species of *agate*, a precious stone which has its name from $\text{ovv}\xi$ a *man's nail*, to the colour of which it nearly approaches. It is impossible to say what is the precise meaning of the original words; and at this distance of time and place it is of little consequence.

Verse 15. Put him into the garden-to dress it, and to keep it.]

Horticulture, or gardening, is the first kind of employment on record, and that in which man was engaged while in a state of perfection and innocence. Though the garden may be supposed to produce all things *spontaneously*, as the whole vegetable surface of the earth certainly did at the creation, yet dressing and tilling were afterwards necessary to maintain the different kinds of plants and vegetables in their perfection, and to repress luxuriance. Even in a state of innocence we cannot conceive it possible that man could have been happy if *inactive*. God gave him work to do, and his employment contributed to his happiness; for the structure of his body, as well as of his mind, plainly proves that he was never intended for a merely contemplative life.

Verse 17. Of the tree of the knowledge-thou shalt not eat] This is the *first positive precept* God gave to man; and it was given as a test of obedience, and a proof of his being in a *dependent, probationary* state. It was necessary that, while constituted lord of this lower world, he should know that he was only God's *vicegerent*, and must be accountable to him for the use of his mental and corporeal powers, and for the use he made of the different creatures put under his care. The man from whose mind the strong impression of this dependence and responsibility is erased, necessarily loses sight of his origin and end, and is capable of any species of wickedness. As God is sovereign, he has a right to give to his creatures what commands he thinks proper. An intelligent creature, without a *law* to regulate his conduct, is an absurdity; this would destroy at once the idea of his dependency and accountableness. Man must ever feel God as his sovereign, and act under his authority, which he cannot do unless he have a *rule* of conduct. This rule God gives: and it is no matter of what kind it is, as long as obedience to it is not beyond the powers of the creature who is to obey. God says: There is a certain fruit-bearing tree; thou shalt not eat of its fruit; but of all the other fruits, and they are all that are necessary, for

thee, thou mayest freely, liberally eat. Had he not an absolute right to say so? And was not man bound to obey?

Thou shalt surely die.] *twm̄t twm̄ moth tamuth*; Literally, *a death thou shalt die; or, dying thou shalt die*. Thou shalt not only die spiritually, by losing the life of God, but from that moment thou shalt become mortal, and shalt continue in a *dying state* till thou *die*. This we find literally accomplished; every moment of man's life may be considered as an act of *dying*, till soul and body are separated. Other meanings have been given of this passage, but they are in general either fanciful or incorrect.

Verse 18. It is not good that the man should be alone] *wdb̄l lebaddo*; only himself. *I will make him a help meet for him*; *rz[wdgnk ezer kenegdo*, a help, a counterpart of himself, one formed from him, and a perfect resemblance of his person. If the word be rendered scrupulously literally, it signifies one *like*, or as *himself*, standing *opposite to* or *before him*. And this implies that the woman was to be a perfect resemblance of the man, possessing neither inferiority nor superiority, but being in all things *like* and *equal* to himself. As man was made a social creature, it was not proper that he should be alone; for to be alone, i.e. without a matrimonial companion, *was not good*. Hence we find that *celibacy* in general is a thing that *is not good*, whether it be on the side of the man or of the woman. Men may, in opposition to the declaration of God, call this a state of excellence and a state of perfection; but let them remember that the word of God says the *reverse*.

Verse 19. Out of the ground, &c.] Concerning the formation of the different kinds of animals, see the preceding chapter.

Verse 20. And Adam gave names to all cattle] Two things God appears to have had in view by causing man to name all the cattle, &c. 1. To show him with what comprehensive powers of mind his Maker had endued him; and 2. To show him that no creature yet formed could make him a suitable companion. And that this twofold purpose was answered we shall shortly see; for,

1. *Adam gave names*; but how? From an intimate knowledge of the nature and properties of each creature. Here we see the perfection of his knowledge; for it is well known that the names affixed to the different animals in Scripture always express some prominent feature and essential characteristic of the creatures to which they are applied. Had he not

possessed an intuitive knowledge of the grand and distinguishing properties of those animals, he never could have given them such names. This one circumstance is a strong proof of the original perfection and excellence of man, while in a state of innocence; nor need we wonder at the account. Adam was the work of an infinitely wise and perfect Being, and the *effect* must resemble the *cause* that produced it.

2. Adam was convinced that none of these creatures could be a suitable companion for him, and that therefore he must continue in the state that *was not good*, or be a farther debtor to the bounty of his Maker; for among all the animals which he had named *there was not found a help meet for him*. Hence we read, {.... v.21 }

Verse 21. The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, &c.]

This was neither swoon nor ecstasy, but what our translation very properly terms a *deep sleep*.

And he took one of his ribs] It is immaterial whether we render [I x *tsela* a rib, or a part of his *side*, for it may mean *either*: some part of man was to be used on the occasion, whether *bone* or *flesh* it matters not; though it is likely, from verse ^{<01023>} **Genesis 2:23**, that a part of *both* was taken; for Adam, knowing how the woman was formed, said, This is *flesh* of my *flesh*, and *bone* of my *bone*. God could have formed the woman out of the dust of the earth, as he had formed the man; but had he done so, she must have appeared in his eyes as a distinct being, to whom he had no natural relation. But as God formed her out of *a part of the man himself*, he saw she was of the same nature, the same identical flesh and blood, and of the same constitution in all respects, and consequently having equal powers, faculties, and rights. This at once ensured his affection, and excited his esteem.

Verse 23. Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, &c.] There is a very delicate and expressive meaning in the original which does not appear in our version. When the different *genera* of creatures were brought to Adam, that he might assign them their proper names, it is probable that they passed in pairs before him, and as they passed received their names. To this circumstance the words in this place seem to refer. Instead of *this now is* **µaph taz** *zoth happaam*, we should render more literally *this turn*, this creature, which now passes or appears before me, is flesh of my flesh, &c. The creatures that had *passed* already before him were not

suitable to him, and therefore it was said, *For Adam there was not a help meet found*, ⁽¹⁰²⁾**Genesis 2:20**; but when the woman came, formed out of himself, he felt all that attraction which consanguinity could produce, and at the same time saw that she was in her person and in her mind every way suitable to be his companion. See *Parkhurst*, sub voce.

She shall be called Woman] A literal version of the Hebrew would appear strange, and yet a literal version is the only proper one. *vya ish* signifies *man*, and the word used to express what we term *woman* is the same with a feminine termination, *hva ishshah*, and literally means *she-man*. Most of the ancient versions have felt the force of the term, and have endeavoured to express it as literally as possible. The intelligent reader will not regret to see some of them here. The *Vulgate* Latin renders the Hebrew *virago*, which is a feminine form of *vir*, a man. Symmachus uses *ανδρις*, *andris*, a female form of *ανηρ*, *aner*, a man. Our own term is equally proper when understood. *Woman* has been defined by many as compounded of *wo* and *man*, as if called *man's wo* because she tempted him to eat the forbidden fruit; but this is *no* meaning of the original word, nor could it be intended, as the transgression was not then committed. The truth is, our term is a proper and literal translation of the original, and we may thank the discernment of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors for giving it. [A.S.], of which *woman* is a contraction, means the *man with the womb*. A very appropriate version of the Hebrew *hva ishshah*, rendered by terms which signify *she-man*, in the versions already specified. Hence we see the propriety of Adam's observation: *This creature is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bones; therefore shall she be called WOMB-MAN, or female man, because she was taken out of man*. See *Verstegan*. Others derive it from [A.S.] or [A.S.], man's wife or *she-man*. Either may be proper, the first seems the most likely.

Verse 24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother]

There shall be, by the order of God, a more intimate connection formed between the man and woman, than can subsist even between parents and children.

And they shall be one flesh.] These words may be understood in a twofold sense. 1. *These two shall be one flesh*, shall be considered as *one body*, having no separate or independent rights, privileges, cares, concerns, &c., each being equally interested in all things that concern the marriage

state. 2. These two shall be *for the production* of one flesh; from their union a posterity shall spring, as exactly resembling themselves as they do each other. Our Lord quotes these words, ^{<4096>}**Matthew 19:5**, with some variation from this text: *They TWAIN shall be one flesh*. So in ^{<4108>}**Mark 10:8**. St. Paul quotes in the same way, ^{<4056>}**1 Corinthians 6:16**, and in ^{<4053>}**Ephesians 5:31**. The Vulgate Latin, the Septuagint, the Syriac, the Arabic, and the Samaritan, all read the word TWO. That this is the genuine reading I have no doubt. The word **phynv** *sheneyhem, they two or both of them*, was, I suppose, omitted at first from the Hebrew text, by mistake, because it occurs *three* words after in the following verse, or more probably it originally occurred in ^{<01024>}**Genesis 2:24**, and not in ^{<01025>}**Genesis 2:25**; and a copyist having found that he had written it twice, in correcting his copy, struck out the word in ^{<01024>}**Genesis 2:24** instead of ^{<01025>}**Genesis 2:25**. But of what consequence is it? In the controversy concerning polygamy, it has been made of very great consequence. *Without* the word, some have contended a man may have *as many wives as he chooses*, as the terms are indefinite, *THEY shall be, &c.*, but *with* the word, marriage is restricted. A man can have in legal wedlock but *ONE wife* at the same time.

We have here the first institution of marriage, and we see in it several particulars worthy of our most serious regard. 1. God pronounces the state of celibacy to be a *bad state*, or, if the reader please, *not a good one*; and the Lord God said, *It is not good for man to be alone*. This is GOD'S judgment. Councils, and fathers, and doctors, and synods, have given a different judgment; but on such a subject they are worthy of no attention. The word of God abideth for ever. 2. God made the woman *for* the man, and thus he has shown us that every son of Adam should be united to a daughter of Eve to the end of the world. See Clarke on ^{<4078>}**1 Corinthians 7:3'**. God made the woman *out* of the man, to intimate that the closest union, and the most affectionate attachment, should subsist in the matrimonial connection, so that the man should ever consider and treat the woman as a *part of himself*: and as no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and supports it, so should a man deal with his wife; and on the other hand the woman should consider that the man was not made *for her*, but that she was made *for the man*, and derived, under God, her being from him; therefore the wife should see that she reverence her husband, ^{<4053>}**Ephesians 5:33**. ^{<01023>}**Genesis 2:23, 24** contain the *very words* of the marriage ceremony: *This is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone, therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave*

unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. How happy must such a state be where God's institution is properly regarded, where the parties are married, as the apostle expresses it, *in the Lord*; where each, by acts of the tenderest kindness, lives only to prevent the wishes and contribute in every possible way to the comfort and happiness of the other! Marriage might still be what it *was* in its original institution, pure and suitable; and in its first exercise, affectionate and happy; but how few such marriages are there to be found! *Passion*, turbulent and irregular, not *religion*; *custom*, founded by these irregularities, not *reason*; *worldly prospects*, originating and ending in selfishness and earthly affections, not in *spiritual ends*, are the grand producing causes of the great majority of matrimonial alliances. How then can such turbid and bitter *fountains* send forth pure and sweet waters? See the ancient allegory of *Cupid and Psyche*, by which marriage is so happily illustrated, explained in the notes on ^{<0190>} **Matthew 19:4-6.**

Verse 25. They were both naked, &c.] The weather was perfectly temperate, and therefore they had no need of clothing, the circumambient air being of the same temperature with their bodies. And as sin had not yet entered into the world, and no part of the human body had been put to any improper use, therefore there was no *shame*, for shame can only arise from a consciousness of sinful or irregular conduct.

EVEN in a state of *innocence*, when all was perfection and excellence, when God was clearly discovered in all his works, every *place* being his *temple*, every *moment* a *time of worship*, and every *object* an *incitement* to religious reverence and adoration—even *then*, God chose to consecrate a *seventh part* of time to his more especial worship, and to hallow it unto his own service by a perpetual decree. Who then shall dare to reverse this order of God? Had the religious observance of the Sabbath been never proclaimed till the proclamation of the law on Mount Sinai, then it might have been conjectured that this, like several other ordinances, was a shadow which must pass away with that dispensation; neither extending to future ages, nor binding on any other people. But this was not so. God gave the Sabbath, *his first ordinance*, to man, (see the *first precept*, ^{<010217>} **Genesis 2:17,**) while all the nations of the world were seminally included in him, and while he stood the father and representative of the whole human race; therefore the Sabbath is not for one nation, for one time, or for one place. It is the fair type of heaven's eternal day-of the state of endless blessedness and glory, where human souls, having fully regained the Divine image, and become united to the *Centre* and Source of all

perfection and excellence, shall *rest* in God, unutterably happy through the immeasurable progress of duration! Of this consummation every returning Sabbath should at once be a type, a remembrancer, and a foretaste, to every pious mind; and these it must be to all who are taught of God.

Of this rest, *the garden of Eden*, that paradise of God formed for man, appears also to have been a type and pledge; and the institution of marriage, the cause, bond, and cement of the social state, was probably designed to prefigure that harmony, order, and blessedness which must reign in the kingdom of God, of which the condition of our first parents in the garden of paradise is justly supposed to have been an expressive emblem. What a pity that this heavenly institution should have ever been perverted! that, instead of becoming a sovereign help to all, it is now, through its prostitution to animal and secular purposes, become the destroyer of millions! Reader, every connection thou formest in life will have a strong and sovereign influence on thy future destiny. Beware! an unholy cause, which from its peculiar nature must be ceaselessly active in every muscle, nerve, and passion, cannot fail to produce incessant effects of sin, misery, death, and perdition. Remember that thy earthly connections, no matter of what kind, are not formed merely for *time*, whatsoever thou mayest intend, but also for *eternity*. With what caution there fore shouldst thou take every step in the path of life! On this ground, the observations made in the preceding notes are seriously recommended to thy consideration.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 3

Satan, by means of a creature here called the serpent, deceives Eve, 1-5. Both she and Adam transgress the Divine command, and fall into sin and misery, 6, 7. They are summoned before God, and judged, 8-13. The creature called the serpent is degraded and punished, 14. The promise of redemption by the incarnation of Christ, 15. Eve sentenced, 16. Adam sentenced, 17. The ground cursed, and death threatened, 18, 19. Why the woman was called Eve, 20. Adam and Eve clothed with skins, 21. The wretched state of our first parents after their fall, and their expulsion from the garden of Paradise, 22-24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. Now the serpent was more subtle] We have here one of the most difficult as well as the most important narratives in the whole book of God. The last chapter ended with a short but striking account of the perfection and felicity of the first human beings, and this opens with an account of their transgression, degradation, and ruin. That man is in a *fallen* state, the history of the world, with that of the life and miseries of every human being, establishes beyond successful contradiction. But *how*, and by what *agency*, was this brought about? Here is a great mystery, and I may appeal to all persons who have read the various comments that have been written on the Mosaic account, whether they have ever yet been satisfied on this part of the subject, though convinced of the fact itself. *Who* was the *serpent*? of what *kind*? In what *way* did he seduce the first happy pair? These are questions which *remain yet to be answered*. The whole account is either a *simple narrative* of *facts*, or it is an *allegory*. If it be a historical relation, its literal meaning should be sought out; if it be an *allegory*, no attempt should be made to explain it, as it would require a direct revelation to ascertain the sense in which it should be understood, for fanciful illustrations are endless. Believing it to be a *simple relation* of *facts* capable of a satisfactory explanation, I shall take it up on this ground; and, by a careful examination of the original text, endeavour to fix the meaning, and show the propriety and consistency of the Mosaic account of the fall of man. The chief difficulty in the account is found in the question, Who was the *agent* employed in the seduction of our first parents?

The word in the text which we, following the Septuagint, translate *serpent*, is **vj n nachash**; and, according to *Buxtorf* and others, has *three* meanings in Scripture. 1. It signifies to *view* or *observe attentively*, to *divine* or *use enchantments*, because in them the augurs *viewed attentively the flight of birds*, the *entrails of beasts*, the *course of the clouds*, &c.; and under this head it signifies to *acquire knowledge by experience*. 2. It signifies *brass*, *brazen*, and is translated in our Bible, not only *brass*, but *chains*, *fetters*, *fetters of brass*, and in several places *steel*; see ^{<10225>}**2 Samuel 22:35** ^{<18324>}**Job 20:24** ^{<191834>}**Psalm 18:34**; and in one place, at least *filthiness* or *fornication*, ^{<51636>}**Ezekiel 16:36**. 3. It signifies a *serpent*, but of what kind is not determined. In ^{<18313>}**Job 26:13**, it seems to mean the *whale* or *hippopotamus*: *By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent*, **j rb vj n nachash bariach**: as **j rb barach** signifies to *pass on* or *pass through*, and **j yrb beriach** is used for a *bar* of a gate or door *that passed through rings*, &c., the idea of *straightness* rather than *crookedness* should be attached to it here; and it is likely that the *hippopotamus* or *sea-horse* is intended by it.

In ^{<21015>}**Ecclesiastes 10:11**, the creature called *nachash*, of whatever sort, is compared to the *babbling*: *Surely the serpent (vj n nachash) will bite without enchantment; and a babbling is no better*.

In ^{<23701>}**Isaiah 27:1**, the *crocodile* or *alligator* seems particularly meant by the original: *In that day the Lord shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent*, &c. And in ^{<24625>}**Isaiah 65:25**, the same creature is meant as in ^{<10101>}**Genesis 3:1**, for in the words, *And dust shall be the serpent's meat*, there is an evident allusion to the text of Moses. In ^{<31008>}**Amos 9:3**, the *crocodile* is evidently intended: *Though they be hid in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, (vj nh hannachash,) and he shall bite them*. No person can suppose that any of the snake or serpent kind can be intended here; and we see from the various acceptations of the word, and the different senses which it bears in various places in the sacred writings, that it appears to be a sort of *general term* confined to no one sense. Hence it will be necessary to examine the root accurately, to see if its ideal meaning will enable us to ascertain the animal intended in the text. We have already seen that **vj n nachash** signifies to *view attentively*, to *acquire knowledge* or *experience by attentive observation*; so **y tvj n nichashti**, ^{<101327>}**Genesis 30:27**: *I have learned by experience*; and this seems

to be its most general meaning in the Bible. The original word is by the Septuagint translated $\sigma\phi\iota\varsigma$, a *serpent*, not because this was its *fixed* determinate meaning in the sacred writings, but because it was the best that occurred to the translators: and they do not seem to have given themselves much trouble to understand the meaning of the original, for they have rendered the word as variously as our translators have done, or rather our translators have followed *them*, as they give nearly the same significations found in the Septuagint: hence we find that $\sigma\phi\iota\varsigma$ is as frequently used by them as *serpent*, its supposed literal meaning, is used in our version. And the New Testament writers, who seldom quote the Old Testament *but from the Septuagint translation*, and often do not *change* even a word in their quotations, copy this version in the use of this word. From the Septuagint therefore we can expect no light, nor indeed from any other of the ancient versions, which are all *subsequent* to the Septuagint, and some of them actually made from it. In all this uncertainty it is natural for a serious inquirer after truth to look *everywhere* for information. And in such an inquiry the Arabic may be expected to afford some help, from its great similarity to the Hebrew. A root in this language, very nearly similar to that in the text, seems to cast considerable light on the subject. [Arabic] *chanas* or *khanasa* signifies *he departed, drew off, lay hid, seduced, slunk away*; from this root come [Arabic] *akhnas*, [Arabic] *khanasa*, and [Arabic] *khanooos*, which all signify an *ape*, or *satyrus*, or any creature of the *simia* or *ape* genus. It is very remarkable also that from the same root comes [Arabic] *khanas*, the DEVIL, which appellation he bears from that meaning of [Arabic] *khanasa*, *he drew off, seduced, &c.*, because he *draws* men off from righteousness, *seduces* them from their obedience to God, &c., &c. See *Golius*, sub voce. Is it not strange that the *devil* and the *ape* should have the same name, derived from the same root, and that root so very similar to the word in the text? But let us return and consider what is said of the creature in question. *Now the nachash was more subtle, $\mu\omega\rho$ [arum, more wise, cunning, or prudent, than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.* In this account we find, 1. That whatever this *nachash* was, he stood at the *head* of all inferior animals for wisdom and understanding. 2. That he *walked erect*, for this is necessarily implied in his punishment-*on thy belly* (i.e., on all fours) *shalt thou go*. 3. That he was *endued with the gift of speech*, for a conversation is here related between him and the woman. 4. That he was also endued with the *gift of reason*, for we find him reasoning and disputing with Eve. 5. That these things were *common to this creature*, the woman no doubt having often seen him walk

erect, talk, and reason, and therefore she testifies *no kind of surprise* when he accosts her in the language related in the text; and indeed from the manner in which this is introduced it appears to be only a *part* of a conversation that had passed between them on the occasion: *Yea, hath God said, &c.*

Had this creature never been known to speak before his addressing the woman at this time and on this subject, it could not have failed to excite her *surprise*, and to have filled her with *caution*, though from the purity and innocence of her nature she might have been incapable of being affected with *fear*. Now I apprehend that none of these things can be spoken of a *serpent* of any species. 1. None of them ever *did* or ever *can* walk erect. The tales we have had of two-footed and four-footed serpents are justly exploded by every judicious naturalist, and are utterly unworthy of credit. The very name *serpent* comes from *serpo*, to creep, and therefore to such it could be neither *curse* nor *punishment* to go on their bellies, i.e., *to creep on*, as they had done from their creation, and must do while their race endures. 2. They have no *organs* for *speech*, or any kind of articulate sound; they can only *hiss*. It is true that an *ass* by miraculous influence may speak; but it is not to be supposed that there was any miraculous interference here. GOD did not qualify this creature with speech for the occasion, and it is not intimated that there was any *other agent* that did it; on the contrary, the text intimates that *speech* and *reason* were natural to the *nachash*: and is it not in reference to this the inspired penman says, *The nachash was more subtle or intelligent than all the beasts of the field that the Lord God had made?* Nor can I find that the *serpentine genus* are remarkable for *intelligence*. It is true the wisdom of the *serpent* has passed into a proverb, but I cannot see on what it is founded, except in reference to the passage in question, where the *nachash*, which we translate *serpent*, following the Septuagint, shows so much intelligence and cunning: and it is very probable that our Lord alludes to this very place when he exhorts his disciples to be *wise-prudent* or *intelligent*, *as serpents*, **φρονιμοι ως οι οπεις** and it is worthy of remark that he uses the same term employed by the Septuagint in the text in question: **οφης ην φρονιμωτατος**, *the serpent was more prudent or intelligent than all the beasts, &c.* All these things considered, we are obliged to seek for some other word to designate the *nachash* in the text, than the word *serpent*, which on every view of the subject appears to me inefficient and inapplicable. We have seen above that *khanas*, *akhnas*, and *khanoos*, signify a creature of the *ape* or *satyrus* kind.

We have seen that the meaning of the root is, he *lay hid, seduced, slunk away, &c.*; and that *khanas* means the *devil*, as the inspirer of evil, and seducer from God and truth. See *Golius* and *Wilmet*. It therefore appears to me that a creature of the *ape* or *ouran outang* kind is here intended; and that Satan made use of this creature as the *most proper* instrument for the accomplishment of his murderous purposes against the life and soul of man. Under this creature he *lay hid*, and by this creature he *seduced* our first parents, and *drew off* or *slunk away* from every eye but the eye of God. Such a creature answers to every part of the description in the text: it is evident from the structure of its limbs and their muscles that it might have been originally designed to walk *erect*, and that nothing less than a sovereign controlling power could induce them to put down *hands* in every respect formed like those of man, and walk like those creatures whose claw-armed paws prove them to have been designed to walk on all fours. Dr. *Tyson* has observed in his anatomy of an *ouran outang*, that the seminal vessels passed between the two coats of the peritoneum to the scrotum, as in man; hence he argues that this creature was designed to walk erect, as it is otherwise in all quadrupeds. *Philos. Trans.*, vol. *xxi.*, p. 340. The subtlety, cunning, endlessly varied pranks and tricks of these creatures, show them, *even now*, to be more subtle and more *intelligent* than any other creature, man alone excepted. Being *obliged* now to walk on all fours, and gather their food from the ground, they are literally obliged to *eat the dust*; and though exceedingly cunning, and careful in a variety of instances to separate that part which is wholesome and proper for food from that which is not so, in the article of *cleanliness* they are lost to all sense of propriety; and though they have every means in their power of cleansing the aliments they gather off the ground, and from among the dust, yet they never in their savage state make use of any, except a slight rub against their side, or with one of their hands, more to see what the article is than to cleanse it. Add to this, their utter aversion to *walk upright*; it requires the utmost discipline to bring them to it, and scarcely anything irritates them more than to be obliged to do it. Long observation on some of these animals enables me to state these facts.

Should any person who may read this note object against my conclusions, because apparently derived from an Arabic word which is not exactly similar to the Hebrew, though to those who understand both languages the similarity will be striking; yet, as I do not insist on the *identity* of the terms, though important consequences have been derived from less likely

etymologies, he is welcome to throw the whole of this out of the account. He may then take up the Hebrew root only, which signifies to *gaze, to view attentively, pry into, inquire narrowly, &c.*, and consider the passage that appears to compare the *nachash* to the *babbler*. ^{<21101>} **Ecclesiastes 10:11**, and he will soon find, if he have any acquaintance with creatures of this genus, that for *earnest, attentive watching, looking, &c.*, and for *chattering or babbling*, they have no fellows in the animal world. Indeed, the ability and propensity to chatter is all they have left, according to the above hypothesis, of their original gift of speech, of which I suppose them to have been deprived at the fall as a part of their punishment.

I have spent the longer time on this subject, 1. Because it is exceedingly obscure; 2. Because no interpretation hitherto given of it has afforded me the smallest satisfaction; 3. Because I think the above mode of accounting for every part of the whole transaction is consistent and satisfactory, and in my opinion removes many embarrassments, and solves the chief difficulties. I think it can be no solid objection to the above mode of solution that Satan, in different parts of the New Testament, is called the *serpent*, the *serpent that deceived Eve by his subtlety, the old serpent, &c.*, for we have already seen that the New Testament writers have borrowed the word from the *Septuagint*, and the *Septuagint* themselves use it in a *vast variety and latitude of meaning*; and surely the *ouran outang* is as likely to be the animal in question as **vj n** *nachash* and **οφις** *ophis* are likely to mean at once a *snake, a crocodile, a hippopotamus, fornication, a chain, a pair of fetters, a piece of brass, a piece of steel, and a conjurer*; for we have seen above that all these are acceptations of the original word. Besides, the New Testament writers seem to lose sight of the animal or instrument used on the occasion, and speak only of Satan himself as the cause of the transgression, and the instrument of all evil. If, however, any person should choose to differ from the opinion stated above, he is at perfect liberty so to do; I make it no article of faith, nor of Christian communion; I crave the same liberty to judge for myself that I give to others, to which every man has an indisputable right; and I hope no man will call me a heretic for departing in this respect from the common opinion, which appears to me to be so embarrassed as to be altogether unintelligible. See farther on ^{<10102>} **Genesis 3:7-14, &c.**

Yea, hath God said] This seems to be the continuation of a discourse of which the preceding part is not given, and a proof that the creature in

question was endowed with the gift of reason and speech, for no surprise is testified on the part of Eve.

Verse 3. Neither shall ye touch it] Did not the woman *add* this to what God had before spoken? Some of the Jewish writers, who are only serious on comparative trifles, state that as soon as the woman had asserted this, the serpent pushed her against the tree and said, “See, thou hast *touched* it, and art still alive; thou mayest therefore safely *eat* of the fruit, for surely thou shalt not die.”

Verse 4. Ye shall not surely die] Here the *father of lies* at once appears; and appears too in flatly contradicting the assertion of God. The tempter, through the *nachash*, insinuates the impossibility of her dying, as if he had said, God has created thee immortal, thy death therefore is impossible; and God knows this, for as thou livest by the *tree of life*, so shalt thou get increase of wisdom by the *tree of knowledge*.

Verse 5. Your eyes shall be opened] Your understanding shall be greatly enlightened and improved; *and ye shall be as gods*, **ܡܝܗܝܐ ܐܟ ܠܗܘܝܡ**, like God, so the word should be translated; for what idea could our first parents have of *gods* before idolatry could have had any being, because sin had not yet entered into the world? The Syriac has the word in the *singular* number, and is the only one of all the versions which has hit on the true meaning. As the original word is the same which is used to point out the Supreme Being, **ⲉⲓⲟⲩⲟⲩⲉ** **Genesis 1:1**, so it has here the same signification, and the object of the tempter appears to have been this: to persuade our first parents that they should, by eating of this fruit, become wise and powerful as God, (for *knowledge is power*,) and be able to exist for ever, independently of him.

Verse 6. The tree was good for food] 1. The fruit appeared to be wholesome and nutritive. *And that it was pleasant to the eyes*. 2. The beauty of the fruit tended to whet and increase appetite. *And a tree to be desired to make one wise*, which was, 3. An additional motive to please the palate. From these three sources all natural and moral evil sprang; they are exactly what the apostle calls the *desire of the flesh*; the tree was good for food: *the desire of the eye*; it was pleasant to the sight: and *the pride of life*; it was a tree to be desired to make one wise. God had undoubtedly created our first parents not only very wise and intelligent, but also with a great capacity and suitable propensity to increase in knowledge. Those

who think that Adam was created so perfect as to preclude the possibility of his increase in knowledge, have taken a very false view of the subject. We shall certainly be convinced that our first parents were in a state of sufficient perfection when we consider, 1. That they were endued with a vast capacity to obtain knowledge. 2. That all the means of information were within their reach. 3. That there was no hinderance to the most direct conception of occurring truth. 4. That all the objects of knowledge, whether natural or moral, were ever at hand. 5. That they had the strongest propensity to know; and, 6. The greatest pleasure in knowing. To have God and nature continually open to the view of the soul; and to have a soul capable of viewing both, and fathoming endlessly their unbounded glories and excellences, without hinderance or difficulty; what a state of perfection! what a consummation of bliss! This was undoubtedly the state and condition of our first parents; even the present ruins of the state are incontestable evidences of its primitive excellence. We see at once how transgression came; it was natural for them to desire to be increasingly wise. God had implanted this desire in their minds; but he showed them that this desire should be gratified in a *certain way*; that *prudence* and *judgment* should always regulate it; that they should carefully examine what God had opened to their view; and should not pry into what he chose to conceal. He alone who knows all things knows how much knowledge the soul needs to its perfection and increasing happiness, in *what* subjects this may be legitimately sought, and where the mind may make excursions and discoveries to its prejudice and ruin. There are doubtless many subjects which angels are capable of knowing, and which God chooses to conceal even from them, because that knowledge would tend neither to their perfection nor happiness. Of every attainment and object of pursuit it may be said, in the words of an ancient poet, who conceived correctly on the subject, and expressed his thoughts with perspicuity and energy:—

*Est modus in rebus: sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.
HOR. Sat., lib. i., Sat. 1., ver. 106.*

“There is a rule for all things; there are in fine fixed and stated limits, on either side of which righteousness cannot be found.” *On the line* of duty alone we must walk.

Such limits God certainly assigned from the beginning: Thou shalt *come up* to this; thou shalt not *pass* it. And as he assigned the *limits*, so he assigned the *means*. It is lawful for thee to acquire knowledge in *this way*; it is

unlawful to seek it in *that*. And had he not a right to do so? And would his creation have been perfect without it?

Verse 7. The eyes of them both were opened] They now had a sufficient discovery of their sin and folly in disobeying the command of God; they could discern between good and evil; and what was the consequence? Confusion and shame were engendered, because innocence was lost and guilt contracted.

Let us review the whole of this melancholy business, the *fall* and its *effects*.

1. From the New Testament we learn that Satan associated himself with the creature which we term the *serpent*, and the original the *nachash*, in order to seduce and ruin mankind; ^{<471103>}**2 Corinthians 11:3** ^{<61219>}**Revelation 12:9 20:2**. 2. That this creature was the most suitable to his purpose, as being the most subtle, the *most intelligent* and *cunning* of all beasts of the field, endued with the gift of speech and reason, and consequently one in which he could best conceal himself. 3. As he knew that while they *depended on God* they could not be ruined, he therefore endeavoured to seduce them from this dependence. 4. He does this by working on that propensity of the mind to desire an increase of knowledge, with which God, for the most gracious purposes, had endued it. 5. In order to succeed, he insinuates that God, through motives of envy, had given the prohibition-*God doth know that in the day ye eat of it, ye shall be like himself, &c.* 6. As their present state of blessedness must be inexpressibly dear to them, he endeavours to persuade them that they could not fall from this state: *Ye shall not surely die* -ye shall not only retain your present blessedness, but it shall be greatly increased; a temptation by which he has ever since fatally succeeded in the ruin of multitudes of souls, whom he persuaded that being *once right* they could never *finally* go wrong. 7. As he kept the unlawfulness of the means proposed out of sight, persuaded them that they could not fall from their steadfastness, assured them that they should resemble God himself, and consequently be self-sufficient, and totally independent of him; they listened, and fixing their eye only on the promised good, neglecting the positive command, and determining to become wise and independent at all events, *they took of the fruit and did eat*.

Let us now examine the *effects*.

1. Their eyes were opened, and they saw they were naked. They saw what they never saw before, that they were stripped of their excellence; that they had lost their innocence; and that they had fallen into a state of indigence and danger. 2. Though their eyes were opened to see their nakedness, yet their mind was clouded, and their judgment confused. They seem to have lost all just notions of honour and dishonour, of what was shameful and what was praise-worthy. It was dishonourable and shameful to break the commandment of God; but it was neither to go *naked*, when clothing was not necessary. 3. They seem in a moment, not only to have lost sound judgment, but also *reflection*: a short time before Adam was so wise that he could name all the creatures brought before him, according to their respective natures and qualities; *now* he does not know the first principle concerning the Divine nature, that *it knows all things*, and that it is omnipresent, therefore he endeavours to hide himself among the trees from the eye of the *all-seeing* God! How astonishing is this! When the creatures were brought to him he could *name* them, because he could discern their respective natures and properties; when Eve was brought to him he could immediately tell *what* she was, *who* she was, and for *what end* made, though he was in a *deep sleep* when God formed her; and this seems to be particularly noted, merely to show the depth of his wisdom, and the perfection of his discernment. But alas! how are the mighty fallen! Compare his present with his past state, his state *before* the transgression with his state *after* it; and say, is this the same creature? the creature of whom God said, as he said of all his works, *He is very good*-just what he should be, a living image of the living God; but now lower than the beasts of the field? 4. This account could never have been credited had not the indisputable proofs and evidences of it been continued by uninterrupted succession to the present time. All the descendants of this first guilty pair resemble their degenerate ancestors, and copy their conduct. The original *mode* of transgression is still continued, and the *original sin* in consequence. Here are the proofs. 1. Every human being is endeavouring to obtain knowledge by unlawful means, even while the lawful means and every available help are at hand. 2. They are endeavouring to be *independent*, and to live without God in the world; hence *prayer*, the language of dependence on God's providence and grace, is neglected, I might say detested, by the great majority of men. Had I no other proof than this that man is a *fallen creature*, my soul would bow to this evidence. 3. Being destitute of the true knowledge of God they seek privacy for their crimes, not considering that the eye of God is upon them, being only

solicitous to hide them from the eye of man. These are all proofs in point; but we shall soon meet with additional ones. See on ^{<OEBIO>} **Genesis 3:10, 12.**

Verse 8. The voice of the Lord] The *voice* is properly used here, for as God is an infinite Spirit, and cannot be confined to any *form*, so he can have no *personal* appearance. It is very likely that God used to converse with them in the garden, and that the usual time was the *decline* of the day, **לְרוּחַ יְמֵי עָרֶב** *leruach haiyom*, in the *evening breeze*; and probably this was the time that our first parents employed in the more solemn acts of their religious worship, at which God was ever present. The time for this solemn worship is again come, and God is in his place; but Adam and Eve have sinned, and therefore, instead of being found in the place of worship, are hidden among the trees! Reader, how often has this been *thy* case!

Verse 10. I was afraid, because I was naked] See the immediate consequences of sin. 1. SHAME, because of the ingratitude marked in the rebellion, and because that in aiming to be like God they were now sunk into a state of the greatest wretchedness. 2. FEAR, because they saw they had been deceived by Satan, and were exposed to that death and punishment from which he had promised them an exemption. How worthy is it of remark that *this* cause continues to produce the very same effects! *Shame* and *fear* were the first fruits of sin, and fruits which it has *invariably* produced, from the first transgression to the present time.

Verse 12. And the man said, &c.] We have here some farther proofs of the fallen state of man, and that the consequences of that state extend to his remotest posterity. 1. On the question, *Hast thou eaten of the tree?* Adam is obliged to acknowledge his transgression; but he does this in such a way as to shift off the blame from himself, and lay it upon *God* and upon the *woman*! *This* woman whom THOU didst give to be with me, **יְדַמְתִּי** [*immadi*, to be my companion, (for so the word is repeatedly used,) *she* gave me, and I did eat. I have no farther blame in this transgression; I did not *pluck* the fruit; *she* took it and gave it to me. 2. When the woman is questioned she lays the blame upon God and the serpent, (*nachash*.) *The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* Thou didst make him much wiser than thou didst make me, and therefore my simplicity and ignorance were overcome by his superior wisdom and subtlety; I can have no fault here, the fault is *his*, and his who made him *so wise* and me *so ignorant*. Thus we find that, while the eyes of their body were opened to see their degraded state, the eyes of their understanding were closed, so that they could not

see the sinfulness of sin; and at the same time their hearts were hardened through its deceitfulness. In this also their posterity copy their example. How few ingenuously confess their own sin! They see not their guilt. They are continually making excuses for their crimes; the strength and subtlety of the tempter, the natural weakness of their own minds, the unfavourable circumstances in which they were placed, &c., &c., are all pleaded as excuses for their sins, and thus the possibility of repentance is precluded; for till a man *take his sin to himself*, till he acknowledge that *he alone* is guilty, he cannot be humbled, and consequently cannot be saved. Reader, till thou accuse thyself, and *thyself only*, and feel that thou alone art responsible for all thy iniquities, there is no hope of thy salvation.

Verse 14. And the Lord God said unto the serpent] The *tempter* is not asked *why he deceived the woman*; he cannot roll the blame on any other; *self-tempted he fell*, and it is natural for him, such is his enmity, to deceive and destroy all he can. His fault admits of no excuse, and therefore God begins to pronounce sentence on *him* first. And here we must consider a twofold sentence, one on *Satan* and the other on the *agent* he employed. The *nachash*, whom I suppose to have been at the head of all the inferior animals, and in a sort of society and intimacy with man, is to be greatly degraded, entirely banished from human society, and deprived of the gift of speech. *Cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field*-thou shalt be considered the most contemptible of animals; *upon thy belly shalt thou go*-thou shalt no longer walk erect, but mark the ground equally with thy hands and feet; *and dust shalt thou eat*-though formerly possessed of the faculty to distinguish, choose, and cleanse thy food, thou shalt feed henceforth like the most stupid and abject quadruped, *all the days of thy life*-through all the innumerable generations of thy species. God saw meet to manifest his displeasure against the agent employed in this melancholy business; and perhaps this is founded on the part which the intelligent and subtle *nachash* took in the seduction of our first parents. We see that he was capable of it, and have some reason to believe that he became a *willing* instrument.

Verse 15. I will put enmity between thee and the woman] This has been generally supposed to apply to a certain enmity subsisting between men and serpents; but this is rather a fancy than a reality. It is yet to be discovered that the serpentine race have any peculiar enmity against mankind, nor is there any proof that men hate serpents *more* than they do other noxious animals. Men have much more enmity to the common rat

and magpie than they have to all the serpents in the land, because the former destroy the grain, &c., and serpents in general, far from seeking to do men mischief, flee his approach, and generally avoid his dwelling. If, however, we take the word *nachash* to mean any of the *simia* or *ape* species, we find a more consistent meaning, as there is scarcely an animal in the universe so detested by most *women* as these are; and indeed *men* look on them as continual caricatures of themselves. But we are not to look for merely *literal meanings* here: it is evident that Satan, who actuated this creature, is alone intended in this part of the prophetic declaration. God in his endless mercy has put enmity between men and him; so that, though all mankind love his *service*, yet all invariably hate *himself*. Were it otherwise, who could be saved? A great point gained towards the conversion of a sinner is to convince him that it is *Satan* he has been serving, that it is to *him* he has been giving up his soul, body, goods, &c.; he starts with horror when this conviction fastens on his mind, and shudders at the thought of being in league with the old murderer. But there is a deeper meaning in the text than even this, especially in these words, *it shall bruise thy head*, or rather, **awh hu**, HE; who? the seed of the *woman*; the person is to come by the *woman*, and by her *alone*, *without the concurrence of man*. Therefore the address is not to Adam and Eve, but to *Eve alone*; and it was in consequence of this purpose of God that Jesus Christ was born of a *virgin*; this, and this alone, is what is implied in the promise of the *seed of the woman* bruising the head of the serpent. Jesus Christ died to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and to destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Thus he *bruises his head*-destroys his *power and lordship* over mankind, turning them from the *power* of Satan unto God; **Acts 26:18**. And Satan *bruises his heel*-God so ordered it, that the salvation of man could only be brought about by the *death* of Christ; and even the spiritual seed of our blessed Lord have the heel often bruised, as they suffer persecution, temptation, &c., which may be all that is intended by this part of the prophecy.

Verse 16. Unto the woman he said] She being second in the transgression is brought up the *second* to receive her condemnation, and to hear her punishment: I will greatly multiply, or *multiplying I will multiply*; i.e., I will multiply thy sorrows, and multiply those sorrows by other sorrows, and this during conception and pregnancy, and particularly so in parturition or child-bearing. And this curse has fallen in a heavier degree on the *woman* than on any other *female*. Nothing is better attested than this, and yet there

is certainly no *natural* reason why it should be so; it is a part of her punishment, and a part from which even God's mercy will not exempt her. It is added farther, *Thy desire shall be to thy husband* -thou shalt not be able to shun the great pain and peril of child-bearing, for thy desire, *thy appetite*, shall be to thy husband; *and he shall rule over thee*, though at their creation both were formed with equal rights, and the woman had probably as much right to *rule* as the man; but subjection to the will of her husband is one part of her curse; and so very capricious is this *will* often, that a sorer punishment no human being can well have, to be at all in a state of liberty, and under the protection of wise and equal laws.

Verse 17. Unto Adam he said] The man being the *last* in the transgression is brought up *last* to receive his sentence: *Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife*-“thou wast not *deceived*, she only gave and counselled thee to eat; this thou shouldst have resisted;” and that he did not is the reason of his condemnation. *Cursed is the ground for thy sake*-from henceforth its fertility shall be greatly impaired; *in sorrow shalt thou eat of it*-be in continual perplexity concerning the seed time and the harvest, the cold and the heat, the wet and the dry. How often are all the fruits of man's toll destroyed by blasting, by mildew, by insects, wet weather, land floods, &c.! Anxiety and carefulness are the labouring man's portion.

Verse 18. Thorns also and thistles, &c.] Instead of producing nourishing grain and useful vegetables, noxious weeds shall be peculiarly prolific, injure the ground, choke the good seed, and mock the hopes of the husbandman; *and thou shalt eat the herb of the field*-thou shalt no longer have the privilege of this garden of delights, but must go to the common champaign country, and feed on such herbs as thou canst find, till by labour and industry thou hast raised others more suitable to thee and more comfortable.

In the curse pronounced on the *ground* there is much more implied than generally appears. The amazing fertility of some of the most common *thistles* and *thorns* renders them the most proper instruments for the fulfilment of this sentence against man. *Thistles* multiply enormously; a species called the *Carolina sylvestris* bears ordinarily from 20 to 40 heads, each containing from 100 to 150 seeds.

Another species, called the *Acanthum vulgare*, produces above 100 heads, each containing from 3 to 400 seeds. Suppose we say that these *thistles*

produce at a medium only 80 beads, and that each contains only 300 seeds; the first crop from these would amount to 24,000. Let *these* be sown, and their crop will amount to 576 *millions*. Sow these, and their produce will be 13,824,000,000,000, or *thirteen billions, eight hundred and twenty-four thousand millions*; and a single crop from these, which is only the *third* year's growth, would amount to 331,776,000,000,000,000, or *three hundred and thirty-one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six billions*; and the fourth year's growth will amount to 7,962,624,000,000,000,000,000, or *seven thousand nine hundred and sixty-two trillions, six hundred and twenty-four thousand billions*. A progeny more than sufficient to stock not only the surface of the whole world, but of all the planets of the solar system, so that no other plant or vegetable could possibly grow, allowing but the space of one square foot for each plant.

The *Carduus vulgatissimus viarum*, or common hedge thistle, besides the almost infinite swarms of winged seeds it sends forth, spreads its roots around many yards, and throws up suckers everywhere, which not only produce seeds in their turn, but extend their roots, propagate like the parent plant, and stifle and destroy all vegetation but their own.

As to THORNS, the bramble, which occurs so commonly, and is so mischievous, is a sufficient proof how well the *means* are calculated to secure the end. The *genista*, or *spinosa vulgaris*, called by some *furze*, by others *whins*, is allowed to be one of the most mischievous shrubs on the face of the earth. Scarcely any thing can grow near it, and it is so thick set with prickles that it is almost impossible to touch it without being wounded. It is very prolific; almost half the year it is covered with flowers which produce *pods* filled with seeds. Besides. it shoots out roots far and wide, from which suckers and young plants are continually springing up, which produce others in their turn. Where it is permitted to grow it soon overspreads whole tracts of ground, and it is extremely difficult to clear the ground of its roots where once it has got proper footing. Such provision has the just God made to fulfil the curse which he has pronounced on the earth, because of the crimes of its inhabitants. See *Hale's Vegetable Statics*.

Verse 19. In the sweat of thy face] Though the whole body may be thrown into a profuse sweat, if hard labour be long continued, yet the *face* or *forehead* is the first part whence this sweat begins to issue; this is

occasioned by the blood being strongly propelled to the brain, partly through stooping, but principally by the strong action of the muscles; in consequence of this the blood vessels about the head become turgid through the great flux of blood, the fibres are relaxed, the pores enlarged, and the sweat or serum poured out. Thus then the very commencement of every man's labour may put him in mind of his sin and its consequences.

Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.] God had said that in the day they ate of the forbidden fruit, *dying they should die*-they should then become *mortal*, and continue under the influence of a great variety of unfriendly agencies in the atmosphere and in themselves, from heats, colds, drought, and damps in the one, and morbid *increased* and *decreased* action in the solids and fluids of the other, till the spirit, finding its earthly house no longer tenable, should return to God who gave it; and the body, being decomposed, should be reduced to its primitive dust. It is evident from this that man would have been immortal had he never transgressed, and that this state of continual life and health depended on his obedience to his Maker. The tree of life, as we have already seen, was intended to be the means of continual preservation. For as no being but God can exist independently of any supporting agency, so man could not have continued to live without a particular supporting agent; and this supporting agent under God appears to have been the *tree of life*.

ολιγη δε κεισομεσθα
κονις, οστων λυθεντων.

Anac. Od. 4., v. 9.

“We shall lie down as a small portion of dust, our bones being dissolved.”

Verse 20. And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.] A man who does not understand the original cannot possibly comprehend the reason of what is said here. What has the word *Eve* to do with being *the mother of all living*? Our translators often follow the *Septuagint*; it is a pity they had not done so here, as the *Septuagint* translation is literal and correct: και εκαλεσεν αδαμ το ονομα της γυναικος αυτου ζωη, οτι μητηρ παντων των ζωντων “And Adam called his wife's name *Life*, because she was the mother of all the *living*.” This is a proper and faithful representation of the Hebrew text, for the **hwj** *Chavvah* of the original, which we have corrupted into *Eve*, a word destitute of all meaning, answers exactly to the **ζωη** of the *Septuagint*, both

signifying *life*; as does also the Hebrew **yj** *chai* to the Greek ζωντων, both of which signify *the living*.

It is probable that God designed by this name to teach our first parents these two important truths: 1. That though they had merited immediate death, yet they should be respited, and the accomplishment of the sentence be long delayed; they should be spared to propagate a numerous progeny on the earth. 2. That though much misery would be entailed on his posterity, and death should have a long and universal empire, yet ONE should in the fulness of time spring from the woman, who should destroy *death*, and bring *life* and *immortality* to light, **2Ti 1:10**. Therefore Adam called his wife's name *Life*, because she was to be the mother of all human beings, and because she was to be the mother of HIM who was to give *life* to a world dead in trespasses, and dead in sins, ~~4001~~ **Ephesians 2:1**, &c.

Verse 21. God made coats of skins] It is very likely that the *skins* out of which their *clothing* was made were taken off animals whose blood had been poured out as a *sin-offering* to God; for as we find Cain and Abel offering sacrifices to God, we may fairly presume that God had given them instructions on this head; nor is it likely that the notion of a sacrifice could have ever occurred to the mind of man without an express revelation from God. Hence we may safely infer, 1. That as Adam and Eve needed this clothing as soon as they fell, and death had not as yet made any ravages in the animal world, it is most likely that the skins were taken off victims offered under the direction of God himself, and in faith of HIM who, in the fulness of time, was to make an atonement by his death. And it seems reasonable also that this matter should be brought about in such a way that Satan and death should have no triumph, when the very *first death* that took place in the world was an emblem and type of that death which should conquer Satan, destroy his empire, reconcile God to man, convert man to God, sanctify human nature, and prepare it for heaven.

Verse 22. Behold, the man is become as one of us] On all hands this text is allowed to be difficult, and the difficulty is increased by our translation, which is opposed to the original Hebrew and the most authentic versions. The Hebrew has **hyh** *hayah*, which is the third person preterite tense, and signifies *was*, not *is*. The *Samaritan text*, the *Samaritan version*, the *Syriac*, and the *Septuagint*, have the same tense. These lead us to a very different sense, and indicate that there is an ellipsis of some words which must be supplied in order to make the sense complete. A very learned man

has ventured the following paraphrase, which should not be lightly regarded: “*And the Lord God said, The man who WAS like one of us in purity and wisdom, is now fallen and robbed of his excellence; he has added t [dl] ladaath, to the knowledge of the good, by his transgression the knowledge of the evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever in this miserable state, I will remove him, and guard the place lest he should re-enter. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden,*” &c. This seems to be the most natural sense of the place. Some suppose that his removal from the tree of life was in mercy, to prevent a *second* temptation. He before imagined that he could gain an increase of wisdom by eating of the *tree of knowledge*, and Satan would be disposed to tempt him to endeavour to elude the sentence of *death*, by eating of the *tree of life*. Others imagine that the words are spoken *ironically*, and that the Most High intended by a cutting taunt, to upbraid the poor culprit for his offence, because he broke the Divine command in the expectation of being *like God* to know good from evil; and now that he had lost *all the good* that God had designed for him, and got nothing but *evil* in its place, therefore God taunts him for the total miscarriage of his project. But God is ever consistent with himself; and surely his infinite pity prohibited the use of either *sarcasm* or *irony*, in speaking of so dreadful a catastrophe, that was in the end to occasion the agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion, the death and burial, of Him in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, ^{<5100>}**Colossians 2:9**.

In ^{<010125>}**Genesis 1:26,27**, we have seen man in the perfection of his nature, the dignity of his office, and the plenitude of his happiness. Here we find the same creature, but stripped of his glories and happiness, so that the word *man* no longer conveys the same ideas it did before. *Man* and *intellectual excellence* were before so intimately connected as to appear inseparable; *man* and *misery* are now equally so. In our nervous mother tongue, the Anglo-Saxon, we have found the word [A.S.] *God* signifying, not only the Supreme Being, but also *good* or *goodness*; and it is worthy of especial note that the word [A.S.] *man*, in the same language, is used to express, not only the *human being* so called, both male and female, but also *mischief*, *wickedness*, *fraud*, *deceit*, and *villany*. Thus a simple monosyllable, still in use among us in its *first* sense, conveyed at once to the minds of our ancestors the two following particulars: 1. *The human being* in his *excellence*, capable of knowing, loving, and glorifying his

Maker. 2. The *human being* in his *fallen state*, capable of and committing all kinds of wickedness. “Obiter hic notandum,” says old Mr. Somner in his Saxon Dictionary, “venit, [A.S.] *Saxonibus* et DEUM significasse et BONUM: uti [A.S.] et *hominem* et *nequitiam*.”

Here it is to be noted, that among the Saxons the term GOD signified both the *Divine Being* and *goodness*, as the word *man* signified both the *human being* and *wickedness*.” This is an additional proof that our Saxon ancestors both *thought* and *spoke* at the *same time*, which, strange as it may appear, is not a common case: their words in general are not arbitrary signs; but as far as sounds can convey the ideal meaning of things, their words do it; and they are so formed and used as necessarily to bring to view the nature and proper ties of those things of which they are the signs. In this sense the *Anglo-Saxon* is inferior only to the *Hebrew*.

Verse 24. So he drove out the man] Three things are noted here: 1. God’s *displeasure* against sinful man, evidenced by his expelling him from this place of blessedness; 2. Man’s *unfitness* for the place, of which he had rendered himself unworthy by his ingratitude and transgression; and, 3. His *reluctance* to leave this place of happiness. He was, as we may naturally conclude, *unwilling* to depart, and God *drove* him out.

He placed at the east] $\mu d k m$ *mikkedem*, or *before the garden of Eden*, before what may be conceived its gate or entrance; *Cherubims*, $\mu y b r k h$ *hakerubim*, THE *cherubim*. Hebrew plurals in the masculine end in general in *im*: to add an *s* to this when we introduce such words into English, is very improper; therefore the word should be written *cherubim*, not *cherubims*. But what were these? They are utterly unknown. Conjectures and guesses relative to their nature and properties are endless. Several think them to have been emblematical representations of the sacred *Trinity*, and bring reasons and scriptures in support of their opinion; but as I am not satisfied that this opinion is correct, I will not trouble the reader with it. From the description in ^{<12301>}**Exodus 26:1,31**; ^{<11069>}**1 Kings 6:29,32**; ^{<4014>}**2 Chronicles 3:14**, it appears that the cherubs were sometimes represented with *two* faces, namely, those of a *lion* and of a *man*; but from ^{<20105>}**Ezekiel 1:5**, &c.; ^{<26101>}**Ezekiel 10:20,21**, we find that they had *four* faces and *four* wings; the faces were those of a *man*, a *lion*, an *ox*, and an *eagle*; but it seems there was but one *body* to these heads. The *two-faced* cherubs were such as were represented on the curtains and veil of the tabernacle, and on

the wall, doors, and veil of the temple; those with *four* faces appeared only in the holy of holies.

The word **brk** or **bwrk** *kerub* never appears as a *verb* in the Hebrew Bible, and therefore is justly supposed to be a word compounded of **k** *ke* a particle of resemblance, *like to, like as*, and **br** *rab*, he was *great, powerful, &c.* Hence it is very likely that the cherubs, to whatever order of beings they belonged, were emblems of the ALL-MIGHTY, and were those creatures by whom he produced the great effects of his power. The word **br** *rab* is a character of the Most High, ^{<10510>}**Proverbs 26:10**: *The great God who formed all*; and again in ^{<19482>}**Psalm 48:2**, where he is called the *Great King*, **br** **Ēl m** *melech rab*. But though this is rarely applied as a character of the Supreme Being in the Hebrew Bible, yet it is a common appellative of the Deity in the Arabic language. [Arabic] *rab*, and [Arabic] *rab'ulalameen* Lord of both worlds, or, Lord of the universe, are expressions repeatedly used to point out the *almighty energy* and *supremacy of God*. On this ground, I suppose, the cherubim were emblematical representations of the eternal power and Godhead of the Almighty. These angelic beings were for a time employed in guarding the entrance to Paradise, and keeping the way of or road to the tree of life. This, I say, *for a time*; for it is very probable that God soon removed the tree of life, and abolished the garden, so that its situation could never after be positively ascertained.

By the flaming sword turning every way, or flame folding back upon itself, we may understand the formidable appearances which these cherubim assumed, in order to render the passage to the tree of life inaccessible.

Thus terminates this most awful tragedy; a tragedy in which all the actors are slain, in which the most awful murders are committed, and the whole universe ruined! The *serpent*, so called, is degraded; the *woman* cursed with pains, miseries, and a subjection to the will of her husband, which was never *originally* designed; the *man*, the lord of this lower world, doomed to incessant labour and toil; and the *earth* itself cursed with comparative barrenness! To complete all, the *garden of pleasure* is interdicted, and this man, who was made after the image of God, and who *would be like him*, shamefully expelled from a place where pure spirits alone could dwell. Yet in the midst of wrath God remembers mercy, and a promise of redemption from this degraded and cursed state is made to them through HIM who, in

the fulness of time, is to be made flesh, and who, by dying for the sin of the world, shall destroy the power of Satan, and deliver all who trust in the merit of his sacrifice from the power, guilt, and nature of sin, and thus prepare them for the celestial Paradise at the right hand of God. Reader, hast thou repented of *thy* sin? for often hast thou sinned after the similitude of thy ancestor's transgression. Hast thou sought and found redemption in the blood of the Lamb? Art thou saved from a disposition which led thy first parents to transgress? Art thou living a life of *dependence* on thy Creator, and of faith and loving obedience to him who died for thee? *Wilt* thou live under the curse, and die eternally? God forbid! Return to him with all thy soul, and receive this exhortation as a call from his mercy.

To what has already been said on the awful contents of this chapter, I can add little that can either set it in a clearer light, or make its solemn subject more impressive. We see here that by the subtlety and envy of the devil sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and we find that death reigned, not only from Adam to Moses, but from Moses to the present day. Flow abominable must sin be in the sight of God, when it has not only defaced his own image from the soul of man, but has also become a source of natural and moral evil throughout every part of the globe! Disruption and violence appear in every part of nature; vice, profligacy, and misery, through all the tribes of men and orders of society. It is true that where sin hath abounded, there grace doth much more abound; but men shut their eyes against the light, and harden their hearts against the truth. Sin, which becomes propagated into the world by natural generation, growing with the growth and strengthening with the strength of man, would be as endless in its duration, as unlimited in its influence, did not God check and restrain it by his grace, and cut off its extending influence in the incorrigibly wicked by means of *death*. How wonderful is the economy of God! That which entered into the world as one of the prime fruits and effects of sin, is now an instrument in his hands to prevent the extension of its contagion.

If men, now so greatly multiplied on the earth, and fertile in mischievous inventions, were permitted to live nearly a thousand years, as in the ancient world, to mature and perfect their infectious and destructive counsels, what a sum of iniquity and ruin would the face of the earth present! Even while they are laying plans to extend the empire of death, God, by the very means of *death* itself, prevents the completion of their pernicious and diabolic designs. Thus what man, by his wilful obstinacy does not permit *grace* to correct and restrain, God, by his sovereign power, brings in *death* to

control. It is on this ground that wicked and blood-thirsty men live not out half their days; and what a mercy to the world that it is so! They who will not submit to the sceptre of mercy shall be broken in pieces by the rod of iron. Reader, provoke not the Lord to displeasure; thou art not stronger than he. Grieve not his Spirit, provoke him not to destroy thee; why shouldst thou die *before thy time*? Thou hast sinned much, and needest every moment of thy short life to make thy calling and election sure. Shouldst thou provoke God, by thy perseverance in iniquity, to cut thee off by death before this great work is done, better for thee thou hadst never been born!

How vain are all attempts to attain immortality here! For some thousands of years men have been labouring to find out means to prevent death; and some have even boasted that they had found out a medicine capable of preserving life for ever, by resisting all the attacks of disease, and incessantly repairing all the wastes of the human machine. That is, the alchymistic philosophers would have the world to believe that they had found out a private passage to the tree of immortality; but their *own deaths*, in the common order of nature, as well as the deaths of the millions which make no such pretensions, are not only a sufficient confutation of their baseless systems, but also a continual proof that *the cherubim, with their flaming swords, are turning every way to keep the passage of the tree of life*. Life and immortality are, however, brought to light by the Gospel; and he only who keepeth the sayings of the Son of God shall live for ever. Though the body is dead-consigned to death, because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness; and on those who are influenced by this Spirit of righteousness, the second death shall have no power!

GENESIS

CHAPTER 4

The birth, trade, and religion of Cain and Abel, 1-7. Cain murders his brother Abel, 8. God calls him into judgment for it, 9, 10. He is cursed, 11, 12. He despairs, 15, 14. A promise given him of preservation, and a mark set on him to prevent his being killed, 15. He departs from God's presence, 16. Has a son whom he calls Enoch; and builds a city, which he calls after his name, 17. Cain has several children, among whom are Lamech, the first bigamist, 18, 19. Jobat, who taught the use of tents and feeding cattle, 20. Jabal, the inventor of musical instruments, 21. Tubal-cain, the inventor of smith-work, 22. Strange speech of Lamech to his wives, 23, 24. Seth born to Adam and Eve in the place of Abel, 25. Enoch born, and the worship of God restored, 26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. I have gotten a man from the Lord.] Cain, *ˆyq*, signifies acquisition; hence Eve says *tnq kanithi*, I have gotten or *acquired* a man, *hwby ta eth Yehovah*, the Lord. It is extremely difficult to ascertain the sense in which Eve used these words, which have been as variously translated as understood. Most expositors think that Eve imagined Cain to be the *promised seed* that should bruise the head of the serpent. This exposition really seems too refined for that period. It is very likely that she meant no more than to acknowledge that it was through God's peculiar blessing that she was enabled to conceive and bring forth a son, and that she had now a well-grounded hope that the race of man should be continued on the earth. Unless she had been under Divine inspiration she could not have called her son (even supposing him to be the promised seed) *Jehovah*; and that she was not under such an influence her *mistake* sufficiently proves, *for Cain*, so far from being the Messiah, *was of the wicked one*; ^{ⲄⲔⲔⲓⲗ} **1 John 3:12**. We may therefore suppose that *hwby ta eth Yehovah*, THE LORD, is an elliptical form of expression for *hwby tam meeth Yehovah*, FROM THE LORD, or *through the Divine blessing*.

Verse 2. And she again bare his brother Abel.] Literally, *She added to bear* (*tdl l āstw vattoseph laledeth*) *his brother*. From the very face of this account it appears evident that Cain and Abel were *twins*. In most cases where a subject of this kind is introduced in the Holy Scriptures, and

the successive births of children of the same parents are noted, the acts of conceiving and bringing forth are mentioned in reference to each child; here it is *not* said that she *conceived* and brought forth Abel, but simply *she added to bring forth Abel his brother*; that is, as I understand it, Cain was the first-born, Abel, his twin brother, came next.

Abel was a keeper of sheep] Adam was originally a *gardener*, Abel a *shepherd*, and Cain an *agriculturist* or *farmer*. These were the *three* primitive employments, and, I may add, the most rational, and consequently the best calculated to prevent strife and an immoderate love of the world.

Verse 3. In process of time] μῦμῦ xqm *mikkets yamim*, at the end of days. Some think the anniversary of the creation to be here intended; it is more probable that it means the *Sabbath*, on which Adam and his family undoubtedly offered oblations to God, as the Divine worship was certainly instituted, and no doubt the Sabbath properly observed in that family. This worship was, in its original institution, very simple. It appears to have consisted of two parts: 1. *Thanksgiving* to God as the author and dispenser of all the bounties of nature, and *oblations* indicative of that gratitude. 2. *Piacular sacrifices* to his justice and holiness, implying a *conviction* of their own sinfulness, *confession* of transgression, and *faith* in the promised Deliverer. If we collate the passage here with the apostle's allusion to it, <S1104>**Hebrews 11:4**, we shall see cause to form this conclusion.

Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering] hj nm *minchah*, unto the Lord. The word *minchah* is explained, <R101>**Leviticus 2:1**, &c., to be *an offering of fine flour, with oil and frankincense*. It was in general a eucharistic or gratitude offering, and is simply what is implied in the *fruits of the ground* brought by Cain to the Lord, by which he testified his belief in him as the Lord of the universe, and the dispenser of secular blessings.

Verse 4. Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock] Dr. Kennicott contends that the words *he also brought*, awh μg aybh *hebi gam hu*, should be translated, Abel brought IT also, i.e. a *minchah* or *gratitude offering*; and beside this he brought of the first-born (twrkbm *mibbechoroth*) of his flock, and it was by *this* alone that he acknowledged himself a *sinner*, and professed faith in the promised *Messiah*. To this circumstance the apostle seems evidently to allude, <S1104>**Hebrews 11:4**: By FAITH Abel offered πλειοςα θυσιαν, a MORE or GREATER sacrifice; not a

more excellent, (for this is no meaning of the word *πλειων*,) which leads us to infer, according to Dr. Kennicott, that Abel, besides his *minchah* or gratitude offering, brought also *θυσια*, a *victim*, to be slain for his sins; and this he chose out of the *first-born* of his flock, which, in the order of God, was a representation of the Lamb of God that was to take away the sin of the world; and what confirms this exposition more is the observation of the apostle: *God testifying ροις δωποις*, of his GIFTS, which certainly shows he brought more than *one*. According to this interpretation, Cain, the father of Deism, not acknowledging the necessity of a vicarious sacrifice, nor feeling his need of an atonement, according to the dictates of his *natural religion*, brought a *minchah* or *eucharistic* offering to the God of the universe. Abel, not less grateful for the produce of his fields and the increase of his flocks, brought a *similar* offering, and by adding a *sacrifice* to it paid a proper regard to the will of God as far as it had then been revealed, acknowledged himself a *sinner*, and thus, deprecating the Divine displeasure, showed forth the death of Christ till he came. Thus his offerings were accepted, while those of Cain were rejected; for this, as the apostle says, was done by FAITH, and therefore he obtained witness that he was righteous, or a justified person, God testifying with his gifts, the *thank-offering* and the *sin-offering*, by accepting them, that faith in the promised seed was the only way in which he could accept the services and offerings of mankind. Dr. Magee, in his Discourses on the Atonement, criticises the opinion of Dr. Kennicott, and contends that there is no ground for the distinction made by the latter on the words *he also brought*; and shows that though the *minchah* in general signifies an unbloody offering, yet it is also used to express both kinds, and that the *minchah* in question is to be understood of the *sacrifice* then offered by Abel. I do not see that we gain much by this counter-criticism. See ^{<01047>}Genesis 4:7.

Verse 5. Unto Cain] As being unconscious of his sinfulness, and consequently unhumiliated, *and to his offering*, as not being accompanied, as Abel's was, with *faith* and a sacrifice for sin, *he had not respect*—He could not, consistently with his holiness and justice, approve of the one or receive the other. Of the manner in which God testified his *approbation* we are not informed; it was probably, as in the case of Elijah, by sending down fire from heaven, and consuming the sacrifice.

Cain was very wroth] That displeasure which should have been turned against his own unhumiliated heart was turned against his innocent brother, who, though not more highly privileged than he, made a much better use of

the advantages which he shared in common with his ungodly and unnatural brother.

Verse 6. Why art thou wroth?] This was designed as a gracious warning, and a preventive of the meditated crime.

Verse 7. If thou doest well] That which is right in the sight of God, *shalt thou not be accepted?* Does God reject any man who serves him in simplicity and godly sincerity? *But if thou doest not well,* can wrath and indignation against thy righteous brother save thee from the displeasure under which thou art fallen? On the contrary, have recourse to thy Maker for mercy; **xbr tacj j tpl** *lappethach chattath robets*, a *sin-offering* lieth at thy door; an animal proper to be offered as an atonement for sin is now *couching* at the door of thy fold.

The words **tacj** *chattath*, and **tacj** *chattaah*, frequently signify *sin*; but I have observed more than a hundred places in the Old Testament where they are used for *sin-offering*, and translated **ἁμαρτία** by the Septuagint, which is the term the apostle uses, ^{<FRS2>}**2 Corinthians 5:21**: *He hath made him to be sin (ἁμαρτίαν, A SIN-OFFERING) for us, who knew no sin.* Cain's fault now was his not bringing a *sin-offering* when his brother brought one, and his neglect and contempt caused his other offering to be rejected. However, God now graciously informs him that, though he had miscarried, his case was not yet desperate, as the means of faith, from the promise, &c., were in his power, and a victim proper for a *sin-offering* was lying (**xbr** *robets*, a word used to express the lying down of a quadruped) at the door of his fold. How many sinners perish, not because there is not a Saviour able and willing to save them, but because they will not use that which is within their power! Of such how true is that word of our Lord, *Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life!*

Unto thee shall be his desire, &c.] That is, Thou shalt ever have the right of primogeniture, and in all things shall thy brother be subject unto thee. These words are not spoken of *sin*, as many have understood them, but of *Abel's* submission to Cain as his superior, and the words are spoken to remove Cain's envy.

Verse 8. Cain talked with Abel his brother] **^yq rmayw** *vaiyomer Kayin, and Cain said, &c.*; not *talked*, for this construction the word cannot bear without great violence to analogy and grammatical accuracy.

But why should it be thus translated? Because our translators could not find that any thing was *spoken* on the occasion; and therefore they ventured to intimate that there was a conversation, indefinitely. In the most correct editions of the Hebrew Bible there is a small space left here in the text, and a circular mark which refers to a note in the margin, intimating that there is a hiatus or deficiency in the verse. Now this deficiency is supplied in the principal ancient versions, and in the Samaritan text. In this the supplied words are, LET US WALK OUT INTO THE FIELD. The Syriac has, Let us go to the desert. The Vulgate *Egrediamur foras*, Let us walk out. The Septuagint, *διελθεμεν εις το πεδον*, Let us go out into the field. The two Chaldee *Targums* have the same reading; so has the *Coptic* version. This addition is completely lost from every MS. of the Pentateuch now known; and yet it is sufficiently evident from the Samaritan text, the Samaritan version, the Syriac, Septuagint, and Vulgate, that it was in the most authentic copies of the Hebrew before and some time since the Christian era. The words may therefore be safely considered as a part of the sacred text, and with them the whole passage reads clear and consistently: “And Cain said unto Abel his brother, Let us go out into the field: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up,” &c. The Jerusalem Targum, and the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, pretend to give us the subject of their conversation: as the piece is curious, I shall insert the substance of it, for the sake of those who may not have access to the originals. “And Cain said unto Hebel his brother, Let us go out into the field; and it came to pass that, when they were in the field, Cain answered and said to Hebel his brother, I thought that the world was created in mercy, but it is not governed according to the merit of good works. nor is there any judgment, nor a Judge, nor shall there be any future state in which good rewards shall be given to the righteous, or punishment executed on the wicked; and *now* there is respect of persons in judgment. On what account is it that thy sacrifice has been accepted, and mine not received with complacency? And Hebel answered and said, The world was created in mercy, and it is governed according to the fruit of good works; there is a Judge, a future world, and a coming judgment, where good rewards shall be given to the righteous, and the impious punished; and there is no respect of persons in judgment; but because my works were better and more precious than thine, my oblation was received with complacency. And because of these things they contended on the face of the field, and Cain rose up against Hebel his brother, and struck a stone into his forehead, and killed him.”

It is here supposed that the first murder committed in the world was the consequence of a religious dispute; however *this* may have been, millions since have been sacrificed to prejudice, bigotry, and intolerance. Here, certainly, originated the many-headed monster, *religious persecution*; the spirit of the wicked one in his followers impels them to afflict and destroy all those who are partakers of the Spirit of God. Every persecutor is a legitimate son of the *old murderer*. This is the first triumph of Satan; it is not merely a *death* that he has introduced, but a *violent* one, as the first-fruits of sin. It is not the death of an *ordinary* person, but of the most *holy man* then in being; it is not brought about by the *providence* of God, or by a gradual failure and destruction of the earthly fabric, but by a violent separation of body and soul; it is not done by a *common enemy*, from whom nothing better could be expected, but by the hand of a *brother*, and for no other reason but because the object of his envy was more righteous than himself. Alas! how exceeding sinful does sin appear in its first manifestation!

Verse 10. The voice of thy brother's blood] It is probable that Cain, having killed his brother, dug a hole and buried him in the earth, hoping thereby to prevent the murder from being known; and that this is what is designed in the words, *Thy brother's blood crieth unto me FROM THE GROUND-which hath opened her mouth to receive it from thy hand*. Some think that by *the voice of thy brother's blood* the cries of Abel's widow and children are to be understood, as it is very probable that he was *father of a family*; indeed his occupation and sacrifices seem to render this probable, and probability is all we can expect on such a subject. God represents these as calling aloud for the punishment of the murderer; and it is evident that Cain expected to fall by the hands of some person who, from his *consanguinity*, had the right of the avenger of blood; for now that the murder is found out, he expects to suffer death for it. See ~~10:14~~ **Genesis 4:14**.

Verse 12. A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be] Thou shalt be expelled from the presence of God, and from thy family connections, and shalt have no fixed *secure* residence in any place. The Septuagint render this **στενων και τρεμων εση**, *thou shalt be groaning and trembling upon the earth-the horror of thy crime shall ever haunt thee, and thou shalt never have any well-grounded hope that God will remit the punishment thou deservest*. No state out of endless perdition can be considered more awful than this.

Verse 13. My punishment is greater than I can bear.] The margin reads, *Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven.* The original words, *awcnm ynw [l wdg gadol avoni minneso*, may be translated, *Is my crime too great to be forgiven?* words which we may presume he uttered on the verge of black despair. It is most probable that *w [avon* signifies rather the *crime* than the *punishment*; in this sense it is used ^{<02541>}**Leviticus 26:41, 43**; ^{<02810>}**1 Samuel 28:10**; ^{<13709>}**2 Kings 7:9**; and *acn nasa* signifies to remit or forgive. The *marginal* reading is, therefore, to be preferred to that in the text.

Verse 14. Behold, thou hast driven me out] In ^{<01041>}**Genesis 4:11, 12**, God states two parts of Cain's punishment: 1. The ground was cursed, so that it was not to yield any adequate recompense for his most careful tillage. 2. He was to be a fugitive and a vagabond having no place in which he could dwell with comfort or security. To these Cain himself adds others. 1. His being hidden from the face of God; which appears to signify his being expelled from that *particular place* where God had manifested his presence. in or contiguous to Paradise, whither our first parents resorted as to an oracle, and where they offered their daily adorations. So in ^{<01046>}**Genesis 4:16**, it is said, *Cain went out from the presence of the Lord*, and was not permitted any more to associate with the family in acts of religious worship. 2. The continual apprehension of being slain, as all the inhabitants of the earth were at that time of the *same family*, the parents themselves still alive, and each having a right to kill this murderer of his relative. Add to all this, 3. The terrors of a guilty conscience; his awful apprehension of God's judgments, and of being everlastingly banished from the beatific vision. To this part of the punishment of Cain St. Paul probably alludes, ^{<30109>}**2 Thessalonians 1:9**: *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* The words are so similar that we can scarcely doubt of the allusion.

Verse 15. The Lord set a mark upon Cain] What this mark was, has given rise to a number of frivolously curious conjectures. Dr. Shuckford collects the most remarkable. Some say he was *paralytic*; this seems to have arisen from the version of the Septuagint, *στερες και τρεμος εση*, *Groaning and trembling shalt thou be.* The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel says the sign was from the great and precious name, probably one of the letters of the word [Samaritan] *Yehovah*. The author of an Arabic Catena in the Bodleian Library says, "A sword could not pierce him; fire

could not burn him; water could not drown him; the air could not blast him; nor could thunder or lightning strike him.” The author of Bereshith Rabba, a comment on Genesis, says the mark was a circle of the sun rising upon him. Abravanel says the sign was Abel’s dog, which constantly accompanied him. Some of the doctors in the Talmud say that it was the letter **t** tau marked on his forehead, which signified his contrition, as it is the first letter in the word **hbwvt** *teshubah*, repentance. Rabbi Joseph, wiser than all the rest, says it was a long horn growing out of his forehead!

Dr. Shuckford farther observes that the Hebrew word **tya** *oth*, which we translate *a mark*, signifies *a sign* or *token*. Thus, ^{<0013>}**Genesis 9:13**, the bow was to be **tyal** *leoth*, *for a sign* or *token* that the world should not be destroyed; therefore the words, *And the Lord set a mark upon Cain*, should be translated, *And the Lord appointed to Cain a token or sign*, to convince him that no person should be permitted to slay him. To have *marked* him would have been the most likely way to have brought all the evils he dreaded upon him; therefore the Lord gave him some miraculous sign or token that he should not be slain, to the end that he should not despair, but, having time to repent, might return to a gracious God and find mercy. Notwithstanding the allusion which I suppose St. Paul to have made to the punishment of Cain, some think that he did repent and find mercy. I can only say *this was possible*. Most people who read this account wonder why Cain should dread being killed, when it does not appear to them that there were any inhabitants on the earth at that time besides himself and his parents. To correct this mistake, let it be observed that the death of Abel took place in the one hundred and twenty-eighth or one hundred and twenty-ninth year of the world. Now, “supposing Adam and Eve to have had no other sons than Cain and Abel in the year of the world one hundred and twenty-eight, yet as they had daughters married to these sons, their descendants would make a considerable figure on the earth. Supposing them to have been married in the *nineteenth* year of the world, they might easily have had each eight children, some males and some females, in the twenty-fifth year. In the fiftieth year there might proceed from them in a direct line sixty-four persons; in the seventy-fourth year there would be five hundred and twelve; in the ninety-eighth year, four thousand and ninety-six; in the one hundred and twenty-second they would amount to thirty-two thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight: if to these we add the other children descended from Cain and Abel, their children, and their children’s children, we shall have, in the aforesaid one hundred

and twenty-eight years *four hundred and twenty-one thousand one hundred and sixty-four men* capable of generation, without reckoning the women either old or young, or such as are under the age of seventeen.” See Dodd.

But this calculation may be disputed, because there is no evidence that the antediluvian patriarchs began to have children before they were *sixty-five* years of age. Now, supposing that Adam at one hundred and thirty years of age had one hundred and thirty children, which is quite possible, and each of these a child at sixty-five years of age, and one in each successive year, the whole, in the *one hundred and thirtieth* year of the world, would amount to *one thousand two hundred and nineteen persons*; a number sufficient to found several villages, and to excite the apprehensions under which Cain appeared at this time to labour.

Verse 16. The land of Nod] As *dnw nod* signifies the same as *dn*, a *vagabond*, some think this verse should be rendered, *And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, from the east of Eden, and dwelt a vagabond on the earth*; thus the curse pronounced on him, ^{<01012>}**Genesis 4:12**, was accomplished.

Verse 17. She-bare Enoch] As *Ēwnj Chanoch* signifies *instructed*, *dedicated*, or *initiated*, and especially in sacred things, it may be considered some proof of Cain’s repentance, that he appears to have dedicated this son to God, who, in his father’s stead, might minister in the sacerdotal office, from which Cain, by his crime, was for ever excluded.

Verse 19. Lamech took-two wives] He was the first who dared to reverse the order of God by introducing polygamy; and from him it has been *retained*, practised, and defended to the present day.

Verse 20. Jabal-was the father] The *inventor* or *teacher*, for so the word is understood, ^{<01012>}**1 Samuel 10:12**. He was the first who invented tent-making, and the breeding and managing of cattle; or he was, in these respects, the most eminent in that time. Though Abel was a shepherd, it is not likely he was such on an extensive scale.

Verse 21. Jubal-the father] i.e. The inventor of musical instruments, such as the *rwnk kinnor*, which we translate *harp*, and the *bgw [ugab*, which we render *organ*; it is very likely that both words are *generic*, the former

including under it all *stringed* instruments, and the latter, all *wind* instruments.

Verse 22. Tubal-cain] The first *smith* on record, who taught how to make *warlike* instruments and *domestic* utensils out of brass and iron. Agricultural instruments must have been in use long before, for Cain was a *tiller of the ground*, and so was Adam, and they could not have cultivated the ground without *spades, hooks, &c.* Some of these arts were useless to man while innocent and upright, but after his fall they became necessary. Thus is the saying verified: *God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.* As the power to get wealth is from God, so also is the invention of useful arts.

M. De Lavour, in his *Conference de la Fable avec l'Histoire Sainte*, supposes that the Greeks and Romans took their smith-god *Vulcan* from Tubal-cain, the son of Lamech. The probability of this will appear, 1. From the *name*, which, by the omission of the *Tu* and turning the *b* into *v*, a change frequently made among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, makes *Vulcain* or *Vulcan*. 2. From his *occupation* he was an artificer, a master smith in brass and iron. 3. He thinks this farther probable from the *names* and *sounds* in this verse. The melting metals in the fire, and hammering them, bears a near resemblance to the *hissing* sound of **hl x tsillah**, the mother of Tubal-cain; and **ll x tsalal** signifies to *tinkle* or make a sound like a *bell*, ^{<0811>}**1 Samuel 3:11** ^{<12112>}**2 Kings 21:12**. 4. *Vulcan* is said to have been lame; M. Deuteronomy Lavour thinks that this notion was taken from the noun **al x tsela**, which signifies a *halting* or *lameness*. 5. *Vulcan* had to wife *Venus*, the goddess of *beauty*; *Naamah*, the sister of Tubal-cain, he thinks, may have given rise to this part of the fable, as her name in Hebrew signifies *beautiful* or *gracious*. 6. *Vulcan* is reported to have been jealous of his wife, and to have forged nets in which he took Mars and her, and exposed them to the view of the whole celestial court: this idea he thinks was derived from the literal import of the name *Tubal-cain*; **lbt tebel** signifies an incestuous mixture of relatives, ^{<0812>}**Leviticus 20:12**; and **anq kana**, to burn with jealousy; from these and concomitant circumstances the case of the detected adultery of Mars and Venus might be easily deduced. He is of opinion that a tradition of this kind might have readily found its way from the Egyptians to the Greeks, as the former had frequent intercourse with the Hebrews.

Of *Naamah* nothing more is spoken in the Scriptures; but the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel makes her the inventress of funeral songs and lamentations. R. S. Jarchi says she was the wife of Noah, and quotes *Bereshith Rabba* in support of the opinion. Some of the Jewish doctors say her name is recorded in Scripture because she was an upright and chaste woman; but others affirm that the *whole world wandered after her*, and that of her evil spirits were born into the world. This latter opinion gives some countenance to that of M. Deuteronomy Lavaur.

Verse 23. And Lamech said unto his wives] The speech of Lamech to his wives is in hemistichs in the original, and consequently, as nothing of this kind occurs before this time, it is very probably the *oldest piece of poetry in the world*. The following is, as nearly as possible, a literal translation:

*“And Lamech said unto his wives,
Adah and Tsillah, hear ye my voice;
Wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech;
For I have slain a man for wounding me,
And a young man for having bruised me.
If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold,
Also Lamech seventy and seven.”*

It is supposed that Lamech had slain a man in his own defence, and that his wives being alarmed lest the kindred of the deceased should seek his life in return, to quiet their fears he makes this speech, in which he endeavours to prove that there was no room for fear on this account; for if the slayer of the wilful murderer, Cain, should suffer a seven-fold punishment, surely he, who should kill Lamech for having slain a man in self-defence, might expect a seventy-seven-fold punishment.

This speech is very dark, and has given rise to a great variety of very strange conjectures. Dr. Shuckford supposes there is an ellipsis of some preceding speech or circumstance which, if known, would cast a light on the subject. In the antediluvian times, the nearest of kin to a murdered person had a right to revenge his death by taking away the life of the murderer. This, as we have already seen, appears to have contributed not a little to Cain’s horror, ^{<0044>}**Genesis 4:14**. Now we may suppose that the descendants of Cain were in continual alarms, lest some of the other family should attempt to avenge the death of Abel on *them*, as they were not permitted to do it on Cain; and that in order to dismiss those fears,

Lamech, the seventh descendant from Adam, spoke to this effect to his wives: “Why should you render yourselves miserable by such ill-founded fears? We have slain no person; we have not done the least wrong to our brethren of the other family; surely then reason should dictate to you that they have no right to injure us. It is true that Cain, one of our ancestors, killed his brother Abel; but God, willing to pardon his sin, and give him space to repent, threatened to punish those with a seven-fold punishment who should dare to kill him. If this be so, then those who should have the boldness to kill any of us who are innocent, may expect a punishment still more rigorous. For if Cain should be avenged seven-fold on the person who should slay him, surely Lamech or any of his innocent family should be avenged seventy-seven-fold on those who should injure them.” The Targums give nearly the same meaning, and it makes a good sense; but who can say it is the true sense? If the words be read interrogatively, as they certainly may, the sense will be much clearer, and some of the difficulties will be removed:

*“Have I slain a man, that I should be wounded?
Or a young man, that I should be bruised?”*

But even this still supposes some previous reason or conversation. I shall not trouble my readers with a ridiculous Jewish fable, followed by St. Jerome, of Lamech having killed Cain by accident, &c.; and after what I have already said, I must leave the passage, I fear, among those which are inscrutable.

Verse 25. God-hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel] Eve must have received on this occasion some Divine communication, else how could she have known that this son was appointed in the *place* of Abel, to continue that holy line by which the Messiah was to come? From this we see that the line of the Messiah was determined from the beginning, and that it was not first fixed in the days of Abraham; for the promise was then only *renewed*, and *that* branch of his family designated by which the sacred line was to be continued. And it is worthy of remark, that Seth’s posterity *alone* continued after the flood, when all the other families of the earth were destroyed, Noah being the tenth descendant from Adam through Seth.

Though all these persons are mentioned in the following chapter, I shall produce them here in the order of their succession: 1. Adam; 2. Seth; 3. Enos; 4. Cainan; 5. Mahalaleel; 6. Jared; 7. Enoch; 8. Methuselah; 9.

Lamech, (the second;) 10. Noah. In order to keep this line distinct, we find particular care was taken that, where there were two or more sons in a family, the one through whom God particularly designed to bring his Son into the world was, by some especial providence, pointed out. Thus in the family of Adam, Seth was chosen; in the family of Noah, Shem; in the family of Abraham, Isaac; and in that of David, Solomon and Nathan. All these things God watched over by an especial providence from the beginning, that when Jesus Christ should come it might be clearly seen that he came by the promise, through *grace*, and not by *nature*.

Verse 26. Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.] The marginal reading is, *Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord*; which words are supposed to signify that in the time of Enos the true followers of God began to distinguish themselves, and to be distinguished by others, by the appellation of *sons of God*; those of the other branch of Adam's family, among whom the Divine worship was not observed, being distinguished by the name, *children of men*. It must not be dissembled that many eminent men have contended that *l j wh huchal*, which we translate *began*, should be rendered *began profanely*, or *then profanation began*, and from this time they date the origin of idolatry. Most of the Jewish doctors were of this opinion, and Maimonides has discussed it at some length in his Treatise on Idolatry; as this piece is curious, and gives the most probable account of the origin and progress of idolatry, I shall insert it here.

“In the days of Enos the sons of Adam erred with great error, and the counsel of the wise men of that age became brutish, and Enos himself was (one) of them that erred; and their error was this: they said, Forasmuch as God hath created these stars and spheres to govern the world, and set them on high, and imparted honour unto them, and they are ministers that minister before him; it is meet that men should laud, and glorify, and give them honour. For this is the will of God, that we magnify and honour whomsoever he magnifieth and honoureth; even as a king would have them honoured that stand before him, and this is the honour of the king himself. When this thing was come up into their hearts they began to build temples unto the stars, and to offer sacrifice unto them, and to laud and glorify them with words, and to worship before them, that they might in their evil opinion obtain favour of the Creator; and this was *the root of idolatry*, &c. And in process of time there stood up false prophets among the sons of Adam, which said that God had commanded and said unto them, Worship

such a star, or all the stars, and do sacrifice unto them thus and thus; and build a temple for it, and make an image of it, that all the people, women, and children may worship it. And the false prophet showed them the image which he had feigned out of his own heart, and said it was the image of such a star, which was made known unto him by prophecy. And they began after this manner to make images in temples, and under trees, and on tops of mountains and hills, and assembled together and worshipped them, &c. And this thing was spread through all the world, to serve images with services different one from another, and to sacrifice unto and worship them. So, in process of time, the glorious and fearful name (of God) was forgotten out of the mouth of all living, and out of their knowledge, and they acknowledged him not.

And there was found no people on the earth that knew aught, save images of wood and stone, and temples of stone, which they had been trained up from their childhood to worship and serve, and to swear by their names. And the wise men that were among them, as the priests and such like, thought there was no God save the stars and spheres, for whose sake and in whose likeness they had made these images; but as for the Rock everlasting, there was no man that acknowledged him or knew him save a few persons in the world, as Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Sham, and Heber. And in this way did the world walk and converse till that pillar of the world, Abraham our father, was born.” *Maim.* in *Mishn*, and *Ainsworth* in loco.

1. WE see here the vast importance of worshipping God according to his own mind; no sincerity, no uprightness of intention, can atone for the neglect of positive commands delivered in Divine revelation, when this revelation is known. He who will bring a eucharistic offering instead of a sacrifice, while a sin-offering lieth at the door, as he copies Cain’s conduct, may expect to be treated in the same manner. Reader, remember that thou hast an entrance unto the holiest through the veil, that is to say *his flesh*; and those who come in this way, God will in nowise cast out.

2. We see the horrible nature of envy: its eye is evil merely because God is good; it easily begets hatred; hatred, deep-settled malice; and malice, murder! Watch against the first appearance of this most destructive passion, the prime characteristic of which is to seek the destruction of the object of its malevolence, and finally to ruin its possessor.

3. Be thankful to God that, as weakness increased and wants became multiplied, God enabled man to find out useful inventions, so as to lessen excessive labour, and provide every thing indispensably necessary for the support of life. He who carefully attends to the dictates of honest, sober industry, is never likely to perish for lack of the necessaries of life.

4. As the followers of God at this early period found it indispensably necessary to separate themselves from all those who were irreligious and profane, and to make a public profession of their attachment to the truth, so it should be now. There are still men of profane minds. whose spirit and conduct are destructive to godliness; and in reference to such the permanent order of God is, *Come out from among them, touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* He who is not determined to be a Christian at all events, is not far from being an infidel. Those only who confess Christ among men shall be acknowledged before his Father and the angels of God.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 5

A recapitulation of the account of the creation of man, 1, 2; and of the birth of Seth, 3. Genealogy of the ten antediluvian patriarchs, 3-31. Enoch's extraordinary piety, 22; his translation to heaven without seeing death, 24. The birth of Noah, and the reason of his name, 29; his age at the birth of Japheth, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. The book of the generations] *רִפְסֵי סֵפֶר*, in Hebrew, which we generally translate *book*, signifies a *register*, an *account*, any kind of writing, even a *letter*, such as the bill of divorce. Here It means the *account* or *register* of the *generations of Adam* or his descendants to the five hundredth year of the life of Noah.

In the likeness of God made he him] This account is again introduced to keep man in remembrance of the heights of glory whence he had fallen; and to prove to him that the miseries and death consequent on his present state were produced by his transgression, and did not flow from his original state. For, as he was created in the image of God, he was created free from natural and moral evil. As the *deaths* of the patriarchs are now to be mentioned, it was necessary to introduce them by this observation, in order to justify the ways of God to man.

Verse 3. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, &c.] The Scripture chronology especially in the ages of some of the *antediluvian* and *postdiluvian* patriarchs, has exceedingly puzzled chronologists, critics, and divines. The printed Hebrew text, the Samaritan, the Septuagint, and Josephus, are all different, and have their respective vouchers and defenders. The following tables of the genealogies of the patriarchs *before* and *after* the flood, according to the Hebrew, Samaritan, and Septuagint, will at once exhibit the discordances.

| ANTEDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS LIVED BEFORE THEIR SONS' BIRTH | | | | POSTDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS LIVED BEFORE THEIR SONS' BIRTH | | | | |
|--|------------|------|--------|--|---|------|--------|-------|
| | | Heb. | Samar. | Sept. | | Heb. | Samar. | Sept. |
| Adam, | Gen. v. 3. | 130 | 130 | 230 | Shem begot Arphaxad after the flood, Gen. xi. 10. | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Seth, | — 6. | 105 | 105 | 205 | | | | |
| Enos, | — 9. | 90 | 90 | 190 | Arphaxad, Gen. xi. 12. Cainan (2d) mentioned only by the LXX, and Luke iii. 36. | 35 | 135 | 135 |
| Cainan, | — 12. | 70 | 70 | 170 | | | | |
| Mahinleel, | — 15. | 65 | 65 | 165 | Salah, Gen. xi. 14. | 30 | 130 | 130 |
| Jared, | — 18. | 162 | 62 | 162 | | | | |
| Enoch, | — 21. | 65 | 65 | 165 | Eber, — 16. | 34 | 134 | 134 |
| Methuseiah, | — 25. | 187 | 67 | 167 | Peleg, — 18. | 30 | 130 | 130 |
| Lamech, | — 28. | 182 | 53 | 188 | Iscu, — 20. | 32 | 132 | 132 |
| Noah, at the } Flood, } Gen. vii. 6. | | 600 | 600 | 600 | Serug, — 22. | 30 | 130 | 130 |
| Total before the flood, | | 1656 | 1307 | 2242* | Nabor, — 24. | 20 | 79 | 179 |
| | | | | | Terah, — 26. | 70 | 70 | 70 |
| | | | | | Total to the 70th year of Terah, | 292 | 942 | 1172* |

In this first period the sum in Josephus is 2256, which is also adopted by Dr. Hales in his *New Analysis of Chronology*.

In this second period the sum in Josephus is 1002.

* The Septuagint account of the ages of the *antediluvian* and *postdiluvian* patriarchs in the above tables, is taken from the VATICAN copy, but if we follow the ALEXANDRIAN MS., we shall have in the *first* period the whole sum of 2262 instead of 2242; and in the *second* period, 1072 instead of 1172. On this subject the different MSS. of the Septuagint abound with *various readings*.

For much satisfactory information on this subject I must refer to *A New Analysis of Chronology*, by the Rev. *William Hales*, D.D., 3 vols. 4to., London, 1809.

And begat a son in his own likeness, after his image] Words nearly the same with those ^{<010126>} **Genesis 1:26:** *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.* What this *image* and *likeness* of God were, we have already seen, and we may rest assured that the *same* image and likeness are not meant here. The *body* of Adam was created provisionally immortal, i.e. while he continued obedient he could not die; but his obedience was voluntary, and his state a probationary one. The *soul* of Adam was created in the moral image of God, in *knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness*. He had now sinned, and consequently had *lost* his moral resemblance to his Maker; he had also become *mortal* through his breach of the law. His image and likeness were therefore widely different at this time from what they were before; and his begetting children in this image and likeness plainly implies that they were imperfect like himself, mortal like himself, sinful and corrupt like himself. For it is impossible that he, being impure, fallen from the Divine image, could beget a pure and holy offspring, unless we could suppose it possible that a *bitter* fountain could send forth *sweet* waters, or that a *cause* could produce effects totally dissimilar from itself. What is said here of Seth might have been said of all the other children of

Adam, as they were all begotten after his fall; but the sacred writer has thought proper to mark it only in this instance.

Verse 22. And Enoch walked with God—three hundred years] There are several things worthy of our most particular notice in this account:

1. The name of this patriarch; *Enoch*, from **Ēnj chanack**, which signifies to *instruct*, to *initiate*, to *dedicate*. From his subsequent conduct we are authorized to believe he was early *instructed* in the things of God, *initiated* into the worship of his Maker, and *dedicated* to his service. By these means, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, which will ever attend pious parental instructions, his mind got that sacred bias which led him to act a part so distinguished through the course of a long life.

2. His religious conduct. *He walked with God*; **Ēl hty yithhallech**, he *set himself to walk*, he was *fixedly purposed and determined* to live to God. Those who are acquainted with the original will at once see that it has this force. A verb in the conjugation called *hithpael* signifies a reciprocal act, that which a man does upon himself: here we may consider Enoch receiving a pious education, and the Divine influence through it; in consequence of which he determines to be a worker with God, and therefore takes up the resolution to walk with his Maker, that he might not receive the grace of God in vain.

3. The *circumstances* in which he was placed. He was a patriarch; the king, the priest, and the prophet of a numerous family, to whom he was to administer justice, among whom he was to perform all the rites and ceremonies of religion, and teach, both by precept and example, the way of truth and righteousness. Add to this, he was a *married man*, he had a numerous family of his own, independently of the collateral branches over which he was obliged, as *patriarch*, to preside; *he walked three hundred years with God, and begat sons and daughters*; therefore *marriage* is no hinderance even to the perfection of piety; much less inconsistent with it, as some have injudiciously taught.

4. The astonishing *height of piety* to which he had arrived; being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and having perfected holiness in the fear of God, we find not only his soul but his body purified, so that, without being obliged to visit the empire of death, he was capable of immediate translation to the paradise of God. There are few cases of this

kind on record; but probably there might be more, many more, were the followers of God more faithful to the grace they receive.

5. Enoch attained this state of religious and spiritual excellence in a time when, comparatively speaking, there were few helps, and no *written revelation*. Here then we cannot but see and admire how mighty the grace of God is, and what wonders it works in the behalf of those who are faithful, who *set themselves to walk with God*. It is not the want of grace nor of the means of grace that is the cause of the decay of this primitive piety, but the want of faithfulness in those who have the light, and yet will not walk as children of the light.

6. If the grace of God could work such a mighty change in those primitive times, when life and immortality were not brought to light by the Gospel, what may we not expect in *these* times, in which the Son of God tabernacles among men, in which God gives the Holy Spirit to them who ask him, in which all things are possible to him who believes? No man can prove that Enoch had greater spiritual advantages than any of the other patriarchs, though it seems pretty evident that he made a better use of those that were common to all than any of the rest did; and it would be absurd to say that *he* had greater spiritual helps and advantages than Christians can now expect, for he lived under a dispensation much less perfect than that of the LAW, and yet the law itself was only the *shadow* of the glorious *substance* of Gospel blessings and Gospel privileges.

7. It is said that Enoch not only *walked with God*, setting him always before his eyes, beginning, continuing, and ending every work to his glory, but also that *he pleased God*, and had the *testimony that he did please God*, ^{<81106>} **Hebrews 11:5**. Hence we learn that it was *then* possible to live so as not to offend God, consequently so as not to commit sin against him; and to have the continual evidence or testimony that all that a man did and purposed was pleasing in the sight of Him who searches the heart, and by whom devices are weighed: and if it was possible *then*, it is surely, through the same grace, possible *now*; for God, and Christ, and *faith*, are still the *same*.

Verse 27. The days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years] This is the longest life mentioned in Scripture, and probably the longest ever lived; but we have not authority to say positively that it was the longest. Before the flood, and before artificial refinements were much known and cultivated, the life of man was greatly protracted, and yet of

him who lived within thirty-one years of a *thousand* it is said he *died*; and the longest life is but as a moment when it is past. Though life is uncertain, precarious, and full of natural evils, yet it is a blessing in all its periods if devoted to the glory of God and the interest of the soul; for while it lasts we may more and more acquaint ourselves with God and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto us; <18221> **Job 22:21.**

Verse 29. This same shall comfort us] This is an allusion, as some think, to the name a Noah, which they derive from ׀ן נ *nacham*, to comfort; but it is much more likely that it comes from ׀ן נ *nach* or ׀ן נ *nuach*, to rest, to settle, &c. And what is more *comfortable* than *rest* after *toil* and *labour*? These words seem to have been spoken *prophetically* concerning Noah, who built the ark for the preservation of the human race, and who seems to have been a typical person; for when he offered his sacrifice after the drying up of the waters, it is said that God smelled a savour of REST, and said he would not curse the ground any more for man's sake, <10821> **Genesis 8:21**; and from that time the earth seems to have had upon an average the same degree of fertility; and the life of man, in a few generations after, was settled in the mean at threescore years and ten. See <10818> **Genesis 9:3.**

Verse 32. Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.] From <11021> **Genesis 10:21**; <13018> **1 Chronicles 1:5**, &c., we learn that Japheth was the eldest son of Noah, but *Shem* is mentioned first, because it was from him, in a direct line, that the Messiah came. *Ham* was certainly the *youngest* of Noah's sons, and from what we read, <10922> **Genesis 9:22**, the *worst* of them; and how *he* comes to be mentioned out of his natural order is not easy to be accounted for. When the Scriptures design to mark *precedency*, though the subject be a younger son or brother, he is always mentioned *first*; so *Jacob* is named before *Esau*, his elder brother, and *Ephraim* before *Manasses*. See <102818> **Genesis 28:5**; **48:20.**

AMONG many important things presented to our view in this chapter, several of which have been already noticed, we may observe that, of all the antediluvian patriarchs, Enoch, who was probably the best man, was the shortest time upon earth; his years were exactly as the days in a solar revolution, viz., *three hundred and sixty-five*; and like the sun he fulfilled a glorious course, shining more and more unto the perfect day, and was taken, when in his meridian splendour, to shine like the sun in the kingdom of his Father for ever.

From computation it appears, 1. That Adam lived to see Lamech, the ninth generation, in the fifty-sixth year of whose life he died; and as he was the first who lived, and the first that sinned, so he was the first who tasted death in a natural way. Abel's was not a natural but a violent death. 2. That Enoch was taken away next after Adam, seven patriarchs remaining witness of his translation. 3. That all the nine first patriarchs were taken away before the flood came, which happened in the six hundredth year of Noah's life. 4. That Methuselah lived till the very year in which the flood came, of which his name is supposed to have been *prophetical wtm methu*, "he dieth," and *j l v shalach*, "he sendeth out;" as if God had designed to teach men that as soon as Methuselah died the flood should be sent forth to drown an ungodly world. If this were then so understood, even the *name* of this patriarch contained in it a *gracious warning*. See the *genealogical plate* after "⁰¹¹³²**Genesis 11:32**".

GENESIS

CHAPTER 6

The children of God, among whom the true religion was at first preserved, corrupt it by forming matrimonial connections with irreligious women, 1, 2. God, displeased with these connections and their consequences, limits the continuance of the old world to one hundred and twenty years, 3. The issue of those improper connections termed giants, 4. An affecting description of the depravity of the world, 5, 6. God threatens the destruction of every living creature, 7. Noah and his family find grace in his sight, 8. The character and family of Noah, 9, 10. And a farther description of the corruption of man, 11, 12. Noah is forewarned of the approaching destruction of the human race, 13; and is ordered to build an ark for the safety of himself and household, the form and dimensions of which are particularly described, 14-16. The deluge threatened, 17. The covenant of God's mercy is to be established between him and the family of Noah, 18. A male and female of all kinds of animals that could not live in the waters to be brought into the ark, 19, 20. Noah is commanded to provide food for their sustenance, 21; and punctually follows all these directions, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. When men began to multiply] It was not at *this* time that men *began* to multiply, but the inspired penman speaks *now* of a fact which had taken place long before. As there is a distinction made here between *men* and those called the *sons of God*, it is generally supposed that the immediate posterity of Cain and that of Seth are intended. The first were *mere men*, such as fallen nature may produce, degenerate sons of a degenerate father, governed by the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life. The others were *sons of God*, not *angels*, as some have dreamed, but such as were, according to our Lord's doctrine, *born again, born from above*, ~~<RB>~~ **John 3:3, 5, 6**, &c., and made children of God by the influence of the Holy Spirit, ~~<RB>~~ **Galatians 5:6**. The former were apostates from the true religion, the latter were those among whom it was preserved and cultivated.

Dr. Wall supposes the first verses of this chapter should be paraphrased thus: "When men began to multiply on the earth, the *chief men* took wives of all the handsome *poor women* they chose. There were tyrants in the earth in those days; and also after the antediluvian days *powerful men* had

unlawful connections with the inferior women, and the children which sprang from this illicit commerce were the renowned heroes of antiquity, of whom the heathens made their gods.”

Verse 3. My spirit shall not always strive] It is only by the influence of the Spirit of God that the carnal mind can be subdued and destroyed; but those who wilfully resist and grieve that Spirit must be ultimately left to the hardness and blindness of their own hearts, if they do not repent and turn to God. God delights in mercy, and therefore a gracious warning is given. Even at this time the earth was ripe for destruction; but God promised them one hundred and twenty years’ respite: if they repented in that interim, well; if not, they should be destroyed by a flood. **See note on “~~Genesis~~ Genesis 6:5”**

Verse 4. There were giants in the earth] **μυλ πη nephilim**, from **ל פה naphal**, “he fell.” Those who had *apostatized* or *fallen* from the true religion. The Septuagint translate the original word by **γγαντες**, which literally signifies *earth-born*, and which we, following them, term *giants*, without having any reference to the meaning of the word, which we generally conceive to signify persons of *enormous stature*. But the word when properly understood makes a very just distinction between the sons of men and the sons of God; those were the nephilim, the *fallen earth-born* men, with the animal and devilish mind. These were the *sons of God*, who were born from above; children of the kingdom, because children of God. Hence we may suppose originated the different appellatives given to *sinners and saints*; the former were termed **γγαντες**, earth-born, and the latter, **αγιοι**, i.e. saints, persons *not of the earth*, or *separated from the earth*.

The same became mighty men-men of renown.] **μυρβγ gibborim**, which we render *mighty men*, signifies properly *conquerors, heroes*, from **רבג gabar**, “he prevailed, was victorious.” and **μνη γνη anshey hashshem**, “men of the name,” **ανθρωποι ονομασπι**, Septuagint; the same as we render *men of renown*, *renominati*, *twice named*, as the word implies, having one name which they derived from their fathers, and another which they acquired by their daring exploits and enterprises.

It may be necessary to remark here that our translators have rendered seven different Hebrew words by the one term *giants*, viz., *nephilim*, *gibborim*, *enachim*, *rephaim*, *emim*, and *zamzumim*; by which

appellatives are probably meant in general persons of great knowledge, piety, courage, wickedness, &c., and not men of enormous stature, as is generally conjectured.

Verse 5. The wickedness of man was great] What an awful character does God give of the inhabitants of the antediluvian world! 1. They were *flesh*, (^{<DIOFB>}**Genesis 6:3**;) wholly sensual, the desires of the mind overwhelmed and lost in the desires of the flesh, their souls no longer discerning their high destiny, but ever minding earthly things, so that they were sensualized, brutalized, and become flesh; incarnated so as not to retain God in their knowledge, and they lived, seeking their portion in this life. 2. They were in a *state of wickedness*. All was corrupt within, and all unrighteous without; neither the science nor practice of religion existed. Piety was gone, and every form of sound words had disappeared. 3. This wickedness was *great hbr rabbah*, “was multiplied;” it was continually increasing and multiplying increase by increase, so that the *whole earth* was corrupt before God, and was filled with violence, (^{<DIOGI>}**Genesis 6:11**;) profligacy among the lower, and cruelty and oppression among the higher classes, being only predominant. 4. *All the imaginations of their thoughts were evil*-the very first *embryo* of every idea, the *figment* of every thought, the very *materials* out of which perception, conception, and ideas were formed, were all *evil*; the fountain which produced them, with every thought, purpose, wish, desire, and motive, was incurably poisoned. 5. All these were evil *without any mixture of good*-the Spirit of God which strove with them was continually resisted, so that evil had its sovereign sway. 6. They were evil *continually*-there was no interval of good, no moment allowed for serious reflection, no holy purpose, no righteous act. What a finished picture of a fallen soul! Such a picture as God alone, who searches the heart and tries the spirit, could possibly give. 7. To complete the whole, God represents himself as *repenting* because he had made them, and as *grieved at the heart* because of their iniquities! Had not these been *voluntary* transgressions, crimes which they *might have avoided*, had they not grieved and quenched the Spirit of God, could he speak of them in the manner he does here? 8. So incensed is the most holy and the most merciful God, that he is determined to destroy the work of his hands: *And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created;* ^{<DIOEIT>}**Genesis 6:7**. How great must the evil have been, and how provoking the transgressions, which obliged the most compassionate God, for the vindication of his own

glory, to form this awful purpose! Fools make a mock at sin, but none except fools.

Verse 8. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.] Why? Because he was, 1. *A just man*, **qydx vya ish tsaddik**, a man who gave to all their due; for this is the ideal meaning of the original word. 2. He was *perfect in his generation*-he was in all things a consistent character, never departing from the truth in principle or practice. 3. *He walked with God*-he was not only *righteous* in his conduct, but he was *pious*, and had continual communion with God. The same word is used here as before in the case of Enoch. See ^{<01052>}**Genesis 5:22**.

Verse 11. The earth also was corrupt] See Clarke on “^{<01055>}**Genesis 6:5**”.

Verse 13. I will destroy them with the earth.] Not only the human race was to be destroyed, but all terrestrial animals, i.e. those which could not live in the waters. These must necessarily be destroyed when the whole surface of the earth was drowned. But destroying the earth may probably mean the alteration of its constitution. Dr. Woodward, in his natural history of the earth, has rendered it exceedingly probable that the whole terrestrial substance was amalgamated with the waters, after which the different materials of its composition settled in beds or strata according to their respective gravities. This theory, however, is disputed by others.

Verse 14. Make thee an ark] **tb̄t** *tebath*, a word which is used only to express *this vessel*, and that in which Moses was preserved, ^{<01055>}**Exodus 2:3,5**. It signifies no more than our word *vessel* in its common acceptation-a hollow place capable of containing persons, goods, &c., without any particular reference to *shape* or *form*.

Gopher wood] Some think the *cedar* is meant; others, the *cypress*. Bochart renders this probable, 1. From the appellation, supposing the Greek word **κυπαρισσος**, *cypress*, was formed from the Hebrew **רפף**, *gopher*; for take away the termination **ισσος**, and then *gopher* and **κυπαρ** will have a near resemblance. 2. Because the cypress is not liable to rot, nor to be injured by worms. 3. The cypress was anciently used for ship-building. 4. This wood abounded in Assyria, where it is probable Noah built the ark. After all, the word is of doubtful signification, and occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. The Septuagint render the place, **εκ ξυλων**

τετραγωνων, “of square timber;” and the Vulgate, *de lignis laevigatis*, “of planed timber;” so it is evident that these translators knew not what kind of wood was intended by the original. The Syriac and Arabic trifle with the passage, rendering it *wicker* work, as if the ark had been a great *basket*! Both the Targums render it *cedar*; and the Persian, *pine* or *fir*.

Verse 15. Thou shalt make-the length of the ark-three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits]

Allowing the cubit, which is the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, to be *eighteen* inches, the ark must have been *four hundred and fifty* feet in length, *seventy-five* in breadth, and *forty-five* in height. But that the ancient cubit was more than *eighteen* inches has been demonstrated by Mr. Greaves, who travelled in Greece, Palestine, and Egypt, in order to be able to ascertain the *weights, moneys, and measures* of antiquity. He measured the pyramids in Egypt, and comparing the accounts which Herodotus, Strabo, and others, give of their size, he found the length of a cubit to be *twenty-one* inches and *eight hundred and eighty-eight* decimal parts out of a thousand, or nearly *twenty-two* inches. Hence the *cube* of a cubit is evidently *ten thousand four hundred and eighty-six* inches. And from this it will appear that the *three hundred* cubits of the ark’s length make *five hundred and forty-seven* feet; the *fifty* for its breadth, *ninety-one* feet *two* inches; and the *thirty* for its height, *fifty-four* feet *eight* inches. When these dimensions are examined, the ark will be found to be a vessel whose capacity was more than sufficient to contain all persons and animals said to have been in it, with sufficient food for each for more than *twelve* months. This vessel Dr. Arbuthnot computes to have been *eighty-one thousand and sixty-two* tons in burden.

As many have supposed the capacity of the ark to have been much *too small* for the things which were contained in it, it will be necessary to examine this subject thoroughly, that every difficulty may be removed. The things contained in the ark, besides the *eight persons* of Noah’s family, were one pair of all *unclean* animals, and seven pairs of all *clean* animals. with provisions for all sufficient for *twelve* months.

At the first view the number of animals may appear so immense that no space but the forest could be thought sufficient to contain them. If, however, we come to a calculation, the number of the different *genera* or *kinds* of animals will be found much less than is generally imagined. It is a question whether in this account any but the different *genera* of animals

necessary to be brought into the ark should be included Naturalists have divided the whole system of zoology into CLASSES and ORDERS, containing *genera* and *species*. There are six classes thus denominated: 1. *Mammalia*; 2. *Aves*; 3. *Amphibia*; 4. *Pisces*; 5. *Insectæ*; and 6. *Vermes*. With the three last of these, viz., *fishes*, *insects*, and *worms*, the question can have little to do.

The *first* CLASS, *Mammalia*, or animals with *teats*, contains *seven* orders, and only *forty-three genera* if we except the *seventh* order, *cete*, i.e. all the *whale* kind, which certainly need not come into this account. The different *species* in this class amount, the *cete* excluded, to *five hundred* and *forty-three*.

The *second* CLASS, *Aves*, birds, contains *six* orders, and only *seventy-four* genera, if we exclude the *third* order, *anseræ*, or *web-footed* fowls, all of which could very well live in the water. The different species in this class, the *anseræ* excepted, amount to *two thousand three hundred* and *seventy-two*.

The *third* CLASS, *Amphibia*, contains only *two* orders, *reptiles* and *serpents*; these comprehend *ten genera*, and *three hundred* and *sixty-six* species, but of the reptiles many could live in the water, such as the *tortoise*, *frog*, &c. Of the former there are *thirty-three* species, of the latter *seventeen*, which excluded reduce the number to *three hundred* and *sixteen*. The whole of these would occupy but little room in the ark, for a small portion of *earth*, &c., in the *hold* would be sufficient for *their* accommodation.

Bishop Wilkins, who has written largely and with his usual accuracy on this subject, supposes that quadrupeds do not amount to *one hundred* different kinds, nor *birds* which could not live in the water to *two hundred*. Of quadrupeds he shows that only *seventy-two* species needed a place in the ark, and the *birds* he divides into *nine* classes, including in the whole *one hundred* and *ninety-five* kinds, from which all the *web-footed* should be deducted, as these could live in the water.

He computes all the *carnivorous* animals equivalent, as to the bulk of their bodies and food, to *twenty-seven* wolves; and all the rest to *one hundred* and *eighty* oxen. For the former he allows *one thousand eight hundred* and *twenty-five* sheep for their annual consumption; and for the latter, *one hundred* and *nine thousand five hundred* cubits of *hay*: these animals and

their food will be easily contained In the two *first stories*, and much room to spare; as to the *third story*, no person can doubt its being sufficient for the *fowls*, with *Noah* and his *family*.

One sheep each day he judges will be sufficient for *six* wolves; and a square cubit of hay, which contains *forty-one* pounds, as ordinarily pressed in our *ricks*, will be amply sufficient for *one ox* in the day. When the quantum of *room* which these animals and their provender required for one year, is compared with the *capacity* of the ark, we shall be led to conclude, with the learned bishop, “that of the two it is more difficult to assign a number and bulk of necessary things to answer to the capacity of the ark, than to find sufficient room for the several species of animals and their food already known to have been there.” This he attributes to the imperfection of our lists of animals, especially those of the unknown parts of the earth; and adds, “that the most expert mathematicians at this day,” and he was one of the first in Europe, “could not assign the proportion of a vessel better accommodated to the purpose than is here done;” and concludes thus: “The capacity of the ark, which has been made an objection against Scripture, ought to be esteemed a confirmation of its Divine authority; since, in those ruder ages men, being less versed in arts and philosophy, were more obnoxious to vulgar prejudices than now, so that had it been a human invention it would have been contrived, according to those wild apprehensions which arise from a confused and general view of things, as much *too big* as it has been represented *too little*.” See Bishop Wilkins’s *Essay towards a Philosophical Character and Language*.

Verse 16. A window shalt thou make] What this was cannot be absolutely ascertained. The original word **רַחַץ** *tsohar* signifies *clear* or *bright*; the Septuagint translate it by **ἐπιδυναγων**, “*collecting*, thou shalt make the ark,” which plainly shows they did not understand the word as signifying any kind of *window* or *light*. Symmacus translates it **διαφανες**, *a transparency*; and Aquila, **μεσημβρινον**, *the noon*. Jonathan ben Uzziel supposes that it was a precious luminous stone which Noah, by Divine command, brought from the river *Pison*. It is probably a word which should be taken in a collective sense, signifying *apertures* for *air* and *light*.

In a cubit shalt thou finish it above] Probably meaning that the roof should be left a cubit broad at the apex or top, and that it should not terminate in a *sharp* ridge. But this place is variously understood.

Verse 17. I—do bring a flood] **I wbm**; *mabbul*; a word used only to designate the *general deluge*, being never applied to signify any other kind of inundation; and does not the Holy Spirit intend to show by this that no other *flood* was ever like this, and that it should continue to be the sole one of the kind? There have been many partial inundations in various countries, but never more than ONE *general deluge*; and we have God's promise, ^{<010915>}**Genesis 9:15**, that there shall never be *another*.

Verse 18. With thee will I establish my covenant] The word **tyrb berith**, from **rb bar**, to purify or cleanse, signifies properly a *purification* or *purifier*, (see on chap. xv.) because in all covenants made between God and man, *sin* and *sinfulness* were ever supposed to be on man's side, and that God could not enter into any covenant or engagement with him without a *purifier*; hence, in all covenants, a sacrifice was offered for the removal of offences, and the reconciliation of God to the sinner; and hence the word **tyrb berith** signifies not only a *covenant*, but also the *sacrifice* offered on the occasion, ^{<02408>}**Exodus 24:8**; ^{<05016>}**Psalm 50:5**; and Jesus Christ, the great atonement and purifier, has the same word for his title, ^{<3416>}**Isaiah 42:6; 49:8**; and ^{<3911>}**Zechariah 9:11**.

Almost all nations, in forming alliances, &c., made their covenants or contracts in the same way. A sacrifice was provided, its throat was cut, and its blood poured out before God; then the whole carcass was divided through the spinal marrow from the head to the rump; so as to make exactly two equal parts; these were placed opposite to each other, and the contracting parties passed between them, or entering at opposite ends met in the centre, and there took the covenant oath. This is particularly referred to by Jeremiah, ^{<2418>}**Jeremiah 34:18, 19, 20**: "I will give the men (into the hands of their enemies, ^{<2420>}**Jeremiah 34:20**) that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before me, *when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof*," &c. See also ^{<05212>}**Deuteronomy 29:12**.

A covenant, says Mr. Ainsworth, is a disposition of good things faithfully declared, which God here calls *his*, as arising from his *grace* towards Noah (^{<01088>}**Genesis 6:8**) and all men; but implying also *conditions on man's part*, and therefore is called *our* covenant, ^{<3911>}**Zechariah 9:11**. The apostles call it **διαθήκη**, a *testament* or *disposition*; and it is mixed of the properties both of covenant and testament, as the apostle shows, ^{<3916>}**Hebrews 9:16**,

&c., and of both may be named a *testamental covenant*, whereby the disposing of God's favours and good things to us is declared. The covenant made with Noah signified, on *God's* part, that he should save Noah and his family from death by the ark. On Noah's part, that he should in faith and obedience make and enter into the ark-*Thou shalt come into the ark*, &c., so committing himself to God's preservation, ^{<88107>}**Hebrews 11:7**. And under this the covenant or testament of eternal salvation by Christ was also implied, the apostle testifying, ^{<8102>}**1 Peter 3:21**, that the antitype, baptism, doth also now save us; for baptism is a seal of our salvation, ^{<41616>}**Mark 16:16**. To *provide* a Saviour, and the means of salvation, is *GOD'S part*: to *accept* this Saviour, laying hold on the hope set before us, is *ours*. Those who refuse the way and means of salvation must perish; those who accept of the great Covenant Sacrifice cannot perish, but shall have eternal life. See Clarke on "^{<01510>}**Genesis 15:10**", &c.

Verse 19. To keep them alive] God might have destroyed all the animal creation, and created others to occupy the new world, but he chose rather to *preserve* those already created. The Creator and Preserver of the universe does nothing but what is essentially necessary to be done. Nothing should be wantonly wasted; nor should *power* or *skill* be lavished where no necessity exists; and yet it required more means and economy to preserve the old than to have created new ones. Such respect has God to the work of his hands, that nothing but what is essential to the credit of his justice and holiness shall ever induce him to destroy any thing he has made.

Verse 21. Of all food that is eaten] That is, of the food proper for every species of animals.

Verse 22. Thus did Noah] He prepared the ark; and during one hundred and twenty years preached righteousness to that sinful generation, ^{<6105>}**2 Peter 2:5**. And this we are informed, ^{<6108>}**1 Peter 3:18, 19**, &c., he did by the *Spirit of Christ*; for it was only through *him* that the doctrine of repentance could ever be successfully preached. The people in Noah's time are represented as *shut up in prison*-arrested and condemned by God's justice, but graciously allowed the space of one hundred and twenty years to repent in. This respite was an act of great mercy; and no doubt thousands who died in the interim availed themselves of it, and believed to the saving of their souls. But the great majority of the people did not, else the *flood* had never come.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 7

God informs Noah that within seven days he shall send a rain upon the earth, that shall continue for forty days and nights; and therefore commands him to take his family, with the different clean and unclean animals, and enter the ark, 1-4. This command punctually obeyed, 5-9. In the seventeenth day of the second month, in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, the waters, from the opened windows of heaven, and the broken up fountains of the great deep, were poured out upon the earth, 10-12. The different quadrupeds, fowls, and reptiles come unto Noah, and the Lord shuts him and them in, 13-16. The waters increase, and the ark floats, 17. The whole earth is covered with water fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, 18-20. All terrestrial animals die, 21-23. And the waters prevail one hundred and fifty days, 24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. Thee have I seen righteous] See Clarke's note on "~~<0100>~~Genesis 6:8".

Verse 2. Of every clean beast] So we find the distinction between clean and unclean animals existed long before the Mosaic law. This distinction seems to have been originally designed to mark those animals which were proper for sacrifice and food, from those that were not. See Lev. xi.

Verse 4. For yet seven days] God spoke these words probably on the seventh or Sabbath day, and the days of the ensuing week were employed in entering the ark, in embarking the mighty troop, for whose reception ample provision had been already made.

Forty days] This period became afterwards sacred, and was considered a proper space for humiliation. *Moses* fasted forty days, ~~<0600>~~**Deuteronomy 9:9,11**; so did *Elijah*, ~~<1100>~~**1 Kings 19:8**; so did our *Lord*, ~~<1040>~~**Matthew 4:2**. Forty days' respite were given to the Ninevites that they might repent, ~~<0300>~~**Jonah 3:4**; and *thrice forty* (one hundred and twenty) years were given to the old world for the same gracious purpose, ~~<0100>~~**Genesis 6:3**. The forty days of Lent, in commemoration of our Lord's fasting, have a reference to the same thing; as each of these seems to be deduced from this primitive judgment.

Verse 11. In the six hundredth year, &c.] This must have been in the beginning of the six hundredth year of his life; for he was a year in the ark, ^{<010813>}**Genesis 8:13**; and lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood, and died nine hundred and fifty years old, ^{<010229>}**Genesis 9:29**; so it is evident that, when the flood commenced, he had just entered on his six hundredth year.

Second month] The first month was *Tisri*, which answers to the latter half of *September*, and first half of *October*; and the second was *Mareheshvan*, which answers to part of *October* and part of *November*. After the deliverance from Egypt, the beginning of the year was changed from *Marcheshvan* to *Nisan*, which answers to a part of our *March* and *April*. But it is not likely that this reckoning obtained *before* the flood. Dr. Lightfoot very probably conjectures that Methuselah was alive in the first month of this year. And it appears, says he, how clearly the Spirit of prophecy foretold of things to come, when it directed his father Enoch almost a thousand years before to name him *Methuselah*, which signifies *they die by a dart*; or, *he dieth, and then is the dart*; or, *he dieth, and then it is sent*. And thus Adam and Methuselah had measured the whole time between the *creation* and the *flood*, and lived above two hundred and forty years together. **See Clarke's note - Tables** ^{<010613>}**Genesis 5:3**".

Were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.] It appears that an immense quantity of waters occupied the centre of the antediluvian earth; and as these burst forth, by the order of God, the circumambient strata must sink, in order to fill up the vacuum occasioned by the elevated waters. This is probably what is meant by *breaking up the fountains of the great deep*. These waters, with the seas on the earth's surface, might be deemed sufficient to drown the whole globe, as the waters now on its surface are nearly three-fourths of the whole, as has been accurately ascertained by Dr. Long. **See Clarke's note on** ^{<010110>}**Genesis 1:10**".

By the *opening of the windows of heaven* is probably meant the precipitating all the aqueous vapours which were suspended in the whole atmosphere, so that, as Moses expresses it, ^{<010107>}**Genesis 1:7**, the *waters that were above the firmament* were again united to the waters *which were below the firmament*, from which on the second day of creation they had been *separated*. A multitude of facts have proved that *water* itself is composed of two airs, *oxygen* and *hydrogen*; and that 85 parts of the first

and 15 of the last, making 100 in the whole, will produce exactly 100 parts of water. And thus it is found that these two *airs* form the constituent parts of water in the above proportions. The electric spark, which is the same as lightning, passing through these airs, decomposes them and converts them to water. And to this cause we may probably attribute the *rain* which immediately follows the flash of lightning and peal of thunder. God therefore, by the means of lightning, might have converted the whole atmosphere into water, for the purpose of drowning the globe, had there not been a sufficiency of merely aqueous vapours suspended in the atmosphere on the second day of creation. And if the electric fluid were used on this occasion for the production of water, the incessant glare of lightning, and the continual peals of thunder, must have added indescribable horrors to the scene. **See Clarke's note on "^{COIC001}Genesis 8:1**". These two causes concurring were amply sufficient, not only to overflow the earth, but probably to *dissolve* the whole terrene fabric, as some judicious naturalists have supposed: indeed, this seems determined by the word **l wbm** *mabbul*, translated *flood*, which is derived from **l b bal** **l l b** or *balal*, to *mix, mingle, confound, confuse*, because the *aqueous* and *terrene* parts of the globe were then mixed and confounded together; and when the supernatural cause that produced this mighty change suspended its operations, the different particles of matter would settle according to their specific gravities, and thus form the various *strata* or *beds* of which the earth appears to be internally constructed. Some naturalists have controverted this sentiment, because in some cases the internal structure of the earth does not appear to justify the opinion that the various portions of matter had settled according to their specific gravities; but these anomalies may easily be accounted for, from the great changes that have taken place in different parts of the earth *since* the *flood*, by volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, &c. Some very eminent philosophers are of the opinion "that, by the *breaking up of the fountains of the great deep*, we are to understand *an eruption of waters from the Southern Ocean*." Mr. Kirwan supposes "that this is pretty evident from such animals as the elephant and rhinoceros being found in great masses in Siberia, mixed with different *marine substances*; whereas no animals or other substances belonging to the *northern regions* have been ever found in *southern* climates. Had these animals died natural deaths in their proper climate, their bodies would not have been found in such masses. But that they were carried no farther northward than Siberia, is evident from there being no remains of any animals besides those of whales found in the mountains of Greenland. That

this great *rush of waters* was from the *south* or *south-east* is farther evident, he thinks, from the south and south-east sides of almost all great mountains being much steeper than their north or north-west sides, as they necessarily would be if the force of a great body of water fell upon them in that direction." On a subject like this men may innocently differ. Many think the first opinion accords best with the Hebrew text and with the phenomena of nature, for mountains do not always present the above appearance.

Verse 12. The rain was upon the earth] Dr. Lightfoot supposes that the rain began on the 18th day of the second month, or *Marcheshvan*, and that it ceased on the 28th of the third month, *Cisleu*.

Verse 15. And they went in, &c.] It was physically impossible for Noah to have collected such a vast number of tame and ferocious animals, nor could they have been retained in their wards by mere natural means. How then were they brought from various distances to the ark and preserved there? Only by the power of God. He who first miraculously brought them to Adam that he might give them their names, now brings them to Noah that he may preserve their lives. And now we may reasonably suppose that their natural enmity was so far removed or suspended that the lion might dwell with the lamb, and the wolf lie down with the kid, though each might still require his peculiar aliment. This can be no difficulty to the power of God, without the immediate interposition of which neither the deluge nor the concomitant circumstances could have taken place.

Verse 16. The Lord shut him in.] This seems to imply that God took him under his especial protection, and as he shut HIM *in*, so he shut the OTHERS *out*. God had waited one hundred and twenty years upon that generation; they did not repent; they filled up the measure of their iniquities, and then wrath came upon them to the uttermost.

Verse 20. Fifteen cubits upward] Should any person object to the *universality* of the deluge because he may imagine there is not water sufficient to drown the whole globe in the manner here related, he may find a most satisfactory answer to all the objections he can raise on this ground in Mr. Ray's *Physico-theological Discourses*, 2d edit., 8vo., 1693.

Verse 22. Of all that was in the dry land] From this we may conclude that such animals only as *could not live in the water* were preserved in the ark.

Verse 24. And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.] The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, and the raining forty days and nights, had raised the waters fifteen cubits above the highest mountains; after which forty days it appears to have continued at this height for one hundred and fifty days more. “So,” says Dr. Lightfoot, “these two sums are to be reckoned distinct, and not the forty days included in the one hundred and fifty; so that when the one hundred and fifty days were ended, there were six months and ten days of the flood past.”

For an improvement of this awful judgment, see the conclusion of the following chapter.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 8

At the end of one hundred and fifty days the waters begin to subside, 1-3. The ark rests on Mount Ararat, 4. On the first of the tenth month the tops of the hills appear, 5. The window opened and the raven sent out, 6, 7. The dove sent forth, and returns, 8, 9. The dove sent forth a second time, and returns with an olive leaf, 10, 11. The dove sent out the third time, and returns no more, 12. On the twentieth day of the second month the earth is completely dried, 13, 14. God orders Noah, his family, and all the creatures to come out of the ark, 15-19. Noah builds an altar, and offers sacrifices to the Lord, 20. They are accepted; and God promises that the earth shall not be cursed thus any more, notwithstanding the iniquity of man, 21, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. And God made a wind to pass over the earth] Such a wind as produced a strong and sudden evaporation. The effects of these winds, which are frequent in the east, are truly astonishing. A friend of mine, who had been bathing in the Tigris, not far from the ancient city of *Ctesiphon*, and within five days' journey of *Bagdad*, having on a pair of Turkish drawers, one of these hot winds, called by the natives *samiel*, passing rapidly across the river just as he had got out of the water, so effectually dried him in a *moment*, that not one particle of moisture was left either on his body or in his bathing dress! With such an electrified wind as this, how soon could God dry the whole of the earth's surface! An operation something similar to the conversion of water into its two constituent *airs*, *oxygen* and *hydrogen*, by means of the *galvanic* fluid, as these airs themselves may be reconverted into water by means of the electric spark. See Clarke's note "⁶⁻¹⁰⁷¹⁵Genesis 7:11". And probably this was the agent that restored to the atmosphere the quantity of water which it had contributed to this vast inundation. The other portion of waters, which had proceeded from the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, would of course subside more slowly, as openings were made for them to run off from the higher lands, and form seas. By the first cause, the hot wind, the *waters were assuaged*, and the atmosphere having its due proportion of vapours restored, the quantity below must be greatly lessened. By the second, the earth was gradually dried, the waters, as they found passage, lessening by degrees till the seas and gulfs were formed, and the earth

completely drained. This appears to be what is intended in the third and fifth verses by the *waters decreasing continually*, or, according to the margin, they *were in going and decreasing*, ^{<1000>}**Genesis 8:5.**

Verse 4. The mountains of Ararat.] That Ararat was a mountain of *Armenia* is almost universally agreed. What is commonly thought to be the Ararat of the Scriptures, has been visited by many travellers, and on it there are several monasteries. For a long time the world has been amused with reports that the *remains* of the ark were still visible there; but Mr. *Tournefort*, a famous French naturalist, who was on the spot, assures us that nothing of the kind is there to be seen. As there is a great chain of mountains which are called by this name, it is impossible to determine on what part of them the ark rested; but the highest part, called by some the *finger mountain*, has been fixed on as the most likely place. These things we must leave, and they are certainly of very little consequence.

From the circumstance of the resting of the ark on the 17th of the seventh month, Dr. Light. foot draws this curious conclusion: That the ark drew exactly *eleven cubits* of water. On the first day of the month *Ab* the mountain tops were first seen, and then the waters had fallen *fifteen cubits*; for so high had they prevailed above the tops of the mountains. This decrease in the waters took up *sixty* days, namely, from the first of *Sivan*; so that they appear to have abated in the proportion of *one cubit* in *four days*. On the 16th of *Sivan* they had abated but *four cubits*; and yet on the next day the ark rested on one of the hills, when the waters must have been as yet *eleven cubits* above it. Thus it appears that the ark drew *eleven cubits* of water.

Verse 7. He sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro] It is generally supposed that the raven *flew off*, and was seen no more, but this meaning the Hebrew text will not bear; *awxy axyw bwvw vaiyetse yatso vashob*, and it went forth, going forth and returning. From which it is evident that she did *return*, but *was not taken into the ark*. She made frequent excursions, and continued on the wing as long as she could, having picked up such aliment as she found floating on the waters; and then, to rest herself, regained the ark, where she might perch, though she was not admitted. Indeed this must be allowed, as it is impossible she could have continued *twenty one* days upon the wing, which she must have done had she not returned. But the text itself is sufficiently determinate.

Verse 8. He sent forth a dove] The dove was sent forth *thrice*; the first time she *speedily* returned, having, in all probability, gone but a little way from the ark, as she must naturally be terrified at the appearance of the waters. After seven days, being sent out a *second time*, she returned with an *olive leaf pluckt off*, ^{<01081>}**Genesis 8:11**, an emblem of the restoration of peace between God and the earth; and from this circumstance the *olive* has been the *emblem of peace* among all civilized nations. At the end of the other *seven* days the dove being sent out the *third* time, returned no more, from which Noah conjectured that the earth was now sufficiently drained, and therefore removed the covering of the ark, which probably gave liberty to many of the fowls to fly off, which circumstance would afford him the greater facility in making arrangements for disembarking the beasts and reptiles, and heavy-bodied domestic fowls, which might yet remain. See ^{<010817>}**Genesis 8:17**.

Verse 14. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day] From this it appears that Noah was in the ark a *complete solar year*, or *three hundred and sixty-five days*; for he entered the ark the 17th day of the second month, in the *six hundredth* year of his life, ^{<01071>}**Genesis 7:11,13**, and continued in it till the 27th day of the second month, in the *six hundredth and first* year of his life, as we see above. The months of the ancient Hebrews were lunar; the first *six* consisted of *thirty* days each, the latter *six* of *twenty-nine*; the whole twelve months making *three hundred and fifty-four* days: add to this *eleven days*, (for though he entered the ark the preceding year on the *seventeenth* day of the second month, he did not come out till the *twenty-seventh* of the same month in the following year,) which make exactly *three hundred and sixty-five days*, the period of a complete solar revolution; the odd hours and minutes, as being fractions of time, noncomputed, though very likely all included in the account. This year, according to the Hebrew computation, was the *one thousand six hundred and fifty-seventh* year from the creation; but according to the reckoning of the Septuagint it was the *two thousand two hundred and forty-second*, and according to Dr. Hales, the *two thousand two hundred and fifty-sixth*. See Clarke on ^{<01112>}**Genesis 11:12**".

Verse 20. Noah builded an altar] As we have already seen that Adam, Cain, and Abel, offered sacrifices, there can be no doubt that they had *altars* on which they offered them; but this, builded by Noah, is certainly the *first* on record. It is worthy of remark that, as the old world began with sacrifice, so also did the new. *Religion* or the proper mode of worshipping

the Divine Being, is the invention or institution of God himself; and *sacrifice*, in the *act* and *design*, is the *essence* of religion. Without sacrifice, actually offered or implied, there never was, there never can be, any religion. Even in the *heavens*, a lamb is represented before the throne of God as newly slain, ^{<666>}**Revelation 5:6, 12, 13**. The design of sacrificing is two-fold: the *slaying* and *burning* of the victim point out, 1st, that the *life* of the sinner is forfeited to Divine justice; 2dly, that his *soul* deserves the *fire* of perdition.

The Jews have a tradition that the *place* where Noah built his altar was the same in which the altar stood which was built by Adam, and used by Cain and Abel, and the same spot on which Abraham afterwards offered up his son Isaac.

The word **j bzm** *mizbach*, which we render *altar*, signifies properly a *place for sacrifice*, as the root **j bz** *zabach* signifies simply to *slay*. *Altar* comes from the Latin *altus*, high or elevated, because places for sacrifice were generally either raised *very high* or built on the tops of *hills* and *mountains*; hence they are called *high places* in the Scriptures; but such were chiefly used for idolatrous purposes.

Burnt-offerings] See the meaning of every kind of offering and sacrifice largely explained on ^{<670>}**Leviticus 7:1-38**.

Verse 21. The Lord smelled a sweet savour] That is, he was well pleased with this religious act, performed in obedience to his own appointment, and in faith of the promised Saviour. That this sacrifice prefigured that which was offered by our blessed Redeemer in behalf of the world, is sufficiently evident from the words of St. Paul, ^{<680>}**Ephesians 5:2**: *Christ hath loved us, and given himself for its an offering and a sacrifice to God for a SWEET-SMELLING SAVOUR*; where the words **οσμην ευωδιας** of the apostle are the very words used by the Septuagint in this place.

I will not again curse the ground] **āsa al** *lo osiph*, I will not add to curse the ground- there shall not be *another* deluge to destroy the whole earth: *for the imagination of man's heart*, **yk ki**, ALTHOUGH the imagination of man's heart *should be evil*, i.e. should they become afterwards as evil as they have been before, I will not destroy the earth by a FLOOD. God has other means of destruction; and the next time he visits by a general judgment, FIRE is to be the agent. ^{<687>}**2 Peter 3:7**.

Verse 22. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, &c.]

There is something very expressive in the original, *ymy l k d[xrah od col yemey haarets*, until all the DAYS of the earth; for God does not reckon its duration by centuries, and the words themselves afford a strong presumption that the earth shall not have an endless duration.

Seed-time and harvest.-It is very probable that the *seasons*, which were distinctly marked immediately after the deluge, are mentioned in this place; but it is difficult to ascertain them. Most European nations divide the year into four distinct parts, called *quarters* or *seasons*; but there are *six* divisions in the text, and probably all intended to describe the seasons in one of these postdiluvian years, particularly in that part of the globe, *Armenia*, where Noah was when God gave him, and mankind through him, this gracious promise. From the *Targum* of Jonathan on this verse we learn that in *Palestine* their *seed-time* was in September, at the autumnal equinox; their *harvest* in March, at the vernal equinox; that their *winter* began in December, at the solstice; and their *summer* at the solstice in June.

The *Copts* begin their autumn on the 15th of September, and extend it to the 15th of December. Their *winter* on the 15th of December, and extend it to the 15th of March. Their *spring* on the 15th of March, and extend it to the 15th of June. Their *summer* on the 15th of June, and extend it to the 15th of September, assigning to each season three complete months.

Calmet.

There are certainly regions of the earth to which neither this nor our own mode of division can apply: there are some where *summer* and *winter* appear to divide the whole year, and others where, besides *summer*, *winter*, *autumn*, and *spring*, there are distinct seasons that may be denominated the *hot season*, the *cold season*, the *rainy season*, &c., &c.

This is a very merciful promise to the inhabitants of the earth. There may be a variety *in* the seasons, but no season essentially necessary to vegetation shall utterly fail. The times which are of greatest consequence to the preservation of man are distinctly noted; there shall be both *seed-time* and *harvest*-a proper time to deposit the different grain in the earth, and a proper time to *reap* the produce of this seed.

Thus ends the account of the general deluge, its cause, circumstances, and consequences. An account that seems to say to us, Behold the goodness and severity of God! Both his *justice* and *long-suffering* are particularly

marked in this astonishing event. His *justice*, in the punishment of the incorrigibly wicked, and his *mercy*, in giving them so fair and full a warning, and in waiting so long to extend his grace to all who might seek him. Such a convincing proof has the destruction of the world by water given of the Divine justice, such convincing testimony of the truth of the sacred writings, that not only every part of the earth gives testimony of this extraordinary revolution, but also every nation of the universe has preserved records or traditions of this awful display of the justice of God.

A multitude of testimonies, collected from the most authentic sources in the heathen world, I had intended for insertion in this place, but want of room obliges me to lay them aside. But the state of the earth itself is a sufficient proof. Every part of it bears unequivocal evidence of disruption and violence. From the hand of the God of order it never could have proceeded in its present state. In every part we see marks of the crimes of men, and of the justice of God. And shall not the living lay this to heart? Surely God is not mocked; that which a man soweth he shall reap. He who soweth to the flesh shall of it reap destruction; and though the plague of water shall no more destroy the earth, yet an equal if not sorer punishment awaits the world of the ungodly, in the threatened destruction by fire.

In ancient times almost every thing was typical, and no doubt the *ark* among the rest; but *of what* and in *what way* farther than revelation guides, it is both difficult and unsafe to say. It has been considered a type of our blessed Lord; and hence it has been observed, that “as all those who were *out of the ark* perished by the flood, so those who take not refuge in the meritorious atonement of Christ Jesus must perish everlastingly.” Of all those who, having the opportunity of hearing the Gospel, refuse to accept of the sacrifice it offers them, this saying is true; but the parallel is not good. Myriads of those who perished during the flood probably repented, implored mercy, and found forgiveness; for God ever delights to save, and Jesus was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And though, generally, the people continued in carnal security and sensual gratifications till the flood came, there is much reason to believe that those who during the *forty days’* rain would naturally flee to the high lands and tops of the highest mountains, would earnestly implore that mercy which has never been denied, even to the most profligate, when under deep humiliation of heart they have returned to God. And who can say that this was not done by multitudes while they beheld the increasing flood; or that God, in this last extremity, had rendered it impossible?

St. Peter, ~~1 Peter~~ **1 Peter 3:21**, makes the ark a figure of baptism, and intimates that we are saved by this, as the eight souls were saved by the ark. But let us not mistake the apostle by supposing that the mere *ceremony* itself saves any person; he tells us that the salvation conveyed through this sacred rite *is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God*; i.e. remission of sins and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, which are signified by this baptism. A *good conscience* never existed where remission of sins had not taken place; and every person knows that it is God's prerogative to forgive sins, and that no ordinance can confer it, though ordinances may be the *means* to convey it when piously and believingly used.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 9

God blesses Noah and his sons, 1. The brute creation to be subject to them through fear, 2. The first grant of animal food, 3. Eating of blood forbidden, 4. Cruelty to animals forbidden, 5. A man-slayer to forfeit his life, 6. The covenant of God established between him and Noah and the whole brute creation, 8-11. The rainbow given as the sign and pledge of this covenant, 12-17. The three sons of Noah people the whole earth, 18, 19. Noah plants a vineyard, drinks of the wine, is intoxicated, and lies exposed in his tent, 20, 21. The reprehensible conduct of Ham, 22. The laudable carriage of Shem and Japheth, 23. Noah prophetically declares the servitude of the posterity of Ham, 24, 25; and the dignity and increase of Shem and Japheth, 26, 27. The age and death of Noah, 28, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. God blessed Noah] Even the increase of families, which appears to depend on merely natural means, and sometimes fortuitous circumstances, is all of God. It is by his power and wisdom that the human being is formed, and it is by his providence alone that man is supported and preserved.

Verse 2. The fear of you and the dread, &c.] Prior to the fall, man ruled the inferior animals by *love* and *kindness*, for then *gentleness* and *docility* were *their* principal characteristics. After the fall, untractableness, with savage ferocity, prevailed among almost all orders of the brute creation; enmity to man seems particularly to prevail; and had not God in his mercy impressed their minds with the *fear* and *terror* of man, so that some submit to his will while others *flee* from his residence, the human race would long ere this have been totally destroyed by the beasts of the field. Did the horse know his own strength, and the weakness of the miserable wretch who unmercifully *rides, drives, whips, goads, and oppresses* him, would he not with one stroke of his hoof destroy his tyrant possessor? But while God hides these things from him he impresses his mind with the *fear* of his owner, so that either by *cheerful* or *sullen submission* he is trained up for, and employed in, the most useful and important purposes; and even willingly submits, when tortured for the sport and amusement of his more brutish oppressor. Tigers, wolves, lions, and hyænas, the determinate foes

of man, incapable of being tamed or domesticated, flee, through the principle of *terror*, from the dwelling of man, and thus he is providentially safe. Hence, by *fear* and by *dread* man rules every beast of the earth, every fowl of the air, and every fish of the sea. How wise and gracious is this order of the Divine providence! and with what thankfulness should it be considered by every human being!

Verse 3. Every moving thing-shall be meat] There is no positive evidence that *animal* food was ever used *before* the flood. Noah had the first grant of this kind, and it has been continued to all his posterity ever since. It is not likely that this grant would have been now made if some extraordinary alteration had not taken place in the vegetable world, so as to render its productions less nutritive than they were before; and probably such a change in the constitution of man as to render a grosser and higher diet necessary. We may therefore safely infer that the earth was less productive *after* the flood than it was before, and that the human constitution was greatly impaired by the alterations which had taken place through the whole economy of nature. Morbid debility, induced by an often unfriendly state of the atmosphere, with sore and long-continued labour, would necessarily require a higher nutriment than vegetables could supply. That this was the case appears sufficiently clear from the grant of animal food, which, had it not been indispensably necessary, had not been made. That the constitution of man was then much altered appears in the greatly contracted lives of the postdiluvians; yet from the deluge to the day of Abraham the lives of several of the patriarchs amounted to some hundreds of years; but this was the effect of a *peculiar providence*, that the new world might be the more speedily repopled.

Verse 4. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood] Though animal food was granted, yet the *blood* was most solemnly forbidden, because it was the *life of the beast*, and this *life* was to be offered to God as an atonement for sin. Hence the blood was ever held sacred, because it was the grand instrument of expiation, and because it was typical of that blood by which we enter into the holiest. 1. *Before* the deluge it was not eaten, because animal food was not in use. 2. *After* the deluge it was prohibited, as we find above; and, being one of the *seven* Noahic precepts, it was not eaten previously to the publication of the Mosaic law. 3. At the giving of the law, and at several times during the ministry of Moses, the prohibition was most solemnly, and with awful penalties renewed. Hence we may rest assured that no blood was eaten previously to the Christian

era, nor indeed ever since by the *Jewish* people. 4. That the prohibition has been renewed under the Christian dispensation, can admit of little doubt by any man who *dispassionately* reads ^{<4153>}Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25, where even the *Gentile converts* are charged to abstain from it on the authority, not only of the *apostles*, but of the *Holy Ghost*, who gave them *there and then* especial direction concerning this point; see ^{<4153>}Acts 15:28; not for fear of *stumbling the converted Jews*, the gloss of theologians, but because it was one των αναγκων αυτων, of those *necessary points*, from the *burden* (βαρος) of obedience to which they could not be excused. 5. This command is still scrupulously obeyed by the oriental Christians, and by the whole Greek Church; and why? because the reasons still subsist. No blood was eaten *under the law*, because it pointed out the blood that *was to be shed* for the sin of the world; and *under the Gospel* it should not be eaten, because it should ever be considered as representing the blood *which has been shed* for the remission of sins. If the eaters of blood in general knew that it affords a very crude, almost indigestible, and unwholesome ailment, they certainly would not on these *physical* reasons, leaving *moral* considerations out of the question, be so much attached to the consumption of that from which they could expect no wholesome nutriment, and which, to render it even pleasing to the palate, requires all the skill of the cook. See ^{<18710>}Leviticus 17:10.

Verse 5. Surely your blood—will I require; at the hand of every beast]

This is very obscure, but if taken literally it seems to be an awful warning against *cruelty* to the brute creation; and from it we may conclude that *horse-racers, hare-hunters, bull-baiters, and cock-fighters* shall be obliged to give an account to God for every creature they have *wantonly* destroyed. Instead of *hyj chaiyah*, “beast,” the Samaritan reads [Sam. *Yod Kaph*] *chai*, “living,” any “living creature or person;” this makes a very good sense, and equally forbids cruelty either to men or brutes.

Verse 6. Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood] Hence it appears that whoever kills a man, unless *unwittingly*, as the Scripture expresses it, shall forfeit his own life.

A man is accused of the crime of murder; of this crime he is guilty or he is not: if he be guilty of murder he should die; if not, let him be punished according to the demerit of his crime; but for no offence *but murder* should he lose his life. Taking away the life of another is the highest offence that can be committed against the individual, and against society; and the

highest punishment that a man can suffer for such a crime is the loss of his own life. As punishment should be ever proportioned to crimes, so the *highest punishment* due to the *highest crime* should not be inflicted for a *minor offence*. The law of God and the eternal dictates of reason say, that if a man kill another, the loss of his own life is at once the highest penalty he can pay, and an equivalent for his offence as far as civil society is concerned. If the death of the murderer be the highest penalty he can pay for the murder he has committed, then the infliction of this punishment for *any minor offence* is *injustice* and *cruelty*; and serves only to *confound* the claims of justice, the different degrees of moral turpitude and vice, and to render the profligate desperate: hence the adage so frequent among almost every order of delinquents, “It is as good to be hanged for a *sheep* as a *lamb*;” which at once marks their desperation, and the injustice of those penal laws which inflict the highest punishment for almost every species of crime. When shall a wise and judicious legislature see the absurdity and injustice of inflicting the punishment of *death* for stealing a *sheep* or a *horse*, forging a *twenty shillings’ note*, and MURDERING A MAN; when the latter, in its moral turpitude and ruinous consequences, infinitely exceeds the others?* { * On this head the doctor’s pious wish has been realized since this paragraph was written-PUBLISHERS }

Verse 13. I do set my bow in the cloud] On the origin and nature of the rainbow there had been a great variety of conjectures, till *Anthony de Dominis*, bishop of Spalatro, in a treatise of his published by *Bartholus* in 1611, partly suggested the true cause of this phenomenon, which was afterwards fully explained and demonstrated by *Sir Isaac Newton*. To enter into this subject here in detail would be improper; and therefore the less informed reader must have recourse to treatises on *Optics* for its full explanation. To readers in general it may be sufficient to say that the rainbow is a mere *natural effect of a natural cause*: 1. It is never seen but in showery weather. 2. Nor then unless the sun shines. 3. It never appears in any part of the heavens but in that *opposite* to the sun. 4. It never appears greater than a semicircle, but often much less. 5. It is always *double*, there being what is called the *superior* and *inferior*, or *primary* and *secondary* rainbow. 6. These bows exhibit the *seven* prismatic colours, *red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet*. 7. The whole of this phenomenon depends on the rays of the sun falling on spherical drops of water, and being in their passage through them, *refracted* and *reflected*.

The formation of the primary and secondary rainbow depends on the *two* following *propositions*; 1. When the sun shines on the drops of rain as they are falling, the rays that come from those drops to the eye of the spectator, after *ONE reflection* and *TWO refractions*, produce the *primary* rainbow. 2. When the sun shines on the drops of rain as they are falling, the rays that come from those drops to the eye of the spectator after *TWO reflections* and *TWO refractions*, produce the *secondary* rainbow. The illustration of these propositions must be sought in treatises on *Optics*, assisted by *plates*. From the well-known cause of this phenomenon It cannot be rationally supposed that there was no rainbow in the heavens *before* the time mentioned in the text, for as the rainbow is the natural effect of the sun's rays falling on drops of water, and of their being refracted and reflected by them, it must have appeared at different times from the creation of the sun and the atmosphere. Nor does the text intimate that the bow was *now* created for a *sign* to Noah and his posterity; but that what was *formerly* created, or rather that which was the necessary effect, in certain cases, of the creation of the sun and atmosphere, should *now* be considered by them as an unfailing token of their continual preservation from the waters of a deluge; therefore the text speaks of what *had already been done*, and not of what was *now* done, **yt tn ytcq** *kashti nathatti*, "My bow I *have* given, or put in the cloud;" as if he said: As surely as the rainbow is a necessary effect of sunshine in rain, and must continue such as long as the sun and atmosphere endure, so surely shall this earth be preserved from destruction by water; and its preservation shall be as necessary an effect of my promise as the rainbow is of the shining of the sun during a shower of rain.

Verse 17. This is the token] **twa** *oth*, The Divine sign or portent: *The bow shall be in the cloud*. For the reasons above specified it *must* be there, when the circumstances already mentioned occur; if therefore it cannot fail because of the reasons before assigned, no more shall my promise; and the bow shall be the proof of its perpetuity.

Both the *Greeks* and *Latins*, as well as the *Hebrews*, have ever considered the rainbow as a Divine token or portent; and both of these nations have even deified it, and made it a messenger of the gods.

Homer, Il. xi., ver. 27, speaking of the figures on Agamemnon's breastplate, says there were three dragons, whose colours were

ἰρισσὶν εὐϊκοτὲς, ἀς τε Κρονῶν.
 Ἐν νεφεί σθηριξέ, τερας μεροπῶν ἀνθρώπων.

“like to the rainbow which the son of Saturn has placed in the cloud as a SIGN to mankind,” or to *men of various languages*, for so the **μεροπῶν ἀνθρώπων** of the poet has been understood. Some have thought that the ancient Greek writers give this epithet to man from some tradition of the confusion and multiplication of tongues at Babel; hence in this place the words may be understood as implying mankind at large, the whole human race; God having given the rainbow for a sign to all the descendants of Noah, by whom the whole earth was peopled after the flood. Thus the celestial bow speaks a *universal language*, understood by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Virgil, from some disguised traditionary figure of the truth, considers the rainbow as a messenger of the gods. *Æn.* v., ver. 606:

IRIM de caelo misit Saturnia Juno.

“Juno, the daughter of Saturn, sent down the rainbow from heaven;”

and again, *Æn.* ix., ver. 803:—

æriam caelo nam Jupiter IRIM — Demisit.

“For Jupiter sent down the ethereal rainbow from heaven.”

It is worthy of remark that both these poets understood the rainbow to be a *sign, warning, or portent* from heaven.”

As I believe the rainbow to have been intended solely for the purpose mentioned in the text, I forbear to make spiritual uses and illustrations of it. Many have done this, and their observations may be very edifying, but they certainly have no foundation in the text.

Verse 20. Noah began to be a husbandman] *hmdah vya ish haadamah*, A man of the ground, a farmer; by his *beginning* to be a husbandman we are to understand his recommencing his agricultural operations, which undoubtedly he had carried on for six hundred years before, but this had been interrupted by the flood. And the transaction here mentioned might have occurred many years posterior to the deluge, even after Canaan was born and grown up, for the date of it is not fixed in the text.

The word *husband* first occurs here, and scarcely appears proper, because it is always applied to man in his *married* state, as *wife* is to the woman. The etymology of the term will at once show its propriety when applied to

the *head* of a family. *Husband*, [A.S. *husband*], is Anglo-Saxon, and simply signifies the *bond* of the *house* or *family*; as by him the family is formed, *united*, and *bound* together, which, on his death, is *disunited* and *scattered*.

It is on this etymology of the word that we can account for the *farmers* and *petty* landholders being called so early as the twelfth century, *husbandi*, as appears in a statute of David II., king of Scotland: we may therefore safely derive the word from [A.S. *hus*], a house, and [A.S. *bond*] from [A.S. *binben*], to *bind* or *tie*; and this etymology appears plainer in the orthography which prevailed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in which I have often found the word written *house-bond*; so it is in a MS. Bible before me, written in the fourteenth century. *Junius* disputes this etymology, but I think on no just ground.

Verse 21. He drank of the wine, &c.] It is very probable that this was the first time the wine was cultivated; and it is as probable that the strength or intoxicating power of the expressed juice was never before known. Noah, therefore, might have drunk it at this time without the least blame, as he knew not till this trial the effects it would produce. I once knew a case which I believe to be perfectly parallel. A person who had scarcely ever heard of *cider*, and whose beverage through his whole life had been only *milk* or *water*, coming wet and very much fatigued to a farmer's house in Somersetshire, begged for a little *water* or *milk*. The good woman of the house, seeing him very much exhausted, kindly said, "I will give you a little *cider*, which will do you more good." The honest man, understanding no more of *cider* than merely that it was the *simple juice* of apples, after some hesitation drank about a half pint of it; the consequence was, that in less than half an hour he was perfectly intoxicated, and could neither speak plain nor walk! This case I myself witnessed. A stranger to the circumstances, seeing this person, would pronounce him *drunk*; and perhaps at a third hand he might be represented as a *drunkard*, and thus his character be blasted; while of the crime of drunkenness he was as innocent as an infant.

This I presume to have been precisely the case with Noah; and no person without an absolute breach of every rule of charity and candour, can attach any blame to the character of Noah on this ground, unless from a *subsequent* account they were well assured that, knowing the power and effects of the liquor, he had repeated the act. Some expositors seem to be

glad to fix on a fact like this, which by *their distortion* becomes a *crime*; and then, in a strain of sympathetic tenderness, affect to deplore “the failings and imperfections of the *best of men*;” when, from the interpretation that *should be* given of the place, neither *failing* nor *imperfection* can possibly appear.

Verses 22. - 24. And Ham, the father of Canaan, &c.] There is no occasion to enter into any detail here; the sacred text is circumstantial enough. Ham, and very probably his son Canaan, had treated their father on this occasion with contempt or reprehensible levity. Had Noah not been innocent, as my exposition supposes him, God would not have endued him with the spirit of prophecy on this occasion, and testified such marked disapprobation of *their* conduct. The conduct of Shem and Japheth was such as became pious and affectionate children, who appear to have been in the habit of treating their father with decency, reverence, and obedient respect. On the one the spirit of prophecy (not the incensed father) pronounces a curse: on the others the same spirit (not parental tenderness) pronounces a blessing. These things had been just as they afterwards occurred had Noah never spoken. God had wise and powerful reasons to induce him to sentence the one to perpetual servitude, and to allot to the others prosperity and dominion. Besides, the curse pronounced on Canaan neither fell immediately upon himself nor on his worthless father, but upon the Canaanites; and from the history we have of this people, in ^{<B1806>}**Leviticus 18:6, 7, 24, 29, 30,** ^{<B309>}**Leviticus 20:9, 22-24, 26;** and ^{<B504>}**Deuteronomy 9:4; 12:31,** we may ask, Could the curse of God fall more deservedly on any people than on these? Their profligacy was great, but *it was not the effect of the curse*; but, being foreseen by the Lord, the curse was the effect of their conduct. But even this curse does not exclude them from the possibility of obtaining salvation; it extends not to the *soul* and to *eternity*, but merely to their bodies and to time; though, if they continued to abuse their liberty, resist the Holy Ghost, and refuse to be saved on God’s terms, then the wrath of Divine justice must come upon them to the uttermost. How many, even of these, repented, we cannot tell.

Verse 25. Cursed be Canaan] See on the preceding verses. In the 25th, 26th, and 27th verses, instead of *Canaan* simply, the Arabic version has *Ham the father of Canaan*; but this is acknowledged by none of the other versions, and seems to be merely a gloss.

Verse 29. The days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years] The oldest patriarch on record, except Methuselah and Jared. This, according to the common reckoning, was A. M. 2006, but according to Dr. Hales, 3505.

“HAM,” says Dr. Hales, “signifies *burnt* or *black*, and this name was peculiarly significant of the regions allotted to his family. To the *Cushites*, or children of his eldest son *Cush*, were allotted the hot southern regions of *Asia*, along the coasts of the *Persian Gulf*, *Susiana* or *Chusistan*, *Arabia*, &c.; to the sons of Canaan, Palestine and Syria; to the sons of Misraim, Egypt and Libya, in Africa.

The *Hamites* in general, like the Canaanites of old, were a seafaring race, and sooner arrived at civilization and the luxuries of life than their simpler pastoral and agricultural brethren of the other two families. The first great empires of *Assyria* and *Egypt* were founded by them, and the republics of *Sidon*, *Tyre*, and *Carthage* were early distinguished for their commerce but they sooner also fell to decay; and Egypt, which was one of the first, became the last *and basest of the kingdoms*, ³²⁹¹⁵ **Ezekiel 29:15**, and has been successively in subjection to the *Shemites* and *Japhethites*, as have also the settlements of the other branches of the *Hamites*.

“SHEM signifies *name* or *renown*; and his indeed was great in a temporal and spiritual sense. The finest regions of Upper and Middle *Asia* allotted to his family, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Media, Persia, &c., to the *Indus* and *Ganges*, and perhaps to *China* eastward.

“The chief renown of Shem was of a spiritual nature: he was destined to be the lineal ancestor of the blessed seed of the woman; and to this glorious privilege Noah, to whom it was probably revealed, might have alluded in that devout ejaculation, Blessed be the LORD, the GOD of *Shem*! The pastoral life of the *Shemites* is strongly marked in the prophecy by *the tents of Shem*; and such it remains to the present day, throughout their midland settlements in *Asia*.

“JAPHETH signifies *enlargement*; and how wonderfully did Providence *enlarge the boundaries of Japheth*! His posterity diverged eastward and westward throughout the whole extent of *Asia*, north of the great range of Taurus, as far as the Eastern Ocean, whence they probably crossed over to *America* by *Behring’s Straits* from *Kamtschatka*, and in the opposite direction throughout *Europe* to the *Mediterranean Sea* and the *Atlantic*

Ocean; from whence also they might have crossed over to *America* by *Newfoundland*, where traces of early settlements remain in parts now desert. Thus did they gradually *enlarge* themselves till they literally encompassed the earth, within the precincts of the northern temperate zone, to which their roving *hunter's* life contributed not a little. Their progress northwards was checked by the much greater extent of the *Black Sea* in ancient times, and the increasing rigour of the climates: but their hardy race, and enterprising, warlike genius, made them frequently encroach southwards on the settlements of *Shem*, whose pastoral and agricultural occupations rendered them more inactive, peaceable. and unwarlike; and so *they dwelt in the tents of Shem* when the Scythians invaded *Media*, and subdued western *Asia* southwards as far as *Egypt*, in the days of *Cyaxares*; when the Greeks, and afterwards the Romans, overran and subdued the Assyrians, Medes, and Persians in the east, and the Syrians and Jews in the south; as foretold by the Syrian prophet Balaam, ^{<1024>}**Numbers 24:24**:—

***Ships shall come from Chittim,
And shall afflict the Assyrians, and afflict the Hebrews;
But he (the invader) shall perish himself at last.***

“And by Moses: And the Lord shall bring thee (the Jews) into *Egypt* (or bondage) again with ships, &c., ^{<1028>}**Deuteronomy 28:68**. And by Daniel: For the ships of *Chittim* shall come against him, viz., Antiochus, king of Syria, ^{<2713>}**Daniel 11:30**. In these passages *Chittim* denotes the southern coasts of Europe, bounding the *Mediterranean*, called the *isles of the Gentiles* or *Nations*; see ^{<1106>}**Genesis 10:5**. And the *isles of Chittim* are mentioned ^{<2420>}**Jeremiah 2:10**. And in after times the *Tartars* in the east have repeatedly invaded and subdued the *Hindoos* and the *Chinese*; while the warlike and enterprising genius of the greatest of the isles of the Gentiles, GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND, have spread their colonies, their arms, their language, their arts, and in some measure their religion, from the rising to the setting sun.” See Dr. Hales’s *Analysis of Chronology*, vol. 1., p. 352, &c.

Though what is left *undone* should not cause us to lose sight of what *is done*, yet we have reason to lament that the inhabitants of the British isles, who of all nations under heaven have the purest light of Divine revelation, and the best means of diffusing it, have been much more intent on spreading their conquests and extending their commerce, than in

propagating the Gospel of the Son of God. But the nation, by getting the Bible translated into every *living language*, and sending it to *all parts* of the habitable globe, and, by its various *missionary societies*, sending men of God to explain and enforce the doctrines and precepts of this sacred book, is rapidly redeeming its character, and becoming great in goodness and benevolence over the whole earth!

GENESIS

CHAPTER 10

The generations of the sons of Noah, 1. JAPHETH and his descendants, 2-4. The isles of the Gentiles, or Europe, peopled by the Japhethites, 5. HAM and his posterity, 6-20. Nimrod, one of his descendants, a mighty hunter, 8, 9, founds the first kingdom, 10. Nineveh and other cities founded, 11, 12. The Canaanites in their nine grand branches or families, 15-18. Their territories, 19. SHEM and his posterity, 21-31. The earth divided in the days of Peleg, 25. The territories of the Shemites, 30. The whole earth peopled by the descendants of Noah's three sons, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. Now these are the generations] It is extremely difficult to say what particular nations and people sprang from the three grand divisions of the family of Noah, because the names of many of those ancient people have become changed in the vast lapse of time from the deluge to the Christian era; yet some are so very distinctly marked that they can be easily ascertained, while a few still retain their original names.

Moses does not always give the name of the *first settler* in a country, but rather that of the *people* from whom the country *afterwards* derived its name. Thus *Mizraim* is the dual of *Mezer*, and could never be the name of an *individual*. The like may be said of *Kittim*, *Dodanim*, *Ludim*, *Ananim*, *Lehabim*, *Naphtuhim*, *Pathrusim*, *Casluhim*, *Philistim*, and *Caphtorim*, which are all *plurals*, and evidently not the names of *individuals*, but of *families* or *tribes*. See ^{<01104>}**Genesis 10:4, 6, 13, 14.**

In the posterity of Canaan we find whole nations reckoned in the genealogy, instead of the individuals from whom they sprang; thus the *Jebusite*, *Amorite*, *Girgasite*, *Hivite*, *Arkite*, *Sinite*, *Arvadite*, *Zemarite*, and *Hamathite*, ^{<01106>}**Genesis 10:16-18**, were evidently whole nations or tribes which inhabited the promised land, and were called *Canaanites* from *Canaan*, the son of *Ham*, who settled there.

Moses also, in this genealogy, seems to have introduced even the name of some *places* that were remarkable in the sacred history, instead of the original *settlers*. Such as *Hazarmaveth*, ^{<01105>}**Genesis 10:26**; and probably *Ophir* and *Havilah*, ^{<01109>}**Genesis 10:29**. But this is not infrequent in the

sacred writings, as may be seen ~~<1305>~~ **1 Chronicles 2:51**, where *Salma* is called *the father of Bethlehem*, which certainly never was the name of a *man*, but of a *place* sufficiently celebrated in the sacred history; and in ~~<1304>~~ **1 Chronicles 4:14**, where Joab is called *the father of the valley of Charashim*, which no person could ever suppose was intended to designate an *individual*, but the society of *craftsmen* or artificers who lived there.

Eusebius and others state (from what authority we know not) that Noah was commanded of God to *make a will* and bequeath the whole of the earth to his three sons and their descendants in the following manner:-To *Shem*, all the *East*; to *Ham*, all *Africa*; to *Japheth*, the *Continent of Europe* with its *isles*, and the *northern parts of Asia*. See the notes at the end of the preceding chapter. See Clarke's note "~~<1002>~~ **Genesis 9:29**".

Verse 2. The sons of Japheth] Japheth is supposed to be the same with the *Japetus* of the Greeks, from whom, in an extremely remote antiquity, that people were supposed to have derived their origin.

Gomer] Supposed by some to have peopled Galatia; so Josephus, who says that the *Galatians* were anciently named *Gomerites*. From him the *Cimmerians* or *Cimbrians* are supposed to have derived their origin. *Bochart* has no doubt that the *Phrygians* sprang from this person, and some of our principal commentators are of the same opinion.

Magog] Supposed by many to be the father of the *Scythians* and *Tartars*, or *Tatars*, as the word should be written; and in great Tartary many names are still found which bear such a striking resemblance to the *Gog* and *Magog* of the Scriptures, as to leave little doubt of their identity.

Madai] Generally supposed to be the progenitor of the *Medes*; but *Joseph Mede* makes it probable that he was rather the founder of a people in Macedonia called *Maedi*, and that Macedonia was formerly called *Emathia*, a name formed from *Ei*, an *island*, and *Madai*, because he and his descendants inhabited the maritime coast on the borders of the Ionian Sea. On this subject nothing certain can be advanced.

Javan] It is almost universally agreed that from him sprang the *Ionians*, of Asia Minor; but this name seems to have been anciently given to the *Macedonians*, *Achaians*, and *Bæotians*.

Tubal] Some think he was the father of the *Iberians*, and that a part at least of *Spain* was peopled by him and his descendants; and that *Meshech*,

who is generally in Scripture joined with him, was the founder of the *Cappadocians*, from whom proceeded the *Muscovites*.

Tiras.] From this person, according to general consent, the *Thracians* derived their origin.

Verse 3. Ashkenaz] Probably gave his name to *Sacagena*, a very excellent province of Armenia. Pliny mentions a people called *Ascanitici*, who dwelt about the *Tanais* and the *Palus Mæotis*; and some suppose that from Ashkenaz the *Euxine Sea* derived its name, but others suppose that from him the Germans derived their origin.

Riphath] Or *Diphath*, the founder of the *Paphlagonians*, which were anciently called *Riphataei*.

Togarmah.] The *Sauromates*, or inhabitants of Turcomania. See the reasons in *Calmet*.

Verse 4. Elishah] As *Javan* peopled a considerable part of *Greece*, it is in that region that we must seek for the settlements of his descendants; *Elishah* probably was the first who settled at *Elis*, in Peloponnesus.

Tarshish] He first inhabited *Cilicia*, whose capital anciently was the city of *Tarsus*, where the Apostle Paul was born.

Kittim] We have already seen that this name was rather the name of a *people* than of an *individual*: some think by *Kittim* Cyprus is meant: others, the isle of Chios; and others, the *Romans*; and others, the *Macedonians*.

Dodanim.] Or *Rodanim*, for the **d** and **r** may be easily mistaken for each other, because of their great similarity. Some suppose that this family settled at *Dodona* in Epirus; others at the isle of *Rhodes*; others, at the *Rhone*, in France, the ancient name of which was *Rhodanus*, from the Scripture *Rodanim*.

Verse 5. Isles of the Gentiles] EUROPE, of which this is allowed to be a general epithet. *Calmet* supposes that it comprehends all those countries to which the Hebrews were obliged to go by sea, such as Spain, Gaul, Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor.

Every one after his tongue] This refers to the time posterior to the confusion of tongues and dispersion from *Babel*.

Verse 6. Cush] Who peopled the Arabic *nome* near the *Red Sea* in Lower Egypt. Some think the *Ethiopians* descended from him.

Mizraim] This family certainly peopled *Egypt*; and both in the East and in the West, Egypt is called *Mezr* and *Mezraim*.

Phut] Who first peopled an Egyptian *nome* or district, bordering on Libya.

Canaan.] He who first peopled the land so called, known also by the name of the *Promised Land*.

Verse 7. Seba] The founder of the Sabæans. There seem to be three different people of this name mentioned in this chapter, and a fourth in ^{<0125B>}**Genesis 25:3**.

Havilah] Supposed by some to mean the inhabitants of the country included within that branch of the river Pison which ran out of the Euphrates into the bay of Persia, and bounded Arabia Felix on the east.

Sabtah] Supposed by some to have first peopled an isle or peninsula called *Saphta*, in the Persian Gulf.

Raamah] Or *Ragmah*, for the word is pronounced both ways, because of the [*ain*, which some make a vowel, and some a consonant. Ptolemy mentions a city called *Regma* near the Persian Gulf; it probably received its name from the person in the text.

Sabtechah] From the river called *Samidochus*, in Caramanla; Bochart conjectures that the person in the text fixed his residence in that part.

Sheba] Supposed to have had his residence beyond the Euphrates, in the environs of Charran, Eden, &c.

Dedan.] Supposed to have peopled a part of Arabia, on the confines of Idumea.

Verse 8. Nimrod] Of this person little is known, as he is not mentioned except here and in ^{<13010>}**1 Chronicles 1:10**, which is evidently a copy of the text in Genesis. He is called a *mighty hunter before the Lord*; and from ^{<01100>}**Genesis 10:10**, we learn that he founded a *kingdom* which included the cities *Babel*, *Erech*, *Accad*, and *Calneh*, in the land of *Shinar*. Though the words are not definite, it is very likely he was a very *bad man*. His name Nimrod comes from *drm*, *marad*, *he rebelled*; and the Targum, on ^{<13010>}**1**

Chronicles 1:10, says: *Nimrod began to be a mighty man in sin, a murderer of innocent men, and a rebel before the Lord.* The Jerusalem Targum says: “He was mighty in hunting (or in prey) and in sin before God, for he was a hunter of the children of men in their languages; and he said unto them, *Depart from the religion of Shem, and cleave to the institutes of Nimrod.*” The Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel says: “From the foundation of the world none was ever found like Nimrod, powerful in hunting, and in rebellions against the Lord.” The Syriac calls him a *warlike giant*. The word **dyx tsayid**, which we render *hunter*, signifies *prey*; and is applied in the Scriptures to the *hunting of men* by persecution, oppression, and tyranny. Hence it is likely that Nimrod, having acquired power, used it in tyranny and oppression; and by rapine and violence founded that domination which was the first distinguished by the name of a *kingdom* on the face of the earth. How many kingdoms have been founded in the same way, in various ages and nations from that time to the present! From the Nimrods of the earth, God deliver the world!

Mr. Bryant, in his *Mythology*, considers Nimrod as the principal instrument of the *idolatry* that afterwards prevailed in the family of Cush, and treats him as an *arch rebel and apostate*. Mr. Richardson, who was the determined foe of Mr. Bryant’s whole system, asks, *Dissertation*, p. 405, “Where is the authority for these aspersions? They are nowhere to be discovered in the originals, in the *versions*, nor in the *paraphrases* of the sacred writings.” If they are *not* to be found either in *versions* or *paraphrases* of the sacred writings, the above quotations are all *false*.

Verse 10. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel] | **bb** *babel* signifies *confusion*; and it seems to have been a very proper name for the commencement of a kingdom that appears to have been founded in *apostasy* from God, and to have been supported by *tyranny*, *rapine*, and *oppression*.

In the land of Shinar.] The same as mentioned ^{<OHID>} **Genesis 11:2**. It appears that, as Babylon was built on the river Euphrates, and the tower of Babel was in the land of *Shinar*, consequently *Shinar* itself must have been in the southern part of Mesopotamia.

Verse 11. Out of that land went forth Asshur] The *marginal* reading is to be preferred here. *He-Nimrod, went out into Assyria and built Nineveh*; and hence Assyria is called the *land of Nimrod*, ^{<3RB>} **Micah 5:6**. Thus did

this mighty hunter extend his dominions in every possible way. The city of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, is supposed to have had its name from *Ninus*, the son of Nimrod; but probably Ninus and Nimrod are the same person. This city, which made so conspicuous a figure in the history of the world, is now called *Mossul*; it is an inconsiderable place, built out of the ruins of the ancient Nineveh.

Rehoboth, and Calah, &c.] Nothing certain is known concerning the situation of these places; conjecture is endless, and it has been amply indulged by learned men in seeking for *Rehoboth* in the *Birtha* of Ptolemy, *Calah* in *Calachine*, *Resen* in *Larissa*, &c., &c.

Verse 13. Mizraim begat Ludim] Supposed to mean the inhabitants of the *Mareotis*, a canton in Egypt, for the name *Ludim* is evidently the name of a people.

Anamim] According to Bochart, the people who inhabited the district about the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Lehabim] The *Libyans*, or a people who dwelt on the west of the *Thebaid*, and were called *Libyo-Egyptians*.

Naphtuhim] Even the conjectures can scarcely fix a place for these people. Bochart seems inclined to place them in *Marmarica*, or among the *Troglodytæ*.

Verse 14. Pathrusim] The inhabitants of the *Delta*, in Egypt, according to the Chaldee paraphrase; but, according to Bochart, the people who inhabited the *Thebaid*, called *Pathros* in Scripture.

Casluhim] The inhabitants of *Colchis*; for almost all authors allow that *Colchis* was peopled from Egypt.

Philistim] The people called *Philistines*, the constant plagues and frequent oppressors of the Israelites, whose history may be seen at large in the books of Samuel, Kings, &c.

Capthorim] Inhabitants of *Cyprus* according to Calmet.

Verse 15. Sidon] Who probably built the city of this name, and was the father of the *Sidonians*.

Heth] From whom came the Hittites, so remarkable among the Canaanitish nations.

Verse 16. The Jebusite-Amorite, &c.] Are well known as being the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, expelled by the children of Israel.

Verse 20. These are the sons of Ham after their families] No doubt all these were well known in the days of Moses, and for a long time after; but at this distance, when it is considered that the political state of the world has been undergoing almost incessant revolutions through all the intermediate portions of time, the impossibility of fixing their residences or marking their descendants must be evident, as both the *names* of the people and the *places* of their residences have been changed beyond the possibility of being recognized.

Verse 21. Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber] It is generally supposed that the *Hebrews* derived their name from *Eber* or *Heber*, son of Shem; but it appears much more likely that they had it from the circumstance of Abraham *passing over* (for so the word רב[*abar* signifies) the river Euphrates to come into the land of Canaan. See the history of Abraham, ^{<011413>} **Genesis 14:13.**

Verse 22. Elam] From whom came the *Elamites*, near to the Medes, and whose chief city was *Elymais*.

Asshur] Who gave his name to a vast province (afterwards a mighty empire) called *Assyria*.

Arphaxad] From whom *Arrapachitis* in Assyria was named, according to some; or *Artaxata* in Armenia, on the frontiers of Media, according to others.

Lud] The founder of the *Lydians*. In Asia Minor; or of the *Ludim*, who dwelt at the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris, according to *Arias Montanus*.

Aram.] The father of the Arameans, afterwards called *Syrians*.

Verse 23. Uz] Who peopled *Cælosyria*, and is supposed to have been the founder of *Damascus*.

Hul] Who peopled a part of *Armenia*.

Gether] Supposed by Calmet to have been the founder of the *Itureans*, who dwelt beyond the Jordan, having Arabia Deserta on the east, and the Jordan on the west.

Mash.] Who inhabited mount *Masius* in Mesopotamia, and from whom the river *Mazeca*, which has its source in that mountain, takes its name.

Verse 24. Salah] The founder of the people of *Susiana*.

Eber.] See ^{<0102>}**Genesis 10:21**. The Septuagint add *Cainan* here, with *one hundred and thirty* to the chronology.

Verse 25. Peleg] From *gl p palag*, to divide, because *in his days*, which is supposed to be about *one hundred* years after the flood, *the earth was divided* among the sons of Noah. Though some are of opinion that a *physical* division, and not a *political* one, is what is intended here, viz., a separation of continents and islands from the main land; the earthy parts having been united into one great continent previously to the days of Peleg. This opinion appears to me the most likely, for what is said, ^{<0105>}**Genesis 10:5**, is spoken by way of *anticipation*.

Verses 26. - 30. Joktan] He had *thirteen* sons who *had their dwelling from Mesha unto Sephar, a mount of the east*, which places Calmet supposes to be mount *Masius*, on the west in *Mesopotamia*, and the mountains of the *Saphirs* on the east in Armenia, or of the *Tapyrs* farther on in Media.

In confirmation that all men have been derived from one family, let it be observed that there are many customs and usages, both sacred and civil, which have prevailed in all parts of the world; and that these could owe their origin to nothing but a general institution, which could never have existed, had not mankind been originally of the same blood, and instructed in the same common notions before they were dispersed. Among these usages may be reckoned, 1. The numbering by *tens*. 2. Their computing time by a cycle of *seven* days. 3. Their setting apart the *seventh* day for religious purposes. 4. Their use of *sacrifices, propitiatory* and *eucharistical*. 5. The consecration of *temples* and *altars*. 6. The institution of *sanctuaries* or places of refuge, and their privileges. 7. Their giving a *tenth* part of the produce of their fields, &c., for the use of the altar. 8. The custom of worshipping the Deity *bare-footed*. 9. Abstinence of the men from all sensual gratifications previously to their offering sacrifice. 10. The order of *priesthood* and its support. 11. The notion of legal pollutions, defilements, &c. 12. The universal tradition of a general deluge. 13. The universal opinion that the *rainbow* was a Divine *sign*, or *portent*, &c., &c. See *Dodd*. The wisdom and goodness of God are particularly manifested in

repeopling the earth by means of *three persons*, all of the same family, and who had witnessed that awful display of Divine justice in the destruction of the world by the flood, while themselves were preserved in the ark. By this very means the true religion was propagated over the earth; for the sons of Noah would certainly teach their children, not only the precepts delivered to their father by God himself, but also how in his justice he had brought the flood on the world of the ungodly, and by his merciful providence preserved *them* from the general ruin. It is on this ground alone that we can account for the uniformity and universality of the above traditions, and for the grand outlines of religious truth which are found in every quarter of the world. God has so done his marvellous works that they may be had in everlasting remembrance.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 11

All the inhabitants of the earth, speaking one language and dwelling in one place, 1, 2, purpose to build a city and a tower to prevent their dispersion, 3, 4. God confounds their language, and scatters them over the whole earth, 5-9. Account of the lives and families of the postdiluvian patriarchs. Shem, 10, 11. Arphaxad, 12, 13. Salah, 14, 15. Eber, 16, 17. Peleg, 18, 19. Ragau or Reu, 20, 21. Serug, 22, 23. Nahor, 24, 25. Terah and his three sons, Haran, Nahor, and Abram, 26, 27. The death of Haran, 28. Abram marries Sarai, and Nahor marries Milcah, 29. Sarai is barren, 30. Terah, Abram, Sarai, and Lot, leave Ur of the Chaldees, and go to Haran, 31. Terah dies in Haran, aged two hundred and five years, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. The whole earth was of one language] *The whole earth—all mankind was of one language, in all likelihood the HEBREW; and of one speech—articulating the same words in the same way. It is generally supposed, that after the confusion mentioned in this chapter, the Hebrew language remained in the family of Heber. The proper names, and their significations given in the Scripture, seem incontestable evidences that the Hebrew language was the original language of the earth—the language in which God spake to man, and in which he gave the revelation of his will to Moses and the prophets. “It was used,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “in all the world for one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven years, till Phaleg, the son of Heber, was born, and the tower of Babel was in building one hundred years after the flood, ^{<01025>}Genesis 10:25; 11:9. After this, it was used among the Hebrews or Jews, called therefore the Jews’ language, ^{<2361>}Isaiah 36:11, until they were carried captive into Babylon, where the holy tongue ceased from being commonly used, and the mixed Hebrew (or Chaldee) came in its place.” It cannot be reasonably imagined that the Jews lost the Hebrew tongue entirely in the seventy years of their captivity in Babylon; yet, as they were mixed with the Chaldeans, their children would of course learn that dialect, and to them the pure Hebrew would be unintelligible; and this probably gave rise to the necessity of explaining the Hebrew Scriptures in the Chaldee tongue, that the children might understand as well as their fathers. As we may safely presume the parents could not have forgotten the Hebrew, so we may conclude the children in*

general could not have learned it, as they did not live in an insulated state, but were mixed with the Babylonians. This conjecture removes the difficulty with which many have been embarrassed; one party supposing that the knowledge of the Hebrew language was lost during the Babylonish captivity, and hence the necessity of the Chaldee Targums to explain the Scriptures; another party insisting that this was impossible in so short a period as seventy years.

Verse 2. As they journeyed from the east] Assyria, Mesopotamia, and the country on the borders and beyond the Euphrates, are called the *east* in the sacred writings. Balaam said that the king of Moab had brought him *from the mountains of the east*, ^{<04237>}**Numbers 23:7**.

Now it appears, from ^{<04235>}**Numbers 22:5**, that Balaam dwelt at Pethor, on the river Euphrates. And it is very probable that it was from this country that the wise men came to adore Christ; for it is said they came *from the east* to Jerusalem, ^{<4001>}**Matthew 2:1**. Abraham is said to have come *from the east* to Canaan, ^{<23402>}**Isaiah 41:2**; but it is well known that he came from *Mesopotamia* and *Chaldea*. ^{<23611>}**Isaiah 46:11**, represents Cyrus as coming *from the east* against Babylon. And the same prophet represents the Syrians as dwelling *eastward* of Jerusalem, ^{<23912>}**Isaiah 9:12**: *The Syrians before, ׀dqm mikkedem, from the east*, the same word which Moses uses here. Daniel ^{<27144>}**Daniel 11:44**, represents Antiochus as troubled at news received *from the east*; i.e. of a revolt in the eastern provinces, *beyond the Euphrates*.

Noah and his family, landing after the flood on one of the mountains of Armenia, would doubtless descend and cultivate the valleys: as they increased, they appear to have passed along the banks of the Euphrates, till, at the time specified here, they came to the plains of *Shinar*, allowed to be the most fertile country in the east. See *Calmet*. That *Babel* was built in the land of *Shinar* we have the authority of the sacred text to prove; and that *Babylon* was built in the same country we have the testimony of Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.*, lib. ix., c. 15; and Josephus, *Antiq.*, lib. i., c. 5.

Verse 3. Let us make brick] It appears they were obliged to make use of *brick*, as there was an utter scarcity of *stones* in that district; and on the same account they were obliged to use *slime*, that is, bitumen, (Vulg.) *ασφαλτος*, (*Septuagint*) for mortar: so it appears they had neither

common stone nor *lime-stone*; hence they had *brick* for stone, and *asphaltus* or *bitumen* instead of mortar.

Verse 4. Let us build us a city and a tower] On this subject there have been various conjectures. Mr. Hutchinson supposed that the design of the builders was to erect a *temple to the host of heaven*—the sun, moon, planets, &c.; and, to support this interpretation, he says **וְיִמְצֵא וְיִבְנֶה** *verosho bashshamayim* should be translated, not, *whose top* may reach unto *heaven*, for there is nothing for *may reach* in the Hebrew, but *its head* or *summit to the heavens*, i.e. to the heavenly bodies: and, to make this interpretation the more probable, he says that previously to this time the descendants of Noah were all agreed in *one form of religious worship*, (for so he understands **תְּיָאֵר אֶחָד** *vesaphah achath, and of one lip*,) i.e. according to him, they had *one litany*; and as God confounded their litany, they began to disagree in their religious opinions, and branched out into sects and parties, each associating with those of his own sentiment; and thus their tower or temple was left unfinished.

It is probable that their being of *one language and of one speech* implies, not only a *sameness* of language, but also a *unity* of sentiment and design, as seems pretty clearly intimated in ^{<01106>}**Genesis 11:6**. Being therefore strictly united in all things, coming to the fertile plains of Shinar they proposed to settle themselves there, instead of spreading themselves over all the countries of the earth, according to the design of God; and in reference to this purpose they encouraged one another to build a *city* and a *tower*, probably a *temple*, to prevent their separation, “lest,” say they, “we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth:” but God, miraculously interposing, confounded or frustrated their rebellious design, which was inconsistent with his will; see ^{<05308>}**Deuteronomy 32:8**; ^{<41726>}**Acts 17:26**; and, partly by confounding their language, and disturbing their counsels, they could no longer keep in a united state; so that agreeing in nothing but the *necessity of separating*, they went off in different directions, and thus became scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. The Targums, both of *Jonathan ben Uzziel* and of *Jerusalem*, assert that the *tower* was for idolatrous worship; and that they intended to place an image on the top of the tower with a sword in its hand, probably to act as a talisman against their enemies. Whatever *their* design might have been, it is certain that this temple or tower was afterwards devoted to idolatrous

purposes. Nebuchadnezzar repaired and beautified this tower, and it was dedicated to *Bel*, or the sun.

An account of this tower, and of the confusion of tongues, is given by several ancient authors. *Herodotus* saw the tower and described it. A *sybil*, whose oracle is yet extant, spoke both of it and of the confusion of tongues; so did *Eupolemus* and *Abydenus*. See *Bochart Geogr. Sacr.*, lib. i., c. 13, edit. 1692. On this point *Bochart* observes that these things are taken from the Chaldeans, who preserve many remains of ancient facts; and though they often *add* circumstances, yet they are, in general, in some sort dependent on the text. 1. They say Babel was built by the *giants*, because Nimrod, one of the builders, is called in the Hebrew text **רַבְבִּי גִבּוֹר** *gibbor*, a *mighty man*; or, as the Septuagint, **γίγας**, a *giant*. 2. These giants, they say, sprang from the earth, because, in ^{<0101>}**Genesis 10:11**, it is said, *He went, **אַחַח אֶרֶץ מִן הָאָרֶץ** **ārah** min haarets hahiv*, out of that earth; but this is rather spoken of *Asshur*, who was another of the Babel builders. 3. These giants are said to have waged war with the gods, because it is said of Nimrod, ^{<0109>}**Genesis 10:9**, *He was a mighty hunter before the Lord*; or, as others have rendered it, a *warrior and a rebel against the Lord*. See *Jarchi* in loco. 4. These giants are said to have raised a tower up to heaven, as if they had intended to have ascended thither. This appears to have been founded on “*whose top may reach to heaven*,” which has been already explained. 5. It is said that the gods sent *strong winds* against them, which dispersed both them and their work. This appears to have been taken from the Chaldean history, in which it is said their dispersion was made *to the four winds of heaven*, **אַיִמְבַּי יְרֵךְ** [**brab** *bearba ruchey shemaiya*, i.e. to the four quarters of the world. 6. And because the verb **פָּחַט** *phuts*, or **פָּחַט** *naphats*, used by Moses, signifies, not only to *scatter*, but also to *break to pieces*; whence *thunder*, ^{<2330>}**Isaiah 30:30**, is called **פָּחַט** *nephets*, a breaking to pieces; hence they supposed the whole work was *broken to pieces* and overturned. It was probably from this disguised representation of the Hebrew text that the Greek and Roman poets took their fable of the giants waging war with the gods, and piling mountain upon mountain in order to scale heaven. See *Bochart* as above.

Verse 5. And the Lord came down] A lesson, says an ancient Jewish commentator, to magistrates to examine every evidence before they decree judgment and execute justice.

Verse 6. The people is one, &c.] From this, as before observed, we may infer, that as the people had the same language, so they had a unity of design and sentiment. It is very likely that the original language was composed of monosyllables, that each had a distinct *ideal* meaning, and only *one* meaning; as different acceptations of the same word would undoubtedly arise, either from compounding terms, or, when there were but few words in a language, using them by a different mode of pronunciation to express a variety of things. Where this simple monosyllabic language prevailed (and it must have prevailed in the first ages of the world) men would necessarily have *simple ideas*, and a corresponding *simplicity of manners*. The Chinese language is exactly such as this; and the Hebrew, if stripped of its vowel points, and its prefixes, suffixes, and postfixes separated from their combinations, so that they might stand by themselves, it would nearly answer to this character even in its present state. In order therefore to remove this unity of sentiment and design, which I suppose to be the necessary consequence of such a language, God confounded their language—caused them to articulate the same word differently, to affix different ideas to the same term, and perhaps, by transposing syllables and interchanging letters, form new terms and compounds, so that the mind of the speaker was apprehended by the hearer in a contrary sense to what was intended. This idea is not iii expressed by an ancient French poet, *Du Bartas*; and not badly, though rather *quaintly*, metaphrased by our countryman, Mr. Sylvester.

Some speak *between the teeth*, some in the *nose*, Some in the *throat* their words do ill dispose—

“Bring me,” quoth one, “a trowel, quickly, quick!”

One brings him up a hammer. “Hew this brick,”

Another bids; and then they cleave a tree;

“Make fast this rope,” and then they let it flee.

One calls for planks, another mortar lacks;

They bear the first a stone, the last an axe.

One would have spikes, and him a spade they give;

Another asks a saw, and gets a sieve.

Thus crossly crost, they prate and point in vain:

What one hath made another mars again.

.....

*These masons then, seeing the storm arrived
Of God's just wrath, all weak and heart-deprived,
Forsake their purpose, and, like frantic fools,
Scatter their stuff and tumble down their tools.*

DU BARTAS.-Babylon.

I shall not examine how the different languages of the earth were formed. It certainly was not the work of a *moment*; different climates must have a considerable share in the formation of tongues, by their influence on the organs of speech. The invention of new arts and trades must give birth to a variety of terms and expressions. Merchandise, commerce, and the cultivation of the sciences, would produce their share; and different forms of government, modes of life, and means of instruction, also contribute their quota. The *Arabic*, *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, and *Æthiopic*, still bear the most striking resemblance to their parent, the Hebrew. Many others might be reduced to a common source, yet everywhere there is sufficient evidence of this confusion. The anomalies even in the most regular languages sufficiently prove this. Every language is confounded less or more but that of *eternal truth*. This is ever the same; in all countries, climates, and ages, the language of truth, like that God from whom it sprang, is unchangeable. It speaks in all tongues, to all nations, and in all hearts: "There is one GOD, the fountain of goodness, justice, and truth. MAN, thou art his creature, ignorant, weak, and dependent; but he is all-sufficient-hates nothing that he has made- loves *thee*-is able and willing to save *thee*; return to and depend on *him*, take his revealed will for thy law, submit to his authority, and accept eternal life on the terms proposed in his word, and thou shalt never perish nor be wretched." This language of truth all the ancient and modern Babel builders have not been able to confound, notwithstanding their repeated attempts. How have men toiled to make this language clothe their own ideas; and thus cause God to speak according to the pride, prejudice and worst passions of men! But through a just judgment of God, the language of all those who have attempted to do this has been confounded, and the word of the Lord abideth for ever.

Verse 7. Go to] A form of speech which, whatever it might have signified formerly, now means nothing. The Hebrew **h**[**h** *habah* signifies come, *make preparation*, as it were for a journey, the execution of a purpose, &c. Almost all the versions understand the word in this way; the Septuagint have **δευτε**, the Vulgate *venite*, both signifying *come*, or *come ye*. This

makes a very good sense, *Come, let its go down, &c.* For the meaning of these latter words see ^{<00126>}**Genesis 1:26**, and ^{<01821>}**Genesis 18:21**.

Verse 9. Therefore is the name of it called Babel] I bb *babel*, from I b *bal*, to *mingle, confound, destroy*; hence *Babel*, from the mingling together and confounding of the projects and language of these descendants of Noah; and this confounding did not so much imply the producing new languages, as giving them a different method of pronouncing the same words, and leading them to affix different ideas to them.

Besides Mr. Hutchinson's opinion, (see **Clarke on** ^{<01104>}**Genesis 11:4**"), there have been various conjectures concerning the purpose for which this tower was built. Some suppose it was intended to prevent the effects of another flood, by affording an asylum to the builders and their families in case of another general deluge. Others think that it was designed to be a grand city, the seat of government, in order to prevent a general dispersion. This God would not permit, as he had purposed that men should be dispersed over the earth, and therefore caused the means which they were using to prevent it to become the grand instrument of its accomplishment. Humanly speaking, the earth could not have so speedily peopled, had it not been for this very circumstance which the counsel of man had devised to prevent it. Some say that these builders were divided into seventy-two nations, with seventy-two different languages; but this is an idle, unfounded tale.

Verse 10. These are the generations of Shem] This may he called the *holy family*, as from it sprang *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob*, the *twelve patriarchs, David, Solomon*, and all the great progenitors of the Messiah.

We have already seen that the Scripture chronology, as it exists in the Hebrew text, the Samaritan, the Septuagint, Josephus, and some of the fathers, is greatly embarrassed; and it is yet much more so in the various systems of learned and unlearned chronologists. For a full and rational view of this subject, into which the nature of these notes forbids me farther to enter, I must refer my reader to Dr. Hales's laborious work, "A New Analysis of Sacred Chronology," vol. ii., part 1, &c., in which he enters into the subject with a cautious but firm step; and, if he has not been able to remove all its difficulties, has thrown very considerable light upon most parts of it.

Verse 12. And Arphaxad lived] The Septuagint bring in here a second Cainan, with an addition of one hundred and thirty years. St. Luke follows the Septuagint, and brings in the same person in the same way. But the Hebrew text, both here and in ^{<13010>}**1 Chronicles 1:1-28**, is perfectly silent on this subject, and the best chronologists have agreed in rejecting this as a spurious generation.

Verse 26. And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.] Haran was certainly the eldest son of Terah, and he appears to have been born when Terah was about seventy years of age, and his birth was followed in successive periods with those of *Nahor* his second, and *Abram* his *youngest* son. Many have been greatly puzzled with the account here, supposing because Abram is mentioned *first*, that therefore he was the *eldest* son of Terah: but he is only put first by way of *dignity*. An instance of this we have already seen, ^{<01052>}**Genesis 5:32**, where Noah is represented as having *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japheth* in this order of succession; whereas it is evident from other scriptures that *Shem* was the *youngest* son, who for dignity is named *first*, as Abram is here; and *Japheth* the *eldest*, named *last*, as *Haran* is here. Terah died two hundred and five years old, ^{<01112>}**Genesis 11:32**; then Abram departed from Haran when seventy-five years old, ^{<01124>}**Genesis 12:4**; therefore Abram was born, not when his father Terah was seventy, but when he was one hundred and thirty.

When any case of dignity or pre-eminence is to be marked, then even the *youngest son* is set before all the rest, though contrary to the usage of the Scriptures in other cases. Hence we find *Shem*, the youngest son of Noah, always mentioned first; *Moses* is mentioned before his elder brother *Aaron*; and *Abram* before his two elder brethren *Haran* and *Nahor*. These observations are sufficient to remove all difficulty from this place.

Verse 29. Milcah, the daughter of Haran] Many suppose *Sarai* and *Iscah* are the same person under two different names; but this is improbable, as *Iscah* is expressly said to be the daughter of Haran, and *Sarai* was the daughter of Terah, and half sister of Abram.

Verse 31. They went forth-front Ur of the Chaldees] Chaldea is sometimes understood as comprising the whole of Babylonia; at other times, that province towards *Arabia Deserta*, called in Scripture *The land of the Chaldeans*. The capital of this place was *Babylon*, called in Scripture *The beauty of the Chaldees' excellency*, ^{<231319>}**Isaiah 13:19**.

Ur appears to have been a city of some considerable consequence at that time in Chaldea; but *where* situated is not well known. It probably had its name *Ur rwa*, which signifies *fire*, from the *worship* practised there. The learned are almost unanimously of opinion that the ancient inhabitants of this region were *ignicolists* or *worshippers of fire*, and in that place this sort of worship probably *originated*; and in honour of this element, the symbol of the Supreme Being, the whole *country*, or a particular *city* in it, might have had the name *Ur*. Bochart has observed that there is a place called *Ouri*, south of the Euphrates, in the way from Nisibis to the river Tigris. The Chaldees mentioned here had not this name in the time *of which* Moses *speaks*, but they were called so in the time *in which* Moses *wrote*. Chesed was the son of Nahor, the son of Terah, ^{<01222>}**Genesis 22:22**. From Chesed descended the *Chasdim*, whose language was the same as that of the *Amorites*, ^{<27010>}**Daniel 1:4; 2:4**. These *Chasdim*, whence the χαλδαίοι, *Chaldeans*, of the *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, and all later versions, afterwards settled on the south of the Euphrates. Those who dwelt in *Ur* were either priests or astronomers, ^{<27010>}**Daniel 2:10**, and also idolaters, ^{<03410>}**Joshua 24:2, 3, 14, 15**. And because they were much addicted to astronomy, and probably to judicial astrology, hence all astrologers were, in process of time, called *Chaldeans*, ^{<27010>}**Daniel 2:2-5**.

The building of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and the first call of Abram, are *three* remarkable particulars in this chapter; and these led to the accomplishment of *three* grand and important *designs*: 1. The peopling of the whole earth; 2. The preservation of the true religion by the means of one family; and 3. The preservation of the line uncorrupted by which the Messiah should come. When God makes a discovery of himself by a particular revelation, it must begin in some particular *time*, and be given to some particular *person*, and in some particular *place*. *Where*, *when*, and to *whom*, are comparatively matters of small importance. It is God's gift; and his own wisdom must determine the *time*, the *person*, and the *place*. But if this be the case, have not others cause to complain because not thus favoured? Not at all, unless the favouring of the one *for a time* should necessarily cut off the others *for ever*. But this is not the case. Abram was first favoured; *that* time, *that* country, and *that* person were chosen by infinite wisdom, for *there* and *then* God chose to commence these mighty operations of Divine goodness. Isaac and Jacob also received the promises, the twelve patriarchs through their father, and the whole Jewish people through them. Afterwards the designs of God's endless mercy were more

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CHAPTER 12

God calls Abram to leave Haran and go into Canaan, 1; promises to bless him, and through him all the families of the earth, 2, 3. Abram, Sarai, Lot, and all their household, depart from Canaan, 4, 5; pass through Sichem, 6. God appears to him, and renews the promise, 7. His journey described, 8, 9. On account of a famine in the land he is obliged to go into Egypt, 10. Fearing lest, on account of the beauty of his wife, the Egyptians should kill him, he desires her not to acknowledge that she is his wife, but only his sister, 11-13. Sarai, because of her beauty, is taken into the palace of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who is very liberal to Abram on her account, 14-16. God afflicts Pharaoh and his household with grievous plagues on account of Sarai, 17. Pharaoh, on finding that Sarai was Abram's wife, restores her honourably, and dismisses the patriarch with his family and their property, 18-20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. Get thee out of thy country] There is great dissension between commentators concerning the *call* of Abram; some supposing he had *two* distinct calls, others that he had but *one*. At the conclusion of the preceding chapter, ^{<0113>}**Genesis 11:31**, we find Terah and all his family leaving Ur of the Chaldees, in order to go to Canaan. This was, no doubt, in consequence of some Divine admonition. While resting at Haran, on their road to Canaan, Terah died, ^{<0113>}**Genesis 11:32**; and then God repeats his call to Abram, and orders him to proceed to Canaan, ^{<0120>}**Genesis 12:1**.

Dr. Hales, in his Chronology, contends for *two* calls: “The first,” says he, “is omitted in the Old Testament, but is particularly recorded in the New, ^{<4070>}**Acts 7:2-4**: *The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was (at Ur of the Chaldees) in Mesopotamia, BEFORE HE DWELT IN CHARRAN; and said unto him, Depart from thy land, and from thy kindred, and come into the land (γην, a land) which I will show thee.* Hence it is evident that God *had* called Abram *before* he came to Haran or Charran.” The SECOND CALL is recorded only in this chapter: “The Lord said (not HAD said) unto Abram, Depart from *thy land*, and from *thy kindred*, and from *thy father's house*, unto THE LAND, **xrah** HA-arets, (Septuagint, GHN γην,) which I will show thee.” “The difference of the two calls,” says Dr. Hales, “more carefully translated from the originals, is

obvious: in the former the *land* is *indefinite*, which was designed only for a *temporary* residence; in the latter it is *definite*, intimating his abode. A third condition is also annexed to the latter, that Abram shall now separate himself from *his father's house*, or leave his brother Nahor's family behind at Charran. This call Abram obeyed, still *not knowing whither he was going*, but trusting implicitly to the Divine guidance."

Thy kindred] Nahor and the different branches of the family of Terah, Abram and Lot excepted. That Nahor went with Terah and Abram as far as Padan-Aram, in Mesopotamia, and settled there, so that it was afterwards called *Nahor's city*, is sufficiently evident from the ensuing history, see ^{<01230>}**Genesis 25:20**; ^{<01240>}**Genesis 24:10, 15**; and that the same land was *Haran*, see ^{<01202>}**Genesis 28:2, 10**, and *there were Abram's kindred and country* here spoken of, ^{<01240>}**Genesis 24:4**.

Thy father's house] Terah being now dead, it is very probable that the family were determined to go no farther, but to settle at Charran; and as Abram might have felt inclined to stop with them in this place, hence the ground and necessity of the *second call* recorded here, and which is introduced in a very remarkable manner; **kl kl lech lecha**, GO FOR THYSELF. If none of the family will accompany thee, yet go for thyself unto THAT LAND *which I will show thee*. God does not tell him *what* land it is, that he may still cause him to walk by faith and not by sight. This seems to be particularly alluded to by Isaiah, ^{<24102>}**Isaiah 41:2**: Who raised up the righteous man (Abram) *from the east, and called him to his foot*; that is, to *follow implicitly* the Divine direction. The apostle assures us that in all this Abram had spiritual views; he looked for a better country, and considered the land of promise only as typical of the heavenly inheritance.

Verse 2. I will make of thee a great nation] i.e., The Jewish people; *and make thy name great*, alluding to the change of his name from *Abram*, a high father, to *Abraham*, the father of a multitude.

Verse 3. In thee] In thy posterity, in the *Messiah*, who shall spring from thee, shall all families of the earth be blessed; for as he shall take on him human nature from the posterity of Abraham, he shall taste death for every man, his Gospel shall be preached throughout the world, and innumerable blessings be derived on all mankind through his *death* and *intercession*.

Verse 4. And Abram was seventy and five years old] As Abram was now seventy-five years old, and his father Terah had just died, at the age of

two hundred and five, consequently Terah must have been one hundred and thirty when Abram was born; and the seventieth year of his age mentioned ^{<01126>}**Genesis 11:26**, was the period at which *Haran*, not *Abram*, was born. See on the preceding chapter.

Verse 5. The souls that they had gotten in Haran] This may apply either to the persons who were employed in the service of Abram, or to the persons he had been the instrument of converting to the knowledge of the true God; and in this latter sense the Chaldee paraphrasts understood the passage, translating it, *The souls of those whom they proselyted in Haran.*

They went forth to go into the land of Canaan] A good land, possessed by a bad people, who for their iniquities were to be expelled, see ^{<01825>}**Leviticus 18:25**. And this land was made a type of the kingdom of God. Probably the whole of this transaction may have a farther meaning than that which appears in the letter. As Abram left his own country, father's house, and kindred, took at the command of God a journey to this promised land, nor ceased till he arrived in it; so should we cast aside every weight, come out from among the workers of iniquity, set out for the kingdom of God, nor ever rest till we reach the heavenly country. How many set out for the kingdom of heaven, make good progress for a time in their journey, but halt before the race is finished! Not so Abram; *he went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan he came.* Reader, go thou and do likewise.

Verse 6. The plain of Moreh.] ׀wl a elon should be translated *oak*, not *plain*; the Septuagint translate την δρυν την υψηλην, the *lofty oak*; and it is likely the place was remarkable for a grove of those trees, or for one of a stupendous height and bulk.

The Canaanite was then in the land.] This is thought to be an interpolation, because it is supposed that these words must have been written *after* the Canaanites were expelled from the land by the Israelites under Joshua; but this by no means follows. All that Moses states is simply that, at the time in which Abram passed through Sichem, the land was inhabited by the descendants of Canaan, which was a perfectly possible case, and involves neither a contradiction nor absurdity. There is no rule of criticism by which these words can be produced as an evidence of interpolation or incorrectness in the statement of the sacred historian. See this mentioned again, ^{<01307>}**Genesis 13:7**.

Verse 7. The Lord appeared] In what way this appearance was made we know not; it was probably by the great angel of the covenant, Jesus the Christ. The appearance, whatsoever it was, perfectly satisfied Abram, and proved itself to be supernatural and Divine. It is worthy of remark that Abram is the *first* man to whom God is said to have *shown* himself or *appeared*: 1. In *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, ^{<4070>}**Acts 7:2**; and 2. At the *oak of Moreh*, as in this verse. As *hrwm* *Moreh* signifies a *teacher*, probably this was called the *oak of Moreh* or *the teacher*, because God manifested himself here, and *instructed* Abram concerning the future possession of that land by his posterity, and the dispensation of the mercy of God to all the families of the earth through the promised Messiah. **See Clarke on** ^{<40150>}**Genesis 15:7**".

Verse 8. Beth-el] The place which was afterwards called *Beth-el* by Jacob, for its first name was *Luz*. See ^{<012819>}**Genesis 28:19**. *l a tyb beith El* literally signifies *the house of God*.

And pitched his tent-and-builed an altar unto the Lord] Where Abram has a *tent*, there God must have an ALTAR, as he well knows there is no safety but under the Divine protection. How few who build houses ever think on the propriety and necessity of building an altar to their Maker! The house in which the worship of God is not established cannot be considered as under the Divine protection.

And called upon the name of the Lord.] Dr. Shuckford strongly contends that *µvb arq kara beshem* does not signify to *call ON the name*, but to *invoke IN the name*. So Abram *invoked Jehovah in or by the name of Jehovah*, who had appeared to him. He was taught even in these early times to approach God through a Mediator; and that Mediator, since manifested in the flesh, was known by the name Jehovah. Does not our Lord allude to such a discovery as this when he says, *Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad?* ^{<40356>}**John 8:56**. Hence it is evident that he was informed that the Christ should be born of his seed, that the nations of the world should be blessed through him; and is it then to be wondered at if he invoked God in the name of this great Mediator?

Verse 10. There was a famine in the land] Of Canaan. This is the first famine on record, and it prevailed in the most fertile land then under the sun; and why? God made it desolate for the wickedness of those who dwelt in it.

Went down into Egypt] He felt himself a stranger and a pilgrim, and by his unsettled state was kept in mind of the city that hath foundations that are permanent and stable, whose builder is the living God. See ^{<81108>}**Hebrews 11:8, 9.**

Verse 11. Thou art a fair woman to look upon] Widely differing in her *complexion* from the swarthy Egyptians, and consequently more likely to be coveted by them. It appears that Abram supposed they would not scruple to take away the life of the husband in order to have the undisturbed possession of the wife. The age of Sarai at this time is not well agreed on by commentators, some making her *ninety*, while others make her only *sixty-five*. From ^{<01177>}**Genesis 17:17**, we learn that Sarai was ten years younger than Abram, for she was but *ninety* when he was *one hundred*. And from ^{<011204>}**Genesis 12:4**, we find that Abram was *seventy-five* when he was called to leave Haran and go to Canaan, at which time Sarai could be only *sixty-five*; and if the transactions recorded in the preceding verses took place in the course of that year, which I think possible, consequently Sarai was but *sixty-five*; and as in those times people lived much longer, and *disease* seems to have had but a very contracted influence, women and men would necessarily arrive more slowly at a state of perfection, and retain their vigour and complexion much longer, than in later times. We may add to these considerations that *strangers* and *foreigners* are more coveted by the licentious than those who are *natives*. This has been amply illustrated in the West Indies and in America, where the *jetty, monkey-faced* African women are preferred to the elegant and beautiful Europeans! To this subject a learned British traveller elegantly applied those words of Virgil, Ecl. ii., ver. 18:—

Alba ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur.
White lilies lie neglected on the plain,
While dusky hyacinths for use remain.
DRYDEN.

Verse 13. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister] Abram did not wish his wife to tell a *falsehood*, but he wished her to suppress a part of the *truth*. From ^{<012012>}**Genesis 20:12**, it is evident she was his *step-sister*, i.e., his sister by his *father*, but by a different *mother*. Some suppose Sarai was the daughter of Haran, and consequently the *grand-daughter* of *Terah*: this opinion seems to be founded on ^{<011129>}**Genesis 11:29**, where *Iscah* is thought

to be the same with Sarai, but the supposition has not a sufficiency of probability to support it.

Verse 15. The woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.] *Pharaoh* appears to have been the common appellative of the Cuthite shepherd kings of Egypt, who had conquered this land, as is conjectured, about seventy-two years before this time. The word is supposed to signify *king* in the ancient Egyptian language. If the meaning be sought in the Hebrew, the root [רפ *para* signifies to be *free* or *disengaged*, a name which such *freebooters* as the Cuthite shepherds might naturally assume. All the kings of Egypt bore this name till the commencement of the Grecian monarchy, after which they were called *Ptolemies*.

When a woman was brought into the seraglio or harem of the eastern princes, she underwent for a considerable time certain purifications before she was brought into the king's presence. It was in this *interim* that God *plagued Pharaoh and his house with plagues*, so that Sarai was restored before she could have been taken to the bed of the Egyptian king.

Verse 16. He had sheep, and oxen, &c.] As some of these terms are liable to be confounded, and as they frequently occur, especially in the Pentateuch, it may be necessary to consider and fix their meaning in this place.

SHEEP; אצ *tsan*, from *tsaan*, to be *plentiful* or *abundant*; a proper term for the eastern sheep, which almost constantly bring forth *twins*, Cant. {<2042>**Song of Solomon 4:2**}, and sometimes *three* and even *four* at a birth. Hence their great fruitfulness is often alluded to in the Scripture. See <19613>**Psalm 65:13; 144:13**. But under this same term, which almost invariably means a *flock*, both *sheep* and *goats* are included. So the Romans include *sheep*, *goats*, and *small cattle* in general, under the term PECUS *pecoris*; so likewise they do larger cattle under that of PECUS *pecudis*.

OXEN; רqb *bakar*, from the root, to *examine*, *look out*, because of the full, broad, steady, unmoved look of most animals of the *beve* kind; and hence the *morning* is termed *boker*, because of the light springing out of the east, and *looking out* over the whole of the earth's surface.

HE-ASSES; מרמ *chamorim*, from רמ *chamar*, to be *disturbed*, *muddy*; probably from the dull, stupid appearance of this animal, as if it were

always affected with melancholy. *Scheuchzer* thinks the *sandy-coloured* domestic Asiatic ass is particularly intended. The word is applied to *asses* in general, though most frequently restrained to those of the *male kind*.

SHE-ASSES; *tnta athonoth*, from *ˆta ethan*, strength, probably the *strong animal*, as being superior in muscular force to every other animal of its size. Under this term both the male and female are sometimes understood.

CAMELS; *μγλ mg gemallim*, from *l mg gamal*, to *recompense, return, repay*; so called from its resentment of injuries, and revengeful temper, for which it is proverbial in the countries of which it is a native. On the animals and natural history in general, of the Scriptures, I must refer to the *Hicrozoicon* of BOCHART, and the *Physica Sacra* of SCHEUCHZER. The former is the most learned and accurate work. perhaps, ever produced by one man.

From this enumeration of the riches of Abram we may conclude that this patriarch led a pastoral and itinerant life; that his *meat* must have chiefly consisted in the flesh of clean animals, with a sufficiency of pulse for bread; that his chief *drink* was their *milk*; his clothing, their *skins*; and his beasts of burden, *asses* and *camels*; (for as yet we read of no *horses*;) and the ordinary employment of his servants, to take care of the flocks, and to serve their master. Where the patriarchs became resident for any considerable time, they undoubtedly cultivated the ground to produce grain.

Verse 17. The Lord plagued Pharaoh] What these plagues were we know not. In the parallel case, ^{<012018>}**Genesis 20:18**, all the females in the family of Abimelech, who had taken Sarah in nearly the same way, were made barren; possibly this might have been the case here; yet much more seems to be signified by the expression *great plagues*. Whatever these plagues were, it is evident they were understood by Pharaoh as proofs of the disapprobation of God; and, consequently, even at this time in Egypt there was some knowledge of the primitive and true religion.

Verse 20. Commanded his men concerning him] Gave particular and strict orders to afford Abram and his family every accommodation for their journey; for having received a great increase of cattle and servants, it was necessary that he should have the favour of the king, and his permission to remove from Egypt with so large a property; hence, a particular charge is

given to the officers of Pharaoh to treat him with respect, and to assist him in his intended departure.

THE weighty and important contents of this chapter demand our most attentive consideration. Abram is a *second time* called to leave his country, kindred, and father's house, and go to a place he knew not. Every thing was apparently against him but the voice of God. This to Abram was sufficient; he could trust his Maker, and knew he could not do wrong in following his command. He is therefore proposed to us in the Scriptures as a pattern of faith, patience, and loving obedience. When he received the call of God, he spent no time in useless reasonings about the call itself, his family circumstances, the difficulties in the way, &c., &c. He was *called*, and he *departed*, and this is all we hear on the subject. *Implicit faith* in the promise of God, and *prompt obedience* to his commands, become us, not only as HIS *creatures*, but as sinners called to separate from evil workers and wicked ways, and travel, by that faith which worketh by love, in the way that leads to the paradise of God.

How greatly must the faith of this blessed man have been tried, when, coming to the very land in which he is promised so much blessedness, he finds instead of plenty a *grievous famine*! Who in his circumstances would not have gone back to his own country, and kindred? Still he is not stumbled; prudence directs him to turn aside and go to Egypt, till God shall choose to remove this famine. Is it to be wondered at that, in this *tried* state, he should have serious apprehensions for the safety of his life? Sarai, his affectionate wife and faithful companion, he supposes he shall lose; her beauty, he suspects, will cause her to be desired by men of power, whose will he shall not be able to resist. If he appear to be her *husband*, his death he supposes to be certain; if she pass for his *sister*, he may be well used on her account; he will not *tell a lie*, but he is tempted to *prevaricate* by suppressing a *part* of the truth. Here is a weakness which, however we may be inclined to pity and excuse it, we should never imitate. It is recorded with its own condemnation. He should have risked all rather than have prevaricated. But how could he think of lightly giving up *such a wife*? Surely he who would not risk his life for the protection and safety of a good wife, is not worthy of one. Here his faith was deficient. He still credited the *general promise*, and acted on that faith in reference to *it*; but he did not use his faith in reference to *intervening circumstances*, to which it was equally applicable. Many trust God for their *souls* and *eternity*, who do not trust in him for their *bodies* and for *time*. To him who follows God

fully in simplicity of heart, every thing must ultimately succeed. Had Abram and Sarai simply passed for *what they were*, they had incurred no danger; for God, who had obliged them to go to Egypt, had prepared the way before them. Neither Pharaoh nor his courtiers would have noticed the woman, had she appeared to be the *wife* of the *stranger* that came to sojourn in their land. The issue sufficiently proves this. Every ray of the light of truth is an emanation from the holiness of God, and awfully sacred in his eyes. Considering the subject thus, a pious ancient spoke the following words, which refiners in prevarication have deemed by much *too strong*: “I would not,” said he, “tell a lie to save the souls of the whole world.” Reader, be on thy guard; thou mayest fall by comparatively small matters, while resolutely and successfully resisting those which require a giant’s strength to counteract them. In every concern God is necessary; seek him for the *body* and for the *soul*; and do not think that any thing is too small or insignificant to interest him that concerns thy present or eternal peace.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 13

Abram and his family return out of Egypt to Canaan, 1, 2. He revisits Beth-el, and there invokes the Lord, 3, 4. In consequence of the great increase in the flocks of Abram and Lot, their herdsmen disagree; which obliges the patriarch and his nephew to separate, 5-9. Lot being permitted to make his choice of the land, chooses the plains of Jordan, 10,11, and pitches his tent near to Sodom, while Abram abides in Canaan, 12. Bad character of the people of Sodom, 13. The Lord renews his promise to Abram, 14-17. Abram removes to the plains of Mamre, near Hebron, and builds an altar to the Lord, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. Abram went up out of Egypt-into the south.] Probably the south of *Canaan*, as In leaving Egypt he is said to come *from the south*, ^{<013>}**Genesis 13:3**, for the southern part of the promised land lay north-east of Egypt.

Verse 2. Abram was very rich] The property of these patriarchal times did not consist in *flocks* only, but also in *silver* and *gold*; and in all these respects Abram was **dam dbd cabed meod**, exceeding rich. Josephus says that a part of this property was acquired by teaching the Egyptians arts and sciences. Thus did God fulfil his promises to him, by protecting and giving him a great profusion of temporal blessings, which were to him signs and pledges of spiritual things.

Verse 3. Beth-el] See chap. 8.

Verse 6. Their substance was great] As their families increased, it was necessary their flocks should increase also, as from those flocks they derived their clothing, food, and drink. Many also were offered in sacrifice to God.

They could not dwell together] 1. Because their flocks were great. 2. Because the Canaanites and the Perizzites had already occupied a considerable part of the land. 3. Because there appears to have been *envy* between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. To prevent disputes among them, that might have ultimately disturbed the peace of the two families, it was necessary that a separation should take place.

Verse 7. The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.]

That is, they were *there* at the time Abram and Lot came to fix their tents in the land. See Clarke's note on "⁶⁻⁰¹²³⁶Genesis 12:6".

Verse 8. For we be brethren.] We are of the same family, worship the same God in the same way, have the same promises, and look for the same end. Why then should there be strife? If it appear to be unavoidable from our present situation, let that situation be instantly changed, for no secular advantages can counterbalance the loss of peace.

Verse 9. Is not the whole land before thee.] As the patriarch or head of the family, Abram, by prescriptive right, might have *chosen* his own portion first, and *appointed* Lot his; but intent upon peace, and feeling pure and parental affection for his nephew, he permitted him to make his choice first.

Verse 10. Like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.] There is an obscurity in this verse which *Houbigant* has removed by the following translation: *Ea autem, priusquam Sodomam Gornorrhamque Do minus delerit, erat, qua itur Segor, tota irrigua, quasi hortus Domini, et quasi terra Ægypti.* "But before the Lord had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, it was, as thou goest to Zoar, well watered, like the garden of the Lord, and like the land of Egypt." As paradise was watered by the four neighbouring streams, and as Egypt was watered by the annual overflowing of the Nile; so were the plains of the Jordan, and all the land on the way to Zoar, well watered and fertilized by the overflowing of the Jordan.

Verse 11. Then Lot chose him all the plain] A little civility or good breeding is of great importance in the concerns of life. Lot either had none, or did not profit by it. He certainly should have left the choice to the patriarch, and should have been guided by his counsel; but he took his *own* way, trusting to his own judgment, and guided only by the sight of his eyes: *he beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered, &c.*; so he chose the *land*, without considering the character of the *inhabitants*, or what advantages or disadvantages it might afford him in spiritual things. This choice, as we shall see in the sequel, had nearly proved the ruin of his body, soul, and family.

Verse 13. The men of Sodom were wicked] $\mu\gamma$ [r *rain*, from [r , *ra*, to break in pieces, destroy, and afflict; meaning persons who broke the established order of things, destroyed and confounded the distinctions

between right and wrong, and who afflicted and tormented both themselves and others. *And sinners*, **μυαc j** *chattaim*, from **ac j** *chata*, *to miss the mark, to step wrong, to miscarry; the same as αμαρτανω* in Greek, from *a*, *negative*, and **μαρπτω** *to hit a mark*; so a *sinner* is one who is ever aiming at happiness and constantly missing his mark; because, being *wicked-radically evil* within, every affection and passion depraved and out of order, he seeks for happiness where it never can be found, in worldly honours and possessions, and in sensual gratifications, the end of which is disappointment, affliction, vexation, and ruin. Such were the companions Lot must have in the *fruitful land he had chosen*. This, however, amounts to no more than the common character of sinful man; but the people of Sodom were *exceedingly sinful and wicked before*, or against, *the Lord*-they were sinners of no common character; they excelled in unrighteousness, and soon filled up the measure of their iniquities. See chap. 19.

Verse 14. The Lord said unto Abram] It is very likely that the angel of the covenant appeared to Abram in *open day*, when he could take a distinct view of the length and the breadth of this good land. The revelation made ^{<0157>}**Genesis 15:5**, was evidently made in the *night*; for then he was called to number the *stars*, which could not be seen but in the night season: here he is called on to *number the dust of the earth*, ^{<0136>}**Genesis 13:16**, which could not be seen but in the *day-light*.

Verse 15. To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.] This land was given to Abram, that it might lineally and legally descend to his posterity; and though Abram himself cannot be said to have possessed it, ^{<4076>}**Acts 7:5**, yet it was the gift of God to him in behalf of his seed; and this was always the design of God, not that Abram *himself* should possess it, but that his posterity should, till the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. And this is chiefly what is to be understood by the words *for ever*, **μl w [da ad olam**, to the end of the present dispensation, and the commencement of the new. **μl w [olam** means either ETERNITY, which implies the *termination* of all *time* or *duration*, such as is measured by the celestial luminaries: or a *hidden, unknown period*, such as includes a *completion* or *final termination* of a particular *era, dispensation, &c.*; therefore the first is its *proper* meaning, the latter its *accommodated* meaning. See Clarke's note on ^{<0170>}**Genesis 17:7**". See Clarke's note on ^{<0213>}**Genesis 21:33**".

Verse 18. Abram removed his tent] Continued to travel and pitch in different places, till at last he fixed his tent in the *plain*, or *by the oak*, of *Mamre*, see ^{<0120>}**Genesis 12:6**, which is in *Hebron*; i.e., the district in which *Mamre* was situated *was called Hebron*. *Mamre* was an Amorite then living, with whom *Abram* made a league, ^{<0143>}**Genesis 14:13**; and the oak probably went by his name, because he was the possessor of the ground. *Hebron* is called *Kirjath-arba*, ^{<0123>}**Genesis 23:2**; but it is very likely that *Hebron* was its primitive name, and that it had the above appellation from being the residence of *four* gigantic or powerful *Anakim*, for *Kirjath-arba* literally signifies the *city of the four*; See **Clarke's note on** ^{<0123>}**Genesis 23:2**".

Built there an altar unto the Lord.] On which he offered sacrifice, as the word *j bzm mizbach*, from *j bz zabach*, to *slay*, imports.

THE increase of riches in the family of *Abram* must, in the opinion of many, be a source of felicity to them. If earthly possessions could produce happiness, it must be granted that they had now a considerable share of it in their power. But *happiness* must have its seat in the *mind*, and, like *that*, be of a *spiritual* nature; consequently earthly goods cannot give it; so far are they from either producing or procuring it, that they always engender care and anxiety, and often strifes and contentions. The peace of this amiable family had nearly been destroyed by the largeness of their possessions. To prevent the most serious misunderstandings, *Abram* and his nephew were obliged to separate. He who has much in general wishes to have more, for the eye is not satisfied with seeing. *Lot*, for the better accommodation of his flocks and family, chooses the most fertile district in that country, and even sacrifices reverence and filial affection at the shrine of worldly advantage; but the issue proved that a pleasant worldly prospect may not be the most advantageous, even to our secular affairs. *Abram* prospered greatly in the comparatively barren part of the land, while *Lot* lost all his possessions, and nearly the lives of himself and family, in that land which appeared to him *like the garden of the Lord*, like a second paradise. Rich and fertile countries have generally luxurious, effeminate, and profligate inhabitants; so it was in this case. The inhabitants of *Sodom* were *sinners*, and *exceedingly wicked*, and their profligacy was of that kind which luxury produces; they fed themselves *without fear*, and they acted *without shame*. *Lot* however was, through the mercy of God, preserved from this contagion: he retained his religion; and this supported his soul and saved his life, when his *goods* and his *wife* perished. Let us learn from

this to be jealous over our own wills and wishes; to distrust flattering prospects, and seek and secure a heavenly inheritance. "Man wants but little; nor *that little* long." A man's life-the comfort and happiness of it-does not consist in the multitude of the things he possesses. "One house, one day's food, and one suit of raiment," says the Arabic proverb, "are sufficient for thee; and if thou die before noon, thou hast one half too much." The example of Abram, in constantly erecting an altar wherever he settled, is worthy of serious regard; he knew the path of duty was the way of safety, and that, if he acknowledged God in all his ways, he might expect him to direct all his steps: he felt his dependence on God, he invoked him through a Mediator, and offered sacrifices in faith of the coming Saviour; he found blessedness in this work-it was not an empty service; he rejoiced to see the day of Christ-he saw it and was glad. **See Clarke's note on "4128: Genesis 12:8"**. Reader, has God an altar in *thy* house? Dost thou *sacrifice* to him? Dost thou offer up daily by faith, in behalf of thy soul and the souls of thy family, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world? *No man cometh unto the Father but by me*, said Christ: this was true, not only from the incarnation, but from the foundation of the world. And to this another truth, not less comfortable, may be added: *Whosoever cometh unto me I will in no-wise cast out*.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 14

The war of four confederate kings against the five kings of Canaan, 1-3. The confederate kings overrun and pillage the whole country, 4-7. Battle between them and the kings of Canaan, 5, 9. The latter are defeated, and the principal part of the armies of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah slain, 10; on which these two cities are plundered, 11. Lot, his goods, and his family, are also taken and carried away, 12. Abram, being informed of the disaster of his nephew, 13, arms three hundred and eighteen of his servants, and pursues them, 14; overtakes and routs them, and recovers Lot and his family, and their goods, 15, 16; is met on his return by the king of Sodom, and by Melchizedek, king of Salem, with refreshments for himself and men, 17, 18. Melchizedek blesses Abram, and receives from him, as priest of the most high God, the tenth of all the spoils, 19, 20. The king of Sodom offers to Abram all the goods he has taken from the enemy, 21; which Abram positively refuses, having vowed to God to receive no recompense for a victory of which he knew God to be the sole author, 22, 23; but desires that a proportion of the spoils be given to Aner, Eshcol and Mamre, who had accompanied him on this expedition, 24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. In the days of Amraphel] Who this king was is not known; and yet, from the manner in which he is spoken of in the text, it would seem that he was a person well known, even when Moses wrote this account. But the *Vulgate* gives a different turn to the place, by rendering the passage thus: *Factum est in illo tempore, ut Amraphel, &c.* “It came to pass in that time that Amraphel, &c.” The Chaldee Targum of Onkelos makes Amraphel king of Babylon, others make him king of Assyria; some make him the same as Nimrod, and others, one of his descendants.

Arioch king of Ellasar] Some think *Syria* is meant; but conjecture is endless where facts cannot be ascertained.

Chedorlaomer king of Elam] Dr. Shuckford thinks that this was the same as *Ninyas*, the son of *Ninus* and *Semiramis*; and some think him to be the same with *Keeumras*, son of *Doolaved*, son of *Arphaxad*, son of *Shem*, son of *Noah*; and that *Elam* means *Persia*; see ^{<OH102>}**Genesis 10:22**. The Persian historians unanimously allow that *Keeumras*, whose name bears some affinity to *Chedorlaomer*, was the first king of the *Peeshdadian* dynasty.

Tidal king of nations] **μywg** *goyim*, different peoples or clans. Probably some adventurous person, whose subjects were composed of *refugees* from different countries.

Verse 2. These made war with Bera, &c.] It appears, from ^{<01404>}**Genesis 14:4**, that these five Canaanitish kings had been subdued by Chedorlaomer, and were obliged to pay him tribute; and that, having been enslaved by him twelve years, wishing to recover their liberty, they revolted in the thirteenth; in consequence of which Chedorlaomer, the following year, summoned to his assistance three of his vassals, invaded Canaan, fought with and discomfited the kings of the *Pentapolis* or five cities-Sodom, Gomorrah, Zeboiim, Zoar, and Admab, which were situated in the fruitful plain of Siddim, having previously overrun the whole land.

Verse 5. Rephaims] A people of Canaan: ^{<01530>}**Genesis 15:20**.

Ashteroth] A city of Basan, where *Og* afterwards reigned; ^{<01531>}**Joshua 13:31**.

Zuzims] Nowhere else spoken of, unless they were the same with the *Zamzummims*, ^{<01520>}**Deuteronomy 2:20**, as some imagine.

Emims] *A people great and many* in the days of Moses, and *tall as the Anakim*. They dwelt among the Moabites, by whom they were reputed *giants*; ^{<01510>}**Deuteronomy 2:10, 11**.

Shaveh Kiriathaim] Rather, as the *margin*, the *plain of Kiriathaim*, which was a city afterwards belonging to *Sihon* king of Heshbon; ^{<01519>}**Joshua 13:19**.

Verse 6. The Horites] A people that dwelt in Mount Seir, till Esau and his sons drove them thence; ^{<01522>}**Deuteronomy 2:22**.

El-paran] The *plain* or *oak of Paran*, which was a city in the wilderness of Paran; ^{<01212>}**Genesis 21:21**.

Verse 7. En-mishpat] The *well of judgment*; probably so called from the judgment pronounced by God on Moses and Aaron for their rebellion at that place; ^{<0301>}**Numbers 20:1-10**.

Amalekites] So called *afterwards*, from Amalek, son of Esau; ^{<01362>}**Genesis 36:12**.

Hazon-tamar.] Called, in the Chaldee, Engaddi; a city in the land of Canaan, which fell to the lot of Judah; ^{<06152>}**Joshua 15:62**. See also ^{<14012>}**2 Chronicles 20:2**. It appears, from Canticles ^{<20114>}**Song of Solomon 1:14**, to have been a very fruitful place.

Verse 8. Bela, the same is Zoar] That is, it was called *Zoar* after the destruction of Sodom, &c., mentioned in ^{<01924>}**Genesis 19:24, 25**.

Verse 10. Slime-pits] Places where *asphaltus* or *bitumen* sprang out of the ground; this substance abounded in that country.

Fell there] It either signifies they were defeated on this spot, and many of them slain, or that multitudes of them had perished in the bitumen-pits which abounded there; that the place was *full of pits* we learn from the Hebrew, which reads here **trab trab beeroth beeroth**, pits, pits, i.e., multitudes of pits. A bad place to maintain a fight on, or to be obliged to run through in order to escape.

Verse 11. They took all the goods, &c.] This was a predatory war, such as the Arabs carry on to the present day; they pillage a city, town, or caravan; and then escape with the booty to the wilderness, where it would ever be unsafe, and often impossible, to pursue them.

Verse 12. They took Lot, &c.] The people, being exceedingly wicked, had provoked God to afflict them by means of those marauding kings; and Lot also suffered, being found in company with the workers of iniquity. Every child remembers the fable of the Geese and Cranes; the former, being found feeding where the latter were destroying the grain, were all taken in the same net. Let him that readeth understand.

Verse 13. Abram the Hebrew] See Clarke's note on ^{<01021>}**Genesis 10:21**". It is very likely that Abram had this appellation from his coming *from beyond* the river Euphrates to enter Canaan; for **yrb[h haibri]**, which we render *the Hebrew*, comes from **rb[abar]**, to *pass over*, or come *from beyond*. It is supposed by many that he got this name from *Eber* or *Heber*, son of Salah; see ^{<01115>}**Genesis 11:15**. But why he should get a name from Heber, rather than from his own father, or some other of his progenitors, no person has yet been able to discover. We may, therefore, safely conclude that he bears the appellation of *Hebrew* or *Ibrite* from the above circumstance, and not from one of his progenitors, of whom we know nothing but the name, and who preceded Abram not less

than six generations; and during the whole of that time till the time marked here, none of his descendants were ever called *Hebrews*; this is a demonstration that Abram was not called the *Hebrew* from *Heber*; see ^{<01115>}**Genesis 11:15-27.**

These were confederate with Abram.] It seems that a kind of convention was made between Abram and the three brothers, *Mamre*, *Eshcol*, and *Aner*, who were probably all chieftains in the vicinity of Abram's dwelling: all petty princes, similar to the nine kings before mentioned.

Verse 14. He armed his trained servants] These amounted to three hundred and eighteen in number: and how many were in the divisions of Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner, we know not; but they and their men certainly accompanied him in this expedition. See ^{<01143>}**Genesis 14:24.**

Verse 15. And he divided himself against them] It required both considerable courage and address in Abram to lead him to attack the victorious armies of these four kings with so small a number of troops, and on this occasion both his skill and his courage are exercised. His affection for Lot appears to have been his chief motive; he cheerfully risks his life for that nephew who had lately chosen the best part of the land, and left his uncle to live as he might, on what he did not think worthy his own acceptance. But it is the property of a great and generous mind, not only to forgive, but to forget offences; and at all times to repay evil with good.

Verse 16. And he brought back-the women also] This is brought in by the sacred historian with peculiar interest and tenderness. All who read the account must be in pain for the fate of *wives* and *daughters* fallen into the hands of a ferocious, licentious, and victorious *soldiery*. Other spoils the routed confederates might have left behind; and yet on their swift asses, camels, and dromedaries, have carried off the female captives. However, Abram had disposed his attack so judiciously, and so promptly executed his measures, that not only all the baggage, but all the *females* also, were recovered.

Verse 17. The king of Sodom went out to meet him] This could not have been *Bera*, mentioned ^{<01142>}**Genesis 14:2**, for it seems pretty evident, from ^{<01140>}**Genesis 14:10**, that both he and *Birsha*, king of Gomorrah, were slain at the bitumen-pits in the vale of Siddim; but another person in the meantime might have succeeded to the government.

Verse 18. And Melchizedek, king of Salem] A thousand idle stories have been told about this man, and a thousand idle conjectures spent on the subject of his short history given here and in Heb. vii. At present it is only necessary to state that he appears to have been as real a personage as *Bera*, *Birsha*, or *Shinab*, though we have no more of *his* genealogy than we have of theirs.

Brought forth bread and wine] Certainly to *refresh* Abram and his men, exhausted with the late battle and fatigues of the journey; not in the way of *sacrifice*, &c.; this is an idle conjecture.

He was the priest of the most high God.] He had preserved in his family and among his subjects the worship of the true God, and the primitive patriarchal institutions; by these the father of every family was both *king* and *priest*, so Melchizedek, being a worshipper of the true God, was *priest* among the people, as well as *king* over them.

Melchizedek is called here *king of Salem*, and the most judicious interpreters allow that by Salem, *Jerusalem* is meant. That it bore this name anciently is evident from ^{<19701>}**Psalm 76:1, 2**: “In *Judah* is God known; his name is great in *Israel*. In SALEM also is his *tabernacle*, and his dwelling place in *Zion*.” From the use made of this part of the sacred history by David, ^{<19801>}**Psalm 110:4**, and by St. Paul, ^{<8001>}**Hebrews 7:1-10**, we learn that there was something very mysterious, and at the same time typical, in the *person, name, office, residence*, and government of this Cannanitish prince. 1. In his *person* he was a representative and type of Christ; see the scriptures above referred to. 2. His name, qdx ykl m malki tsedek, signifies *my righteous king*, or *king of righteousness*. This name he probably had from the pure and righteous administration of his government; and this is one of the characters of our blessed Lord, a character which can be applied to him only, as he alone is *essentially righteous*, and the *only Potentate*; but a holy man, such as Melchizedek, might bear this name as his *type* or *representative*. 3. *Office*; he was a *priest of the most high God*. The word ^{hk} *cohen*, which signifies both *prince* and *priest*, because the patriarchs sustained this double office, has both its root and proper signification in the Arabic; [Arabic] *kahana* signifies *to approach, draw near, have intimate access to*; and from hence to *officiate as priest before God*, and thus have intimate access to the Divine presence: and by means of the sacrifices which he offered he received *counsel* and *information* relative to what was *yet to take place*,

and hence another acceptation of the word, to *foretell, predict future events, unfold hidden things or mysteries*; so the lips of the priests preserved knowledge, and they were often the interpreters of the will of God to the people. Thus we find that Melchizedek, being a priest of the most high God, represented Christ in his *sacerdotal* character, the word *priest* being understood as before explained. 4. His *residence*; he was king of *Salem*. $\mu\lambda$ \vee *shalam* signifies to *make whole, complete, or perfect*; and hence it means *peace*, which implies the *making whole* the *breaches* made in the political and domestic union of kingdoms, states, families, &c., making an end of discord, and establishing friendship. Christ is called the *Prince of peace*, because, by his incarnation, sacrifice, and mediation, he procures and establishes peace between God and man; heals the breaches and dissensions between heaven and earth, reconciling both; and produces glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will among men. His *residence* is *peace* and quietness and assurance for ever, in every believing upright heart. He governs as the Prince and Priest of the most high God, ruling in righteousness, mighty to save; and he ever lives to make intercession for, and save to the uttermost all who come unto the Father by him. See Clarke's notes on "^{<8075>}Hebrews 7:25".

Verse 19. And he blessed him] This was a part of the priest's office, to *bless in the name of the Lord, for ever*. See the *form* of this blessing, ^{<4023>}Numbers 6:23-26; and for the meaning of the word *to bless*, see ^{<0023>}Genesis 2:3.

Verse 20. And he gave him tithes] A tenth part of *all* the spoils he had taken from the confederate kings. These Abram gave as a *tribute* to the *most high God*, who, being *the possessor of heaven and earth*, dispenses all spiritual and temporal favours, and demands the gratitude, and submissive, loving obedience, of all his subjects. Almost all nations of the earth have agreed in giving a *tenth part* of their property to be employed in religious uses. The *tithes* were afterwards granted to the Levites for the use of the sanctuary, and the maintenance of themselves and their families, as they had no other inheritance in Israel.

Verse 22. I have lift up mine hand] The primitive mode of appealing to God, and calling him to witness a particular transaction; this no doubt generally obtained among the faithful till *circumcision*, the *sign* of the covenant, was established. After this, in swearing, the hand was often placed on the circumcised part; see ^{<0240>}Genesis 24:2, 9.

Verse 23. From a thread even to a shoelatchet] This was certainly a proverbial mode of expression, the full meaning of which is perhaps not known. Among the rabbinical writers **CWJ** *chut*, or **ycwj** *chuti*, signifies a *fillet worn by young women to tie up their hair*; taken in this sense it will give a good meaning here. As Abram had rescued both the *men* and *women* carried off by the confederate kings, and the king of Sodom had offered him *all the goods*, claiming only the *persons*, he answers by protesting against the accepting any of their property: “I have vowed unto the Lord, the proprietor of heaven and earth, that I will not receive the smallest portion of the property either of the *women* or *men*, from a girl’s fillet to a man’s shoe-tie.”

Verse 24. Save only that which the young men have eaten] His own servants had partaken of the *victuals* which the confederate kings had carried away; see ⁰¹¹⁴¹¹**Genesis 14:11**. This was unavoidable, and this is all he claims; but as he had no right to prescribe the same liberal conduct to his assistants, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, he left them to claim the *share* that by *right of conquest* belonged to them of the recaptured booty. Whether they were as generous as Abram we are not told.

THE great variety of striking incidents in this chapter the attentive reader has already carefully noted. To *read* and not *understand* is the property of the *foolish* and the *inconsiderate*. 1. We have already seen the danger to which Lot exposed himself in preferring a fertile region, though peopled with the workers of iniquity. His sorrows commence in the captivity of himself and family, and the loss of all his property, though by the good providence of God he and they were rescued. 2. Long observation has proved that the company a man keeps is not an indifferent thing; it will either be the means of his salvation or destruction. 3. A generous man cannot be contented with mere personal safety while others are in danger, nor with his own prosperity while others are in distress. Abram, hearing of the captivity of his nephew, determines to attempt his rescue; he puts himself at the head of his own servants, three hundred and eighteen in number, and the few assistants with which his neighbours, Mamre, Aner, and Eshcol, could furnish him; and, trusting in God and the goodness of his cause, marches off to attack four confederate kings! 4. Though it is not very likely that the armies of those petty kings could have amounted to *many thousands*, yet they were numerous enough to subdue almost the whole land of Canaan; and consequently, humanly speaking, Abram must know that by numbers *he* could not prevail, and that in this case

particularly *the battle was the Lord's*. 5. While depending on the Divine blessing and succour he knew he must use the means he had in his power; he therefore divided his troops skilfully that he might attack the enemy at *different points* at the *same time*, and he chooses the *night season* to commence his attack, that the *smallness* of his force might not be discovered. God requires a man to use all the faculties he has given him in every lawful enterprise, and only in the conscientious use of them can he expect the Divine blessing; when this is done the event may be safely trusted in the hands of God. 6. Here is a war undertaken by Abram on motives the most honourable and conscientious; it was to repel aggression, and to rescue the innocent from the heaviest of sufferings and the worst of slavery, not for the purpose of plunder nor the extension of his territories; therefore he takes no spoils, and returns peaceably to *his own possessions*. How happy would the world be were every sovereign actuated by the same spirit! 7. We have already noticed the appearance, person, office, &c., of *Melchizedek*; and, without indulging in the wild theories of either ancient or modern visionaries, have considered him as the Scriptures do, *a type of Christ*. All that has been already spoken on this head may be recapitulated in a few words. 1. The Redeemer of the world is the *King of righteousness*; he creates it, maintains it, and rules by it. 2. His empire is the *empire of peace*; this he proclaims to them who are afar off, and to them that are nigh; to the Jew and to the Gentile. 3. He is *Priest* of the most high God, and has laid down his life for the sin of the world; and through this sacrifice the *blessing* of God is derived on them that believe. Reader, take him for thy *King* as well as thy *Priest*; he saves those only *who submit to his authority*. and take his *Spirit* for the *regulator* of their *heart*, and his *word* for the *director* of their *conduct*. How many do we find, among those who would be sorry to be rated so low as to rank only with *nominal* Christians, talking of Christ as their *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*, who are not taught by his word and Spirit, who apply not for *redemption in his blood*, and who *submit not* to his *authority*! Reader, learn this deep and important truth: “*Where I am there also shall my servant be; and he that serveth me, him shall my Father honour.*”

GENESIS

CHAPTER 15

God appears to Abram in a vision, and gives him great encouragement, 1. Abram's request and complaint, 2, 3. God promises him a son, 4; and an exceedingly numerous posterity, 5. Abram credits the promise, and his faith is counted unto him for righteousness, 6. Jehovah proclaims himself, and renews the promise of Canaan to his posterity, 7. Abram requires a sign of its fulfilment, 8. Jehovah directs him to offer a sacrifice of five different animals, 9; which he accordingly does, 10, 11. God reveals to him the affliction of his posterity in Egypt, and the duration of that affliction, 12, 13. Promises to bring them back to the land of Canaan with great affluence, 14-16. Renews the covenant with Abram, and mentions the possessions which should be given to his posterity, 18-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. **The word of the Lord came unto Abram]** This is the first place where God is represented as revealing himself by his *word*. Some learned men suppose that the **hwby rbd** *debar Jehovah*, translated here *word of the Lord*, means the same with the **λογος του θεου** of St. John, ^{<εβ010>}**John 1:1**, and, by the Chaldee paraphrases in the next clause, called **yrmy m meimeri**, “my word,” and in other places **yyd armym meimera daiya**, the word of *Yeya*, a contraction for *Jehovah*, which they appear always to consider as a *person*; and which they distinguish from **amgtp pithgama**, which signifies merely a *word* spoken, or any *part of speech*. There have been various conjectures concerning the manner in which God revealed his will, not only to the patriarchs, but also to the prophets, evangelists, and apostles. It seems to have been done in different ways. 1. By a *personal appearance* of him who was afterwards incarnated for the salvation of mankind. 2. By an *audible voice*, sometimes accompanied with emblematical appearances. 3. By *visions* which took place either in the night in ordinary sleep, or when the persons were cast into a temporary trance by daylight, or when about their ordinary business, 4. By the *ministry of angels* appearing in human bodies, and performing certain miracles to accredit their mission. 5. By the powerful agency of the *Spirit of God upon the mind*, giving it a strong conception and supernatural persuasion of the truth of the things perceived by the understanding. We

shall see all these exemplified in the course of the work. It was probably in the third sense that the revelation in the text was given; for it is said, *God appeared to Abram in a vision*, *hzi m machazeh*, from *hzi chazah*, to see, or according to others, to fix, fasten, settle; hence *chozeh*, a SEER, the person who sees Divine things, to whom alone they are revealed, on whose mind they are fastened, and in whose memory and judgment they are fixed and settled. Hence the vision which was mentally perceived, and, by the evidence to the soul of its Divine origin, fixed and settled in the mind.

Fear not] The late Dr. Dodd has a good thought on this passage; “I would read, says he, “the second verse in a parenthesis, thus: *For Abram HAD said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, &c. Abram had said this in the fear of his heart, upon which the Lord vouchsafed to him this prophetic view, and this strong renovation of the covenant. In this light all follows very properly. Abram had said so and so in* ^{<015D>}**Genesis 15:2**, upon which God appears and says, *I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.* The patriarch then, ^{<015B>}**Genesis 15:3**, freely opens the anxious apprehension of his heart, *Behold, to me thou hast given no seed, &c.*, upon which God proceeds to assure him of posterity.”

I am thy shield, &c.] Can it be supposed that Abram understood these words as promising him *temporal* advantages at all corresponding to the magnificence of these promises? If he did he was disappointed through the whole course of his life, for he never enjoyed *such* a state of worldly prosperity as could justify the strong language in the text. Shall we lose sight of Abram, and say that his posterity was intended, and Abram understood the promises as relating to them, and not to himself or immediately to his own family? Then the question recurs, Did the Israelites ever enjoy such a state of temporal affluence as seems to be intended by the above promise? To this every man acquainted with their history will, without hesitation, say, No. What then is intended? Just what the words state. GOD was *Abram's portion*, and he is the *portion* of every *righteous soul*; for to *Abram*, and the *children of his faith*, he gives not a *portion in this life*. Nothing, says Father Calmet, proves more invincibly the immortality of the soul, the truth of religion, and the eternity of another life, than to see that in this life the righteous seldom receive the reward of their virtue, and that in temporal things they are often less happy than the workers of iniquity.

I am, says the Almighty, *thy shield*-thy constant covering and protector, and *thy exceeding great reward*, **dam hbrh Ērkc sekarcha harbeh meod**, “THAT superlatively multiplied reward of thine.” It is not the Canaan I promise, but the *salvation* that is to come through the promised seed. Hence it was that *Abram rejoiced to see his day*. And hence the Chaldee Targum translates this place, *My WORD shall be thy strength, &c.*

Verse 2. What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless] The anxiety of the Asiatics to have offspring is intense and universal. Among the *Hindoos* the want of children renders all other blessings of no esteem. See *Ward*.

And the steward of my house] Abram, understanding the promise as relating to that person who was to spring from his family, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, expresses his surprise that there should be such a promise, and yet he is about to die childless! How then can the promise be fulfilled, when, far from a *spiritual seed*, he has not even a person in his family that has a *natural* right to his property, and that a *stranger* is likely to be his heir? This seems to be the general sense of the passage; but who this *steward of his house*, this *Eliezer of Damascus*, was, commentators are not agreed. The translation of the Septuagint is at least curious: **οδε υιος μασεκ οικολενουσ μου, ουτος δαμασκος ελιεζερ**. *The son of Masek my homeborn maid, this Eliezer of Damascus*, is my heir; which intimates that they supposed **qvm meshek**, which we translate *steward*, to have been the name of a *female slave, born* in the family of Abram, of whom was born this Eliezer, who on account of the country either of his father or mother, was called a *Damascene* or one of Damascus. It is extremely probable that our Lord has this passage in view in his parable of the rich man and Lazarus, **<0169> Luke 16:19**. From the name *Eliezer*, by leaving out the first letter, *Liezer* is formed, which makes *Lazarus* in the New Testament, the person who, from an abject and distressed state, was raised to lie in the bosom of Abraham in paradise.

Verse 5. Look now toward heaven] It appears that this whole transaction took place in the *evening*; see *Clarke on* “**<0134> Genesis 13:14**”. Abram had either two visions, that recorded in **<0150> Genesis 15:1**, and that in **<0152> Genesis 15:12**, &c.; or what is mentioned in the beginning of this chapter is a part of the occurrences which took place after the sacrifice mentioned **<0159> Genesis 15:9**, &c.: but it is more likely that there was a vision of that kind already described, and afterwards a *second*, in which he received the revelation mentioned **<0153> Genesis 15:13-16**. After the first

vision he is *brought forth abroad* to see if he can number the stars; and as he finds this impossible, he is assured that as they are to him innumerable, so shall his posterity be; and that all should spring from one who should proceed from his own bowels-*one* who should be his own legitimate child.

Verse 6. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.] This I conceive to be one of the most important passages in the whole Old Testament. It properly contains and specifies that doctrine of *justification by faith* which engrosses so considerable a share of the epistles of St. Paul, and at the foundation of which is the *atonement* made by the Son of God: *And he (Abram) believed [^]mah heemin*, he put faith) *in Jehovah, wl hbvj yw vaiyachshebeita lo*, and he counted *it*-the faith he put in Jehovah, to HIM for *righteousness, hqdx tsedakak*, or justification; though there was no *act* in the case but that of the mind and heart, no *work* of any kind. Hence the doctrine of *justification by faith, without any merit of works*; for in this case there could be none-no works of Abram which could *merit the salvation of the whole human race*. It was the *promise* of God which he credited, and in the blessedness of which he became a partaker through faith. See at the close of the chapter; **See Clarke** “^{<-01519>}**Genesis 15:19**”; see also on “^{<-0113>}**Romans 4:13**”, &c.

Verse 7. Ur of the Chaldees] See Clarke on “^{<-0113>}**Genesis 11:31**”

Verse 8. And he said, Lord God] *hwby ynda Adonai Jehovah, my Lord Jehovah*. Adonai is the word which the Jews in reading always substitute for *Jehovah*, as they count it impious to pronounce this name. *Adonai* signifies my *director, basis, supporter, prop, or stay*; and scarcely a more appropriate name can be given to that God who is the *framer and director* of every righteous word and action; the *basis* or *foundation* on which every rational hope rests; the *supporter* of the souls and bodies of men, as well as of the universe in general; the *prop* and *stay* of the weak and fainting, and the *buttress* that shores up the building, which otherwise must necessarily fall. This word often occurs in the Hebrew Bible, and is rendered in our translation *Lord*; the same term by which the word *Jehovah* is expressed: but to distinguish between the two, and to show the reader when the original is *hwby Jehovah*, and when *ynda Adonai*, the first is always put in capitals, LORD, the latter in plain Roman characters, Lord. For the word *Jehovah* see Clarke on “^{<-01014>}**Genesis 2:4**”, and on “^{<-02306>}**Exodus 34:6**”.

Whereby shall I know] By what *sign* shall I be assured, that I shall inherit this land? It appears that he expected some sign, and that on such occasions one was ordinarily given.

Verse 9. Take me a heifer] **hl g[** *eglah*, a *she-calf*; a *she-goat*, **z[** *ez*, a goat, male or female, but distinguished here by the *feminine adjective*; **tvI vm** *meshullesheth*, a *three-yearling*; a *ram*, **l ya** *ayil*; a *turtle-dove*, **r t** *tor*, from which come *turtur* and *turtle*; *young pigeon*, **l zwg** *gozal*, a word signifying the young of *pigeons* and *eagles*. See ^{<1621>}**Deuteronomy 32:11**. It is worthy of remark, that every animal allowed or commanded to be sacrificed under the Mosaic law is to be found in this list. And is it not a proof that God was now giving to Abram an *epitome* of that law and its sacrifices which he intended more fully to reveal to Moses; the essence of which consisted in its *sacrifices*, which typified the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world?

On the several animals which God ordered Abram to take, Jarchi remarks: “The idolatrous nations are compared in the Scriptures to *bulls*, *rams*, and *goats*; for it is written, ^{<1621>}**Psalm 22:12**: *Many bulls have compassed me about*. ^{<7831>}**Daniel 8:20**: *The ram which thou hast seen is the king of Persia. The rough goat is the king of Greece*. ^{<7821>}**Daniel 8:21**. But the Israelites are compared to *doves*, &c.; ^{<2124>}**Song of Solomon 2:14**: *O my dove, that art in the cleft of the rock. The division of the above carcasses denotes the *division* and *extermination* of the idolatrous nations; but the birds not *being divided*, shows that the Israelites are to *abide for ever*.” See Jarchi on the place.*

Verse 10. Divided them in the midst] The ancient method of making covenants. as well as the original word, have been already alluded to, and in a general way explained. See ^{<10618>}**Genesis 6:18**. The word *covenant* from *con*, together, and *venio*, I come, signifies an agreement, association, or meeting between two or more parties; for it is impossible that a covenant can be made between an individual and himself, whether God or man. This is a theological absurdity into which many have run; there must be at least *two* parties to contract with each other. And often there was a *third* party to *mediate* the agreement, and to witness it when made. Rabbi Solomon Jarchi says, “It was a custom with those who entered into covenant with each other to take a heifer and cut it in two, and then the contracting parties passed between the pieces.” See this and the scriptures to which it refers particularly explained, ^{<10618>}**Genesis 6:18**. A covenant always

supposed one of these *four* things: 1. That the contracting parties had been hitherto *unknown* to each other, and were brought by the covenant into a state of *acquaintance*. 2. That they had been previously in a state of *hostility* or *enmity*, and were brought by the covenant into a state of *pacification* and *friendship*. 3. Or that, being known to each other, they now agree to unite their counsels, strength, property, &c., for the accomplishment of a particular purpose, mutually subservient to the interests of both. Or, 4. It implies an agreement to succour and defend a *third party* in cases of oppression and distress. For whatever purpose a covenant was made, it was ever ratified by a sacrifice offered to God; and the passing between the divided parts of the victim appears to have signified that each agreed, if they broke their engagements, to submit to the punishment of being *cut asunder*; which we find from ^{<12451>}**Matthew 24:51**; ^{<21246>}**Luke 12:46**, was an ancient mode of punishment. This is farther confirmed by Herodotus, who says that Sabacus, king of Ethiopia, had a vision, in which he was ordered **μεσουσ διατεμειν**, *to cut in two*, all the Egyptian priests; lib. ii. We find also from the same author, lib. vii., that Xerxes ordered one of the sons of Pythius **μεσον διατεμειν**, *to be cut in two*, and one half to be placed on each side of the way, that his army might pass through between them. That this kind of punishment was used among the Persians we have proof from ^{<27115>}**Daniel 2:5**, ^{<27129>}**Daniel 3:29**. Story of Susanna, verses 55, 59. See farther, ^{<10231>}**2 Samuel 12:31**, and ^{<33108>}**1 Chronicles 20:3**. These authorities may be sufficient to show that the *passing between* the parts of the divided victims signified the punishment to which those exposed themselves who broke their covenant engagements. And that covenant sacrifices were thus *divided*, even from the remotest antiquity, we learn from Homer, Il. A., v. 460.

Μηρουσ ἰ εξεταμον κατα τε κνιση εκαλυσαν,
Διπτυχα ποιησαντες, εἰ αυτων δ ωμοθητησαν.

“They cut the quarters, and cover them with the fat; *dividing them into two*, they place the raw flesh upon them.”

But this place may be differently understood.

St. Cyril, in his work against Julian, shows that *passing between the divided parts of a victim* was used also among the Chaldeans and other people. As the *sacrifice* was required to make an atonement to God, so the *death of the animal* was necessary to signify to the contracting parties the

punishment to which they exposed themselves, should they prove unfaithful.

Livy preserves the *form* of the imprecation used on such occasions, in the account he gives of the league made between the Romans and Albans. When the Romans were about to enter into some solemn league or covenant, they sacrificed a hog; and, on the above occasion, the *priest*, or *pater patratus*, before he slew the animal, stood, and thus invoked Jupiter: *Audi, Jupiter! Si prior defecerit publico consilio dolo malo, tum illo die, Diespiter, Populum Romanum sic ferito, ut ego hunc porcum hic hodie feriam; tantoque magis ferito, quanto magis potes pollesque!* Livii Hist., lib. i., chap. 24. “Hear, O Jupiter! Should the Romans in public counsel, through any evil device, first transgress these laws, in that same day, O Jupiter, thus smite the Roman people, as I shall at this time smite this hog; and smite them with a severity proportioned to the greatness of thy power and might!”

But the birds divided he not.] According to the law, ^{<18017>} **Leviticus 1:17**, fowls were not to be divided asunder but only cloven for the purpose of taking out the intestines.

Verse 11. And when the fowls] *cy[h haayit*, birds of prey, *came down upon the carcasses* to devour them, *Abram*, who stood by his sacrifice waiting for the manifestation of GOD, who had ordered him to prepare for the ratification of the covenant, *drove them away*, that they might neither *pollute* nor *devour* what had been thus consecrated to God.

Verse 12. A deep sleep] *hmdrt tardemah*, the same word which is used to express the sleep into which Adam was cast, previous to the formation of Eve; ^{<01021>} **Genesis 2:21**.

A horror of great darkness] Which God designed to be expressive of the affliction and misery into which his posterity should be brought during the *four hundred* years of their bondage in Egypt; as the next verse particularly states.

Verse 13. Four hundred years] “Which began,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “when Ishmael, son of Hagar, mocked and persecuted Isaac, ^{<01210>} **Genesis 21:9**; ^{<18049>} **Galatians 4:29**; which fell out *thirty* years after the promise, ^{<01123>} **Genesis 12:3**; which promise was *four hundred and thirty* years before

the law, ^{<81617>}**Galatians 3:17**; and *four hundred and thirty years* after that promise came Israel out of Egypt, ^{<12124>}**Exodus 12:41**.”

Verse 14. And also that nation, &c.] How remarkably was this promise fulfilled, in the redemption of Israel from its bondage, in the plagues and destruction of the Egyptians, and in the immense wealth which the Israelites brought out of Egypt! Not a more circumstantial or literally fulfilled promise is to be found in the sacred writings.

Verse 15. Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace] This verse strongly implies the immortality of the soul, and a state of separate existence. He was gathered to his fathers- introduced into the place where separate spirits are kept, waiting for the general resurrection. Two things seem to be distinctly marked here: 1. The soul of Abram should be introduced among the assembly of the first-born; *Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace*.

2. His body should be buried after a long life, *one hundred and seventy-five years*, ^{<11237>}**Genesis 25:7**. The body was buried; the soul went to the spiritual world, to dwell among the *fathers*-the patriarchs, who had lived and died in the Lord. See Clarke's note on ^{<11238>}**Genesis 25:8**”.

Verse 16. In the fourth generation] In former times most people counted by *generations*, to each of which was assigned a term of years amounting to 20, 25, 30, 33, 100, 108, or 110; for the *generation* was of various lengths among various people, at different times. It is probable that the *fourth generation* here means the *same as the four hundred years* in the preceding verse. Some think it refers to the time when *Eleazar*, the son of *Aaron*, the son of *Amram*, the son of *Kohath*, came out of Egypt, and divided the land of Canaan to Israel, ^{<16140>}**Joshua 14:1**. Others think the fourth generation of the Amorites is intended, because it is immediately added, *The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full*; but in the fourth generation they should be expelled, and the descendants of Abram established in their place. From these words we learn that there is a certain pitch of iniquity to which nations may arrive before they are destroyed, and beyond which Divine justice does not permit them to pass.

Verse 17. Smoking furnace and a burning lamp] Probably the smoking furnace might be designed as an emblem of the sore afflictions of the Israelites in Egypt; but the *burning lamp* was certainly the *symbol of the Divine presence*, which, passing between the pieces, ratified the covenant with Abram, as the following verse immediately states.

Verse 18. The Lord made a covenant] *tyrb trk carath berith* signifies to *cut a covenant*, or rather the covenant *sacrifice*; for as no covenant was made without one, and the creature was *cut in two* that the contracting parties might pass between the pieces, hence *cutting the covenant* signified making the covenant. The same form of speech obtained among the Romans; and because, in making their covenants they always slew an animal, either by *cutting its throat*, or *knocking it down* with a stone or axe, after which they *divided* the parts as we have already seen, hence among the *percutere fædus*, to smite a covenant, and *scindere fædus*, to *cleave a covenant*, were terms which signified simply to *make* or *enter* into a covenant.

From the river of Egypt] Not the Nile, but the river called *Sichor*, which was *before* or on the *border* of Egypt, near to the isthmus of Suez; see ^{<613B>}**Joshua 13:3**; though some think that by this a branch of the Nile is meant. This promise was fully accomplished in the days of David and Solomon. See ^{<108B>}**2 Samuel 8:3**, &c., and ^{<149D>}**2 Chronicles 9:26**.

Verse 19. The Kenites, &c.] Here are *ten* nations mentioned, though afterwards reckoned but *seven*; see ^{<870B>}**Deuteronomy 7:1**; ^{<41319>}**Acts 13:19**. Probably some of them which existed in Abram's time had been blended with others before the time of Moses, so that *seven* only out of the *ten* then remained; see part of these noticed ^{<0100B>}**Genesis 10:1-31**.

In this chapter there are *three* subjects which must be particularly interesting to the pious reader. 1. The *condescension of GOD* in revealing himself to mankind in a variety of ways, so as to render it absolutely evident that *he had spoken*, that he loved mankind, and that he had made every provision for their eternal welfare. So unequivocal were the discoveries which God made of himself, that on the minds of those to whom they were made not one doubt was left, relative either to the truth of the subject, or that it was God himself who made the discovery. The subject of the discovery also was such as sufficiently attested its truth to all future generations, for it concerned matters yet in futurity, so distinctly marked, so positively promised, and so highly interesting, as to make them objects of *attention*, *memory*, and *desire*, till they did come; and of *gratitude*, because of the permanent blessedness they communicated through all generations *after* the facts had taken place.

2. *The way of salvation by faith* in the promised Saviour, which now began to be explicitly declared. God gives the promise of salvation, and by means in which it was impossible, humanly speaking, that it should take place; teaching us, 1. That the whole work was spiritual, supernatural, and Divine; and, 2. That no human power could suffice to produce it. This Abram believed while he was yet uncircumcised, and this faith was accounted to him for righteousness or justification; God thereby teaching that he would pardon, accept, and receive into favour all who should believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And this very case has ever since been the *standard of justification by faith*; and the experience of millions of men, built on this foundation, has sufficiently attested the truth and solidity of the ground on which it was built.

3. The foundation of the doctrine itself is laid in the covenant made between God and Abram in behalf of all the families of the earth, and this covenant is ratified by a sacrifice. By this covenant man is bound to God, and God graciously binds himself to man. As this covenant referred to the incarnation of Christ; and Abram, both as to himself and posterity, was to partake of the benefits of it by *faith*; hence *faith*, not *works*, is the only condition on which God, through Christ, forgives sins, and brings to the promised spiritual inheritance. This covenant still stands open; all the successive generations of men are parties on the one side, and Jesus is at once the sacrifice and Mediator of it. As therefore the covenant still stands open, and Jesus is still the Lamb slain before the throne, every human soul must ratify the covenant for himself; and no man does so but he who, conscious of his guilt, accepts the sacrifice which God has provided for him. Reader, hast thou done so! And with a heart unto *righteousness* dost thou *continue* to believe on the Son of God? How merciful is God, who has found out such a way of salvation by providing a Saviour every way suitable to miserable, fallen, sinful man! One who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; and who, being higher than the heavens, raises up his faithful followers to the throne of his own eternal glory! Reader, give God the praise, and avail thyself of the sin-offering which lieth at the door.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 16

Sarai, having no child, gives Hagar her maid to Abram for wife, 1-3. She conceives and despises her mistress, 4. Sarai is offended and upbraids Abram, 5. Abram vindicates himself; and Hagar, being hardly used by her mistress, runs away, 6. She is met by an angel, and counselled to return to her mistress, 7-9. God promises greatly to multiply her seed, 10. Gives the name of Ishmael to the child that should be born of her, 11. Shows his disposition and character, 12. Hagar calls the name of the Lord who spoke to her, Thou God seest me, 13. She calls the name of the well at which the angel met her, Beer-laharoi, 14. Ishmael is born in the 86th year of Abram's age, 15, 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. She had a handmaid, an Egyptian] As Hagar was an Egyptian, St. Chrysostom's conjecture is very probable. that she was one of those female slaves which Pharaoh gave to Abram when he sojourned in Egypt; see ^{<01216>}**Genesis 12:16**. Her name *rg̃h hagar* signifies a *stranger* or *sojourner*, and it is likely she got this name in the family of Abram, as the word is pure Hebrew.

Verse 2. Go in unto my maid.] It must not be forgotten that female slaves constituted a part of the private patrimony or possessions of a wife, and that she had a right, according to the usages of those times, to dispose of them as she pleased, the husband having no authority in the case.

I may obtain children by her.] The *slave* being the absolute property of the mistress, not only her person, but the fruits of her labour, with all her children, were her owner's property also.

The children, therefore, which were born of the slave, were considered as the children of the mistress. It was on this ground that Sarai gave her slave to Abram; and we find, what must necessarily be the consequence in all cases of polygamy, that strifes and contentions took place.

Verse 3. And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar-and gave her to her husband-to be his wife.] There are instances of Hindoo women, when barren, consenting to their husbands marrying a second wife for the sake of

children; and second marriages on this account, without consent, are very common.-*Ward*

Verse 5. My wrong be upon thee] This appears to be intended as a reproof to Abram, containing an insinuation that it was his fault that she herself had not been a mother, and that now he carried himself more affectionately towards Hagar than he did to her, in consequence of which conduct the slave became petulant. To remove all suspicion of this kind, Abram delivers up Hagar into her hand, who was certainly under his protection while his concubine or secondary wife; but this right *given to him by Sarai* he restores, to prevent her jealousy and uneasiness.

Verse 6. Sarah dealt hardly with her] *hnat teanneha, she afflicted her;* the term implying *stripes* and *hard usage*, to *bring down the body* and *humble the mind*. If the slave was to blame in this business the mistress is not less liable to censure. *She* alone had brought her into those circumstances, in which it was natural for her to value herself beyond her mistress.

Verse 7. The angel of the Lord] That Jesus Christ, in a body suited to the dignity of his nature, frequently appeared to the patriarchs, has been already intimated. That the person mentioned here was greater than any created being is sufficiently evident from the following particulars:-

1. From his promising to *perform* what God alone could *do*, and *foretelling* what God alone could *know*; “*I will multiply thy seed exceedingly,*” &c., ^{<011610>}**Genesis 16:10**; “*Thou art with child, and shalt bear a son,*” &c., ^{<011611>}**Genesis 16:11**; “*He will be a wild man,*” &c., ^{<011612>}**Genesis 16:12**. All this shows a *prescience* which is proper to God alone.
2. Hagar considers the person who spoke to her as *God*, calls him *I a El*, and addresses him in the way of *worship*, which, had he been a created angel, he would have refused. See ^{<661910>}**Revelation 19:10; 22:9**.
3. Moses, who relates the transaction, calls this angel expressly *JEHOVAH*; for, says *he*, she called *hwwhy μν shem Yehovah*, the *NAME* of the *LORD* that spake to her, ^{<011613>}**Genesis 16:13**. Now this is a name never given to any created being.

4. This person, who is here called **hwyh Ēal m malach Yehovah**, the Angel of the Lord, is the same who is called **l agh Ēal mh hammalach haggioel**, the *redeeming Angel* or the *Angel the Redeemer*, ^{<04816>}**Genesis 48:16**; **wynp Ēal m malach panaiv**, the Angel of God's presence, ^{<2630>}**Isaiah 63:9**; and **tyrbh Ēal m malach habberith**, the Angel of the Covenant, ^{<3001>}**Malachi 3:1**; and is the same person which the Septuagint, ^{<2006>}**Isaiah 9:6**, term **μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος**, the *Angel of the Great Counsel* or *Design*, viz., of redeeming man, and filling the earth with righteousness.

5. These things cannot be spoken of any *human* or *created* being, for the *knowledge, works, &c.*, attributed to this person are such as belong to God; and as in all these cases there is a most evident *personal appearance*, Jesus Christ alone can be meant; for of God the Father it has been ever true that *no man hath at any time seen his shape*, nor has he ever limited himself to any definable *personal* appearance.

In the way to Shur.] As this was the road from Hebron to Egypt, it is probable she was now returning to her own country.

Verse 8. Hagar, Sarai's maid] This mode of address is used to show her that she was *known*, and to remind her that she was the *property* of another.

Verse 10. I will multiply thy seed exceedingly] Who says this? The person who is called the Angel of the Lord; and he certainly speaks with all the authority which is proper to God.

Verse 11. And shalt call his name Ishmael] **l [amvy Yishmael**, from **[mv shama**, he heard, and **l a El**, God; for, says the Angel, **THE LORD HATH HEARD thy affliction**. Thus the name of the child must ever keep the mother in remembrance of God's merciful interposition in her behalf, and remind the *child* and the *man* that he was an object of God's gracious and providential goodness. Afflictions and distresses have a voice in the ears of God, even when prayer is restrained; but how much more powerfully do they speak when endured in meekness of spirit, with confidence in and supplication to the Lord!

Verse 12. He will be a wild man] **uda arp pere adam**. As the root of this word does not appear in the Hebrew Bible, it is probably found in the Arabic [Arabic] *farra*, to *run away*, to *run wild*; and hence the *wild ass*,

from its *fleetness* and its *untamable* nature. What is said of the wild ass, ^{<1830E>}**Job 39:5-8**, affords the very best description that can be given of the *Ishmaelites*, (*the Bedouins* and *wandering Arabs*.) the descendants of Ishmael: "Who hath sent out the wild ass (*arp pere*) free? or who hath loosed the bands (*dwr [arod*) of the brayer? Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing." Nothing can be more descriptive of the *wandering, lawless, freebooting* life of the Arabs than this.

God himself has *sent them out free*-he has *loosed* them from all political restraint. *The wilderness is their habitation*; and in the *parched land*, where no other human beings could live, they *have their dwellings*. *They scorn the city*, and therefore have no *fixed* habitations; for their *multitude*, they are not afraid; for when they make depredations on cities and towns, they retire into the desert with so much precipitancy that all pursuit is eluded. In this respect *the crying of the driver is disregarded*. They may be said to have no lands, and yet *the range of the mountains is their pasture*-they pitch their *tents* and feed their *flocks*, wherever they please; and they *search after every green thing*-are continually looking after *prey*, and seize on every kind of property that comes in their way.

It is farther said, *His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him*. -Many potentates among the Abyssinians, Persians, Egyptians, and Turks, have endeavoured to subjugate the wandering or wild Arabs; but, though they have had temporary triumphs, they have been ultimately unsuccessful. *Sesostris, Cyrus, Pompey, and Trajan*, all endeavoured to conquer Arabia, but in vain. From the beginning to the present day they have maintained their independency, and God preserves them as a lasting monument of his providential care, and an incontestable argument of *the truth of Divine Revelation*. Had the Pentateuch no other argument to evince its Divine origin, the account of *Ishmael* and the prophecy concerning his *descendants*, collated with their history and manner of life during a period of nearly *four thousand years*, would be sufficient. Indeed the argument is so absolutely demonstrative, that the man who would attempt its refutation, in the sight of reason and common sense would stand convicted of the most ridiculous presumption and folly.

The country which these free descendants of Ishmael may be properly said to possess, stretches from Aleppo to the Arabian Sea, and from Egypt to the Persian Gulf; a tract of land not less than 1800 miles in length, by 900 in breadth; see ^{<0173>}**Genesis 17:20**.

Verse 13. And she called the name of the Lord] She invoked (*arqtw vattikra*) the name of Jehovah who spake unto her, thus: Thou God seest me! She found that the eye of a merciful God had been upon her in all her wanderings and afflictions; and her words seem to intimate that *she had been seeking* the Divine help and protection, for she says, *Have I also* (or *have I not also*) *looked after him that seeth me?*

This last clause of the verse is very obscure and is rendered differently by all the versions. The general sense taken out of it is this, That Hagar was now convinced that God himself had appeared unto her, and was surprised to find that, notwithstanding this, she was still permitted to live; for it is generally supposed that if God appeared to any, they must be consumed by his glories. This is frequently alluded to in the sacred writings. As the word *yrj a acharey*, which we render simply *after*, in other places signifies the *last days* or *after times*, (see ^{<0232>}**Exodus 33:23**;) it may probably have a similar meaning here; and indeed this makes a consistent sense: *Have I here also seen the LATTER PURPOSES or DESIGNS of him who seeth me?* An exclamation which may be referred to that discovery which God made in the preceding verse of the *future state* of her descendants.

Verse 14. Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi] It appears, from ^{<0167>}**Genesis 16:7**, that Hagar had sat down by a fountain or well of water in the wilderness of Shur, at which the Angel of the Lord found her; and, to commemorate the wonderful discovery which God had made of himself, she called the name of the well *yj l rab yar beer-lachai-roi*, “A well to the Living One who seeth me.” Two things seem implied here: 1. A dedication of the well to Him who had appeared to her; and, 2. Faith in the promise: for he who is the Living One, existing in all generations, must have it ever in his power to accomplish promises which are to be fulfilled through the whole lapse of time.

Verse 15. And Hagar bare Abram a son, &c.] It appears, therefore, that Hagar returned at the command of the angel, believing the promise that God had made to her.

Called his son's name-Ishmael.] Finding by the account of Hagar, that God had designed that he should be so called. "Ishmael," says Ainsworth, "is the first man in the world whose name was given him of God before he was born."

In the preceding chapter we have a very detailed account of the covenant which God made with Abram, which stated that his seed would possess Canaan; and this promise, on the Divine authority, he steadfastly believed, and in simplicity of heart waited for its accomplishment. Sarai was not like minded. As she had no child herself, and was now getting old, she thought it necessary to secure the inheritance by such means as were in *her power*; she therefore, as we have seen, gave her slave to Abram, that she might have children by her. We do not find Abram remonstrating on the subject; and why is he blamed? God had not *as yet* told him *how* he was to have an heir; the promise simply stated, *He that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir,* ^{<01504>} **Genesis 15:4**. Concubinage, under that dispensation, was perfectly lawful; therefore he could, with equal justice and innocence, when it was lawful in itself, and now urged by the *express desire of Sarai*, take Hagar to wife. And it is very likely that he might think that *his* posterity, whether by *wife* or *concubine*, as both were lawful, might be *that* intended by the promise.

It is very difficult to believe that a promise which refers to some *natural event* can possibly be fulfilled but through some *natural means*. And yet, what is nature but an instrument in God's hands? What we call natural effects are all performed by supernatural agency; for nature, that is, the whole system of inanimate things, is as inert as any of the particles of matter of the aggregate of which it is composed, and can be a *cause* to no *effect* but as it is excited by a sovereign power. This is a doctrine of sound philosophy, and should be carefully considered by all, that men may see that without an overruling and universally energetic providence, no effect whatever can be brought about. But besides these general influences of God in nature, which are all exhibited by what men call *general laws*, he chooses often to act *supernaturally*, i.e., independently of or against these general laws, that we may see that there is a God who does not confine himself to *one way* of working, but *with* means, *without* means, and even *against natural* means, accomplishes the gracious purposes of his mercy in the behalf of man. Where God *has* promised let him be implicitly credited, because *he* cannot lie; and let not hasty nature intermeddle with his work.

The omniscience of God is a subject on which we should often reflect, and we can never do it unfruitfully while we connect it, as we ever should, with infinite goodness and mercy. Every thing, person, and circumstance, is under its notice; and doth not the eye of God affect his heart? The poor *slave*, the *stranger*, the *Egyptian*, suffering under the severity of her hasty, unbelieving mistress, is seen by the all-wise and merciful God. He permits her to go to the desert, provides the spring to quench her thirst, and sends the Angel of the covenant to instruct and comfort her. How gracious is God! He permits us to get into distressing circumstances that he may give us effectual relief; and in such a way, too, that the excellence of the power may appear to be of him, and that we may learn to trust in him in all our distresses. God *delights* to do his creatures good.

In all transactions between God and man, mentioned in the sacred writings, we see one uniform agency; the great *Mediator* in all, and *through* all; God ever coming to man by him, and man having access to God through him. This *was*, *is*, and ever *will be* the economy of grace. “The Father hath sent me:-and no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” God forbid that he should have cause to complain of us, “YE will not come unto me, that ye might have life.”

GENESIS

CHAPTER 17

In the ninety-ninth year of Abram's life God again appears to him, announces his name as GOD ALMIGHTY, and commands him to walk perfectly before him, 1; proposes to renew the covenant, 2. Abram's prostration, 3. The covenant specified, 4. Abram's name changed to ABRAHAM, and the reason given, 5. The privileges of the covenant enumerated, 6-8. The conditions of the covenant to be observed, not only by Abraham, but all his posterity, 9. Circumcision appointed as a sign or token of the covenant, 10, 11. The age at which and the persons on whom this was to be performed, 12, 13. The danger of neglecting this rite, 14. Sarai's name changed to SARAH, and a particular promise made to her, 15, 16. Abraham's joy at the prospect of the performance of a matter which, in the course of nature, was impossible, 17. His request for the preservation and prosperity of Ishmael, 18. The birth and blessedness of Isaac foretold, 19. Great prosperity promised to Ishmael, 20. But the covenant to be established not in his, but in Isaac's posterity, 21. Abraham, Ishmael and all the males in the family circumcised, 23-27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. The Lord appeared to Abram] See Clarke's note on "^{<0150>}Genesis 15:1".

I am the Almighty God] ydv l a yna ani El shaddai, *I am God all-sufficient; from hdv shadah, to shed, to pour out. I am that God who pours out blessings, who gives them richly, abundantly, continually.*

Walk before me] ynpl Ël hth hithhallech lephanai, *set thyself to walk-be firmly purposed, thoroughly determined to obey, before me; for my eye is ever on thee, therefore ever consider that God seeth thee. Who can imagine a stronger incitement to conscientious, persevering obedience?*

Be thou perfect.] µymt hyhw vehyeh thamim, *and thou shalt be perfections, i.e., a together perfect. Be just such as the holy God would have thee to be, as the almighty God can make thee and live as the all-sufficient God shall support thee; for he alone who makes the soul holy can preserve it in holiness. Our blessed Lord appears to have had these words pointedly in view, ^{<0158>}Matthew 5:48: εσεσθε υμεις τελειοι, ωσπερ ο εν τοις ουρανοις τελειος εστι. Ye SHALL BE perfect, as your*

Father who is in heaven is perfect. But what does this imply? Why, to be saved from all the power, the guilt, and the contamination of sin. This is only the *negative* part of salvation, but it has also a *positive* part; to be made *perfect*-to be perfect as our Father who is in heaven is perfect, to be filled with the fulness of God, to have Christ dwelling continually in the heart by faith, and to be rooted and grounded in love. This is the state *in* which man was created, for he was made in the image and likeness of God. This is the state *from* which man fell, for he broke the command of God. And this is the state *into* which every human soul must be raised, who would dwell with God in glory; for Christ was incarnated and died to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. What a glorious privilege! And who can doubt the possibility of its attainment, who believes in the omnipotent love of God, the infinite merit of the blood of atonement, and the all-pervading and all-purifying energy of the Holy Ghost? How many miserable souls employ that time to dispute and cavil against the possibility of being saved *from* their sins, which they should devote to praying and believing that they might be saved out of the hands of their enemies! But some may say, "You overstrain the meaning of the term; it signifies only, *be sincere*; for as perfect obedience is impossible, God accepts of *sincere* obedience." If by *sincerity* the objection means *good desires*, and generally *good purposes*, with an *impure heart* and *spotted life*, then I assert that no such thing is implied in the text, nor in the original word; but if the word *sincerity* be taken in its proper and literal sense, I have no objection to it. *Sincere* is compounded of *sine cera*, "without wax;" and, applied to moral subjects, is a metaphor taken from clarified honey, from which every atom of the comb or wax is separated. Then let it be proclaimed from heaven, *Walk before me, and be SINCERE!* purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump unto God; and thus ye shall be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. This is *sincerity*. Reader, remember that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Ten thousand quibbles on insulated texts can never lessen, much less destroy, the merit and efficacy of the great Atonement.

Verse 3. And Abram fell on his face] The eastern method of prostration was thus: the person first went down on his knees, and then lowered his head to his knees, and touched the earth with his forehead. A very painful posture, but significative of great humiliation and reverence.

Verse 5. Thy name shall be Abraham] Abram **µrba** literally signifies a *high* or *exalted father*. Ab-ra-ham **µhrba** differs from the preceding only in one letter; it has **h** *he* before the last radical. Though this may appear very simple and easy, yet the true etymology and meaning of the word are very difficult to be assigned. The reason given for the change made in the patriarch's name is this: *For a father of many nations have I made thee*, **ba µywg ^wmh** *ab-hamon goyim*, "a father of a multitude of nations." This has led some to suppose that **µhrba** *Abraham*, is a contraction for **^wmh br ba** *ab-rab-hamon*, "the father of a great multitude."

Aben Ezra says the name is derived from **^wmh ryba** *abir-hamon*, "a powerful multitude."

Rabbi Solomon Jarchi defines the name *cabalistically*, and says that its numeral letters amount to *two hundred and forty-eight*, which, says he, is the exact number of the *bones in the human body*. But before the **h** *he* was added, which stands for *five*, it was five short of this perfection.

Rabbi Lipman says the **h** *he* being added as the *fourth letter*, signifies that the Messiah should come in the fourth millenary of the world.

Clarius and others think that the **h** *he*, which is one of the letters of the Tetragrammaton, (or word of four letters, **hwby** *YeHoVaH*,) was added for the sake of *dignity*, God associating the patriarch more nearly to himself, by thus imparting to him a portion of his own name.

Having enumerated so many opinions, that of *William Alabaster*, in his *Apparatus to the Revelation*, should not be passed by. He most wisely says that *ab-ram* or *ab-rom* signifies *father of the Romans*, and consequently the *pope*; therefore Abraham was *pope the first!* This is just as likely as some of the preceding etymologies.

From all these learned as well as puerile conjectures we may see the extreme difficulty of ascertaining the true meaning of the word, though the *concordance makers*, and *proper name explainers* find no difficulty at all in the case; and pronounce on it as readily and authoritatively as if they had been in the Divine council when it was first imposed.

Hottinger, in his *Smegma Orientale*, supposes the word to be derived from the Arabic root [Arabic] *rahama*, which signifies *to be very numerous*.

Hence [Arabic] *ab raham* would signify a *copious father* or *father of a multitude*. This makes a very good sense, and agrees well with the context. Either this etymology or that which supposes the inserted **h** *he* to be an abbreviation of the word **mh** *hamon, multitude*, is the most likely to be the true one. But this last would require the word to be written, when full, **wmh** *ur ba* *ab-ram-hamon*.

The same difficulty occurs, ^{<01715>}**Genesis 17:15**, on the word *Sarai*, **ycr** which signifies *my prince* or *princess*, and *Sarah*, **hrc** where the whole change is made by the substitution of a **h** *he* for a **y** *yod*. This latter might be translated *princess* in general; and while the former seems to point out her government in her *own family alone*, the latter appears to indicate her government over the *nations* of which her husband is termed the *father* or *lord*; and hence the promise states that *she shall be a mother of nations*, and that *kings of people should spring from her*. See ^{<01715>}**Genesis 17:15, 16**.

Now as the only change in each name is made by the insertion of a single letter, and that letter the same in *both* names, I cannot help concluding that some *mystery* was designed by its insertion; and therefore the opinion of *Clarius* and some others is not to be disregarded, which supposes that God shows he had conferred a peculiar *dignity* on both, by adding to their names one of the letters of his own: a name by which his eternal power and Godhead are peculiarly pointed out.

From the difficulty of settling the etymology of these two names, on which so much stress seems to be laid in the text, the reader will see with what caution he should receive the *lists of explanations* of the proper names in the Old and New Testaments, which he so frequently meets with, and which I can pronounce to be in general *false* or *absurd*.

Verse 7. An everlasting covenant] **ul w[** **tyrb** *berith olam*. See **Clarke's note on** "^{<01315>}**Genesis 13:15**". Here the word *olam* is taken in its own proper meaning, as the words immediately following prove *to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee*; for as the soul is to endure for ever, so it shall eternally stand in need of the supporting power and energy of God; and as the reign of the Gospel dispensation shall be as long as sun and moon endure, and its consequences *eternal*, so must the covenant be on which these are founded.

Verse 8. Everlasting possession] Here $\mu\lambda\ \omega$ [*olam*] appears to be used in its *accommodated* meaning, and signifies the completion of the Divine counsel in reference to a particular period or dispensation. And it is literally true that the Israelites possessed the land of Canaan till the Mosaic dispensation was terminated in the complete introduction of that of the Gospel. But as the spiritual and temporal covenants are both blended together, and the former was pointed out and typified by the latter, hence the word even here may be taken in its own proper meaning, that of *ever-during*, or *eternal*; because the spiritual blessings pointed out by the temporal covenant *shall have no end*. And hence it is immediately added, *I will be their God, not for a time, certainly, but for ever and ever*. See Clarke's note on "⁰¹²¹³³Genesis 21:33".

Verse 10. Every man-child-shall be circumcised.] Those who wish to invalidate the evidence of the Divine origin of the Mosaic law, roundly assert that the Israelites received the rite of circumcision from the Egyptians. Their apostle in this business is Herodotus, who, lib. ii., p. 116, Edit. Steph. 1592, says: "The Colchians, Egyptians, and Ethiopians, are the only nations in the world who have used circumcision $\alpha\pi\ \alpha\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$, from the remotest period; and the Phœnicians and Syrians who inhabit Palestine acknowledge they received this from the Egyptians." Herodotus cannot mean *Jews* by Phœnicians and Syrians; if he does he is incorrect, for no Jew ever did or ever could *acknowledge* this, with the history of Abraham in his hand. If Herodotus had written before the days of Abraham, or at least before the sojourning of the children of Israel in Egypt, and informed us that circumcision had been practised among them $\alpha\pi\ \alpha\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$, *from the beginning*, there would then exist a possibility that the Israelites while sojourning among them had learned and adopted this rite. But when we know that Herodotus flourished only 484 years before the Christian era, and that Jacob and his family sojourned in Egypt more than 1800 years before Christ, and that all the descendants of Abraham most conscientiously observed circumcision, and do so to this day, then the presumption is that the Egyptians received it from the Israelites, but that it was impossible the latter could have received it from the former, as they had practised it so long before their ancestors had sojourned in Egypt.

Verse 11. And it shall be a token] $\tau\omega\alpha\lambda$ *leoth*, for a sign of spiritual things; for the circumcision made in the flesh was designed to signify the purification of the heart from all unrighteousness, as God particularly

showed in the law itself. See ^{<51016>}**Deuteronomy 10:16**; see also ^{<51225>}**Romans 2:25-29**, ^{<51021>}**Colossians 2:11**. And it was *a seal of that righteousness* or justification that comes by *faith*, ^{<50411>}**Romans 4:11**. That some of the Jews had a just notion of its *spiritual* intention, is plain from many passages in the Chaldee paraphrases and in the Jewish writers. I borrow one passage from the book *Zohar*, quoted by Ainsworth: “At what time a man is sealed with this holy seal, (of circumcision,) thenceforth he seeth the holy blessed God properly, and the holy soul is united to him. If he be not worthy, and keepeth not this sign, what is written? *By the breath of God they perish*, (^{<18049>}**Job 4:9**.) because this seal of the holy blessed God was not kept. But if he be worthy, and keep it, the Holy Ghost is not separated from him.”

Verse 12. He that is eight days old] Because previously to this they were considered unclean, ^{<18121>}**Leviticus 12:2,3**, and circumcision was ever understood as a *consecration of the person to God*. Neither calf, lamb, nor kid, was offered to God till it was eight days old for the same reason, ^{<18227>}**Leviticus 22:27**.

Verse 13. He that is born in thy house] The son of a servant; *he that is bought with thy money*-a slave on his coming into the family. According to the Jewish writers the father was to circumcise his son; and the master, the servant born in his house, or the slave bought with money. If the father or master neglected to do this, then the magistrates were obliged to see it performed; if the neglect of this ordinance was unknown to the magistrates, then the person himself, when he came of age, was obliged to do it.

Verse 14. The uncircumcised-shall be cut off from his people] By being cut off some have imagined that a sudden temporal death was implied; but the simple meaning seems to be that such should have no right to nor share in the blessings of the covenant, which we have already seen were both of a temporal and spiritual kind; and if so, then eternal death was implied, for it was impossible for a person who had not received the *spiritual purification* to enter into eternal glory. The *spirit* of this law extends to all ages, dispensations, and people; he whose heart is not purified from sin cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Reader, on *what* is thy hope of heaven founded?

Verse 15. Thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah] See Clarke’s note on ^{<01175>}**Genesis 17:5**’.

Verse 16. I will bless her, &c.] Sarah certainly stands at the head of all the women of the Old Testament, on account of her extraordinary privileges. I am quite of Calmet's opinion that Sarah was a type of the blessed *Virgin*. St. Paul considers her a type of the *New Testament* and heavenly Jerusalem; and as all *true believers* are considered as the *children of Abraham*, so all *faithful holy women* are considered the *daughters of Sarah*, ^{<0422>}**Galatians 4:22, 24, 26**. See also ^{<0136>}**1 Peter 3:6**.

Verse 17. Then Abraham-laughed] I am astonished to find learned and pious men considering this as a token of Abraham's *weakness of faith* or *unbelief*, when they have the most positive assurance from the Spirit of God himself that *Abraham was not weak but strong in the faith*; that *he staggered not at the promise through unbelief*, but *gave glory to God*, ^{<0419>}**Romans 4:19, 20**. It is true the same word is used, ^{<0182>}**Genesis 18:12**, concerning Sarah, in whom it was certainly a sign of doubtfulness, though mixed with pleasure at the thought of the possibility of her becoming a mother; but we know how possible it is to express both *faith* and *unbelief* in the same way, and even pleasure and disdain have been expressed by a smile or laugh. By *laughing* Abraham undoubtedly expressed his *joy* at the prospect of the fulfilment of so glorious a promise; and from this very circumstance *Isaac* had his name. **qj xy yitschak**, which we change into *Isaac*, signifies *laughter*; and it is the same word which is used in the verse before us: *Abraham fell on his face*, **qj xyw vaiyitschak**, *and he laughed*; and to the *joy* which he felt on this occasion our Lord evidently alludes, ^{<0356>}**John 8:56**: *Your father Abraham REJOICED to see my day; and he saw it, and was GLAD*. And to commemorate this joy he called his son's name *Isaac*. See Clarke's note on ^{<0106>}**Genesis 21:6**".

Verse 18. O that Ishmael might live before thee!] Abraham, finding that the covenant was to be established in *another* branch of his family, felt solicitous for his son Ishmael, whom he considered as necessarily excluded; on which God delivers that most remarkable prophecy which follows in ^{<0173>}**Genesis 17:20**, and which contains an answer to the prayer and wish of Abraham: *And as for Ishmael I have heard thee*; so that the object of Abraham's prayer was, that his son Ishmael might be the head of a prosperous and potent people.

Verse 20. Twelve princes shall he beget, &c.] See the names of these *twelve princes*, ^{<0125>}**Genesis 25:12-16**. From Ishmael proceeded the various tribes of the Arabs, called also *Saracens* by Christian writers. They were

anciently, and still continue to be, a very numerous and powerful people. “It was somewhat wonderful, and not to be foreseen by human sagacity,” says Bishop Newton, “that a man’s whole posterity should so nearly resemble him, and retain the same inclinations, the same habits, and the same customs, throughout all ages! These are the only people besides the Jews who have subsisted as a distinct people from the beginning, and in some respects they very much resemble each other 1. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are descended from Abraham, and both boast of their descent from the father of the faithful. 2. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are circumcised, and both profess to have derived this ceremony from Abraham. 3. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, had originally *twelve patriarchs*, who were their princes or governors. 4. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, marry among themselves, and in their own tribes. 5. The Arabs, as well as the Jews, are singular in several of their customs, and are standing monuments to all ages of the exactness of the Divine predictions, and of the veracity of Scripture history. We may with more confidence believe the particulars related of Abraham and Ishmael when we see them verified in their posterity at this day. This is having, as it were, ocular demonstration for our faith.” See Bp. Newton’s *Second Dissertation on the Prophecies*, and See Clarke’s note on “^{<011612>}Genesis 16:12”.

Verse 21. My covenant will I establish with Isaac] All *temporal* good things are promised to Ishmael and his posterity, but the establishment of the Lord’s covenant is to be with Isaac. Hence it is fully evident that this covenant referred chiefly to *spiritual things*-to the Messiah, and the salvation which should be brought to both Jews and Gentiles by his incarnation, death, and glorification.

Verse 22. God went up from Abraham.] Ascended evidently before him, so that he had the fullest proof that it was no human being, no earthly angel or messenger, that talked with him; and the promise of a son in the course of a single year, *at this set time in the next year*, ^{<011721>}Genesis 17:21, which had every human probability against it, was to be the sure token of the truth of all that had hitherto taken place, and the proof that all that was farther promised should be fulfilled in its due time. Was it not in nearly the same way in which the Lord went up from Abraham, that Jesus Christ ascended to heaven in the presence of his disciples? ^{<02251>}Luke 24:51.

Verse 23. And Abraham took Ishmael, &c.] Had not Abraham, his son, (who was of age to judge for himself,) and all the family, been fully

convinced that this thing was of God, they could not have submitted to it. A rite so painful, so repugnant to every feeling of delicacy, and every way revolting to nature, could never have sprung up in the imagination of man. To this day the Jews practise it as a Divine ordinance; and all the Arabians do the same. As a distinction between *them* and *other people* it never could have been designed, because it was a *sign* that was never to *appear*. The individual alone knew that he bore in his flesh this sign of the covenant, and he bore it by the order of God, and he knew it was a *sign* and *seal* of spiritual blessings, and not the blessings themselves, though a proof that these blessings were promised, and that he had a *right* to them. Those who did not consider it in this spiritual reference are by the apostle denominated the *circision*, ^{<STRD>}**Philippians 3:2**, i.e., persons whose flesh was cut, but whose hearts were not purified.

THE contents of this chapter may be summed up in a few propositions:—

1. God, in renewing his *covenant* with Abram, makes an important *change* in his and Sarai's name; a change which should ever act as a help to their faith, that the promises by which God had bound himself should be punctually fulfilled. However difficult it may be for us to ascertain the precise import of the change then made, we may rest assured that it was perfectly understood by both; and that, as they had received this name from God, they considered it as placing them in a new relation both to their *Maker* and to their posterity. From what we have already seen, the change made in Abram's name is *inscrutable* to us; there is something like this in ^{<REV17>}**Revelation 2:17**: *To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and a NEW NAME-which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.* The full import of the *change* made in a soul that enters into covenant with God through Christ, is only known to itself; a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy. Hence, even men of learning and the world at large have considered experimental religion as enthusiasm, merely because they have not understood its nature, and have permitted themselves to be carried away by prejudices which they have imbibed perhaps at first through the means of ignorant or hypocritical pretenders to deep piety; but while they have the sacred writings before them, their prejudices and opposition to that without which they cannot be saved are as unprincipled as they are absurd.

2. God gives Abraham a *precept*, which should be observed, not only by himself, but by all his posterity; for this was to be a permanent sign of that covenant which was to endure for ever. Though the sign is now changed

from *circumcision* to *baptism*, each of them equally significant, yet the covenant is not changed in any part of its essential meaning. Faith in God through the great sacrifice, remission of sins, and sanctification of the heart, are required by the new covenant as well as by the old.

3. The rite of *circumcision* was *painful* and *humiliating*, to denote that *repentance, self-denial, &c.*, are absolutely necessary to all who wish for redemption in the blood of the covenant; and *the putting away this filth of the flesh* showed the necessity of a pure heart and a holy life.

4. As eternal life is the free gift of God, he has a right to give it in what way he pleases, and on what terms. He says to Abraham and his seed, *Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin*, and he that doth not so *shall be cut off from his people*. He says also to sinners in general, *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; Repent, and believe the Gospel*; and, *Except ye repent, ye shall perish*. These are the *terms* on which he will bestow the blessings of the old and new covenants. And let it be remembered that stretching out the hand to receive an alms can never be considered as *meriting* the *bounty* received, neither can repentance or faith *merit* salvation, although they are the conditions on which it is bestowed.

5. The *precepts* given under both covenants were accompanied with a *promise* of the *Messiah*. God well knows that no religious rite can be properly observed, and no precept obeyed, unless he impart strength from on high; and he teaches us that that strength must ever come through the promised seed. Hence, with the utmost propriety, we ask every blessing *through him*, in whom God is well pleased.

6. The *precept*, the *promise*, and the *rite*, were prefaced with, "I am God all-sufficient; walk before me, and be thou perfect." God, who is the sole object of religious worship, has the sole authority to prescribe that worship, and the rites and ceremonies which shall be used in it; hence he prescribed *circumcision* and *sacrifices* under the old law, and *baptism* and the *eucharist* under the Gospel; and to render both effectual to the end of their institution, *faith* in God was indispensably necessary.

7. Those who profess to believe in him must not live as *they* list, but as *he* pleases. Though redeemed from the curse of the law, and from the rites and ceremonies of the *Jewish Church*, they are *under the law to Christ*, and *must walk before him*-be in all things obedient to that *moral* law which

is an emanation from the righteousness of God, and of eternal obligation; and let it ever be remembered that Christ is “the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him.” Without faith and obedience there can be no holiness, and without holiness none can see the Lord. Be all that God would have thee to be, and God will be to thee” all that thou canst possibly require. He never gives a precept but he offers sufficient grace to enable thee to perform it. Believe as he would have thee, and act as he shall strengthen thee, and thou wilt believe all things *savingly*, and do all things *well*.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 18

The Lord appears unto Abraham in Mamre, 1. Three angels, in human appearance, come towards his tent, 2. He invites them in to wash and refresh themselves, 3-5; prepares a calf, bread, butter, and milk, for their entertainment; and himself serves them, 6-8. They promise that within a year Sarah shall have a son, 9, 10. Sarah, knowing herself and husband to be superannuated, smiles at the promise, 11, 12. One of the three, who is called the LORD or Jehovah, chides her, and asserts the sufficiency of the Divine power to accomplish the promise, 13, 14. Sarah, through fear, denies that she had laughed or showed signs of unbelief, 15. Abraham accompanies these Divine persons on their way to Sodom, 16; and that one who is called Jehovah informs him of his purpose to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, because of their great wickedness, 17-21. The two former proceed toward Sodom, while the latter (Jehovah) remains with Abraham, 22. Abraham intercedes for the inhabitants of those cities, entreating the Lord to spare them provided fifty righteous persons should be found in them, 23-25. The Lord grants this request, 26. He pleads for the same mercy should only forty-five be found there; which is also granted, 27, 28. He pleads the same for forty, which is also granted, 29; for thirty, with the same success, 30; for twenty, and receives the same gracious answer, 31; for ten, and the Lord assures him that should ten righteous persons be found there, he will not destroy the place, 32. Jehovah then departs, and Abraham returns to his tent, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. And the Lord appeared] See Clarke's note on "^{<01150>}Genesis 15:1".

Sat in the tent door] For the purpose of enjoying the refreshing air *in the heat of the day*, when the sun had most power. A custom still frequent among the Asiatics.

Verse 2. Three men stood by him] ^{wyl} [^{μybxn} *nitstsabim alaiv*, were *standing over against him*; for if they had been *standing by him*, as our translation says, he needed not to have "run from the tent door to meet them." To Abraham these appeared at first as *men*; but he *entertained angels unawares*, see ^{<813D>}**Hebrews 13:2**.

Verse 3. And said, My Lord, &c.] The word is *ynda Adonai*, not *hwwhy Yehovah*, for as yet Abraham did not know the quality of his guests. For an explanation of this word, See Clarke's note on "^{<01138>}Genesis 15:8".

Verse 4. Let a little water-be fetched, and wash your feet, &c.] In these verses we find a delightful picture of primitive hospitality. In those ancient times shoes such as ours were not in use; and the foot was protected only by *sandals* or *soles*, which fastened round the foot with straps. It was therefore a great refreshment in so hot a country to get the feet washed at the end of a day's journey; and this is the *first* thing that Abraham proposes.

Rest yourselves under the tree] We have already heard of the *oak grove* of Mamre, ^{<01126>}Genesis 12:6, and this was the *second* requisite for the refreshment of a weary traveller, viz., rest in the shade.

Verse 5. I will fetch a morsel of bread] This was the *third* requisite, and is introduced in its proper order; as eating immediately after exertion or fatigue is very unwholesome. The strong action of the lungs and heart should have time to diminish before any food is received into the stomach, as otherwise concoction is prevented, and fever in a less or greater degree produced.

For therefore are ye come] In those ancient days every traveller conceived he had a right to refreshment, when he needed it, at the first tent he met with on his journey.

So do as thou hast said.] How exceedingly simple was all this! On neither side is there any *compliment* but such as a generous heart and sound sense dictate.

Verse 6. Three measures of fine meal] The *has seah*, which is here translated *measure*, contained, according to Bishop Cumberland, about two gallons and a half; and Mr. Ainsworth translates the word *peck*. On this circumstance the following observations of the judicious and pious Abbe Fleury cannot fail to be acceptable to the reader. Speaking of the frugality of the patriarchs he says: "We have an instance of a splendid entertainment in that which Abraham made for the three angels. He set a whole *calf* before them, *new bread*, but baked on the hearth, together with *butter* and *milk*. *Three* measures of meal were baked into bread on this occasion, which come to more than two of our bushels, and nearly to

fifty-six pounds of our weight; hence we may conclude that men were great eaters in those days, used much exercise, were probably of a much larger stature as well as longer lives than we. Homer (*Odyss.* lib. xiv., ver. 74, &c.) makes his heroes great eaters. When *Eumæus* entertained Ulysses, he dressed *two pigs* for himself and his guest.

*‘So saying, he girded quick his tunic close,
And issuing sought the styes; thence bringing two,
Of the imprisoned herd, he slaughtered both,
Singed them and slash’d and spitted them, and placed
The whole well roasted, banquets spits, and all,
Reeking before Ulysses.’*
COWPER.

On another occasion a *hog* of *five* years old was slaughtered and served up for *five* persons:—

*‘-His wood for fuel he prepared,
And dragging thither a well-fatted brawn
Of the fifth year:
Next piercing him, and scorching close his hair,
The joints they parted,’ &c.*
Ibid. ver. 419. — COWPER.

Homer’s heroes wait upon themselves and guests in the common occasions of life; the patriarchs do the same. Abraham, who had so many servants, and was nearly a hundred years old, brought the water himself to wash the feet of his guests, ordered his wife to make the bread quickly, went himself to choose the calf from the herd, and came again to serve them *standing*. I will allow that he was animated on this occasion with a desire of showing hospitality, but the lives of all the rest of the patriarchs were similar to this.”

Make cakes upon the hearth.] Or under the ashes. This mode is used in the east to the present day. When the hearth is strongly heated with the fire that has been kindled on it, they remove the coals, sweep off the ashes, lay on the bread, and then cover it with the hot cinders.

Verse 8. And he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.]

Nothing is more common in *Hindustan* than to see travellers and guests *eating under the shade of trees*. Feasts are scarcely ever held in *houses*. The house of a Hindoo serves for *sleeping* and *cooking*, and for *shutting up the women*; but is never considered as a *sitting* or *dining* room.—*Ward*.

Verse 10. I will certainly return] Abraham was now *ninety-nine* years of age, and this promise was fulfilled when he was a *hundred*; so that the phrase *according to the time of life* must mean either a *complete year*, or *nine months* from the present time, the ordinary time of pregnancy. Taken in this latter sense, Abraham was now in the ninety-ninth year of his age, and Isaac was born when he was in his hundredth year.

Verse 11. It ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.] And consequently, naturally speaking, conception could not take place; therefore if she have a son it must be in a *supernatural* or *miraculous* way.

Verse 12. Sarah laughed] Partly through pleasure at the bare idea of the *possibility* of the thing, and partly from a conviction that it was extremely *improbable*. She appears to have been in the same spirit, and to have had the same feelings of those who, unexpectedly hearing of something of great consequence to themselves, *smile* and say, “The news is too good to be true;”, see ^{<01206>}**Genesis 21:6**. There is a case very similar to this mentioned ^{<0000>}**Psalm 126:1,2**. On Abraham’s laughing, **See Clarke’s note on** ^{<01177>}**Genesis 17:17**”.

Verse 13. And the LORD (Jehovah) said, &c.] So it appears that one of those three persons was *Jehovah*, and as this name is never given to any created being, consequently the ever-blessed God is intended; and as he was never seen in any bodily shape, consequently the great Angel of the covenant, Jesus Christ, must be meant. **See Clarke’s note on** ^{<0107>}**Genesis 16:7**”.

Verse 14. Is any thing too hard for the Lord?] *rbd hw hym al pyh hayippale meihovah dabar*, shall a word (or thing) be wonderful from the Lord? i.e., Can any thing be too great a miracle for *him* to effect? The Septuagint translate the passage, *μη αδυνατησει παρα τω θεω ρημα*; which St. Luke adopts almost literatim, only making it an *affirmative* position instead of a *question*: *ουκ αδυνατησει παρα τω θεω παν ρημα*, which we translate, “With God nothing shall be impossible,” ^{<0137>}**Luke 1:37**. Many copies of the Septuagint insert the word *παν* before *ρημα*, as in St. Luke; but it makes little difference in the sense. It was to correct Sarah’s unbelief, and to strengthen her faith, that God spoke these most important words; words which state that where human wisdom, prudence, and energy fall, and where nature herself ceases to be an agent, through lack of energy to act, or laws to direct and regulate energy, *there*

also God has *full sway*, and by his own omnific power works all things after the counsel of his own will. Is there an effect to be produced? God can produce it as well *without* as *with* means. He produced nature, the whole system of causes and effects, when in the whole compass of his own eternity there was neither *means* nor *being*. HE spake, and it was done; HE commanded, and it stood fast. How great and wonderful is God!

Verse 16. Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.] This was another piece of primitive hospitality-to direct strangers in the way. Public roads did not then exist and guides were essentially necessary in countries where villages were seldom to be met with, and where solitary dwellings did not exist.

Verse 17. Shall I hide from Abraham] That is, I will not hide. A common mode of speech in Scripture-a question asked when an affirmative is designed. *Do men gather grapes of thorns?* Men do not gather grapes of thorns, &c.

Verse 18. Shall surely become a great and mighty nation] The revelation that I make to him shall be preserved among his posterity; and the exact fulfilment of my promises, made so long before, shall lead them to believe in my name and trust in my goodness.

Verse 19. And they shall keep the way of the Lord] The true religion; God's WAY; that in which God walks himself, and in which, of course, his *followers* walk also; *to do justice and judgment*; not only to preserve the truth in their *creed*, but maintain it in their *practice*.

Verse 20. Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah] See Clarke's note on "^{<011313>}Genesis 13:13".

Verse 21. I will go down now, &c.] A lesson to magistrates, teaching them not to judge according to report, but accurately to inquire into the facts themselves.-*Jarchi*.

Verse 22. And the men turned their faces] That is, the two angels who accompanied Jehovah were now sent towards Sodom; while the third, who is called the LORD or *Jehovah*, remained with Abraham for the purpose of teaching him the great usefulness and importance of faith and prayer.

Verse 23. Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?] A form of speech similar to that in "^{<011817>}Genesis 18:17, an invariable principle

of justice, that the righteous shall not be punished for the crimes of the impious. And this Abraham lays down as the *foundation* of his supplications. Who can pray with any hope of success who cannot assign a *reason* to God and his *conscience* for the petitions he offers? The great sacrifice offered by Christ is an infinite reason why a penitent sinner should expect to find the mercy for which he pleads.

Verse 25. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?] God alone is the Judge of all men. Abraham, in thus addressing himself to the person in the text, considers him either as the Supreme Being or his representative.

Verse 27. Which am but dust and ashes] *rpaw rp* [*aphar vaepher*, words very similar in sound, as they refer to matters which so much resemble each other. *Dust*-the lightest particles of earth. *Ashes*-the residuum of consumed substances. By these expressions he shows how deeply his soul was humbled in the presence of God. He who has *high* thoughts of himself must have *low* thoughts of the dignity of the Divine nature, of the majesty of God, and the sinfulness of sin.

Verse 32. Peradventure ten shall be found there] Knowing that in the family of his nephew the true religion was professed and practised, he could not suppose there could be less than ten righteous persons in the city, he did not think it necessary to urge his supplication farther; he therefore left off his entreaties, and the Lord departed from him. It is highly worthy of observation, that while he continued to pray the presence of God was continued; and when Abraham ended, “the glory of the Lord was lifted up,” as the Targum expresses it.

THIS chapter, though containing only the preliminaries to the awful catastrophe detailed in the next, affords us several lessons of useful and important information.

1. The hospitality and humanity of Abraham are worthy, not only of our most serious regard, but also of our *imitation*. He sat in the door of his tent in the heat of the day, not only to enjoy the current of refreshing air, but that if he saw any weary and exhausted travellers he might invite them to rest and refresh themselves. Hospitality is ever becoming in one human being towards another; for every destitute man is a *brother* in distress, and demands our most prompt and affectionate assistance, according to that heavenly precept, “What ye would that men should do unto you, do even so unto them.” From this conduct of Abraham a Divine precept is formed:

“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. ^{<8132>}**Hebrews 13:2.**

2. Whatever is given on the ground of humanity and mercy is given unto God, and is sure to meet with his approbation and a suitable reward. While Abraham entertained his guests God discovers himself, and reveals to him the counsels of his will, and renews the promise of a numerous posterity. Sarah, though naturally speaking past child-bearing, shall have a son: natural obstacles cannot hinder the purpose of God; nature is his instrument; and as it works not only by general laws, but also by any particular will of God, so it may accomplish that will in any way he may choose to direct. It is always difficult to credit God’s *promises* when they relate to *supernatural* things, and still more so when they have for their object events that are *contrary* to the course of nature; but as *nothing is too hard for God*, so “all things are possible to him that believeth.” It is that faith alone which is of the operation of God’s Spirit, that is capable of crediting supernatural things; he who does not pray to be enabled to believe, or, if he do, uses not the power when received, can never believe to the saving of the soul.

3. Abraham trusts much in God, and God reposes much confidence in Abraham. He knows that God is faithful, and will fulfil his promises; and God knows that Abraham is faithful, and will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; ^{<01189>}**Genesis 18:19.** No man lives unto himself; and God gives us neither *spiritual* nor *temporal* blessings for ourselves alone; our bread we are to divide with the hungry, and to help the stranger in distress. He who understands the *way of God* should carefully instruct his household in that way; and he who is the father of a family should pray to God to teach him, that he may teach his household. His ignorance of God and salvation can be no excuse for his neglecting his family: it is his indispensable duty to teach them; and God will teach him, if he earnestly seek it, that he may be able to discharge this duty to his family. Reader, if thy children or servants perish through thy neglect, God will judge thee for it in the great day.

4. The sin of Sodom and the cities of the plain was great and grievous; the measure of their iniquity was full, and God determined to destroy them. Judgment is God’s *strange work*, but though rarely done it must be done sometimes, lest men should suppose that right and wrong, vice and virtue,

are alike in the eye of God. And these judgments must be dispensed in such a way as to show they are not the results of natural causes, but come immediately from the incensed justice of the Most High.

5. Every man who loves God loves his neighbour also; and he who loves his neighbour will do all in his power to promote the well-being both of his soul and his body. Abraham cannot prevent the men of Sodom from sinning against God; but he can make prayer and intercession for their souls, and plead, if not in arrest, yet in mitigation, of judgment. He therefore intercedes for the transgressors, and God is well pleased with his intercessions. These are the offspring of God's own love in the heart of his servant.

6. How true is that word, The energetic faithful prayer of a righteous man availeth much! Abraham *draws near to God* by affection and faith, and in the most devout and humble manner makes prayer and supplication; and every petition is answered on the spot. Nor does God cease to promise to show mercy till Abraham ceases to intercede! What encouragement does this hold out to them that fear God, to make prayer and intercession for their sinful neighbours and ungodly relatives! Faith in the Lord Jesus endues prayer with a species of omnipotence; whatsoever a man asks of the Father in his name, he will do it. Prayer has been termed the *gate* of heaven, but without *faith* that gate cannot be *opened*. He who *prays* as he *should*, and *believes* as he *ought*, shall have the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel of peace.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 19

The two angels mentioned in the preceding chapter, come in the evening to Sodom, 1. Lot, who was sitting at the gate, invites them to enter his house, take some refreshment, and tarry all night; which they at first refuse, 2; but on being pressingly solicited, they at last comply, 3. The abominable conduct of the men of Sodom, 4, 5. Lot's deep concern for the honour and safety of his guests, which leads him to make a most exceptionable proposal to those wicked men, 6-8. The violent proceedings of the Sodomites, 9. Lot rescued from their barbarity by the angels, who smite them with blindness, 10, 11. The angels exhort Lot and his family to flee from that wicked place, as God was about to destroy it, 12, 13. Lot's fruitless exhortation to his sons-in-law, 14. The angels hasten Lot and his family to depart, 15, 16. Their exhortation, 17. Lot's request, 18-20. He is permitted to escape to Zoar, 21-23. Fire and brimstone are rained down from heaven upon all the cities of the plain, by which they are entirely destroyed, 24, 25. Lot's wife, looking behind, becomes a pillar of salt, 26. Abraham, early in the morning, discovers the desolation of those iniquitous cities, 27-29. Lot, fearing to continue in Zoar, went with his two daughters to the mountain, and dwelt in a cave, 30. The strange conduct of his daughters, and his unhappy deception, 31-36. Moab and Ammon born, from whom sprang the Moabites and Ammonites, 37, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. Two angels] The two referred to ^{<0182>}**Genesis 18:22**.

Sat in the gate] Probably, in order to prevent unwary travellers from being entrapped by his wicked townsmen, he waited at the gate of the city to bring the strangers he might meet with to his own house, as well as to transact his own business. Or, as the gate was the place of judgment, he might have been sitting there as *magistrate* to hear and determine disputes.

Bowed himself] Not through religious reverence, for he did not know the quality of his guests; but through the customary form of civility. See on verses ^{<0183>}**Genesis 18:3-5** of the preceding chapter.

Verse 2. Nay; but we will abide in the street] Instead of **al lo**, nay, some MSS. have **wl lo**, to him; "And they said *unto him*, for we lodge in the street." where, nevertheless, the negation is understood. Knowing the disposition of the inhabitants, and appearing in the mere character of

travellers, they preferred the open street to any house; but as Lot pressed them vehemently, and they knew him to be a righteous man, not yet willing to make themselves known, they consented to take shelter under his hospitable roof. Our Lord, willing for the time being to conceal his person from the knowledge of the disciples going to Emmaus, made as though he would go farther, ^{<02413>}**Luke 24:13**; but at last, like the angels here, yielded to the importunity of his disciples, and went into their lodgings.

Verse 5. Where are the men which came in to thee, &c.] This account justifies the character given of this depraved people in the preceding chapter, ^{<01820>}**Genesis 18:20**, and in ^{<02313>}**Genesis 23:13**. As their crime was the deepest disgrace to human nature, so it is too bad to be described; in the sacred text it is sufficiently marked; and the iniquity which, from these most abominable wretches, has been called *Sodomy*, is punished in our country with death.

Verse 8. Behold now, I have two daughters] Nothing but that sacred light in which the rights of hospitality were regarded among the eastern nations, could either justify or palliate this proposal of Lot. A man who had taken a stranger under his care and protection, was bound to defend him even at the expense of his own life. In this light the rights of hospitality are still regarded in Asiatic countries; and on these high notions only, the influence of which an Asiatic mind alone can properly appreciate, Lot's conduct on this occasion can be at all excused: but even then, it was not only the language of anxious solicitude, but of unwarrantable haste.

Verse 9. And he will needs be a judge] So *his sitting in the gate* is perhaps a farther proof of his being there in a *magisterial* capacity, as some have supposed.

Verse 11. And they smote the men-with blindness] This has been understood two ways: 1. The angels, by the power which God had given them, deprived these wicked men of a proper and regular use of their sight, so as either totally to deprive them of it, or render it so confused that they could no longer distinguish objects; or, 2. They caused such a deep darkness to take place, that they could not find Lot's door. The author of the book of *Wisdom* was evidently of this latter opinion, for he says they *were compassed about with horrible great darkness*, ^{<01917>}**Genesis 19:17**. See a similar case of Elisha and the Syrians, ^{<02618>}**2 Kings 6:18**, &c.

Verse 12. Hast thou here any besides? son-in-law] Here there appears to be but *one* meant, as the word [^]tj *chathan* is in the *singular* number; but in ^{<01914>}**Genesis 19:14** the word is *plural*, wytj *chathanaiv*, his sons-in-law. There were only *two* in number; as we do not hear that Lot had more than two daughters: and these seem not to have been *actually* married to those daughters, but only *betroted*, as is evident from what Lot says, ^{<01908>}**Genesis 19:8**; for they had *not known man*, but were the spouses *elect* of those who are here called his sons-in-law. But though these might be reputed as a part of Lot's family, and entitled on this account to God's protection, yet it is sufficiently plain that they did not escape the perdition of these wicked men; and the reason is given, ^{<01914>}**Genesis 19:14**, they received the solemn warning as a ridiculous tale, the creature of Lot's invention, or the offspring of his fear. Therefore they made no provision for their escape, and doubtless perished, notwithstanding the sincerely offered grace, in the perdition that fell on this ungodly city.

Verse 16. While he lingered] Probably in affectionate though useless entreaties to prevail on the remaining parts of his family to escape from the destruction that was now descending; *laid hold upon his hand*-pulled them away by mere force, *the Lord being merciful*; else they had been left to perish in their *lingering*, as the others were in their *gainsaying*.

Verse 17. When they had brought them forth, &c.] Every word here is emphatic, *Escape for thy LIFE*; thou art in the most imminent danger of perishing; thy *life* and thy *soul* are both at stake. *Look not behind thee*-thou hast but barely time enough to escape from the judgment that is now descending; no lingering, or thou art lost! one *look back* may prove fatal to thee, and God commands thee to avoid it. *Neither stay thou in all the plain*, because God will destroy that as well as the city. *Escape to the mountain*, on which these judgments shall not light, and which God has appointed thee for a place of refuge; *lest thou be CONSUMED*. It is not an ordinary judgment that is coming; a fire from heaven shall burn up the cities, the plain, and all that remain in the cities and in the plain. Both the *beginning* and *end* of this exhortation are addressed to his *personal feelings*. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life;" and *self-preservation is the first law of nature*, to which every other consideration is minor and unimportant.

Verse 19. I cannot escape to the mountain] He saw the destruction so near, that he imagined he should not have time sufficient to reach the

mountain before it arrived. He did not consider that God could give no command to his creatures that it would be impossible for them to fulfil; but the hurry and perturbation of his mind will at once account for and excuse this gross oversight.

Verse 20. It is a little one] Probably Lot wished to have it for an inheritance, and therefore pleaded its being a *little* one, that his request might be the more readily granted. Or he might suppose, that being a *little city*, it was less depraved than Sodom and Gomorrah, and therefore not so ripe for punishment; which was probably the case.

Verse 21. See, I have accepted thee] How prevalent is prayer with God! Far from refusing to grant a reasonable petition, he shows himself as if under embarrassment to deny any.

Verse 22. I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither.] So these heavenly messengers had the strictest commission to take care of Lot and his family; and even the purposes of Divine justice could not be accomplished on the rebellious, till this righteous man and his family had escaped from the place. A proof of Abraham's assertion, *The Judge of all the earth will do right.*

The name of the city was called Zoar.] ר [wx *Tsoar*, LITTLE, its former name being *Bela*.

Verse 24. The Lord rained-brimstone and fire from the Lord] As all judgment is committed to the Son of God, many of the primitive fathers and several modern divines have supposed that the words *hwbyw vaihovah* and *hwby tam meeth Yehovah* imply, *Jehovah the Son* raining brimstone and fire from *Jehovah the Father*; and that this place affords no mean proof of the proper Divinity of our blessed Redeemer. It may be so; but though the point is sufficiently established elsewhere, it does not appear to me to be *plainly* indicated here. And it is always better on a subject of this kind not to have recourse to *proofs* which require *proofs* to confirm them. It must however be granted that *two* persons mentioned as Jehovah in one verse, is both a strange and curious circumstance; and it will appear more remarkable when we consider that the person called Jehovah, who conversed with Abraham, (see chap. xviii.,) and sent those two angels to bring Lot and his family out of this devoted place, and seems himself after he left off talking with Abraham to have ascended to heaven, ^{<011933>} **Genesis**

19:33, does not any more appear on this occasion till we hear that *JEHOVAH rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from JEHOVAH out of heaven*. This certainly gives much countenance to the opinion referred to above, though still it may fall short of positive proof.

Brimstone and fire.-The word *tyrpg gophrith*, which we translate *brimstone*, is of very uncertain derivation. It is evidently used metaphorically, to point out the utmost degrees of punishment executed on the most flagitious criminals, in ^{<16223>}**Deuteronomy 29:23**; ^{<181815>}**Job 18:15**; ^{<91106>}**Psalm 11:6**; ^{<2340>}**Isaiah 34:9**; ^{<5322>}**Ezekiel 38:22**. And as *hell*, or an everlasting separation from God and the glory of his power, is the utmost punishment that can be inflicted on sinners, hence brimstone and fire are used in Scripture to signify the torments in that place of punishment. See ^{<2303>}**Isaiah 30:33**; ^{<6140>}**Revelation 14:10; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8**. We may safely suppose that it was quite possible that a shower of *nitrous* particles might have been precipitated from the atmosphere, here, as in many other places, called *heaven*, which, by the action of *fire* or the *electric fluid*, would be immediately ignited, and so consume the cities; and, as we have already seen that the plains about Sodom and Gomorrah abounded with *asphaltus* or *bitumen* pits, (see ^{<0140>}**Genesis 14:10**;) that what is particularly meant here in reference to the plain is the setting fire to this vast store of inflammable matter by the agency of lightning or the electric fluid; and this, in the most natural and literal manner, accounts for the whole plain being burnt up, as that plain abounded with this bituminous substance; and thus we find *three* agents employed in the total ruin of these cities, and all the circumjacent plain: 1. Innumerable *nitrous particles* precipitated from the atmosphere. 2. The vast quantity of *asphaltus* or *bitumen* which abounded in that country: and, 3. *Lightning* or the electric spark, which ignited the nitre and bitumen, and thus consumed both the cities and the plain or champaign country in which they were situated.

Verse 25. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain] This forms what is called the lake *Asphaltites*, *Dead Sea*, or *Salt Sea*, which, according to the most authentic accounts, is about seventy miles in length, and eighteen in breadth.

The most strange and incredible tales are told by many of the ancients, and by many of the moderns, concerning the *place* where these cities stood. Common fame says that the waters of this sea are so *thick* that a stone will not sink in them, so tough and *clammy* that the most boisterous wind

cannot ruffle them, so *deadly* that no fish can live in them, and that if a bird happen to fly over the lake, it is killed by the poisonous effluvia proceeding from the waters; that scarcely any verdure can grow near the place, and that in the vicinity where there are any trees they bear a most beautiful fruit, but when you come to open it you find nothing but *ashes!* and that the place was burning long after the apostles' times. These and all similar tales may be safely pronounced great exaggerations of facts, or fictions of ignorant, stupid, and superstitious monks, or impositions of unprincipled travellers, who, knowing that the common people are delighted with the *marvellous*, have stuffed their narratives with such accounts merely to procure a better sale for their books.

The truth is, the waters are exceedingly salt, far beyond the usual saltness of the sea, and hence it is called the *Salt Sea*. In consequence of this circumstance bodies will float in it that would sink in common salt water, and probably it is on this account that few fish can live in it. But the monks of St. Saba affirmed to Dr. Shaw, *that they had seen fish caught in it*; and as to the reports of any noxious quality in the air, or in the evaporations from its surface, the simple fact is, lumps of bitumen often rise from the bottom to its surface, and exhale a foetid odour which does not appear to have any thing poisonous in it. Dr. Pococke swam in it for nearly a quarter of an hour, and felt no kind of inconvenience; the water, he says, is *very clear*, and having brought away a bottle of it, he "had it *analyzed*, and found it to contain no substances besides *salt* and a *little alum*."

As there are frequent eruptions of a bituminous matter from the bottom of this lake, which seem to argue a subterraneous fire, hence the accounts that this place was burning even after the days of the apostles. And this phenomenon still continues, for "masses of bitumen," says Dr. Shaw, "in large hemispheres, are raised at certain times from the bottom, which, as soon as they touch the surface, and are thereby acted upon by the external air, burst at once, with *great smoke* and *noise*, like the *pulvis fulminans* of the chemists, and disperse themselves in a thousand pieces. But this only happens near the shore, for in greater depths the eruptions are supposed to discover themselves in such *columns of smoke* as are now and then observed to arise from the lake. And perhaps to such eruptions as these we may attribute that variety of *pits* and *hollows*, not unlike the traces of many of our ancient limekilns, which are found in the neighbourhood of this lake. The *bitumen* is in all probability accompanied from the bottom with *sulphur*, as both of them are found promiscuously upon the shore, and the

latter is precisely the same with common native sulphur; the other is friable, yielding upon friction, or by being put into the fire, a fœtid smell." The bitumen, after having been some time exposed to the air, becomes indurated like a stone. I have some portions of it before me, brought by a friend of mine from the spot; it is very black, hard, and on friction yields a fœtid odour.

For several curious particulars on this subject, see Dr. Pococke's Travels, vol. ii., part 1, chap. 9, and Dr. Shaw's Travels, 4to. edit., p. 346, &c.

Verse 26. She became a pillar of salt] The vast variety of opinions, both ancient and modern, on the crime of Lot's wife, her change, and the manner in which that change was effected, are in many cases as unsatisfactory as they are ridiculous. On this point the sacred Scripture says little. God had commanded Lot and his family not to look behind them; the wife of Lot disobeyed this command; *she looked back from behind him*-Lot, her husband, *and she became a pillar of salt*. This is all the information the inspired historian has thought proper to give us on this subject; it is true the account is short, but commentators and critics have made it long enough by their laborious glosses. The opinions which are the most probable are the following: 1. "Lot's wife, by the miraculous power of God, was changed into a mass of rock salt, probably retaining the human figure." 2. "Tarrying too long in the plain, she was struck with lightning and enveloped in the bituminous and sulphuric matter which abounded in that country, and which, not being exposed afterwards to the action of the fire, resisted the air and the wet, and was thus rendered permanent." 3. "She was struck dead and consumed in the burning up of the plain; and this judgment on her disobedience being recorded, is an imperishable memorial of the fact itself, and an everlasting warning to sinners in general, and to backsliders or apostates in particular." On these opinions it may be only necessary to state that the two first understand the text *literally*, and that the last considers it *metaphorically*. That God might in a moment convert this disobedient woman into a *pillar* or *mass of salt*, or any *other substance*, there can be no doubt. Or that, by continuing in the plain till the brimstone and fire descended from heaven, she might be *struck dead with lightning*, and *indurated* or *petrified* on the spot, is as possible. And that the account of her becoming a *pillar of salt* may be designed to be understood *metaphorically*, is also highly probable. It is certain that *salt* is frequently used in the Scriptures as an emblem of *incorruption*, *durability*, &c. Hence a *covenant of salt*, ⁽⁴¹⁸⁾**Numbers 18:19**, is a

perpetual covenant, one that is ever to be in full force, and never broken; on this ground a *pillar of salt* may signify no more *in this case* than an *everlasting* monument against criminal curiosity, unbelief, and disobedience.

Could we depend upon the various accounts given by different persons who pretend to have seen the wife of Lot standing in her complete human form, with all her *distinctive marks about her*, the difficulty would be at an end. But we cannot depend on these accounts; they are discordant, improbable, ridiculous, and often grossly absurd. Some profess to have seen her as a *heap of salt*; others, as a *rock of salt*; others, as a *complete human being* as to shape, proportion of parts, &c., &c., but only petrified. This human form, according to others, has still resident in it a miraculous continual energy; break off a finger, a toe, an arm, &c., it is immediately *reproduced*, so that though multitudes of curious persons have gone to see this woman, and every one has brought away a part of her, yet still she is found by the next comer a complete human form! To crown this absurd description, the author of the poem *Deuteronomy Sodoma*, usually attributed to Tertullian, and annexed to his works, represents her as yet *instinct with a portion of animal life, which is unequivocally designated by certain signs which every month produces*. I shall transcribe the whole passage and refer to my author; and as I have given above the *sense* of the whole, my readers must excuse me from giving a more literal translation:—

—————*et simul illic*

*In fragilem mutata salem, stetit ipsa sepulchrum,
Ipsaque imago sibi, formam sine corpore servans
Durat adhuc etenim nuda statione sub æthra,
Nec pluviis dilapsa situ, nec diruta ventis.*

*Quinettam, si quis mutilaverit advena formam,
Protinus ex sese suggestu vulnera complet.
Dicitur et vivens alio sub corpore sexus
Munificos solito dispungere sanguine menses.
TERTULLIANI Opera, vol. ii., p. 731.
Edit. OBERTHUR.*

The sentiment in the last lines is supported by Irenæus, who assures us that, though still remaining as a *pillar of salt*, the statue, in form and other *natural accidents*, exhibits decisive proofs of its original. *James non caro corruptibilis, sed statua salis semper manens*, et, per naturalia, ea quæ *sunt* consuetudinis hominis *ostendens*, lib. iv., c. 51. To complete this

absurdity, this father makes her an emblem of the true Church, which, though she suffers much, and often loses whole members, yet preserves the *pillar of salt*, that is, *the foundation of the true faith*, &c. See *Calmet*.

Josephus says that this pillar was standing in his time, and that himself had seen it: *Εις στηλην αλων μετεβαλεν, ιοτορηκα δ αυτην, ετι γαρ και νυν δοιμενει*. Ant. lib. i., c. xi. 3, 4.

St. Clement, in his *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, chap. ii., follows Josephus, and asserts that Lot's wife was remaining even at that time as a pillar of salt.

Authors of respectability and credit who have since travelled into the Holy Land, and made it *their business* to inquire into this subject in the most particular and careful manner, have not been able to meet with *any remains of this pillar*; and all accounts begin now to be confounded in the pretty general concession, both of Jews and Gentiles, that either the statue does not now remain, or that some of the heaps of salt or blocks of salt rock which are to be met with in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, may be the remains of Lot's wife! All speculations on this subject are perfectly idle; and if the general prejudice in favour of the *continued existence* of this monument of God's justice had not been very strong, I should not have deemed myself justified in entering so much at length into the subject. Those who profess to have seen it, have in general sufficiently invalidated their own testimony by the monstrous absurdities with which they have encumbered their relations. Had Lot's wife been changed in the way that many have supposed, and had she been still preserved somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, surely we might expect some account of it in after parts of the Scripture history; but it is never more mentioned in the Bible, and occurs nowhere in the New Testament but in the simple reference of our Lord to the *judgment itself*, as a warning to the disobedient and backsliding, ^{<2172>}**Luke 17:32**: *Remember Lot's wife!*

Verse 27. Abraham gat up early in the morning] Anxious to know what was the effect of the prayers which he had offered to God the preceding day; what must have been his astonishment when he found that all these cities, with the plain which resembled the garden of the Lord, ^{<0130>}**Genesis 13:10**, burnt up, and the smoke ascending like the *smoke of a furnace*, and was thereby assured that even God himself could not discover *ten righteous persons* in four whole cities!

Verse 29. God remembered Abraham] Though he did not descend lower than *ten* righteous persons, (see ^{<01832>}**Genesis 18:32,**) yet the Lord had respect to the spirit of his petitions, and spared all those who could be called *righteous*, and for Abraham's sake offered salvation to all the family of Lot, though neither his sons-in-law elect nor his own wife ultimately profited by it. The former ridiculed the warning; and the latter, though led out by the hands of the angel, yet by breaking the command of God perished with the other gainsayers.

Verse 30. Lot went up out of Zoar] From seeing the universal desolation that had fallen upon the land, and that the fire was still continuing its depredations, *he feared to dwell in Zoar*, lest that also should be consumed, and then went to those very mountains to which God had ordered him at first to make his escape. Foolish man is ever preferring his own wisdom to that of his Maker. It was wrong at first not to betake himself to the mountain; it was wrong in the next place to go to it when God had given him the assurance that *Zoar* should be spared for his sake. Both these cases argue a strange want of faith, not only in the truth, but also in the providence, of God. Had he still dwelt at Zoar, the shameful transaction afterwards recorded had in all probability not taken place.

Verse 31. Our father is old]. And consequently not likely to re-marry; *and there is not a man in the earth*-none left, according to their opinion in all *the land* of Canaan, of *their own family and kindred*; and they might think it unlawful to match with others, such as the inhabitants of Zoar, who they knew had been devoted to destruction as well as those of Sodom and Gomorrah, and were only saved at the earnest request of their father; and probably while they lived among them they found them ripe enough for punishment, and therefore would have thought it both dangerous and criminal to have formed any matrimonial connections with them.

Verse 32. Come, let us make our father drink wine] On their flight from Zoar it is probable they had brought with them certain provisions to serve them for the time being, and the *wine* here mentioned among the rest.

After considering all that has been said to criminate both Lot and his daughters in this business, I cannot help thinking that the transaction itself will bear a more favourable construction than that which has been generally put on it. 1. It does not appear that it was through any base or sensual desires that the daughters of Lot wished to deceive their father. 2. They might have thought that it would have been criminal to have married into

any other family, and they knew that their husbands elect, who were probably of the same kindred, had perished in the overthrow of Sodom. 3. They might have supposed that there was no other way left to preserve the family, and consequently that righteousness for which it had been remarkable, but the way which they now took.

4. They appear to have supposed that their father would not come into the measure, because he would have considered it as profane; yet, judging the measure to be expedient and necessary, they endeavoured to *sanctify the improper means* used, by the *goodness of the end* at which they aimed; a doctrine which, though resorted to by many, should be reprobated by all. Acting on this bad principle they caused their father to drink wine. **See Clarke's note on "⁻⁰¹¹⁹³⁸Genesis 19:38"**.

Verse 33. And he perceived not when she lay down, nor when, &c.]

That is, he did not perceive *the time* she came to his bed, nor *the time* she quitted it; consequently did not know *who it was* that had lain with him. In this transaction Lot appears to me to be in many respects excusable. 1. He had no accurate knowledge of what took place either on the first or second night, therefore he cannot be supposed to have been drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. That he must have been sensible that some person had been in his bed, it would be ridiculous to deny; but he might have judged it to have been some of his female domestics, which it is reasonable to suppose he might have brought from Zoar. 2. It is very likely that he was *deceived* in the wine, as well as in the consequences; either he knew not the strength of the wine, or wine of a superior power had been given to him on this occasion. As he had in general followed the simple pastoral life, it is not to be wondered at if he did not know the intoxicating power of wine, and being an old man, and unused to it, a small portion would be sufficient to overcome him; sound sleep would soon, at his time of life, be the effect of taking the liquor to which he was unaccustomed, and cause him to forget the effects of his intoxication. Except in this case, his *moral* conduct stands unblemished in the sacred writings; and as the whole transaction, especially as it relates to him, is capable of an interpretation not wholly injurious to his piety, both reason and religion conjoin to recommend that explanation. As to his daughters, let their *ignorance* of the real state of the case plead for them, as far as that *can* go; and let it be remembered that their sin was of that very peculiar nature as never to be capable of becoming a *precedent*. For it is scarcely possible that any should

ever be able to plead similar circumstances in vindication of a similar line of conduct.

Verse 37. Called his name Moab] This name is generally interpreted of *the father*, or, according to Calmet, **bawm** *Moab, the waters of the father*.

Verse 38. Ben-ammi] **ym[ˆb** *Ben-ammi, the son of my people*. Both these names seem to justify the view taken of this subject above, *viz.*, that it was merely to *preserve the family* that the daughters of Lot made use of the above expedient; and hence we do not find that they ever attempted to *repeat* it, which, had it been done for any other purpose, they certainly would not have failed to do. On this subject Origen, in his fifth homily on Genesis, has these remarkable words: *Ubi hic libidinis culpa, ubi incesti criminis arguitur? Quomodo dabitur in VITIO QUOD NON ITERATUR IN FACTO? Vercor proloqui quod sentio, vereor, inquam, ne castior fuerit harum incestus, quam pudicitia multarum*. “Where, in all this transaction, can the crime of lust or of incest be proved? How can this be proved to be a *vice* when the *fact* was *never repeated*? I am afraid to speak my whole mind on the subject, lest the incest of *these* should appear more laudable than the chastity of multitudes.” There is a distinction made here by Origen which is worthy of notice; a single *bad act*, though a *sin*, does not necessarily argue a *vicious* heart, as in order to be *vicious* a man must be *habituated* to sinful acts.

The generation which proceeded from this incestuous connection, whatever may be said in extenuation of the transaction, (its peculiar circumstances being considered,) was certainly a *bad* one. The *Moabites* soon fell from the faith of God, and became *idolaters*, the people of *Chemosh*, and of *Baal-peor*, ^{<0212>}**Numbers 21:29; 25:1-3**; and were enemies to the children of Abraham. See ^{<0221>}**Numbers 22:1-6** &c.; ^{<0714>}**Judges 3:14**, &c. And the *Ammonites*, who dwelt near to the *Moabites*, united with them in idolatry, and were also enemies to Israel. See ^{<0710>}**Judges 11:4, 24**; ^{<0213>}**Deuteronomy 23:3, 4**. As both these people made afterwards a considerable figure in the sacred history, the impartial inspired writer takes care to introduce at this early period an account of their *origin*. See what has been said on the case of Noah’s drunkenness, ^{<0102>}**Genesis 9:20**, &c.

THIS is an awful history, and the circumstances detailed in it are as distressing to piety as to humanity. It may, however, be profitable to review the particulars.

1. From the commencement of the chapter we find that the example and precepts of Abraham had not been lost on his nephew Lot. He also, like his uncle, watches for opportunities to call in the weary traveller. *This* Abraham had taught his household, and we see the effect of his blessed teaching. Lot was both *hospitable* and *pious*, though living in the midst of a crooked and perverse race. It must be granted that from several circumstances in his history he appears to have been a *weak* man, but his weakness was such as was not inconsistent with general uprightness and sincerity. He and his family were not forgetful to entertain strangers, and they alone were free from the pollutions of this accursed people. How powerful are the effects of a religious education, enforced by pious example! It is one of God's especial means of grace. Let a man only do justice to his family, by bringing them up in the fear of God, and he *will* crown it with his blessing. How many excuse the profligacy of their family, which is often entirely owing to their own neglect, by saying, "O, we cannot give them grace!" No, *you* cannot; but you can afford them the *means* of grace. *This* is *your* work, *that* is the Lord's. If, through your neglect of *precept* and *example*, they perish, what an awful account must you give to the Judge of quick and dead! It was the sentiment of a great man, that should the worst of times arrive, and magistracy and ministry were both to fall, yet, if parents would but be faithful to their trust, pure religion would be handed down to posterity, both in its form and in its power.

2. We have already heard of the wickedness of the inhabitants of the cities of the plain, the cup of their iniquity was full; their sin was of no common magnitude, and what a terrible judgment fell upon them! Brimstone and fire are rained down from heaven upon these *traders in iniquity*; and what a *correspondence* between the *crime* and the *punishment*? They burned in lust towards each other, and God burned them up with fire and brimstone. Their sin was *unnatural*, and God punished it by *supernatural* means. Divine justice not only observes a proportion between the crime and the degree of punishment, but also between the *species* of crime and the *kind* of punishment inflicted.

3. Disobedience to the command of God must ever meet with severe reprehension, especially in those who have already partaken of his grace, because these know his salvation, and are justly supposed to possess, by his grace, the power of resisting all solicitations to sin. The servant who knew his lord's will and did it not, was to be beaten with many stripes; see ^{<01247>}**Luke 12:47**. Lot's wife stands as an everlasting monument of admonition and caution to all *backsliders*. She ran well, she permitted Satan to hinder, and she died in her provocation! While we lament her fate, we should profit by her example. To *begin* in the good way is *well*; to *continue* in the path is *better*; and to *persevere* unto the end, *best* of all. The exhortation of our blessed Lord on this subject should awaken our caution, and strongly excite our diligence: *Remember Lot's wife!* On the conduct of Lot and his daughters, **See Clarke's note on** "^{<011931>}**Genesis 19:31**".

GENESIS

CHAPTER 20

Abraham leaves Mamre, and, after having sojourned at Kadesh and Shur, settles in Gerar, 1. Abimelech takes Sarah, Abraham having acknowledged her only as his sister, 2. Abimelech is warned by God in a dream to restore Sarah, 3. He asserts his innocence, 4, 5. He is farther warned, 6, 7. Expostulates with Abraham, 8-10. Abraham vindicates his conduct, 11-13. Abimelech restores Sarah, makes Abraham a present of sheep, oxen, and male and female slaves, 14; offers him a residence in any part of the land, 15; and reproves Sarah, 16. At the intercession of Abraham, the curse of barrenness is removed from Abimelech and his household, 17, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. And Abraham journeyed] It is very likely that this holy man was so deeply affected with the melancholy prospect of the ruined cities, and not knowing what was become of his nephew Lot and his family, that he could no longer bear to dwell within sight of the place. Having, therefore, struck his tents, and sojourned for a short time at *Kadesh* and *Shur*, he fixed his habitation in Gerar, which was a city of Arabia Petræa, under a king of the Philistines called Abimelech, *my father king*, who appears to have been not only the *father of his people*, but also a righteous man.

Verse 2. She is my sister] See the parallel account, ^{<0121>}**Genesis 12:11-20**, and the notes there. Sarah was now about ninety years of age, and probably pregnant with Isaac. Her beauty, therefore, must have been considerably impaired since the time she was taken in a similar manner by Pharaoh, king of Egypt; but she was probably now chosen by Abimelech more on the account of forming an *alliance* with Abraham, who was very rich, than on account of any personal accomplishments. A petty king, such as Abimelech, would naturally be glad to form an alliance with such a powerful chief as Abraham was: we cannot but recollect his late defeat of the four confederate Canannitish kings. **See Clarke's note on** ^{<0144>}**Genesis 14:14**, &c. This circumstance was sufficient to establish his credit, and cause his friendship to be courted; and what more effectual means could Abimelech use in reference to this than the taking of Sarah,

who he understood was Abraham's sister, to be his concubine or second wife, which in those times had no kind of disgrace attached to it?

Verse 3. But God came to Abimelech] Thus we find that persons who were not of the *family of Abraham* had the knowledge of the true God. Indeed, all the *Gerarites* are termed **qydx ywg goi tsaddik**, a righteous nation, ^{<0100>}**Genesis 20:4**.

Verse 5. In the integrity of my heart, &c.] Had Abimelech any other than honourable views in taking Sarah, he could not have justified himself thus to his Maker; and that these views were of the most honourable kind, God himself, to whom the appeal was made, asserts in the most direct manner, *Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart*.

Verse 7. He is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee] The word prophet, which we have from the Greek **προφητες**, and which is compounded of **προ**, *before*, and **φημι**, *I speak*, means, in its general acceptance, one who *speaks of things before they happen*, i.e., one who *foretells* future events. But that this was not the *original* notion of the word, its use in this place sufficiently proves. Abraham certainly was not a prophet in the present general acceptance of the term, and for the Hebrew **aybn nabi**, we must seek some other meaning. I have, in a discourse entitled "The Christian Prophet and his Work," proved that the proper ideal meaning of the original word is to *pray, entreat, make supplication, &c.*, and this meaning of it I have justified at large both from its application in this place, and from its pointed use in the case of Saul, mentioned ^{<0900>}**1 Samuel 10:9-13**, and from the case of the priests of Baal, ^{<1182>}**1 Kings 18:29**, where *prophesying* most undoubtedly means *making prayer and supplication*. As those who were in habits of intimacy with God by *prayer and faith* were found the most proper persons to communicate his mind to man, both with respect to the *present* and the *future*, hence, **aybn nabi**, the *intercessor*, became in process of time the public *instructor or preacher*, and also the predictor of future events, because to such faithful praying men God revealed the secret of his will. Hence St. Paul, ^{<6148>}**1 Corinthians 14:3**, seems to restrain the word wholly to the interpreting the mind of God to the people, and their instruction in Divine things, for, says he, *he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort*. See the discourse on this text referred to above. The title was also given to men eminent for eloquence and for literary abilities; hence Aaron, because he was the spokesman of Moses to the Egyptian king, was termed

aybn nabi, prophet; ^{<00416>}**Exodus 4:16; 7:1.** And Epimenides, a heathen poet, is expressly styled **προφήτης**, a prophet, by St. Paul, ^{<00112>}**Titus 1:12**, just as poets in general were termed *vates* among the Romans, which properly signifies the persons who professed to *interpret the will of the gods* to their votaries, after *prayers* and *sacrifices* duly performed. In Arabic the word [Arabic] *naba* has nearly the same meaning as in Hebrew, but in the first conjugation it has a meaning which may cast light upon the subject in general. It signifies to *itinerate, move from one place or country to another*, compelled thereto either by persecution or the command of God; *exivit de una regione in aliam.*-[Arabic] *migrans de loco in locum.*-GOLIUS. Hence Mohammed was called [Arabic] *an nabi*, because of his *sudden removal from Mecca to Medina*, when, pretending to a Divine commission, *his townsmen sought to take away his life: e Mecca exiens Medinam, unde Muhammed suis* [Arabic] *Nabi Allah dictus fuit.*-GOLIUS. If this meaning belonged originally to the Hebrew word, it will apply with great force to the case of Abraham, whose migratory, itinerant kind of life, generally under the immediate direction of God, might have given him the title *nabi*. However this may be, the term was a title of the highest respectability and honour, both among the Hebrews and Arabs, and continues so to this day. And from the *Hebrews* the word, in all the importance and dignity of its meaning, was introduced among the *heathens* in the **προφήτης** and *vates* of the Greeks and Romans. **See Clarke's note on the word seer, "^{<00150>}Genesis 15:1"**.

Verse 8. Abimelech rose early, &c.] God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and we find as the day broke he arose, assembled his servants, (what we would call his *courtiers*,) and communicated to them what he had received from God. They were all struck with astonishment, and discerned the hand of God in this business. Abraham is then called, and in a most respectful and pious manner the king expostulates with him for bringing him and his people under the Divine displeasure, by withholding from him the information that Sarah was his wife; when, by taking her, he sought only an honourable alliance with his family.

Verse 11. And Abraham said] The best excuse he could make for his conduct, which in *this* instance is far from defensible.

Verse 12. She is my sister] I have not told a lie; I have suppressed only a part of the truth. In this place it may be proper to ask, *What is a lie?* It is any action done or word spoken, whether true or false in itself, which the

doer or speaker wishes the observer or hearer to take in a *contrary* sense to that which he knows to be true. It is, in a word, any action done or speech delivered with *the intention to deceive*, though both may be absolutely true and right in themselves. See Clarke's note on "^{<01213>}Genesis 12:13".

The daughter of my father, but not-of my mother] *Ebn Batrick*, in his annals, among other ancient traditions has preserved the following: "Terah first married *Yona*, by whom he had Abraham; afterwards he married *Tehevita*, by whom he had Sarah." Thus she was the sister of Abraham, being the daughter of the same father by a different mother.

Verse 13. When God caused me to wander] Here the word $\mu\eta\eta\iota$ *Elohim* is used with a plural verb, ($\omega[\text{th} \text{hithu}$, caused me to wander,) which is not very usual in the Hebrew language, as this *plural noun* is generally joined with *verbs* in the *singular* number. Because there is a departure from the general mode in this instance, some have contended that the word *Elohim* signifies *princes* in this place, and suppose it to refer to those in Chaldea, who expelled Abraham because he would not worship the *fire*; but the best critics, and with them the *Jews*, allow that *Elohim* here signifies the *true God*. Abraham probably refers to his *first call*.

Verse 16. And unto Sarah he said] But *what* did he say? Here there is scarcely any agreement among interpreters; the Hebrew is exceedingly obscure, and every interpreter takes it in his own sense.

A thousand pieces of silver] SHEKELS are very probably meant here, and so the Targum understands it. The Septuagint has $\chi\iota\lambda\iota\alpha \delta\iota\delta\rho\alpha\chi\mu\alpha$, a thousand didrachma, no doubt meaning *shekels*; for in ^{<012315>}Genesis 23:15, 16, this translation uses $\delta\iota\delta\rho\alpha\chi\mu\alpha$ for the Hebrew $\text{I} \text{qV}$ *shekel*. As *shakal* signifies literally *to weigh*, and the shekel was a coin of such a weight, Mr. Ainsworth and others think this to be the origin of our word *scale*, the instrument to *weigh* with.

The shekel of the sanctuary weighed *twenty* *gerahs*, ^{<02013>}Exodus 30:13. And according to the *Jews*, the *gerah* weighed *sixteen* grains of barley. *R. Maimon* observes, that after the captivity the *shekel* was increased to *three hundred and eighty-four* grains or barley-corns. On the subject of ancient weights and measures, very little that is satisfactory is known.

Behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes] *It-the one thousand shekels, (not he-Abraham,) is to thee for a covering-to procure thee a veil to conceal thy beauty (unto all that are with thee, and with all other) from all thy own kindred and acquaintance, and from all strangers, that none, seeing thou art another mans wife; may covet thee on account of thy comeliness.*

Thus she was reproved] The original is **tj knw** *venochachath*, but the word is probably the second person preterite, used for the imperative mood, from the root **j kn** *nachach*, to make *straight, direct, right*; or to *speak rightly, correctly*; and may, in connection with the rest of the text, be thus paraphrased: *Behold, I have given thy BROTHER (Abraham, gently alluding to the equivocation, ^{<01210>}Genesis 20:2, 5) a thousand shekels of silver; behold, IT is (that is, the silver is, or may be, or let it be) to thee a covering of the eyes (to procure a veil; see above) with regard to all those who are with thee; and to all (or and in all) speak thou the truth.* Correctly translated by the Septuagint, **και παντα αληθευσον**, *and in all things speak the truth*-not only tell a *part* of the truth, but tell the *whole*; say not merely *he is my brother*, but say also, *he is my husband too*. Thus in *ALL things speak the truth*. I believe the above to be the *sense* of this difficult passage, and shall not puzzle my readers with criticisms. See *Kennicott*.

Verse 17. So Abraham prayed] This was the prime office of the **aybn nabi**; see ^{<01207>}**Genesis 20:7**.

Verse 18. For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs] Probably by means of some *disease* with which he had smitten them, hence it is said *they were healed* at Abraham's intercession; and this seems necessarily to imply that they had been afflicted by some disease that rendered it impossible for them to have children till it was removed. And possibly this disease, as Dr. Dodd conjectures, had afflicted Abimelech, and by this he was withheld, ^{<01205>}**Genesis 20:6**, from defiling Abraham's bed.

1. ON the *prevarication* of Abraham and Sarah, see the notes and concluding observations on chap. xii.; See **Clarke's note** "^{<01220>}**Genesis 12:20**"; and while we pity this *weakness*, let us take it as a *warning*.

2. The *cause* why the patriarch did not acknowledge Sarah as his wife, was a fear lest he should lose his life on her account, for he said, *Surely the fear, i.e., the true worship, of the true God is not in this place*. Such is the

natural bigotry and narrowness of the human heart, that we can scarcely allow that any besides ourselves possess the true religion. To indulge a disposition of this kind is highly blamable. The true religion is neither confined to *one spot* nor to *one people*; it is spread in various forms over the whole earth. He who fills immensity has left a record of himself in every nation and among every people under heaven. Beware of the spirit of intolerance! for bigotry produces uncharitableness; and uncharitableness, harsh judging; and in such a spirit a man may think he does God service when he tortures, or makes a burnt-offering of the person whom his narrow mind and hard heart have dishonoured with the name of *heretic*. Such a spirit is not *confined* to any *one community*, though it has predominated in some more than in others. But these things are highly displeasing in the sight of God. HE, as the Father of the spirits of all flesh, loves every branch of his vastly extended family; and as far as we love one another, no matter of what sect of party, so far we resemble HIM. Had Abraham possessed more charity for man and confidence in God at this time, he had not fallen into that snare from which he barely escaped. A hasty judgment is generally both erroneous and harsh; and those who are the most apt to form it are generally the most difficult to be convinced of the truth.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 21

Isaac is born according to the promise, 1-3; and is circumcised when eight days old, 4. Abraham's age, and Sarah's exultation at the birth of their son, 5-7. Isaac is weaned, 8. Ishmael mocking on the occasion, Sarah requires that both he and his mother Hagar shall be dismissed, 9, 10. Abraham, distressed on the account, is ordered by the Lord to comply, 11, 12. The promise renewed to Ishmael, 13. Abraham dismisses Hagar and her son, who go to the wilderness of Beer-sheba, 14. They are greatly distressed for want of water, 15, 16. An angel of God appears to and relieves them, 17-19. Ishmael prospers and is married, 20, 21. Abimelech, and Phichol his chief captain, make a covenant with Abraham, and surrender the well of Beersheba for seven ewe lambs, 22-32. Abraham plants a grove, and invokes the name of the everlasting God, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. The Lord visited Sarah] That is, God fulfilled his promise to Sarah by giving her, at the advanced age of *ninety*, power to conceive and bring forth a son.

Verse 3. Isaac.] See the reason and interpretation of this name in **Clarke's note on** "^{<-01170>}Genesis 17:7".

Verse 4. And Abraham circumcised his son] See **Clarke's note on** "^{<-01710>}Genesis 17:10", &c.

Verse 6. God hath made me to laugh] Sarah alludes here to the circumstance mentioned ^{<-011812>}Genesis 18:12; and as she seems to use the word *to laugh* in this place, not in the sense of being *incredulous* but to express such *pleasure* or *happiness* as almost *suspends* the reasoning faculty for a time, it justifies the observation on the above-named verse. See a similar case in ^{<-02341>}Luke 24:41, where the disciples were so overcome with the good news of our Lord's resurrection, that it is said, *They believed not for joy.*

Verse 8. The child grew and was weaned] [---AngloSaxon---]. *Anglo-Saxon VERSION.* Now the child waxed and became weaned. We have the verb *to wean* from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.] *awendan*, to *convert*, *transfer*, *turn from one thing to another*, which is the exact import of the

Hebrew word *l mg gamal* in the text. Hence [A.S.] *wenan*, to *wean*, to turn the child from the breast to receive another kind of ailment. And hence, probably, the word *WEAN*, a *young child*, which is still in use in the northern parts of Great Britain and Ireland, and which from its etymology seems to signify *a child taken from the breast*; surely not from the Scotch *wee-ane*, a *little one*, much less from the German *wenig*, *little*, as Dr. Johnson and others would derive it. At what time children were weaned among the ancients, is a disputed point. St. Jerome says there were two opinions on this subject. Some hold that children were always weaned at *five* years of age; others, that they were not weaned till they were *twelve*. From the speech of the mother to her son, **2Mac 7:27**, it seems likely that among the Jews they were weaned when *three* years old: *O my son, have pity upon me that bare thee nine months in my womb, and gave thee SUCK THREE YEARS, and nourished thee and brought thee up*. And this is farther strengthened by ^{<4316>}**2 Chronicles 31:16**, where Hezekiah, in making provision for the Levites and priests, includes the children from *three* years old and upwards; which is a presumptive proof that previously to this age they were wholly dependent on the *mother* for their nourishment. Samuel appears to have been brought to the sanctuary when he was just *weaned*, and then he was capable of ministering before the Lord, ^{<0012>}**1 Samuel 1:22-28**; and this certainly could not be before he was *three* years of age. The term among the Mohammedans is fixed by the Koran, chap. 31:14, at *two* years of age.

Verse 9. Mocking.] What was implied in this mocking is not known. St. Paul, ^{<0029>}**Galatians 4:29**, calls it *persecuting*; but it is likely he meant no more than some species of *ridicule* used by Ishmael on the occasion, and probably with respect to the age of Sarah at Isaac's birth, and her previous barrenness. *Jonathan ben Uzziel* and the *Jerusalem Targum* represent Ishmael as performing some idolatrous rite on the occasion, and that this had given the offence to Sarah. Conjectures are as useless as they are endless. Whatever it was, it became the occasion of the expulsion of himself and mother. Several authors are of opinion that the Egyptian bondage of *four hundred* years, mentioned ^{<01513>}**Genesis 15:13**, commenced with this persecution of the righteous seed by the son of an *Egyptian* woman.

Verse 10. Cast out this bondwoman and her son] Both Sarah and Abraham have been accused of cruelty in this transaction, because every

word reads harsh to us. Cast out; **vrg** *garash* signifies not only to *thrust out*, *drive away*, and *expel*, but also to divorce; (see ^{<02107>}**Leviticus 21:7**;) and it is in this latter sense the word should be understood here. The child of Abraham by Hagar might be considered as having a right at least to a part of the inheritance; and as it was sufficiently known to Sarah that God had designed that the succession should be established in the line of Isaac, she wished Abraham to *divorce* Hagar, or to perform some sort of *legal act* by which Ishmael might be excluded from all claim on the inheritance.

Verse 12. In Isaac shall thy seed be called.] Here God shows the propriety of attending to the counsel of Sarah; and lest Abraham, in whose eyes the thing was grievous, should feel distressed on the occasion, God renews his promises to Ishmael and his posterity.

Verse 14. Took bread, and a bottle] By the word *bread* we are to understand the food or provisions which were necessary for her and Ishmael, till they should come to the place of their destination; which, no doubt, Abraham particularly pointed out. The *bottle*, which was made of skin, ordinarily a goat's skin, contained water sufficient to last them till they should come to the next well; which, it is likely, Abraham particularly specified also. This well, it appears, Hagar missed, and therefore *wandered about in the wilderness* seeking more water, till all she had brought with her was expended. We may therefore safely presume that she and her son were sufficiently provided for their journey, had they not missed their way. Travellers in those countries take only, to the present day, provisions sufficient to carry them to the next village or encampment; and water to supply them till they shall meet with the next well. What adds to the *appearance* of cruelty in this case is, that our translation seems to represent Ishmael as being a *young child*; and that Hagar was obliged to carry him, the bread, and the bottle of water on her back or shoulder at the same time. But that Ishmael could not be carried on his mother's shoulder will be sufficiently evident when his *age* is considered; Ishmael was born when Abraham was eighty-six years of age, ^{<011616>}**Genesis 16:16**; Isaac was born when he was one hundred years of age, ^{<012105>}**Genesis 21:5**; hence Ishmael was fourteen years old at the birth of Isaac. Add to this the age of Isaac when he was *weaned*, which, from ^{<012108>}**Genesis 21:8**, (See Clarke's note ^{<012108>}**Genesis 21:8**) was probably *three*, and we shall find that Ishmael was at the time of his leaving Abraham not less than seventeen years old; an age which, in those primitive times, a young man was able to

gain his livelihood, either by his bow in the wilderness, or by keeping flocks as Jacob did.

Verse 15. And she cast the child] *dl yh ta Èl vtw* *vattashlech eth haiyeled*, and she sent the lad under one of the shrubs, viz., to screen him from the intensity of the heat. Here Ishmael appears to be utterly helpless, and this circumstance seems farther to confirm the opinion that he was now in a state of *infancy*; but the preceding observations do this supposition entirely away, and his present helplessness will be easily accounted for on this ground: 1. Young persons can bear much less fatigue than those who are arrived at mature age. 2. They require much more fluid from the greater quantum of heat in their bodies, strongly marked by the impetuosity of the blood; because from them a much larger quantity of the fluids is thrown off by sweat and insensible perspiration, than from grown up or aged persons. 3. Their digestion is much more rapid, and hence they cannot bear hunger and thirst as well as the others. On these grounds Ishmael must be much more exhausted with fatigue than his mother.

Verse 19. God opened her eyes] These words appear to me to mean no more than that God directed her to a well, which probably was at no great distance from the place in which she then was; and therefore she is commanded, ^{<0218>}**Genesis 21:18**, to *support the lad*, literally, to *make her hand strong in his behalf*-namely, that he might reach the well and quench his thirst.

Verse 20. Became an archer.] And by his skill in this art, under the continual superintendence of the Divine Providence, (for *God was with the lad*,) he was undoubtedly enabled to procure a sufficient supply for his own wants and those of his parent.

Verse 21. He dwelt in the wilderness of Paran] This is generally allowed to have been a part of the desert belonging to Arabia Petrea, in the vicinity of Mount Sinai; and this seems to be its uniform meaning in the sacred writings.

Verse 22. At that time] This may either refer to the transactions recorded in the preceding chapter, or to the time of Ishmael's marriage, but most probably to the former.

God is with thee] *yyd armym melmera daiya*, the WORD of Jehovah; see before, ^{<0150>}**Genesis 15:1**. That the Chaldee paraphrasts use this term,

not for a *word spoken*, but in the same sense in which St. John uses the *λογος του θεου*, the WORD of God, {<EJ101>**John 1:1**}, must be evident to every unprejudiced reader. See Clarke on “<O150>**Genesis 15:1**”.

Verse 23. Now therefore swear unto me] The oath on such occasions probably meant no more than the mutual promise of both the parties, when they slew an animal, poured out the blood as a sacrifice to God, and then passed between the pieces. See this ceremony, <O1518>**Genesis 15:18**, and on <O150>**Genesis 15:9, 10**.

According to the kindness that I have done] The simple claims of justice were alone set up among virtuous people in those ancient times, which constitute the basis of the famous *lex talionis*, or law of *like for like, kind office for kind office, and breach for breach*.

Verse 25. Abraham reproved Abimelech] Wells were of great consequence in those hot countries, and especially where the flocks were numerous, because the water was scarce, and digging to find it was accompanied with much expense of time and labour.

Verse 26. I wot not who hath done this thing] The servants of Abimelech had committed these depredations on Abraham without any authority from their master, who appears to have been a very amiable man, possessing the fear of God, and ever regulating the whole of his conduct by the principles of righteousness and strict justice.

Verse 27. Took sheep and oxen] Some think that these were the sacrifices which were offered on the occasion, and which Abraham furnished at his own cost, and, in order to do Abimelech the greater honour, gave them to him to offer before the Lord.

Verse 28. Seven ewe lambs] These were either given as a *present*, or they were intended as the *price* of the well; and being accepted by Abimelech, they served as a *witness* that he had acknowledged Abraham's right to the *well* in question.

Verse 31. He called that place Beer-sheba] [*bv rab Beer-shaba*, literally, the well of swearing or of the oath, because they both swore there-mutually confirmed the covenant.

Verse 33. Abraham planted a grove] The original word *l va eshel* has been variously translated a *grove*, a *plantation*, an *orchard*, a *cultivated*

field, and an oak. From this word, says Mr. Parkhurst, may be derived the name of the famous *asylum*, opened by Romulus *between two groves of oaks* at Rome; (μεθοριον δυοιν δρυμωσ, Dionys. Hal., lib. ii. c. 16:) and as Abraham, ^{<01233>}Genesis 21:33, agreeably, no doubt, to the institutes of the patriarchal religion, planted an oak in Beer-sheba, and called on the name of Jehovah, the everlasting God, (compare ^{<01238>}Genesis 12:8; 18:1,) so we find that *oaks* were sacred among the idolaters also. *Ye shall be ashamed of the OAKS ye have chosen*, says Isaiah, ^{<23029>}Isaiah 1:29, to the idolatrous Israelites. And in *Greece* we meet in very early times with the oracle of Jupiter at the oaks of Dodona. Among the Greeks and *Romans* we have *sacra Jovi quercus*, the oak sacred to Jupiter, even to a proverb. And in *Gaul* and *Britain* we find the highest religious regard paid to the same tree and to its *mistletoe*, under the direction of the *Druids*, that is, the *oak prophets* or *priests*, from the Celtic *deru*, and Greek *δρυς*, an oak. Few are ignorant that the mistletoe is indeed a very extraordinary plant, not to be cultivated in the earth, but always growing on some other tree. “The druids,” says *Pliny*, Nat. Hist., lib. xvii., c. 44, “hold nothing more sacred than the *mistletoe*, and the tree on which it is produced, provided it be the oak. They make choice of *groves of oak* on this account, nor do they perform any of their sacred rites without the leaves of those trees; so that one may suppose that they are for this reason called, by a Greek etymology, *Druids*. And whatever *mistletoe* grows on the oak they think is sent from heaven, and is a sign that God himself has chosen that tree. This however is very rarely found, but when discovered is treated with great ceremony. They call it by a name which signifies in their language *the curer of all ills*; and having duly prepared their feasts and sacrifices under the tree, they bring to it two white bulls, whose horns are then for the first time tied; the priest, dressed in a white robe, ascends the tree, and with a *golden pruning hook* cuts off the *mistletoe*, which is received into a white *sagum* or sheet. Then they sacrifice the victims, praying that God would bless his own gift to those on whom he has bestowed it.” It is impossible for a *Christian* to read this account without thinking of HIM who was *the desire of all nations*, of the man whose name was *the BRANCH*, who had indeed no father upon earth, but came down from heaven, was given to *heal all our ills*, and, after being *cut off* through the Divine counsel, was wrapped in *fine linen* and laid in the sepulchre for our sakes. I cannot forbear adding that the *mistletoe* was a *sacred emblem* to other *Celtic* nations, as, for instance, to the ancient inhabitants of *Italy*. The *golden branch*, of which *Virgil* speaks so largely in the sixth book of the *Æneis*, and without which,

he says, none could *return from the infernal regions*, (see line 126,) seems an allusion to the *misletoe*, as he himself plainly intimates by comparing it to that plant, line 205, &c. See *Parkhurst*, under the word **l va eshel**.

In the first ages of the world the worship of God was exceedingly simple; there were no *temples* nor covered edifices of any kind; an *altar*, sometimes a *single stone*, sometimes consisting of several, and at other times merely of *turf*, was all that was necessary; on this the fire was lighted and the sacrifice offered. Any *place* was equally proper, as they knew that the object of their worship filled the heavens and the earth. In process of time when families increased, and many sacrifices were to be offered, *groves* or shady places were chosen, where the worshippers might enjoy the protection of the shade, as a considerable time must be employed in offering *many* sacrifices. These groves became afterwards abused to *impure* and *idolatrous* purposes, and were therefore strictly forbidden. See ^{<12313>}**Exodus 34:13**; ^{<16113>}**Deuteronomy 12:3; 16:21**.

And called there on the name of the Lord] On this important passage Dr. Shuckford speaks thus: “Our English translation very erroneously renders this place, *he called upon the name of Jehovah*; but the expression **µvb arq kara beshem** never signifies *to call upon the name*; **µv arq kara shem** would signify *to invoke or call upon the name*, or **µv l a arq kara el shem** would signify *to cry unto the name*; but **µvb arq kara beshem** signifies *to invoke IN the name*, and seems to be used where the true worshippers of God offered their prayers in the name of the true Mediator, or where the idolaters offered their prayers in the name of false ones, ^{<11185>}**1 Kings 18:26**; for as the true worshippers had but *one God* and *one Lord*, so the false worshippers had *gods many* and *lords many*, ^{<4185>}**1 Corinthians 8:5**. We have several instances of **arq kara**, and a noun after it, sometimes *with* and sometimes *without* the particle **l a el**, and then it signifies *to call upon the person there mentioned*; thus, **hw hy arq kara Yehovah** is *to call upon the Lord*, ^{<9144>}**Psalm 14:4; 17:6; 31:17; 53:4; 118:5**, &c.; and **hw hy l a arq kara el Yehovah** imports the same, ^{<9127>}**1 Samuel 12:17**; ^{<33105>}**Jonah 1:6**, &c.; but **µvb arq kara beshem** is either *to name BY the name*, ^{<01047>}**Genesis 4:17**; ^{<0432>}**Numbers 32:42**; ^{<9491>}**Psalm 49:11**; ^{<2347>}**Isaiah 43:7**; or *to invoke IN the name*, when it is used as an expression of religious worship.” CONNEX. vol. i., p. 293. I believe this to be a just view of the subject, and therefore I admit it without scruple.

The everlasting God.] מלך [I a hwhy *Yehovah el olam*, JEHOVAH, *the STRONG GOD, the ETERNAL ONE*. This is the first place in Scripture in which מלך [*olam* occurs as an *attribute* of God, and here it is evidently designed to point out his eternal duration; that it can mean no *limited time* is self-evident, because nothing of this kind can be attributed to God. The Septuagint render the words θεος αἰωνιος, the *ever-existing God*; and the Vulgate has *Invocavit ibi nomen Do mini, Dei aeterni*, There he invoked the name of the Lord, the eternal God. The Arabic is nearly the same. From this application of both the Hebrew and Greek words we learn that מלך [*olam* and αἰων *aion* originally signified ETERNAL, or *duration without end*. מלך [*alam* signifies *he was hidden, concealed, or kept secret*; and αἰων, according to Aristotle, (*Deuteronomy Cælo*, lib. i., chap. 9, and a higher authority need not be sought,) is compounded of αἰ, *always*, and ων, *being*, αἰων εστις, ἀπο του αει ειναι. The same author informs us that God was termed *Aisa*, because he was always existing, λεγεσθαι””” Αισας δε, αει ουσαν. *Deuteronomy Mundo*, chap. xi., *in fine*. Hence we see that no words can more forcibly express the grand characteristics of eternity than these. It is that duration which is *concealed, hidden, or kept secret* from all created beings; which is *always existing*, still *running ON* but never *running OUT*; an *interminable, incessant, and immeasurable duration*; it is *THAT*, in the *whole of which* God alone can be said to *exist*, and *that* which the *eternal mind* can alone comprehend.

In all languages words have, in process of time, deviated from their original acceptations, and have become accommodated to particular purposes, and limited to particular meanings. This has happened both to the Hebrew מלך [*alam*, and the Greek αἰων; they have been both used to express a *limited* time, but in general a time the limits of which are *unknown*; and thus a pointed reference to the *original ideal meaning* is still kept up. Those who bring any of these terms in an *accommodated* sense to favour a particular doctrine, &c., must depend on the good graces of their opponents for permission to use them in this way. For as the real grammatical meaning of both words is *eternal*, and all other meanings are only *accommodated* ones, sound criticism, in all matters of dispute concerning the import of a word or term, must have recourse to the grammatical meaning, and its use among the earliest and most correct writers in the language, and will determine all *accommodated* meanings by this alone. Now the first and best writers in both these languages apply *olam* and αἰων to express *eternal*, in

the proper meaning of that word; and this is their proper meaning in the Old and New Testaments when applied to God, his attributes, his operations taken in connection with the *ends* for which he performs them, for *whatsoever he doth, it shall be for ever*- $\mu\lambda\ w[\ l\ \text{hyhy yihyeh leolam}$, it shall be for eternity, ^{<210314>}**Ecclesiastes 3:14**; *forms and appearances* of created things may change, but the *counsels* and *purposes* of God relative to them are permanent and eternal, and none of them can be frustrated; hence the words, when applied to things which from their nature must have a *limited* duration, are properly to be understood in this sense, because those things, though *temporal* in themselves, *shadow forth* things that are *eternal*. Thus the Jewish dispensation, which in the whole and in its parts is frequently said to be $\mu\lambda\ w[\ l\ \text{leolam}$, for ever, and which has terminated in the Christian dispensation, has the word properly applied to it, because it typified and introduced that dispensation which is to *continue* not only *while time shall last*, but is to have its incessant accumulating consummation throughout *eternity*. The word is, with the same strict propriety, applied to the duration of the rewards and punishments in a future state. And the argument that pretends to prove (and it is only pretension) that in the future punishment of the wicked “the worm *shall die*,” and “the fire “*shall be quenched*,” will apply as forcibly to the state of happy spirits, and as fully prove that a point in eternity shall arrive when the repose of the righteous shall be interrupted, and the glorification of the children of God have an eternal end! See Clarke’s notes on “^{<0170>}**Genesis 17:7**”; “^{<0170>}**Genesis 17:8**”.

1. FAITHFULNESS is one of the attributes of God, and none of his promises can fall. According to the promise to Abraham, Isaac is born; but according to the course of nature it fully appears that both Abraham and Sarah had passed that term of life in which it was possible for them to have children. Isaac is the child of the *promise*, and the promise is *supernatural*. Ishmael is born according to the ordinary course of *nature*, and cannot inherit, because the inheritance is *spiritual*, and cannot come by *natural birth*; hence we see that no man can expect to enter into the kingdom of God by birth, education, profession of the true faith, &c., &c. Those alone who are *born from above*, and are made *partakers of the Divine nature*, can be admitted into the family of God in heaven, and everlastingly enjoy that glorious inheritance. Reader, art *thou* born again? Hath God changed thy heart and thy life? If not, canst thou suppose that in thy present state thou

canst possibly enter into the paradise of God? I leave thy conscience to answer.

2. The actions of good men may be misrepresented, and their motives suspected, because those motives are not known; and those who are prone to think evil are the last to take any trouble to inform their minds, so that they may judge righteous judgment. Abraham, in the dismissal of Hagar and Ishmael, has been accused of *cruelty*. Though objections of this kind have been answered already, yet it may not be amiss farther to observe that what he did he did in conformity to a Divine command, and a command so unequivocally given that he could not doubt its Divine origin; and this very command was accompanied with a promise that *both the child and his mother should be taken under the Divine protection*. And it was so; nor does it appear that they lacked any thing but *water*, and that only for a *short time*, after which it was miraculously supplied. God will work a miracle when necessary, and never till then; and at such a time the Divine interposition can be easily ascertained, and man is under no temptation to attribute to *second causes* what has so evidently flowed from the *first*. Thus, while he is promoting his creatures' good, he is securing his own glory; and he brings men into straits and difficulties, that he may have the fuller opportunity to convince his followers of his providential care, and to prove how much he loves them.

3. Did we acknowledge God in all our ways, he would direct our steps. Abimelech, king of Gerar, and Phichol, captain of his host, seeing Abraham a worshipper of the true God, made him swear by the object of his worship that there should be a lasting peace between them and him; for as they saw that God was with Abraham, they well knew that he could not expect the Divine blessing any longer than he walked in *integrity* before God; they therefore require him to swear by God that he would not *deal falsely* with *them* or their posterity. From this very circumstance we may see the original purpose, design, and spirit of an oath, viz., *Let God prosper or curse ME in all that I do, as I prove true or false to my engagements!* This is still the *spirit* of all oaths where God is called to witness, whether the *form* be by the *water of the Ganges*, the *sign of the cross*, *kissing the Bible*, or *lifting up the hand to heaven*. Hence we may learn that he who falsifies an *oath* or *promise*, made in the presence and name of God, thereby forfeits all right and title to the approbation and blessing of his Maker.

But it is highly criminal to make such appeals to God upon *trivial* occasions. Only the *most solemn* matters should be thus determined. Legislators who regard the morals of the people should take heed not to multiply oaths in matters of *commerce* and *revenue*, if they even use them at all. Who can take the oaths presented by the custom house or excise, and be guiltless? I have seen a person kiss his pen or thumb nail instead of the book, thinking that he avoided the condemnation thereby of the false oath he was then taking!

GENESIS

CHAPTER 22

The faith and obedience of Abraham put to a most extraordinary test, 1. He is commanded to offer his beloved son Isaac for a burnt-offering, 2. He prepares, with the utmost promptitude, to accomplish the will of God, 3-6. Affecting speech of Isaac, 7; and Abraham's answer, 8. Having arrived at mount Moriah he prepares to sacrifice his son, 9, 10; and is prevented by an angel of the Lord, 11, 12. A ram is offered in the stead of Isaac, 13; and the place is named Jehovah-jireh, 14. The angel of the Lord calls to Abraham a second time, 15; and, in the most solemn manner, he is assured of innumerable blessings in the multiplication and prosperity of his seed, 16-18. Abraham returns and dwells at Beer-sheba, 19; hears that his brother Nahor has eight children by his wife Milcah, 20; their names, 21-23; and four by his concubine Reumah, 24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. God did tempt Abraham] The original here is very emphatic: *hsn pyhl ahw pbrba ha vehaelohim nissah eth Abraham*, "And the Elohim he tried this Abraham;" God brought him into such circumstances as *exercised* and *discovered* his faith, love, and obedience. Though the word *tempt*, from *tento*, signifies no more than to *prove* or *try*, yet as it is now generally used to imply a sollicitation to evil, in which way God never tempts any man, it would be well to avoid it here. The Septuagint used the word *επειρασε*, which signifies *tried, pierced through*; and Symmachus translates the Hebrew *hsn nissah* by *εδοξαζεις*, God *glorified* Abraham, or rendered him *illustrious*, supposing the word to be the same with *Sn nas*, which signifies to *glister with light*, whence *Sn nes*, an *ensign* or *banner displayed*. Thus then, according to him, the words should be understood: "God put great honour on Abraham by giving him this opportunity of showing to all successive ages the nature and efficacy of an unshaken faith in the power, goodness, and truth of God." The *Targum* of *Jonathan ben Uzziel* paraphrases the place thus: "And it happened that Isaac and Ishmael contended, and Ishmael said, I ought to be my father's heir, because I am his first-born; but Isaac said, It is more proper that I should be my father's heir, because I am the son of Sarah his wife, and thou art only the son of Hagar, my mother's slave. Then Ishmael answered, I am more righteous than thou, because I was circumcised when I was

thirteen years of age, and if I had chosen, I could have prevented my circumcision; but thou wert circumcised when thou wert but *eight days* old, and if thou hadst had knowledge, thou wouldst probably not have suffered thyself to be circumcised. Then Isaac answered and said, Behold, I am now thirty-six years old, and if the holy and blessed God should require all my members, I would freely surrender them. These words were immediately heard before the Lord of the universe, and **yjd armym meimera daiya**, the WORD of the LORD, did try Abraham.” I wish once for all to remark, though the subject has been referred to before, that the Chaldee term **armym meimera**, which we translate *word*, is taken *personally* in some hundreds of places in the *Targums*. When the author, Jonathan, speaks of the Divine Being as doing or saying any thing, he generally represents him as performing the whole by his *meimera*, which he appears to consider, not as a *speech* or *word spoken*, but as a *person* quite distinct from the Most High. St. John uses the word **λογος** in precisely the same sense with the Targumists, ^{<03010>}**John 1:1**; see the notes there, and see before on ^{<0122>}**Genesis 21:22**, and ^{<0150>}**Genesis 15:1**.

Verse 2. Take now thy son] Bishop Warburton’s observations on this passage are weighty and important. “The order in which the words are placed in the original gradually increases the sense, and raises the passions higher and higher: *Take now thy son*, (rather, take I *beseech thee an na*,) *thine only son whom thou lovest, even Isaac*. Jarchi imagines this minuteness was to preclude any doubt in Abraham. Abraham desired earnestly to be let into the mystery of *redemption*; and God, to instruct him in the infinite extent of the Divine goodness to mankind, *who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*, let Abraham feel by experience what it was to lose a beloved son, the son born miraculously when Sarah was past child-bearing, as Jesus was miraculously born of a virgin. The *duration*, too, of the action, ^{<0224>}**Genesis 22:4**, was the same as that between Christ’s death and resurrection, both which are designed to be represented in it; and still farther not only the final archetypal sacrifice of the Son of God was figured in the command to offer Isaac, but the *intermediate typical* sacrifice in the Mosaic economy was represented by the *permitted* sacrifice of the ram offered up, ^{<0223>}**Genesis 22:13**, instead of Isaac.” See *Dodd*.

Only son] All that he had by Sarah his legal wife.

The land of Moriah] This is supposed to mean all the mountains of Jerusalem, comprehending Mount Gihon or Calvary, the mount of Sion and of Acra. As Mount Calvary is the highest ground to the west, and the mount of the temple is the lowest of the mounts, Mr. Mann conjectures that it was upon this mount Abraham offered up Isaac, which is well known to be the same mount on which our blessed Lord was crucified. Beer-sheba, where Abraham dwelt, is about forty-two miles distant from Jerusalem, and it is not to be wondered at that Abraham, Isaac, the two servants, and the ass laden with wood for the burnt-offering, did not reach this place till the *third* day; see ^{<01234>}**Genesis 22:4**.

Verse 3. Two of his young men] Eliezer and Ishmael, according to the Targum.

Clave the wood] Small wood, *fig* and *palm*, proper for a burnt-offering.-*Targum*.

Verse 4. The third day] “As the number SEVEN,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “is of especial use in Scripture because of the *Sabbath* day, ^{<01012>}**Genesis 2:2**, so THREE is a mystical number because of Christ’s rising from the dead the *third* day, ^{<01723>}**Matthew 17:23**; ^{<01514>}**1 Corinthians 15:4**; as he was crucified the *third* hour after noon, ^{<01525>}**Mark 15:25**: and Isaac, as he was a figure of Christ, in being the only son of his father, and not spared but offered for a sacrifice, ^{<01832>}**Romans 8:32**, so in sundry particulars he resembled our Lord: the *third* day Isaac was to be offered up, so it was the *third* day in which Christ also was to be perfected, ^{<01332>}**Luke 13:32**; Isaac carried the wood for the burnt-offering, ^{<01216>}**Genesis 22:6**, so Christ carried the tree whereon he died, ^{<01917>}**John 19:17**; the binding of Isaac, ^{<01210>}**Genesis 21:9**, was also typical, so Christ was bound, ^{<01272>}**Matthew 27:2**.

“In the following remarkable cases this number also occurs. Moses desired to go *three* days’ journey in the wilderness to sacrifice, ^{<01013>}**Exodus 5:3**; and they travelled *three* days in it before they found water, ^{<01522>}**Exodus 15:22**; and *three* days’ journey the ark of the covenant went before them, to search out a resting place, ^{<01413>}**Numbers 10:33**; by the *third* day the people were to be ready to receive God’s law, ^{<01911>}**Exodus 19:11**; and after *three* days to pass over Jordan into Canaan, ^{<01014>}**Joshua 1:14**; the *third* day Esther put on the apparel of the kingdom, ^{<01701>}**Esther 5:1**; on the

third day Hezekiah, being recovered from his illness, went up to the house of the Lord, ^{<12116>}**2 Kings 20:5**; on the *third* day, the prophet said, God will raise us up and we shall live before him, ^{<28112>}**Hosea 6:2**; and on the *third* day, as well as on the *seventh*, the unclean person was to purify himself, ^{<041912>}**Numbers 19:12**: with many other memorable things which the Scripture speaks concerning the *third* day, and not without mystery. See ^{<014012>}**Genesis 40:12,13; 42:17,18**; ^{<330117>}**Jonah 1:17**; ^{<041216>}**Joshua 2:16**; unto which we may add a Jew's testimony in *Bereshith Rabba*, in a comment on this place: *There are many THREE DAYS mentioned in the Holy Scripture, of which one is the resurrection of the Messiah.*"-Ainsworth.

Saw the place afar off.] He knew the place by seeing the cloud of glory smoking on the top of the mountain.-*Targum*.

Verse 5. I and the lad will go and come again] How could Abraham consistently with truth say this, when he knew he was going to make his son a *burnt-offering*? The apostle answers for him: *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac-accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure,* ^{<81117>}**Hebrews 11:17,19**. He knew that previously to the birth of Isaac both he and his wife were *dead* to all the purposes of procreation; that his birth was a kind of life from the dead; that the promise of God was most positive, *In Isaac shall thy seed be called,* ^{<012112>}**Genesis 21:12**; that this promise could not fail; that it was his duty to obey the command of his Maker; and that it was as easy for God to restore him to life after he had been a burnt-offering, as it was for him to give him life in the beginning. Therefore he went fully purposed to offer his son, and yet confidently expecting to have him restored to life again. *We will go yonder and worship-perform a solemn act of devotion which God requires, and come again to you.*

Verse 6. Took the wood-and laid it upon Isaac] Probably the mountain-top to which they were going was too difficult to be ascended by the ass; therefore either the father or the son must carry the wood, and it was most becoming in the latter.

Verse 7. Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb] Nothing can be conceived more tender, affectionate, and affecting, than the

question of the son and the reply of the father on this occasion. A paraphrase would spoil it; nothing can be added without injuring those expressions of affectionate submission on the one hand, and dignified tenderness and simplicity on the other.

Verse 8. My son, God will provide himself a lamb] Here we find the same obedient unshaken faith for which this pattern of practical piety was ever remarkable. But we must not suppose that this was the language merely of faith and obedience; the patriarch spoke prophetically, and referred to that Lamb of God which HE had provided for himself, who in the fulness of time should take away the sin of the world, and of whom Isaac was a most expressive type. All the other lambs which had been offered from the foundation of the world had been such as MEN *chose* and MEN *offered*; but THIS was the Lamb which GOD *had provided*-emphatically, THE LAMB OF GOD.

Verse 9. And bound Isaac his son] If the patriarch had not been upheld by the conviction that he was doing the *will* of God, and had he not felt the most perfect confidence that his son should be *restored* even *from the dead*, what agony must his heart have felt at every step of the journey, and through all the circumstances of this extraordinary business? What must his affectionate heart have felt at the questions asked by his innocent and amiable son? What must he have suffered while building the altar, laying on the wood, binding his lovely son, placing him on the wood, taking the knife, and stretching out his hand to slay the child of his hopes? Every view we take of the subject interests the heart, and exalts the character of this father of the faithful. But has the character of Isaac been duly considered? Is not the consideration of *his* excellence lost in the supposition that he was *too young* to enter particularly into a sense of his danger, and *too feeble* to have made any resistance, had he been unwilling to submit? Josephus supposes that Isaac was now *twenty-five*, (see the chronology on <01201> **Genesis 22:1**;) some rabbins that he was *thirty-six*; but it is more probable that he was now about *thirty-three*, the age at which his great Antitype was offered up; and on this *medium* I have ventured to construct the chronology, of which I think it necessary to give this notice to the reader. Allowing him to be only *twenty-five*, he might have easily resisted; for can it be supposed that an old man of at least one hundred and twenty-five years of age could have bound, without his consent, a young man in the very prime and vigour of life? In this case we cannot say that the *superior strength* of the father *prevailed*, but the *piety, filial affection*,

and *obedience* of the son *yielded*. All this was most illustriously typical of Christ. In both cases the father himself offers up his only-begotten son, and the father himself binds him on the wood or to the cross; in neither case is the son *forced* to yield, but yields of his own accord; in neither case is the life taken away by the hand of *violence*; Isaac *yields* himself to the knife, Jesus *lays down* his life for the sheep.

Verse 11. The angel of the Lord] The very person who was represented by this offering; the Lord Jesus, who calls himself Jehovah, ^{<012216>}**Genesis 22:16**, and on his own authority renews the promises of the covenant. HE was ever the great Mediator between God and man. See this point proved, ^{<011507>}**Genesis 15:7**.

Verse 12. Lay not thine hand upon the lad] As Isaac was to be the *representative* of Jesus Christ's *real* sacrifice, it was sufficient for this purpose that in his *own will*, and the *will* of his *father*, the *purpose* of the immolation was complete. Isaac was now fully offered both by his father and by himself. The father yields up the son, the son gives up his life; on both sides, as far as *will* and *purpose* could go, the sacrifice was complete. God simply spares the father the torture of putting the knife to his son's throat. Now was the time when it might properly be said, "Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offering, and sacrifice for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure in them: then said *the Angel of the Covenant*, Lo! I come to do thy will, O God." Lay not thy hand upon the *lad*; an *irrational* creature will serve for the purpose of a *representative* sacrifice, from this till the fulness of time. But without this most expressive representation of *the father offering his beloved, only-begotten son*, what reference can such sacrifices be considered to have to the great event of the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ? Abraham, the most dignified, the most immaculate of all the patriarchs; Isaac, the true pattern of piety to God and filial obedience, may well represent God *the Father* so loving the world as to give *his only-begotten Son*, JESUS CHRIST, to die for the sin of man. But the grand *circumstances* necessary to prefigure these important points could not be exhibited through the means of *any* or of the *whole brute* creation. The whole sacrificial system of the Mosaic economy had a *retrospective* and *prospective* view, referring FROM *the sacrifice of Isaac* TO *the sacrifice of Christ*; in the *first* the *dawning* of the Sun of righteousness was seen; in the *latter*, his *meridian splendour* and *glory*. Taken in this light (and this is the only light in which it should be viewed) Abraham offering his son Isaac is one of the most important facts and most

instructive histories in the whole Old Testament. See farther on this subject, ^{<0123D>}**Genesis 23:2**.

Verse 14. Jehovah-jireh] *hary hwhy* *Yehovah-yireh*, literally interpreted in the margin, *The Lord will see*; that is, God will take care that every thing shall be done that is necessary for the comfort and support of them who trust in him: hence the words are usually translated, *The Lord will provide*; so our translators, ^{<0123B>}**Genesis 22:8**, *hary myhl a Elohim yireh*, God will provide; because his *eye* ever affects his *heart*, and the wants he *sees* his hand is ever ready to *supply*. But all this seems to have been done under a Divine Impulse, and the words to have been spoken *prophetically*; hence Houbigant and some others render the words thus: *Dominus videbitur*, the Lord shall be seen; and this translation the following clause seems to require, *As it is said to this day*, *hary hwhy rhh behar Yehovah yeraeh*, ON THIS MOUNT THE LORD SHALL BE SEEN. From this it appears that the sacrifice offered by Abraham was understood to be a *representative* one, and a tradition was kept up that Jehovah should be seen in a sacrificial way on this mount. And this renders the opinion stated on ^{<0123B>}**Genesis 22:1** more than probable, viz., that Abraham offered Isaac on that *very mountain* on which, in the fulness of time, Jesus suffered. See Bishop Warburton.

Verse 16. By myself have I sworn] So we find that the person who was called the *angel of the Lord* is here called *Jehovah*; See Clarke's note on ^{<0123D>}**Genesis 22:2**". An oath or an appeal to God is, among men, an end to strife; *as God could swear by no greater, he sware by himself*: being *willing more abundantly*, says the apostle, *to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, he confirmed it by an oath, that two immutable things, (his PROMISE and his OATH,) in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us*. See ^{<S0163>}**Hebrews 6:13-18**.

Verse 17. Shall possess the gate of his enemies] Instead of *gate* the Septuagint have *πολεις*, cities; but as there is a very near resemblance between *πολεις*, cities, and *πυλας*, gates, the latter might have been the original reading in the Septuagint, though none of the MSS. now acknowledge it. By the gates may be meant all the strength, whether troops, counsels, or fortified cities of their enemies. So ^{<01618>}**Matthew**

16:18: *On this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*—the counsels, stratagems, and powers of darkness shall not be able to prevail against or overthrow the true Church of Christ; and possibly our Lord had this promise to Abraham and his spiritual posterity in view, when he spoke these words.

Verse 18. And in thy seed, &c.] We have the authority of St. Paul, ^{<808>}**Galatians 3:8,16,18**, to restrain this to our blessed Lord, who was THE SEED through whom alone all God's blessings of providence, mercy, grace, and glory, should be conveyed to the nations of the earth.

Verse 20. Behold, Milcah, she hath also borne children unto thy brother] This short history seems introduced solely for the purpose of preparing the reader for the transactions related ^{<0230>}**Genesis 24:1-67**, and to show that the providence of God was preparing, in one of the branches of the family of Abraham, a suitable spouse for his son Isaac.

Verse 21. Huz] He is supposed to have peopled the land of *Uz* or *Ausitis*, in Arabia Deserta, the country of Job.

Buz his brother] From this person *Elihu* the *Buzite*, one of the friends of Job, is thought to have descended.

Kemuel the father of Aram] *Kamouel* **πατερα συρωσ**, *the father of the Syrians*, according to the Septuagint. Probably the *Kamiletes*, a Syrian tribe to the westward of the Euphrates are meant; they are mentioned by *Strabo*.

Verse 23. Bethuel begat Rebekah] Who afterward became the wife of Isaac.

Verse 24. His concubine] We borrow this word from the Latin compound *concupina*, from *con*, together, and *cubo*, to lie, and apply it solely to a woman cohabiting with a man without being *legally* married. The Hebrew word is **vgl yp** *pilegesh*, which is also a compound term, contracted, according to Parkhurst, from **gl p** *palag*, to divide or share, and **vgn** *nagash*, to approach; because the husband, in the delicate phrase of the Hebrew tongue, *approaches* the concubine, and *shares* the bed, &c., of the real wife with her. The *pilegesh* or concubine, (from which comes the Greek **παλλακη** *pallake*, and also the Latin *pellex*.) in Scripture, is a kind of *secondary* wife, not unlawful in the patriarchal times; though the

progeny of such could not inherit. The word is not used in the Scriptures in that disagreeable sense in which we commonly understand it. Hagar was properly the concubine or *pilegesh* of Abraham, and this *annuente Deo*, and with his wife's consent. Keturah, his second wife, is called a concubine, ^{<012615>}**Genesis 26:15**; ^{<130132>}**1 Chronicles 1:32**; and Pilhah and Zilhah were concubines to Jacob, ^{<013522>}**Genesis 35:22**. After the patriarchal times many eminent men had concubines, viz., *Caleb*, ^{<13046>}**1 Chronicles 2:46,48**; *Manasses*, ^{<130714>}**1 Chronicles 7:14**; *Gideon*, ^{<070831>}**Judges 8:31**; *Saul*, ^{<010807>}**2 Samuel 3:7**; *David*, ^{<010513>}**2 Samuel 5:13**; *Solomon*, ^{<21108>}**2 Kings 11:3**; and *Rehoboam*, ^{<141121>}**2 Chronicles 11:21**. The *pilegesh*, therefore, differed widely from a prostitute; and however unlawful under the New Testament, was not so under the Old.

FROM this chapter a pious mind may collect much useful instruction. From the trial of Abraham we again see, 1. That God may bring his followers into severe straits and difficulties, that they may have the better opportunity of both knowing and showing their own faith and obedience; and that he may seize on those occasions to show them the abundance of his mercy, and thus confirm them in righteousness all their days. There is a foolish saying among some religious people, which cannot be too severely reprobated: *Untried grace is no grace*. On the contrary, there may be much grace, though God, for good reasons, does not think proper for a time to put it to any severe trial or proof. But grace is certainly not fully *known* but in being called to trials of severe and painful obedience. But as all the gifts of God should be *used*, (and they are increased and strengthened by exercise,) it would be unjust to deny trials and exercises to *grace*, as this would be to preclude it from the opportunities of being strengthened and increased. 2. The offering up of Isaac is used by several religious people in a sort of metaphorical way, to signify their *easily-besetting sins, beloved idols, &c.* But this is a most reprehensible abuse of the Scripture. It is both insolent and wicked to compare some abominable lust or unholy affection to the amiable and pious youth who, for his purity and excellence, was deemed worthy to prefigure the sacrifice of the Son of God. To call our vile passions and unlawful attachments by the name of *our Isaac* is unpardonable; and to talk of *sacrificing* such to God is downright blasphemy. Such sayings as these appear to be legitimated by long use; but we should be deeply and scrupulously careful not to use any of the words of God in any sense in which he has not spoken them. If, in the course of God's providence, a parent is called to give up to

death an amiable, *only* son, then there is a parallel in the case; and it may be justly said, if pious resignation fill the parent's mind, such a person, like Abraham, has been called *to give his Isaac back to God*.

Independently of the *typical* reference to this transaction, there are two points which seem to be recommended particularly to our notice. 1. The astonishing faith and prompt obedience of the father. 2. The innocence, filial respect, and passive submission of the son. Such a father and such a son were alone worthy of each other.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 23

The age and death of Sarah, 1, 2. Abraham mourns for her, and requests a burial-place from the sons of Heth, 24. They freely offer him the choice of all their sepulchres, 5, 6. Abraham refuses to receive any as a free gift, and requests to buy the cave of Machpelah from Ephron, 7-9. Ephron proffers the cave and the field in which it was situated as a free gift unto Abraham, 10, 11. Abraham insists on giving its value in money, 12, 13. Ephron at last consents, and names the sum of four hundred shekels, 14, 15. Abraham weighs him the money in the presence of the people; in consequence of which the cave, the whole field, trees, &c., are made sure to him and his family for a possession, 16-18. The transaction being completed, Sarah is buried in the cave, 19. The sons of Heth ratify the bargain, 20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 1. And Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty years old] It is worthy of remark that Sarah is the only woman in the sacred writings whose *age*, *death*, and *burial* are distinctly noted. And she has been deemed worthy of *higher* honour, for St. Paul, ^{<802>}**Galatians 4:22, 23**, makes her a type of the *Church of Christ*; and her faith in the accomplishment of God's promise, that she should have a son, when all natural probabilities were against it, is particularly celebrated in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ^{<811>}**Hebrews 11:11**. Sarah was about ninety-one years old when Isaac was born, and she lived thirty-six years after, and saw him grown up to man's estate. With SARAH the promise of the incarnation of Christ *commenced*, though a comparatively obscure prophecy of it had been delivered to Eve, ^{<0015>}**Genesis 3:15**; and with MARY it terminated, having had its exact completion. Thus God put more honour upon these two women than upon all the daughters of Eve besides. Sarah's conception of Isaac was *supernatural*; she had passed the age and circumstances in which it was possible, naturally speaking, to have a child; therefore she laughed when the promise was given, knowing that the thing was impossible, because it had ceased to be with her after the manner of women. God allows this natural impossibility, and grants that the thing must be the effect of Divine interposition; and therefore asks, *Is any thing too hard for God?* The physical impossibility was increased in the case of *Mary*, she having no connection with man; but the same power interposed

as in the case of Sarah: and we find that when all aptitude for natural procreation was gone, *Sarah received strength to conceive seed*, and bore a son, from whom, in a direct line, the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, was to descend; and through this same power we find a *virgin* conceiving and bearing a son against all natural impossibilities. Every thing is *supernatural* in the births both of the type and antitype; can it be wondered at then, if the spiritual offspring of the Messiah must have a supernatural birth likewise? hence the propriety of that saying, *Unless a man be born again-born from above-born, not only of water, but of the Holy Ghost, he cannot see the kingdom of God*. These may appear hard sayings, and those who are little in the habit of considering spiritual things may exclaim, *It is enthusiasm!* Who can bear it? Such things cannot possibly be.” To such persons I have only to say, God hath spoken. This is sufficient for those who credit his being and his Bible; nor is there any thing *too hard* for him. He, by whose almighty power, Sarah had strength to conceive and bear a son in her old age, and by whose miraculous interference a virgin conceived, and the man Christ Jesus was born of her, can by the same power transform the sinful soul, and cause it to bear the image of the heavenly as it has borne the image of the earthly.

Verse 2. Sarah died in Kirjath-arba] Literally *in the city of the four*. Some suppose this place was called the *city of the four* because it was the burial place of *Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; others, because according to the opinion of the rabbins, *Eve* was buried there. with *Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah*. But it seems evidently to have had its name from a Canaanite, one of the Anakim, probably called *Arba* (for the text, ^{<06144>}**Joshua 14:14**, does not actually say this was his name,) who was the chief of the *four* brothers who dwelt there; the names of the others being *Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai*. See ^{<07010>}**Judges 1:10**. These three were destroyed by the tribe of Judah; probably the other had been previously dead.

Abraham came to mourn for Sarah] From verse 19 of the preceding chapter { ^{<012219>}**Genesis 22:19** } it appears that Abraham had settled at *Beer-sheba*; and here we find that Sarah died at Hebron, which was about twenty-four miles distant from Beersheba. For the convenience of feeding his numerous flocks, Abraham had probably several places of temporary residence, and particularly one at Beer-sheba, and another at Hebron; and it is likely that while he sojourned at Beersheba, Sarah died at Hebron; and

his *coming to mourn and weep for her* signifies his coming from the former to the latter place on the news of her death.

Verse 3. Abraham stood up from before his dead] He had probably sat on the ground some days in token of sorrow, as the custom then was, (see **Tobit 2:12, 13;** ^{<23470>}**Isaiah 47:1;** and ^{<013735>}**Genesis 37:35;**) and when this time was finished he arose and began to treat about a burying place.

Verse 4. I am a stranger and a sojourner] It appears from ^{<81113>}**Hebrews 11:13-16;** ^{<0121>}**1 Peter 2:11,** that these words refer more to the state of his mind than of his body. He felt that he had no certain dwelling place, and was seeking by faith a city that had foundations.

Give me a possession of a burying place] It has been remarked that in different nations it was deemed ignominious to be buried in another's ground; probably this prevailed in early times in the east, and it may be in reference to a sentiment of this kind that Abraham refuses to accept the offer of the children of Heth to bury in any of their sepulchres, and earnestly requests them to sell him one, that he might bury his wife in a place that he could claim as *his own*.

Verse 6. Thou art a mighty prince] *uyhl a ayvn nesi Elohim, a prince of God*-a person whom we know to be Divinely favoured, and whom, in consequence, we deeply respect and reverence.

Verse 8. Entreat for me to Ephron] Abraham had already seen the cave and field, and finding to whom they belonged, and that they would answer his purpose, came to the gate of Hebron, where the elders of the people sat to administer justice, &c., and where bargains and sales were made and witnessed, and having addressed himself to the elders, among whom *Ephron* was, though it appears he was not personally known to Abraham, he begged them to use their influence with the owner of the cave and field to sell it to him, that it might serve him and his family for a place of sepulture.

Verse 10. And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth] And Ephron *bvy yosheb,* was sitting among the children of Heth, but, as was before conjectured, was personally unknown to Abraham; he therefore answered for himself, making a free tender of the field, &c., to Abraham, in the presence of all the people, which amounted to a *legal conveyance* of the whole property to the patriarch.

Verse 13. If thou wilt give it] Instead of, if thou *wilt give it*, we should read, But if thou *wilt sell it*, *I will give thee money for the field*; **psk keseph**, silver, not *coined* money, for it is not probable that any such was then in use.

Verse 15. The land is worth four hundred shekels of silver] Though the words *is worth* are not in the text, yet they are necessarily expressed here to adapt the Hebrew to the idiom of our tongue. A shekel, according to the general opinion, was equal to two shillings and sixpence; but according to Dr. Prideaux, whose estimate I shall follow, three shillings English, four hundred of which are equal to sixty pounds sterling; but it is evident that a certain *weight* is intended, and not a *coin*, for in ^{<012316>}**Genesis 23:16** it is said, And Abraham weighed **l qvyw vaiyishkol**, the silver, and hence it appears that this *weight* itself passed *afterwards* as a current coin, for the word **l qv** is not only used to express a coin or piece of silver, but also to *weigh*; See Clarke's note on ^{<012016>}**Genesis 20:16**".

Verse 16. Current with the merchant] **rj sl rb** [*ober lassocher*, passing to or with the traveller—such as was commonly used by those who travelled about with merchandise of any sort. The word signifies the same as *hawker* or *pedlar* among us.

Verse 17. All the trees that were in the field] It is possible that all these were specified in the agreement.

Verse 20. And the field, &c. were made sure] **mqyw vaiyakom**, were established, caused to stand; the whole transaction having been regulated according to all the forms of law then in use.

1. IN this transaction between Abraham and the sons of Heth concerning the cave and field of Machpelah, we have the earliest account on record of the *purchase of land*. The simplicity, openness, and candour on both sides cannot be too much admired.

2. Sarah being dead, Abraham being only a *sojourner* in that land, shifting from place to place for the mere purpose of pasturing his flocks, and having no *right* to any part of the land, wished to *purchase* a place in which he might have the continual right of sepulture. For this purpose, 1. He goes to the gate of the city, the place where, in all ancient times, justice was administered, and bargains and sales concluded, and where for these purposes the elders of the people sat. 2. He there proposes to buy the cave

known by the name of the *Cave of Machpelah*, the cave of the *turning* or the *double cave*, for a burying place for his family. 3. To prevent him from going to any unnecessary expense, the people with one voice offer him the privilege of burying his wife in any of their sepulchres; this appearing to them to be no more than the common rights of hospitality and humanity required. 4. Abraham, intent on making a purchase, Ephron, the owner of the field and cave, values them at four hundred shekels, but at the same time wishes Abraham to receive the whole as a *gift*. 5. Abraham refuses the gift and weighs down the silver specified. 6. The people who enter in at the gate, i.e., the inhabitants coming from or going to their ordinary occupations in the country, witness the transaction, and thus the conveyance to Abraham is made sure without the intervention of those puzzlers of civil affairs by whose tricks and chicanery property often becomes insecure, and right and succession precarious and uncertain. But this censure does not fall on *lawyers* properly so called, who are men of honour, and whose office, in every well-regulated state, is as useful as it is respectable. But the accumulation and complex nature of almost all modern systems of law puzzle even justice herself, and often induce decisions by which truth falls in the streets and equity goes backwards. In the first ages of mankind, suspicion, deceit, and guile seem to have had a very limited influence. Happy days of primitive simplicity! When shall they return?

3. We often hear of the *rudeness* and *barbarity* of the primitive ages, but on what evidence? Every rule of politeness that could be acted upon in such a case as that mentioned here, is brought into full practice. Is it possible to read the simple narration in this place without admiring the amiable, decent, and polite conduct displayed on both sides? Had even Lord Chesterfield read this account, his good sense would have led him to propose it as a model in all transactions between man and his fellows. There is neither awkward, stiff formality on the one hand, nor frippery or affectation on the other. Decent respect, good sense, good nature, and good breeding, are all prominently displayed. And how highly laudable and useful is all this! A *pedant* or a *boor* on either side might have destroyed the simplicity of the whole transaction; the one by engendering *caution* and *suspicion*, and the other by *exciting disgust*. In all such transactions the *beau* and the *boor* are equally to be avoided.

From the *first* no *sincerity* can be expected, and the manners of the *latter* render him intolerable. The religion of the Bible recommends and inculcates orderly behaviour, as well as purity of heart and life. They who,

under the sanction of religion, trample under foot the decent forms of civil respect, supposing that because they are religious they have a right to be rude, totally mistake the spirit of Christianity, for *love* or *charity* (the soul and essence of that religion) *behaveth not itself unseemly*. Every attentive reader of the thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, will clearly discern that the description of true religion given in that place applies as forcibly to *good breeding* as to inward and outward holiness. What lessons of honesty, decent respect, and good manners could a sensible man derive from *Abraham* treating with the sons of Heth for the cave of Machpelah, and *William Penn* treating with the American Indians for the tract of land now called Pennsylvania! I leave others to draw the parallel, and to show how exactly the conduct and spirit of patriarch the *first* were exemplified in the conduct and spirit of patriarch the *second*. Let the righteous be had in everlasting remembrance!

GENESIS

CHAPTER 24

Abraham, being solicitous to get his son Isaac property married, calls his confidential servant, probably Eliezer, and makes him swear that he will not take a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites, 1-3, but from among his own kindred, 4. The servant proposes certain difficulties, 5, which Abraham removes by giving him the strongest assurances of God's direction in the business, 6, 7, and then specifies the conditions of the oath, 8. The form of the oath itself, 9. The servant makes preparations for his journey, and sets out for Mesopotamia, the residence of Abraham's kindred, 10. Arrives at a well near to the place, 11. His prayer to God, 12-14. Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, comes to the well to draw water, 15. She is described, 16. Conversation between her and Abraham's servant, in which every thing took place according to his prayer to God, 17-21. He makes her presents, and learns whose daughter she is, 22-24. She invites him to her father's house, 25. He returns thanks to God for having thus far given him a prosperous journey, 26, 27. Rebekah runs home and informs her family, 28; on which her brother Laban comes out, and invites the servant home, 29-31. His reception, 32, 33. Tells his errand, 34, and how he had proceeded in executing the trust reposed in him, 35-48. Requests an answer, 49. The family of Rebekah consent that she should become the wife of Isaac, 50, 51. The servant worships God, 52, and gives presents to Milcah, Laban, and Rebekah, 53. He requests to be dismissed, 54-56. Rebekah, being consulted, consents to go, 57, 58. She is accompanied by her nurse, 59; and having received the blessing of her parents and relatives, 60, she departs with the servant of Abraham, 61. They are met by Isaac, who was on an evening walk for the purpose of meditation, 62-65. The servant relates to Isaac all that he had done, 66. Isaac and Rebekah are married, 67.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. And Abraham was old] He was now about one hundred and forty years of age, and consequently Isaac was forty, being born when his father was one hundred years old. See ^{<012105>}**Genesis 21:5; 25:20.**

Verse 2. Eldest servant] As this eldest servant is stated to have been the ruler over all that he had, it is very likely that Eliezer is meant. See ^{<01150>}**Genesis 15:2, 3.**

Put, I pray thee, thy hand] See Clarke's note on ^{<012409>}**Genesis 24:9**".

Verse 3. I will make thee swear] See Clarke's note on "^{<01240>}Genesis 24:9".

Of the Canaanites] Because these had already been devoted to *slavery*, &c., and it would have been utterly inconsistent as well with prudence as with the design of God to have united the child and *heir* of the *promise* with one who was under a *curse*, though that curse might be considered to be only of a political nature. See the curse of Canaan, ^{<01025>}**Genesis 9:25**.

Verse 4. My country] Mesopotamia, called here Abraham's country, because it was the place where the family of Haran, his brother, had settled; and where himself had remained a considerable time with his father Terah. In this family, as well as in that of Nahor, the true religion had been in some sort preserved, though afterwards considerably corrupted; see ^{<01319>}**Genesis 31:19**.

And take a wife unto my son] A young man in Bengal is precisely in the same circumstances as Isaac; he has nothing to do in the choice of a wife; parents employ *others* to seek wives for their sons. Those who leave their homes in search of employment always marry their children in their own country, and among their acquaintance at home; never among the people with whom they *reside*. In Asiatic countries this custom has prevailed from the infancy of the human race. See Ward's *Hindoo Customs*.

Verse 5. Peradventure the woman will not be willing] We may see, says Calmet, by this and other passages of Scripture, ^{<00918>}**Joshua 9:18**, what the sentiments of the ancients were relative to an *oath*. They believed they were bound precisely by *what was spoken*, and had no liberty to interpret the intentions of those to whom the oath was made.

Verse 7. The Lord God, &c.] He expresses the strongest confidence in God, that the great designs for which he had brought him from his own kindred to propagate the true religion in the earth would be accomplished; and that therefore, when earthly instruments failed, heavenly ones should be employed. *He shall send his angel*, probably meaning the Angel of the Covenant, of whom see ^{<01157>}**Genesis 15:7**.

Verse 9. Put his hand under the thigh of Abraham] This *form* of swearing has greatly puzzled the commentators; but it is useless to detail opinions which I neither believe myself, nor would wish my readers to credit. I believe the true sense is given in the *Targum of Jonathan ben*

Uzziel, and that called the *Jerusalem Targum*. In the former it is said, *Put now thy hand ytl whm tyzgb bigzirath mehulathi, in sectione circumcisionis meæ*; in the latter *ymyq Ēry twj t techoth yerech keyami, sub femore fæderis mei*. When we put the circumstances mentioned in this and the third verse together, we shall find that they fully express the ancient method of binding by oath in such transactions as had a religious tendency.

1. The *rite* or *ceremony* used on the occasion: the person binding himself put his hand under the thigh of the person to whom he was to be bound; *i.e.*, he put his hand on the *part* that bore the mark of *circumcision*, the sign of God's covenant, which is tantamount to our *kissing the book*, or laying the hand upon the *New Testament* or *covenant* of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. The *form* of the *oath* itself: the person swore *by Jehovah, the God of heaven* and the *God of the earth*. Three essential attributes of God are here mentioned: 1. His *self-existence* and *eternity* in the name *Jehovah*. 2. His *dominion of glory* and blessedness in the kingdom of *heaven*. 3. His *providence* and *bounty* in the *earth*. The meaning of the oath seems to be this: "As God is unchangeable in his nature and purposes, so shall I be in this engagement, under the penalty of forfeiting all expectation of temporal prosperity, the benefits of the mystical covenant, and future glory." An oath of this kind, taken at such a time, and on such an occasion, can never be deemed irreligious or profane. *Thou shalt swear by his name*-shalt acknowledge and bind thyself unto the *true God*, as the just Judge of thy motives and actions, is a command of the Most High; and such an oath as the above is at once (on such an occasion) both proper and rational. The person binding himself proposes for a *pattern* the *unchangeable* and *just God*; and as HE is the avenger of wrong and the punisher of falsehood, and has all power in the heavens and in the earth, so he can punish perjury by privation of spiritual and temporal blessings, by the loss of life, and by inflicting the perdition due to ungodly men, among whom liars and perjured persons occupy the most distinguished rank. Our ideas of delicacy may revolt from the *rite* used on this occasion; but, when the nature of the covenant is considered, of which *circumcision* was the *sign*, we shall at once perceive that this rite could not be used without producing sentiments of reverence and godly fear, as the contracting party must know that the God of this covenant was a consuming fire.

Verse 10. Took ten camels] It appears that Abraham had left the whole management of this business to the discretion of his servant, to take with him what *retinue* and what *dowry* he pleased; for it is added, *All the goods*

of his master were in his hand; and in those times it was customary to *give* a dowry *for* a wife, and not to receive one *with* her.

Verse 11. He made his camels to kneel down] To rest themselves, or lie down, as the Septuagint has very properly expressed it, **και εκοιμισε τας καμηλους.**

The time that women go out to draw water.] In Bengal it is the universal practice for the women to go to *pools* and *rivers* to fetch water.

Companies of four, six, ten, or more, may be seen in every town daily going to fetch water, with the pitchers resting upon their sides; and, on their return from bathing, women frequently bring water home.-WARD.

Verse 12. And he said, O Lord God, &c.] “The conduct of this servant,” says Dr. Dodd, “appears no less pious than rational. By supplicating for a sign, he acknowledges God to be the great superintendent and director of the universe, and of that event in particular; and at the same time, by asking a *natural* sign, such as betokened humanity, condescension, and other qualities which promised a discreet and virtuous wife, he puts his prayer upon such a discreet, rational footing, as to be a proper example for all to imitate who would not tempt the providence of God, by expecting extraordinary signs to be given them for the determination of cases which they are capable of deciding by a proper use of their rational faculties.”

This is all very good; but certainly the case referred to here is such a one as required especial direction from God; a case which no use of the rational faculties, without Divine influence, could be sufficient to determine. It is easy to run into extremes, and it is very natural so to do. In all things the assistance and blessing of God are necessary, even where human strength and wisdom have the fullest and freest sphere of action; but there are numberless cases, of infinite consequence to man, where his strength and prudence can be of little or no avail, and where the God of all grace must work all things according to the counsel of his own will. To expect the accomplishment of any good end, without a proper use of the means, is the most reprehensible enthusiasm; and to suppose that any good can be done or procured without the blessing and mercy of God, merely because proper means are used, is not less reprehensible. Plan, scheme, and labour like Eliezer, and then, by earnest faith and prayer, commit the whole to the direction and blessing of God.

Verse 15. Behold, Rebekah came out] How admirably had the providence of God adapted every circumstance to the necessity of the case,

and so as in the most punctual manner to answer the prayer which his servant had offered up!

Verse 19. I will draw water for thy camels also] Had Rebekah done *no more* than Eliezer had prayed for, we might have supposed that she acted not as a free agent, but was *impelled* to it by the absolutely controlling power of God; but as she exceeds all that was requested, we see that it sprang from her native benevolence, and sets her conduct in the most amiable point of view.

Verse 21. The man, wondering at her] And he was so lost in wonder and astonishment at her simplicity, innocence, and benevolence, that he permitted this delicate female to draw water for *ten camels*, without ever attempting to afford her any kind of assistance! I know not which to admire most, the benevolence and condescension of Rebekah, or the cold and apparently stupid indifference of the servant of Abraham. Surely they are both of an uncommon cast.

Verse 22. The man took a golden ear-ring] *bhz μzn nezem zahab*. That this could not be an *ear-ring* is very probable from its being in the *singular* number. The margin calls it a *jewel for the forehead*; but it most likely means a *jewel for the nose*, or *nose-ring*, which is in universal use through all parts of Arabia and Persia, particularly among young women. They are generally worn in the left nostril. The word is very properly translated *επιρρινον*, an *ornament for the nose*, by Symmachus.

Half a shekel] For the weight of a shekel, See Clarke's note "^{012016}Genesis 20:16".

And two bracelets] *μydy mx ynvw usheney tsemidim*. As *tsemidim* comes from *dmx tsamad*, to *join* or *couple together*, it may very properly mean *bracelets*, or whatever may clasp round the arms or legs; for rings and ornaments are worn round both by females in India and Persia. The small part of the leg is generally decorated in this way, and so is the whole arm from the shoulder to the wrist. As these *tsemidim* were given to Rebekah *for her hands*, it sufficiently distinguishes them from a similar ornament used for the *ankles*.

In different parts of the sacred writings there are allusions to ornaments of various kinds still in use in different Asiatic countries. They are of seven different sorts. 1. for the *forehead*; 2. for the *nose*; 3. for the *ears*; 4. for

the *arms*; 5. for the *fingers*; 6. for the *neck* and *breast*; 7. for the *ankles*. See ^{<01242>}**Genesis 24:22, 47**; also ^{<26162>}**Ezekiel 16:12**; ^{<01122>}**Proverbs 11:22**; ^{<23022>}**Isaiah 3:21**; ^{<01350>}**Genesis 35:4**; ^{<02312>}**Exodus 32:2,3**; ^{<08211>}**Job 42:11**; ^{<00824>}**Judges 8:24**. The principal female ornaments are enumerated in the third chapter of Isaiah, which are very nearly the same that are in use in Persia and India to the present time.

Verse 26. Bowed down his head, and worshipped] Two acts of adoration are mentioned here; 1. Bowing the head, *dqy yikkod*; and 2. Prostration upon the earth, *wj tvyw vaiyishtaehu*. The bowing of the head was to Rebekah, to return her thanks for her kind invitation. The prostration was to Jehovah, in gratitude for the success with which he had favoured him.

Verse 27. The Lord led me] By desire of his master he went out on this journey; and as he acknowledged God in all his ways, the Lord directed all his steps.

Verse 28. Her mother's house] Some have conjectured from this that her father *Bethuel* was dead; and the person called *Bethuel*, ^{<01250>}**Genesis 24:50**, was a younger brother. This is possible, but the mother's house might be mentioned were even the father alive; for in Asiatic countries the women have apartments entirely separate from those of the men, in which their little children and grown-up daughters reside with them. This was probably the case here, though it is very likely that Bethuel was dead, as the whole business appears to be conducted by Rebekah's brothers.

Verse 31. Thou blessed of the Lord] Probably a usual mode of wishing prosperity, as he that is blessed of the Lord is worthy of all respect; for, enjoying the Divine favour, he is in possession of the sum of happiness.

Verse 32. Provender for the camels] These were the first objects of his care; for a good man is merciful to his beast.

Water to wash his feet] Thus it thus appears that he had servants with him; and as the fatigues of the journey must have fallen as heavily upon them as upon himself, so we find no distinction made, but water is provided to wash their feet also.

Verse 33. I will not eat until I have told] In Hindoostan it is not unusual for a Brahmin to enter a house and sit down, and when meat is offered,

refuse to eat till he has obtained the object of his errand. Here is a servant who had his master's interest more at heart than his own. He refuses to take even necessary refreshment till he knows whether he is likely to accomplish the object of his journey. Did not our blessed Lord allude to the conduct of Abraham's servant, ^{<E0E4>}**John 4:34**: *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work?*

Verse 36. Unto him hath he given all that he hath.] He has made Isaac his sole heir. These things appear to be spoken to show the relatives of Rebekah that his master's son was a proper match for her; for even in those primitive times there was regard had to the suitability of station and rank in life, as well as of education, in order to render a match comfortable. Persons of dissimilar habits, as well as of dissimilar religious principles, are never likely to be very happy in a married life. Even the *poor* and the *rich* may better meet together in matrimonial alliances than the *religious* and the *profane*, the *well-bred* and the *vulgar*. A person may be unequally yoked in a great variety of ways: *Bear ye one another's burdens* is the command of God; but where there is unsuitableness in the dispositions, education, mental capacity, &c., of the persons, then *one side* is obliged to bear the whole burden, and endless dissatisfaction is the result. See at the end. ^{<012457>}**“See Clarke's note at Genesis 24:67”**.

Verse 42. O Lord God of my master] As Abraham was the friend of God, Eliezer makes use of this to give weight and consequence to his petitions.

Verse 43. When the virgin] **hml** [**h** *haalmah*, from **חל** [*alam*, to hide, cover, or conceal; a pure virgin, a woman not *uncovered*, and in this respect still concealed from man. The same as **חל** **wtb** *bethulah*, ^{<012416>}**Genesis 24:16**, which, from the explanation there given, incontestably means a *virgin* in the proper sense of the word—a young woman, not that is *covered* or *kept at home*, the common gloss, but who was not *uncovered* in the *delicate sense* in which the Scripture uses this word. See this interpretation vindicated on ^{<23714>}**Isaiah 7:14**. **See Clarke's note** ^{<<23714>}**Isaiah 7:14”**.

Verse 45. Before I had done speaking in mine heart] So we find that the whole of this prayer, so circumstantially related ^{<012412>}**Genesis 24:12-14**, and again ^{<012442>}**Genesis 24:42-44**, was mental, and heard only by that God to whom it was directed. It would have been improper to have used *public*

prayer on the occasion, as his servants could have felt no particular interest in the accomplishment of his petitions, because they were not concerned in them, having none of the responsibility of this mission.

Verse 49. That I may turn to the right hand or to the left] That is, That I may go elsewhere and seek a proper match for the son of my master. Some have imagined that Eliezer intimated by these expressions that if he did not succeed in obtaining Rebekah, he would go and seek for a wife either among the descendants of Ishmael or the descendants of Lot. This interpretation is fanciful.

Verse 50. Laban and Bethuel] These seem both to be *brothers*, of whom Laban was the eldest and chief; for the opinion of Josephus appears to be very correct, *viz.*, that Bethuel, the father, had been some time dead. See Clarke's note "^{<01248>}Genesis 24:28".

Bad or good] We can neither speak *for* nor against; it seems to be entirely the work of God, and we cordially submit: consult Rebekah; if she be willing, take her and go. See Clarke's note "^{<01248>}Genesis 24:58".

Verse 53. Jewels of silver, and jewels of gold] The word *yl k keley*, which we here translate *jewels* signifies properly *vessels* or *instruments*; and those presented by Eliezer might have been of various kinds. What he had given before, ^{<01242>}Genesis 24:22, was in token of *respect*, what he gave now appears to have been in the way of *dowry*.

Precious things.] tndgm migdanoth. This word is used to express *exquisite fruits* or *delicacies*, ^{<R313>}Deuteronomy 33:13-16; *precious plants* or *flowers*, Cant. ^{<20416>}Song of Solomon 4:16; 7:13. But it may mean *gifts* in general, though rather of an *inferior* kind to those mentioned above.

Verse 54. And they did eat and drink] When Eliezer had got a favourable answer, then he and his servants sat down to meat; this he had refused to do till he had told his message, ^{<01243>}Genesis 24:33.

Verse 55. Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten] The original is very abrupt and obscure, because we are not acquainted with the precise meaning of the *form of speech* which is here used; **rwc** [**wa μymy** *yamim o asor* DAYS OR TEN, probably meaning a *year* or *ten months*, as the margin reads it, or a *week* or *ten days*. This latter is the most likely sense, as there would be no propriety after having given their consent

that she should go, in detaining her for a *year* or *ten months*. In matters of simple phraseology, or in those which concern peculiar customs, the *Septuagint* translation, especially in the Pentateuch, where it is most accurate and pure, may be considered a legitimate judge; this translation renders the words *ἡμερᾶς ὡσεὶ δέκα*, *about ten days*. Houbigant contends strongly that instead of the words *רַׁוַׁס [wa μymy yamim o asor*, days or ten, we should read *μymy װדׁי chodesh yamim*, a month of days, i.e., a full month; without which emendation he asserts, *locus explicari non possit*, “the passage cannot be explained.” This emendation is supported by the *Syriac* version, which reads here [Arabic] *yerach yomin*, a month of days, or a full month. The reader may adopt the *Syriac* or the *Septuagint*, as he judges best.

Verse 58. Wilt thou go with this man?] So it appears it was left *ultimately* to the choice of Rebekah whether she would accept the proposals now made to her, unless we suppose that the question meant, *Wilt thou go immediately, or stay with us a month longer?*

She said, I will go.] It fully appears to be the will of God that it should be so, and I consent. This at once determined the whole business.

Verse 59. And her nurse] Whose name, we learn from ^{<01308>}**Genesis 35:8**, was *Deborah*, and who, as a second mother, was deemed proper to accompany Rebekah. This was a measure dictated by good sense and prudence. Rebekah had other female attendants. See ^{<01246>}**Genesis 24:61**.

Verse 60. Be thou the mother of thousands of millions] *hbbr ypl al lealphay rebabah*, for thousands ten thousand, or *for myriads of thousands*, a large family being ever considered, in ancient times, as a proof of the peculiar blessing and favour of God. Similar addresses to a daughter, when she is going from her father’s house to live with her husband, are very common among the *Hindoos*; such as, “Be thou the mother of a son,” “Be thou the wife of a king,” &c. See *Ward*.

Verse 62. And Isaac came] Concerning this *well* see ^{<01163>}**Genesis 16:13,14**, &c. As it appears from ^{<02511>}**Genesis 25:11**, that Isaac dwelt at the well *Lahai-roi*, it has been conjectured that he had now come on a visit to his aged father at Beersheba, where he waited in expectation of his bride.

For he dwelt in the south country.] The southern part of the land of Canaan. See ^{<0113>}**Genesis 12:9**.

Verse 63. Isaac went out to meditate] **j wcl** *lasuach*, to bend down the body, or the mind, or both. He was probably in deep thought, with his eyes fixed upon the ground. What the subject of his meditation was it is useless to inquire; he was a pious man, and could not be *triflingly* employed.

Verse 65. She took a veil] **āy[xh** *hatstsaaf*. This is the first time this word occurs, and it is of doubtful signification; but most agree to render it a *veil* or a *cloak*. The former is the most likely, as it was generally used by women in the east as a sign of *chastity*, *modesty*, and *subjection*.

Verse 67. Sarah's tent] Sarah being dead, her tent became now appropriated to the use of Rebekah.

And took Rebekah, &c.] After what *form* this was done we are not told; or whether there was any form used on the occasion, more than solemnly receiving her as the person whom God had chosen to be his wife; for it appears from ^{<01246>}**Genesis 24:66** that the servant told him all the especial providential circumstances which had marked his journey. The primitive *form* of marriage we have already seen, ^{<01023>}**Genesis 2:23,24**, which, it is likely, as far as *form* was attended to, was that which was commonly used in all the patriarchal times.

In this chapter we have an affecting and edifying display of that *providence* by which God disposes and governs the affairs of the universe, descending to the minutest particulars, and managing the great *whole* by directing and influencing all its *parts*. This *particular* or *especial* providence we see is not confined to work by *general laws*; it is wise and intelligent, for it is the mind, the will, and energy of God; it steps out of common ways, and takes particular directions, as endlessly varied human necessities may need, or the establishment and maintenance of godliness in the earth may require. What a history of providential occurrences, coming all in answer to the prayer and faith of a simple, humble individual, does this chapter exhibit!

As Abraham's servant has God's glory only in view in the errand on which he is going, he may well expect the Divine direction. See with what simplicity and confidence he prays to God! He even prescribes the way in which the Divine choice and approbation shall be made known; and God honours the purity of his motives and his pious faith, by giving him

precisely the answer he wished. How honourable in the sight of God is *simplicity* of heart! It has nothing to fear, and all good to hope for; whereas a spirit warped by *self-interest* and *worldly views* is always *uncertain* and *agitated*, as it is ever seeking that from its *own counsels*, *projects*, and *schemes*, which should be sought in God alone. In every place the upright man meets with his God; his heart acknowledges his Maker, and his Maker acknowledges him; for such a one the whole economy of providence and grace is ever at work.

Abraham's solicitude to get a suitable wife for his son is worthy of the most serious regard. He was well aware that if Isaac formed a matrimonial alliance with the *Canaanites* it might be ruinous to his piety, and prevent the dissemination of the true religion; therefore he binds his most trusty servant by a solemn oath not to take a wife for his son from the daughters of Canaan, but from his own kindred, among whom the knowledge of the true God was best preserved. Others had different rays of the light of truth, but Abraham's family alone had *THE truth*; and to the descendants of this family were the promises made.

How careful should parents be to procure alliances for their children with those who fear God, as so much of the peace and comfort of the children, and the happiness of *their* posterity, depend on this circumstance! But alas! how many sacrifice the comfort and salvation of their offspring at the shrine of Mammon! If they can procure *rich husbands* and *wives* for their daughters and sons, then all, in their apprehension, is well. Marriages of this kind may be considered as mere *bargain* and *sale*; for there is scarcely ever any reference to God or eternity in them. The Divine institution of marriage is left out of sight; and the persons are united, not properly to *each other*, in the love, fear, and according to the ordinance of God, but they are wedded to so many *thousand pounds* sterling, and to so many *houses, fields, &c.* Thus like goes to like, *metal to metal, earth to earth.* Marriages formed on such principles are mere *licensed adulteries*. Let such *contractors* hear these awful words of God: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" ~~5046~~ **James 4:4.** See Clarke's note on "~~40286~~ **Genesis 24:36**".

Although under the patriarchal dispensation parents had a kind of absolute authority over their children, and might dispose of them as they pleased in general cases, yet it appears that in matrimonial connections they were under no compulsion. The suitable person was pointed out and

recommended; but it does not appear that children were *forced*, against the whole tide of their affections, to take those persons who were the objects of the parent's choice. *Wilt thou go with this man?* was, in all likelihood, deemed essential to the completion of the contract; and by the answer, *I will go*, was the contract fully ratified. Thus the persons were ultimately left to their own choice, though the most prudent and proper means were no doubt used in order to direct and fix it. Whether this was precisely the plan followed in primitive times we cannot *absolutely* say: they were times of great *simplicity*; and probably connections on the mere principle of *affection*, independently of all other considerations, seldom existed. And it must be allowed that matches formed on the sole principle of *conveniency* might as well be formed by the parents as by any others; and in Asiatic countries it was generally so, for *there* the female seldom presumes to have a choice of her own.

In all cases of this kind the child should invariably consult the *experience* and *wisdom* of the parents; and the parents should ever pay much respect to the *feelings* of the child, nor oppose an alliance which may be in all other respects suitable, because there may be a lack of *property* on *one side* of the intended match. If parents would proceed in this way, God would pour his blessing on their seed, and his Spirit upon their offspring.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 25

Abraham marries Keturah, 1. Their issue, 2-4. Makes Isaac his heir, 5; but gives portions to the sons of his concubines, and sends them eastward from Isaac, to find settlements, 6. Abraham's age, 7, and death, 8. Is buried by his sons Isaac and Ishmael in the cave of Machpelah, 9, 10. God's blessing upon Isaac, 11. The generations of Ishmael, 12-16. His age, 17, and death, 18. Of the generations of Isaac, 19, who was married in his fortieth year, 20. Rebekah his wife being barren, on his prayer to God she conceives, 21. She inquires of the Lord concerning her state, 22. The Lord's answer, 23. She is delivered of twins, 24. Peculiarities in the birth of her sons Esau and Jacob, from which they had their names, 25, 26. Their different manner of life, 27, 28. Esau, returning from the field faint, begs pottage from his brother, 29, 30. Jacob refuses to grant him any but on condition of his selling him his birthright, 31. Esau, ready to die, parts with his birthright to save his life, 32. Jacob causes him to confirm the sale with an oath, 33. He receives bread and pottage of lentiles, and departs, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 1. Then again Abraham took a wife] When Abraham took Keturah we are not informed; it might have been in the lifetime of Sarah; and the original *āsyw vaiyoseph, and he added, &c.*, seems to give some countenance to this opinion. Indeed it is not very likely that he had the children mentioned here *after* the death of Sarah; and from the circumstances of his age, feebleness, &c., at the birth of Isaac, it is still more improbable. Even at that age, forty years before the marriage of Isaac, the birth of his son is considered as not less miraculous on his part than on the part of Sarah; for the apostle expressly says, ^{ερωτησ}**Romans 4:19**, that Abraham *considered not his own body NOW DEAD, when he was about a hundred years old, nor the DEADNESS of Sarah's womb*; hence we learn that they were both past the procreation of children, insomuch that the birth of Isaac is ever represented as *supernatural*. It is therefore very improbable that he had any child after the birth of Isaac; and therefore we may well suppose that Moses had related this transaction out of its *chronological* order, which is not unfrequent in the sacred writings, when a variety of important facts relative to the accomplishment of some grand design are thought necessary to be produced in a connected series. On this

account *intervening* matters of a different complexion are referred to a future time. Perhaps we may be justified in reading the verse: "And Abraham *had* added, and *had taken* a wife (besides Hagar) whose name was Keturah," &c. The chronology in the margin dates this marriage with Keturah A. M. 2154, nine years after the death of Sarah, A. M. 2145. *Jonathan ben Uzziel* and the *Jerusalem Targum* both assert that Keturah was the same as *Hagar*. Some rabbins, and with them Dr. Hammond, are of the same opinion; but both Hagar and Keturah are so distinguished in the Scriptures, that the opinion seems destitute of probability.

Verse 2. Zimran] Stephanus Byzantinus mentions a city in *Arabia Felix* called *Zadram*, which some suppose to have been named from this son of Keturah; but it is more likely, as Calmet observes, that all these sons of Abraham resided in *Arabia Deserta*; and Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, lib. vi., c. 28, mentions a people in that country called *Zamarenians*, who were probably the descendants of this person.

Jokshan] Several learned men have been of opinion that this Jokshan was the same as *Kachtan*, the father of the Arabs. The testimonies in favour of this opinion see in Dr. Hunt's Oration, *Deuteronomy Antiquitate*, &c., *Linguae Arabicae*, p. 4. Calmet supposes that the Cataneans, who inhabited a part of *Arabia Deserta*, sprang from this Jokshan.

Medan, and Midian] Probably those who peopled that part of *Arabia Petraea* contiguous to the land of Moab eastward of the Dead Sea. St. Jerome terms the people of this country *Madinæans*; and Ptolemy mentions a people called *Madianites*, who dwelt in the same place.

Ishbak] From this person Calmet supposes the brook *Jabbok*, which has its source in the mountains of *Gilead*, and falls into the sea of Tiberias, took its name.

Shuah.] Or *Shuach*. From this man the *Sacceans*, near to *Batanla*, at the extremity of *Arabia Deserta*, towards Syria, are supposed to have sprung. *Bildad* the *Shuhite*, one of Job's friends, is supposed to have descended from this son of Abraham.

Verse 3. Sheba] From whom sprang the Sabeans, who robbed Job of his cattle. See *Bochart* and *Calmet*.

Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.] We know not who these were, but as each name is *plural* they must have been *tribes* or *families*,

and not *individuals*. Onkelos interprets these words of persons dwelling in *camp*s, *tents*, and *islands*; and Jonathan ben Uzziel calls them *merchants*, *artificers*, and *heads* or *chiefs of people*.

Verse 4. Ephah, and Epher, &c.] Of these we know no more than of the preceding; an abundance of conjectures is already furnished by the commentators.

Verse 5. Gave all that he had unto Isaac.] His principal flocks, and especially his right to the land of Canaan, including a confirmation to him and his posterity of whatever was contained in the promises of God.

Verse 6. Unto the sons of the concubines] Viz., Hagar and Keturah, Abraham gave gifts. Cattle for breed, seed to sow the land, and implements for husbandry, may be what is here intended.

And sent them away-while he yet lived] Lest after his death they should dispute a settlement in the Land of Promise with Isaac; therefore he very prudently sent them to procure settlements during his lifetime, that they might be under no temptation to dispute the settlement with Isaac in Canaan. From this circumstance arose that law which has prevailed in almost all countries, of *giving the estates to the eldest son* by a lawful wife; for though concubines, or wives of the second rank, were perfectly legitimate in those ancient times, yet their children did not inherit, except in case of the failure of *legal* issue, and with the consent of the lawful wife; and it is very properly observed by Calmet, that it was in consequence of the consent of Leah and Rachel that the children of their slaves by Jacob had a common and equal lot with the rest. By a law of Solon all natural children were excluded from the paternal inheritance, but their fathers were permitted to give them any sum not beyond a thousand drachma by way of *present*.

Eastward, unto the east country.] Arabia Deserta, which was eastward of Beer-sheba, where Abraham lived.

Verse 7. The days of the years, &c.] There is a beauty in this expression which is not sufficiently regarded. Good men do not live by *centuries*, though many such have lived several hundred years, nor do they count their lives even by *years*, but by *days*, living as if they were the creatures only of A DAY; having no more time than they can with any propriety call their own, and living that day in reference to *eternity*.

Verse 8. Then Abraham gave up the ghost] Highly as I value our translation for general accuracy, fidelity, and elegance, I must beg leave to dissent from this version. The original word [wgy yigva, from the root [yg gava, signifies *to pant for breath, to expire, to cease from breathing, or to breathe one's last*; and here, and wherever the original word is used, the simple term *expired* would be the proper expression. In our translation this expression occurs ^{<1238>}**Genesis 25:8,17; 35:29; 44:33;** ^{<1831>}**Job 3:11; 10:18; 11:20; 13:19; 14:10;** ^{<2019>}**Lamentations 1:19;** in all of which places the original is [yg gava. It occurs also in our translation, ^{<4153>}**Jeremiah 15:9,** but there the original is hvpn hj pn *naphceah naphshah, she breathed out her soul*; the verb [yg gava not being used. Now as our English word *ghost*, from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.] *gast*, an *inmate, inhabitant, guest*, (a casual visitant,) also a *spirit*, is now restricted among us to the latter meaning, always signifying the *immortal spirit* or *soul* of man, the *guest* of the body; and as *giving up the spirit, ghost, or soul*, is an act not proper to man, though *commending it to God*, in our last moments, is both an act of faith and piety; and as *giving up the ghost*, i.e., *dismissing his spirit* from his body, is attributed to Jesus Christ, to whom alone it is proper, I therefore object against its use in *every other case*.

Every man since the fall has not only been *liable* to death, but has *deserved* it, as all have forfeited their lives because of sin. Jesus Christ, as born immaculate, and having never sinned, had not *forfeited* his life, and therefore may be considered as naturally and properly immortal. *No man*, says he, *taketh it-my life, from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again: therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again,* ^{<3107>}**John 10:17,18.** Hence we rightly translate ^{<1275>}**Matthew 27:50, αφηκε το πνευμα,** *he gave up the ghost*; i.e., *he dismissed his spirit that he might die for the sin of the world*. The Evangelist St. ^{<3193>}**John 19:30,** makes use of an expression to the same import, which we translate in the same way, **παρεδωκε το πνευμα,** *he delivered up his spirit*. We translate ^{<11537>}**Mark 15:37,** and ^{<12346>}**Luke 23:46,** *he gave up the ghost*, but not correctly, because the word in both these places is very different, **εξεπνευσε,** *he breathed his last, or expired*, though in the latter place (^{<12346>}**Luke 23:46**) there is an equivalent expression, *O Father, into thy hands παρατιθεμαι το πνευμα μου,* *I commit my spirit*, i.e., *I place my soul in thy hand*; proving that the act was *his own*, that no man could take his life away from

him, that he did not die by the *perfidy* of his disciple, or the *malice* of the Jews, but by his *own free act*. Thus HE LAID DOWN *his life for the sheep*. Of Ananias and Sapphira, ^{<416>}Acts 5:5,10, and of Herod, ^{<412>}Acts 12:23, our translation says they *gave up the ghost*; but the word in both places is εξεψυξε, which simply means to *breathe out*, to *expire*, or *die*; but in no case, either by the *Septuagint* in the *Old* or any of the sacred writers in the *New Testament*, is αφηκε το πνευμα or παρεδωκε το πνευμα, *he dismissed his spirit* or *delivered up his spirit*, spoken of any person but Christ. Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, &c., *breathed their last*; Ananias, Sapphira, and Herod *expired*; but none, Jesus Christ excepted, *gave up the ghost*, *dismissed*, or *delivered up his own spirit*, and was consequently *free among the dead*. Of the patriarchs, &c., the *Septuagint* uses the word εκλειπων, *failing*, or κατεπαυσε, *he ceased* or *rested*.

An old man] Viz., one hundred and seventy-five, the youngest of all the patriarchs; *and full* of years. The word *years* is not in the text; but as our translators saw that some word was necessary to fill up the text, they added this in *italics*. It is probable that the true word is μυμυ *yamim*, *days*, as in ^{<152>}Genesis 35:29; and this reading is found in several of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS., in the *Samaritan* text, *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, *Persic*, and *Chaldee*. On these authorities it might be safely admitted into the text.

Being full of days, or *full of years*.-To be *satiated* with days or life, has been in use among different nations to express the termination of life, and especially life ended *without reluctance*. It seems to be a metaphor taken from a guest regaled by a plentiful banquet, and is thus used by the Roman poets.

Lucretius, lib. iii., ver. 947, ridiculing those who were unreasonably attached to life, and grievously afflicted at the prospect of death, addresses them in the following manner:—

—————*Quid mortem congemis, ac fies?*
Nam si grata fuit tibi vita anteacta, priorque,
Et non omnia pertusum congesta quasi in vas
Commoda perfluxere, atque ingrata interiere:
Cur non, ut PLENUS VITÆ CONVIVA, RECEDIS?

*Fond mortal, what's the matter, thou dost sigh?
 Why all these fears because thou once must die?
 For if the race thou hast already run
 Was pleasant, if with joy thou saw'st the sun,
 If all thy pleasures did not pass thy mind
 As through a sieve, but left some sweets behind,
 Why dost thou not then, like a THANKFUL GUEST,
 Rise cheerfully from life's ABUNDANT FEAST?
 CREECH.*

*Et nec opinanti mors ad caput astitit ante,
 Quam SATUR, ac PLENUS possis discedere rerum.
 Ib. ver. 972.*

*And unexpected hasty death destroys,
 Before thy greedy mind is FULL of JOYS. Idem.*

Horace makes use of the same figure:—

*Inde fit, ut raro, qui se vixisse beatum
 Dicat, et exacto CONTENTUS tempore vitæ
 Cedat, ut CONVIVA SATUR, reperire queamus.
 Sat. l. i. Sat. i. ver. 117.*

*From hence how few, like SATED GUESTS, depart
 From life's FULL BANQUET with a cheerful heart?
 FRANCIS.*

The same image is expressed with strong ridicule in his last EPISTLE—

*Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti;
 Tempus ABIRE tibi est.
 Epist. l. ii., ver. 216.*

*Thou hast eaten, drunk, and play'd ENOUGH; then why
 So stark reluctant to leave off, and DIE?*

The poet Statius uses *abire paratum* PLENUM vita, “prepared to depart, being FULL of LIFE,” in exactly the same sense:—

———*Dubio quem non in turbine rerum
 Dependet suprema dies; sed abire paratum,
 Ac PLENUM VITA.
 Sylv. l. ii., Villa Surrentina, ver. 128.*

*The man whose mighty soul is not immersed
in dubious whirl of secular concerns,
His final hour ne'er takes him by surprise,
But, FULL of LIFE, he stands PREPARED to DIE.*

It was the opinion of Aristotle that *a man should depart from life as he should rise from a banquet*. Thus Abraham died FULL of days, and SATISFIED with life, but in a widely different spirit from that recommended by the above writers—HE left life with a hope full of immortality, which they could never boast; for HE saw the day of Christ, and was glad; and his hope was crowned, for here it is expressly said, *He was gathered to his fathers*; surely not to the bodies of his sleeping ancestors, who were buried in Chaldea and not in Canaan, nor with his fathers in any sense, for he was deposited in the cave where his WIFE alone slept; but he was gathered to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven; ^{<81223>}Hebrews 12:23.

Verse 9. His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him] Though Ishmael and his mother had been expelled from Abraham's family on the account of Isaac, yet, as he was under the same obligation to a most loving affectionate father as his brother Isaac, if any personal feuds remained, they agreed to bury them on this occasion, that both might dutifully join in doing the last offices to a parent who was an honour to them and to human nature: and, considering the rejection of Ishmael from the inheritance, this transaction shows his character in an amiable point of view; for though he was a wild man, (see ^{<01612>}Genesis 16:12,) yet this appellation appears to be more characteristic of his habits of life than of his disposition.

For the character of Abraham see the conclusion of this chapter. See Clarke ^{<012534>}Genesis 25:34".

Verse 11. God blessed his son Isaac] The peculiar blessings and influences by which Abraham had been distinguished now rested upon Isaac; but how little do we hear in him of the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of love! Only one Abraham and one Christ ever appeared among men; there have been some successful imitators, there should have been many.

Verse 12. These are the generations of Ishmael] The object of the inspired writer seems to be to show how the promises of God were fulfilled to both the branches of Abraham's family. Isaac has been already referred

to; God blessed him according to the promise. He had also promised to multiply *Ishmael*, and an account of his generation is introduced to show how exactly the promise had also been fulfilled to him.

Verse 13. Nebajoth] From whom came the Nabatheans, whose capital was *Petra*, or, according to Strabo, *Nabatheia*. They dwelt in *Arabia Petraea*, and extended themselves on the east towards Arabia Deserta.

Kedar] The founder of the *Cedreans*, who dwelt near to the *Nabatheans*. The descendants of Kedar form a part of the Saracens.

Adbeel, and Mibsam] Where these were situated is not known.

Verse 14. Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa] Where the first and last of these settled is not known; but it is probable that *Dumah* gave his name to a place called Dumah in *Arabia*. See a prophecy concerning this place, ^{<3211>}**Isaiah 21:11**, from which we find that it was in the vicinity of *Mount Seir*.

These three names have passed into a proverb among the Hebrews, because of their signification. [*mvm* *mishma* signifies HEARING; *hmwd* *dumah*, SILENCE; and *acm* *massa*, PATIENCE. Hence, “Hear much, say little, and bear much,” tantamount to the famous maxim of the Stoics, *ανεχου και απεχου*, “Sustain and abstain,” is supposed to be the spirit of the original words.

Verse 15. Hadar] This name should be read *Hadad* as in ^{<13013>}**1 Chronicles 1:30**. This reading is supported by more than three hundred MSS., versions, and printed editions. See Clarke at “^{<012518>}**Genesis 25:18**”.

Tema] Supposed to be a place in Arabia Deserta, the same of which Job speaks, ^{<18069>}**Job 6:19**.

Jetur] From whom came the *Itureans*, who occupied a small tract of country beyond Jordan, which was afterwards possessed by the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Naphish] These are evidently the same people mentioned ^{<13619>}**1 Chronicles 5:19**, who, with the Itureans and the people of Nadab, assisted the Hagarenes against the Israelites, but were overcome by the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Kedemah] Probably the descendants of this person dwelt at *Kedemoth*, a place mentioned ^{<R126>}**Deuteronomy 2:26**. I wish the reader to observe, that concerning those ancient tribes mentioned here or elsewhere in the Pentateuch little is known; nor of their *places* of settlement have we more certain information. On this subject many learned men have toiled hard with but little fruit of their labour. Those who wish to enter into discussions of this nature must consult *Bochart's Geographia Sacra, Calmet, &c.*

Verse 16. These are their names] By which their *descendants* were called. *Their towns*-places of encampment in the wilderness, such as have been used by the Arabs from the remotest times. Their castles, **mtryc** *tirotham, their towers*, probably mountain tops, fortified rocks, and fastnesses of various kinds in woods and hilly countries.

Verse 18. They dwelt from Havilah unto Shur] The descendants of Ishmael possessed all that country which extends from east to west, from *Havilah* on the Euphrates, near its junction with the Tigris, to the desert of *Shur* eastward of Egypt; and which extends along the isthmus of Suez, which separates the *Red Sea* from the *Mediterranean*.

As thou goest toward Assyria] “These words,” says Calmet, “may refer either to *Egypt*, to *Shur*, or to *Havilah*. The desert of *Shur* is on the road from *Egypt* to *Assyria* in traversing *Arabia Petraea*, and in passing by the country of *Havilah*. I know not,” adds he, “whether *Ashshurah* in the text may not mark out rather the *Asshurim* descended from *Keturah*, than the *Assyrians*, who were the descendants of *Asshur* the son of *Shem*.”

He died in the presence of all his brethren] The original will not well bear this translation. In ^{<02517>}**Genesis 25:17** it is said, *He gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered to his people*. Then follows the account of the district occupied by the Ishmaelites, at the conclusion of which it is added **l pn wyj a l k ynp l [** *al peney col echaiv naphal*, “IT (the lot or district) **FELL** (or was divided to him) in the presence of all his brethren:” and this was exactly agreeable to the promise of God, ^{<01612>}**Genesis 16:12**, *He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren*; and to show that this promise had been strictly fulfilled, it is here remarked that his lot or inheritance was assigned him by Divine Providence, contiguous to that of the other branches of the family. The same word, **l pn** *naphal*, is used ^{<06204>}**Joshua 23:4**, for *to divide by lot*.

On the subject of writing the same proper name *variously* in our common Bibles, the following observations and tables will not be unacceptable to the reader.

“Men who have read their Bible with care,” says Dr. Kennicott, “must have remarked that the name of the same person is often expressed differently in different places. Indeed the variation is sometimes so great that we can scarcely persuade ourselves that *one and the same* person is really meant. A uniform expression of proper names is diligently attended to in other books: perhaps in every other book, except the Old Testament. But here we find strange variety in the expression, and consequently great confusion: and indeed there is scarcely any one general source of error which calls for more careful correction than the same proper names now wrongly expressed. I shall add here, from the *Pentateuch*, some proper names which are strangely varied: first, *twenty-three* names expressed differently in the Hebrew text itself, and *seventeen* of them in our English translation; and then *thirty-one* names expressed uniformly in the *Hebrew* yet differently in the *English*.

SAME NAMES DIFFERING IN THE HEBREW

| | | | | |
|----|------------------|----------|------------|--|
| 1 | Gen. iv. 18. | Mehujael | Mehijael | in the same verse. |
| 2 | — x. 3. | Riphath | Diphath | 1 Chron. i. 6. |
| 3 | — x. 4. | Tarshish | Tarshishah | — i. 7. |
| 4 | — x. 4. | Dodanim | Rodanim | — i. 7. |
| 5 | — x. 23. | Mash | Moshech | — i. 17. |
| 6 | — x. 28. | Obal | Ebal | — i. 22. |
| 7 | — xxxii. 30, 31. | Peniel | Penuel | in the next verse. |
| 8 | — xxxvi. 11. | Zepho | Zephi | 1 Chron. i. 36. |
| 9 | — xxxvi. 23. | Shepho | Shephi | — i. 40. |
| 10 | — xxxvi. 30. | Pau | Pai | — i. 50. |
| 11 | — xxxvi. 40. | Alvah | Aliah | — i. 51. |
| 12 | — xlvi. 10. | Jemuel | Nemuel | Num. xxvi. 12. |
| 13 | — xlvi. 10. | Jachin | Jarib | 1 Chron. iv. 24. |
| 14 | — xlvi. 10. | Zohar | Zerah | { Num. xxvi. 13, and 1 Chron. iv. 24. |
| 15 | — xlvi. 11. | Gershon | Gershom | 1 Chron. vi. 1, 16. |
| 16 | — xlvi. 13. | Job | Jashub | Num. xxvi. 24. |
| 17 | — xlvi. 16. | Ezbon | Ozni | — xxvi. 16. |
| 18 | — xlvi. 21. | Huppim | Huram | 1 Chron. viii. 5. |
| 19 | — xlvi. 21. | Ard | Addar | — viii. 3. |
| 20 | — xlvi. 23. | Hushim | Shuham | Num. xxvi. 42. |
| 21 | Exod. iv. 18. | Jethro | Jethro | in the same verse. |
| 22 | Num. i. 14. | Deuel | Ruel | Num. ii. 14. |
| 23 | Deut. xxxii. 44. | Hoshea | Joshua | Deut. xxxiv. 9. |

NAMES SAME IN HEBREW YET DIFFERENT IN ENGLISH

| | | | | |
|----|--|----------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Gen. v. 3. | Seth | Sheth | 1 Chron. i. 1. |
| 2 | — v. 6. | Enos | Enosh | — i. 1. |
| 3 | — v. 9. | Cainan | Kenan | — i. 2. |
| 4 | — v. 13. | Jared | Jered | — i. 2. |
| 5 | — v. 18. | Enoch | Henoah | — i. 3. |
| 6 | — v. 21. | Methuselah | Mathushelah | — i. 3. |
| 7 | — x. 6. | Phut | Put | — i. 8. |
| 8 | — x. 14. | Philistim | The Philistines | — i. 12. |
| 9 | — x. 14. | Caphthorim | Caphthorim | — i. 12. |
| 10 | — x. 16. | Emorite | Amorites | Gen. xv. 16, 21. |
| 11 | — x. 16. | Girgasite | Girgasites | — xv. 21. |
| 12 | { — x. 19, and } { Jer. xlvii. 5. } | Gaza | Azzah | { Deut. ii. 23, and } { Jer. xxv. 20. } |
| 13 | Gen. x. 22. | Ashur | Ashur | 1 Chron. i. 17. |
| 14 | — x. 24. | Salah | Shelah | — i. 18. |
| 15 | — xiv. 2, 8. | Zebosim | Zeboim | Deut. xxix. 23. |
| 16 | — xiv. 5; xv. 20. | Rephaims | Giants | — ii. 20; iii. 11, 13. |
| 17 | — xxv. 15. | Nephtish | Nephtish | 1 Chron. v. 19. |
| 18 | — xxxix. 6. | Rachel | Rahel | Jer. xxxi. 15. |
| 19 | — xxxvi. 34. | Temani | The Temanites | 1 Chron. i. 45. |
| 20 | — xxxvi. 37. | Saul | Shaul | — i. 48. |
| 21 | — xxxvii. 25, 28. | Ishmaelites | Ishmaelites | Judg. viii. 24. |
| 22 | Exod. i. 11. | Raamses | Rameses | Exod. xii. 37. |
| 23 | — vi. 18. | Izhar | Izhar | Num. iii. 19. |
| 24 | — vi. 19. | Mahali | Mahli | 1 Chron. vi. 19. |
| 25 | Lev. xviii. 21. | Molech | Molech | Amos v. 26. |
| 26 | Num. xiii. 8, 16. | Oshea | Hoshea | Deut. xxxii. 44. |
| 27 | — xiii. 16. | Jehoshua | Joshua | Num. xiv. 6. |
| 28 | — xxi. 12. | Zared | Zered | Deut. ii. 13. |
| 29 | — xxxii. 3. | Jaazer | Jaazar | Num. xxxii. 35. |
| 30 | — xxxiii. 31. | Bene-Jaakan | { Children of } { Jaakan } | Deut. x. 6. |
| 31 | Deut. iii. 17. | Ashdoth-pisgah | { Springs of } { Pisgah } | — iv. 49. |

“Nothing can be more clear than that these *fifty-four* proper names (at least the far greater part of them) should be expressed with the very same letters, in the places where they are now different. In the second list, instances 6, 10, and 13, have been corrected and expressed uniformly in the English Bible printed at Oxford in 1769. And surely the same justice in the translation should be done to the rest of these proper names, and to all others through the Bible; at least, where the original words are now properly the same. Who would not wonder at seeing the same persons named both *Simon* and *Shimon*, *Richard* and *Ricard*? And can we then admit here both *Seth* and *Sheth*, *Rachel* and *Rahel*? Again: whoever could admit (as above) both *Gaza* and *Azzak*, with *Rameses* and *Raamses*, should not object to *London* and *Ondon*, with *Amsterdam* and *Amstradam*. In short, in a history far more interesting than any other, the names of *persons* and *places* should be distinguished accurately, and defined with exact uniformity. And no true critic will think lightly of this advice of Origen, *Contemnenda non est accurata circa NOMINA diligentia ei, qui volurit probe intelligere sanctas literas*? No person who desires thoroughly to understand the sacred

writings, should undervalue a scrupulous attention to the proper names.”-*Kennicott’s Remarks*.

Verse 19. These are the generations of Isaac] This is the history of Isaac and his family. Here the *sixth* section of the law begins, called **qj [y tdl wt** *toledoth yitschak*; as the *fifth*, called **hrc yyj** *chaiye Sarah*, which begins with ^{<01230>}**Genesis 23:1**, ends at the preceding verse.

Verse 21. Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife] Isaac and Rebekah had now lived *nineteen* years together without having a child; for he was *forty* years old when he married Rebekah, ^{<01250>}**Genesis 25:20**, and he was *threescore* years of age when Jacob and Esau were born, ^{<01255>}**Genesis 25:26**. Hence it is evident they had lived *nineteen* years together without having a child.

The form of the original in this place is worthy of notice: Isaac entreated Jehovah, **wtva j knl** *lenochach ishto*, directly, purposely, especially, for his wife. Ainsworth thinks the words imply their *praying together* for this thing; and the rabbins say that “Isaac and Rebekah went on purpose to Mount Moriah, where he had been bound, and prayed together there that they might have a son.” God was pleased to exercise the faith of Isaac previous to the birth of Jacob, as he had exercised that of Abraham previous to his own birth.

Verse 22. The children struggled together] **wxxrty** *yithrotsatsu*, *they dashed against* or *bruised each other*, there was a violent agitation, so that the mother was apprehensive both of her own and her children’s safety; and, supposing this was an uncommon case, she went to inquire of the Lord, as the good women in the present day would go to consult a surgeon or physician; for intercourse with God is not so common *now*, as it was in those times of great primitive simplicity. There are different opinions concerning the *manner* in which Rebekah *inquired of the Lord*. Some think it was by *faith* and *prayer* simply; others, that she went to *Shem* or *Melchizedek*; but *Shem* is supposed to have been dead ten years before this time; but as *Abraham* was yet alive, she might have gone to him, and consulted the Lord through his means. It is most likely that a *prophet* or *priest* was applied to on this occasion. It appears she was in considerable perplexity, hence that imperfect speech, *If so, why am I thus?* the simple meaning of which is probably this; if I must suffer such things, why did I

ever wish to have a child? A speech not uncommon to mothers in their first pregnancy.

Verse 23. Two nations are in thy womb] “We have,” says Bishop Newton, “in the prophecies delivered respecting the sons of Isaac, ample proof that these prophecies were not meant so much of *single persons* as of *whole nations* descended from them; for what was predicted concerning *Esau* and *Jacob* was not verified in *themselves*, but in their *posterity*. The *Edomites* were the offspring of *Esau*, the *Israelites* were of *Jacob*; and who but the Author and Giver of life could foresee that *two children in the womb* would multiply into *two nations*? *Jacob* had twelve sons, and their descendants were all united and incorporated into one nation; and what an overruling providence was it that two nations should arise from the two sons only of Isaac! and that they should be two such *different* nations! The *Edomites* and *Israelites* have been from the beginning two such *different people* in their manners, customs, and religion, as to be at perpetual variance among themselves. The *children struggled together in the womb*, which was an omen of their future disagreement; and when they grew up to manhood, they manifested very different inclinations. *Esau* was a *cunning hunter*, and delighted in the sports of the field; *Jacob* was a *plain man*, dwelling in tents—minding his sheep and his cattle. The religion of the Jews is well known; but whatever the *Edomites* were at first, in process of time they became *idolaters*. When *Amaziah* king of *Judah* overthrew them, he brought their gods, and set them up to be his gods. The king of *Edom* having refused a passage to the *Israelites* through his territories on their return from *Egypt*, the history of the *Edomites* afterwards is little more than the history of their wars with the Jews.”

The one **people shall be stronger than** the other **people]** The same author continues to observe, that “for some time the family of *Esau* was the more powerful of the two, there having been *dukes* and *kings* in *Edom* before there was any king in *Israel*; but *David* and his captains made an entire conquest of the *Edomites*, slew several thousands of them, and compelled the rest to become tributaries, and planted garrisons among them to secure their obedience. In this state of *servitude* they continued about *one hundred and fifty* years, without a king of their own, being governed by deputies or viceroys appointed by the kings of *Judah*; but in the days of *Jehoram* they revolted, recovered their liberties, and set up a king of their own. Afterwards *Amaziah*, king of *Judah*, gave them a total overthrow in the valley of *Salt*; and *Azariah* took *Elath*, a commodious harbour on the

Red Sea, from them. Judas Maccabeus also attacked and defeated them with a loss of more than *twenty thousand* at two different times, and took their chief city *Hebron*. At last *Hyrchanus* his nephew took other cities from them, and reduced them to the necessity of leaving their country or embracing the Jewish religion; on which they submitted to be *circumcised*, and become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and were ever afterwards incorporated into the Jewish Church and nation.”

The elder shall serve the younger.] “This passage,” says Dr. Dodd, “serves for a key to explain the *ninth* chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where the words are quoted; for it proves to a demonstration that this cannot be meant of God’s arbitrary predestination of particular persons to eternal happiness or misery, without any regard to their merit or demerit— a doctrine which some have most impiously fathered on God, who is the best of beings, and who cannot possibly hate, far less absolutely doom to misery, any creature that he has made: but that it means only his bestowing greater external favours, or, if you please, higher opportunities for knowing and doing their duty, upon some men, than he does upon others; and that merely according to his own wise purpose, without any regard to their merits or demerits, as having a right to confer greater or smaller degrees or perfection on whom he pleases.”

The doctrine of *unconditional* predestination to eternal life and eternal death cannot be supported by the example of God’s dealings with *Esau* and *Jacob*, or with the *Edomites* and *Israelites*. After long reprobation the *Edomites* were incorporated among the Jews, and have ever since been undistinguishable members in the Jewish Church. The *Jews*, on the contrary, the *elect of God*, have been cut off and reprobated, and continue so to this day. If a time should ever come when the *Jews* shall *all* believe in Christ Jesus, which is a general opinion, then the *Edomites*, which are now absorbed among them, shall also become the *elect*. And even now Isaac finds *both his children* within the pale of the Jewish Church, equally entitled to the promises of salvation by Christ Jesus, of whom he was the most expressive and the most illustrious *type*. See the account of Abraham’s offering, ^{<0123D>}**Genesis 22:2-14**.

Verse 24. There were twins] **μῆντ** *thomin*, from which comes *Thomas*, properly interpreted by the word **διδυμος**, *Didymus*, which signifies a *twin*; so the first person who was called *Thomas* or *Didymus*, we may take for granted, had this name from the circumstance of his being a *twin*.

Verse 25. Red, all over like a hairy garment] This simply means that he was covered all over with red hair or down; and that this must be intended here is sufficiently evident from another part of his history, where Rebekah, in order to make her favourite son Jacob pass for his brother Esau, was obliged to take the skins of kids, and put them upon his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

They called his name Esau.] It is difficult to assign the proper meaning of the original **wc** [*esau* or *esav*; if we derive it from **hc** [*asah* it must signify *made, performed*, and, according to some, *perfected*; [Arabic] *esa* in Arabic signifies to *make firm* or *hard*, and also to *come to man's estate*, to *grow old*. Probably he had this name from his appearing to be more *perfect, robust, &c.*, than his brother.

Verse 26. His name was called Jacob] **bq**[*y* *Yaccob*, from **bq**[*akab*, to *defraud, deceive, to supplant*, i.e., to overthrow a person by *tripping up his heels*. Hence this name was given to Jacob, because it was found he had laid hold on his brother's heel, which was emblematical of his supplanting Esau, and defrauding him of his birthright.

Verse 27. A man of the field] **hdc** *vya ish sadeh*, one who supported himself and family by *hunting* and by *agriculture*.

Jacob was a plain man] **patth**[*w vya ish tam*, a perfect or upright man; *dwelling in tents*- subsisting by breeding and tending cattle, which was considered in those early times the most *perfect* employment; and in this sense the word **patth**[*w tam*, should be here understood, as in its *moral* meaning it certainly could not be applied to Jacob till after his name was changed, after which time only his character stands fair and unblemished. See ^{<01:326>} **Genesis 32:26-30**.

Verse 28. Isaac loved Esau-but Rebekah loved Jacob.] This is an early proof of unwarrantable parental attachment to one child in preference to another. *Isaac loved Esau*, and *Rebekah loved Jacob*; and in consequence of this the interests of the family were divided, and the house set in opposition to itself. The fruits of this unreasonable and foolish attachment were afterwards seen in a long catalogue of both *natural* and *moral* evils among the descendants of both families.

Verse 29. Sod pottage] *dyczn dzy yazed nazid*, he boiled a boiling; and this we are informed, ^{<02534>}Genesis 25:34, was of *μυυδ* [*adashim*, what the Septuagint render *φακον*, and we, following them and the Vulgate *lens*, translate *lentiles*, a sort of pulse. Dr. Shaw casts some light on this passage, speaking of the inhabitants of Barbary. “Beans, lentiles, kidney beans, and *garvancos*,” says he, “are the chiefest of their pulse kind; beans, when boiled and stewed with oil and garlic, are the principal food of persons of all distinctions; lentiles are dressed in the same manner with beans, dissolving easily into a mass, and making a pottage of a *chocolate colour*. This we find was the *red pottage* which Esau, from thence called *Edom*, exchanged for his *birthright*.” *Shaw’s Travels*, p. 140, 4to. edit.

Verse 30. I am faint] It appears from the whole of this transaction, that Esau was so completely exhausted by fatigue that he must have perished had he not obtained some immediate refreshment. He had been either hunting or labouring in the field, and was now returning for the purpose of getting some food, but had been so exhausted that his strength utterly failed before he had time to make the necessary preparations.

Verse 31. Sell me this day thy birthright.] What the *hrj b bechorah* or birthright was, has greatly divided both ancient and modern commentators. It is generally supposed that the following rights were attached to the primogeniture:—

1. Authority and superiority over the rest of the family.
2. A double portion of the paternal inheritance.
3. The peculiar benediction of the father.
4. The priesthood, previous to its establishment in the family of Aaron.

Calmet controverts most of these rights, and with apparent reason, and seems to think that the double portion of the paternal inheritance was the only incontestable right which the first-born possessed; the others were such as were rather *conceded* to the first-born, than fixed by any law in the family. However this may be, it appears,

1. That the first-born were peculiarly consecrated to God, ^{<0229>}Exodus 22:29.
2. Were next in honour to their parents, ^{<0408>}Genesis 49:3.
3. Had a double portion of their father’s goods, ^{<0217>}Deuteronomy

21:17.

4. Succeeded him in the government of the family or kingdom, ^{<4210>}2 Chronicles 21:3.

5. Had the sole right of conducting the service of God, both at the tabernacle and temple; and hence the tribe of Levi, which was taken in lieu of the *first-born*, had the sole right of administration in the service of God, ^{<00814>}Numbers 8:14-18; and hence we may presume, had originally a right to the *priesthood* previous to the giving of the law; but however this might have been, afterwards the priesthood is never reckoned among the privileges of the first-born.

That the birthright was a matter of very great importance, there can be no room to doubt; and that it was a *transferable* property, the transaction here sufficiently proves.

Verse 34. Pottage of lentiles] See Clarke's note "^{<01239>}Genesis 25:29".

Thus Esau despised his birthright.] On this account the apostle, ^{<81216>}Hebrews 12:16, calls Esau a *profane person*, because he had, by this act, alienated from himself and family those spiritual offices connected with the rights of primogeniture. While we condemn Esau for this bad action, (for he should rather have perished than have alienated this right,) and while we consider it as a proof that his mind was little affected with Divine or spiritual things, what shall we say of his most unnatural brother Jacob, who refused to let him have a morsel of food to preserve him from death, unless he gave him up his birthright? Surely he who *bought* it, in such circumstances, was as bad as he who *sold* it. Thus Jacob verified his right to the name of *supplanter*, a name which in its first imposition appears to have had no other object in view than the circumstance of his *catching his brother by the heel*; but all his subsequent conduct proved that it was truly descriptive of the qualities of his mind, as his whole life, till the time his name was changed, (and then he had a *change of nature*,) was a tissue of cunning and deception, the principles of which had been very early instilled into him by a mother whose regard for truth and righteousness appears to have been very superficial. See on ^{<01270>}Genesis 27:6-27

THE death of Abraham, recorded in this chapter, naturally calls to mind the virtues and excellences of this extraordinary man. His *obedience* to the call of God, and *faith* in his promises, stand supereminent. No *wonders*, signs, or *miraculous displays* of the great and terrible God, as Israel required in Egypt, were used or were necessary to cause Abraham to believe and obey.

He left his own land, not knowing *where* he was going, or for what purpose God had called him to remove. Exposed to various hardships, in danger of losing his life, and of witnessing the violation of his wife, he still obeyed and went on; courageous, humane, and disinterested, he cheerfully risked his life for the welfare of others; and, contented with having rescued the captives and avenged the oppressed, he refused to accept even the spoils he had taken from the enemy whom his skill and valour had vanquished. At the same time he considers the excellency of the power to be of God, and acknowledges this by giving to *him* the tenth of those spoils of which he would reserve nothing for his private use. His *obedience* to God, *in offering up his son Isaac*, we have already seen and admired; together with the *generosity* of his temper, and that *respectful decency* of *conduct* towards superiors and inferiors for which he was so peculiarly remarkable; see on ^{<012318>} **Genesis 23:3-7**, See Clarke ^{<012317>} **Genesis 23:17**". Without *disputing* with his Maker, or *doubting* in his heart, he credited every thing that God had spoken; *hence he always walked in a plain way*. The *authority of God* was always sufficient for Abraham; he did not weary himself to find reasons for any line of conduct which he knew God had prescribed; it was his duty to obey; the success and the event he left with God. His obedience was as *prompt* as it was *complete*. As soon as he hears the voice of God, he girds himself to his work! *Not a moment is lost!* How rare is such conduct! But should not *we* do likewise? The present moment and its duties are ours; every past moment was once present; every future will be present; and, while we are thinking on the subject, the present is *past*, for life is made up of the *past* and the *present*. Are our past moments the cause of deep regret and humiliation? Then let us use the present so as *not* to increase this lamentable cause of our distresses. In other words, let us now *believe-love-obey*. Regardless of all consequences, let us, like Abraham, follow the *directions* of God's *word*, and the *openings* of his *providence*, and leave all events to Him who *doth all things well*.

See to what a state of moral excellence the grace of God can exalt a character, when there is simple, implicit faith, and prompt obedience! Abraham *walked before God*, and *Abraham was perfect*. Perhaps no human being ever exhibited a fairer, fuller portrait of the *perfect man* than Abraham. The more I consider the character of this most amiable patriarch, the more I think the saying of Calmet justifiable: "In the life of Abraham," says he, "we find an epitome of the whole *law of nature*, of the *written law*, and of the *Gospel of Christ*. He has manifested in his own person those

virtues, for which reason and philosophy could scarcely find out names, when striving to sketch the character of their *sophist*-wise or perfect man. St. Ambrose very properly observes that ‘philosophy itself could not equal, in its descriptions and wishes, what was exemplified by this great man in the whole of his conduct.’ *Magnus plane vir, quem votis suis philosophia non potuit æquare; denique minus est quod illa finxit quam quod ille gessit.* The LAW which God gave to Moses, and in which he has proposed the great duties of the law of nature, seems to be a copy of the life of Abraham. This patriarch, without being under the law, has performed the most essential duties it requires; and as to the GOSPEL, its grand *object* was that on which he had fixed his eye—that JESUS whose day he rejoiced to see; and as to its *spirit* and *design*, they were wondrously exemplified in that faith which was imputed to him for righteousness, receiving that grace which conformed his whole heart and life to the will of his Maker, and enabled him to persevere unto death. ‘Abraham,’ says the writer of Ecclesiasticus, 44:20, &c., ‘was a great father of many people: in glory was there none like unto him, who kept the law of the Most high, and was in covenant with him. He established the covenant in his flesh, and when he was tried he was found faithful.’“ See *Calmet*.

As a son, as a husband, as a father, as a neighbour, as a sovereign, and above all as a *man of God*, he stands unrivalled; so that under the most exalted and perfect of all dispensations, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he is proposed and recommended as the *model* and *pattern* according to which the faith, obedience, and perseverance of the followers of the Messiah are to be formed. Reader, while you admire the *man*, do not forget the *God* that made him so great, so good, and so useful. Even Abraham had nothing but what he had received; from the free unmerited mercy of God proceeded all *his* excellences; but he was a *worker together with God*, and therefore *did not receive the grace of God in vain*. Go thou, believe, love, obey, and persevere in like manner.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 26

A famine in the land obliges Isaac to leave Beer-sheba and go to Gerar, 1. God appears to him, and warns him not to go to Egypt, 2. Renews the promises to him which he had made to his father Abraham, 3-5. Isaac dwells at Gerar, 6. Being questioned concerning Rebekah, and fearing to lose his life on her account, he calls her his sister, 7. Abimelech the king discovers, by certain familiarities which he had noticed between Isaac and Rebekah, that she was his wife, 8. Calls Isaac and reproaches him for his insincerity, 9, 10. He gives a strict command to all his people not to molest either Isaac or his wife, 11. Isaac applies himself to husbandry and breeding of cattle, and has a great increase, 12-14. Is envied by the Philistines, who stop up the wells he had digged, 15. Is desired by Abimelech to remove, 16. He obeys, and fixes his tent in the valley of Gerar, 17. Opens the wells dug in the days of Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped up, 18. Digs the well, Ezek. 19, 20; and the well Sitnah, 21; and the well Rehoboth, 22. Returns to Beer-sheba, 23. God appears to him, and renews his promises, 24. He builds an altar there, pitches his tent, and digs a well, 25. Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phichol, visit him, 26. Isaac accuses them of unkindness, 27. They beg him to make a covenant with them, 28, 29. He makes them a feast, and they bind themselves to each other by an oath, 30, 31. The well dug by Isaac's servants (ver. 25) called Shebah, 33. Esau, at forty years of age, marries two wives of the Hittites, 34, at which Isaac and Rebekah are grieved, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 1. There was a famine] *When this happened we cannot tell; it appears to have been after the death of Abraham. Concerning the first famine, see ^{<01210>}Genesis 12:10.*

Abimelech] *As we know not the time when the famine happened, so we cannot tell whether this was the same Abimelech, Phichol, &c., which are mentioned ^{<01201>}Genesis 20:1, 2, &c., or the sons or other descendants of these persons.*

Verse 2. Go not down into Egypt] *As Abraham had taken refuge in that country, it is probable that Isaac was preparing to go thither also; and God, foreseeing that he would there meet with trials, &c., which might prove fatal to his peace or to his piety, warns him not to fulfil his intention.*

Verse 3. Sojourn in this land] In Gerar, whither he had gone, ^{<0120>}**Genesis 26:1**, and where we find he settled, ^{<01206>}**Genesis 26:6**, though the *land of Canaan* in general might be here intended. That there were serious and important reasons why Isaac should not go to Egypt, we may be fully assured, though they be not assigned here; it is probable that even Isaac himself was not informed why he should not go down to Egypt. I have already supposed that God saw trials in his way which he might not have been able to bear. While a man acknowledges God in all his ways, he will direct all his steps, though he may not choose to give him the reasons of the workings of his providence. Abraham might go safely to Egypt, Isaac might not; in firmness and decision of character there was a wide difference between the two men.

Verse 4. I will make thy seed-as the stars of heaven] A promise often repeated to Abraham, and which has been most amply fulfilled both in its *literal* and *spiritual* sense.

Verse 5. Abraham obeyed my voice] *ytrmym meimeri*, my WORD. See ^{<01150>}**Genesis 15:1**.

My charge] *ytrmcm misitmarti*, from *rmv shamar*, he kept, observed, &c., the *ordinances* or *appointments* of God. These were always of two kinds: 1. Such as tended to promote *moral improvement*, the increase of piety, the improvement of the age, &c. And 2. Such as were *typical* of the promised seed, and the salvation which was to come by him. For *commandments, statutes, &c.*, the reader is particularly desired to refer to ^{<01151>}**Leviticus 16:15**, &c., where these things are all explained in the alphabetical order of the Hebrew words.

Verse 7. He said, She is my sister] It is very strange that in the same place, and in similar circumstances, Isaac should have denied *his wife*, precisely as his father had done before him! It is natural to ask, Did Abraham never mention this circumstance to his son? Probably he did *not*, as he was justly ashamed of his weakness on the occasion-the only blot in his character; the son, therefore, not being forewarned, was not armed against the temptation. It may not be well in general for parents to tell their children of their former failings or vices, as this might lessen their authority or respect, and the children might make a bad use of it in extenuation of their own sins. But there are certain cases, which, from the nature of their circumstances, may often occur, where a candid acknowledgment, with

suitable advice, may prevent those children from repeating the evil; but this should be done with great delicacy and caution, lest even the advice itself should serve as an incentive to the evil. I had not known lust, says St. Paul, if the law had not said, *Thou shalt not covet*. Isaac could not say of Rebekah, as Abraham had done of Sarah, *She is my sister*; in the case of Abraham this was literally true; it was not so in the case of Isaac, for Rebekah was only his *cousin*. Besides, though relatives, in the Jewish forms of speaking, are often called *brothers* and *sisters*, and the thing may be perfectly proper when this use of the terms is generally known and allowed, yet nothing of this kind can be pleaded *here* in behalf of Isaac; for he intended that the *Gerarites* should understand him in the proper sense of the term, and consequently have no suspicion that she was his *wife*. We have already seen that the proper definition of a lie is *any word spoken with the intention to deceive*. See ^{<01202>}**Genesis 20:12**.

Verse 8. Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.] Whatever may be the precise meaning of the word, it evidently implies that there were liberties taken and freedom used on the occasion, which were not lawful but between man and wife.

Verse 10. Thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.] It is likely that Abimelech might have had some knowledge of God's intentions concerning the family of Abraham, and that it must be kept free from all impure and alien mixtures; and that consequently, had he or any of his people taken Rebekah, the Divine judgment might have fallen upon the land. Abimelech was a good and holy man; and he appears to have considered adultery as a grievous and destructive crime.

Verse 11. He that toucheth] He who injures Isaac or defiles Rebekah shall certainly die for it. Death was the punishment for adultery among the Canaanites, Philistines, and Hebrews. See ^{<01334>}**Genesis 38:24**.

Verse 12. Isaac sowed in that land] Being now perfectly free from the fear of evil, he betakes himself to agricultural and pastoral pursuits, in which he has the especial blessing of God, so that his property becomes greatly increased.

A hundred-fold] $\mu\gamma\rho$ [*v ham*, *meah shearim*, literally, "A hundred-fold of barley;" and so the Septuagint, $\epsilon\kappa\alpha\tau\omicron\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu\ \kappa\rho\iota\theta\eta\nu$. Perhaps such a crop of this grain was a *rare* occurrence in Gerar. The words,

however, may be taken in a general way, as signifying *a very great increase*; so they are used by our Lord in the parable of the sower.

Verse 13. The man waxed great] There is a strange and observable recurrence of the same term in the original: **dam l dg yk d[l dgw Ēwl h Ēl yw vyah l dgyw** *vaiyigdal haish vaiyelech haloch vegadel ad ki gadal meod, And the man was GREAT; and he went, going on, and was GREAT, until that he was exceeding GREAT.* How *simple* is this language, and yet how forcible!

Verse 14. He had possession of flocks] He who blessed him in the increase of his *fields* blessed him also in the increase of his *flocks*; and as he had extensive possessions, so he must have many *hands* to manage such concerns: therefore it is added, *he had great store of servants*-he had many domestics, some born in his house, and others purchased by his money.

Verse 15. For all the wells-the Philistines had stopped them] In such countries a good well was a great acquisition; and hence in predatory wars it was usual for either party to fill the wells with earth or sand, in order to distress the enemy. The filling up the wells in this case was a most unprincipled transaction, as they had pledged themselves to Abraham, by a solemn oath, not to injure each other in this or any other respect. See ^{<0125>}**Genesis 21:25-31.**

Verse 16. Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.] This is the first instance on record of what was termed among the Greeks *ostracism*; i.e., the banishment of a person from the state, of whose power, influence, or riches, the people were jealous. There is a remarkable saying of Bacon on this subject, which seems to intimate that he had this very circumstance under his eye: “Public *envy* is an *ostracism* that eclipseth men when they grow *too great*.” On this same principle Pharaoh oppressed the Israelites. The Philistines appear to have been jealous of Isaac’s growing prosperity, and to have considered it, not as a due reward of his industry and holiness, but as their individual loss, as though his gain was at their expense; therefore they resolved to drive him out, and take his well-cultivated ground, &c., to themselves, and compelled Abimelech to dismiss him, who gave this reason for it, **wmm tmx[** *atsamta mimmennu, Thou hast obtained much wealth among us, and my people are envious of thee.* Is not this the better translation? for it can hardly be supposed that Isaac was “*mightier*” than the king of whole tribes.

Verse 18. In the days of Abraham] Instead of *ymyb bimey*, in the days, Houbigant contends we should read *ydb[abdey*, servants. Isaac digged again the wells which the *servants* of Abraham his father had digged. This reading is supported by the *Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate*; and it is probably the true one.

Verse 19. A well of springing water.] *μyjj μym rab beer mayim chaiyim*, *A well of living waters*. This is the oriental phrase for a *spring*, and this is its meaning both in the Old and New Testaments: ^{<B1406>}**Leviticus 14:5,50; 15:30;** ^{<04917>}**Numbers 19:17;** Cant. ^{<23415>}**Song of Solomon 4:15.** See also ^{<E0410>}**John 4:10-14; 7:38;** ^{<E2106>}**Revelation 21:6; 22:1.** And by these scriptures we find that an *unfailing spring* was an emblem of the *graces* and *influences* of the *Spirit of God*.

Verse 21. They digged another well] Never did any man more implicitly follow the Divine command, *Resist not evil*, than Isaac; whenever he found that his work was likely to be a subject of strife and contention, he gave place, and rather chose to suffer wrong than to have his own peace of mind disturbed. Thus he overcame *evil* with *good*.

Verse 24. The Lord appeared unto him] He needed especial encouragement when insulted and outraged by the Philistines; for having returned to the place where his noble father had lately died, the remembrance of his *wrongs*, and the remembrance of his *loss*, could not fail to afflict his mind; and God immediately appears to comfort and support him in his trials, by a renewal of all his promises.

Verse 25. Builded an altar there] That he might have a *place* for God's worship, as well as a *place* for himself and family to dwell in.

And called upon the name of the Lord] And invoked in the name of Jehovah. See Clarke's notes on "^{<01218>}**Genesis 12:8**"; "^{<01315>}**Genesis 13:15**".

Verse 26. Abimelech went to him] When a man's ways please God, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him; so Isaac experienced on this occasion. Whether this was the same Abimelech and Phichol mentioned ^{<01222>}**Genesis 21:22**, we cannot tell, it is possible both might have been now alive, provided we suppose them *young* in the days of Abraham; but it is more likely that *Abimelech* was a general name of the Gerarite kings, and that *Phichol* was a name of *office*.

Ahuzzath] The *Targum* translates this word *a company*, not considering it as a proper name: “Abimelech and Phichol came with a *company* of their friends.” The *Septuagint* calls him $\alpha\chi\omicron\zeta\alpha\theta \text{ } \omicron \text{ } \nu\mu\phi\alpha\gamma\omega\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, *Ochozath, the paranymp*, he who conducts the bride to the bridegroom’s house. Could we depend on the correctness of this version, we might draw the following curious conclusions from it: 1. That this was the son of that Abimelech the friend of Abraham. 2. That he had been *lately married*, and on this journey brings with him his confidential friend, to whom he had lately intrusted the care of his spouse.

Verse 27. Seeing ye hate me] He was justified in thinking thus, because if *they* did not injure him, they had connived at their servants doing it.

Verse 28. Let there be now an oath betwixt us] Let us make a covenant by which we shall be mutually bound, and let it be ratified in the most solemn manner.

Verse 30. He made them a feast] Probably on the *sacrifice* that was offered on the occasion of making this covenant. This was a common custom.

Verse 31. They rose up betimes] Early rising was general among the primitive inhabitants of the world, and this was one cause which contributed greatly to their *health* and *longevity*.

Verse 33. He called it Shebah] This was probably the *same well* which was called *Beersheba* in the time of Abraham, which the Philistines had filled up, and which the servants of Isaac had reopened. The same name is therefore given to it which it had before, with the addition of the *emphatic* letter *h* *he*, by which its signification became *extended*, so that now it signified not merely an *oath* or *full*, but *satisfaction* and *abundance*.

The name of the city is Beer-sheba] This name was given to it a hundred years before this time; but as the *well* from which it had this name originally was closed up by the Philistines, probably the name of the place was *abolished* with the well; when therefore Isaac reopened the well, he restored the ancient name of the place.

Verse 34. He took to wife-the daughter, &c.] It is very likely that the wives taken by Esau were daughters of *chiefs* among the Hittites, and by this union he sought to increase and strengthen his secular power and influence.

Verse 35. Which were a grief of mind] Not the *marriage*, though that was improper, but the *persons*; they, by their perverse and evil ways, brought bitterness into the hearts of Isaac and Rebekah. The Targum of *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, and that of *Jerusalem*, say they were addicted to idol worship, and rebelled against and would not hearken to the instructions either of Isaac or Rebekah. From *Canaanites* a different conduct could not be reasonably expected. Esau was far from being *spiritual*, and his wives were wholly *carnal*.

THE same reflections which were suggested by Abraham's conduct in denying his wife in Egypt and Gerar, will apply to that of Isaac; but the case of Isaac was much less excusable than that of Abraham. The latter told no *falsity*; he only through fear *suppressed a part of the truth*.

1. A good man has a right to expect God's blessing on his honest industry. Isaac sowed, and received a hundred-fold, and he had possession of flocks, &c., for the Lord blessed him. *Worldly men*, if they pray at all, ask for *temporal* things: "What shall we eat? what shall we drink? and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" Most of the truly religious people go into another extreme; they forget the *body*, and ask only for the *soul*! and yet there are "things requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul," and things which are only at God's disposal. The body lives for the soul's sake; its life and comfort are in many respects essentially requisite to the salvation of the soul; and therefore the things necessary for its support should be earnestly asked from the God of all grace, the Father of bounty and providence. *Ye have not because ye ask not*, may be said to many poor, afflicted religious people; and they are afraid to ask lest it should appear mercenary, or that they sought their portion in this life. They should be better taught. Surely to none of these will God give a *stone* if they ask *bread*: he who is so liberal of his heavenly blessings will not withhold earthly ones, which are of infinitely less consequence. Reader, expect God's blessing on thy honest industry; pray for it, and believe that God does not love *thee* less, who hast taken refuge in the same hope, than he loved Isaac. Plead not only his promises, but plead on the precedents he has set before thee. "Lord, thou didst so and so to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, and to others who trusted in thee; bless *my* field, bless *my* flocks, prosper *my* labour, that I may be able to provide *things honest* in the sight of all men, and have something to dispense to those who are in want." And will not God hear such prayers? Yea, and answer them too, for he does not willingly afflict the children of men. And we may rest assured that there is

more affliction and poverty in the world than either the justice or providence of God requires. There are, however, many who owe their poverty to their want of diligence and economy; they sink down into indolence, and forget that word, *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*; nor do they consider that by idleness a man is clothed with rags. Be diligent in business and fervent in spirit, and God will withhold from thee no manner of thing that is good.

2. From many examples we find that the wealth of the primitive inhabitants of the world did not consist in *gold, silver, or precious stones*, but principally in *flocks* of useful cattle, and the produce of the field. With *precious metals* and *precious stones* they were not *unacquainted*, and the former were sometimes used in purchases, as we have already seen in the case of Abraham buying a field from the children of Heth. But the blessings which God promises are such as spring from the soil. *Isaac sowed in the land, and had possessions of flocks and herds, and great store of servants,* ^{<012612>}**Genesis 26:12-14.** *Commerce*, by which nations and individuals so suddenly rise and as suddenly fall, had not been then invented; every man was obliged to acquire property by honest and persevering labour, or be destitute. *Lucky hits*, fortunate *speculations*, and adventurous *risks*, could then have no place; the *field* must be *tilled*, the *herds* watched and *fed*, and the proper *seasons* for *ploughing, sowing, reaping, and laying up*, be carefully regarded and *improved*. No man, therefore, could grow rich by *accident*. *Isaac waxed great and went forward, and grew until he became very great,* ^{<012613>}**Genesis 26:13.** *Speculation* was of no use, for it could have no object; and consequently many incitements to *knavery* and to *idleness*, that bane of the physical and moral health of the body and soul of man, could not show themselves. Happy times! when every man wrought with his hands, and God particularly blessed his honest industry. As he had no *luxuries*, he had no *unnatural* and *factitious wants*, few diseases, and a *long life*.

*O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint,
Agricolas!*

O thrice happy husbandmen! did they but know their own mercies.

But has not what is termed *commerce* produced the reverse of all this? A *few* are *speculators*, and the *many* are comparatively *slaves*; and slaves, not to enrich themselves, (this is impossible,) but to enrich the speculators and adventurers by whom they are employed. Even the *farmers* become, at

least partially, *commercial* men; and the *soil*, the fruitful parent of natural wealth, is comparatively disregarded: the consequence is, that the *misery* of the *many*, and the *luxury* of the *few*, increase; and from both these spring, on the one hand, pride, insolence, contempt of the poor, contempt of GOD'S holy word and commandments, with the long catalogue of crimes which proceed from pampered appetites and unsubdued passions: and on the other, murmuring, repining, discontent, and often *insubordination* and *revolt*, the most fell and most destructive of all the evils that can degrade and curse civil society. Hence wars, fightings, and revolutions of states, and public calamities of all kinds. Bad as the world and the times are, men have made them much worse by their unnatural methods of providing for the support of life. When shall men learn that even this is but a subordinate pursuit; and that the cultivator. of the soul in the knowledge, love, and obedience of God, is essentially necessary, not only to future glory, but to present happiness?

GENESIS

CHAPTER 27

Isaac, grown old and feeble, and apprehending the approach of death, desires his son Esau to provide some savoury meat for him, that having eaten of it he might convey to him the blessing connected with the right of primogeniture, 1-4. Rebekah hearing of it, relates the matter to Jacob, and directs him how to personate his brother, and by deceiving his father, obtain the blessing, 5-10. Jacob hesitates, 11, 12; but being counselled and encouraged by his mother, he at last consents to use the means she prescribes, 13, 14. Rebekah disguises Jacob, and sends him to personate his brother, 15-17. Jacob comes to his father, and professes himself to be Esau, 18, 19. Isaac doubts, questions, and examines him closely, but does not discover the deception, 20-24. He eats of the savoury meat, and confers the blessing upon Jacob, 25-27. In what the blessing consisted, 28, 29. Esau arrives from the field with the meat he had gone to provide, and presents himself before his father, 30, 31. Isaac discovers the fraud of Jacob, and is much affected, 32, 33. Esau is greatly distressed on hearing that the blessing had been received by another, 34. Isaac accuses Jacob of deceit, 35. Esau expostulates, and prays for a blessing, 36. Isaac describes the blessing which he has already conveyed, 37. Esau weeps, and earnestly implores a blessing, 38. Isaac pronounces a blessing on Esau, and prophecies that his posterity should, in process of time, cease to be tributary to the posterity of Jacob, 39, 40. Esau purposes to kill his brother, 41. Rebekah hears of it, and counsels Jacob to take refuge with her brother Laban in Padanaram, 42-45. She professes to be greatly alarmed, lest Jacob should take any of the Canaanites to wife, 41.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 1. Isaac was old] It is conjectured, on good grounds, that Isaac was now about one hundred and seventeen years of age, and Jacob about fifty-seven; though the commonly received opinion makes Isaac one hundred and thirty-seven, and Jacob seventy-seven; but **See Clarke's note on "^{<013155>}Genesis 31:55"**, &c.

And his eyes were dim] This was probably the effect of that affliction, of what kind we know not, under which Isaac now laboured; and from which, as well as from the affliction, he probably recovered, as it is certain he lived forty if not forty-three years after this time, for he lived till the return of Jacob from Padan-aram; ^{<013527>}**Genesis 35:27-29.**

Verse 2. I know not the day of my death] From his present weakness he had reason to suppose that his death could not be at any great distance, and therefore would leave no act undone which he believed it his duty to perform. He who lives not in reference to eternity, lives not at all.

Verse 3. Thy weapons] The original word **yl k keley** signifies *vessels* and *instruments* of any kind; and is probably used here for a *hunting spear*, *javelin*, *sword*, &c.

Quiver] **yl t teli**, from **hl t talah**, to *hang* or *suspend*. Had not the *Septuagint* translated the word **φαρετραν**, and the *Vulgate pharetram*, a quiver, I should rather have supposed some kind of *shield* was meant; but either can be *suspended* on the arm or from the shoulder. Some think a *sword* is meant; and because the original signifies to *hang* or *suspend*, hence they think is derived our word *hanger*, so called because it is generally worn in a *pendent* posture; but the word *hanger* did not exist in our language previously to the Crusades, and we have evidently derived it from the Persian [Persian] *khanjar*, a poniard or dagger, the use of which, not only in battles, but in private assassinations, was well known.

Verse 4. Savoury meat] **μym [cm matammim**, from **μ [c taam**, to *taste* or *relish*; how dressed we know not, but its name declares its nature.

That I may eat] The blessing which Isaac was to confer on his son was a species of Divine right, and must be communicated with appropriate ceremonies. As eating and drinking were used among the Asiatics on almost all religious occasions, and especially in making and confirming covenants, it is reasonable to suppose that something of this kind was essentially necessary on this occasion, and that Isaac could not convey the *right* till he had eaten of the meat provided for the purpose by *him* who was to receive the blessing. As Isaac was now old, and in a feeble and languishing condition, it was necessary that the flesh used on this occasion should be prepared so as to invite the appetite, that a *sufficiency* of it might be taken to revive and recruit his drooping strength, that he might be the better able to go through the whole of this ceremony.

This seems to be the sole reason why *savoury* meat is so particularly mentioned in the text. When we consider, 1. That no covenant was deemed *binding* unless the parties had *eaten* together; 2. That to convey this blessing some rite of this kind was necessary; and, 3. That Isaac's strength was now greatly exhausted, insomuch that he supposed himself to be

dying; we shall at once see why *meat* was required on this occasion, and why that meat was to be prepared so as to deserve the epithet of *savoury*. As I believe this to be the true sense of the place, I do not trouble my readers with interpretations which I suppose to be either exceptionable or false.

Verse 5. And Rebekah heard] And was determined, if possible, to frustrate the design of Isaac, and procure the blessing for her favourite son. Some pretend that she received a *Divine inspiration* to the purpose; but if she had she needed not to have recourse to *deceit*, to help forward the accomplishment. Isaac, on being informed, would have had too much piety not to prefer the will of his Maker to his own partiality for his eldest son; but Rebekah had nothing of the kind to plead, and therefore had recourse to the most exceptionable means to accomplish her ends.

Verse 12. I shall bring a curse upon me] For even in those early times the *spirit* of that law was understood, ^{<052718>}**Deuteronomy 27:18:** *Cursed is he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way;* and Jacob seems to have possessed at this time a more tender conscience than his mother.

Verse 13. Upon me be thy curse, my son] Onkelos gives this a curious turn: *It has been revealed to me by prophecy that the curses will not come upon thee, my son.* What a dreadful responsibility did this woman take upon her at this time! The sacred writer states the facts as they were, and we may depend on the truth of the statement; but he nowhere says that God would have any man to copy this conduct. He often relates facts and sayings which he never recommends.

Verse 15. Goodly raiment] Mr. Ainsworth has a sensible note on this place. “The priest in the law had *holy garments* to minister in, ^{<02812>}**Exodus 28:2-4**, which the Septuagint there and in this place term *την στολην*, *THE robe*, and *στολην αγιαν*, *the holy robe*. Whether the first-born, before the law, had such to minister in is not certain, but it is probable by this example; for had they been *common* garments, why did not Esau himself, or his wives, keep them? But being, in all likelihood, holy robes, received from their ancestors, the mother of the family kept them in sweet chests from moths and the like, whereupon it is said, ^{<02727>}**Genesis 27:27**, *Isaac smelled the smell of his garments.*” The opinion of Ainsworth is followed by many critics.

Verse 19. I am Esau thy first-born] Here are many palpable falsehoods, and such as should neither be imitated nor excused. “Jacob,” says Calmet, “imposes on his father in three different ways. 1. By his words: I am *thy first-born Esau*. 2. By his *actions*; he gives him *kids’ flesh* for *venison*, and says he had executed his orders, and *got it by hunting*. 3. By his *clothing*; he puts on Esau’s garments, and the *kids’ skins* upon his hands and the smooth of his neck. In short, he made use of every species of deception that could be practised on the occasion, in order to accomplish his ends.” To attempt to palliate or find excuses for such conduct, instead of *servicing*, *disserves* the cause of religion and truth. Men have laboured, not only to excuse all this conduct of Rebekah and Jacob, but even to show that it was *consistent*, and that the whole was according to the *mind* and *will of God!*

Non tali auxilio, non defensoribus istis—

The cause of God and truth is under no obligation to such defenders; their hands are more unhallowed than those of Uzzah; and however the bearers may stumble, the ark of God requires not *their* support. It was the design of God that *the elder should serve the younger*, and he would have brought it about in the way of his own wise and just providence; but means such as here used he could neither sanction nor recommend.

Verse 23. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy] From this circumstance we may learn that Isaac’s *sense of feeling* was much impaired by his present malady. When he could not discern the *skin of a kid* from the *flesh of his son*, we see that he was, through his infirmity, in a fit state to be imposed on by the deceit of his wife, and the cunning of his younger son.

Verse 27. The smell of my son is as the smell of a field] The smell of these garments, the *goodly raiment which had been laid up in the house*, was probably occasioned by some aromatic herbs, which we may naturally suppose were laid up with the clothes; a custom which prevails in many countries to the present day. *Thyme, lavender, &c.*, are often deposited in wardrobes, to communicate an agreeable scent, and under the supposition that the moths are thereby prevented from fretting the garments. I have often seen the leaves of aromatic plants, and sometimes whole sprigs, put in eastern MSS., to communicate a pleasant smell, and to prevent the worms from destroying them. Persons going from Europe to the East Indies put pieces of Russia leather among their clothes for the same purpose. Such a smell would lead Isaac’s recollection to the fields where

aromatic plants grew in abundance, and where he had often been regaled by the scent.

Verse 28. God give thee of the dew of heaven] Bp. Newton's view of these predictions is so correct and appropriate, as to leave no wish for any thing farther on the subject.

“It is here foretold, and in ^{<01273>}**Genesis 27:39**, of these two brethren, that as to situation, and other temporal advantages, they should be much alike. It was said to Jacob: *God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine*; and much the same is said to Esau, ^{<01273>}**Genesis 27:39**: *Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above*. The spiritual blessing, or the promise of the blessed seed, could be given only to ONE; but temporal good things might be imparted to *both*. Mount Seir, and the adjacent country, was at first in the possession of the Edomites; they afterwards extended themselves farther into Arabia, and into the southern parts of Judea. But wherever they were situated, we find in fact that the Edomites, in temporal advantages, were little inferior to the Israelites. Esau had *cattle and beasts* and *substance* in abundance, and he went to dwell in Seir of his own accord; but he would hardly have removed thither with so many cattle, had it been such a barren and desolate country as some would represent it. The Edomites had *dukes* and *kings* reigning over them, while the Israelites were *slaves* in Egypt. When the Israelites, on their return, desired leave to pass through the territories of Edom, it appears that the country abounded with FRUITFUL FIELDS and VINEYARDS: *Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country; we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells*; ^{<012017>}**Numbers 20:17**. And the prophecy of Malachi, which is generally alleged as a proof of the *barrenness* of the country, is rather a proof of the contrary: *I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness*, ^{<30103>}**Malachi 1:3**; for this implies that the country was fruitful before, and that its present unfruitfulness was rather an effect of war, than any natural defect in the soil. If the country is unfruitful now, neither is *Judea* what it was formerly.” As there was but little rain in Judea, except what was termed the *early rain*, which fell about the beginning of spring, and the *latter rain*, which fell about September, the lack of this was supplied by the *copious dews* which fell both morning and evening, or rather through the whole of the night. And we may judge, says Calmet, of the *abundance* of those dews by what fell on Gideon's fleece,

^{<0768>}**Judges 6:38**, which being wrung *filled a bowl*. And Hushai compares an army ready to fall upon its enemies to a *dew falling on the ground*, ^{<10172>}**2 Samuel 17:12**, which gives us the idea that this fluid fell in great profusion, so as to saturate every thing. Travellers in these countries assure us that the *dews* fall there in an extraordinary abundance.

The fatness of the earth] What Homer calls *ουθαρ αρουρης*, Ilias ix., 141, and Virgil *uber glebæ*, Æneis i., 531, both signifying a soil *naturally fertile*. Under this, therefore, and the former expressions, Isaac wishes his son all the blessings which a plentiful country can produce; for, as *Leviticus Clerc* rightly observes, if the dews and seasonable rains of heaven fall upon a fruitful soil, nothing but human industry is wanting to the plentiful enjoyment of all temporal good things. Hence they are represented in the Scripture as emblems of prosperity, of plenty, and of the blessing of God, ^{<6313>}**Deuteronomy 33:13,28**; ^{<3307>}**Micah 5:7**; ^{<30812>}**Zechariah 8:12**; and, on the other hand, the withholding of these denotes *barrenness, distress, and the curse of God*; ^{<10021>}**2 Samuel 1:21**. See *Dodd*.

Verse 29. Let people serve thee] “However alike their temporal advantages were to each other,” says Bp. Newton, “in all spiritual gifts and graces the younger brother was to have the superiority, was to be the happy instrument of conveying the blessing to all nations: *In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed*; and to this are to be referred, in their full force, those expressions: *Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee. Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee*. The same promise was made to Abraham in the name of God: *I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee*, ^{<01123>}**Genesis 12:3**; and it is here repeated to Jacob, and thus paraphrased in the Jerusalem Targum: ‘He who curseth thee shall be cursed as Balaam the son of Beor; and he who blesseth thee shall be blessed as Moses the prophet, the lawgiver of Israel.’ It appears that Jacob was, on the whole, a man of more religion, and believed the Divine promises more, than Esau. The posterity of Jacob likewise preserved the true religion, and the worship of one God, while the Edomites were sunk in idolatry; and of the seed of Jacob was born at last the Saviour of the world. This was the peculiar privilege and advantage of Jacob, to be the happy instrument of conveying these blessings to all nations. This was his greatest superiority over Esau; and in this sense St. Paul understood and applied the prophecy: *The elder shall serve the younger*, ^{<50912>}**Romans 9:12**. The Christ, the Saviour of the world, was to be born of *some one family*; and

Jacob's was preferred to Esau's, out of the good pleasure of Almighty God, who is certainly the best judge of fitness and expedience, and has undoubted right to dispense his favours as he shall see proper; for he says to Moses, as the apostle proceeds to argue, ^{<4015>}**Romans 9:15**: 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.' And when the Gentiles were converted to Christianity, the prophecy was fulfilled literally: *Let people serve thee, and let nations bow down to thee*; and will be more amply fulfilled when *the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved.*"

Verse 33. And Isaac trembled] The marginal reading is very literal and proper, *And Isaac trembled with a great trembling greatly*. And this shows the deep concern he felt for his own deception, and the iniquity of the means by which it had been brought about. Though Isaac must have heard of that which God had spoken to Rebekah, *The elder shall serve the younger*, and could never have wished to reverse this Divine purpose; yet he might certainly think that the spiritual blessing might be conveyed to Esau, and by him to all the nations of the earth, notwithstanding the superiority of secular dominion on the other side.

Yea, and he shall be blessed.] From what is said in this verse, collated with ^{<81217>}**Hebrews 12:17**. we see how *binding* the conveyance of the birthright was when communicated with the *rites* already mentioned. When Isaac found that he had been deceived by Jacob, he certainly would have reversed the blessing if he could; but as it had been conveyed in the *sacramental* way this was impossible. *I have blessed him*, says he, *yea, and he must, or will, be blessed*. Hence it is said by the apostle. *Esau found no place for repentance*, **μετανοιας γαρ τοπον ουχ ευρε**, no place for *change of mind* or *purpose* in his father, *though he sought it carefully with tears*. The father could not reverse it because the *grant* had already been made and confirmed. But this had nothing to do with the final salvation of poor outwitted Esau, nor indeed with that of his unnatural brother.

Verse 35. Hath taken away thy blessing.] This blessing, which was a different thing from the birthright, seems to consist of *two parts*: 1. The dominion, generally and finally, over the other part of the family; and, 2. Being the progenitor of the Messiah. But the former is more explicitly declared than the latter. **See Clarke's note on** "^{<402531>}**Genesis 25:31**".

Verse 36. Is not he rightly named Jacob?] **See Clarke's note on** "^{<402536>}**Genesis 25:26**".

He took away my birthright] So he might say with considerable propriety; for though he *sold* it to Jacob, yet as Jacob had taken advantage of his perishing situation, he considered the act as a species of robbery.

Verse 37. I have made him thy lord] See Clarke's note on "⁻⁰¹²⁷⁸⁻Genesis 27:28".

Verse 40. By thy sword shalt thou live] This does not absolutely mean that the Edomites should have constant wars; but that they should be of a fierce and warlike disposition, gaining their sustenance by *hunting*, and by predatory excursions upon the possessions of others. Bishop Newton speaks on this subject with his usual good sense and judgment: "The elder branch, it is here foretold, should delight more in war and violence, but yet should be subdued by the younger. *By thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother.* Esau might be said to live much by the sword; for he was a cunning hunter, a man of the field. He and his children got possession of Mount Seir by force and violence, expelling from thence the *Horites*, the former inhabitants. By what means they spread themselves farther among the Arabians is not known; but it appears that upon a sedition and separation several of the Edomites came and seized upon the south-west parts of Judea, during the Babylonish captivity, and settled there ever after. Before and after this they were almost continually at war with the Jews; upon every occasion they were ready to join with their enemies; and when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, they encouraged him utterly to destroy the city, saying, *Rase it, rase it, even to the foundations thereof.* ^{<13707>}**Psalm 137:7.** And even long after they were subdued by the Jews, they retained the same martial spirit; for Josephus in his time gives them the character of 'a turbulent and disorderly nation, always erect to commotions, and rejoicing in changes; at the least adulation of those who beseech them, beginning war, and hasting to battles as to a feast.' And a little before the last siege of Jerusalem they came, at the entreaty of the Zealots, to assist them against the priests and people; and there, together with the *Zealots*, committed unheard-of cruelties, and barbarously murdered *Annas*, the high priest, from whose death Josephus dates the destruction of the city." See Dr. Dodd.

And-when thou shalt have the dominion] It is here foretold that there was to be a time when the elder was to have dominion and shake off the yoke of the younger. The word **dyr t** *tarid*, which we translate *have dominion*, is rather of doubtful meaning, as it may be deduced from three

different roots, **dry** *yarad*, to *descend*, to *be brought down* or *brought low*; **hrd** *radah*, to *obtain rule* or *have dominion*; and **dwr** *rud*, to *complain*; meaning either that when reduced *very low* God would magnify his power in their behalf, and deliver them from the yoke of their brethren; or when they should be increased so as to venture to *set up a king over them*, or when they *mourned* for their transgressions, God would turn their captivity. The Jerusalem Targum gives the words the following turn: “When the sons of Jacob attend to the law and observe the precepts, they shall impose the yoke of servitude upon thy neck; but when they shall turn away themselves from studying the law and neglect the precepts, thou shalt break off the yoke of servitude from thy neck.”

“It was David who imposed the yoke, and at that time the Jewish people observed the law; but the yoke was very galling to the Edomites from the first; and towards the end of Solomon’s reign Hadad, the Edomite, of the blood royal, who had been carried into Egypt from his childhood, returned into his own country, and raised some disturbances, but was not able to recover his throne, his subjects being over-awed by the garrisons which David had placed among them; but in the reign of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, *the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king*. Jehoram made some attempts to subdue them again, but could not prevail; *so the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day*, ^{<12108>} **2 Chronicles 21:8,10**, and hereby this part of the prophecy was fulfilled about nine hundred years after it was delivered.” See Bishop Newton.

“Thus,” says Bishop Newton, “have we traced, in our notes on this and the 25th chapter, the accomplishment of this prophecy from the beginning; and we find that the nation of the Edomites has at several times been conquered by and made tributary to the Jews, but never the nation of the Jews to the Edomites; and the Jews have been the more considerable people, more known in the world, and more famous in history. We know indeed little more of the history of the Edomites than as it is connected with that of the Jews; and where is the *name* or *nation* now? They were swallowed up and lost, partly among the Nabathean Arabs, and partly among the Jews; and the very name, as Dr. Prideaux has observed, was abolished and disused about the end of the first century of the Christian era. Thus were they rewarded for insulting and oppressing

their brethren the Jews; and hereby other prophecies were fulfilled, viz., ^{<34407>}**Jeremiah 49:7**, &c.; ^{<3552>}**Ezekiel 25:12**. &c.; ^{<3089>}**Joel 3:19**; ^{<3000>}**Amos 1:11**, &c.; and particularly Obadiah; for at this day we see the Jews subsisting as a distinct people, while Edom is no more, agreeably to the words of Obadiah, ^{<3010>}**Obadiah 1:10**: *For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, in the return of his posterity from Egypt, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.* And again, ^{<3018>}**Obadiah 1:18**: *There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau, for the Lord hath spoken it.* In what a most extensive and circumstantial manner has God fulfilled all these predictions! and what a proof is this of the Divine inspiration of the Pentateuch, and the omniscience of God!"

Verse 41. The days of mourning for my father are at hand] Such was the state of Isaac's health at that time, though he lived more than forty years afterwards, that his death was expected by all; and Esau thought that would be a favourable time for him to avenge himself on his brother Jacob, as, according to the custom of the times, the sons were always present at the burial of the father. Ishmael came from his own country to assist Isaac to bury Abraham; and both Jacob and Esau assisted in burying their father Isaac, but the enmity between them had happily subsided long before that time.

Verse 42. Doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.] *Ël mj ntm mithnachem lecha*, which Houbigant renders *cogitat super te*, he thinks or meditates to kill thee. This sense is natural enough here, but it does not appear to be the meaning of the original; nor does Houbigant himself give it this sense, in his *Racines Hebraïques*. There is no doubt that Esau, in his hatred to his brother, felt himself pleased with the thought that he should soon have the opportunity of avenging his wrongs.

Verse 44. Tarry with him a few days] It was probably *forty* years before he returned, and it is likely Rebekah saw him no more; for it is the general opinion of the Jewish rabbins that she died before Jacob's return from Padan-aram, whether the period of his stay be considered *twenty* or *forty* years. See Clarke's note on ^{<01355>}**Genesis 31:55**", &c.

Verse 45. Why should I be deprived also of you both] If Esau should kill Jacob, then the nearest akin to Jacob, who was by the patriarchal law, ^{<00906>}**Genesis 9:6**, the avenger of blood, would kill Esau; and both these

deaths might possibly take place in the same day. This appears to be the meaning of Rebekah. Those who are ever endeavouring to sanctify the *means* by the *end*, are full of perplexity and distress. God will not give his blessing to even a Divine service, if not done in his own way, on principles of truth and righteousness. Rebekah and her son would take the means out of God's hands; they compassed themselves with their own sparks, and warmed themselves with their own fire; and this had they at the hand of God, they lay down in sorrow. God would have brought about his designs in a way consistent with his own perfections; for he had fully determined that *the elder should serve the younger*, and that the Messiah should spring not from the family of Esau but from that of Jacob; and needed not the cunning craftiness or deceits of men to accomplish his purposes. Yet in his mercy he overruled all these circumstances, and produced good, where things, if left to their own operations and issues, would have produced nothing but evil. However, after this reprehensible transaction, we hear no more of Rebekah. The Holy Spirit mentions her *no more*, her burial excepted, ^{<04:43>}Genesis 49:31. See Clarke's note on "^{<01:35>}Genesis 35:8".

Verse 46. I am weary of my life] It is very likely that Rebekah kept many of the circumstances related above from the knowledge of Isaac; but as Jacob could not go to Padan-aram without his knowledge, she appears here quite *in her own character*, framing an excuse for his departure, and *concealing* the true cause. Abraham had been solicitous to get a wife for his son Isaac from a branch of his own family; hence *she* was brought from Syria. She is now afraid, or pretends to be afraid, that her son Jacob will marry among the *Hittites*, as Esau had done; and therefore makes this to Isaac *the ostensible reason* why Jacob should immediately go to Padan-aram, that he might get a wife there. Isaac, not knowing the true cause of sending him away, readily falls in with Rebekah's proposal, and immediately calls Jacob, gives him suitable directions and his blessing, and sends him away. This view of the subject makes all consistent and natural; and we see at once the reason of the abrupt speech contained in this verse, which should be placed at the beginning of the following chapter.

1. IN the preceding notes I have endeavoured to represent things simply as they were. I have not copied the manner of many commentators, who have laboured to vindicate the character of Jacob and his mother in the transactions here recorded. As I fear God, and wish to follow him, I dare not bless what he hath not blessed, nor curse what he hath not cursed. I consider the whole of the conduct both of Rebekah and Jacob in some

respects deeply criminal, and in all highly exceptionable. And the impartial relation of the facts contained in this and the xxvth chapter, gives me the fullest evidence of the truth and authenticity of the sacred original. How *impartial* is the history that God writes! We may see, from several commentators, what *man* would have done, had *he* had the same facts to relate. The history given by God details as well the *vices* as the *virtues* of those who are its subjects. How widely different from that in the Bible is the *biography* of the present day! Virtuous acts that were never performed, voluntary privations which were never borne, piety which was never felt, and in a word *lives* which were never *lived*, are the principal subjects of *our* biographical relations. These may be well termed the *Lives of the Saints*, for to these are attributed all the virtues which can adorn the human character, with scarcely a failing or a blemish; while on the other hand, those in general mentioned in the sacred writings stand marked with deep shades. What is the inference which a reflecting mind, acquainted with human nature, draws from a comparison of the biography of the *Scriptures* with that of *uninspired writers*? The inference is this—the Scripture history is natural, is probable, bears all the characteristics of veracity, narrates circumstances which seem to make against its own honour, yet *dwells* on them, and often seeks occasion to REPEAT them. It is true! infallibly true! In this conclusion common sense, reason, and criticism join. On the other hand, of biography in general we must say that it is often unnatural, improbable; is destitute of many of the essential characteristics of truth; studiously avoids mentioning those circumstances which are dishonourable to its subject; ardently endeavours either to cast those which it cannot wholly hide into deep shades, or sublime them into virtues. This is notorious, and we need not go far for numerous examples. From these facts a reflecting mind will draw this general conclusion—an *impartial* history, in every respect true, can be expected only from God himself.

2. These should be only preliminary observations to an extended examination of the characters and conduct of Rebekah and her two sons; but this in detail would be an ungracious task, and I wish only to draw the reader's attention to what may, under the blessing of God, promote his moral good. No pious man can read the chapter before him without emotions of grief and pain. A mother teaches her favourite son to cheat and defraud his brother, deceive his father, and tell the most execrable lies! And God, the just, the impartial God relates all the circumstances in the most ample and minute detail! I have already hinted that this is a strong

proof of the authenticity of the sacred book. Had the Bible been the work of an impostor, a single trait of this history had never appeared. God, it is true, had purposed that *the elder should serve the younger*; but never designed that the supremacy should be brought about in this way. Had Jacob's unprincipled mother left the matter in the hands of God's providence, her favourite son would have had the precedency in such a way as would not only have manifested the justice and holiness of God, but would have been both *honourable* and *lasting* to HIMSELF. He got the *birthright*, and he got the *blessing*; and how little benefit did he personally derive from either! What was his life from this time till his return from Padan-aram? A mere tissue of vexations, disappointments, and calamities. Men may endeavour to palliate the iniquity of these transactions; but this must proceed either from weakness or mistaken zeal. God has sufficiently marked the whole with his disapprobation.

3. The enmity which Esau felt against his brother Jacob seems to have been transmitted to all his posterity; and doubtless the matters of the *birthright* and the *blessing* were the grounds on which that perpetual enmity was kept up between the descendants of both families, the *Edomites* and the *Israelites*. So unfortunate is an ancient family grudge, founded on the opinion that an injury has been done by one of the branches of the family, in a period no matter how remote, provided its operation still continues, and certain secular privations to one side be the result. How possible it is to keep feuds of this kind alive to any assignable period, the state of a neighbouring island sufficiently proves; and on the subject in question, the bloody contentions of the two *houses* of YORK and LANCASTER in this nation are no contemptible comment. The facts, however, relative to this point, may be summed up in a few words. 1. The descendants of Jacob were peculiarly favoured by God. 2. They generally had the dominion, and were ever reputed superior in every respect to the Edomites. 3. The Edomites were generally tributary to the Israelites. 4. They often revolted, and sometimes succeeded so far in their revolts as to become an *independent* people. 5. The Jews were never subjected to the Edomites. 6. As in the case between Esau and Jacob, who after long enmity were reconciled, so were the Edomites and the Jews, and at length they became one people. 7. The Edomites, as a nation, are now totally extinct; and the Jews still continue as a distinct people from all the inhabitants of the earth! So exactly have all the words of God, which he has spoken by his prophets, been fulfilled!

4. On the blessings pronounced on Jacob and Esau, these questions may naturally be asked. 1. Was there any thing in these blessings of such a spiritual nature as to affect the *eternal interests* of either? Certainly there was not, at least as far as might *absolutely* involve the salvation of the one, or the perdition of the other 2. Was not the blessing pronounced on Esau as good as that pronounced on Jacob, the *mere temporary lordship*, and being the *progenitor* of the *Messiah*, excepted? So it evidently appears. 3. If the blessings had referred to their eternal states, had not Esau as fair a prospect for endless glory as his unfeeling brother? Justice and mercy both say-Yes. The truth is, it was their *posterity*, and not themselves, that were the objects of these blessings. Jacob, personally, gained no benefit; Esau, personally, sustained no loss.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 28

Isaac directs Jacob to take a wife from the family of Laban, 1, 2; blesses and sends him away, 3, 4. Jacob begins his journey, 5. Esau, perceiving that the daughters of Canaan were not pleasing to his parents, and that Jacob obeyed them in going to get a wife of his own kindred, 6-8, went and took to wife Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael his father's brother, 9. Jacob, in his journey towards Haran, came to a certain place, (Luz, ver. 19,) where he lodged all night, 10, 11. He sees in a dream a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, on which he beholds the angels of God ascending and descending, 12. God appears above this ladder, and renews those promises which he had made to Abraham and to Isaac, 13, 14; promises Jacob personal protection and a safe return to his own country, 15. Jacob awakes, and makes reflections upon his dream, 16, 17. Sets up one of the stones he had for his pillow, and pours oil on it, and calls the place Beth-el, 18, 19. Makes a vow that if God will preserve him in his journey, and bring him back in safety, the stone should be God's house, and that he would give him the tenths of all that he should have, 20-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 1. And Isaac called Jacob] See Clarke's note on "~~012746~~Genesis 27:46".

And blessed him] Now voluntarily and cheerfully confirmed to him the blessing, which he had before obtained through subtlety. It was necessary that he should have this confirmation previously to his departure; else, considering the way in which he had obtained both the *birthright* and the *blessing*, he might be doubtful, according to his own words, whether he might not have got a curse instead of a blessing. As the blessing now pronounced on Jacob was obtained without any deception on his part, it is likely that it produced a salutary effect upon his mind, might have led him to confession of his sin, and prepared his heart for those discoveries of God's goodness with which he was favoured at Luz.

Verse 2. Go to Padan-aram] This mission, in its spirit and design, is nearly the same as that in ~~01240b~~Genesis 24:1-4, &c., which see. There have been several ingenious conjectures concerning the *retinue* which Jacob had, or might have had, for his journey; and by some he has been supposed to have been *well attended*. Of this nothing is mentioned here, and the reverse

seems to be intimated elsewhere. It appears, from ^{<012811>}**Genesis 28:11**, that he lodged in the open air, with a stone for his pillow; and from ^{<013210>}**Genesis 32:10**, that he went *on foot* with his staff in his hand; nor is there even the most indirect mention of any attendants, nor is it probable there were any. He no doubt took *provisions* with him sufficient to carry him to the nearest encampment or village on the way, where he would naturally recruit his bread and water to carry him to the next stage, and so on. The *oil* that he poured on the pillar might be a little of that which he had brought for his own use, and can be no rational arguement of his having a stock of provisions, servants, camels, &c., for which it has been gravely brought. He had God alone with him.

Verse 3. That thou mayest be a multitude of people] $\mu\text{ym}[\text{ I hql}$
likhal ammim. There is something very remarkable in the original words: they signify literally *for an assembly, congregation, or church of peoples*; referring no doubt to the Jewish Church in the wilderness, but more particularly to the *Christian Church*, composed of every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue. This is one essential part of the blessing of Abraham. See ^{<012804>}**Genesis 28:4**.

Verse 4. Give thee the blessing of Abraham] May he confirm the inheritance with all its attendant blessings to thee, to the exclusion of Esau; as he did to *me*, to the exclusion of Ishmael. But, according to St. Paul, much more than this is certainly intended here, for it appears, from ^{<8016>}**Galatians 3:6-14**, that *the blessing of Abraham*, which is to *come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ*, comprises the whole doctrine of justification by faith, and its attendant privileges, viz., redemption from the curse of the law, remission of sins, and the promise of the Holy Spirit, including the constitution and establishment of the Christian Church.

Verse 5. Bethuel the Syrian] Literally the *Aramean*, so called, not because he was of the race of *Aram* the son of Shem, but because he dwelt in that country which had been formerly possessed by the descendants of Aram.

Verse 9. Then went Esau unto Ishmael] Those who are apt to take every thing by the wrong handle, and who think it was utterly impossible for Esau to do any right action, have classed his taking a daughter of Ishmael among his crimes; whereas there is nothing more plain than that he did this with a sincere desire to *obey and please his parents*. Having heard the

pious advice which Isaac gave to Jacob, he therefore went and took a wife from the family of his grandfather Abraham, as Jacob was desired to do out of the family of his maternal uncle Laban. *Mahalath*, whom he took to wife, stood in the same degree of relationship to Isaac his father as *Rachel* did to his mother Rebekah. Esau married his father's niece; Jacob married his mother's niece. It was therefore most obviously to please his parents that Esau took this additional wife. It is supposed that Ishmael must have been dead thirteen or fourteen years before this time, and that *going to Ishmael* signifies only going to the *family* of Ishmael. If we follow the common computation, and allow that Isaac was now about one hundred and thirty-six or one hundred and thirty-seven years of age, and Jacob seventy-seven, and as Ishmael died in the one hundred and thirty-seventh year of his age, which according to the common computation was the one hundred and twenty-third of Isaac, then Ishmael must have been dead about *fourteen* years. But if we allow the ingenious reasoning of Mr. *Skinner* and Dr. *Kennicott*, that Jacob was at this time only *fifty-seven* years of age, and Isaac consequently only *one hundred and seventeen*, it will appear that Ishmael did not die till *six* years after this period; and hence with propriety it might be said, Esau went unto *Ishmael*, and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael to be his wife. **See Clarke's note on "~~01234~~Genesis 26:34"**, &c.

Verse 11. A certain place, and tarried there] From ~~012819~~**Genesis 28:19**, we find this *certain place* was *Luz*, or some part of its vicinity. Jacob had probably intended to reach *Luz*; but the sun being set, and night coming on, he either could not reach the city, or he might suspect the inhabitants, and rather prefer the open field, as he must have heard of the character and conduct of the men of Sodom and Gomorrah. Or the gates might be shut by the time he reached it, which would prevent his admission; for it frequently happens, to the present day, that travellers not reaching a city in the eastern countries previously to the shutting of the gates, are obliged to lodge under the walls all night, as when once shut they refuse to open them till the next day. This was probably Jacob's case.

He took of the stones] He took one of the stones that were in that place: from ~~012818~~**Genesis 28:18** we find it was *one stone* only which he had for his pillow. *Luz* was about forty-eight miles distant from Beer-sheba; too great a journey for one day, through what we may conceive very unready roads.

Verse 12. He dreamed, and behold a ladder] A multitude of fanciful things have been spoken of Jacob's vision of the ladder, and its signification. It might have several designs, as God chooses to accomplish the greatest number of ends by the fewest and simplest means possible. 1. It is very likely that its primary design was to point out the *providence* of God, by which he watches over and regulates all terrestrial things; for nothing is left to merely natural causes; a heavenly agency pervades, actuates, and directs all. In his present circumstances it was highly necessary that Jacob should have a clear and distinct view of this subject, that he might be the better prepared to meet all occurrences with the conviction that all was working together for his good. 2. It might be intended also to point out the *intercourse between heaven and earth*, and the connection of both worlds by the means of *angelic ministry*. That this is fact we learn from many histories in the Old Testament; and it is a doctrine that is unequivocally taught in the New: *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?* 3. It was probably a *type* of CHRIST, in whom both worlds meet, and in whom the Divine and human nature are conjoined. The LADDER *was set up on the EARTH, and the TOP of it reached to HEAVEN*; for GOD was manifested in the FLESH, and in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Nothing could be a more expressive emblem of the incarnation and its effects; Jesus Christ is the grand connecting medium between heaven and earth, and between God and man. *By him God comes down to man; through him man ascends to God.* It appears that our Lord applies the vision in this way *himself*, 1st, In that remarkable speech to Nathanael, *Hereafter ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man,* ^{<B0151>}**John 1:51**. 2dly, in his speech to Thomas, ^{<B1406>}**John 14:6**: *I am the WAY, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*

Verse 13. I am the Lord God of Abraham] Here God confirms to him the blessing of Abraham, for which Isaac had prayed, ^{<O128B>}**Genesis 28:3, 4**.

Verse 14. Thy seed shall be as the dust] The people that shall descend from thee shall be extremely numerous, *and in thee and thy seed-the Lord JESUS descending from thee, according to the flesh, shall all the families of the earth-not only all of thy race, but all the other families or tribes of mankind which have not proceeded from any branch of the Abrahamic family, be blessed*; for *Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death FOR EVERY MAN,* ^{<S01D>}**Hebrews 2:9**.

Verse 15. And, behold, I am with thee] For I fill the heavens and the earth. “My WORD *shall be thy help.*”-Targum. *And will keep thee in all places, εν τη οδω παση, in all this way.*- *Septuagint.* I shall direct, help, and support thee in a peculiar manner, in thy present journey, be with thee while thou sojournest with thy uncle, *and will bring thee again into this land;* so that in all thy concerns thou mayest consider thyself under my especial providence, *for I will not leave thee.* Thy descendants also shall be my peculiar people, whom I shall continue to preserve as such *until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of*-until the Messiah shall be born of thy race, and *all the families of the earth*-the Gentiles, *be blessed through thee;* the Gospel being preached to them, and they, with the believing Jews, made ONE FOLD under ONE SHEPHERD, and one *Bishop or Overseer of souls.* And this circumstantial promise has been literally and punctually fulfilled.

Verse 16. The Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.] That is, God has made this place his peculiar residence; it is a place in which he meets with and reveals himself to his followers. Jacob might have supposed that this place had been consecrated to God. And it has already been supposed that, his mind having been brought into a humble frame, he was prepared to hold communion with his Maker.

Verse 17. How dreadful is this place!] The appearance of the *ladder*, the *angels*, and the *Divine glory* at the top of the ladder, must have left deep, solemn, and even awful impressions on the mind of Jacob; and hence the exclamation in the text, *How dreadful is this place!*

This is none other but the house of God] The *Chaldee* gives this place a curious turn: “This is not a common place, but a place in which God delights; and opposite to this place is the gate of heaven.” *Onkelos* seems to suppose that the gate or entrance into heaven was actually *above* this spot, and that when the angels of God descended to earth, they came through that opening into this place, and returned by the same way. And it really appears that Jacob himself had a similar notion.

Verse 18. And Jacob-took the stone-and set it up for a pillar] He placed the stone in an erect posture, that it might stand as a monument of the extraordinary vision which he had in this place; *and he poured oil upon it*, thereby consecrating it to God, so that it might be considered an *altar* on which libations might be poured, and sacrifices offered unto God. See

<01.3514> **Genesis 35:14.**

The Brahmins anoint their *stone images* with *oil* before bathing; and some anoint them with sweet-scented oil. This is a practice which arises more from the *customs* of the Hindoos than from their *idolatry*. Anointing *persons* as an act of homage has been transferred to their *idols*.

There is a foolish tradition that the stone set up by Jacob was afterwards brought to Jerusalem, from which, after a long lapse of time, it was brought to Spain, from Spain to Ireland, from Ireland to Scotland, and on it the kings of Scotland sat to be crowned; and concerning which the following leonine verses were made:—

*Ni fallat fatum,-Scoti quocunque locatum
Invenient lapidem,-regnare tenentur ibidem.*

*Or fate is blind-or Scots shall find
Where'er this stone-the royal throne.
Camden's Perthshire.*

Edward I. had it brought to Westminster; and there this stone, called *Jacob's pillar*, and *Jacob's pillow*, is now placed under the chair on which the king sits when crowned! It would be as ridiculous to attempt to disprove the truth of this tradition, as to prove that the stone under the old chair in Westminster was the identical stone which served the patriarch for a bolster.

And poured oil upon the top of it.] Stones, images, and altars, dedicated to Divine worship, were always anointed with oil. This appears to have been considered as a consecration of them to the object of the worship, and a means of inducing the god or goddess to take up their residence there, and answer the petitions of their votaries. Anointing stones, images, &c., is used in idolatrous countries to the present day, and the whole idol is generally smeared over with oil. Sometimes, besides the anointing, a crown or garland was placed on the stone or altar to honour the divinity, who was supposed, in consequence of the *anointing*, to have set up his residence in that place. It appears to have been on this ground that the seats of polished stone, on which the kings sat in the front of their palaces to administer justice, were *anointed*, merely to invite the deity to reside there, that true judgment might be given, and a righteous sentence always be pronounced. Of this we have an instance in HOMER, *Odys.* lib. v., ver. 406-410:-

*εκ δ ελθων, κατ' ἀρ' εζετ' επι ξεστοισι λιθοσιν,
οι οι εσαν προπαροιθε θυρων υψηλων,*

δευκοι, αποστιλβοντες αλειφατος. οισ επι μεν πριν
νηλευς ιζεσκεν, θεοφιν μηστωρ αταλαντος.

*The old man early rose, walk'd forth, and sate
On polish'd stone before his palace gate;
With unguent smooth the lucid marble shone,
Where ancient Neleus sate, a rustic throne.*
POPE.

This gives a *part* of the sense of the passage; but the last line, on which much stress should be laid, is very inadequately rendered by the English poet. It should be translated,—

Where Neleus sat, equal *in counsel to the gods*; because inspired by their wisdom, and which inspiration he and his successor took pains to secure by consecrating with the anointing oil the seat of judgment on which they were accustomed to sit. Some of the ancient commentators on Homer mistook the meaning of this place by not understanding the nature of the custom; and these *Cowper* unfortunately follows, translating “resplendent *as with oil*;” which *as* destroys the whole sense, and obliterates the allusion. This sort of anointing was a common custom in all antiquity, and was probably derived from this circumstance. *Arnobius* tells us that it was customary with himself while a heathen, “when he saw a smooth polished stone that had been smeared with oils, to kiss and adore it, as if possessing a Divine virtue.”

*Si quando conspexeram lubricatum lapidem, et ex
olivi unguine sordidatum (ordinatum?) tanquam
inisset vis prasens, adulabar, affabar.*

And *Theodoret*, in his eighty-fourth question on Genesis, asserts that many pious women in his time were accustomed to *anoint* the coffins of the martyrs, &c. And in Catholic countries when a church is consecrated they *anoint* the door-posts, pillars, altars, &c. So under the law there was a *holy anointing oil* to sanctify the tabernacle, laver, and all other things used in GOD'S service, ^{<BIB>}**Exodus 40:9**, &c.

Verse 19. He called the name of that place Beth-el] That is, the *house of God*; for in consequence of his having *anointed* the stone, and thus *consecrated* it to God, he considered it as becoming henceforth his peculiar residence; see on the preceding verse. This word should be always pronounced as two distinct syllables, each strongly accented, Beth-El.

Was called **Luz at the first.**] The Hebrew has זלμ וּלַמּוּל *Ulam Luz*, which the Roman edition of the Septuagint translates οὐλαμλουζ *Oulamlouz*; the Alexandrian MS., οὐλαμμουζ *Oulammaus*; the Aldine, οὐλαμμαους *Oulammaous*; Symmachus, λαμμαους *Lammaous*; and some others, οὐλαμ *Oulam*. The Hebrew זלμ וּלַמּוּל *ulam* is sometimes a particle signifying *as, just as*; hence it may signify that the place was called Beth-El, *as it was formerly called Luz*. As Luz signifies an *almond, almond or hazel tree*, this place probably had its name from a number of such trees growing in that region. Many of the ancients confounded this city with *Jerusalem*, to which they attribute the *eight* following names, which are all expressed in this verse:—

*Solyma, Luza, Bethel, Hierosolyma, Jebus, Aelia,
Urbs sacra, Hierusalem dicitur atque Salem.*

*Solyma, Luz, Beth-El, Hierosolyma, Jebus, Aelia,
The holy city is call'd, as also Jerusalem and Salem.*

From Beth-El came the *Bætylia, Bethyllia, βαιτυλια*, or *animated stones*, so celebrated in antiquity, and to which Divine honours were paid. The tradition of Jacob anointing this stone, and calling the place *Beth-El*, gave rise to all the superstitious accounts of the *Bætylia* or *consecrated stones*, which we find in *Sanchoniathon* and others. These became abused to idolatrous purposes, and hence God strongly prohibits them, ^{<1330>}**Leviticus 26:1**; and it is very likely that stones of this kind were the most ancient objects of idolatrous worship; these were afterwards formed into beautiful human figures, male and female, when the art of *sculpture* became tolerably perfected, and hence the *origin of idolatry* as far as it refers to the worshipping of *images*, for these, being consecrated by anointing, &c., were supposed immediately to become *instinct* with the power and energy of some divinity. Hence, then, the *Bætylia* or *living stones* of the ancient Phœnicians, &c. As *oil* is an emblem of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, so those who receive this anointing are considered as being *alive* unto God, and are expressly called by St. Peter *living stones*, ^{<1331>}**1 Peter 2:4,5**. May not the apostle have reference to those living stones or *Bætyllia* of antiquity, and thus correct the notion by showing that these rather represented the true worshippers of God, who were consecrated to his service and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and that these alone could be properly called the *living stone*, out of which the true spiritual temple is composed?

Verse 20. Vowed a vow] A vow is a solemn, holy promise, by which a man bound himself to do certain things in a particular way, time, &c., and for power to accomplish which he depended on God; hence all vows were made with prayer.

If God will be with me, &c.] Jacob seems to make this vow rather for his *posterity* than for *himself*, as we may learn from ^{<012813>}**Genesis 28:13-15**; for he particularly refers to the promises which God had made to him, which concerned the *multiplication of his offspring*, and *their establishment in that land*. If, then, God shall fulfil these promises, he binds his *posterity* to build God a house, and to devote for the maintenance of his worship the *tenth* of all their earthly goods. This mode of interpretation removes that appearance of *self-interest* which almost any other view of the subject presents. Jacob had certainly, long ere this, taken Jehovah for his God; and so thoroughly had he been instructed in the knowledge of Jehovah, that we may rest satisfied no reverses of fortune could have induced him to apostatize: but as his taking refuge with Laban was probably typical of the sojourning of his descendants in Egypt, his persecution, so as to be obliged to depart from Laban, the bad treatment of his posterity by the Egyptians, his rescue from death, preservation on his journey, re-establishment in his own country, &c., were all typical of the exodus of his descendants, their travels in the desert, and establishment in the promised land, where they built a house to God, and where, for the support and maintenance of the pure worship of God, they gave to the priests and Levites the *tenth of all their worldly produce*. If all this be understood as referring to Jacob *only*, the Scripture gives us no information how he performed his vow.

Verse 22. This stone shall be God's house] That is, (as far as this matter refers to Jacob alone,) should I be preserved to return in safety, I shall worship God in this place. And this purpose he fulfilled, for there he built an altar, anointed it with oil, and *poured a drink-offering thereon*.

For a practical use of Jacob's vision, see Clarke's note on "^{<012812>}**Genesis 28:12**".

ON the doctrine of *tithes*, or an adequate support for the ministers of the Gospel, I shall here register my opinion. Perhaps a word may be borne from one who never received any, and has Done in prospect. *Tithes* in their origin appear to have been a sort of *eucharistic offering* made unto God, and probably were something similar to the *minchah*, which we learn from Gen. iv. was in use almost from the foundation of the world. When God

established a regular, and we may add an expensive worship, it was necessary that proper provision should be made for the support of those who were obliged to devote their whole time to it, and consequently were deprived of the opportunity of providing for themselves in any secular way. It was soon found that a *tenth* part of the produce of the whole land was necessary for this purpose, as a whole *tribe*, that of *Levi*, was devoted to the public service of God; and when the land was divided, this tribe received no inheritance among their brethren. Hence, for their support, the *law of tithes* was enacted; and by these the priests and Levites were not only supported as the ministers of God, but as the *teachers* and *intercessors* of the people, performing a great variety of religious duties *for them* which otherwise they themselves were bound to perform. As this mode of supporting the ministers of God was instituted by himself, so we may rest assured it was rational and just. Nothing can be more reasonable than to devote a portion of the earthly good which we receive from the free mercy of God, to his own service; especially when by doing it we are essentially serving ourselves. If the ministers of God give up their whole time, talents, and strength, to watch over, labour for, and instruct the people in spiritual things, justice requires that they shall receive their support from the work. How worthless and wicked must that man be, who is continually receiving good from the Lord's hands without restoring any part for the support of true religion, and for charitable purposes! To such God says, *Their table shall become a snare to them, and that he will curse their blessings*. God expects returns of gratitude in this way from every man; he that has much should give plenteously, he that has little should do his diligence to give of that little.

It is not the business of these notes to dispute on the article of *tithes*; certainly it would be well could a proper *substitute* be found for them, and the clergy paid by some other method, as this appears in the present state of things to be very objectionable; and the mode of *levying* them is vexatious in the extreme, and serves to sow dissensions between the clergyman and his parishioners, by which *many* are not only alienated from the Church, but also from the *power* as well as the *form* of godliness. But still the *labourer* is worthy of his hire; and the maintenance of the *public ministry* of the word of God should not be left to the caprices of men. He who is only supported *for his work*, will be probably abandoned when he is no longer capable of public service. I have seen many aged and worn-out ministers reduced to great necessity, and almost literally obliged to beg

their bread among those whose opulence and salvation were, under God, the fruits of their ministry! Such persons may think they do God service by disputing against "*tithes*, as legal institutions long since abrogated," while they permit their worn-out ministers to starve:-but how shall they appear in that day when Jesus shall say, *I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not?* It is true, that where a provision is *established* on a certain order of priesthood by the law, it may be sometimes claimed and consumed by the worthless and the profane; but this is no necessary consequence of such establishment, as there are laws which, if put in action, have sufficient energy to expel every wicked and slothful servant from the vineyard of Christ. This however is seldom done. At all events, this is no reason why those who have served God and their generation should not be comfortably supported during that service; and when incapable of it, be furnished at least with the *necessaries* of life. Though many ministers have reason to complain of this neglect, who have no claims on a legal ecclesiastical establishment, yet none have cause for louder complaint than the generality of those called *curates*, or unbeneficed ministers, in the Church of England: their employers clothe themselves with the wool, and feed themselves with the fat; they tend not the flock, and their substitutes that perform the labour and do the drudgery of the office, are permitted at least to *half starve* on an inadequate remuneration. Let a national worship be supported, but let the support be derived from a less objectionable source than *tithes*; for as the law now stands relative to them, no one purpose of moral instruction or piety can be promoted by the *system*. On their present plan tithes are oppressive and unjust; the clergyman has a right by law to the *tenth* of the produce of the *soil*, and to the *tenth* of all that is *supported by it*. He claims even the *tenth egg*, as well as the *tenth apple*; the *tenth* of all *grain*, of all *hay*, and even of all the produce of the *kitchen garden*; but he contributes nothing to the cultivation of the soil. A comparatively poor man rents a farm; it is entirely *out of heart*, for it has been exhausted; it yields very little, and the *tenth* is not much; at the expense of all he has, he dresses and manures this ungrateful soil; to repay him and *keep up the cultivation* would require three years' produce. It begins to yield well, and the clergyman takes the *tenth* which is now in *quantity* and *quality* more in value than a *pound*, where before it was not a *shilling*. But the whole crop would not repay the farmer's expenses. In proportion to the farmer's improvement is the clergyman's tithe, who has never contributed one shilling to aid in this extra produce! Here then not only the *soil* pays *tithes*, but the man's

property brought upon the soil pays tithes: his *skill* and *industry* also are *tithed*; or if he have been obliged to *borrow cash*, he not only has to pay *tithes* on the produce of this borrowed money, but five per cent interest for the money itself. All this is oppressive and cruelly unjust. I say again, let there be a national religion, and a national clergy supported by the state; but let them be supported by a *tax*, not by *tithes*, or rather let them be paid out of the general taxation; or, if the *tithe* system must be continued, let the *poor-rates* be abolished, and the clergy, out of the tithes, support the poor in their respective parishes, as was the original custom.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 29

Jacob proceeds on his journey, 1. Comes to a well where the flocks of his uncle Laban, as well as those of several others, were usually watered, 2, 3. Inquires from the shepherds concerning Laban and his family, 4-6. While they are conversing about watering the sheep, 7, 8, Rachel arrives, 9. He assists her to water her flock, 10; makes himself known unto her, 11, 12. She hastens home and communicates the tidings of Jacob's arrival to her father, 12. Laban hastens to the well, embraces Jacob, and brings him home, 13. After a month's stay, Laban proposes to give Jacob wages, 14, 15. Leah and Rachel described, 16, 17. Jacob proposes to serve seven years for Rachel, 18. Laban consents, 19. When the seven years were fulfilled, Jacob demands his wife, 20, 21. Laban makes a marriage feast, 22; and in the evening substitutes Leah for Rachel, to whom he gives Zilpah for handmaid, 23, 24. Jacob discovers the fraud, and upbraids Laban, 25. He excuses himself, 26; and promises to give him Rachel for another seven years of service, 27. After abiding a week with Leah, he receives Rachel for wife, to whom Laban gives Bilhah for handmaid, 28, 29. Jacob loves Rachel more than Leah, and serves seven years for her, 30. Leah being despised, the Lord makes her fruitful, while Rachel continues barren, 31. Leah bears Reuben, 32, and Simeon, 33, and Levi, 34, and Judah; after which she leaves off bearing, 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. Then Jacob went on his journey] The original is very remarkable: *And Jacob lifted up his feet, and he travelled unto the land of the children of the east.* There is a certain *cheerfulness* marked in the original which comports well with the state of mind into which he had been brought by the vision of the ladder and the promises of God. He now saw that having God for his protector he had nothing to fear, and therefore he went on his way rejoicing.

People of the east.] The inhabitants of Mesopotamia and the whole country beyond the Euphrates are called **μδq kedem**, or *easterns*, in the sacred writings.

Verse 2. Three flocks of sheep] **ax** tson, small cattle, such as *sheep*, *goats*, &c.; See Clarke's note on "**Genesis 12:16**". Sheep, in a healthy state, seldom drink in cold and comparatively cold countries: but it was probably different in hot climates. The *three flocks*, if *flocks* and not

shepherds be meant, which were lying now at the well, did not belong to *Laban*, but to three other chiefs; for *Laban's* flock was yet to come, under the care of *Rachel*, ^{<012906>}**Genesis 29:6**.

Verse 3. All the flocks] Instead of $\mu y r d [h$ *hadarim*, *flocks*, the Samaritan reads [Samaritan] *haroim*, *shepherds*; for which reading *Houbigant* strongly contends, as well in this verse as in ^{<012908>}**Genesis 29:8**. It certainly cannot be said that *all the flocks rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep*: and yet so it appears to read if we prefer the common Hebrew text to the Samaritan. It is probable that the same reading was originally that of the second verse also.

And put the stone again upon the well's mouth] It is very likely that the stone was a *large one*, which was necessary to prevent ill-minded individuals from either disturbing the water, or filling up the well; hence a great stone was provided, which required the joint exertions of several shepherds to remove it; and hence those who arrived first waited till all the others were come up, that they might water their respective flocks in concert.

Verse 4. My brethren, whence be ye?] The language of *Laban* and his family was *Chaldee* and not Hebrew; (see ^{<013147>}**Genesis 31:47**;) but from the *names* which *Leah* gave to her children we see that the two languages had many words in common, and therefore *Jacob* and the shepherds might understand each other with little difficulty. It is possible also that *Jacob* might have learned the *Chaldee* or *Aramitish* language from his mother, as this was his *mother's tongue*.

Verse 5. Laban the son of Nahor] *Son* is here put for *grandson*, for *Laban* was the son of *Bethuel* the son of *Nahor*.

Verse 6. Is he well?] $w l \mu w l v h$ *hashalom lo?* Is there peace to him? *Peace* among the Hebrews signified *all kinds of prosperity*. Is he a prosperous man in his family and in his property? And they said, He is well, $\mu w l v$ *shalom*, he prospers.

Rachel-cometh with the sheep.] $l j r$ *rachel* (the *ch* sounded strongly guttural) signifies a *sheep* or *ewe*; and she probably had her name from her fondness for these animals.

Verse 7. It is yet high day] The day is but about half run; *neither* is it *time that the cattle should be gathered together*—it is surely not time yet to put them into the folds; give them therefore water, and take them again to pasture.

Verse 8. We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together] It is a rule that the stone shall not be removed till all the shepherds and the flocks which have a right to this well be gathered together; then, and not before, we may water the sheep. See Clarke's note on "~~4020B~~Genesis 29:3".

Verse 9. Rachel came with her father's sheep] So we find that young women were not *kept concealed in the house* till the time they were married, which is the common gloss put on hml [*almah, a virgin, one concealed*. Nor was it beneath the dignity of the daughters of the most opulent chiefs to carry water from the well, as in the case of Rebekah; or tend sheep, as in the case of Rachel. The chief *property* in those times consisted in *flocks*: and who so proper to take care of them as those who were interested in their safety and increase? Honest labour, far from being a discredit, is an honour both to *high* and *low*. The *king* himself is served by the field; and without it, and the labour necessary for its cultivation, all ranks must perish. Let every son, let every daughter, learn that it is no discredit to be employed, whenever it may be necessary, in the meanest offices, by which the interests of the family may be *honestly* promoted.

Verse 10. Jacob went near, and rolled the stone] Probably the flock of Laban was the last of those which had a right to the well; that flock being now come, Jacob assisted the shepherds to roll off the stone, (for it is not likely he did it by himself,) and so assisted his cousin, to whom he was as yet unknown, to water her flock.

Verse 11. Jacob kissed Rachel] A simple and pure method by which the primitive inhabitants of the earth testified their friendship to each other, first abused by *hypocrites*, who pretended affection while their vile hearts meditated terror, (see the case of Joab,) and afterwards disgraced by refiners on morals, who, while they pretended to stumble at those innocent expressions of affection and friendship, were capable of committing the grossest acts of impurity.

And lifted up his voice] It may be, in thanksgiving to God for the favour he had shown him, in conducting him thus far in peace and safety.

And wept.] From a sense of the goodness of his heavenly Father, and his own unworthiness of the success with which he had been favoured. The same expressions of kindness and pure affection are repeated on the part of Laban, ⁽¹²⁹¹³⁾**Genesis 29:13.**

Verse 14. My bone and my flesh.] One of my nearest relatives.

Verse 15. Because thou art my brother, &c.] Though thou art my nearest relative, yet I have no right to thy services without giving thee an adequate recompense. Jacob had passed a whole month in the family of Laban, in which he had undoubtedly rendered himself of considerable service. As Laban, who was of a very saving if not *covetous* disposition, saw that he was to be of great use to him in his secular concerns, he wished to secure his services, and therefore asks him what wages he wished to have.

Verse 17. Leah was tender-eyed] *twkr* *raccoth, soft, delicate, lovely.* I believe the word means just the *reverse* of the signification generally given to it. The design of the inspired writer is to *compare* both the sisters together, that the balance may appear to be greatly in favour of Rachel. The chief recommendation of Leah was her *soft and beautiful eyes*; but Rachel was *rat tpy* *yephath toar*, beautiful in her *shape, person, mien*, and *gait*, and *harm tpy* *yephath mareh*, beautiful in her *countenance*. The words plainly signify *a fine shape and fine features*, all that can be considered as essential to personal beauty. Therefore Jacob loved her, and was willing to become a *bond servant* for seven years, that he might get her to wife; for in his destitute state he could produce no dowry, and it was the custom of those times for the father to receive a portion *for* his daughter, and not to give one *with* her. One of the Hindoo lawgivers says, "A person may become a *slave* on account of love, or to obtain a wife." The bad system of education by which women are spoiled and rendered in general good for nothing, makes it necessary for the husband to get a dowry with his wife to enable him to maintain her; whereas in former times they were well educated and extremely useful, hence he who got a *wife* almost invariably got a *prize*, or as Solomon says, got a good thing.

Verse 20. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel.] In ancient times it appears to have been a custom among all nations that men should give *dowries* for their wives; and in many countries this custom still prevails. When Shechem asked Dinah for wife, he said, *Ask me never so*

much-dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me. When Eliezer went to get Rebekah for Isaac, he took a profusion of riches with him, in *silver, gold, jewels, and raiment, with other costly things,* which, when the contract was made, he gave to Rebekah, her mother, and her brothers. David, in order to be Saul's son-in-law, must, instead of a *dowry,* kill Goliath; and when this was done, he was not permitted to espouse Michal till he had killed one hundred Philistines. The Prophet Hosea bought his wife for *fifteen pieces of silver, and a homer and a half of barley.* The same custom prevailed among the ancient *Greeks, Indians, and Germans.* The *Romans* also had a sort of marriage entitled *per coemptionem,* "by purchase." The *Tartars* and *Turks* still buy their wives; but among the latter they are bought as a sort of *slaves.*

Herodotus mentions a very singular custom among the *Babylonians,* which may serve to throw light on Laban's conduct towards Jacob. "In every district they annually assemble all the marriageable virgins on a certain day; and when the men are come together and stand round the place, the crier rising up sells one after another, always bringing forward the *most beautiful* first; and having sold her for a great sum of gold, he puts up her who is esteemed second in beauty. On this occasion the richest of the *Babylonians* used to contend for the fairest wife, and to outbid one another. But the vulgar are content to take the ugly and lame *with* money; for when all the beautiful virgins are sold, the crier orders the *most deformed* to stand up; and after he has openly demanded who will marry her *with a small sum,* she is at length given to the man that is contented to marry her with the *least.* And in this manner the money arising from the sale of the *handsome* served for a portion to those whose look was disagreeable, or who had any bodily imperfection. A father was not permitted to indulge his own fancy in the choice of a husband for his daughter; neither might the purchaser carry off the woman which he had bought without giving sufficient security that he would live with her as his own wife. Those also who received a sum of money with such as could bring no price in this market, were obliged also to give sufficient security that they would live with them, and if they did not they were obliged to refund the money." Thus Laban made use of the *beauty of Rachel* to dispose of his daughter *Leah,* in the *spirit* of the *Babylonian* custom, though not in the letter.

And they seemed unto him but a few days] If Jacob had been obliged to wait *seven years* before he married Rachel, could it possibly be said that

they could appear to him as a *few days*? Though the *letter* of the text seems to say the contrary, yet there are eminent men who strongly contend that he received Rachel soon after the month was finished, (see ^{<012914>}**Genesis 29:14**.) and then served seven years for her, which might really appear but a few days to him, because of his increasing love to her; but others think this quite incompatible with all the circumstances marked down in the text, and on the supposition that Jacob was not now seventy-seven years of age, as most chronologers make him, but only fifty-seven, (see **Clarke on** ^{<013155>}**Genesis 31:55**’), there will be time sufficient to allow for all the transactions which are recorded in his history, during his stay with Laban. As to the incredibility of a *passionate lover*, as some have termed him, waiting patiently for *seven years* before he could possess the object of his wishes, and those seven years appearing to him as only a few days, it may be satisfactorily accounted for, they think, two ways: 1. He had the continual company of his elect spouse, and this certainly would take away all tedium in the case. 2. Love affairs were not carried to such a pitch of insanity among the patriarchs as they have been in modern times; *they* were much more sober and sedate, and scarcely ever married before they were forty years of age, and then more for *conveniency*, and the desire of having an *offspring*, than for any other purpose. At the very lowest computation Jacob was now fifty-seven, and consequently must have passed those days in which *passion* runs away with *reason*. Still, however, the obvious construction of the text shows that he got Rachel the week after he had married Leah.

Verse 21. My days are fulfilled] My seven years are now completed, let me have my wife, for whom I have given this service as a *dowry*.

Verse 22. Laban-made a feast.] *htvm mishteh* signifies a feast of *drinking*. As marriage was a very solemn contract, there is much reason to believe that *sacrifices* were offered on the occasion, and *libations* poured out; and we know that on festival occasions a cup of *wine* was offered to every guest; and as this was drunk with particular ceremonies, the feast might derive its name from this circumstance, which was the most prominent and observable on such occasions.

Verse 23. In the evening-he took Leah his daughter] As the bride was always *veiled*, and the bride chamber generally *dark*, or nearly so, and as Leah was brought to Jacob in the *evening*, the imposition here practised

might easily pass undetected by Jacob, till the ensuing day discovered the fraud.

Verse 24. And Laban gave-Zilpah his maid] Slaves given in this way to a daughter on her marriage, were the peculiar property of the daughter; and over them the husband had neither right nor power.

Verse 26. It must not be so done in our country] It was an early custom to give daughters in marriage according to their *seniority*; and it is worthy of remark that the oldest people now existing, next to the Jews, I mean the *Hindoos*, have this not merely as a *custom*, but as a *positive law*; and they deem it criminal to give a *younger* daughter in marriage while an elder daughter remains unmarried. Among them it is a high offence, equal to adultery, “for a man to marry while his *elder brother* remains *unmarried*, or for a man to give his daughter to such a person, or to give his youngest daughter in marriage while the eldest sister remains unmarried.”-Code of Gentoo Laws, chap. xv., sec. 1, p. 204. This was a custom at Mesopotamia; but Laban took care to conceal it from Jacob till after he had given him Leah. The words of Laban are literally what a Hindoo would say on such a subject.

Verse 27. Fulfil her week] The marriage feast, it appears, lasted *seven days*; it would not therefore have been proper to break off the solemnities to which all the men of the place had been invited, ^{<01202>}**Genesis 29:22**, and probably Laban wished to keep his *fraud* from the public eye; therefore he informs Jacob that if he will fulfil the marriage *week* for Leah, he will give him Rachel at the end of it, on condition of his serving seven other years. To this the necessity of the case caused Jacob to agree; and thus Laban had *fourteen years’* service instead of *seven*: for it is not likely that Jacob would have served even seven *days* for Leah, as his affection was wholly set on Rachel, the wife of his own choice. By this stratagem Laban gained a settlement for both his daughters. What a man soweth, that shall he reap. Jacob had before practised deceit, and is now deceived; and Laban, the instrument of it, was afterwards deceived himself.

Verse 28. And Jacob did so-and he gave him Rachel] It is perfectly plain that Jacob did not serve seven years more *before* he got Rachel to wife; but having spent a week with Leah, and in keeping the marriage feast, he then got Rachel, and served afterwards seven years for *her*. Connections of this kind are now called *incestuous*; but it appears they were allowable in those ancient times. In taking both sisters, it does not appear that any

blame attached to Jacob, though in consequence of it he was vexed by their jealousies. It was probably because of this that the law was made, *Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her, besides the other in her life-time*. After this, all such marriages were strictly forbidden.

Verse 31. The Lord saw that Leah was hated] From this and the preceding verse we get the genuine meaning of the word **anc** *sane*, to *hate*, in certain disputed places in the Scriptures. The word simply signifies *a less degree of love*; so it is said, ^{<01230>}**Genesis 29:30**: “Jacob loved Rachel *more* than Leah,” i.e., he loved Leah *less* than Rachel; and *this* is called *hating* in ^{<01231>}**Genesis 29:31**: *When the Lord saw that Leah was hated*-that she had *less affection* shown to her than was her due, as one of the legitimate wives of Jacob, *he opened her womb*-he blessed her with children. Now the frequent intercourse of Jacob with Leah (see the following verses) sufficiently proves that he did not *hate* her in the sense in which this term is used among us; but he felt and showed *less affection* for her than for her sister. So *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, simply means, I have shown a greater degree of affection for Jacob and his posterity than I have done for Esau and his descendants, by giving the former a better earthly portion than I have given to the latter, and by choosing the family of Jacob to be the progenitors of the Messiah. But not one word of all this relates to the *eternal* states of either of the two nations. Those who endeavour to support certain peculiarities of their creed by such scriptures as these, do greatly err, not knowing the Scripture, and not properly considering either the *sovereignty* or the *mercy* of God.

Verse 32. She called his name Reuben] **ˆbwar** *reuben*, literally, *see ye* or *behold a son*; for *Jehovah hath looked upon*, **har** *raah*, *beheld*, my affliction; *behold* then the consequence, I have got a son!

Verse 33. She called his name Simeon.] **ˆw[mv** *shimon*, *hearing*; i.e., God had blessed her with another son, *because* he had *heard that she was hated*-loved less than Rachel was.

Verse 34. Therefore was his name called Levi.] **ywl** *levi*, *joined*; because she supposed that, in consequence of all these children, Jacob would become *joined* to her in as strong affection, at least, as he was to Rachel. From Levi sprang the tribe of *Levites*, who instead of the *first-born*, were

joined unto the priests in the service of the sanctuary. See ^{<04182>}Numbers 18:2,4.

Verse 35. She called his name Judah] ^{hdwhy} *yehudah*, a *confessor*; one who *acknowledges* God, and acknowledges that all good comes from his hands, and gives him the praise due to his grace and mercy. From this patriarch the *Jews* have their name, and could it be now rightly applied to them, it would intimate that they were a people that *confess* God, *acknowledge* his bounty, and *praise* him for his grace.

Left bearing.] That is, *for a time*; for she had several children afterwards. Literally translated, the original ^{t dl m dm[t} *taamod milledeth-she stood still from bearing*, certainly does not convey the same meaning as that in our translation; the one appearing to signify that she *ceased entirely* from having children; the other, that she only *desisted for a time*, which was probably occasioned by a temporary suspension of Jacob's company, who appears to have deserted the tent of Leah through the jealous management of Rachel.

The intelligent and pious care of the original inhabitants of the world to call their children by those names which were descriptive of some *remarkable event in providence, circumstance of their birth, or domestic occurrence*, is worthy, not only of *respect*, but of *imitation*. As the *name* itself continually called to the mind, both of the parents and the child, the circumstance from which it originated, it could not fail to be a lasting blessing to both. How widely different is our custom! Unthinking and ungodly, we impose names upon our offspring as we do upon our cattle; and often the dog, the horse, the monkey, and the parrot, share in common with our children the names which are called *Christian*! Some of our *Christian* names, so called, are *absurd*, others are *ridiculous*, and a third class *impious*; these last being taken from the demon gods and goddesses of heathenism. May we hope that the rational and pious custom recommended in the Scriptures shall ever be restored, even among those who profess to *believe* in, *fear*, and *love* God!

GENESIS

CHAPTER 30

Rachel envies her sister, and chides Jacob, 1. He reproves her and vindicates himself, 2. She gives him her maid Bilhah, 3, 4. She conceives, and bears Dan, 5, 6; and afterwards Naphtali, 7, 8. Leah gives Zilpah her maid to Jacob, 9. She conceives and bears Gad, 10, 11, and also Asher, 12, 13. Reuben finds mandrakes, of which Rachel requests a part, 14. The bargain made between her and Leah, 15. Jacob in consequence lodges with Leah instead of Rachel, 16. She conceives, and bears Issachar, 17, 18, and Zebulun, 19, 20, and Dinah, 21. Rachel conceives, and bears Joseph, 22-24. Jacob requests permission from Laban to go to his own country, 25, 26. Laban entreats him to tarry, and offers to give him what wages he shall choose to name, 27, 28. Jacob details the importance of his services to Laban, 29, 30, and offers to continue those services for the speckled and spotted among the goats, and the brown among the sheep, 31-33. Laban consents, 34, and divides all the ring-streaked and spotted among the he-goats, the speckled and spotted among the she-goats, and the brown among the sheep, and puts them under the care of his sons, and sets three days' journey between himself and Jacob, 35, 36. Jacob's stratagem of the pill'd rods, to cause the cattle to bring forth the ring-streaked, speckled, and spotted, 37-39. In consequence of which he increased his flock greatly, getting all that was strong and healthy in the flock of Laban, 40-43.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 1. Give me children, or else I die.] This is a most reprehensible speech, and argues not only *envy* and *jealousy*, but also a total want of dependence on God. She had the greatest share of her husband's affection, and yet was not satisfied unless she could engross all the privileges which her sister enjoyed! How true are those sayings, *Envy is as rottenness of the bones!* and, *Jealousy is as cruel as the grave!*

Verse 2. Am I in God's stead] Am I greater than God, to give thee what he has refused?

Verse 3. She shall bear upon my knees] The handmaid was the sole property of the mistress, as has already been remarked in the case of Hagar; and therefore not only all her labour, but even the children borne by her, were the property of the mistress. These female slaves, therefore, bore children *vicariously* for their mistresses; and this appears to be the import of the term, *she shall bear upon my knees.*

That I may also have children by her.] *hmmm hnbaw veibbaneh mimmennah, and I shall be built up by her.* Hence **ˆb** *ben*, a son or child, from **hnb** *banah*, to build; because, as a house is formed of the stones, &c., that enter into its composition, so is a family by children.

Verse 6. Called she his name Dan.] Because she found God had *judged* for her, and *decided* she should have a son by her handmaid; hence she called his name **ˆd** *dan*, *judging*.

Verse 8. She called his name Naphtali] *yl tpn naphtali, my wrestling*, according to the common mode of interpretation; but it is more likely that the root **l tp** *pathal* signifies to *twist* or *entwine*. Hence Mr. Parkhurst translates the verse, “*By the twistings-agency or operation, of God, I am entwined with my sister; that is, my family is now entwined or interwoven with my sister’s family, and has a chance of producing the promised Seed.*” The *Septuagint*, *Aquila*, and the *Vulgate*, have nearly the same meaning. It is, however, difficult to fix the true meaning of the original.

Verse 11. She called his name Gad.] This has been variously translated. **dg** *gad*, may signify a *troop*, an *army*, a *soldier*, a *false god*, supposed to be the same as *Jupiter* or *Mars*; for as Laban appears to have been, if not an idolater, yet a dealer in a sort of judicial astrology, (see ^{<01319>}**Genesis 31:19**), Leah, in saying **dgb** *bagad*, which we translate *a troop cometh*, might mean, *By or with the assistance of Gad—a particular planet or star, Jupiter possibly, I have gotten this son; therefore she called him after the name of that planet or star from which she supposed the succour came.* See **Clarke’s note on** “^{<01319>}**Genesis 31:19**”. The *Septuagint* translate it **εϑ** *τυχη*, *with good fortune*; the *Vulgate*, *feliciter*, *happily*; but in all this diversity our own translation may appear as probable as any, if not the genuine one, **dg ab** *ba gad*, for the *keri*, or marginal reading, has it in *two* words, *a troop cometh*; whereas the *textual* reading has it only in one, **dgb** *bagad*, *with a troop*. In the Bible published by *Becke*, 1549, the word is translated as an exclamation, *Good luck!*

Verse 13. And Leah said, Happy am I] *yrvab beoshri, in my happiness*, therefore she called his name **rva** *asher*, that is, *blessedness* or *happiness*.

Verse 14. Reuben-found mandrakes] *pyadwd dudaim*. What these were is utterly unknown, and learned men have wasted much time and pains in endeavouring to guess out a probable meaning. Some translate the word *lilies*, others *jessamine*, others *citrons*, others *mushrooms*, others *figs*, and some think the word means *flowers*, or *fine flowers* in general. *Hasselquist*, the intimate friend and pupil of *Linne*, who travelled into the Holy Land to make discoveries in natural history, imagines that the plant commonly called *mandrake* is intended; speaking of Nazareth in Galilee he says: “What I found most remarkable at this village was a great number of *mandrakes* which grew in a vale below it. I had not the pleasure to see this plant in blossom, the *fruit now* (May 5th, O. S.) *hanging ripe to the stem*, which lay withered on the ground. From the season in which *this mandrake* blossoms and ripens fruit, one might form a conjecture that it was Rachel’s *dudaim*. These were brought her in the *wheat harvest*, which in Galilee is in *the month of May*, about this time, and the mandrake was now in fruit.” Both among the Greeks and orientals this plant was held in high repute, as being of a prolific virtue, and helping conception; and from it *philtres* were made, and this is favoured by the meaning of the original, *loves*, i.e., incentives to matrimonial connections: and it was probably on this account that Rachel desired them. The whole account however is very obscure.

Verse 15. Thou hast taken my husband] It appears probable that Rachel had found means to engross the whole of Jacob’s affection and company, and that she now agreed to let him visit the tent of Leah, on account of receiving some of the fruits or plants which Reuben had found.

Verse 16. I have hired thee] We may remark among the Jewish women an intense desire of having children; and it seems to have been produced, not from any peculiar affection for children, but through the hope of having a share in the blessing of Abraham, by bringing forth *Him* in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

Verse 18. God hath given me my hire] *yrkc sechari*. And she called his name *Issachar*, *rkcyy*, This word is compounded of *vy yesh*, IS, and *rkc sachar*, WAGES, from *rkc sachar*, to *content*, *satisfy*, *saturate*; hence a satisfaction or compensation for work done, &c.

Verse 20. Now will my husband dwell with me] *ynl bzy yizbeleni*; and she called his name *Zebulun*, *l bz* a *dwelling* or *cohabitation*, as she now

expected that Jacob would *dwell* with *her*, as he had before dwelt with *Rachel*.

Verse 21. And called her name Dinah.] *hnyd dinah, judgment.* As Rachel had called her son by Bilhah DAN, ^{<01306>}Genesis 30:6, so Leah calls her daughter DINAH, God having *judged* and determined for her, as well as for her sister in the preceding instance.

Verse 22. And God hearkened to her] After the severe reproof which Rachel had received from her husband, ^{<01312>}Genesis 30:2, it appears that she sought God by prayer, and that he heard her; so that her prayer and faith obtained what her impatience and unbelief had prevented.

Verse 24. She called his name Joseph] *ãswy Yoseph, adding, or he who adds;* thereby prophetically declaring that God would *add unto her another son*, which was accomplished in the birth of *Benjamin*, ^{<01318>}Genesis 35:18.

Verse 25. Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away] Having now, as is generally conjectured, fulfilled the *fourteen* years which he had engaged to serve for Leah and Rachel. See ^{<01326>}Genesis 30:26, and conclusion of Clarke's notes ^{<01355>}“Genesis 31:55”.

Verse 27. I have learned by experience] *ytvj n nichashti, from vj n nachash, to view attentively, to observe, to pry into.* I have diligently considered the whole of thy conduct, and marked the increase of my property, and find that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. For the meaning of the word *vj n nachash*, See Clarke's note on ^{<01301>}“Genesis 3:1”, &c.

Verse 30. For it was little which thou had before I came] Jacob takes advantage of the concession made by his father-in-law, and asserts that it was for his sake that the Lord had blessed him: *Since my coming, yl gr l leragli, according to my footsteps*-every step I took in thy service, God prospered to the multiplication of thy flocks and property.

When shall I provide for mine own house] Jacob had already laid his plan; and, from what is afterwards mentioned, we find him using all his *skill* and *experience* to provide for his family by a rapid increase of his flocks.

Verse 32. I will pass through all thy flock] $\hat{a}x$ *tson*, implying, as we have before seen, all *smaller cattle*, such as *sheep, goats, &c.*

All the speckled and spotted cattle] hc *seh*, which we translate *cattle*, signifies the *young* either of *sheep* or *goats*, what we call a *lamb* or a *kid*. *Speckled*, dqn *nakod*, signifies interspersed with *variously coloured spots*.

Spotted] awl c *talu*, spotted with large spot either of the same or different colours, from al c *tala*, to *patch*, to *make party-coloured* or *patch-work*; see $\langle 01316 \rangle$ **Ezekiel 16:16**. I have never seen such sheep as are here described but in the islands of Zetland. There I have seen the most beautiful *brown*, or fine *chocolate* colour among the sheep; and several of the *ring-streaked*, *spotted*, *speckled*, and *piebald* among the same; and some of the latter description I have brought over, and can exhibit a specimen of Jacob's flock brought from the North Seas, feeding in Middlesex.

And all the brown] μwj *chum*. I should rather suppose this to signify a lively *brown*, as the root signifies to be *warm* or *hot*.

Verse 35. The he-goats that were ring-streaked] μydq [h $\mu ycyth$ *hatteyashim haakuddim*, the *he-goats* that had *rings* of *black* or *other coloured hair* around their *feet* or *legs*.

It is extremely difficult to find out, from $\langle 01302 \rangle$ **Genesis 30:32** and $\langle 01305 \rangle$ **Genesis 30:35**, in *what* the bargain of Jacob with his father-in-law properly consisted. It appears from $\langle 01302 \rangle$ **Genesis 30:32**, that Jacob was to have for his wages all the *speckled*, *spotted*, and *brown* among the sheep and the goats; and of course that all those which were not party-coloured should be considered as the property of Laban. But in $\langle 01305 \rangle$ **Genesis 30:35** it appears that Laban separated all the *party-coloured* cattle, delivered them into the hands of *his own sons*; which seems as if he had taken these for his own property, and left the others to Jacob. It has been conjectured that Laban, for the greater security, when he had separated the party-coloured, which by the agreement belonged to Jacob, see $\langle 01302 \rangle$ **Genesis 30:32**, put them under the care of his own sons, while Jacob fed the flock of Laban, $\langle 01306 \rangle$ **Genesis 30:36**, three days' journey being between the two flocks. If therefore the flocks under the care of Laban's sons brought forth young that were all of *one colour*, these were put to the flocks of Laban under the care of Jacob; and if any of the flocks under Jacob's care brought forth *party-coloured* young, they were put to the flocks belonging to Jacob

under the care of Laban's sons. This conjecture is not satisfactory, and the true meaning appears to be this: Jacob had agreed to take all the party-coloured for his wages. As he was now only beginning to act upon this agreement, consequently none of the cattle as yet belonged to him; therefore Laban separated from the flock, ^{<0135>}Genesis 30:35, all such cattle as Jacob might afterwards claim in consequence of his bargain, (for as yet he had no right;) therefore Jacob commenced his service to Laban with a flock that did not contain a single animal of the description of those to which he might be entitled; and the others were sent away under the care of Laban's sons, three days' journey from those of which Jacob had the care. The bargain, therefore, seemed to be wholly in favour of Laban; and to turn it to his own advantage, Jacob made use of the stratagems afterwards mentioned. This mode of interpretation removes all the apparent contradiction between ^{<0132>}Genesis 30:32 and ^{<0135>}Genesis 30:35, with which commentators in general have been grievously perplexed. From the whole account we learn that Laban acted with great *prudence* and *caution*, and Jacob with great *judgment*. Jacob had already served fourteen years; and had got no patrimony whatever, though he had now a family of *twelve* children, *eleven sons* and *one daughter*, besides his two wives, and their two maids, and several servants. See ^{<0133>}Genesis 30:43. It was high time that he should get some property for these; and as his father-in-law was excessively parsimonious, and would scarcely allow him to live, he was in some sort obliged to make use of stratagem to get an equivalent for his services. But did he not push this so far as to ruin his father-in-law's flocks, leaving him nothing but the refuse? See ^{<0134>}Genesis 30:42.

Verse 37. Rods of green poplar] j l hnbI *libneh lach*. The *libneh* is generally understood to mean the *white poplar*; and the word *lach*, which is here joined to it, does not so much imply *greenness* of *colour* as being *fresh*, in opposition to *witheredness*. Had they not been *fresh*-just cut off, he could not have pilled the bark from them.

And of the hazel] zwI *luz*, the *nut* or *filbert tree*, translated by others the *almond tree*; which of the two is here intended is not known.

And chestnut tree] ^wmr [*armon*, the *plane tree*, from μr [*aram*, he was *naked*. The plane tree is properly called by this name, because of the outer bark *naturally peeling off*, and leaving the tree *bare* in various places, having *smooth* places where it has fallen off. A portion of this bark the *plane tree* loses every year. The Septuagint translate it in the same way,

πλατανος, and its name is supposed to be derived from πλατυς, *broad*, on account of its *broad spreading branches*, for which the *plane tree* is remarkable. So we find the Grecian army in Homer, Il. ii., ver. 307, sacrificing *καλη υπο πλατανιστω*, under a beautiful plane tree.

VIRGIL, *Geor.* iv. 146, mentions,

———*ministrantem platanum potantibus umbras.*
The plane tree yielding the convivial shade.

And PETRONIUS ARBITER in *Satyr.*:—

Nobilis æstivas platanus diffuderat umbras.
“The noble plane had spread its summer shade.”

See more in *Parkhurst*. Such a tree would be peculiarly acceptable in *hot* countries, because of its *shade*.

Pilled white streaks in them] Probably cutting the bark through in a *spiral line*, and taking it off in a certain breadth all round the rods, so that the rods would appear party-coloured, the *white* of the wood showing itself where the bark was stripped off.

Verse 38. And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks] It has long been an opinion that whatever makes a strong impression on the mind of a female in the time of conception and gestation, will have a corresponding influence on the mind or body of the fetus. This opinion is not yet rationally accounted for. It is not necessary to look for a miracle here; for though the fact has not been accounted for, it is nevertheless sufficiently plain that the effect does not exceed the powers of nature; and I have no doubt that the same modes of trial used by Jacob would produce the same results in similar cases. The finger of God works in nature myriads of ways unknown to us; we see effects without end, of which no rational cause can be assigned; it has pleased God to work thus and thus, and this is all that we know; and God mercifully hides the operations of his power from man in a variety of eases, that he may hide pride from him. Even with the little we know, how apt are we to be puffed up! We must adore God in a reverential silence on such subjects as these, confess our ignorance, and acknowledge that *nature* is the *instrument* by which he chooses to work, and that he performs all things according to the counsel of his own will, which is always infinitely *wise* and infinitely *good*.

Verse 40. Jacob did separate the lambs, &c.] When Jacob undertook the care of Laban's flock, according to the agreement already mentioned, there were no party-coloured sheep or goats among them, therefore the *ring-streaked*, &c., mentioned in this verse, must have been born *since* the agreement was made; and Jacob makes use of them precisely as he used the *pilled rods*, that, having these *before their eyes* during conception, the impression might be made upon their imagination which would lead to the results already mentioned.

Verse 41. Whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive] The word **תַּרְוָקִים** *mekushsharoth*, which we translate *stronger*, is understood by several of the ancient interpreters as signifying the *early*, *first-born*, or *early spring* cattle; and hence it is opposed to **מַיִפְסִים** [*atuphim*, which we translate *feeble*, and which *Symmachus* properly renders **δευτερογονοι**, cattle of the *second birth*, as he renders the word *mekushsharoth* by **πρωτογονοι**, cattle of the *first* or *earliest birth*. Now this does not apply merely to *two births* from the same female in one year, which actually did take place according to the rabbins, the first in *Nisan*, about our *March*, and the second in *Tisri*, about our *September*; but it more particularly refers to *early* and *late lambs*, &c., in the *same year*; as those that are born just at the termination of winter, and in the very commencement of spring, are every way more valuable than those which were born later in the same spring. Jacob therefore took good heed not to try his experiments with those *late produced cattle*, because he knew these would produce a degenerate breed, but with the early cattle, which were *strong* and *vigorous*, by which his breed must be improved. Hence the whole flock of Laban must be necessarily injured, while Jacob's flock was preserved in a state of increasing perfection. All this proves a consummate knowledge in Jacob of his pastoral office. If extensive breeders in this country were to attend to the same plan, our breed would be improved in a most eminent degree. What a fund of instruction upon almost every subject is to be found in the sacred writings!

Verse 43. And the man increased exceedingly] No wonder, when he used such means as the above. And had *maid-servants*, and *men-servants*-he was obliged to increase *these* as his cattle multiplied. And *camels* and *asses*, to transport his tents, baggage, and family from place to place, being obliged often to *remove* for the benefit of pasturage.

WE have already seen many difficulties in this chapter, and strange incidents, for which we are not able to account. 1. The vicarious bearing of children; 2. The nature and properties of the mandrakes; 3. The bargain of Jacob and Laban; and 4. The business of the party-coloured flocks produced by means of the females looking at the variegated rods. These, especially the three last, may be ranked among the most difficult things in this book. Without encumbering the page with quotations and opinions, I have given the best sense I could; and think it much better and safer to confess *ignorance*, than, under the semblance of *wisdom* and *learning*, to multiply conjectures. Jacob certainly manifested much address in the whole of his conduct with Laban; but though nothing can excuse *overreaching* or *insincerity*, yet no doubt Jacob supposed himself justified in taking these advantages of a man who had greatly injured and defrauded him. Had Jacob got Rachel at first, for whom he had honestly and faithfully served seven years, there is no evidence whatever that he would have taken a second wife. Laban, by having imposed his eldest daughter upon him, and by obliging him to serve seven years for her who never was an object of his affection, acted a part wholly foreign to every dictate of justice and honesty; (for though it was a custom in that country not to give the younger daughter in marriage before the elder, yet, as he did not mention this to Jacob, it cannot plead in his excuse;) therefore, speaking after the manner of men, he had reason to expect that Jacob should repay him in his own coin, and right himself by whatever means came into his power; and many think that he did not transgress the bounds of justice, even in the business of the party-coloured cattle.

The talent possessed by Jacob was a most dangerous one; he was what may be truly called a *scheming* man; his wits were still at work, and as he *devised* so he executed, being as fruitful in *expedients* as he was in *plans*. This was the principal and the most prominent characteristic of his life; and whatever was excessive here was owing to his mother's tuition; she was evidently a woman who paid little respect to what is called *moral principle*, and sanctified *all kinds of means* by the goodness of the *end* at which she aimed; which in social, civil, and religious life, is the most dangerous principle on which a person can possibly act. In this art she appears to have instructed her son; and, unfortunately for himself, he was in some instances but too apt a proficient. Early habits are not easily rooted out, especially those of a bad kind. Next to the influence and grace of the Spirit of God is a good and religious education. Parents should teach their

children to despise and abhor low cunning, to fear a lie, and tremble at an oath; and in order to be successful, they should illustrate their *precepts* by their own regular and conscientious *example*. How far God approved of the whole of Jacob's conduct I shall not inquire; it is certain that he attributes his success to Divine interposition, and God himself censures Laban's conduct towards him; see ^{<013107>}**Genesis 31:7-12**. But still he appears to have proceeded *farther* than this interposition authorized him to go, especially in the means he used to improve his own breed, which necessarily led to the deterioration of Laban's cattle; for, after the transactions referred to above, these cattle could be of but little worth. The whole account, with all its *lights* and *shades*, I consider as another proof of the impartiality of the Divine historian, and a strong evidence of the authenticity of the Pentateuch. Neither the spirit of *deceit*, nor the *partiality of friendship*, could ever pen such an account.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 31

Laban and his sons envy Jacob, 1, 2; on which he is commanded by the Lord to return to his own country, 3. Having called his wives together, he lays before them a detailed statement of his situation in reference to their father, 4-5; the services he had rendered him, 6; the various attempts made by Laban to defraud him of his hire, 7; how, by God's providence, his evil designs had been counteracted, 8-12; and then informs them that he is now called to return to his own country, 13. To the proposal of an immediate departure, Leah and Rachel agree; and strengthen the propriety of the measure by additional reasons, 14-16; on which Jacob collects all his family, his flocks and his goods, and prepares for his departure, 17, 18. Laban having gone to shear his sheep, Rachel secretes his images, 19. Jacob and his family, unknown to Laban, take their departure, 20, 21. On the third day Laban is informed of their flight, 22; and pursues them to Mount Gilead, 23. God appears to Laban in a dream, and warns him not to molest Jacob, 24. He comes up with Jacob at Mount Gilead, 25; reproaches him with his clandestine departure, 26-29; and charges him with having stolen his gods, 30. Jacob vindicates himself, and protests his innocence in the matter of the theft, 31, 32. Laban makes a general search for his images in Jacob's, Leah's, Bilhah's, and Zilpah's tents; and not finding them, proceeds to examine Rachel's, 33. Rachel, having hidden them among the camel's furniture, sat upon them, 34; and making a delicate excuse for not rising up, Laban desists from farther search, 35. Jacob, ignorant of Rachel's theft, reproaches Laban for his suspicions, 36, 37; enumerates his long and faithful services, his fatigues, and Laban's injustice, 38-41; and shows that it was owing to God's goodness alone that he had any property, 42. Laban is moderated, and proposes a covenant, 43, 44. Jacob sets up a stone, and the rest bring stones and make a heap, which Laban calleth Jegar-Sahadutha, and Jacob Galeed, 45-47. They make a covenant, and confirm it by an oath, 48-53. Jacob offers a sacrifice; they eat together; and Laban and his companions, having lodged in the mount all night, take a friendly leave of Jacob and his family next morning, and depart, 54, 55.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 1. **And he heard the words of Laban's sons]** The multiplication of Jacob's cattle, and the decrease and degeneracy of those of Laban, were sufficient to arouse the jealousy of Laban's sons. This, with Laban's unfair treatment, and the direction he received from God, determined him to return to his own country.

Hath he gotten all this glory.] All these riches, this wealth, or property. The original word **dbk** signifies both to be *rich* and to be *heavy*; and perhaps for this simple reason, that riches ever bring with them *heavy weight* and *burden of cares and anxieties*.

Verse 3. And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return-and I will be with thee.] I will take the same care of thee in thy *return*, as I took of thee on thy way to this place. The Targum reads, *My WORD shall be for thy help*, see ^{<0150>}**Genesis 15:1**. A promise of this kind was essentially necessary for the encouragement of Jacob, especially at this time; and no doubt it was a powerful means of support to him through the whole journey; and it was particularly so when he heard that his brother was coming to meet him, with four hundred men in his retinue, ^{<0336>}**Genesis 32:6**. At that time he went and pleaded the very words of this promise with God, ^{<0339>}**Genesis 32:9**.

Verse 4. Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah] He had probably been at some considerable distance with the flocks; and for the greater secrecy, he rather sends for them to the field, to consult them on this most momentous affair, than visit them in their tents, where probably some of the family of Laban might overhear their conversation, though Laban himself was at the time three days' journey off. It is possible that Jacob shored his sheep at the same time; and that he sent for his wives and household furniture to erect tents on the spot, that they might partake of the festivities usual on such occasions. Thus they might all depart without being suspected.

Verse 7. Changed my wages ten times] There is a strange diversity among the ancient versions, and ancient and modern interpreters, on the meaning of these words. The Hebrew is **μῦνμ τρν** [*asereth monim*, which Aquila translates **δεκα αριθμους** *ten numbers*; Symmachus, **δεκακις αριθμω**, *ten times in number*; the Septuagint **δεκα αμνων**, *ten lambs*, with which Origen appears to agree. St. Augustine thinks that by *ten lambs* five years' wages is meant: that Laban had withheld from him all the party-coloured lambs which had been brought forth for *five years*, and because the ewes brought forth lambs *twice* in the year, *bis gravida pecudes*, therefore the number *ten* is used, Jacob having been defrauded of his part of the produce of *ten* births. It is supposed that the Septuagint use *lambs* for *years*, as Virgil does *aristas*.

*En unquam patrios longo post tempore fines,
Pauperis et tuguri congestum cespitem culmen,
Post aliquot mea regna videns mirabor aristas?*
Virg. Ec. i., ver. 68.

Thus inadequately translated by DRYDEN:

*O must the wretched exiles ever mourn;
Nor, after length of rolling years, return?
Are we condemn'd by Fate's unjust decree,
No more our harvests and our homes to see?
Or shall we mount again the rural throng,
And rule the country, kingdoms once our own?*

Here *aristas*, which signifies *ears of corn*, is put for *harvest*, harvest for *autumn*, and autumn for *years*. After all, it is most natural to suppose that Jacob uses the word *ten times* for an indefinite number, which we might safely translate *frequently*; and that it means an indefinite number in other parts of the sacred writings, is evident from ^{<13326>}Leviticus 26:26: TEN women shall bake your bread in one oven. ^{<210719>}Ecclesiastes 7:19: Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than TEN mighty men the city. ^{<41402>}Numbers 14:22: Because all these men have tempted me now these TEN times. ^{<81908>}Job 19:3: These TEN times have ye reproached me. ^{<38023>}Zechariah 8:23: In those days-TEN men shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew. ^{<61010>}Revelation 2:10: Ye shall have tribulation TEN days.

Verse 11. The angel of God spake unto me in a dream] It is strange that we had not heard of this dream *before*; and yet it seems to have taken place before the cattle brought forth, immediately after the bargain between him and Laban. If we follow the *Samaritan* the difficulty is at once removed, for it gives us the whole of this dream after ^{<10306>}Genesis 30:36 of the preceding chapter,

Verse 12. Grisled] *pydrb beruddim*; *drb barad* signifies *hail*, and the meaning must be, they had white spots on them similar to *hail*. Our word *grisled* comes from the old French, *greslé*, *hail*, now written *grêle*; hence *greslé*, *grisled*, spotted with white upon a dark ground.

Verse 15. Are we not counted of him strangers?] Rachel and Leah, who well knew the disposition of their father, gave him here his true character. He has treated us as *strangers*-as *slaves* whom he had a right to dispose of

as he pleased; in consequence, he hath *sold us*-disposed of us on the mere principle of gaining by the sale.

And hath quite devoured also our money.] Has applied to his own use the profits of the sale, and has allowed us neither portion nor inheritance.

Verse 19. Laban went to shear his sheep] Laban *had gone*; and this was a favourable time not only to take his images, but to return to Canaan without being perceived.

Rachel had stolen the images] **μyprt** *teraphim*. What the teraphim were is utterly unknown. In ⁽⁰¹³¹³⁾**Genesis 31:30** they are termed **yhl a elohai**, *gods*; and to some it appears very likely that they were a sort of images devoted to superstitious purposes, not considered as gods, but as representatives of certain Divine attributes, Dr. Shuckford supposes them to be a sort of *tiles*, on which the names or figures of their ancestors were engraven. *Theodoret*, in his 89th question, calls them *idols*; and says that Rachel, who was a *type* of the true Church, stole them from her father that he might be delivered from idolatry. *R. S. Jarchi* gives nearly the same reason.

The *Targum* of Jonathan ben Uzziel gives a strange turn to the whole passage. “And Rachel stole the images of her father: for they had murdered a man, who was a first-born *son*; and having cut off his head, they embalmed it with salt and spices, and they wrote divinations upon a plate of gold, and put it under his tongue; and placed it against the wall, and it conversed with them, and Laban worshipped it. And Jacob stole the science of Laban the Syrian, that it might not discover his departure.”

If the word be derived from **apr** *rapha*, to *heal* or *restore*, then the teraphim may be considered as a sort of *talismans*, kept for the purpose of averting and curing diseases; and probably were kept by Laban for the same purpose that the Romans kept their *lares and penates*. It is however possible that **μyprt** *teraphim* is the same as **μyprc** *seraphim*, the **t** *tau* and **c** *sin* being changed, which is very frequent in the *Syrian* or *Chaldee* language; and we know that Laban was an *Aramean* or *Syrian*. FIRE has been considered from the earliest ages as a symbol of the Deity; and as the word *seraphim* comes from **ārc** *saraph*, to *burn*, it has been conjectured that the teraphim of Laban were luminous forms, prepared of burnished brass, &c., which he might imagine a proper medium of communication

between God and his worshippers. Mr. *Parkhurst* has observed that the *teraphim* were in use among believers and unbelievers. Among the *former*, see this chapter; for he denies that Laban was an idolater. See also ^{<07176>}**Judges 17:5;18:14,18,20;** ^{<09193>}**1 Samuel 19:13,16.** Among the latter, see ^{<12234>}**2 Kings 23:24;** ^{<3521>}**Ezekiel 21:21;** ^{<38102>}**Zechariah 10:2.** Compare ^{<09152>}**1 Samuel 15:23,** and ^{<28104>}**Hosea 3:4.** These are all the places in which the original word is found.

The Persian translator seems to have considered these *teraphim* as *tables* or *instruments* that served for purposes of judicial astrology, and hence translates the word [Persian] *asterlabha, astrolabes*. As the astrolabe was an instrument with which they took the altitude of the pole-star, the sun, &c., it might, in the notion of the Persian translator, imply tables, &c., by which the culminating of particular stars might be determined, and the whole serve for purposes of *judicial astrology*. Now as many who have professed themselves to be believers in Christianity, have nevertheless addicted themselves to judicial astrology, we might suppose such a thing in this case, and still consider Laban as no idolater. If the Persian translator has not hit on the true meaning, he has formed the most likely conjecture.

Verse 21. Passed over the river] The *Euphrates*, as the Targum properly notices. But how could he pass such a river with his flocks, &c.? This difficulty does not seem to have struck critics in general. The rabbins felt it, and assert that God wrought a miracle for Jacob on this occasion, and that he passed over dry shod. As we know not in what other way he could pass, it is prudent to refer it to the power of God, which accompanied him through the whole of his journey. There might, however, have been *fords* well known to both Jacob and Laban, by which they might readily pass.

The mount Gilead.] What the ancient name of this mountain was, we know not; but it is likely that it had not the name of *Gilead* till after the transaction mentioned ^{<01347>}**Genesis 31:47.** The mountains of Gilead were eastward of the country possessed by the tribes of Reuben and Gad; and extended from Mount Hermon to the mountains of Moab.-*Calmet*. It is joined to Mount Libanus, and includes the mountainous region called in the New Testament Trachonitis.-*Dodd*.

Verse 24. And God came to Laban] God's caution to Laban was of high importance to Jacob-*Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad;* or rather, as is the literal meaning of the Hebrew, [r d] bwcm

mittob ad ra, from *good* to *evil*; for had he neither spoken *good nor evil* to Jacob, they could have had no intercourse at all. The original is, therefore, peculiarly appropriate; for when people meet, the language at first is the language of *friendship*; the command therefore implies, “Do not begin with *Peace be unto thee*, and then proceed to *injurious language and acts of violence*.” If this Divine direction were attended to, how many of those *affairs of honour*, so termed, which commence with, “I hope you are well”-“I am infinitely glad to see you”-“I am happy to see you well,” &c., and end with *small swords and pistol bullets*, would be prevented! Where God and true religion act, all is fair, kind, honest, and upright; but where *these* are not consulted, all is hollow, deceitful, or malicious. Beware of *unmeaning compliments*, and particularly of saying what thy heart feels not. God hates a hypocrite and a deceiver.

Verse 27. I might have sent thee away with mirth] *hj mcb*, *besimchah*, with rejoicing, making a *feast* or *entertainment* on the occasion; and with songs, *pyrvb* *beshirim*, odes either in the praise of God, or to commemorate the splendid acts of their ancestors; with *tabret*, *āt̄b* *bethoph*, the *tympanum* used in the east to the present day, and there called [Arabic] *diff*, a thin broad wooden hoop, with parchment extended over one end of it, to which are attached small pieces of brass, tin, &c., which make a jingling noise; it is held in the air with one hand, and beat on with the fingers of the other. It appears to have been precisely the same with that which is called the *tambourine* and which is frequently to be met with in our streets. And with *harp*, *rwnkb* *bekinnor*, a sort of stringed instrument, a lute or harp; probably the same as the Greek *κινύρα kinura*, a harp; the name being evidently borrowed from the Hebrew. These four things seem to include all that was used in those primitive times, as expressive of gladness and satisfaction on the most joyous occasions.

Verse 29. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt] Literally, *My hand is unto God to do you evil*, i.e., I have vowed to God that I will punish thee for thy flight, and the stealing of my teraphim; but the *God of YOUR father* has prevented me from doing it. It is a singular instance that the *plural* pronoun, when addressing an *individual*, should be twice used in this place-the God of *your* father, *μkyba* *abichem*, for *Ëyba* *abicha*, *thy* father.

Verse 32. Let him not live] It appears that anciently *theft* was punished by death; and we know that the patriarchs had the power of life and death in their hands. But previously to the law, the punishment of death was scarcely ever inflicted but for murder. The rabbins consider that this was an *imprecation* used by Jacob, as if he had said, Let God take away the life of the person who has stolen them! And that this was answered shortly after in the death of Rachel, ^{<013516>}**Genesis 35:16-19.**

Verse 35. The custom of women is upon me.] This she knew must be a satisfactory reason to her father; for if the teraphim were used to any religious purpose, and they seem to have been used in this way, as Laban calls them his *gods*, he therefore could not suspect that a woman in such a situation, whose touch was considered as defiling, would have sat upon articles that were either the objects of his adoration, or used for any sacred purpose. The stratagem succeeded to her wish, and Laban departed without suspicion. It seems very natural to suppose that Rachel did believe that by the use of these teraphim Laban could find out their flight, and the direction they took, and therefore she stole them; and having stolen them she was afraid to acknowledge the theft, and probably might think that they might be of some use to herself. Therefore, for these reasons, she brought them away.

Verse 36. And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban] The expostulation of Jacob with Laban, and their consequent agreement, are told in this place with great spirit and dignity. Jacob was conscious that though he had made use of cunning to increase his flocks, yet Laban had been on the whole a great gainer by his services. He had served him at least twenty years, *fourteen* for Rachel and Leah, and *six* for the cattle; and some suppose he had served him twenty years besides the above, which is not unlikely: see the *remarks* at the conclusion of this chapter. {See Clarke at ^{<013155>}**Genesis 31:55**} *Forty* or even *twenty* years of a man's life, devoted to incessant labour and constantly exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, (see ^{<013140>}**Genesis 31:40**.) deserve more than an ordinary reward. Laban's constitutional sin was *covetousness*, and it was an *easily besetting sin*; for it appears to have governed all his conduct, and to have rendered him regardless of the interests of his children, so long as he could secure his own. That he had frequently falsified his agreement with Jacob, though the particulars are not specified, we have already had reason to conjecture from ^{<013107>}**Genesis 31:7**, and with this Jacob charges his father-in-law, in the most positive manner, ^{<013141>}**Genesis 31:41**. Perhaps

some previous unfair transactions of this kind were the cause why Jacob was led to adopt the expedient of *outwitting* Laban in the case of the *spotted, spangled, ring-streaked, and grised cattle*. This if it did take place, though it cannot justify the measure, is some palliation of it; and almost the whole of Jacob's conduct, as far as relates to Laban, can be better excused than his injuring Laban's breed, by leaving him none but the weak, unhealthy, and degenerated cattle.

Verse 39. That which was torn-of my hand didst thou require it] This more particularly marks the covetous and rigorous disposition of Laban; for the law of God required that what had been torn by beasts the shepherd should not be obliged to make good, ^{<02210>}**Exodus 22:10,13**. And it is very likely that this law was in force from the earliest times.

Verse 40. In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night] The being exposed to the *heat* by *day*, and *frost* by *night*, is made part of the heaviest punishment of Prometheus by *Æschylus*.

Σταθευτος δ ηλιου φοιβη φλογι,
Χροιασ αμευψεισ. ασμενω δε σοι
Ἡ ποικιλεμων νυξ αποκρυπει φαιος.
Παχνην ἠ εωαν ηλιος σκεδα παλιν.
Æschyl. Prom. Vinc., v. 22.

*Opposed to the sun's most fervid beam,
The hue of beauty changed; till parch'd by heat
The night with spangled stole shall hide its light
From thee rejoicing, but again the sun
Chases the hoar frost from thy harass'd form.
J. B. B. C.*

Verse 41. Twenty years] See the remarks at the end. See Clarke at ^{<01315>}**Genesis 31:55**".

Verse 42. The fear of Isaac] It is strange that Jacob should say, the GOD of Abraham and the FEAR of Isaac, when both words are meant of the same *Being*. The reason perhaps was this; Abraham was long since dead, and God was *his unalienable* portion for ever. Isaac was yet alive in a state of *probation*, living in the fear of God, not exempt from the danger of *falling*; therefore God is said to be his fear—not only the object of his religious worship in a general way, but that holy and just God before whom

he was still working out his salvation with fear and trembling—fear lest he should fall, and trembling lest he should offend.

Verse 46. Made a heap] *l g gal*, translated *heap*, signifies properly a *round* heap; and this heap was probably made for the double purpose of an *altar* and a *table*, and Jacob's stone or pillar was set on it for the purpose of a *memorial*.

Verse 47. Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha] *atwdhc rgy yegar sahadutha*, the *heap* or *round heap of witness*; but Jacob called it *d[l g galed*, which signifies the same thing. The first is pure *Chaldee*, the second pure *Hebrew*. *rga agar* signifies to collect, hence *rgy yegar* and *rgwa ogar*, a *collection* or *heap* made up of gathered stones; and hence also *arwga egora*, an *altar*, used frequently by the *Chaldee* paraphrast. See <1123> **1 Kings 12:33**; <1063> **Judges 6:31**; <122103> **2 Kings 21:3**; <241701> **Jeremiah 17:1**. See *Castel's Lexicon*. From this example we may infer that the *Chaldee* language was nearly coequal with the *Hebrew*. A gloss made by St. Jerome, and which was probably only entered by him in his margin as a note, has crept into the text of the *Vulgate*. It is found in every copy of this version, and is as follows: *Uterque juxta proprietatem linguæ suæ*, Each according to the idiom of his own tongue.

Verses 48. - 49. I think these two verses are badly divided, and should be read thus:

Verse 48. *And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day.*

Verse 49. *Therefore was the name of it called Galeed and Mizpah; for he said, The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.*

Mizpah] *hp[m mitspah* signifies a *watch-tower*; and Laban supposes that in consequence of the consecration of the place, and the covenant now solemnly made and ratified, that God would take possession of this heap, and stand on it as on a watch-tower, to prevent either of them from trenching on the conditions of their covenant.

Verse 50. No man is with us] Though all were present at the sacrifice offered, yet it appears that in making the contract Jacob and Laban

withdrew, and transacted the business in private, calling on God to witness it.

Jacob had already four wives; but Laban feared that he might take others, whose children would naturally come in for a share of the inheritance to the prejudice of his daughters and grandchildren. Though the Koran allows a man to have *four wives* if he can maintain them, yet we learn that in many cases where a man takes a wife, the parents or relatives of the woman stipulate that the man is not to take another during the lifetime of that one whom he now espouses; and notwithstanding the permission of the Koran, he is obliged to fulfil this agreement.

Verse 51. And Laban said to Jacob—**behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee]** But this pillar, not *cast* but *set up*, was certainly *set up by Jacob*; for in ^{<01345>}**Genesis 31:45** we read, *And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar*: it is therefore for the honour of one Hebrew and one Samaritan MS. that they have preserved the true reading in ^{<01315>}**Genesis 31:51**, **tyry** *yaritha*, *THOU hast set up.*—*Kennicott*. Instead of either of the above readings the Samaritan text has [Samaritan] *yarata*, *The pillar which thou SEEST betwixt me and thee.*

Verse 53. **The God of their father]** As Laban certainly speaks of the *true God* here, with what propriety can he say that this God was the God of *Terah*, the father of Abraham and Nahor? It is certain that Terah was an idolater; of this we have the most positive proof, ^{<01342>}**Joshua 24:2**. Because the clause is not in the Septuagint, and is besides wanting in some MSS., Dr. Kennicott considers it an interpolation. But there is no need of having recourse to this expedient if we adopt the reading **μkyba** *abichem*, *YOUR father*, for **μhyba** *abihem*, *THEIR father*, which is supported by several of Kennicott's and Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS., and is precisely the same form made use of by Laban, ^{<01312>}**Genesis 31:29**, when addressing Jacob, and appears to me to be used here in the same way; for he there most manifestly uses the *plural pronoun*, when speaking only to Jacob himself. It is therefore to be considered as a *form of speech* peculiar to Laban; at least we have *two* instances of his use of it in this chapter.

Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac.] See Clarke on ^{<01342>}**Genesis 31:42**".

Verse 54. Offered sacrifice upon the mount] It is very likely that Laban joined in this solemn religious rite, and that, having offered the blood and fat to God, they feasted upon the sacrifice.

Verse 55. Kissed his sons and his daughters] That is, his *grandchildren*, Jacob's *eleven* sons with Dinah their sister, and their mothers *Leah* and *Rachel*. All these he calls his *children*, ^{<013143>}**Genesis 31:43.** And *blessed them*-prayed heartily for their prosperity, though we find from ^{<013129>}**Genesis 31:29** that he came having bound himself by a vow to God to do them some *injury*. Thus God turned his intended curse into a blessing.

THE most important topics in this chapter have already been considered in the notes, and to those the reader is referred. Jacob's character we have already seen, and hitherto have met in it little to admire; but we shall soon find a blessed change both in his mind and in his conduct. Laban's character appears in almost every instance to disadvantage; he does not seem to be what we commonly term a *wicked* man, but he was certainly both *weak* and *covetous*; and covetousness extinguished in him, as it does in all its votaries, the principles of righteousness and benevolence, and the very *charities of human life*. Provided he could get an increase of property, he regarded not who was wronged or who suffered. In this case he hid himself even from his own bowels, and cared not that his own children should lack even the necessaries of life, provided he could increase his own store! How watchful should we be against this destructive, *unnatural*, and degrading vice! It is impossible for a man who *loves money* to love either God or man; and consequently he must be in the broad way that leads to destruction.

For the difficulties in the chronology of Jacob's sojourning in Padan-aram, I beg leave to refer to the following remarks.

Remarks upon ^{<013138>}**Genesis 31:38**, &c., relative to the time spent by Jacob in the service of his father-in-law Laban, in Mesopotamia; from Dr. Kennicott.

“If every reading which introduces but a single difficulty demands our attention, much greater must that demand be when several difficulties are caused by any one mistake, or any one mistranslation. Of this nature is the passage before us, which therefore shall be here considered more fully, especially as I have not already submitted to the learned any remarks upon this subject. Jacob's age at the time of his going to Laban, has (till very

lately) been fixed, perhaps universally, at *seventy-seven* years. But I think it has been shown by the learned Mr. *Skinner*, in an excellent dissertation, (4to. 1765,) that the number *seventy-seven* cannot here be right.

“Jacob was *one hundred and thirty* when he went down (with *sixty-six* persons) into Egypt. Joseph had then been governor *ten* years; and when made governor was *thirty*; therefore Jacob could not be more than *ninety* at the birth of Joseph. Now, upon supposition that Jacob was *seventy-seven* at going to Laban, and that he had no son till he was *eighty-five*, and that he, with *eleven* sons, left Laban at *ninety-seven*, there will follow these amongst other strange consequences which are enumerated by Mr. *Skinner* page 11, &c.:

1. Though Isaac and Esau married at *forty*, Jacob goes at *seventy-seven* to look for a wife, and agrees to marry her *seven* years after.
2. Issachar is born after the affair of the mandrakes, which Reuben finds and brings home when he (Reuben) was about *four* years old; that is, if Issachar was born before Joseph, agreeably to ~~<013018>~~ **Genesis 30:18,25**.
3. Judah begets Er at *thirteen*; for in the first of the following tables Judah is born in Jacob's year *eighty-eight*, and Er in *one hundred and two*.
4. Er marries at *nine*, and is destroyed for profligacy. Er, born *one hundred and two*, marries in *one hundred and eleven*. See also ~~<01307>~~ **Genesis 38:7**.
5. Onan marries at *eight*; for Onan, born in *one hundred and three*, marries in *one hundred and eleven*.
6. Shelah, being grown at *ten*, ought to be married; for Shelah, born in *one hundred and four*, is marriageable, but not married to Tamar in *one hundred and fourteen*. See ~~<013814>~~ **Genesis 38:14**.
7. Pharez kept from marrying while young, yet has a son at *thirteen*; for Pharez, born in *one hundred and fifteen*, had two sons at going to Egypt in *one hundred and thirty*.
8. Esau goes to Ishmael and marries his daughter, after Jacob went to Laban at *seventy-seven*; though Ishmael died when Jacob was *sixty-three*.
9. If Jacob had no son till he was *eighty-five*, and if Joseph was born when his father was *ninety*, then the *eleven* sons and Dinah were born in *five* years.

Lastly, if Jacob had no son till *eighty-five*, and he went to *Egypt* at *one hundred and thirty*, with sixty-six persons, only *forty-five* years are allowed for his family; whereas the larger sum of *sixty-five* years seems necessary for the births of so many children and grandchildren. On this subject Leviticus Clerc has pronounced, *Hisce in rebus occurrunt nodi, quos nemo hactenus solvit; neque porro, ut opinor, solvet. There are difficulties here which have never been explained, and in my opinion never can be explained.* But upon the single principle of Mr. Skinner, that Jacob went to Laban at *fifty-seven*, (instead of *seventy-seven*,) these difficulties are solved. And it only remains to wish that some authority may be found to support this conjecture, thus strongly founded on the *exigentia loci*. The common opinion is formed by reckoning back from the age of Joseph, when governor of Egypt, to the time of his birth, and from the *twenty* years which Jacob was with Laban. This number, Mr. Skinner thinks, was originally *forty*; and I think that the Hebrew text as it now stands confirms the conjecture, and furnishes the very authority which is so much wanted.

“After Jacob had served Laban *fourteen* years for his two wives, where was Jacob to reside? Esau was still living; and Jacob might well be afraid of returning to him, till more years of absence had disarmed his resentment; and had the death of Esau happened, Jacob would then have been secure. But let us also remember that Isaac was still alive, and that Esau had determined to kill Jacob whenever their father should die. It would therefore be no wonder if Jacob should have desired to continue longer in Haran. And to carry this point more effectually, he might offer to take care of Laban’s cattle, and to live in his neighbourhood, upon such terms of advantage to Laban as could not easily be withstood. Lastly, when the good effects to Laban from this connection had been experienced, without profit, nay with some losses, to Jacob, for *twenty* years, Jacob might naturally grow tired of thus assisting Laban without providing for his own growing family. Accordingly we find that Jacob covenants with Laban for *six* years of more close attendance and service in Laban’s own house, for which the wages were expressly settled. Agreeable to the preceding possibilities seems to have been the fact, Jacob living in Haran *forty* years, and in this manner:—

14 years in Laban’s house, a *covenant servant* for his wives.

20 in Laban’s neighbourhood, as a *friend*.

6 in Laban’s house, a *covenant servant* for cattle.

“Now the *twenty* concurrent years of *neighbourly assistance*, and the disjointed *twenty of covenant service*, seem both of them distinguished in the history itself. For upon Laban’s pursuit of Jacob he mentions *twenty* years twice; which two sets of *twenty*, if really different, make *forty*.

Each mention of the *twenty* years is introduced with the word **hz zeh**, which word, when repeated, is used by way of distinction; as when we say, this and that, the one or the other. Thus, ^{<12140>}**Exodus 14:20**: *So that the one came not near the other.* ^{<21045>}**Ecclesiastes 6:5**: *This hath more rest than the other.* And with the two words at a great distance, ^{<182123>}**Job 21:23**: *One dieth;* ^{<182125>}**Job 21:25**; and *another dieth, &c.* So here, in ^{<013138>}**Genesis 31:38**, Jacob says to Laban, **Ĕm[ykna hnv µyrc[hz zeh esrim shanah anochi immach, during the ONE set of twenty years I was with thee, &c.;** meaning the time in which he lived, not in Laban’s house, but in *his neighbourhood*; not as a *servant*, but a *friend*; after he had served in Laban’s house *fourteen* years for his daughters, and before he served *six* years for his cattle. But then, as to the other *twenty*, he tells Laban, at ^{<013141>}**Genesis 31:41**, varying the phrase very remarkably **Ĕytdb[Ĕtybb hnv µyrc[yl hz zeh li esrim shanah bebeithecha abadticha, during the other twenty years (l li) FOR MYSELF (for my own benefit) IN THY HOUSE; I served thee fourteen years, and six years, &c.** And during this last period, though only *six* years, he charges Laban with changing his wages *ten* times. So that Jacob insists upon having well earned his wages through the *twenty* years when he served for hire; but he makes a far greater merit of having, for *another twenty years*, assisted him without wages, and even with some losses; and therefore, with particular propriety, he reminds Laban of *that set of twenty years* in the first place.

The following Tables, taken chiefly from Mr. Skinner, will greatly elucidate the true chronology of Jacob:

The following Tables, taken chiefly from Mr. Skinner, will greatly elucidate the true chronology of Jacob:

TABLE I.—On Jacob's being at Haran only twenty years.

| | | |
|-----|--|-------------------------------|
| 0 | Jacob (and Esau) born. | |
| 40 | Esau marries two wives, Hittites | Gen. xxvi. 34. |
| 63 | Ishmael dies, aged 137 | Gen. xxv. 17. |
| 77 | Jacob goes to Haran. | |
| 84 | marries Leah and Rachel | Gen. xxix. 20, 21, 27, 28. |
| 85 | REUBEN born of Leah | } Gen. xxix. 32-35. |
| 86 | SIMON do. | |
| 87 | LEVI do. | |
| 88 | JUDAH do. | |
| 89 | DAN born of Bilhah | |
| | Naphtali do. | } Gen. xxx. 6-24. |
| | Gad born of Zilpah | |
| | Asher do. | |
| | ISSACHAR born of Leah | |
| | ZEBULUN and Dinah do. | |
| 91 | JOSEPH born of Rachel | |
| 97 | Jacob returns from Haran. | |
| 98 | dwells in Succoth. | |
| 99 | comes to Shalem, and continues there eight years. | |
| 101 | Judah marries Shuah's daughter. | |
| 102 | Er born,—103 Onan,—104 Shelah. | |
| 106 | Shechemites destroyed by Simeon and Levi. | |
| 107 | BENJAMIN is born, and Rachel dies. | |
| 108 | Joseph sold when seventeen | Gen. xxxvii. 2. |
| 111 | Tamar married to Er, and immediately afterwards to Onan. | |
| 114 | Tamar's incest with Judah. | |
| 115 | Pharez and Zarah born to Judah. | |
| 120 | Isaac dies, aged 180 | Gen. xxxv. 28. |
| 121 | Joseph is made governor of Egypt | Gen. xli. 46. |
| 130 | Jacob goes into Egypt | Gen. xlvii. 9. |
| 147 | and dies | do. 28; and xlix. 33. |

TABLE II.—On Jacob's being at Haran forty years.

| | | |
|-----|--|-------------------------------|
| 0 | Jacob (and Esau) born. | |
| 40 | Esau marries two wives, Hittites | Gen. xxvi. 34. |
| 57 | Jacob goes to Haran. | |
| 58 | Esau goes to Ishmael, and marries his daughter | Gen. xxviii. 9. |
| 63 | Ishmael dies, aged 137 | Gen. xxv. 17. |
| 64 | Jacob marries Leah and Rachel | Gen. xxix. 20, 21, 27, 28. |
| 65 | Reuben born of Leah | } Gen. xxix. 32-35. |
| 66 | Simeon do. | |
| 67 | Levi do. | |
| 68 | Judah do. | |
| 69 | Rachel, not bearing, gives Bilhah | |
| | Dan born of Bilhah | } Gen. xxx. 6-24. |
| 71 | Naphtali do. | |
| | Leah, not bearing, gives Zilpah | |
| 72 | Gad born of Zilpah | |
| 74 | Asher do. | |
| 78 | Reuben at 13 finds the mandrakes | |
| 79 | Issachar born of Leah | |
| 81 | Zebulun do. 82 Dinah | |
| 86 | Judah at 18 marries Shuah's daughter.* | |
| 87 | Er born,—88 Onan,—89 Shelah. | |
| 91 | Joseph born of Rachel. | |
| 6 | years' service for cattle. | |
| 97 | Jacob comes from Haran to Succoth and Shalem. | |
| | Dinah defiled, and the Shechemites destroyed. | |
| 98 | Benjamin is born, and Rachel dies. | |
| 103 | Beriah, fourth son of Asher, born. | |
| 105 | Tamar married to Er—106 to Onan. | |
| 108 | Joseph, at seventeen, is carried into Egypt | Gen. xxxvii. 2. |
| 109 | Shelah, at twenty, not given to Tamar. | |
| 110 | Pharez and Zarah born of Tamar, by Judah. | |
| 120 | Isaac dies, aged 180 | Gen. xxxv. 28. |
| 121 | Joseph, at thirty, governor of Egypt | Gen. xli. 46. |
| 123 | Beriah, at twenty, marries. | |
| 125 | Heber—127 Malchiel—born to Beriah. | |

* Not placed in order of time, Gen. xxxviii.

| | | |
|-----|--|-----------------------|
| 128 | Pharez, at eighteen, marries. | |
| 129 | Hezron—130 Hamul—born to Pharez. | |
| 130 | Benjamin, at thirty-two, has ten sons. | |
| 147 | Jacob goes to Egypt | Gen. xlvii. 9. |
| | and dies. | do. 28; and xlix. 33. |

“Our translation now is, ^{<01318>}**Genesis 31:38:** THIS TWENTY YEARS HAVE I BEEN WITH THEE; *thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.* ^{<01319>}**Genesis 31:39.** *That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night.* ^{<01340>}**Genesis 31:40.** *Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.* ^{<01341>}**Genesis 31:41.** *THUS HAVE I BEEN TWENTY YEARS IN THY HOUSE: I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle; and thou hast changed my wages ten times.*

“The alteration here recommended is this, ^{<01318>}**Genesis 31:38:** DURING THE ONE TWENTY YEARS I WAS WITH THEE; *thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams, &c., &c.* ^{<01341>}**Genesis 31:41.** DURING THE OTHER TWENTY YEARS FOR MYSELF, IN THY HOUSE, *I served, &c.* The same distinction is expressed in ^{<01319>}**Genesis 30:29:** *Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me;* i.e., how I behaved during the time I was with thee as thy servant, and how thy cattle fared during the time they were with me as thy friend.

“It must not be omitted that Archbishop Usher and Bishop Lloyd ascribe sons to Jacob very soon after his coming to Laban; nay, assert that he was married almost as soon as he came to Haran, instead of waiting seven years, as he most evidently did. And Mr. Jackson allows that some of the sons of Benjamin, who are expressly numbered as going into Egypt with Jacob, might be born in Egypt! From such distresses, and such contradictions, does the distinction of two sets of *twenty* years happily deliver us,”

*Hoc temporis intervallo nemo concipere poterit
tot res contingere potuisse.
SPINOSA.*

In such a short space of time, it is impossible that so many transactions could have taken place.

I shall leave this subject with chronologers and critics, and shall not attempt to decide on either opinion. That of Dr. Kennicott I think the most likely, and to it I have adapted the chronology in those cases to which it relates; but there are difficulties in both cases. **See Clarke on “~~01301~~Genesis 38:1”**.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 32

Jacob, proceeding on his Journey, is met by the angels of God, 1, 2. Sends messengers before him to his brother Esau, requesting to be favourably received, 3-5. The messengers return without an answer, but with the intelligence that Esau, with four hundred men, was coming to meet Jacob, 6. He is greatly alarmed, and adopts prudent means for the safety of himself and family, 7, 8. His affecting prayer to God, 9-12. Prepares a present of five droves of different cattle for his brother, 13-15. Sends them forward before him, at a certain distance from each other, and instructs the drivers what to say when met by Esau, 15-20. Sends his wives, servants, children and baggage, over the brook Jabbok, by night, 21-23. Himself stays behind, and wrestles with an angel until the break of day, 24. He prevails and gets a new name, 25-29. Calls the name of the place Peniel, 30. Is lame in his thigh in consequence of his wrestling with the angel, 31, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 1. The angels of God met him.] Our word *angel* comes from the Greek **ἄγγελος** *aggelos*, which literally signifies a messenger; or, as translated in some of our old Bibles, a *tidings-bringer*. The Hebrew word **Ēal m malach**, from **Ēal laach**, *to send, minister to, employ*, is nearly of the same import; and hence we may see the propriety of St. Augustine's remark: *Nomen non naturae sed officii*, "It is a name, not of nature, but of office;" and hence it is applied indifferently to a *human agent* or *messenger*, ^{<10130>}**2 Samuel 2:5**; to a *prophet*, ^{<57011>}**Haggai 1:13**; to a *priest*, ^{<34027>}**Malachi 2:7**; to *celestial spirits*, ^{<19A319>}**Psalm 103:19,20,22; 104:4**. "We often," says Mr. Parkhurst, "read of the **hw̄y** **Ēal m malach** *Yehovah*, or **μ̄yh̄l a ykal m malakey** *Elohim*, the angel of *Yehovah*, or the angels of God, that is, his *agent, personator, mean of visibility or action*, what was employed by God to render himself visible and approachable by flesh and blood." This *angel* was evidently a human form, surrounded or accompanied by *light* or *glory*, with or in which *Yehovah* was present; see ^{<01190>}**Genesis 19:1,12,16**; ^{<07136>}**Judges 13:6,21**; ^{<08182>}**Exodus 3:2,6**. "By this vision," says Mr. Ainsworth, "God confirmed Jacob's faith in him who commanded his angels to keep his people in all their ways," ^{<19111>}**Psalm 91:11**. Angels are here called God's *host, camp, or army*, as in wars; for angels are God's *soldiers*, ^{<01213>}**Luke 2:13**; *horses and chariots of fire*, ^{<12211>}**2**

Kings 2:11; fighting for God's people against their enemies, ^{<27100>}**Daniel 10:20**; of them there are *thousand thousands*, and *ten thousand times ten thousand*, ^{<27070>}**Daniel 7:10**; and they are all sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation, ^{<8014>}**Hebrews 1:14**; and they pitch a camp about them that fear God, ^{<9347>}**Psalm 34:7**." One of the oldest of the Greek poets had a tolerably correct notion of the angelic ministry:—

ΑΥΤΑΡ ΕΠΕΙΠΕΝ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΓΕΝΟΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΓΑΙΑ ΚΑΛΥΨΕΝ
 ΤΟΙ ΜΕΝ ΔΑΙΜΟΝΕΣ ΕΙΣΙ, ΔΙΟΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΔΙΑ ΒΟΥΛΑΣ,
 ΕΣΘΛΟΙ, ΕΠΙΧΘΟΝΙΟΙ, ΦΥΛΑΚΕΣ ΘΝΗΤΩΝ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΩΝ. κ. τ. λ.

HESIOD. *Op. & Dies*, l. i., ver. 120.

*When in the grave this race of men was laid,
 Soon was a world of holy demons made,
 Aerial spirits, by great Jove design'd
 To be on earth the guardians of mankind.
 Invisible to mortal eyes they go,
 And mark our actions good or bad below;*

*The immortal spies with watchful care preside,
 And thrice ten thousand round their charges glide:
 They can reward with glory or with gold,
 A power they by Divine permission hold.*

COOKE.

Verse 2. Mahanaim.] The *two hosts*, if read by the *points*, the angels forming one, and Jacob and his company forming another; or simply *hosts* or *camp*s in the plural. There was a city built afterwards here, and inhabited by the priests of God, ^{<0213>}**Joshua 21:38**. For what purpose the angels of God met Jacob, does not appear from the text; probably it was intended to show him that he and his company were under the care of an especial providence, and consequently to confirm his trust and confidence in God.

The doctrine of the ministration of angels has been much abused, not only among the *heathens*, but also among *Jews* and *Christians*, and perhaps most among the latter. Angels with feigned *names*, *titles*, and *influences*, have been and still are invoked and worshipped by a certain class of men; because they have found that God has been pleased to employ them to minister to mankind; and hence they have made supplications to them to extend their protection, to shield, defend, instruct, &c. This is perfectly absurd. 1. They are God's *instruments*, not *self-determining* agents. 2. They can only do what they are *appointed* to perform, for there is no

evidence that they have any *discretionary* power. 3. God helps man by *ten thousand means* and *instruments*; some *intellectual*, as angels; some *rational*, as men; some *irrational*, as brutes; and some merely *material*, as the sun, wind, rain, food, raiment, and the various productions of the earth. He therefore helps by whom he will help, and to *him* alone belongs all the glory; for should he be determined to destroy, all these instruments collectively could not save. Instead therefore of worshipping *them*, we should take their own advice: *See thou do it not-Worship God.*

Verse 3. Jacob sent messengers] *μυκαλ m malachim*, the same word which is before translated *angels*. It is very likely that these messengers had been sent some time before he had this vision at Mahanaim, for they appear to have returned while Jacob encamped at the brook Jabbok, where he had the vision of angels; see ^{<01306>}**Genesis 32:6, 23.**

The land of Seir, the country of Edom.] This land, which was, according to Dr. Wells, situated on the south of the Dead Sea, extending from thence to the Arabian Gulf, ^{<10926>}**1 Kings 9:26**, was formerly possessed by the *Horites*, ^{<01406>}**Genesis 14:6**; but Esau with his children drove them out, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead, ^{<16022>}**Deuteronomy 2:22**; and thither Esau went from the face of his brother Jacob, ^{<01306>}**Genesis 36:6,7.** Thus we find he verified the prediction, *By thy sword shalt thou live*, ^{<01274>}**Genesis 27:40.**

Verse 4. Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau] Jacob acknowledges the *superiority* of his brother; for the time was not yet come in which it could be said, *The elder shall serve the younger.*

Verse 6. Esau-cometh-and four hundred men with him.] Jacob, conscious that he had injured his brother, was now apprehensive that he was coming with *hostile* intentions, and that he had every evil to fear from his displeasure. *Conscience* is a terrible accuser. It was a fine saying of a heathen,—

———*Hic murus aheneus esto,
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.*
HOR. Ep., l. i., E. i., v. 60.

*Be this thy brazen bulwark of defence,
Still to preserve thy conscious innocence,
Nor e'er turn pale with guilt.*
FRANCIS.

In other words, *He that has a good conscience has a brazen wall for his defence; for a guilty conscience needs no accuser; sooner or later it will tell the truth, and not only make the man turn pale who has it, but also cause him to tremble even while his guilt is known only to himself and God.*

It does not appear that Esau in this meeting had any *hostile* intention, but was really coming with a part of his servants or tribe to do his brother *honour*. If he had had any contrary intention, God had removed it; and the angelic host which Jacob met with before might have inspired him with sufficient confidence in God's protection. But we find that when he needed faith most, he appears to have derived but little benefit from its influence, partly from the sense he had of the injury he had done to his brother, and partly from not attending sufficiently to the assurance which God had given him of his gracious protection.

Verse 7. He divided the people, &c.] His prudence and cunning were now turned into a right channel, for he took the most effectual method to appease his brother, had he been irritated, and save at least a part of his family. This dividing and arranging of his flocks, family, and domestics, has something in it highly *characteristic*. To such a man as Jacob such expedients would naturally present themselves.

Verse 9. O God of my father Abraham, &c.] This prayer is remarkable for its simplicity and energy; and it is a model too for prayer, of which it contains the essential constituents:—

1. Deep self-abasement.
2. Magnification of God's mercy.
3. Deprecation of the evil to which he was exposed.
4. Pleading the promises that God had made to him. And,
5. Taking encouragement from what God had already wrought.

Verse 10. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies] The marginal reading is more consistent with the original: *t mah l kmw µydsj h l km ytncq katonti miccol hachasadim umiccol haemeth, I am less than all the compassions, and than all the faithfulness, which thou hast showed unto thy servant.* Probably St Paul had his eye on this passage when he wrote, *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints.* A man who sees himself in the light of God will ever feel that he has no good but what he has received, and that he deserves nothing of all that he has. The archangels of

God cannot use a different language, and even the spirits of just men consummated in their plenitude of bliss, cannot make a higher boast.

For with my staff] i.e., *myself alone*, without any attendants, as the *Chaldee* has properly rendered it.

Verse 11. And the mother with the children.] He must have had an awful opinion of his brother when he used this expression, which implies the *utmost cruelty*, proceeding in the work of slaughter to total extermination. See ^{<281014>}**Hosea 10:14.**

Verse 12. Make thy seed as the sand] Having come to the *promise* by which *the covenant* was ratified both to *Abraham* and *Isaac*, he ceased, his faith having gained strong confirmation in a promise which he knew could not fail, and which he found was made over to *him*, as it had been to his father and grandfather.

Verse 13. And took of that which came to his hand] *wdyb abh habba beyado*, which came under his hand, i.e., what, in the course of God's providence, came under *his power*.

Verse 14. Two hundred she-goats, &c.] This was a princely present, and such as was sufficient to have compensated Esau for any kind of *temporal loss* he might have sustained in being deprived of his birthright and blessing. The thirty *milch camels* were particularly valuable, for *milch camels* among the Arabs constitute a principal part of their riches, the creature being every way so serviceable that the providence of God appears peculiarly kind and wise in providing such a beast for those countries where no other animal could be of equal service. "The she-camel gives milk continually, not ceasing till great with young; the milk of which," as Pliny has remarked, "when mixed with three parts of water, affords the most pleasant and wholesome beverage." *Cameli lac habent, donec iterum gravescant, suavissimumque hoc existimatur, ad unam mensuram tribus aquae additis.*-Hist. Nat., lib. xi., chap. 41.

Verse 15. Ten bulls] The Syriac and Vulgate have *twenty*; but *ten* is a sufficient proportion to the *forty kine*. By all this we see that Jacob was led to make *restitution* for the injury he had done to his brother. Restitution for injuries done to man is essentially requisite if in our power. He who can and will not make restitution for the wrongs he has done, can have no claim even on the *mercy* of God.

Verse 22. Passed over the ford Jabbok.] This brook or rivulet rises in the mountains of Galaad, and falls into the Jordan at the south extremity of the lake of Gennesaret.

Verse 24. And there wrestled a man with him] This was doubtless the Lord Jesus Christ, who, among the patriarchs, assumed that human form, which in the fulness of time he really took of a woman, and in which he dwelt thirty-three years among men. He is here styled an angel, because he was **μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος**, (see the *Septuagint*, ^{<23007>}**Isaiah 9:7**;) *the Messenger of the great counsel* or *design* to redeem fallen man from death, and bring him to eternal glory; see ^{<01667>}**Genesis 16:7**.

But it may be asked, Had he here a real human body, or only its *form*? The latter, doubtless. How then could he wrestle with Jacob? It need not be supposed that this angel must have assumed a human body, or something analagous to it, in order to render himself *tangible* by Jacob; for as the soul operates on the body by the order of God, so could an angel operate on the body of Jacob during a whole night, and produce in his *imagination*, by the effect of his power, every requisite idea of *corporeity*, and in his *nerves* every sensation of *substance*, and yet no substantiality be in the case.

If angels, in appearing to men, *borrow* human bodies, as is thought, how can it be supposed that with such gross substances they can disappear in a *moment*? Certainly they do not take these bodies into the invisible world with them, and the established laws of *matter* and *motion* require a *gradual* disappearing, however swiftly it may be effected. But this is not allowed to be the case, and yet they are reported to vanish *instantaneously*. Then they must render themselves invisible by a *cloud*, and this must be of a very *dense* nature in order to hide a human body. But this very expedient would make their departure still more *evident*, as the cloud must be more *dense* and *apparent* than the *body* in order to hide it. This does not remove the difficulty. But if they assume a quantity of *air* or *vapour* so condensed as to become visible, and modified into the appearance of a human body, they can in a moment *dilate* and *rarefy* it, and so disappear; for when the vehicle is rarefied beyond the power of natural vision, as their own substance is invisible they can instantly vanish.

From ^{<28124>}**Hosea 12:4**, we may learn that the wrestling of Jacob, mentioned in this place, was not merely a corporeal exercise, but also a spiritual one; *He wept and made supplication unto him*. See the notes there. See **Clarke on** ^{<28124>}**Hosea 12:4**.

Verse 25. The hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint] What this implies is difficult to find out; it is not likely that it was complete luxation of the thigh bone. It may mean no more than he received *a stroke* on the groin, not a *touch*; for the Hebrew word [gn *naga* often signifies to *smite with violence*, which stroke, even if comparatively slight, would effectually disable him for a time, and cause him to halt for many hours, if not for several days. I might add that in this place—the groin, a blow might be of fatal consequence; but as the angel gave it only as a proof of his power, and to show that he *could not* prevail because he *would not*, hence the blow was only *disabling*, without being *dangerous*; and he was probably cured by the time the sun arose.

Verse 26. Let me go, for the day breaketh] Probably meaning, that as it was now morning, Jacob must rejoin his wives and children, and proceed on their journey. Though *phantoms* are supposed to disappear *when the sun rises*, that could be no reason in this case. Most of the angelic appearances mentioned in the Old and New Testaments took place in *open day*, which put their reality out of question.

Verse 28. Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel] I arcw *Yisrael*, from rc *sar*, a prince, or hrc *sarah*, he ruled as a prince, and I a *el*, God; or rather from vya *ish*, a man, (the a aleph being dropped,) and har *raah*, he saw, I a *el*, God; and this corresponds with the name which Jacob imposed on the place, calling it I aynp *peniel*, the *faces* of God, or of *Elohim*, which faces being manifested to him caused him to say, ^{<01320>}Genesis 32:30, μynp I a μynp μyhl a ytyar *raithi Elohim panim el panim*, i.e., “*I have seen the Elohim faces to faces*, (i.e., fully and completely, without any medium,) yvpn I xntw *vattinnatsel napshi*, and my soul is redeemed.”

We may learn from this that *the redemption of the soul* will be the blessed consequence of wrestling by prayer and supplication with God: “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent *take* it by force.” From this time Jacob became a *new* man; but it was not till after a severe struggle that he got his *name*, his *heart*, and his *character* changed. After this he was no more *Jacob the supplanter*, but *Israel—the man who prevails with God*, and *sees him face to face*.

And hast prevailed.] More literally, *Thou hast had power with God, and with man thou shalt also prevail.* μῦηλ α μ [*Im Elohim*, with the strong God; μῦννα μ [*im anashim*, with *weak, feeble man*. There is a beautiful opposition here between the two words: Seeing thou hast been powerful with the *Almighty*, surely thou shalt prevail over perishing *mortals*; as thou hast prevailed with God, thou *shalt* also prevail with men: God calling the things that were not as though they had already taken place, because the prevalency of this people, the Israelites, by means of the *Messiah*, who should proceed from them, was already determined in the Divine counsel. He has never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain. He who *wrestles* must *prevail*.

Verse 29. Tell me, I pray thee, thy name.] It is very likely that Jacob wished to know the name of this angel, that he might invoke him in his necessities: but this might have led him into idolatry, for the doctrine of the incarnation could be but little understood at this time; hence, he refuses to give himself any name, yet shows himself to be the true God, and so Jacob understood him; (see ^{<01:328>} **Genesis 32:28**;) but he wished to have heard from his own lips that name by which he desired to be invoked and worshipped.

Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?] Canst thou be ignorant *who I am*? *And he blessed him there-gave him the new heart and the new nature* which God alone can give to fallen man, and by the change he wrought in him, sufficiently showed *who he was*. After this clause the *Aldine* edition of the Septuagint, and several MSS., add δ εστι θαυμαστον, or και τουτο εστι θαυμαστον, *which is wonderful*; but this addition seems to have been taken from ^{<07:1318>} **Judges 13:18**.

Verse 31. The sun rose upon him] Did the Prophet Malachi refer to this, ^{<30:2>} **Malachi 4:2**: *Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings*? Possibly with the rising of the sun, which may here be understood as emblematical of the *Sun of righteousness*-the *Lord Jesus*, the pain and weakness of his thigh passed away, and he felt both in soul and body that he was healed of his plagues.

Verse 32. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew] What this sinew was neither *Jew* nor *Christian* can tell; and it can add nothing either to science, or to a true understanding of the text, to multiply conjectures. I have already supposed that the part which the angel touched

or *struck* was the groin; and if this be right, the *sinew, nerve, or muscle* that *shrank*, must be sought for in that place.

THE serious reader must meet with much instruction in this chapter.

1. After his reconciliation with Laban, Jacob proceeds on his way to Canaan; and as God, who was continually watching for his welfare, saw the trials to which he would shortly be exposed, therefore he provided for him the instructive vision of angels, that he might see that those who were for him were more than those who could be against him. A proper consideration of God's omniscience is of the utmost advantage to every genuine Christian. He knows whereof we are made, he remembers that we are but dust, he sees our trials and difficulties, and his eye affects his heart. Hence he is ever devising means that his banished-be not expelled from him.

2. Jacob's recollection of his *unkindness* and *injustice* to his brother, when he hears that he is coming to meet him, fills his soul with fear, and obliges him to betake himself to God by prayer and supplication. How important is the office of *conscience*! And how necessary are times of *trial* and *difficulty* when its voice is loudest, and the heart is best prepared to receive its reproofs! In how many cases has conscience *slumbered* till it pleased God to send some *trial* by which it has been powerfully awakened, and the salvation of the sinner was the result! *Before I was afflicted I went astray.*

3. Though salvation be the free gift of God, yet he gives it not to any who do not earnestly seek it. The deeper the conviction of guilt and helplessness is, the more earnest the application to God for mercy is likely to be. They whose salvation costs them strong crying and tears, are not likely (humanly speaking) to part with it lightly; they remember the vinegar and the gall, and they watch and pray that they *enter not* into temptation.

4. In the strife and agony requisite to enter in at the strait gate, it is highly necessary that we should know that the grace and salvation of God are not *purchased* by our tears, &c.; for those things which are only proofs and arguments that we have sinned, can never remove the iniquity of our transgressions. A sensible and pious man observes on this subject, "That prayer and wrestling with God should be made as though no other means were to be practised, and then the best means be adopted as though no prayer or wrestling had been used." God marks even this strife, though highly pleasing in his sight, with such proofs of its own utter insufficiency,

that we may carry about with us the memorial of our own weakness, worthlessness, and slowness of heart to believe. God smote the thigh of Jacob, 1. That he might know he had not prevailed by his *own strength*, but by the power and mercy of his God. 2. That he might, have the most sensible evidence of the reality of the Divine interposition in his behalf. 3. That he might see God's displeasure against his unbelief. And 4. That men in general might be taught that those who will be the disciples of Christ must deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and mortify their members which are upon the earth. Those who have not cut off a right hand or foot, or plucked out a right eye, for the kingdom of heaven's sake, are never likely to see God. The religion that *costs us nothing*, is to us *worth nothing*.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 33

Esau, with four hundred men, meets Jacob, 1. He places his children under their respective mothers, passes over before them, and bows himself to his brother, 2, 3. Esau receives him with great affection, 4. Receives the homage of the handmaids, Leah, Rachel, and their children, 5-7. Jacob offers him the present of cattle, which he at first refuses, but after much entreaty accepts, 8-11. Invites Jacob to accompany him to Mount Seir, 12. Jacob excuses himself because of his flocks and his children, but promises to follow him, 13, 14. Esau offers to leave him some of his attendants, which Jacob declines, 15. Esau returns to Seir, 16, and Jacob journeys to Succoth, 17, and to Shalem, in the land of Canaan, 18. Buys a parcel of ground from the children of Hamor, 19, and erects an altar which he calls El-elohe-Israel, 20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 1. Behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men.] It has been generally supposed that Esau came with an intention to destroy his brother, and for that purpose brought with him four hundred *armed* men. But, 1. There is no kind of evidence of this pretended hostility. 2. There is no proof that the four hundred men that Esau brought with him were at all *armed*. 3. But there is every proof that he acted towards his brother Jacob with all openness and candour, and with such a forgetfulness of past injuries as none but a great mind could have been capable of. Why then should the character of this man be perpetually vilified? Here is the secret. With some people, on the most ungrounded assumption, Esau is a *reprobate*, and the type and figure of all reprobates, and therefore he *must be* everything that is *bad*. This serves a *system*; but, whether true or false in itself, it has neither countenance nor support from the character or conduct of Esau.

Verse 2. He put the handmaids and their children foremost] There is something so *artificial* in this arrangement of Jacob's family, that it must have had some peculiar *design*. Was Jacob still apprehensive of danger, and put those foremost whom he least esteemed, that if the foremost met with any evil, those who were behind might escape on their swift beasts? <01337> **Genesis 32:7,8.** Or did he intend to keep his choicest treasure to the

last, and exhibit his beautiful *Rachel* and favourite *Joseph* after Esau had seen all the rest, in order to make the deeper impression on his mind?

Verse 4. Esau ran to meet him] How sincere and genuine is this conduct of Esau, and at the same time how magnanimous! He had buried all his resentment, and forgotten all his injuries; and receives his brother with the strongest demonstrations, not only of forgiveness, but of fraternal affection.

And kissed him] *whqvvyw valyishshakehu*. In the Masoretic Bibles each letter of this word is noted with a *point* over it to make it *emphatic*. And by this kind of notation the rabbins wished to draw the attention of the reader to the *change* that had taken place in Esau, and the *sincerity* with which he received his brother Jacob. A *Hindoo* when he meets a friend after absence throws his arms round him, and his head across his shoulders, twice over the right shoulder and once over the left, with other ceremonies according to the rank of the parties.

Verse 10. Receive my present at my hand] Jacob could not be certain that he had found favour with Esau, unless the present had been received; for in accepting it Esau necessarily became his *friend*, according to the custom of those times, and in that country. In the eastern countries, if your present be received by your superior, you may rely on his friendship; if it be not received, you have every thing to fear. It is on this ground that Jacob was so urgent with Esau to receive his present, because he knew that after this he must treat him as a friend.

Verse 14. Until I come unto my lord unto Seir.] It is very likely that Jacob was perfectly sincere in his expressed purpose of visiting Esau at Seir, but it is as likely that circumstances afterwards occurred that rendered it either improper or impracticable; and we find that Esau afterwards removed to Canaan, and he and Jacob dwelt there together for several years. See ^{<01306>}**Genesis 36:6**.

Verse 17. Journeyed to Succoth] So called from *tkS succoth*, the *booths* or *tents* which Jacob erected there for the resting and convenience of his family, who in all probability continued there for some considerable time.

Verse 18. And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem] The word *μl v shalem*, in the Samaritan *μwl v shalom*, should be translated here *in*

peace, or in safety. After resting some time at Succoth, which was necessary for the safety of his flocks and the comfort of his family, he got safely to a city of Shechem, in health of body, without any loss of his cattle or servants, his wives and children being also in safety. *Coverdale* and *Matthews* translate this word as above, and with them agree the *Chaldee* and the *Arabic*: it is not likely to have been the name of a city, as it is nowhere else to be found. Shechem is called in ^{<40716>}**Acts 7:16**, *Sychem*, and in ^{<3045>}**John 4:5**, *Sychar*; in the Arabic it is called *Nablous*, and to the present day *Neapolis*. It was near to Samaria; and the place where the wretched remains of the sect of the Samaritans were lately found, from whom Dr. Huntington received a perfect copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

Verse 19. For a hundred pieces of money.] The original, *hcycq hamb bemeah kesitah*, has been a matter of long and learned discussion among critics. As *kesitah* signifies a lamb, it may imply that Jacob gave the Hamorites *one hundred lambs* for the field; but if it be the same transaction that St. Stephen refers to in ^{<40716>}**Acts 7:16**, it was *money*, *τιμης αργυριον*, a *sum* or *price of silver*, which was given on the occasion. It has been conjectured that the money had the figure of a lamb stamped on it, because it was on an average the value of a lamb; and hence it might be called a *kesitah* or *lamb* from the impression it bore. It is certain that in many countries the coin has had its name from the *image* it bore; so among our ancestors a coin was called an *angel* because it bore the image of an angel; hence also a *Jacobus*, a *Carolus*, a *Lewis*, (*Louis d' Or.*) a *Joe*, because certain coins in England, Spain, France, and Portugal, bore on one side the image of the kings of those countries, *James*, *Charles*, *Lewis*, *Joseph*, or *Johannes*. The Athenians had a coin called *bouv*, an *ox*, because it was stamped with the figure of an ox. Hence the saying in *Æschylus*:—

τα δ αλλα σιγω, βους επι γλωττης μεγας
βεβηκεν — AGAM. v. 36.

“I must be silent concerning other matters, a great ox has come upon my tongue;” to signify a person who had received *a bribe* for secrecy, i.e., a sum of money, on each piece of which an ox was stamped, and hence called *βουσ*, an ox. The word *opes*, riches, is a corruption of the word *oves*, sheep, because these animals in ancient times constituted the principal riches of their owners; but when other cattle were added, the word *pecunia*, (from *pecus*, cattle,) which we translate *money*, and from which

we still have our English term *pecuniary*, appears to have been substituted for *oves*, because *pecus*, *pecoris*, and *pecus*, *pecudis*, were used to signify *all kinds of cattle large and small*. Among our *British* and *Saxon* ancestors we find coins stamped with the figure of an *ox*, *horse*, *hog*, *goat*, &c., and this custom arose in all probability, both among them and other nations, from this circumstance, that in primitive times the coin was the ordinary value of the animal whose image it bore. It is, all circumstances weighed, most likely that a piece of *money* is here intended, and *possibly* marked with the image of a *lamb*; but as the original word **hcycq kesitah** occurs only *here*, and in ^{<0342>}**Joshua 24:32**, and ^{<0821>}**Job 42:11**, this is not sufficiently evident, the word itself being of very doubtful signification. Mr. Parkhurst is of opinion that the *kesitah* bore the image of a *lamb*; and that these *lamb coins* of the ancient Hebrews typified the Lamb of God, who in the Divine purpose was considered as slain from the foundation of the world, and who *purchased* us unto God with his own blood. The conjecture is at least *pious*, and should lead to useful reflections. Those who wish to see more on this subject may consult the writers in the *Critici Sacri*, and *Calmet*.

Verse 20. And he erected there an altar] It appears that Jacob had a very correct notion of the *providence* and *mercy* of God; hence he says, ^{<0133>}**Genesis 33:5**: *The children which God hath GRACIOUSLY given thy servant*; and in ^{<01331>}**Genesis 33:11** he attributes all his *substance* to the bounty of his Maker: *Take, I pray thee, my blessing-because God hath dealt GRACIOUSLY with me, and because I have enough*. Hence he viewed God as the *God of all grace*, and to him he erects an altar, dedicating it to *God, the God of Israel*, referring particularly to the *change* of his own name, and the *mercies* which he then received; and hence perhaps it would be best to translate the words, *The strong God (is) the God of Israel*; as by the power of his grace and goodness he had rescued, defended, blessed, and supported him from his youth up until now. The erecting altars with particular names appears in other places; so, ^{<02175>}**Exodus 17:15**, Moses calls his altar *Jehovah-nissi*, “the Lord is my banner.”

1. WHEN a man’s way’s please God, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. When Jacob had got reconciled to God, God reconciled his brother to him. The hearts of all men are in the hands of God, and he turns them howsoever he will.

2. Since the time in which Jacob wrestled with the Angel of the covenant. We see in him much dependence on God, accompanied with a spirit of deep humility and gratitude. God's grace alone can change the heart of man, and it is by that grace only that we get a sense of our obligations; this lays us in the dust, and the more we receive the lower we shall lie.

3. "The first thing," says good Bishop Wilson, "that pious men do, is to provide for the honour and worship of God." Jacob buys a piece of ground, and erects an altar on it in the land of a heathen, that he might acknowledge God among his enemies, and turn them to the true faith; and there is every reason to believe that this expedient would have been successful, had it not been for the base conduct of his sons. How true is the saying, One sinner spoileth much good! Reader, beware, lest thy conduct should become a stumbling block to any.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 34.

Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah, going out to see the daughters of the land, is ravished by Shechem, the son of Hamor, 1, 2. He entreats his father to get her for him to wife, 3. Jacob and his sons hear of the indignity offered to Dinah, 5-7. Hamor proposes the suit of Shechem to Jacob and his sons, and offers them a variety of advantages, 8-10. Shechem himself comes forward, begs to have Dinah to wife, and offers dowry to any extent, 11, 12. The sons of Jacob pretend scruples of conscience to give their sister to one who was uncircumcised; and require, as a condition of this marriage, and of intermarriages in general, that all the Shechemites should be circumcised, 13-17. Hamor and Shechem consent, 18, 19. They lay the business before the elders of their city, dwell on the advantages of a connection with Jacob and his family, and propose to them the condition required by the sons of Jacob, 20-23. The elders consent, and all the males are circumcised, 24. While the Shechemites are incapable of defending themselves, on the third day after their circumcision, Simeon and Levi, the brothers of Dinah, came upon the city, slew all the males, sacked the city, took the women and children captives, and seized on all the cattle belonging to the Shechemites, 25-29. Jacob is greatly displeased and alarmed at this treachery and cruelty of his sons, and lays before them the probable consequences, 30. They endeavour to vindicate their conduct, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 1. And Dinah-went out to see the daughters of the land.] It is supposed that Jacob had been now about seven or eight years in the land, and that Dinah, who was about seven years of age when Jacob came to Canaan, was now about fourteen or fifteen. Why or on what occasion she went out we know not, but the reason given by Josephus is very probable, *viz.*, that it was on one of their *festivals*.

Verse 2. Prince of the country] i.e., Hamor was prince; Shechem was the son of the prince or chief. Our version appears to represent Shechem as *prince*, but his father was the chief of the country. See ^{<01306>} **Genesis 34:6, 8,** &c.

Verse 3. Spake kindly unto the damsel.] Literally, *he spake to the heart of the damsel*-endeavoured to gain her affections, and to reconcile her to her disgrace. It appears sufficiently evident from this and the preceding

verse that there had been no *consent* on the part of Dinah, that the whole was an act of *violence*, and that she was now detained *by force* in the house of *Shechem*. Here she was found when Simeon and Levi sacked the city, ^{<01306>}**Genesis 34:26**.

Verse 7. He had wrought folly in Israel] The land, afterwards generally called *Israel*, was not as yet so named; and the sons of Jacob were neither called *Israel*, *Israelites* nor *Jews*, till long after this. How then can it be said that Shechem had *wrought folly in Israel*? The words are capable of a more literal translation: **I arcyb** *beyisrael*, may be translated, *against Israel*. The angel had said, *Thy name shall be called no more Jacob-not only Jacob, but Israel*. It was this that aggravated the offence of Shechem; he wrought folly against *Israel*, the prince of God, in lying with the daughter of Jacob. Here both the names are given; *Jacob*, whose daughter was defiled, and *Israel*, the *prince of God*, against whom the offence was committed.

Verse 12. Ask me never so much dowry] See Clarke on “^{<01220>}**Genesis 29:20**”, &c. See the law relative to this, ^{<02216>}**Exodus 22:16,17**.

Verse 13. Answered-deceitfully] Which nothing could excuse; yet, to show that they had had much provocation, it is immediately subjoined **wrbdyw** *vaidabberu*, *they spoke thus because he had defiled Dinah their sister*; for so this parenthesis should be read.

Verse 14. That were a reproach unto us] Because the uncircumcised were not in the covenant of God; and to have given an heiress of the promise to one who had no kind of right to its spiritual blessings, from whom might spring children who would naturally walk in the way of their father would have been *absurd*, *reproachful* and *wicked*. Thus far they were perfectly right; but to make this holy principle a cloak for their deceitful and murderous purposes, was the full sum of all wickedness.

Verse 17. Then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.] It is natural to suppose that the tribe of Hamor was very inconsiderable, else they would not have sought an alliance with the family of Jacob, and have come so readily into a painful, disgraceful measure, without having either the sanction of *Divine authority* or *reason*; for it does not appear that the sons of Jacob urged either. And they are *threatened* here that if they do not agree to be circumcised, Dinah shall be taken from them, and restored to

her family; and this is probably what the Shechemites saw they had not power at present to prevent.

Verse 23. Shall not their cattle and their substance-be ours? This was a bait held out for the poor unsuspecting people of Hamor by their prince and his son, who were not much less deceived than the people themselves.

Verse 24. Every male was circumcised] These simple people must have had very great affection for their chief and his son, or have been under the influence of the most *passive obedience*, to have come so readily into this measure, and to have submitted to this rite. But the *petty* princes in Asiatic countries have ever been *absolute* and *despotic*, their subjects paying them the most prompt and blind obedience. I shall give a few examples from Mr. Richardson's Dissertations.-

“*Abu Thaher*, chief of the *Carmathians*, about the year nine hundred and thirty, ravaged the territory of *Mecca*, defiled the temple, and destroyed nearly 40,000 people. With only 500 horse he went to lay siege to Bagdad: the caliph's general, at the head of 30,000 men, marched out to seize him, but before he attacked him he sent an officer to summon him to surrender. ‘How many men has the caliph's general?’ said *Abu Thaher*. ‘Thirty thousand,’ replied the officer. ‘Among them all,’ says the *Carmathian* chief, ‘has he got three like mine?’ Then, ordering his followers to approach, he commanded one to stab himself, another to throw himself from a precipice, and a third to plunge into the *Tigris*; all three instantly obeyed, and perished. Then turning to the officer, he said, ‘He who has such troops needs not value the *number* of his enemies!’

“*Hassan Sabat*, one of those petty princes formerly known in Asia and Europe by the title *Sheekh-ul-jibel*, or *old man of the mountain*, being required by an ambassador to do homage to his master, the Sultan *Malekshah Jelaleddin*, without giving any answer, ordered one of his attendants to poniard himself, and another to leap from the battlements of the tower; and he was instantly obeyed! Then turning to the ambassador, he said, ‘Seventy thousand are thus attentive to my commands. Let this be my answer. On a principle of this kind we may account for the *prompt obedience* of the people of Hamor.

Verse 25. On the third day, when they were sore] When the inflammation was at the height, and a fever ensued which rendered the person utterly helpless, and his state critical, *Simeon and Levi*, the half

brothers of Dinah, *took each man his sword*, probably assisted by that portion of the servants which helped *them* to take care of the flock, *came on the city boldly*, **j cb** *betach*, *securely*-without being *suspected*, and being in no danger of meeting with resistance, *and slew all the males*. Great as the provocation was, and it certainly was very great, this was an act or unparalleled treachery and cruelty.

Verse 27. The sons of Jacob] The rest of Jacob's sons, the remaining brothers of Simeon and Levi, *spoiled the city*. Though the others could slay the defenceless males, it was not likely that they could have carried away all the booty, with the women, children, and cattle; it is therefore most natural to suppose that the rest of the sons of Jacob assisted at last in the business.

Verse 30. Ye have troubled me] Brought my mind into great distress, and endangered my personal safety; *to make me to stink*-to render me odious to the surrounding tribes, so that there is every reason to suspect that when this deed is come abroad they will join in a confederacy against me, and extirpate my whole family. And had he not been under the peculiar protection of God, this in all human probability would have been the case; but he had prevailed with God, and he was also to prevail with men. That Jacob's resentment was not dissembled we have the fullest proof in his depriving these two sons of the birthright, which otherwise they had doubtless enjoyed. See ^{<014905>}**Genesis 49:5,7**, where some additional circumstances are related.

Verse 31. Should he deal with our sister as with a harlot?] On this outrage alone they vindicated their flagitious conduct. The word *harlot* first occurs here: the original is not **vgl yp** *pilegash*, which we render *concubine*, (see its explanation ^{<01224>}**Genesis 22:24**,) but **hnwz** *zonah*, which ordinarily signifies *one who prostitutes herself to any person for hire*. Our word *harlot* is said to have been derived from a very odd circumstance: Robert, duke of Normandy, seeing a fine-looking country girl dancing with her companions on the green, took her to his bed. She was the daughter of a *skinner*, and her name was *Arlotta*; and of her *William*, surnamed *The Conqueror*, was born. Hence it is said all such women were from her called *harlots*, as *William* himself was usually termed *the Bastard*. But *horelet*, the diminutive of *whore*, is not a less likely derivation.

SOLOMON has very properly said, *My son, enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away,* ^{<1044>} **Proverbs 4:14,15**. Had not Dinah gone out to see the daughters of the land, and very possibly at one of their idolatrous festivals, she had not suffered the foul disgrace mentioned in this chapter. Not only prudence dictates that young women should keep at *home*, but God expressly commands it, ^{<1045>} **Titus 2:5**. Dinah got among idolaters, and thus partook of their iniquities; and this led to the most base and cruel transaction upon record. How true is the saying, *Those who wander out of the way of understanding shall abide in the congregation of the dead!* In the case before us blame seems to attach to all parties.

1. It was wrong in *Jacob* to suffer his daughter, alone and unprotected, to visit the daughters of the land.
2. It was excessively wicked in *Shechem* to take this advantage of the daughter of a respectable stranger, who had sought his friendship, and came to sojourn among his people, and whose righteous dealing they must have witnessed for at least *seven years* past. In his behalf we may say, and it would be unjust not to say it, that having done the mischief, and sinned deeply against the laws of hospitality, he wished to make all the reparation in his power; and therefore in the most frank and liberal manner he not only offered, but most pressingly entreated, permission to take Dinah *to wife*. This was the utmost he could do in such a case. And in this he is a saint of the first order when compared with the noble and ignoble profligates who, while blaspheming the *Christian* name by continuing to assume it, commit all kinds of breaches on the virtue of simple females, and the peace of respectable families, and not only make no reparation, but glory in their shame.
3. It was *diabolical* in *Jacob's sons* to slay a whole tribe for the offence of one man, and especially as that one had offered to make all the restitution in his power. They required that Hamor, Shechem, and all their subjects should be circumcised before they could conscientiously consent to give their sister to Shechem in marriage. This *required conformity* was made the cloak of the most base and infamous designs. The simple unsuspecting Shechemites agreed to the proposal; and when rendered by this religious rite incapable of defending themselves, they were basely murdered by Simeon and Levi, and their city destroyed. Jacob, to his great honour, remonstrated against this barbarous and bloody act, committed apparently

under the sanction of religion; and God showed his abhorrence of it by directing the patriarch, in his dying moments, to *proscribe* them from the blessings of the covenant, so that they barely retained a name among the tribes of Israel, being in general small, and ever disreputable, except merely in the service of the sanctuary, in which Levi was employed. How often since, notwithstanding this solemn warning, has the pure and benevolent religion of God been made, by wicked and designing men, a political stalking-horse to serve the basest purposes, and a covert to the worst of crimes! But shall we find fault with the holy religion of the blessed God because wicked men have abused it? God forbid! Were it not so good as it really is, it would be incapable of such abuse. An *evil* cannot be *abused*, a *good* may; and the greater and the more acknowledged the good, the more liable to abuse. As every good is so capable of being abused, does he act wisely who argues against the *use* of the thing on this account? Shall we say that various kinds of grain, fruits, and aliments are a *curse*, because wicked men abuse them to the purposes of *drunkenness* and *gluttony*? This would argue an utter perversion of all reason: and is it not on such a pretext as this that many persons have ventured to call in question even the *truths* of Christianity?

Whatever *such* men may be *determined* to think on the subject of this chapter, with the unprejudiced reader the ample and detailed relation which we have here of this barbarous transaction will appear an additional proof of the veracity and impartiality of the sacred historian.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 35

Jacob is commanded of God to go to Beth-el, and to build an altar there, 1. His exhortation to his family to put away all strange gods, &c., 2, 3. They deliver them all up, and Jacob hides them in the earth, 4. They commence their journey, 5; come to Luz, 6; build there the altar El-beth-el, 7. Burial place of Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, 8. God appears again unto Jacob, 9. Blesses him and renews the promises, 10-13. To commemorate this manifestation of God, Jacob sets up a pillar, and calls the place Beth-el, 14, 15. They journey to Ephrath, where Rachel, after hard labour, is delivered of Benjamin, and dies, 16-19. Jacob sets up a pillar on her grave, 20. They journey to Edar, 21. While at this place, Reuben defiles his father's bed, 22. Account of the children of Jacob, according to the mothers, 23-26. Jacob comes to Mamre to his father Isaac, who was probably then in the one hundred and fifty-eighth year of his age, 27. Isaac dies, and is buried by his sons Esau and Jacob, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 35

Verse 1. Arise, go up to Beth-el] The transaction that had lately taken place rendered it unsafe for Jacob to dwell any longer at the city of Shechem; and it seems that while he was reflecting on the horrible act of Simeon and Levi, and not knowing what to do, God graciously appeared to him, and commanded him to go up to Beth-el, build an altar there, and thus perform the vow he had made, ^{<01283D>}**Genesis 28:20,22.**

Verse 2. Put away the strange gods] *rknh yhl a elohey hannechar*, the *gods of the foreigners*, which were among them. Jacob's servants were all *Syrians*, and no doubt were addicted less or more to idolatry and superstition. These gods might belong to *them*, or, as some have conjectured, they were the *teraphim* which Rachel stole; but these have already been supposed to be *astrological tables*, or something of this kind, called by Laban his *gods*, because by them he supposed he could predict future events, and that they referred to certain astral and planetary intelligences, by whose influences sublunary things were regulated. But it is more natural to suppose that these gods found now in Jacob's family were images of silver, gold, or curious workmanship, which were found among the spoils of the city of Shechem. Lest these should become incitements to idolatry, Jacob orders them to be put away.

Be clean, and change your garments] Personal or outward purification, as emblematical of the sanctification of the soul, has been in use among all the true worshippers of God from the beginning of the world. In many cases the law of Moses *more solemnly* enjoined rites and ceremonies which had been in use from the earliest ages. “A *Hindoo* considers those clothes defiled in which he has been employed in business, and always changes them before eating and worship.”-WARD.

Verse 3. Answered me in the day of my distress] Not only when he fled from the face of his brother, but more particularly when he was in his greatest strait at the brook of Jabbok.

Verse 4. And-ear-rings which were in their ears] Whether these rings were in the ears of the gods, or in those of Jacob’s family, we may rest assured that they were not mere ornaments, but served for superstitious purposes. *Ear-rings* were certainly worn as *amulets* and *charms*, first consecrated to some god, or formed under some constellation, on which magical characters and images were drawn. A very ancient and beautiful one of this kind brought from Egypt, cut out of a solid piece of cornelian, now lies before me. It was evidently intended for the *ear*, as the opening is too small for any human finger; and it is engraved all over with strange characters and images, which prove that it was intended for a *talisman* or *amulet*. It seems to be such a one as St. Augustine describes, *Epist.* 73, which was suspended from the tip of the ears both of men and women, not for the purpose of ornament, but through an execrable superstition, for the service of demons. “Execranda superstitio ligaturarum, in quibus etiam in aures virorum in summis ex una parte auriculis suspensæ deputantur, non ad placendum hominibus, sed ad serviendum dæmonibus.” See Clarke on “~~12:22~~ Genesis 24:22”.

Verse 5. The terror of God] A supernatural awe sent by the Almighty, *was upon the cities that were round about*, so that they were not molested in their departure. This could be owing to nothing less than the especial providence of God.

Verse 7. El-beth-el] *l a tyb l a the strong God, the house of the strong God*. But the first *l a el* is wanting in one of Deuteronomy Rossi’s MSS., as it is also in the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and some copies of the Arabic. The sentence reads much better without it, and much more consistent with the parallel passages.

Verse 8. But Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died] She was sent with Rebekah when taken by Abraham's servant to be wife to Isaac, ^{<0125>}**Genesis 24:59**. How she came to be in Jacob's family, expositors are greatly puzzled to find out; but the text does not state that *she was in Jacob's family*. Her death is mentioned merely because Jacob and his family had now arrived at the place where she was buried, and the name of that place was called *Allon-bachuth*, "the oak of weeping," as it is likely her death had been greatly regretted, and a general and extraordinary mourning had taken place on the occasion. Of *Rebekah's* death we know nothing. After her counsel to her son, ^{<0127>}**Genesis 27:5-17, 42-46**, we hear no more of her history from the sacred writings, except of her burial in ^{<0143>}**Genesis 49:31**. Her name is written in the dust. And is not this designed as a mark of the disapprobation of God? It seems strange that such an inconsiderable person as a *nurse* should be mentioned, when even the person she brought up is passed by unnoticed! It has been observed that the nurse of *Æneas* is mentioned nearly in the same way by the poet Virgil; and in the circumstances, in both cases, there is a striking resemblance.

*“Tu quoque littoribus nostris, Æneia nutrix,
Æternam moriens famam, Caleta, dedisti:
Eet nunc servat honos sedem tunus; ossaque nomen,
Hesperia in magna, (si qua est en gloria,) signat.
At pius exequils Æneas rite solutis,
Aggere composito tumuli, postquam alta quierunt
Æquora, tendit iter veils, portumque relinquit.”
Æn., lib. vii., ver. 1, &c.*

*“Thou too, Cajeta, whose indulgent cares
Nursed the great chief, and form'd his tender years,
Expiring here (an ever-honour'd name!)
Adorn Hesperia with immortal fame:
Thy name survives, to please thy pensive ghost;
Thy sacred relics grace the Latian coast.
Soon as her funeral rites the prince had paid,
And raised a tomb in honour of the dead;
The sea subsiding, and the tempests o'er,
He spreads the flying sails, and leaves the shore.”
PITT.*

Verse 9. God appeared unto Jacob again] He appeared to him first at Shechem, when he commanded him to go to Bethel, and now that he is

arrived at the place, God appears to him the *second* time, and confirms to him the Abrahamic blessing. To Isaac and Jacob these frequent appearances of God were necessary, but they were not so to Abraham; for to him one word was sufficient—*Abraham believed God*.

Verse 13. And God went up from him] This was not a vision, nor a strong mental impression, but a real manifestation of God. Jacob *saw* and *heard* him speak, and before his eyes *he went up*—ascended to heaven. This was no doubt the future Saviour, the Angel of the covenant. See ^{<011607>}**Genesis 16:7**.

Verse 14. A drink-offering] *Ēsn nesech*, a libation. These were afterwards very common in all countries. At first they consisted probably of *water* only, afterwards *wine* was used; see on ^{<08701>}**Leviticus 7:1**, &c. The *pillar* which Jacob set up was to commemorate the appearance of God to him; the *drink-offering* and the *oil* were intended to express his *gratitude* and *devotion* to his preserver. It was probably the same pillar which he had set up before, which had since been thrown down, and which he had consecrated afresh to God.

Verse 16. There was but a little way to come to Ephrath] The word *trbk kibrath*, translated here *a little way*, has greatly perplexed commentators. It occurs only here, in ^{<014307>}**Genesis 48:7**, and ^{<121519>}**2 Kings 5:19**; and it seems to have been some sort of *measure* applied to land, as we say a *mile*, an *acre*, a *rood*, a *perch*; but what the exact quantity of the *kibrath* was cannot be ascertained. *Ephrath*, called also *Bethlehem*, and *Bethlehem Ephrata*, was the birthplace of our blessed Redeemer. See its meaning ^{<0106>}**Matthew 2:6**.

Verse 18. As her soul was in departing] Is not this a proof that there is an immortal spirit in man, which can exist *separate* from and independent of the body? Of Rachel's death it is said, *hvpn taxb betseth naphshah*, *in the going away of her soul*; her *body* did not go away, therefore her soul and body must have been distinct. If her *breath* only had been intended, *hmvn neshamah* or *j wꝛ ruach* would have rather been used, as the first means *breath*, the latter *breath* or *spirit* indifferently.

She called his name Ben-oni] *yna ʿb* *the Son of my sorrow or affliction*, because of the *hard labour* she had in bringing him into the world; *but his father called him Benjamin*, *ʿymygb* *the son of my right hand*, i.e., the son

peculiarly dear to me. *So man of the right hand*, ^{<1907>}**Psalm 80:17**, signifies one much loved and regarded of God. The Samaritan has *Benyamin*, the *son of days*; *i.e.*, the son of *his old age*, as Judah calls him, ^{<140>}**Genesis 44:20**; and Houbigant contends that this is the true reading, and that the Chaldee termination *in* for *im* is a corruption. If it be a corruption, it is as old as the days of St. Jerome, who translated the place *Benjamin*, *id est*, *filius dextræ*; *Benjamin*, *that is*, *the son of the right hand*.

Verse 20. Jacob set a pillar upon her grave] Was not this the origin of funeral monuments? In ancient times, and among rude nations, a heap of stones designated the burial place of the chief; many of these still remain in different countries. Afterwards a rude stone, with a simple inscription, was used, containing only the name of the deceased, and that of his father. But where arts and sciences flourished, superb monuments were erected highly decorated, and pompously inscribed. It is very likely from the circumstances of Jacob that a single stone constituted the *pillar* in this case, on which, if writing did then exist, the name, or rather some hieroglyphical device, was probably inscribed. That which is now called *Rachel's pillar* is allowed, by those who have examined it, to be a comparatively *modern* structure.

Verse 21. Tower of Edar.] Literally, *the tower of the flock*, and so translated ^{<308>}**Micah 4:8**. It is supposed that this tower was about a mile from Bethlehem, and to have been the place where the angels appeared to the shepherds. The Targum of Jonathan expressly says: "It is the place in which the King Messiah shall be manifested in the end of days." By the *tower of the flock* we may understand a place built by the shepherds near to some *well*, for the convenience of watering their flocks, and keeping watch over them by night.

Verse 22. Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine] Jonathan, in his Targum, says that Reuben only overthrew the bed of Bilhah, which was set up opposite to the bed of his mother Leah, and that this was reputed to him as if he had lain with her. The colouring given to the passage by the Targumist is, that Reuben was incensed, because he found Bilhah preferred after the death of Rachel to his own mother Leah; and therefore in his anger he overthrew her couch. The same sentiment is repeated by Jonathan, and glanced at by the Jerusalem Targum, ^{<140>}**Genesis 49:4**. Could this view of the subject be proved to be correct, both piety and candour would rejoice.

And Israel heard it.] Not one word is added farther in the Hebrew text; but a break is left in the verse, opposite to which there is a Masoretic note, which simply states that *there is a hiatus in the verse*. This hiatus the Septuagint has thus supplied: **καὶ πονηρὸν ἐφάνη ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ**, and *it appeared evil in his sight*.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve] Called afterwards the *twelve patriarchs*, because they became heads or *chiefs* of numerous *families* or tribes, ^{<4070>}**Acts 7:8**; and the people that descended from them are called the *twelve tribes*, ^{<4337>}**Acts 26:7**; ^{<3010>}**James 1:1**. *Twelve princes* came from Ishmael, ^{<012516>}**Genesis 25:16**, who were heads of families and tribes. And in reference to the *twelve patriarchs*, our Lord chose *twelve apostles*. Strictly speaking, there were *thirteen* tribes among the Hebrews, as *Ephraim* and *Manasses* were counted for tribes, ^{<014805>}**Genesis 48:5,6**; but the Scripture in naming them, says Mr. Ainsworth, usually sets down but twelve, omitting the name now of one, then of another, as may in sundry places be observed, ^{<05336>}**Deuteronomy 33:5-29**; ^{<26801>}**Ezekiel 48:1-35**; ^{<07004>}**Revelation 7:4-8**, &c.

Verse 23. The sons of Leah] The children are arranged under their respective mothers, and not in order of their birth.

Verse 26. Born to him in Padan-aram.] *i.e.*, all but Benjamin was born in Canaan, ^{<013516>}**Genesis 35:16,17**.

It is well known that Padan-aram is the same as *Mesopotamia*, and hence the Septuagint translate **μεσοποταμία της συρίας**, *Mesopotamia of Syria*. The word signifies *between the two rivers*, from **μεσος** *the midst*, and **ποταμος**, *a river*. It is situated between the *Euphrates* and *Tigris*, having Assyria on the *east*, Arabia Deserta, with Babylonia, on the *south*, Syria on the *west*, and Armenia on the *north*. It is now the province of *Diarbek*, in Asiatic Turkey, and is sometimes called *Maverannahar*, the country beyond the river; and *Aram Naharaim*, Aram or Syria of the two rivers.

Verse 27. The city of Arbah, (which is Hebron)] See ^{<01232>}**Genesis 23:2**. It has been conjectured that Jacob must have paid a visit to his father before this time, as previously to this he had been some years in Canaan; but now, as he was approaching to his end, Jacob is supposed to have gone to live with and comfort him in his declining days.

Verse 29. Isaac gave up the ghost-and was gathered unto his people] See Clarke on "^{<01258>}Genesis 25:8".

Esau and Jacob buried him.] See ^{<01259>}Genesis 25:9. Esau, as we have seen chap. 33., was thoroughly reconciled to his brother Jacob, and now they both join in fraternal and filial affection to do the last kind office to their amiable father. It is generally allowed that the death of Isaac is mentioned here out of its chronological order, as several of the transactions mentioned in the succeeding chapters, especially 37. and 38., must have happened during his life; but that the *history of Joseph* might not be disturbed, his death is anticipated in this place. It is supposed that he lived at least twelve years after Joseph was sold into Egypt.

THIS chapter contains several subjects which are well worthy of the reader's most serious attention.

1. That such a family as that of Jacob should have had false gods in it, is a matter not less astonishing than real: and suppose that we allow, as is very probable, that their *images* and *rings* were got from strangers, the Syrians and the Shechemites, yet their being tolerated in the family, though it is probable this was for a very short time, cannot be easily accounted for. It is true the LAW was not then given, and the unity of God not so particularly taught as it was afterwards. Besides, we have already seen that certain superstitions were compatible in those early times with general sincerity and attachment to the truth; those times and acts of ignorance were winked at, till superior light shone upon the world. Between many of the practices of Laban's family and those of the surrounding heathenish tribes, there might have been but little difference; and this was probably the reason why Dinah could so readily mix with the daughters of the land, ^{<01340>}Genesis 34:1, which led to the fatal consequences already reviewed. Sin is like the letting out of water-when once a breach is made in the dyke, the stream becomes determined to a wrong course, and its progress is soon irresistible. Had not Jacob put away these strange gods, the whole family might have been infected with idolatry. This saying of one of the ancients is good, *Vitia transmittit ad posteros, qui presentibus culpis ignoscit.*-SENECA. "He who is indulgent to present offences, transmits sin to posterity." The first motions of it should be firmly resisted; after struggles are too often fruitless.

2. The doctrine of a *particular* and *especial providence* has another proof in this chapter. After the sanguinary conduct of Jacob's sons, is it not

surprising that the neighbouring tribes did not join together and extirpate the whole family? And so they certainly would, had not the terror of God fallen upon them, ^{<0135>}**Genesis 35:5**. Jacob and the major part of his family were innocent of this great transgression; and on the preservation of their lives, the accomplishment of great events depended: therefore God watches over them, and shields them from the hands of their enemies.

3. The *impatience* and *fate* of the amiable Rachel, who can read of without deploring? *Give me children, said she, or else I die,* ^{<0130>}**Genesis 30:1**. Her desire was granted, and her *death* was the consequence! God's way is ever best. We know not what we ask, nor what we ought to ask, and therefore often ask amiss when we petition for such secular things as belong to the *dispensations* of God's *providence*. For things of this kind we have no revealed directory; and when we ask for them, it should be with the deepest submission to the Divine will, as God alone knows what is *best* for us. With respect to the *soul*, every thing is clearly revealed, so that we may ask and receive, and have a fulness of joy; but as to our *bodies*, there is much reason to fear that the *answer of our petitions* would be, in numerous cases, our inevitable destruction. How many prayers does God in mercy shut out!

4. The transgression of Reuben, of whatsoever kind, was marked, not only by the displeasure of his father, but by that of God also; see ^{<0130>}**Genesis 49:4**. It brought a curse upon him, and he forfeited thereby the right of primogeniture and the priesthood: the first was given to Judah, the second to Levi. Is it not in reference to this that our Lord addresses these solemn words to the angel of the Church of Philadelphia: *Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN?* A man, by sowing a *grain* of forbidden sweets, may reap an abundant harvest of eternal wretchedness. Reader, let not *sin* rob *thee* of the kingdom of God.

5. Here we have the death of *Isaac* recorded: most that can be said of his character has been already anticipated, see chap. 22., &c. He appears to have been generally pious, deeply submissive and obedient. He was rather an *amiable* and *good*, than a *great* and *useful*, man. If compared with his son Jacob, in the early part of their lives, he appears to great advantage, as possessing more sincerity and more personal piety. But if compared with his father Abraham, O, what a falling off is here! Abraham is the most perfect character under the Old Testament, and even under the *New* he has

no parallel but St. Paul. Isaac, though falling far short of his father's excellences, will ever remain a pattern of piety and filial obedience.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 36

The genealogy of Esau, i.e., his sons, by his Canaanitish wives Adah, Aholibamah, and Bashemath, 1-3. The children of Adah and Bashemath, 4. Of Aholibamah, 5. Esau departs from Canaan and goes to Mount Seir, 6-8. The generations of Esau, i.e., his grandchildren, while in Seir, 7-19. Anah finds mules (Yemim) in the wilderness, 24. The generations of Seir, the Horite, 29-30. The kings which reigned in Edom, 31-39. The dukes that succeeded them, 40-43.

NOTES ON CHAP. 36

Verse 1. These are the generations of Esau] We have here the genealogy of Esau in his sons and grandsons, and also the genealogy of *Seir* the Horite. The genealogy of the *sons of Esau*, born in Canaan, is related ^{<01301>}**Genesis 36:1-8**; those of his grandchildren born in Seir, ^{<01309>}**Genesis 36:9-19**; those of *Seir* the Horite, ^{<01363>}**Genesis 36:20-30**. The generations of Esau are particularly marked, to show how exactly God fulfilled the promises he made to him, ^{<01259>}**Genesis 25:29-34**; ^{<01273>}**Genesis 27:30-40**; and those of *Seir* the *Horite* are added, because his family became in some measure blended with that of Esau.

Verse 2. His wives] It appears that Esau's wives went by very different names. *Aholibamah* is named *Judith*, ^{<01264>}**Genesis 26:34**; *Adah* is called *Bashemath* in the same place; and she who is here called *Bashemath* is called *Mahalath*, ^{<01289>}**Genesis 28:9**. These are variations which cannot be easily accounted for; and they are not of sufficient importance to engross much time. It is well known that the same persons in Scripture are often called by different names. See the Table of variations, chap. xxv., where there are some slight examples. See Clarke on ^{<012518>}**Genesis 25:18**".

Anah the daughter of Zibeon] But this same *Anah* is said to be the *son* of Zibeon, ^{<01364>}**Genesis 36:24**, though in this and ^{<01364>}**Genesis 36:14** he is said to be the *daughter* of Zibeon. But the *Samaritan*, the *Septuagint*, (and the *Syriac*, in ^{<01340>}**Genesis 36:2**;) read *son* instead of *daughter*, which *Houbigant* and *Kennicott* contend to be the true reading. Others say that *daughter* should be referred to *Aholibamah*, who was the daughter of *Anah*, and *granddaughter* of Zibeon. I should rather prefer the reading of

the Samaritan, Septuagint, and Syriac, and read, both here and in ^{<013614>}**Genesis 36:14**, “Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the SON of Zibeon,” and then the whole will agree with ^{<013624>}**Genesis 36:24**.

Verse 6. Esau took his wives, &c.] So it appears that Esau and Jacob dwelt together in Canaan, whither the former removed from Seir, probably soon after the return of Jacob. That they were on the most friendly footing this sufficiently proves; and Esau shows the same dignified conduct as on other occasions, in leaving Canaan to Jacob, and returning again to Mount Seir; certainly a much less fruitful region than that which he now in behalf of his brother voluntarily abandoned.

Verse 12. Timna was concubine to Eliphaz] As Timna was sister to *Lotan* the Horite, ^{<013622>}**Genesis 36:22**, we see how the family of Esau and the Horites got intermixed. This might give the sons of Esau a pretext to seize the land, and expel the ancient inhabitants, as we find they did, ^{<013612>}**Deuteronomy 2:12**.

Amalek] The father of the Amalekites, afterwards bitter enemies to the Jews, and whom God commanded to be entirely exterminated, ^{<013517>}**Deuteronomy 25:17,19**.

Verse 15. Dukes of the sons of Esau] The word *duke* comes from the Latin *dux*, a *captain* or *leader*. The Hebrew **pwl a alluph** has the same signification; and as it is also the term for a *thousand*, which is a grand *capital* or *leading* number, probably the **ypwl a alluphey** or *dukes* had this name from being *leaders* of or *captains* over a company of one *thousand* men; just as those among the Greeks called *chiliarchs*, which signifies the same; and as the Romans called those *centurions* who were captains over one hundred men, from the Latin word *centum*, which signifies a hundred. The ducal government was that which prevailed first among the *Idumeans*, or descendants of Esau. Here *fourteen* dukes are reckoned to Esau, *seven* that came of his wife, Adah, *four* of Bashemath, and *three* of Aholibamah.

Verse 16. Duke Korah] This Dr. Kennicott pronounces to be an interpolation. “It is certain, from ^{<013604>}**Genesis 36:4**, that Eliphaz was Esau’s son by Adah; and from ^{<013611>}**Genesis 36:11, 12**, that *Eliphaz* had but *six* sons, *Teman*, *Omar*, *Zepho*, *Gatam*, *Kenaz*, and *Amalek*. It is also certain, from ^{<013615>}**Genesis 36:5, 14**, that *Korah* was the son of *Esau* (not of Eliphaz) by *Aholibamah*; and as such he is properly mentioned in ^{<013618>}**Genesis 36:18**: These are the sons of Aholibamah, Esau’s wife: duke

Jeush, duke Jaalam, DUKE KORAH. It is clear, therefore, that some transcriber has improperly inserted *duke Korah* in ^{<013616>}**Genesis 36:16**; from which interpolation both the *Samaritan text* and the *Samaritan version* are free.”-KENNICOTT’S *Remarks*. Everything considered, I incline to the opinion that these words were not originally in the text.

Verse 20. These are the sons of Seir the Horite] These Horites were the original inhabitants of the country of *Seir*, called the land of the Horites, and afterwards the land of the Idumeans, when the descendants of Esau had driven them out. These people are first mentioned ^{<01406>}**Genesis 14:6**.

Verse 21. These are the dukes of the Horites] It appears pretty evident that the Horites and the descendants of Esau were mixed together in the same land, as before observed; and Calmet has very properly remarked, that if we compare this verse with ^{<013630>}**Genesis 36:30**, there were princes of Seir in the country of Seir, and in that of Edom; and in comparing the generations of Seir and Esau, we are obliged to consider these princes as *contemporary*.

Verse 24. This was that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness] The words $\mu\text{myh ta eth kaiyemim}$, here translated *mules*, has given rise to a great variety of conjectures and discordant opinions. *St. Jerome*, who renders it *aquas calidas, warm springs, or hot baths*, says there are as many opinions concerning it as there are commentators.

The *Septuagint* has $\tau\text{ov } \iota\alpha\mu\epsilon\iota\nu$, which seems to be the name of a *man*; but this is expressed in a great variety of ways in different MSS. of that version.

The *Syriac* renders it [Syriac] *mayé, waters*; the author of this version having read in the Hebrew copy from which he translated. $\mu\text{ym mayim}$, *waters*, for $\mu\text{my yemim}$, the two first letters being *transposed*.

Onkelos translates the word ayrbg gibbaraiya , *giants, or strong or powerful men*.

The *Samaritan text* has [Samaritan] *haaimim*, and the *Samaritan version* [Samaritan] *am aimai*, the *Emim*, a warlike people, bordering upon the *Horites*.

The *Targum* of *Jonathan ben Uzziel* paraphrases the place thus: “This is the Anah who united the *onager* with the tame *ass*, and in process of time

he found *mules* produced by them.” *R. D. Kimchi* says, that “Zibeon was both the father and brother of Anah; and this Anah, intent on heterogeneous mixtures, caused asses and horses to copulate, and so produced mules.” *R. S. Jarchi* is of the same opinion. See his comment on this place.

Bochart believes the *Emim* are meant; and argues forcibly, 1. That **axm matsa**, he found, never signifies to *invent*, but rather the *meeting with* or *happening on* a thing which already exists. 2. That mules are never called **μmy yemim** in the Scriptures, but **μydrp peradim**. 3. That Anah fed ASSES *only*, not *horses*. And, 4. That there is no mention of *mules* in Palestine till the days of David. From the whole he concludes that the *Emim* are meant, with whom Anah *fought*; and he brings many places of Scripture where the same form of expression, *he* or *they found*, signifies the *onset to battle*, **Judges 1:5**; **1 Samuel 31:3**; **1 Kings 13:24**; **2 Chronicles 22:8**; **Numbers 35:27**; **Genesis 4:14**; with many others. See the *Hierozoicon*, vol. i., cap. 21, p. 23S., edit. 1692.

Gusset, in *Comment. Heb. Ling.*, examines what *Bochart* has asserted, and supposes that *mules*, not the *Emim*, were found by Anah.

Wagenseil would credit what *Bochart* has asserted, did not stronger reasons lead him to believe that the word means a sort of *plant*!

From the above *opinions* and *versions* the reader may choose which he likes best, or invent one for himself. My own opinion is, that *mules* were not known before the time of Anah; and that he was probably the first who coupled the *mare* and *ass* together to produce this mongrel, or the first who met with creatures of this race in some very secluded part of the wilderness. Is it not probable that from this Anah, or **hn[enah**, the *Enetæ* derived at least their fabulous origin, whom *Homer* mentions as famous for their race of *wild mules*?

Παφλαγονων δ ηγειτο πυλαιμενεος λασιον κηρ,
Εξοδυσ Ενετων, δθεν ημιονων γενοσ αγροτεραων.

IL., lib. ii., v. 852.

*The Paphlagonians Pylæmenes rules,
Where rich HENETIA breeds her SAVAGE MULES.
POPE.*

The *Enetæ* or *Henetæ*, who were a people contiguous to Paphlagonia, Cappadocia, and Galatia, might have derived their origin from this *Anah*, or *Henah*, out of which the **ενετοι** of the ancient Greek writers might have been formed; and according to Theophrastus, Strabo, and Plutarch, the *first mules* were seen among these people. See *Ludov, Deuteronomy Dieu and Scheuchzer*.

Verse 31. Before there reigned any king over-Israel.] I suppose all the verses, from ^{<135>}**Genesis 36:31-39** inclusive, have been transferred to this place from ^{<130>}**1 Chronicles 1:43-50**, as it is not likely they could have been written by Moses; and it is quite possible they might have been, at a very early period, written in the margin of an authentic copy, to make out the regal succession in Edom, prior to the consecration of Saul; which words being afterwards found in the margin of a valuable copy, from which others were transcribed, were supposed by the copyist to be a part of the text, which having been omitted by the mistake of the original writer, had been since added to make up the deficiency; on this conviction he would not hesitate to transcribe them consecutively in his copy. In most MSS. sentences and paragraphs have been left out by the copyists, which, when perceived, have been added in the margin, either by the original writer, or by some later hand. Now, as the *margin* was the ordinary place where glosses or explanatory notes were written, it is easy to conceive how the *notes*, as well as the parts of the original text found in the margin, might be all incorporated with the text by a future transcriber; and his MSS., being often copied, would of course multiply the copies with such *additions*, as we have much reason to believe has been the case. This appears very frequently in the Vulgate and Septuagint; and an English Bible now before me written some time in the fourteenth century, exhibits several proofs of this principle. See the *preface* to this work.

I know there is another way of accounting for those words on the ground of their being written originally by Moses; but to me it is not satisfactory. It is simply this: the word *king* should be considered as implying any kind of *regular government*, whether by *chiefs, dukes, judges, &c.*, and therefore when Moses says these are the *kings* which reigned in Edom, before there was any king in Israel, he may be only understood as saying that these kings reigned among the Edomites before the family of Jacob had acquired any considerable power, or before the time in which his twelve sons had become the fathers of those numerous tribes, at the head of which, as *king* himself in *Jeshurun*, he now stood.

Esau, after his *dukes*, had *eight kings*, who reigned successively over their people, while Israel were in affliction in Egypt.

Verse 33. Jobab the son of Zerah] Many have supposed that *Jobab* is the same as *Job*, so remarkable for his afflictions and patience; and that *Eliphaz*, mentioned ^{<01360>}**Genesis 36:10**, &c., was the same who in the book of Job is called one of his friends: but there is no proper proof of this, and there are many reasons against it.

Verse 35. Smote Midian in the field of Moab] Bishop Cumberland supposes that this was Midian, the son of Abraham by Keturah, and that he was killed by Hadad some time before he was one hundred and nine years of age; and that Moses recorded this, probably, because it was a calamity to the ancestor of Jethro, his father-in-law.-*Orig. of Nat.*, p. 14.

Verse 40. These are the names of the dukes that came of Esau] These dukes did not govern the whole nation of the Idumeans, but they were chiefs in their respective *families*, in *their places*-the districts they governed, and to which they gave *their names*. Calmet thinks that those mentioned above were dukes in Edom or Idumea at the time of the exodus of Israel from Egypt.

Verse 43. He is Esau the father of the Edomites.] That is, The preceding list contains an account of the posterity of Esau, who was the father of Edom. *Thus ends Esau's history*; for after this there is no farther account of his life, actions, or death, in the Pentateuch.

1. AS Esau is so considerable a person in polemic divinity, it may be necessary, in this place especially, to say something farther of his conduct and character. I have already, in several places, endeavoured, and I hope successfully, to wipe off the odium that has been thrown upon this man, (see the notes on chap. 27. and chap. 33.,) without attempting to lessen his faults; and the unprejudiced reader must see that, previously to this last account we have of him, his character stands without a blot, except in the case of selling his birthright, and his purpose to destroy his brother. To the first he was led by his famishing situation and the unkindness of his brother, who refused to save his life *but on this condition*; and the latter, made in the heat of vexation and passion, he never attempted to execute, even when he had the most ample means and the fairest opportunity to do it.

Dr. Shuckford has drawn an impartial character of Esau, from which I extract the following particulars: “Esau was a plain, generous, and honest man, for we have no reason, from any thing that appears in his life or actions, to think him *wicked* beyond other men of his age or times; and his generous and good temper appears from all his behaviour towards his brother. When they first met he was all humanity and affection, and he had no uneasiness when he found that Jacob followed him not to Seir, but went to live near his father. And at Isaac’s death we do not find that he made any difficulty of quitting Canaan, which was the very point which, if he had harboured any latent (evil) intentions, would have revived all his resentments. He is indeed called in Scripture the profane Esau; and it is written, *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*; but there is, I think, no reason to infer, from any of those expressions, that Esau was a *very wicked man*, or that God hated or punished him for an immoral life. For, 1. The sentence here against him is said expressly to be founded, not upon his actions, for it was determined *before the children had done good or evil*. 2. God’s hatred of Esau was not a hatred which induced him to punish him with any evil, for he was as happy in all the blessings of this life as either Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob; and his posterity had a land designed by God to be their possession, as well as the children of Jacob, and they were put in possession of it *much sooner* than the Israelites; and God was pleased to *protect them* in the enjoyment of it, and to caution the Israelites against invading them with a remarkable strictness, ~~-(Gen 25:22)~~ **Deuteronomy 2:4,5**. And as God was pleased thus to bless Esau and his children in the blessings of this life, even as much as he blessed Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, if not more, why may we not hope to find him with them at the last day, as well as *Lot* or *Job* or any other good and virtuous man, who was not designed to be a partaker of the *blessing* given to *Abraham*? 3. All the punishment inflicted on Esau was an exclusion from being heir to the blessing promised to *Abraham* and to *his seed*, which was a favour not granted to *Lot*, to *Job*, to several other very *virtuous* and *good men*. 4. St. Paul, in the passage before cited, only intends to show the Jews that God had all along given the favours that led to the Messiah where he pleased; to *Abraham*, not to *Lot*; to *Jacob*, not to *Esau*; as at the time St. Paul wrote the *Gentiles* were made the people of God, not the *Jews*. 5. Esau is indeed called *profane*, (βεβηλος,) but I think that word does not mean *wicked* or *immoral*, ασεβης or αμαρτωλος` he was called profane for not having that due value for the priest’s office which he should have had; and therefore, though I think it does not appear that he was cut off from being the heir of

the promises by any particular action in his life, yet his turn of mind and thoughts do appear to have been such as to evidence that God's purpose towards Jacob was founded on the truest wisdom."-SHUCKFORD'S *Connections*, vol.ii., p.174, &c.

The truth is, the Messiah must spring from *some ONE family*, and God chose *Abraham's* through *Isaac, Jacob, &c.*, rather than the same through *Ishmael, Esau*, and the others in that line; but from this choice it does not follow that the first were all *necessarily saved*, and the others *necessarily lost*.

2. To some the *genealogical lists* in this chapter will doubtless appear uninteresting, especially those which concern *Esau* and his descendants; but it was as necessary to register the generations of *Esau* as to register those of *Jacob*, in order to show that the Messiah *did not* spring from the *former*, but that he *did* spring from the *latter*. The genealogical tables, so frequently met with in the sacred writings, and so little regarded by Christians in general, are extremely useful. 1. As they are standing proofs of the truth of the prophecies, which stated that the Messiah should come from a particular family, which prophecies were clearly fulfilled in the birth of Christ. 2. As they testify, to the conviction of the Jews, that the Messiah thus promised is found in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who incontestably sprang from the last, the only remaining branch of the family of David. These registers were religiously preserved among the Jews till the destruction of Jerusalem, after which they were all destroyed, insomuch that there is not a Jew in the universe who can trace himself to the family of David; consequently, all expectation of a Messiah *to come is*, even on their own principles, nugatory and absurd, as nothing remains to legitimate his birth. When Christ came all these registers were in existence. When St. Matthew and St. Luke wrote, all these registers were still in existence; and had *they* pretended what could not have been supported, an appeal to the registers would have convicted them of a falsehood. But no Jew attempted to do this, notwithstanding the excess of their malice against Christ and his followers; and because they did not do it, we may safely assert no Jew *could* do it. Thus the *foundation* standeth sure.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 37

Jacob continues to sojourn in Canaan, 1. Joseph, being seventeen years of age, is employed in feeding the flocks of his father, 2. Is loved by his father more than the rest of his brethren, 3. His brethren envy him, 4. His dream of the sheaves, 5-7. His brethren interpret it, and hate him on the account, 8. His dream of the sun, moon, and eleven stars, 9-12. Jacob sends him to visit his brethren, who were with the flock in Shechem, 13, 14. He wanders in the field, and is directed to go to Dothan, whither his brethren had removed the flocks, 15-17. Seeing him coming they conspire to destroy him, 18-20. Reuben, secretly intending to deliver him, counsels his brethren not to kill, but to put him into a pit, 21, 22. They strip Joseph of his coat of many colours, and put him into a pit, 23, 24. They afterwards draw him out, and sell him to a company of Ishmaelite merchants for twenty pieces of silver, who carry him into Egypt, 25-28. Reuben returns to the pit, and not finding Joseph, is greatly affected, 29, 30. Joseph's brethren dip his coat in goat's blood to persuade his father that he had been devoured by a wild beast, 31-33. Jacob is greatly distressed, 34, 35. Joseph is sold in Egypt to Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard, 36.

NOTES ON CHAP. 37

Verse 1. Wherein his father was a stranger] *wyba yrwgm megurey abiv*, Jacob dwelt in the land of his father's sojournings, as the margin very properly reads it. The place was probably the vale of Hebron, see ^{<015714>}**Genesis 37:14**.

Verse 2. These are the generations] *twdl t toledoth*, the history of the lives and actions of Jacob and his sons; for in this general sense the original must be taken, as in the whole of the ensuing history there is no particular account of any *genealogical* succession. Yet the words may be understood as referring to the tables or genealogical lists in the preceding chapter; and if so, the original must be understood in its common acceptance.

The lad was with the sons of Bilhah] It is supposed that our word *lad* comes from the Hebrew *dl y yeled*, a *child*, a *son*; and that *lass* is a contraction of *ladess*, the female of *lad*, a *girl*, a *young woman*. Some have supposed that *King James* desired the translators to insert this word; but

this must be a mistake, as the word occurs in this place in *Edmund Becke's* Bible, printed in 1549; and still earlier in that of *Coverdale*, printed in 1535.

Brought unto his father their evil report] *Conjecture* has been busily employed to find out what this evil report might be; but it is needless to inquire what it was, as on this head the sacred text is perfectly silent. All the use we can make of this information is, that it was one cause of increasing his brothers' hatred to him, which was first excited by his father's *partiality*, and secondly by his own *dreams*.

Verse 3. A coat of many colours.] $\mu y s p \ t n t k$ *kethoneth passim*, a coat made up of stripes of differently coloured cloth. Similar to this was the *toga prætexta* of the Roman youth, which was *white*, striped or fringed with *purple*; this they wore till they were *seventeen* years of age, when they changed it for the *toga virilis*, or *toga pura*, which was all *white*. Such vestures as clothing of *distinction* are worn all over Persia, India, and China to the present day. It is no wonder that his brethren should envy him, when his father had thus made him such a distinguished object of his partial love. We have already seen some of the evils produced by this unwarrantable conduct of parents in preferring one child to all the rest. The old fable of *the ape and her favourite cub*, which she *hugged to death through kindness*, was directed against such foolish parental fondnesses as these.

Verse 4. And could not speak peaceably unto him.] Does not this imply, in our use of the term, that they were continually *quarrelling* with him? but this is no meaning of the original: $\mu l \ v l \ w r b d \ w l \ k y \ a l \ w \ v e l o \ y a c h e l u$ *dabbero leshalom*, they could not speak peace to him, i.e., they would not accost him in a *friendly* manner. They would not even *wish him well*. The eastern method of salutation is, *Peace be to thee!* $\ddot{E} l \ \mu w l \ v$ *shalom lecha*, among the Hebrews, and [Arabic] *salam*, *peace*, or [Arabic] *salam kebibi*, *peace to thee my friend*, among the Arabs. Now as *peace* among those nations comprehends all kinds of blessings spiritual and temporal, so they are careful not to say it to those whom they do not cordially wish well. It is not an unusual thing for an Arab or a Turk to hesitate to return the *salam*, if given by a Christian, or by one of whom he has not a favourable opinion: and this, in their own country, may be ever considered as a mark of *hostility*; not only as a proof that they do not wish you well, but that if they have an opportunity they will do you an injury. This was precisely the case

with respect to Joseph's brethren: they would not give him the *salam*, and therefore felt themselves at liberty to take the first opportunity to injure him.

Verse 7. We were binding sheaves in the field] Though in these early times we read little of *tillage*, yet it is evident from this circumstance that it was practised by Jacob and his sons. The whole of this dream is so very plain as to require no comment, unless we could suppose that the *sheaves of grain* might have some reference to the *plenty* in Egypt under Joseph's superintendence, and the scarcity in Canaan, which obliged the brethren to go down to Egypt for corn, where the dream was most literally fulfilled, his brethren there *bowing* in the most abject manner before him.

Verse 9. He dreamed yet another dream] This is as clear as the preceding. But how could Jacob say, *Shall I and thy mother, &c.*, when Rachel his mother was *dead* some time before this? Perhaps Jacob might hint, by this explanation, the *impossibility* of such a dream being fulfilled, because one of the persons who should be a *chief actor in it* was already dead. But any one wife or concubine of Jacob was quite sufficient to fulfil this part of the dream. It is possible, some think, that Joseph may have had these dreams before his mother Rachel died; but were even this the case, she certainly did not live to fulfil the part which appears to refer to herself.

The sun and the moon and the eleven stars] Why *eleven* stars? Was it merely to signify that his brothers might be represented by stars? Or does he not rather there allude to the *Zodiac*, his eleven brethren answering to *eleven* of the celestial signs, and himself to the *twelfth*? This is certainly not an unnatural thought, as it is very likely that the heavens were thus measured in the days of Joseph; for the zodiacal constellations have been distinguished among the eastern nations from time immemorial. See Clarke at "⁻⁰¹⁴⁹³³⁻Genesis 49:33".

Verse 14. Go-see whether it be well with thy brethren] Literally, Go, I beseech thee, and see the peace of thy brethren, and the peace of the flock. Go and see whether they are all in *prosperity*. See Clarke on "⁻⁰¹³⁷⁰⁴⁻Genesis 37:4". As Jacob's sons were now gone to feed the flock on the parcel of ground they had bought from the Shechemites, (see ⁻⁰¹³³¹⁹⁻Genesis 33:19,) and where they had committed such a horrible slaughter, their father might feel more solicitous about their welfare, lest the neighbouring tribes should rise against them, and revenge the murder of the Shechemites.

As Jacob appears to have been at this time in the *vale of Hebron*, it is supposed that Shechem was about *sixty* English miles distant from it, and that *Dothan* was about *eight* miles farther. But I must again advertise my readers that all these calculations are very dubious; for we do not even know that the *same place* is intended, as there are many proofs that different places went by the same names.

Verse 19. Behold, this dreamer cometh.] *twml j h l [b baal hachalomoth*, this *master of dreams*, this *master dreamer*. A form of speech which conveys great contempt.

Verse 20. Come now and let us slay him] What unprincipled savages these must have been to talk thus coolly about imbruing their hands in an innocent brother's blood! How necessary is a Divine revelation, to show man what God *hates* and what he *loves*! Ferocious cruelty is the principal characteristic of the nations and tribes who receive not the law at his mouth.

Verse 21. Reuben heard it] Though Reuben appears to have been a transgressor of no ordinary magnitude, if we take ^{<01852>}Genesis 35:22 according to the letter, yet his bosom was not the habitation of *cruelly*. He determined, if possible, to save his brother from death, and deliver him safely to his father, with whose fondness for him he was sufficiently acquainted. *Josephus*, in his usual way, puts a long flourishing speech in the mouth of Reuben on the occasion, spoken in order to dissuade his brethren from their barbarous purpose; but as it is *totally unfounded*, it is worthy of no regard.

Verse 23. They stripped Joseph out of his coat] This probably was done that, if ever found, he might not be discerned to be a *person of distinction*, and consequently, no inquiry made concerning him.

Verse 25. They sat down to eat bread] Every act is perfectly in character, and describes forcibly the *brutish* and *diabolic* nature of their ruthless souls.

A company of Ishmaelites] We may naturally suppose that this was a *caravan*, composed of different tribes that, for their greater safety, were travelling *together*, and of which *Ishmaelites* and *Midianites* made the chief. In the Chaldee they are called *Arabians*, which, from *br [arab*, to *mingle*, was in all probability used by the *Targumist* as the word *Arabians*

is used among us, which comprehends a vast number of *clans*, or *tribes* of people. The *Jerusalem Targum* calls them *ִּיִּקְרָסִי Sarkin*, what we term *Saracens*. In the *Persian*, the clause stands thus: [Persian] *karavaneeh iskmaaleem araban aya*. “A caravan of Ishmaelite Arabs came.” This seems to give the true sense.

Verse 28. For twenty pieces of silver] In the *Anglo-Saxon* it is [Anglo-Saxon] *thirty pence*. This, I think, is the first instance on record of selling a man for a slave; but the practice certainly did not commence now, it had doubtless been in use long before. Instead of *pieces*, which our translators supply, the *Persian* has [Persian] *miskal*, which was probably intended to signify a *shekel*; and if *shekels* be intended, taking them at *three shillings* each, Joseph was sold for about *three pounds* sterling. I have known a whole cargo of slaves, amounting to *eight hundred and thirteen*, bought by a slave captain in Bonny river, in Africa, on an average, for *six pounds* each; and this payment was made in *guns, gunpowder, and trinkets!* As there were only *nine* of the brethren present, and they sold Joseph for *twenty shekels*, each had more than *two shekels* as *his* share in this most infamous transaction.

Verse 29. Reuben returned unto the pit] It appears he was absent when the caravan passed by, to whom the other brethren had sold Joseph.

Verse 30. The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?] The words in the original are very plaintive, *ab yna hna ynaaw wnyya dl yh haiyeled einennu, vaani anah, ani ba!*

Verse 32. Sent the coat of many colours-to their father] What *deliberate cruelty* to torture the feelings of their aged father, and thus harrow up his soul!

Verse 33. Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces!] It is likely he inferred this from the *lacerated* state of the coat, which, in order the better to cover their wickedness, they had not only besmeared with the blood of the goat, but it is probable reduced to *tatters*. And what must a father’s heart have felt in such a case! As this coat is rent, so is the body of my beloved son rent in pieces! and *Jacob rent his clothes*.

Verse 35. All his sons and all his daughters] He had only one daughter, *Dinah*; but his *sons’ wives* may be here included. But what hypocrisy in his sons to attempt to comfort him concerning the death of a son who they

knew was alive; and what cruelty to put their aged father to such torture, when, properly speaking, there was no ground for it!

Verse 36. Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's] The word *syrs saris*, translated *officer*, signifies a *eunuch*; and lest any person should imagine that because this Potiphar *had a wife*, therefore it is absurd to suppose him to have been a *eunuch*, let such persons know that it is not uncommon in the east for eunuchs to have *wives*, nay, some of them have even a *harem* or *seraglio* where they keep many women, though it does not appear that they have any *progeny*; and probably discontent on *this ground* might have contributed as much to the unfaithfulness of Potiphar's wife, as that less principled motive through which it is commonly believed she acted.

Captain of the guard.] *μυj bch rc sar kattabbachim*, *chief of the butchers*; a most appropriate name for the guards of an eastern despot. If a person offend one of the despotic eastern princes, the order to one of the life-guards is, *Go and bring me his head*; and this command is instantly obeyed, without judge, jury, or any form of law. Potiphar, we may therefore suppose, was captain of those *guards* whose business it was to take care of the royal person, and execute his sovereign will on all the objects of his displeasure. Reader, if thou hast the happiness to live under the British constitution, be thankful to God. *Here*, the will, the power, and utmost influence of the king, were he even so disposed, cannot deprive the meanest subject of his property, his liberty, or his life. All the solemn legal forms of justice must be consulted; the culprit, however accused, be heard by himself and his *counsel*; and in the end twelve honest, impartial men, chosen from among his fellows, shall decide on the validity of the evidence produced by the accuser. For the *trial by jury*, as well as for innumerable political blessings, may God make the inhabitants of Great Britain thankful!

1. WITH this chapter the history of Joseph commences, and sets before our eyes such a scene of wonders wrought by Divine Providence in such a variety of surprising instances, as cannot fail to confirm our faith in God, show the propriety of resignation to his will, and confidence in his dispensations, and prove that all things work together for good to them that love him. Joseph has often been considered as a type of Christ, and this subject in the hands of different persons has assumed a great variety of colouring. The following parallels appear the most probable; but I shall not pledge myself for the propriety of any of them: "Jesus Christ, prefigured by Joseph, the beloved of his father, and by him sent to visit his brethren, is

the innocent person whom his brethren sold for a few pieces of silver, the bargain proposed by his brother *Judah*, (Greek *Judas*,) the very namesake of that disciple and *brother* (for so Christ vouchsafes to call him) who sold his Lord and Master; and who by this means became their Lord and Saviour; nay, the Saviour of *strangers*, and of the whole world; which had not happened but for this plot of destroying him, the act of rejecting, and exposing him to sale. In both examples we find the same fortune and the same innocence: Joseph in the prison between two criminals; Jesus on the cross between two thieves. Joseph foretells deliverance to one of his companions and death to the other, from the same omens: of the two thieves, one reviles Christ, and perishes in his crimes; the other believes, and is assured of a speedy entrance into paradise. Joseph requests the person that should be delivered to be mindful of him in his glory; the person saved by Jesus Christ entreats his deliverer to remember him when he came into his kingdom.”-See *Pascal’s Thoughts*. Parallels and coincidences of this kind should always be received cautiously, for where the Spirit of God has not marked a direct resemblance, and obviously referred to it as such in some other part of his word, it is bold, if not dangerous, to say “such and such *things* and *persons* are types of Christ.” We have instances sufficiently numerous, legitimately attested, without having recourse to those which are of dubious import and precarious application. See the observation on **Clarke** “⁰⁴⁴²³Genesis 40:23”.

2. Envy has been defined, “pain felt, and malignity conceived, at the sight of excellence or happiness in another.” Under this detestable passion did the brethren of Joseph labour; and had not God particularly interposed, it would have destroyed both its subjects and its object, Perhaps there is no vice which so directly filiates itself on Satan, as this does. In opposition to the assertion that *we cannot envy that by which we profit*, it may be safely replied that we may envy our neighbour’s *wisdom*, though he gives us good counsel; his *riches*, though he supplies our wants; and his *greatness*, though he employs it for our protection.

3. How ruinous are family distractions! A house divided against itself cannot stand. Parents should take good heed that their own conduct be not the first and most powerful cause of such dissensions, by exciting *envy* in some of their children through undue *partiality* to others; but it is in vain to speak to most parents on the subject; they will give way to foolish predilections, till, in the prevailing distractions of their families, they meet

with the punishment of their imprudence, when regrets are vain, and the evil past remedy.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 38

Judah marries the daughter of a Canaanite, 1, 2; and begets of her Er, 3, Onan, 4, and Shelah, 5. Er marries Tamar, 6; is slain for his wickedness, 7. Onan, required to raise up seed to his brother, refuses, 8, 9. He also is slain, 10. Judah promises his son Shelah to Tamar, when he should be of age; but performs not his promise, 11. Judah's wife dies, 12. Tamar in disguise receives her father-in-law, he leaves his signet, bracelets, and staff in her hand, and she conceives by him, 13-23. Judah is informed that his daughter-in-law is with child; and, not knowing that himself was the father, condemns her to be burnt, 24. She produces the signet, bracelets, and staff, and convicts Judah, 25, 26. She is delivered of twins, who are called Pharez and Zarah, 27-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 38

Verse 1. And it came to pass at that time] The facts mentioned here could not have happened at the times mentioned in the preceding chapter, as those times are all unquestionably too recent, for the very earliest of the transactions here recorded must have occurred long before the selling of Joseph. Mr. Ainsworth remarks “that Judah and his sons must have married when very young, else the chronology will not agree. For Joseph was born *six* years before Jacob left Laban and came into Canaan; ^{<01302>}**Genesis 30:25**, and ^{<01314>}**Genesis 31:41**. Joseph was *seventeen* years old when he was sold into Egypt, ^{<01370>}**Genesis 37:2,25**; he was *thirty* years old when he interpreted Pharaoh's dream, ^{<01414>}**Genesis 41:46**. And *nine* years after, when there had been *seven* years of plenty and *two* years of famine, did Jacob with his family go down into Egypt, ^{<01415>}**Genesis 41:53, 54**, and ^{<01450>}**Genesis 45:6, 11**. And at their going down thither, Pharez, the son of Judah, whose birth is set down at the end of this chapter, had two sons, Hezron and Hamul, ^{<01408>}**Genesis 46:8, 12**. Seeing then from the selling of Joseph unto Israel's going down into Egypt there cannot be above *twenty-three* years, how is it possible that Judah should take a wife, and have by her three sons successively, and Shelah the youngest of the three be marriageable when Judah begat Pharez of Tamar, ^{<01384>}**Genesis 38:14, 24**, and Pharez be grown up, married, and have *two* sons, all within so short a space? The *time* therefore here spoken of seems to have been soon after Jacob's coming to Shechem, ^{<01318>}**Genesis 33:18**, before the history of Dinah, ^{<01340>}**Genesis 34:1-31**, though Moses for special cause relates it in

this place.” I should rather suppose that this chapter originally stood after ^{<01330>}**Genesis 33:1-20**, and that it got by accident into this place. Dr. Hales, observing that some of Jacob’s son must have married remarkably young, says that “Judah was about *forty-seven* years old when Jacob’s family settled in Egypt. He could not therefore have been above *fifteen* at the birth of his eldest son *Er*; nor *Er* more than *fifteen* at his marriage with Tamar; nor could it have been more than *two* years after *Er*’s death till the birth of Judah’s twin sons by his daughter-in-law Tamar; nor could *Pharez*, one of them, be more than *fifteen* at the birth of his twin sons *Herron* and *Hamul*, supposing they were twins, just born before the departure from Canaan. For the aggregate of these numbers, 15, 15, 2, 15, or 47 years, gives the age of Judah; compare ^{<01301>}**Genesis 38:1-30** with ^{<014612>}**Genesis 46:12**.” See the remarks of Dr. Kennicott, at the end of **Clarke’s note at** ^{<013155>}**Genesis 31:55**”.

Adullamite] An inhabitant of Adullam, a city of Canaan, afterwards given for a possession to the sons of Judah, ^{<061501>}**Joshua 15:1,35**. It appears as if this Adullamite had kept a kind of *lodging house*, for *Shuah* the Canaanite and his family lodged with him; and *there* Judah lodged also. As the woman was a Canaanitess, Judah had the example of his fathers to prove at least the impropriety of such a connection.

Verse 5. And he was at Chezib when she bare him.] This town is supposed to be the same with *Achzib*, which fell to the tribe of Judah, ^{<061544>}**Joshua 15:44**. “The name,” says Ainsworth, “has in Hebrew the signification of *lying*; and to it the prophet alludes, saying *the houses of Achzib shall be (Achzab) a lie to the kings of Israel*, ^{<3001>}**Micah 1:14**.”

Verse 7. Er-was wicked in the sight of the Lord] What this wickedness consisted in we are not told; but the phrase *sight of the Lord* being added, proves that it was some very great evil. It is worthy of remark that the Hebrew word used to express *Er*’s wickedness is *his own name*, the letters *reversed*. *Er* **r** [wicked, [**r** *ra*. As if the inspired writer had said, “Er was altogether wicked, a completely abandoned character.”

Verse 9. Onan knew that the seed should not be his] That is, that the child begotten of his brother’s widow should be reckoned as the child of his deceased brother, and *his* name, though the real father of it, should not appear in the genealogical tables.

Verse 10. Wherefore he slew him also.] The sin of Onan has generally been supposed to be *self-pollution*; but this is certainly a mistake; his crime was *his refusal to raise up seed to his brother*, and rather than do it, by the act mentioned above, he rendered himself incapable of it. We find from this history that long before the Mosaic law it was an established custom, probably founded on a Divine precept, that if a man died childless his brother was to take his wife, and the children produced by this second marriage were considered as the children of the first husband, and in consequence inherited his possessions.

Verse 12. In process of time] This phrase, which is in general use in the Bible, needs explanation; the original is **מִיָּמִיחַ וּבְרַיִו** *valyirbu haiyamim*, and the days were multiplied. Though it implies an indefinite time, yet it generally embraces a pretty long period, and in this place may mean *several years*.

Verse 15. Thought her to be a harlot] See the original of this term, ^{<0138>}**Genesis 34:31**. The Hebrew is **זֹנָה** *zonah*, and signifies generally a person who prostitutes herself to the public for hire, or one who lives by the public; and hence very likely applied to a *publican*, a *tavern-keeper*, or *hostess*, ^{<0100>}**Joshua 2:1**; translated by the Septuagint, and in the New Testament, **πορνῆ**, from **πρῶναι**, to sell, which certainly may as well apply to her *goods* as to her *person*.

It appears that in very ancient times there were public persons of this description; and they generally veiled themselves, sat in public places by the highway side, and received certain *hire*. Though *adultery* was reputed a very flagrant crime, yet this public prostitution was not; for persons whose characters were on the whole morally good had connections with them. But what could be expected from an age in which there was no *written* Divine revelation, and consequently the bounds of right and wrong were not sufficiently ascertained? This defect was supplied in a considerable measure by the *law* and the *prophets*, and now completely by the *Gospel of Christ*.

Verse 17. Wilt thou give me a pledge till thou send it?] The word **עֲרָבֹן** *erabon* signifies an *earnest* of something promised, a *part of the price* agreed for between a buyer and seller, by *giving* and *receiving* of which the bargain was ratified; or a *deposit*, which was to be restored when the thing promised should be given. St. Paul uses the same word in Greek

letters, **απαβων**, ^{<0122>}2 Corinthians 1:22; Eph 1:14. From the use of the term in this history we may at once see what the apostle means by the *Holy Spirit being the EARNEST*, **απαβων**, *of the promised inheritance*; viz., *a security given in hand for the fulfilment of all God's promises* relative to grace and eternal life. We may learn from this that eternal life will be given in the great day to all who can produce this *erabon* or *pledge*. He who has the *earnest of the Spirit* then in his heart shall not only be saved from death, but have that *eternal life* of which it is the *pledge* and the evidence. What the pledge given by Judah was, see Clarke on "^{<0125>}Genesis 38:25".

Verse 21. Where is the harlot that was openly by the wayside?] Our translators often render different *Hebrew* words by the same term in *English*, and thus many important shades of meaning, which involve *traits* of character, are lost. In ^{<0125>}Genesis 38:15, Tamar is called a *harlot*, **hnwz** *zonah*, which, as we have already seen, signifies a person who prostitutes herself for *money*. In this verse she is called a *harlot* in our version; but the original is not **hnwz** but **hvdq** *kedeshah*, a holy or *consecrated person*, from **vdq** *kadash*, to *make holy*, or to *consecrate to religious purposes*. And the word here must necessarily signify a person consecrated by prostitution to the worship of some impure goddess.

The public prostitutes in the temple of Venus are called **ιεροδουλοι** **γυναικες**, *holy or consecrated female servants*, by *Strabo*; and it appears from the words *zonah* and *kedeshah* above, that impure rites and public prostitution prevailed in the worship of the Canaanites in the time of Judah. And among these people we have much reason to believe that *Astarte* and *Asteroth* occupied the same place in their theology as *Venus* did among the Greeks and Romans, and were worshipped with the same impure rites.

Verse 23. Lest we be shamed] Not of the *act*, for this he does not appear to have thought criminal; but lest he should fall under the raillery of his companions and neighbours, for having been tricked out of his signet, bracelets, and staff, by a prostitute.

Verse 24. Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.] As he had ordered Tamar to live as a widow in her own father's house till his son Shelah should be marriageable, he considers her therefore as the wife of his son; and as Shelah was not yet given to her, and she is found with child, she is reputed by him as an *adulteress*, and *burning*, it seems, was anciently the punishment of this crime. *Judah*, being a patriarch or head of a family, had,

according to the custom of those times, the supreme magisterial authority over all the branches of his own family; therefore he only acts here in his juridical capacity. How strange that in the very place where *adultery* was punished by the most violent death, *prostitution for money* and for religious purposes should be considered as no crime!

Verse 25. The signet] *tmtj chothemeth*, properly a *seal*, or instrument with which *impressions* were made to ascertain property, &c. These exist in all countries.

Bracelets] *pyl ytp pethilim*, from *l tp pathal*, to twist, wreath, twine, may signify a girdle or a collar by which precedence, &c., might be indicated; not the muslin, silk, or linen wreath of his turban, as Mr. Harmer has conjectured.

Staff.] *hcm matteh*, either what we would call a common walking stick, or the staff which was the ensign of his tribe.

Verse 26. She hath been more righteous than I] It is probable that Tamar was influenced by no other motive than that which was common to all the Israelitish women, *the desire to have children who might be heirs of the promise made to Abraham*, &c. And as Judah had obliged her to continue in her widowhood under the promise of giving her his son Shelah when he should be of age, consequently his refusing or delaying to accomplish this promise was a breach of truth, and an injury done to Tamar.

Verse 28. The midwife-bound upon his hand a scarlet thread] The binding of the scarlet thread about the wrist of the child whose arm appeared first in the birth, serves to show us how *solicitously* the privileges of the *birthright* were preserved. Had not this caution been taken by the midwife, *Pharez* would have had the right of *primogeniture* to the prejudice of his elder brother *Zarah*. And yet *Pharez* is usually reckoned in the genealogical tables before *Zarah*; and from him, not *Zarah*, does the line of our Lord proceed. See ^{<BOOK>}**Matthew 1:3**. Probably the two brothers, as being twins, were conjoined in the privileges belonging to the *birthright*.

Verse 29. How hast thou broken forth?] *txrp hm mah paratsta*, this *breach be upon thee*, *xrp Ēyl [aleycka parets*; thou shalt bear the name of the *breach* thou hast made, i.e., in coming first into the world. Therefore

his name was called **xrp** *Parets*, i.e., the person who made the *breach*. The *breach* here mentioned refers to a certain circumstance in parturition which it is unnecessary to explain.

Verse 30. His name was called Zarah.] hrz *Zarach*, risen or sprung up, applied to the sun, rising and diffusing his light. "He had this name," says Ainsworth, "because he should have risen, i.e., have been born first, but for the breach which his brother made."

THERE are several subjects in this chapter on which it may not be unprofitable to spend a few additional moments.

1. The insertion of this chapter is a farther proof of the *impartiality* of the sacred writer. The facts detailed, considered in *themselves*, can reflect no credit on the patriarchal history; but *Judah, Tamar, Zarah, and Pharez*, were progenitors of the Messiah, and therefore their birth must be recorded; and as the *birth*, so also the *circumstances* of that birth, which, even had they not a higher end in view, would be valuable as casting light upon some very ancient *customs*, which it is interesting to understand. These are not forgotten in the preceding notes.

2. On what is generally reputed to be the *sin of Onan*, something very pointed should be spoken. But *who* dares and will do it, and in *such language* that it may neither pollute the ear by describing the evil *as it is*, nor fail of its effect by a language so refined and so laboriously delicate as to *cover the sin* which it professes to disclose? *Elaborate treatises* on the subject will never be read by those who need them most, and *anonymous pamphlets* are not likely to be regarded.

The sin of *self-pollution*, which is generally considered to be that of Onan, is one of the most destructive evils ever practised by fallen man. In many respects it is several degrees worse than common whoredom, and has in its train more awful consequences, though practised by numbers who would shudder at the thought of criminal connections with a prostitute. It excites the powers of nature to *undue action*, and produces *violent secretions*, which necessarily and speedily *exhaust the vital principle and energy*; hence the muscles become flaccid and feeble, the tone and natural action of the nerves relaxed and impeded, the understanding confused, the memory oblivious, the judgment perverted, the will indeterminate and wholly without energy to resist; the eyes appear languishing and without expression, and the countenance vacant; the *appetite ceases*, for the

stomach is incapable of performing its proper office; *nutrition fails*, tremors, fears, and terrors are generated; and thus the wretched victim drags out a most miserable existence, till, *superannuated* even before he had time to arrive at *man's estate*, with a mind often debilitated even to a state of idiotism, his worthless body tumbles into the grave, and his guilty soul (guilty of self-murder) is hurried into the awful presence of its Judge! Reader, this is no caricature, nor are the colourings overcharged in this shocking picture. Worse woes than my pen can relate I have witnessed in those addicted to this fascinating, unnatural, and most destructive of crimes. If *thou* hast entered into this snare, flee from the destruction both of body and soul that awaits thee! God alone can save thee. Advice, warnings, threatenings, increasing debility of body, mental decay, checks of conscience, expostulations of judgment and medical assistance, will all be lost on thee: God, and God *alone*, can save them from an evil which has in its issue the destruction of thy body, and the final perdition of thy soul! Whether this may have been the sin of *Onan* or not, is a matter at present of small moment; it may be *thy sin*; therefore take heed lest *God slay thee for it*. The intelligent reader will see that prudence forbids me to enter any farther into this business. See the remarks at the end of **Clarke's note at** “^{<01.321>}**Genesis 39:21**”.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 39

Joseph, being brought to Potiphar's house, prospers in all his undertakings, 1-3. Potiphar makes him his overseer, 4. Is prospered in all his concerns for Joseph's sake, in whom he puts unlimited confidence, 5, 6. The wife of Potiphar solicits him to criminal correspondence, 7. He refuses, and makes a fine apology for his conduct, 8, 9. She continues her solicitations, and he his refusals, 10. She uses violence, and he escapes from her hand, 11-13. She accuses him to the domestics, 14, 15, and afterward to Potiphar, 16-18. Potiphar is enraged, and Joseph is cast into prison, 19, 20. The Lord prospers him, and gives him great favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison, 21, who intrusts him with the care of the house and all the prisoners, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 39

Verse 1. An officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard] Mr. Ainsworth, supposing that his office merely consisted in having charge of the king's prisoners, calls Potiphar *provost marshal*! See Clarke on "⁻⁰¹³⁷³⁶Genesis 37:36", See Clarke on "⁻⁰¹⁴⁰⁸Genesis 40:3".

Verse 4. He made him overseer] *dyqph hiphkid*, from *dqp pakad*, to visit, take care of, superintend; the same as *ἐπισκοπος*, overseer or bishop, among the Greeks. This is the term by which the Septuagint often express the meaning of the original.

Verse 6. Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.] *harm hpyw rat hpy yepkeh thoar, vipheh mareh, beautiful in his person, and beautiful in his countenance.* The same expressions are used relative to Rachel; see them explained ⁻⁰¹²⁹¹⁷Genesis 29:17. The beauty of Joseph is celebrated over all the East, and the Persian poets vie with each other in descriptions of his comeliness. Mohammed spends the twelfth chapter of the Koran entirely on Joseph, and represents him as a perfect beauty, and the most accomplished of mortals. From his account, the passion of *Zuleekha* (for so the Asiatics call Potiphar's wife) being known to the ladies of the court, they cast the severest reflections upon her: in order to excuse herself, she invited forty of them to dine with her, put knives in their hands, and gave them oranges to cut, and caused Joseph to attend. When they saw him they were struck with admiration, and so confounded,

that instead of cutting their oranges they cut and hacked their own hands, crying out, [Arabic] *hasha lillahi ma hadha bashara in hadha illa malakon kareemon*. “O God! this is not a human being, this is none other than a glorious angel!”-Surat xii., verse 32.

Two of the finest poems in the Persian language were written by the poets *Jamy* and *Nizamy* on the subject of Joseph and his mistress; they are both entitled *Yusuf we Zuleekha*. These poems represent Joseph as the most beautiful and pious of men; and Zuleekha the most chaste, virtuous, and excellent of women, previous to her having seen Joseph; but they state that when she saw him she was so deeply affected by his beauty that she lost all self-government, and became a slave to her passion. Hafiz expresses this, and apologizes for her conduct in the following elegant couplet:—

[Arabic]

[Arabic]

*Men az an husn-i roz afzoon keh Yusuf dasht danistam
Keh ishk az pardah-i ismat beroon arad Zuleekhara.*

*“I understand, from the daily increasing beauty which Joseph possessed,
How love tore away the veil of chastity from Zuleekha.”*

The Persian poets and eastern historians, however, contrive to carry on a sort of guiltless passion between them till the death of *Potiphar*, when Zuleekha, grown old, is restored to youth and beauty by the power of God, and becomes the wife of Joseph. What *traditions* they had beside the Mosaic text for what they say on this subject, are now unknown; but the whole story, with innumerable embellishments, is so generally current in the East that I thought it not amiss to take this notice of it. The twelfth chapter of the Koran, which celebrates the beauty, piety, and acts of this patriarch, is allowed to be one of the finest specimens of Arabic composition ever formed; and the history itself, as told by Moses, is one of the most simple, natural, affecting, and well-told narratives ever published. It is a master-piece of composition, and never fails of producing its intended effect on the mind of a careful reader. The Arab lawgiver saw and felt the beauties and excellences of his model; and he certainly put forth all the strength of his own language, and all the energy of his mind, in order to rival it.

Verse 8. My master wotteth not] Knoweth not, from the old Anglo-Saxon [A.S.], *witan*, to know; hence [A.S.], *wit*, *intellect*, *understanding*, *wisdom*, *prudence*.

Verse 9. How then] *Ēyaw veeik*, and how? Joseph gives two most powerful reasons for his noncompliance with the wishes of his mistress: 1. *Gratitude* to his master, to whom he owed all that he had. 2. His *fear of God*, in whose sight it would be a heinous offence, and who would not fail to punish him for it. With the kindness of his master and the displeasure of God before his eyes, how could he be capable of committing an act of transgression, which would at once have distinguished him as the most *ungrateful* and the most *worthless* of men?

Verse 14. He hath brought in a Hebrew unto us] Potiphar's wife affects to throw great blame on her *husband*, whom we may reasonably suppose she did not greatly love. He *hath brought in*-he hath raised this person to all his dignity and eminence, to give him the greater opportunity to mock us. **qj pl** *letsachek*, here translated *to mock*, is the same word used in ^{<01208>}**Genesis 26:8**, relative to Isaac and Rebekah; and is certainly used by Potiphar's wife in ^{<01397>}**Genesis 39:17**, to signify some kind of familiar intercourse not allowable but between man and wife.

Verse 20. Put him into the prison] **rhs tyb** *beith sohar*, literally the *round house*; in such a *form* the prison was probably built.

Verse 21. The Lord was with Joseph] It is but of little consequence where the lot of a servant of God may be cast; like Joseph he is ever employed for his master, and God honours him and prospers his work.

1. HE who acknowledges God in all his ways, has the promise that God shall direct all his steps. Joseph's captivity shall promote God's glory; and to this end God works *in him, for him, by him*. Even the irreligious can see when the Most High distinguishes his followers. Joseph's master saw *that Jehovah was with him*; and from this we may learn that the knowledge of the *true God* was in Egypt, even before the time of Joseph, though his worship was neither established nor even tolerated there. Both *Abraham* and *Isaac* had been in Egypt, and they had left a savour of true godliness behind them.

2. Joseph's virtue in resisting the solicitations of his mistress was truly exemplary. Had he reasoned after the manner of men, he might have soon

found that the proposed intrigue might be carried on with the utmost secrecy and greatly to his secular advantage. But he chose to risk all rather than injure a kind benefactor, defile his conscience, and sin against God. Such conduct is so exceedingly rare that his example has stood on the records of time as almost without a parallel, admired by all, applauded by most, and in similar circumstances, I am afraid, imitated by few. The fable of the brave and virtuous Bellerophon and Sthenobæa, wife of Proetus, king of the Argives, was probably founded on this history.

3. *Joseph fled and got him out.* To know *when to fight* and *when to fly* are of great importance in the Christian life. Some temptations must be manfully met, resisted, and thus overcome; from others we must *fly*. He who stands to contend or reason, especially in such a case as that mentioned here, is infallibly ruined. *Principiis obsta*, “resist the first overtures of sin,” is a good maxim. After-remedies come too late.

4. A woman of the spirit of Potiphar’s wife is capable of any species of evil. When she could not get her wicked ends answered, she began to *accuse*. This is precisely Satan’s custom: he first tempts men to sin, and then accuses them *as having committed it*, even where the temptation has been faithfully and perseveringly resisted! By this means he can trouble a tender conscience, and weaken faith by bringing confusion into the mind. Thus the inexperienced especially are often distracted and cast down; hence Satan is properly called *the accuser of the brethren*, ^{<61210>}**Revelation 12:10**.

Very useful lessons may be drawn from every part of the relation in this chapter, but detailing the facts and reasoning upon them would be more likely to produce than prevent the evil. An account of this kind cannot be touched with *too gentle* a hand. Others have been *profuse* here; I chose to be *parsimonious*, for reasons which the intelligent reader will feel as well as myself. Let this remark be applied to what has been said on the sin of Onan, see Clarke ^{<01329>}**Genesis 38:29**’.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 40

Pharaoh's chief butler and his chief baker, having offended their lord, are put in prison, 1-3. The captain of the guard gives them into the care of Joseph, 4. Each of them has a dream, 5. Joseph, seeing them sad, questions them on the subject, 6, 7. Their answer, 8. The chief butler tells his dream, 9-11. Joseph interprets it, 12, 13. Gives a slight sketch of his history to the chief butler, and begs him to think upon him when restored to his office, 14, 15. The chief baker tells his dream, 16,17. Joseph interprets this also, 18,19. Both dreams are fulfilled according to the interpretation, the chief butler being restored to his office, and the chief baker hanged, 20-22. The chief butler makes no interest for Joseph, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 40

Verse 1. The butler] *hqvm mashkeh*, the same as [Arabic] *saky* among the Arabians and Persians, and signifying a *cup-bearer*.

Baker] *hpa opheh*; rather *cook, confectioner*, or the like.

Had offended] They had probably been accused of attempting to take away the king's life, one by poisoning his drink, the other by poisoning his *bread or confectionaries*.

Verse 3. Where Joseph was bound.] The place in which Joseph was now *confined*; this is what is implied in being *bound*; for, without doubt, he had his *personal* liberty. As the butler and the baker were state criminals they were put in the same prison with Joseph, which we learn from the preceding chapter, ^{<01321>}**Genesis 39:20**, was the *king's prison*. All the officers in the employment of the ancient kings of Egypt were, according to *Diodorus Siculus*, taken from the most illustrious families of the priesthood in the country; no slave or common person being ever permitted to serve in the presence of the king. As these persons, therefore, were of the most noble families, it is natural to expect they would be put, when accused, into the *state prison*.

Verse 4. They continued a season] *μyym yamim*, literally *days; how long* we cannot tell. But many suppose the word signifies a *complete year*; and as Pharaoh called them to an account on his *birthday*, ^{<01411>}**Genesis 40:20**,

Calmet supposes they had offended on the preceding *birthday*, and thus had been one whole year in prison.

Verse 5. Each man according to the interpretation] Not like dreams in general, the disordered workings of the mind, the consequence of disease or repletion; these were dreams that had an interpretation, that is, that were *prophetic*.

Verse 6. They were sad.] They concluded that their dreams portended something of great importance, but they could not tell *what*.

Verse 8. There is no interpreter] They either had access to none, or those to whom they applied could give them no consistent, satisfactory meaning.

Do not interpretations belong to God?] God alone, the Supreme Being, knows what is in futurity; and if he have sent a significant dream, he alone can give the solution.

Verse 11. And I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup] From this we find that *wine* anciently was the *mere expressed juice of the grape*, without *fermentation*. The *saky*, or cup-bearer, took the bunch, pressed the juice into the cup, and instantly delivered it into the hands of his master. This was anciently the *ˆyy yain* of the *Hebrews*, the *οινος* of the *Greeks*, and the *mustum* of the ancient *Latins*.

Verse 12. The three branches are three days] That is, The three branches signify three days; so, *this IS my body*, that is, this bread *signifies* or *represents* my body; *this cup IS my blood*, REPRESENTS *my blood*; a form of speech frequently used in the sacred writings, for the Hebrew has no proper word by which our terms *signifies*, *represents*, &c., are expressed; therefore it says such a thing IS, for *represents*, *points out*, &c. And because several of our ancestors would understand such words in their *true*, *genuine*, *critical*, and *sole meaning*, Queen Mary, Bishops Gardiner, Bonner, and the rest of that demoniacal crew, reduced them to ashes in Smithfield and elsewhere!

Verse 14. Make mention of me unto Pharaoh] One would have supposed that the very circumstance of his restoration, according to the prediction of Joseph, would have almost necessarily prevented him from forgetting so extraordinary a person. But what have mere *courtiers* to do either with *gratitude* or *kindness*?

Verse 15. For indeed I was stolen] yt**ng** **ng** *gunnob gunnobti, stolen, I have been stolen*-most assuredly I was stolen; and here also have I done nothing. These were simple assertions, into the proof of which he was ready to enter if called on.

Verse 19. Lift up thy head from off thee] Thus we find that *beheading, hanging, and gibbeting*, were modes of punishment among the ancient Egyptians; but the criminal was beheaded before he was hanged, and then either hanged on hooks, or by the hands. See ^{<2862>}**Lamentations 5:12**.

Verse 20. Pharaoh's birthday] The distinguishing a birthday by a feast appears from this place to have been a very ancient custom. It probably had its origin from a correct notion of the immortality of the soul, as the *commencement* of life must appear of great consequence to that person who believed he was to live for ever. St. Matthew (^{<4046>}**Matthew 14:6**) mentions Herod's keeping his birthday; and examples of this kind are frequent to the present time in most nations.

Lifted up the head of the chief butler, &c.] By lifting up the head, probably no more is meant than bringing them to trial, tantamount to what was done by Jezebel and the nobles of Israel to Naboth: *Set Naboth on high among the people; and set two men, sons of Belial, to bear witness against him, &c.*; ^{<12109>}**1 Kings 21:9**, &c. The issue of the trial was, the baker alone was found *guilty* and hanged; and the butler, being *acquitted*, was restored to his office.

Verse 23. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph] Had he mentioned the circumstance to Pharaoh, there is no doubt that Joseph's case would have been examined into, and he would in consequence have been restored to his liberty; but, owing to the ingratitude of the chief butler, he was left *two years* longer in prison,

MANY commentators have seen in *every circumstance* in the history of Joseph a parallel between him and our blessed Lord. So, "Joseph in prison represents Christ in the custody of the Jews; the chief butler and the chief baker represent the two thieves which were crucified with our Lord; and as one thief was pardoned, and the other left to perish, so the chief butler was restored to his office, and the chief baker hanged." I believe GOD never designed such parallels; and I am astonished to find comparatively grave and judicious men trifling in this way, and forcing the features of *truth* into the most distorted anamorphosis, so that even her friends blush to

acknowledge her. This is not a light matter; we should beware how we attribute designs to God that he never had, and employ the Holy Spirit in forming trifling and unimportant similitudes. Of plain, direct truth we shall find as much in the sacred writings as we can receive and comprehend; let us not therefore hew out unto ourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. Interpretations of this kind only tend to render the sacred writings uncertain; to expose to ridicule all the solemn types and figures which it really contains; and to furnish pretexts to infidels and irreligious people to scoff at all spirituality, and lead them to reject the word of GOD entirely, as incapable of being interpreted on any fixed or rational plan. The mischief done by this system is really incalculable. See the observations on **Clarke's notes** "⁴⁻⁰¹³⁷³⁶**Genesis 37:36**".

GENESIS

CHAPTER 41

Pharaoh's dream of the seven well-favoured and seven ill-favoured kine, 1-4. His dream of the seven full and seven thin ears of corn, 5-7. The magicians and wise men applied to for the interpretation of them, but could give no solution, 8. The chief butler recollects and recommends Joseph, 9-13. Pharaoh commands him to be brought out of prison, 14. Joseph appears before Pharaoh, 15, 16. Pharaoh repeats his dreams, 17-24. Joseph interprets them, 25-32, and gives Pharaoh directions how to provide against the approaching scarcity, 33-36. Pharaoh, pleased with the counsel, appoints Joseph to be superintendent of all his affairs, 37-41. Joseph receives the badges of his new office, 42, 43, and has his powers defined, 44; receives a new name, and marries Asenath, daughter of Poti-Pherah, priest of ON, 45. Joseph's age when brought before Pharaoh, 46. Great fertility of Egypt in the seven plenteous years, 47. Joseph hoards up the grain, 48, 49. Ephraim and Manasseh born, 50-52. The seven years of famine commence with great rigour, 53-55. Joseph opens the storehouses to the Egyptians, 56. People from the neighbouring countries come to Egypt to buy corn, the famine being in all those lands, 57.

NOTES ON CHAP. 41

Verse 1. Two full years] $\mu\upsilon\mu\upsilon\ \mu\upsilon\tau\eta\nu$ *shenathayim yamim*, two years of days, two complete solar revolutions, after the events mentioned in the preceding chapter.

The river.] The Nile, the cause of the fertility of Egypt.

Verse 2. There came up out of the river seven well-favoured kine] This must certainly refer to the *hippopotamus* or river horse, as the circumstances of *coming up out of the river and feeding in the field* characterize that animal *alone*. The hippopotamus is the well-known inhabitant of the Nile, and frequently by night comes out of the river to feed in the fields, or in the sedge by the river side.

Verse 6. Blasted with the east wind] It has been very properly observed that all the mischief done to corn or fruit, by blasting, smutting, mildews, locusts, &c., is attributed to the east wind. See ^{<121013>} **Exodus 10:13; 14:21;** ^{<19736>} **Psalm 78:26;** ^{<35710>} **Ezekiel 17:10;** ^{<32048>} **Jonah 4:8.** In Egypt it is peculiarly destructive, because it comes through the parched deserts of Arabia, often destroying vast numbers of men and women. The destructive

nature of the *simoom* or *sloom* is mentioned by almost all travellers. Mr. Bruce speaks of it in his Travels in Egypt. On their way to Syene, *Idris* their guide, seeing one of these destroying blasts coming, cried out with a loud voice to the company, "Fall upon your faces, for here is the *simoom*! I saw," says Mr. B., "from the *S. E.* a haze come, in colour like the purple part of the rainbow, but not so compressed or thick. It did not occupy *twenty* yards in breadth, and was about *twelve* feet high from the ground. It was a kind of blush upon the air, and it moved very rapidly, for I scarce could turn to fall upon the ground, with my head northward, when I felt the heat of its current plainly upon my face. We all lay flat upon the ground, as if dead, till *Idris* told us it was blown over. The meteor or purple haze which I saw was indeed passed, but the light air that still blew was of a heat to threaten suffocation. for my part, I found distinctly in my breast that I had imbibed a part of it; nor was I free from an asthmatic sensation till I had been some months in Italy, at the bathe of Poretta, near two years afterwards."-Travels, vol. vi., p. 462. On another occasion the whole company were made ill by one of these pestilential blasts, so that they had scarcely strength to load their camels.-ibid., p. 484. The action of this destructive wind is referred to by the Prophet ²⁸¹³⁵**Hosea 13:15**:
Though he be fruitful among his brethren, an EAST WIND shall come, the wind of the Lord shall come up FROM THE WILDERNESS, and his spring shall BECOME DRY, and his fountain shall be DRIED up: he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels.

Verse 8. Called for all the magicians] **μymcrj** *chartummim*. The word here used may probably mean no more than *interpreters of abstruse and difficult subjects*; and especially of the Egyptian *hieroglyphics*, an art which is now entirely lost. It is most likely that the term is Egyptian, and consequently its etymology must remain unknown to us. If Hebrew, Mr. Parkhurst's definition may be as good as any: "**crj** *cheret, a pen or instrument to write or draw with, and* **ματth[w** *tam, to perfect or accomplish*; those who were perfect in drawing their sacred, astrological, and hieroglyphical figures or characters, and who, by means of them, pretended to extraordinary feats, among which was the interpretation of dreams. They seem to have been such persons as Josephus (Ant., lib. ii., c. 9, s. 2) calls **ιερογραμματεις** *sacred scribes, or professors of sacred learning.*"

Wise men] *hymkj chacameyha*, the persons who, according to Porphyry, “addicted themselves to the worship of God and the study of wisdom, passing their whole life in the contemplation of Divine things. Contemplation of the stars, self-purification, arithmetic, and geometry, and singing hymns in honour of their gods, was their continual employment.”-See *Dodd*. It was probably among these that Pythagoras conversed, and from whom he borrowed that modest name by which he wished his countrymen to distinguish him, viz., *φιλοσοφος*, a *philosopher*, simply, a *lover of wisdom*.

Verse 9. I do remember my faults] It is not possible he could have *forgotten* the circumstance to which he here alludes; it was too intimately connected with all that was dear to him, to permit him ever to forget it. But it was not *convenient* for him to remember this before; and probably he would not have remembered it now, had he not seen, that giving this information in such a case was likely to serve his own interest. We are justified in thinking evil of this man because of his scandalous neglect of a person who foretold the rescue of his life from imminent destruction, and who, being unjustly confined, prayed to have his case fairly represented to the king that justice might be done him; but this *courtier*, though then in the same circumstances himself, found it convenient to forget the *poor, friendless Hebrew slave!*

Verse 14. They brought him hastily out of the dungeon] Pharaoh was in perplexity on account of his dreams; and when he heard of Joseph, he sent *immediately* to get him brought before him. He *shaved* himself-having let his beard grow all the time he was in prison, he now *trimmed* it, for it is not likely that either the Egyptians or Hebrews *shaved themselves* in our sense of the word: the change of raiment was, no doubt, furnished out of the king’s wardrobe; as Joseph, in his present circumstances, could not be supposed to have any changes of raiment.

Verse 16. It is not in me, &c.] *yd[l b biladai*, *without or independently of me*-I am not essential to thy comfort, God himself has thee under his care. And *he will send thee*, or answer thee, *peace*; thou shalt have *prosperity* (*μwl c shelom*) howsoever ominous thy dreams may appear. By this answer he not only conciliated the mind of the king, but led him to expect his help from that GOD from whom alone all comfort, protection, and prosperity, must proceed.

Verse 18. Seven kine, fat-fleshed] See Clarke on “^{◀-014102}Genesis 41:2”.

And observe farther, that the seven fat and the seven lean kine coming out of the same river plainly show, at once, the *cause* both of the *plenty* and the *dearth*. It is well known that there is scarcely any *rain* in Egypt; and that the country depends for its fertility on the overflowing of the Nile; and that the fertility is in proportion to the *duration* and *quantity* of the overflow. We may therefore safely conclude that the seven years of plenty were owing to an *extraordinary overflowing* of the Nile; and that the seven years of dearth were occasioned by a very partial, or total want of this essentially necessary inundation. Thus then the *two sorts of cattle*, signifying years of *plenty* and *want*, might be said to *come out of the same river*, as the inundation was either complete, partial, or wholly restrained. See Clarke on “^{◀-014131}Genesis 41:31”.

Verse 21. And when they had eaten them up, &c.] Nothing can more powerfully mark the excess and severity of the famine than creatures of the beeve or of the hippopotamus kind eating each other, and yet without any effect; remaining as lean and as wretched as they were before. A sense of want increases the appetite, and stimulates the digestive powers to unusual action; hence the concoction of the food becomes very rapid, and it is hurried through the intestines before its nutritive particles can be sufficiently absorbed; and thus, though much is eaten, very little nourishment is derived from it. *And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning.* A most nervous and physically correct description.

Verse 25. God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do.] Joseph thus shows the Egyptian king that though the ordinary cause of plenty or want is the river Nile, yet its inundations are under the direction of God: the dreams are sent by him, not only to signify beforehand the *plenty* and *want*, but to show also that all these circumstances, however fortuitous they may appear to man, are under the direction of an overruling Providence.

Verse 31. The plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following] As Egypt depends for its fertility on the flowing of the Nile, and this flowing is not always equal, there must be a point to which it must rise to saturate the land sufficiently, in order to produce grain sufficient for the support of its inhabitants. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, lib. v., cap. 9, has given us a *scale* by which the plenty and dearth may be ascertained;

and, from what I have been able to collect from modern travellers, this scale may be yet considered as perfectly correct. *Justum incrementum est cubitorum xvi. Minores aquæ non omnia rigant, ampliores detinent, tardius recedendo. HÆ serendi tempora absumunt, solo madente, ILLÆ non dant, sitiente. Utrumque reputat provincia. In xii. cubitis famen sentit. In xiii. etiamnum esurit; xiv. cubita hilaritatem afferunt; xv. securitatem; xvi. delicias.* “The ordinary height of the inundations is *sixteen* cubits. When the waters are lower than this standard they do not overflow the whole ground; when above this standard, they are too long in running off. In the first case the ground is not saturated: by the second, the waters are detained so long on the ground that seed-time is lost. The province marks both. If it rise only *twelve* cubits, a *famine* is the consequence. Even at *thirteen* cubits hunger prevails; *fourteen* cubits produces *general rejoicing*; *fifteen*, *perfect security*; and *sixteen*, all the *luxuries of life.*”

When the Nile rises to *eighteen* cubits it prevents the sowing of the land in due season, and as necessarily produces a famine as when it does not overflow its banks.

Verse 33. A man discreet and wise] As it is impossible that Joseph could have foreseen his own elevation, consequently he gave this advice without any reference to himself. The counsel therefore was either immediately inspired by God, or was dictated by policy, prudence, and sound sense.

Verse 34. Let him appoint officers] *μυδϑρ pekidim*, visitors, overseers: translated by Ainsworth, *bishops*; see ^{<01301>}**Genesis 39:1**.

Take up the fifth part of the land] What is still called the *meery*, or that part of the *produce* which is claimed by the king *by way of tax*. It is probable that in Joseph’s time it was not so much as a *fifth* part, most likely a *tenth*: but as this was an extraordinary occasion, and the earth brought forth by handfuls, ^{<01447>}**Genesis 41:47**, the king would be justified in requiring a *fifth*; and from the great *abundance*, the people could pay this increased tax without feeling it to be oppressive.

Verse 35. Under the hand of Pharaoh] To be completely at the disposal of the king.

Verse 37. The thing was good] Pharaoh and his courtiers saw that the counsel was prudent, and should be carefully followed.

Verse 38. In whom the Spirit of God is?] *pyhl a j wr ruach Elohim*, the identical words used ^{<01012>} **Genesis 1:2**; and certainly to be understood *here* as in the preceding place. If the Egyptians were idolaters, they acknowledged Joseph's God; and it is not to be supposed that they only became acquainted with him on this occasion. The knowledge of the true God was in Egypt long before; but it is very likely that though they acknowledged his influence with respect to Joseph, as they saw most clearly that he acted under an influence far beyond that of their magicians, for *he* interpreted dreams which *they* could not; yet they might, notwithstanding, have their gods many and their lords many at this time, for we know that in religious matters they were exceedingly corrupt afterwards.

Verse 40. According unto thy word shall all my people be ruled]

Literally, *At thy mouth shall all my people kiss*. In the eastern countries it is customary to kiss any thing that comes from a superior, and this is done by way of testifying respect and submission. In this sense the words in the text are to be understood: All the people shall pay the profoundest respect and obedience to all thy orders and commands.

Only in the throne will I be greater than thou.] This, in one word, is a perfect description of a *prime minister*. Thou shalt have the sole management, *under me*, of all state affairs.

Verse 42. And Pharaoh took off his ring-and put it upon Joseph's hand] In this ring was probably set the *king's signet*, by which the royal instruments were sealed; and thus Joseph was constituted what we would call Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal.

Vestures of fine linen] *vv shesh*. Whether this means *linen* or *cotton* is not known. It seems to have been a term by which both were denominated; or it may be some other substance or cloth with which we are unacquainted. If the fine linen of Egypt was such as that which invests the bodies of the mummies, and these in general were persons of the first distinction, and consequently were enveloped in cloth of the finest quality, it was only *fine* comparatively speaking, Egypt being the only place at that time where such cloth was manufactured. I have often examined the cloth about the bodies of the most splendidly ornamented mummies, and found it sackcloth when compared with the fine *Irish* linens. As this *shesh* appears to have been a part of the royal clothing, it was probably both *scarce* and

costly. “By comparing,” says Parkhurst, “^{<12704>}**Exodus 25:4; 26:1**, with ^{<14214>}**2 Chronicles 2:14**, and ^{<12751>}**Exodus 26:31**, with ^{<14314>}**2 Chronicles 3:14**, it appears that **xwb** *buts*, cotton, is called **vv** *shesh*; and by comparing ^{<12842>}**Exodus 28:42**, with ^{<12392>}**Exodus 39:28**, that **db** *bad*, linen, is also called **vv** *shesh*; so that *shesh* seems a name expressive of either of these, from their *cheerful vivid whiteness*.”

Put a gold chain about his neck] This was not merely a *badge* of office. The *chain* might be intended to point out the *union* which should subsist between all parts of the government- the king, his ministers, and the people; as also that *necessary dependence* which they had reciprocally on each other, as well as the *connection* which must be preserved between the different members of the body politic, and the laws and institutions by which they were to be governed. Its being of *gold* might be intended to show the excellence, utility, and permanence of a government constituted on wise, just, and equal laws. We are justified in drawing such inferences as these, because in ancient times, in all nations, every thing was made an *emblem* or *representation* of some spiritual or moral subject it is strange that, probably without adverting to the reasons, the *chain of gold* worn about the neck is in different nations an emblem of *civil authority*.

Verse 43. He made him to ride in the second chariot] That which usually followed the king’s chariot in public ceremonies.

Bow the knee] **Ērba** *abrech*, which we translate *bow the knee*, and which we might as well translate any thing else, is probably an *Egyptian* word, the signification of which is utterly unknown. If we could suppose it to be a *Hebrew* word, it might be considered as compounded of **ba** *ab, father*, and **Ēr** *rach, tender*; for Joseph might be denominated a *father*, because of his *care* over the people, and the *provision* he was making for their preservation; and *tender* because of his *youth*. Or it may be compounded of **ba** *ab, father*, and **Ērb** *barech, blessing*, the latter **b** *beth* being easily lost in the preceding one; and Joseph might have this epithet as well as the other, on account of the care he was taking to turn aside the heavy curse of the seven years of famine, by accumulating the *blessings* of the seven years of plenty. Besides, *father* seems to have been a name of office, and probably *father of the king* or *father of Pharaoh* might signify the same as the *king’s minister* among us; see on ^{<01450>}**Genesis 45:8**. But if it be an *Egyptian* word, it is vain to look for its signification in Hebrew.

Verse 44. I am Pharaoh] The same as if he had said, *I am the king*; for *Pharaoh* was the common title of the sovereigns of Egypt.

Verse 45. Zaphnath-paaneah] The meaning of this title is as little known as that of *abrech* in the preceding verse. Some translate it, *The revealer of secrets*; others, *The treasury of glorious comfort*. St. Jerome translates the whole verse in the most arbitrary manner. *Vertitque nomen ejus, et vocavit eum, lingua Ægyptiaca, Salvatorem mundi*. “And he changed his name, and called him in the Egyptian language, *The saviour of the world*.” None of the Asiatic versions acknowledge this extraordinary gloss, and it is certainly worthy of no regard. The Anglo-Saxon nearly copies the Vulgate: [Anglo-Saxon] And named him in Egyptian, *The healer of the world*. All the etymologies hitherto given of this word are, to say the least of them, *doubtful*. I believe it also to be an Egyptian epithet, designating the office to which he was now raised; and similar to our compound terms, *Prime-Minister, Lord Chancellor, High-Treasurer, Chief Justice, &c.*

Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah] There is no likelihood that the *Poti-pherah* mentioned here is the same as the *Potiphar* who had purchased Joseph, and, on the false accusations of his wife, cast him into prison. 1. The Scripture gives no intimation that they were one and the same person. 2. *Poti-pherah* had children, and *Potiphar* was an *eunuch*; **See Clarke on “⁻⁰¹⁵⁷³⁶Genesis 37:36”**; for though eunuchs often kept women, there is no proof that they had any issue by them.

Priest of On.] For the signification of the word ^{hk} *cohen* or *priest*, **See Clarke on “⁻⁰¹⁴⁴⁸Genesis 14:18”**. On is rendered *Heliopolis* (the city of the sun, [Anglo-Saxon]) by the Septuagint and *Anglo-Saxon*; and it is very likely that this *Poti-pherah* was *intendant* of that *nome* or *province*, under Pharaoh.

Joseph went out over all the land] No doubt for the building of granaries, and appointing proper officers to receive the corn in every place, as Dr. *Dodd* has very properly conjectured.

Verse 46. Joseph was thirty years old] As he was *seventeen* years old when he was sold into Egypt, ⁻⁰¹⁵⁷⁰² **Genesis 37:2**, and was now *thirty*, he must have been *thirteen* years in slavery.

Stood before Pharaoh] This phrase always means admission to the immediate presence of the sovereign, and having the honour of his most

unlimited confidence. Among the Asiatic princes, the privilege of *coming even to their seat, of standing before them, &c.*, was granted only to the highest *favourites*.

Verse 47. The earth brought forth by handfuls.] This probably refers principally to *rice*, as it grows in tufts, a great number of stalks proceeding from the same seed. In those years the Nile probably rose *sixteen* cubits; See Clarke on “^{<0413>}Genesis 41:31”.

Verse 50. Two sons] Whom he called by names expressive of God’s particular and bountiful providence towards him. MANASSEH, *hvnmm menashsheh*, signifies *forgetfulness*, from *hvn nashah*, to *forget*; and EPHRAIM, *μyρπα ephrayim*, *fruitfulness*, from *hrp parah*, to be *fruitful*; and he called his sons by these names, because God had enabled him to *forget* all his toil, disgrace, and affliction, and had made him *fruitful* in the very land in which he had suffered the greatest misfortune and indignities.

Verse 54. The seven years of dearth began to come] Owing in Egypt to the Nile not rising more than *twelve* or *thirteen* cubits; (See Clarke on “^{<0413>}Genesis 41:31”); but there must have been other causes which affected other countries, not immediately dependent on the Nile, though remotely connected with Egypt and Canaan.

The dearth was in all lands] All the countries dependent on the Nile. And it appears that a general *drought* had taken place, at least through all Egypt and Canaan; for it is said, ^{<0415>}Genesis 41:57, *that the famine was sore in all lands*-Egypt and Canaan, and their respective dependencies.

Verse 55. When all the land of Egypt was famished] As Pharaoh, by the advice of Joseph, had exacted a *fifth part* of all the grain during the seven years of plenty, it is very likely that no more was left than what was merely necessary to supply the ordinary demand both in the way of home consumption, and for the purpose of *barter* or *sale* to neighbouring countries.

Verse 56. Over all the face of the earth] The original, *xrah ynp l k col peney haarets*, should be translated, *all the face of that land, viz., Egypt*, as it is explained at the end of the verse.

Verse 57. All countries came into Egypt-to buy] As there had not been a sufficiency of rains, vapours, &c., to swell the Nile, to effect a proper

inundation in Egypt, the same cause would produce drought, and consequently scarcity, in all the *neighbouring* countries; and this may be all that is intended in the text.

1. AS the providence of God evidently led the *butler* and *baker* of Pharaoh, as well as the *king* himself, to dream the prophetic dreams mentioned in this and the preceding chapter, so his Spirit in Joseph led to the true interpretation of them. What a proof do all these things give us of a providence that is so *general* as to extend its influence to every part, and so *particular* as to notice, influence, and direct the most minute circumstances! Surely God “has way every where, and all things serve *his will*.”

2. *Dreams* have been on one hand superstitiously regarded, and on the other skeptically disregarded. That some are *prophetic* there can be no doubt; that others are *idle* none can hesitate to believe. Dreams may be divided into the *six* following kinds: 1. Those which are the mere nightly result of the mind’s reflections and perplexities during the business of the day. 2. Those which spring from a diseased state of the body, occasioning startings, terrors, &c. 3. Those which spring from an impure state of the heart, mental repetitions of those acts or images of illicit pleasure, riot, and excess, which form the business of a profligate life. 4. Those which proceed from a diseased *mind*, occupied with schemes of pride, ambition, grandeur, &c. These, as forming the characteristic conduct of the life, are repeatedly reacted in the deep watches of the night, and strongly agitate the soul with illusive enjoyments and disappointments. 5. Those which come immediately from Satan, which instil thoughts and principles opposed to *truth* and *righteousness*, leaving strong impressions on the mind suited to its natural bent and turn, which, in the course of the day, by favouring circumstances, may be called into action. 6. Those which come from God, and which necessarily lead to him, whether prophetic of future good or evil, or impressing holy purposes and heavenly resolutions. Whatever lends away from God, truth, and righteousness, must be from the source of evil; whatever leads to obedience to God, and to acts of benevolence to man, must be from the source of goodness and truth. Reader, there is often as much *superstition* in *disregarding* as in *attending* to dreams; and he who fears God will escape it in both.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 42

Jacob sends his ten sons to Egypt to buy corn, 1-3; but refuses to permit Benjamin to go, 4. They arrive in Egypt, and bow themselves before Joseph, 5, 6. He treats them roughly and calls them spies, 7-10. They defend themselves and give an account of their family, 11-13. He appears unmoved, and puts them all in prison for three days, 14-17. On the third day he releases them on condition of their bringing Benjamin, 18-20. Being convicted by their consciences, they reproach themselves with their cruelty to their brother Joseph, and consider themselves under the displeasure of God, 21-23. Joseph is greatly affected, detains Simeon as a pledge for Benjamin, orders their sacks to be filled with corn, and the purchase money to be put in each man's sack, 24, 25. When one of them is going to give his ass provender he discovers his money in the mouth of his sack, at which they are greatly alarmed, 26-28. They come to their father in Canaan, and relate what happened to them in their journey, 29-34. On emptying their sacks, each man's money is found in his sack's mouth, which causes alarm both to them and their father, 35. Jacob deplores the loss of Joseph and Simeon, and refuses to let Benjamin go, though Reuben offers his two sons as pledges for his safety, 36-38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 42

Verse 1. Jacob saw that there was corn] That is, Jacob *heard* from the report of others that there was plenty in Egypt. The operations of one *sense*, in Hebrew, are often put for those of another. Before agriculture was properly known and practised, famines were frequent; Canaan seems to have been peculiarly vexed by them. There was one in this land in the time of Abraham, ^{<01210>}**Genesis 12:10**; another in the days of Isaac, ^{<01230>}**Genesis 26:1**; and now a third in the time of Jacob. To this St. Stephen alludes, ^{<4071>}**Acts 7:11**: there was *great affliction, and our fathers found no sustenance*.

Verse 6. Joseph was the governor] *cy l v shallit*, an *intendant*, a *protector*, from *cl v skalat*, to be *over as a protector*; hence *mycl v shelatim*, *shields*, or *arms for protection and defence*, ^{<10087>}**2 Samuel 8:7**; and *wcl v shilton*, *power and authority*, ^{<10084>}**Ecclesiastes 8:4,8**; and hence the Arabic [Arabic] *sultan*, a *lord, prince, or king*, from [Arabic] *salata*, he *obtained and exercised dominion, he ruled*. Was it not from this very

circumstance, Joseph being *shallit*, that all the Mohammedan governors of Egypt, &c., took the title of *sultan*?

Bowed down themselves before him] Thus fulfilling the prophetic dream, ^{<01370>}**Genesis 37:7,8**, which they had taken every precaution to render null and void. But there is neither might nor counsel against the Lord.

Verse 9. Ye are spies] *ṣta pyl grm meraggelim attem, ye are footmen, trampers about, footpads, vagabonds*, lying in wait for the property of others; persons who, under the pretence of wishing to buy corn, desire only to find out whether the land be so defenceless that the *tribes* to which ye belong (see ^{<01421>}**Genesis 42:11**) may attack it successfully, drive out the inhabitants, and settle in it themselves; or, having plundered it, retire to their deserts. This is a frequent custom among the Arabs to the present day. Thus Joseph spake *roughly* to them merely to cover that warmth of affection which he felt towards them; and that being thus brought, apparently, into straits and dangerous circumstances, their consciences might be awakened to reflect on and abhor their own wickedness.

Verse 11. We are all one man's sons] We do not belong to *different tribes*, and it is not likely that *one family* would make a hostile attempt upon a whole kingdom. This seems to be the very ground that Joseph took, *viz.*, that they were persons belonging to different tribes. Against this particularly they set up their defence, asserting that they all belonged to one family; and it is on the *proof* of this that Joseph puts them, ^{<01425>}**Genesis 42:15**, in obliging them to leave one as a hostage, and insisting on their bringing their remaining brother; so that he took exactly the same precautions to detect them as if he had had no acquaintance with them, and had every reason to be suspicious.

Verse 13. One is not.] An elliptical sentence, *One is not* alive.

Verse 15. By the life of Pharaoh] *h[rp yj chey Pharaoh, Pharaoh liveth*. As if he had said, As surely as the king of Egypt lives, so surely shall ye not go hence unless your brother come hither. Here therefore is no *oath*; it is just what they themselves make it in their report to their father, ^{<0143>}**Genesis 43:3**: *the man did solemnly protest unto us*; and our translators should not have put it in the *form* of an oath, especially as the original not only will bear another version, but is absolutely repugnant to this in our sense of the word.

Verse 18. I fear God] *ary yna pyhl ah ta eth haelohim ani yare,* literally translated the passage runs thus, *I also fear the gods*; but the emphatic *h ha* is probably added by Joseph, both here and in his conversation with Pharaoh, the more particularly to point out the eminence and perfection of the Supreme Being as contradistinguished from the gods of Egypt. He seems to say to his brethren, *I am* a worshipper of the true God, and ye have nothing to fear.

Verse 21. We are verily guilty] How finely are the office and influence of conscience exemplified in these words! It was about *twenty-two* years since they had sold their brother, and probably their conscience had been lulled asleep to the present hour. God combines and brings about those favourable circumstances which produce *attention* and *reflection*, and give weight to the expostulations of conscience. How necessary to hear its voice in time, for *here* it may be the instrument of salvation; but if not heard in this world, it must be heard in the next; and there, in association with the *unquenchable fire*, it will be the *never-dying worm*. Reader, has not *thy* sin as yet found *thee* out? Pray to God to take away the *veil* from thy heart, and give thee that deep sense of guilt which shall oblige thee to flee for refuge to the hope which is set before thee in the Gospel of Christ.

Verse 23. For he spake unto them by an interpreter.] Either there was a very great difference between the two languages as *then* spoken, or Joseph, to prevent all suspicion, might affect to be ignorant of both. We have many evidences in this book that the Egyptians, Hebrews, Canaanites, and Syrians, could understand each other in a general way, though there are also proofs that there was a considerable difference between their dialects.

Verse 24. Took-Simeon and bound him before their eyes.] This was *retaliation*, if, as the rabbins suppose, it was Simeon who bound Joseph, and put him into the pit. A recollection of this circumstance must exceedingly deepen the sense he had of his guilt.

Verse 25. Commanded to fill their sacks] *pyhl k keleyhem, their vessels*; probably large woollen bags, or baskets lined with leather, which, as Sir John Chardin says, are still in use through all Asia, and are called *tambellet*; they are covered with leather, the better to resist the wet, and to prevent dirt and sand from mixing with the grain. These *vessels*, of whatever sort, must have been different from those called *qc sak* in the *twenty-seventh* and following verses, which was probably only a small *sack*

or *bag*, in which each had reserved a sufficiency of corn for his ass during the journey; the larger vessels or bags serving to hold the *wheat* or *rice* they had brought, and their own packages. The reader will at once see that the English word *sack* is plainly derived from the Hebrew.

Verse 26. They laded their asses] Amounting, no doubt, to several *scores*, if not *hundreds*, else they could not have brought a sufficiency of corn for the support of so large a family as that of Jacob.

Verse 27. One of them opened his sack] From ^{אֶת־הַשָּׂקִי} **Genesis 42:35** we learn that each of the ten brethren on emptying his sack when he returned found his money in it; can we suppose that this was not discovered by them all before? It seems not; and the reason was probably this: the money was put in the *mouth* of the sack of *one* only, in the sacks of the others it was placed *at* or *near to the bottom*; hence only one discovered it on the road, the rest found it when they came to empty their sacks at their father's house.

In the inn] ^{אֶת־הַמִּלּוֹן} *bammalon*, from ^{לָן} *lan*, to *lodge*, *stay*, *remain*, &c. The place at which they stopped to bait or rest themselves and their asses. Our word *inn* gives us a false idea here; there were no such places of entertainment at that time in the desert over which they had to pass, nor are there any to the present day. Travellers generally endeavour to reach a *well*, where they fill their *girbahs*, or leathern bottles, with fresh water, and having clogged their camels, asses, &c., permit them to crop any little verdure there may be in the place, keeping watch over them by turns. This is all we are to understand by the *malon* or *inn* in the text, for even *caravanseries* were not then in use, which are generally no more than *four walls* perfectly exposed, the place being open at the top.

Verse 28. Their heart failed them] ^{אֶת־לִבָּם} *axyw valyetse libbam*, *their heart went out*. This refers to that spasmodic affection which is felt in the breast at any sudden alarm or fright. Among the common people in our own country we find an expression exactly similar, "My heart was ready to leap out at my mouth," used on similar occasions.

What is this that God hath done unto us?] Their guilty consciences, now thoroughly awakened, were in continual alarms; they felt that they deserved God's curse, and every occurrence served to confirm and increase their suspicions.

Verse 35. As they emptied their sacks] See Clarke on “^{<01427>}Genesis 42:27”.

Verse 36. All these things are against me.] *hnl k wyh yl [alai hayu cullanah*; literally, *All these things are upon me*. Not badly translated by the Vulgate, *In me haec omnia mala reciderunt*, “All these evils fall back upon me.” They lie upon me as heavy loads, hastening my death; they are more than I can bear.

Verse 37. Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee] What a strange proposal made by a *son* to his *father*, concerning his *grandchildren*! But they show the honesty and affection of Reuben’s heart; he felt deeply for his father’s distress, and was determined to risk and hazard every thing in order to relieve and comfort him. There is scarcely a transaction in which Reuben is concerned that does not serve to set his character in an amiable point of view, except the single instance mentioned ^{<01352>}Genesis 35:22, and which for the sake of decency and piety we should wish to understand as the Targumists have explained it. See the notes.

Verse 38. He is left alone] That is, *Benjamin* is the only remaining son of Rachel; for he supposed *Joseph*, who was the other son, to be dead.

Shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow] Here he keeps up the idea of the oppressive *burden* mentioned ^{<01426>}Genesis 42:36, to which every occurrence was adding an additional weight, so that he felt it impossible to support it any longer.

The following observations of Dr. Dodd on this verse are very appropriate and judicious: “Nothing can be more tender and picturesque than the words of the venerable patriarch. Full of affection for his beloved Rachel, he cannot think of parting with Benjamin, the only remaining pledge of that love, now Joseph, as he supposes, is no more. We seem to behold the gray-headed, venerable father pleading with his sons, the beloved Benjamin standing by his side, impatient sorrow in *their* countenances, and in *his* all the bleeding anxiety of paternal love. It will be difficult to find in any author, ancient or modern, a more exquisite picture.”

1. THERE is one doctrine relative to the economy of Divine Providence little heeded among men; I mean the doctrine of *restitution*. When a man has done wrong to his neighbour, though, on his repentance, and faith in our Lord Jesus, God forgives him his sin, yet he requires him to make

restitution to the person injured, *if it lie in the compass of his power*. If he do not, God will take care to exact it in the course of his providence. Such respect has he for the dictates of infinite justice that nothing of this kind shall pass unnoticed. Several instances of this have already occurred in this history, and we shall see several more. No man should expect mercy at the hand of God who, having wronged his neighbour, refuses, when he has it in his power, to make *restitution*. Were he to weep tears of blood, both the justice and mercy of God would shut out his prayer, if he made not his neighbour amends for the injury he may have done him. The mercy of God, through the blood of the cross, can *alone* pardon his guilt; but no dishonest man can expect this; and he is a dishonest man who illegally holds the property of another in his hand. The unnatural brethren who sold their brother are now about to be captivated themselves; and the *binder* himself is *bound* in his turn: and though a kind Providence permits not the evil to fall upon them, yet, while apprehending it, they feel all its reality, conscience supplying the lack of *prison, jailer, and bonds*.

2. The ways of Providence are often to us dark and perplexed, so that we are ready to imagine that good can never result from what appears to us to be directly contrary to our interest; and we are often tempted to think that those very providential dealings of God, which have for their object our present and eternal welfare, are rather proofs of his displeasure, or evidences of his vindictive judgment. *All these things are against me*, said poor desponding Jacob; whereas, instead of being *against* him, all these things were *for* him; and by all these means was the merciful God working for the preservation of himself and his family, and the fulfillment of his ancient promise, that the posterity of Abraham *should be as the stars of heaven for multitude*. How strange is it that our faith, after so many evidences of his goodness, should still be so weak; and that our opinion of him should be so imperfect, that we can never trust in him but while he is under our own eye! If we see him producing good, we can believe that he is doing so, and this is all. If we believe not, he abides faithful; but our unbelief must make our own way extremely perplexing and difficult.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 43

The famine continuing, Jacob desires his sons to go again to Egypt and buy some food, 1, 2. Judah shows the necessity of Benjamin's accompanying them, without whom it would be useless to return to Egypt, 3-5. Jacob expostulates with him, 6. Judah replies, and offers to become surety for Benjamin, 7-10. Jacob at last consenting and desires them to take a present with them for the governor of Egypt; and double money, that which they had brought back in their sacks' mouth, and the price of the load they were now to bring; and, having prayed for them, sends them away, 11-15. They arrive in Egypt, and are brought to Joseph's house to dine with him, at which they are greatly alarmed, 16-18. They speak to the steward of Joseph's house concerning the money returned in their sacks, 19-22. He gives them encouragement, 23, 24. Having made ready the present, they bring it to Joseph when he came home to dine, 25, 26. He speaks kindly to them, and inquires concerning their health, and that of their father, 27, 28. Joseph is greatly affected at seeing his brother Benjamin, 29-31. They dine with him, and are distinguished according to their seniority; but Benjamin receives marks of peculiar favour, 32-34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 43

Verse 8. Send the lad with me] As the original is not *dl yeled*, from which we have derived our word *lad*, but *r [n naar*, it would have been better had our translators rendered it by some other term, such as *the youth*, or *the young man*, and thus the distinction in the Hebrew would have been better kept up. Benjamin was at this time at least twenty-four years of age, some think *thirty*, and had a family of his own. See <01462> **Genesis 46:21.**

That we may live, and not die] An argument drawn from self-preservation, what some have termed *the first law of nature*. By your keeping Benjamin we are prevented from going to Egypt; if we go not to Egypt we shall get no corn; if we get no corn we shall all perish by famine; and Benjamin himself, who otherwise might live, must, with thee and the whole family, infallibly die.

Verse 9. Let me bear the blame for ever] *µymyh I k Ēl ytacj w vechatathi lecha col haiyamim*, then shall I sin against thee all my days, and consequently be liable to punishment for violating my faith.

Verse 11. Carry down the man a present] From the very earliest times *presents* were used as means of introduction to great men. This is particularly noticed by Solomon: *A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men,* ^{<201816>} **Proverbs 18:16.** But what was the present brought to Joseph on this occasion? After all the labour of commentators, we are obliged to be contented with probabilities and conjecture. According to our translation, the gifts were *balm, honey, spices, myrrh, nuts, and almonds.*

Balm] **yrx** *tsori* is supposed to signify *resin* in general, or some kind of gum issuing from trees.

Honey] **vbd** *debash* has been supposed to be the same as the *rob* of *grapes*, called in Egypt *dibs*. Others think that *honey*, in the common sense of the term, is to be understood here: we know that honey was plentiful in Palestine.

Spices] **takn** *nechoth* is supposed to mean gum *storax*, which might be very valuable on account of its qualities as a *perfume*.

Myrrh] **cl** *lot*, supposed by some to mean *stacte*; by others to signify *an ointment made of myrrh*.

Nuts] **µyncb** *botnim*, by some rendered *pistachio nuts*, those produced in Syria being the finest in the world; by others, *dates*; others, *walnuts*; others, *pine apples*; others, the nuts of the *terebinth tree*.

Almonds] **µydqv** *shekedim*, correctly enough translated, and perhaps the only article in the collection of which we know any thing with certainty. It is generally allowed that the land of Canaan produces the best almonds in the east; and on this account they might be deemed a very acceptable present to the governor of Egypt. Those who wish to see this subject exhausted must have recourse to the *Physica Sacra* of Scheuehzer.

Verse 12. Double money] What was returned in their sacks, and what was farther necessary to buy another load.

Verse 14. This verse may be literally translated thus: “And God, the all-sufficient, shall give you tender mercies before the man, and send to you your other brother, and Benjamin; and I, as I shall be childless, so I shall be childless.” That is, I will submit to this privation, till God shall restore my

children. It appears that this verse is spoken *prophetically*; and that God at this time gave Jacob a supernatural evidence that his children should be restored.

Verse 16. Slay, and make ready] *j bc j bc teboach tebach, slay a slaying*, or make a *great slaughter*-let preparations be made for a great feast or entertainment. See a similar form of speech, ^{<1092>}**Proverbs 9:2**; ^{<0251>}**1 Samuel 25:11**; and ^{<013154>}**Genesis 31:54**.

Verse 18. And the men were afraid] *A guilty conscience needs no accuser*. Every thing alarms them; they now feel that God is exacting *retribution*, and they know not what the degrees shall be, nor where it shall stop.

Fall upon us] *wynl [l l gth hithgolel alainu*, roll himself upon us. A metaphor taken from *wrestlers*; when a man has overthrown his antagonist, he rolls himself upon him, in order to keep him down.

And our asses.] Which they probably had in *great number* with them; and which, if captured, would have been a great loss to the family of Jacob, as such cattle must have constituted a principal part of its riches.

Verse 20. O sir, we came indeed-to buy food] There is a frankness now in the conduct of Joseph's brethren that did not exist before; they simply and honestly relate the whole circumstance of the money being found in their sacks on their return from their last journey. *Afflictions* from the hand of God, and under his direction, have a wonderful tendency to humble the soul. Did men know how gracious his designs are in sending such, no murmur would ever be heard against the dispensations of Divine Providence.

Verse 23. And he said] The address of the steward in this verse plainly proves that the knowledge of the true God was in Egypt. It is probable that the steward himself was a *Hebrew*, and that Joseph had given him intimation of the whole affair; and though he was not at liberty to reveal it, yet he gives them assurances that the whole business would issue happily.

I had your money.] *yl a ab mukpsk caspechem ba elai, your money comes to me*. As I am the steward, the cash for the corn belongs to me. Ye have no reason to be apprehensive of any evil; the whole transaction is between myself and you; receive therefore the money as a present from *the*

God of your father, no matter whose hands he makes use of to convey it. The *conduct* of the steward, as well as his *words*, had a great tendency to relieve their burdened minds.

Verse 24. Brought the men into Joseph's house, &c.] This is exactly the way in which a *Hindoo* receives a guest. As soon as he enters, one of the civilities is the presenting of water to wash his feet. So indispensable is this, that water to wash the feet makes a part of the offering to an image.

Verse 27. And he asked them of their welfare] This verse may be thus translated: "And he asked them concerning their prosperity; and he said, is your father prosperous, the old man who ye told me was alive? And they said, Thy servant our father prospers; he is yet alive."

Verse 29. He lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin] They were probably introduced to him *successively*; and as Benjamin was the youngest, he would of course be introduced last.

God be gracious unto thee, my son!] A usual salutation in the east from the aged and *superiors* to the *younger* and *inferiors*, which, though very emphatic and expressive in ancient times, in the present day means no more than "I am your humble servant," or "I am exceedingly glad to see you;" words which among us mean-just nothing. Even in David's time they seem to have been, not only devoid of meaning, but to be used as a *cloak* for the basest and most treacherous designs: *They bless with their mouths, but they curse inwardly*. Hence *Joab* salutes *Amasa*, kisses him with apparent affection, and stabs him in the same moment! The case of *Judas*, betraying the Son of man with a *kiss*, will not be forgotten.

Verse 32. They set on for him by himself, &c.] From the text it appears evident that there were *three* tables, one for Joseph, one for the Egyptians, and one for the eleven brethren.

The Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews] There might have been some *political* reason for this, with which we are unacquainted; but independently of this, two may be assigned. 1. The Hebrews were *shepherds*; and Egypt had been almost ruined by hordes of lawless wandering banditti, under the name of *Hycsos*, or *King-shepherds*, who had but a short time before this been expelled from the land by *Amasis*, after they had held it in subjection for 259 years, according to *Manetho*, committing the most wanton cruelties. 2. The Hebrews sacrificed those

animals which the Egyptians held sacred, and fed on their flesh. The Egyptians were in general very superstitious, and would have no social intercourse with people of any other nation; hence we are informed that they would not even use the *knife* of a Greek, because they might have reason to suspect it had *cut the flesh of some of those animals which they held sacred*. Among the *Hindoos* different castes will not eat food cooked in the same vessel. If a person of another caste touch a cooking vessel, it is thrown away. Some are of opinion that the Egyptian idolatry, especially their worship of *Apis* under the figure of an *ox*, was *posterior* to the time of Joseph; ancient monuments are rather against this opinion, but it is impossible to decide either way. The clause in the Alexandrian Septuagint stands thus, **βδελυγμα εστιν τοις αιγυπτιοις [πασ ποιμην προβατων,**] “For [every shepherd] is an abomination to the Egyptians;” but this clause is probably borrowed from ^{<01463>}**Genesis 46:34**, where it stands in the Hebrew as well as in the Greek. See Clarke on “^{<01463>}**Genesis 46:34**”.

Verse 33. The first-born according to his birthright] This must greatly astonish these brethren, to find themselves treated with so much *ceremony*, and at the same time with so much *discernment* of their respective ages.

Verse 34. Benjamin’s mess was five times so much as any of theirs.] Sir John Chardin observes that “in Persia, Arabia, and the Indies, there are several houses where they place several plates in large salvers, and set one of these before each person, or before two or three, according to the magnificence of each house. This is the method among the *Hindoos*; the dishes are not placed on the table, but messes are sent to each individual by the master of the feast or by his substitute. The great men of the state are always served by themselves, in the feasts that are made for them; and with *greater profusion, their part of each kind of provision being always DOUBLE, TREBLE, or a LARGER proportion of each kind of meat.*” The circumstance of Benjamin’s having a mess FIVE times as large as any of his brethren, shows the peculiar honour which Joseph designed to confer upon him. See several useful observations on this subject in *Harmer’s Observ.*, vol. ii., p. 101, &c., Edit. 1808.

1. THE scarcity in Canaan was not absolute; though they had no *corn*, they had *honey, nuts, almonds, &c.* In the midst of *judgment*, God remembers *mercy*. If there was *scarcity* in *Canaan*, there was *plenty* in *Egypt*; and though his providence had denied one country *corn*, and accumulated it in

the *other*, his bounty had placed in the former *money* enough to procure it from the latter. How true is the saying, "It is never *ill* with any but it might be *worse!*" Let us be deeply thankful to God that we have *any thing*, seeing we deserve *no good* at his hands.

2. If we examine our circumstances closely, and call to remembrance the dealings of God's providence towards us, we shall find that we can sing much both of *mercy* and of *judgment*. For one day of absolute unavoidable want, we shall find we had three hundred and sixty-four, if not of *fulness*, yet of a *competency*. Famines, though rarely happening, are everywhere *recorded*; *innumerable years of abundance* are scarcely ever *registered!* Such is the perverseness and ingratitude of man!

GENESIS

CHAPTER 44

Joseph commands his steward to put his cup secretly into Benjamin's sack, 1, 2. The sons of Jacob depart with the corn they had purchased, 3. Joseph commands his steward to pursue them, and charge them with having stolen his cup, 4-6. The brethren excuse themselves, protest their innocence, and offer to submit to be slaves should the cup be found with any of them, 7-9. Search is made, and the cup is found in Benjamin's sack, 10-12. They are brought back and submit themselves to Joseph, 13-16. He determines that Benjamin alone, with whom the cup is found, shall remain in captivity, 17. Judah, in a most affecting speech, pleads for Benjamin's enlargement, and offers himself to be a bondman in his stead, 18-34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 44

Verse 2. Put my cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest] The stratagem of the cup seems to have been designed to bring Joseph's brethren into the *highest state of perplexity and distress*, that their deliverance by the discovery that Joseph was their brother might have its *highest effect*.

Verse 5. Whereby-he divineth?] Divination by cups has been from time immemorial prevalent among the Asiatics; and for want of knowing this, commentators have spent a profusion of learned labour upon these words, in order to reduce them to that kind of meaning which would at once be consistent with the scope and design of the history, and save Joseph from the impeachment of *sorcery* and *divination*. I take the word **vj n nachash** here in its general acceptance of *to view attentively, to inquire*. Now there has been in the east a tradition, the commencement of which is lost in immemorial time, that there was a CUP, which had passed successively into the hands of different potentates, which possessed the strange property of representing in it the *whole world*, and all the *things which were then doing in it*. The cup is called [Persian] *jami Jemsheed*, the cup of Jemsheed, a very ancient king of Persia, whom late historians and poets have confounded with *Bacchus, Solomon, Alexander the Great, &c.* This CUP, filled with the *elixir of immortality*, they say was discovered when digging to lay the foundations of *Persepolis*. The Persian poets are full of allusions to this cup, which, from its property of representing the whole world and

its transactions, is styled by them [Persian] *jam jehan nima*, “the cup showing the universe;” and to the intelligence received by means of it they attribute the great prosperity of their ancient monarchs, as by it they understood all events, past, present, and to come. Many of the Mohammedan princes and governors affect still to have information of futurity by means of a *cup*. When Mr. Norden was at *Derri* in the farthest part of Egypt, in a very dangerous situation, an ill-natured and powerful Arab, in a threatening way, told one of their people whom they sent to him that “he knew what sort of people they were, for he had *consulted his cup*, and found by it that they were those of whom one of their prophets had said, that *Franks* (Europeans) would come in disguise; and, passing everywhere, examine the state of the country; and afterwards bring over a great number of other Franks, conquer the country, and exterminate all.” By this we see that the tradition of the *divining cup* still exists, and in the *very same country* too in which Joseph formerly ruled. Now though it is not at all likely that Joseph practised any kind of *divination*, yet probably, according to the superstition of those times, (for I suppose the tradition to be even older than the time of Joseph,) supernatural influence might be attributed to *his cup*; and as the whole transaction related here was merely intended to deceive his brethren for a *short time*, he might as well affect *divination by his cup*, as he affected to believe they had *stolen* it. The steward therefore uses the word **vj n nachash** in its proper meaning: *Is not this it out of which my lord drinketh, and in which he inspecteth accurately?* ^{<0446>}**Genesis 44:5**. And hence Joseph says, ^{<0445>}**Genesis 44:15**: *Wot ye not—did ye not know, that such a person as I (having such a cup) would accurately and attentively look into it?* As I consider this to be the true meaning, I shall not trouble the reader with other modes of interpretation.

Verse 16. What shall we say, &c.] No words can more strongly mark *confusion* and *perturbation* of mind. They, no doubt, all thought that Benjamin had actually stolen the cup; and the probability of this guilt might be heightened by the circumstance of his having that very cup to drink out of at dinner; for as he had the most honourable mess, so it is likely he had the most honourable cup to drink out of at the entertainment.

Verse 18. Thou art even as Pharaoh.] As wise, as powerful, and as much to be dreaded as he. In the Asiatic countries, the reigning monarch is always considered to be the *pattern of all perfection*; and the highest honour that can be conferred on any person, is to resemble him to the

monarch; as the monarch himself is likened, in the same complimentary way, to *an angel of God*. See ^{<0147>}**2 Samuel 14:17,18**. Judah is the chief speaker here, because it was in consequence of his becoming surety for Benjamin that Jacob permitted him to accompany them to Egypt. See ^{<0143>}**Genesis 43:9**.

“EVERY man who reads,” says Dr. Dodd, “to the close of this chapter, must confess that Judah acts here the part both of the affectionate brother and of the dutiful son, who, rather than behold his father’s misery in case of Benjamin’s being left behind, submits to become a bondman in his stead: and indeed there is such an air of candour and generosity running through the whole strain of this speech, the sentiments are so tender and affecting, the expressions so passionate, and flow so much from artless nature, that it is no wonder if they came home to Joseph’s heart, and forced him to throw off the mask.” “When one sees,” says Dr. Jackson, “such passages related by men who affect no art, and who lived long *after* the parties who first uttered them, we cannot conceive how all particulars could be so naturally and fully recorded, unless they had been suggested by *His* Spirit who gives mouths and speech unto men; who, being alike present to all successions, is able to communicate the secret thoughts or forefathers to their children, and put the very words of the deceased, never registered before, into the mouths or pens of their successors born many ages after; and that as exactly and distinctly as if they had been caught, in characters of *steel* or *brass*, as they issued out of their mouths. For it is plain that every circumstance is here related with such natural *specifications*, as if Moses had heard them talk; and therefore could not have been thus represented to us, unless they had been written by *His* direction who knows all things, fore-past, present, or to come.”

To two such able and accurate testimonies I may be permitted to add my own. No paraphrase can heighten the effect of Judah’s address to Joseph. To *add* would be to diminish its excellence; to attempt to *explain* would be to obscure its beauties; to clothe the ideas in other language than that of Judah, and his translators in our Bible, would ruin its energy, and destroy its influence. It is perhaps one of the most tender, affecting pieces of natural oratory ever spoken or penned; and we need not wonder to find that when Joseph heard it he could not refrain himself, but wept aloud. His

soul must have been insensible beyond what is common to human nature, had he not immediately yielded to a speech so delicately tender, and so powerfully impressive. We cannot but deplore the unnatural and unscientific *division* of the narrative in our common Bibles, which obliges us to have recourse to *another chapter* in order to witness the effects which this speech produced on the heart of Joseph.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 45

Joseph, deeply affected with the speech of Judah, could no longer conceal himself, but discovers himself to his brethren, 1-4. Excuses their conduct towards him, and attributes the whole to the providence of God, 5-8. Orders them to hasten to Canaan, and bring up their father and their own families, cattle, &c., because there were five years of the famine yet to come, 9-13. He embraces and converses with all his brethren, 14,15. Pharaoh, hearing that Joseph's brethren were come to Egypt, and that Joseph had desired them to return to Canaan and bring back their families, not only confirms the order, but promises them the best part of the land of Egypt to dwell in; and provides them carriages to transport themselves and their households, 16-20. Joseph provides them with wagons according to the commandment of Pharaoh; and having given them various presents, sends them away with suitable advice, 21-24. They depart, arrive in Canaan, and announce the glad tidings to their father, who for a time believes not, but being assured of the truth of their relation, is greatly comforted, and resolves to visit Egypt, 25-28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 45

Verse 1. Joseph could not refrain himself] The word *qpath hithappek* is very emphatic; it signifies to *force one's self, to do something against nature, to do violence to one's self*. Joseph could no longer constrain himself to act a feigned part—all the *brother* and the *son* rose up in him at once, and overpowered all his resolutions; he felt for his *father*, he realized his disappointment and agony; and he felt for his *brethren*, “now at his feet submissive in distress;” and, that he’ might give free and full scope to his feelings, and the most ample play of the workings of his affectionate heart, he ordered all his attendants to go out, *while he made himself known to his brethren*. “The beauties of this chapter,” says Dr. Dodd, “are so striking, that it would be an indignity to the reader’s judgment to point them out; all who can read and feel must be sensible of them, as there is perhaps nothing in sacred or profane history more highly wrought up, more interesting or affecting.”

Verse 2. The Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.] It seems strange that Joseph should have wept so loud that his *cries* should be heard at some considerable distance, as we may suppose his dwelling was not very nigh to the palace! “But this,” says Sir John Chardin, “is exactly the

genius of the people of Asia—their sentiments of joy or grief are properly *transports*, and their transports are uncontrolled, excessive, and truly outrageous. When any one returns from a long journey, or dies, his family burst *into cries that may be heard twenty doors off*; and this is renewed at different times, and continues many days, according to the vigour of the passion. Sometimes they cease all at once, and then begin as suddenly with a greater shrillness and loudness than one could easily imagine.” This circumstance Sir John brings to illustrate the verse in question. See Harmer, vol. iii. p. 17. But *the house of Pharaoh* may certainly signify *Pharaoh’s servants*, or any of the members of his household, such as those whom Joseph had desired to withdraw, and who might still be within hearing of his voice. After all, the words may only mean that the *report* was brought to Pharaoh’s house. See ⁽⁰¹⁴⁵¹⁶⁾ **Genesis 45:16**.

Verse 3. I am Joseph] Mr. Pope supposed that the discovery of Ulysses to his son Telemachus bears some resemblance to Joseph’s discovery of himself to his brethren. The passage may be seen in Homer, *Odyss.* l. xvi., ver. 186-218.

A few lines from *Cowper’s* translation will show much of the spirit of the original, and also a considerable analogy between the two scenes:—

*“I am thy father, for whose sake thou lead’st
A life of wo by violence oppress’d.
So saying, he kiss’d his son; while from his cheeks
Tears trickled, tears till then perforce restrain’d.
Then threw Telemachus*

**His arms around his father’s neck, and wept.
Pangs of soft sorrow, not to be suppress’d,
Seized both.
So they, their cheeks with big round drops of wo
Bedewing, stood.”**

Verse 5. Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves] This discovers a truly *noble mind*: he not only *forgives* and *forgets*, but he wishes even those who had wronged him to forget the injury they had done, that they might not suffer distress on the account; and with deep piety he attributes the whole to the providence of God; for, says he, God did *send me before you to preserve life*. On every word here a strong emphasis may be laid. It is not *you*, but *God*; it is not you that *sold* me, but God who *sent* me; Egypt and Canaan must both have perished, had not a merciful provision

been made; *you* were to come down hither, and God sent me *before* you; death must have been the consequence of this famine, had not God sent me here to *preserve life*.

Verse 6. There shall **neither be earing nor harvest.**] **EARING** has been supposed to mean collecting the *ears* of corn, which would confound it with *harvest*: the word, however, means *ploughing* or *seed-time*, from the Anglo-Saxon [A.S.] *erian*, probably borrowed from the Latin *aro*, to *plough*, and plainly means that there should be no *seed-time*, and consequently no *harvest*; and why? Because there should be a total want of *rain* in other countries, and the *Nile* should not rise above *twelve cubits* in Egypt; **See Clarke on** “^{<01413>}**Genesis 41:31**”. But the expressions here must be qualified a little, as we find from ^{<014719>}**Genesis 47:19**, that the Egyptians came to Joseph to buy *seed*; and it is probable that even during this famine they sowed some of the ground, particularly on the borders of the river, from which a crop, though not an abundant one, might be produced. The passage, however, in the above chapter may refer to the *last year* of the famine, when they came to procure seed for the *ensuing* year.

Verse 8. He hath made me a father to Pharaoh] It has already been conjectured that *father* was a name of *office* in Egypt, and that *father of Pharaoh* might among them signify the same as *prime minister* or the *king’s minister* does among us. Calmet has remarked that among the Phœnicians, Persians, Arabians, and Romans, the title of *father* was given to certain officers of state. The Roman emperors gave the name of *father* to the prefects of the Prætorium, as appears by the letters of Constantine to Ablavius. The caliphs gave the same name to their *prime ministers*. In ^{<01710>}**Judges 17:10**, Micah says to the young Levite, *Dwell with me, and be unto me a FATHER and a priest*. And Diodorus Siculus remarks that the *teachers* and *counsellors* of the kings of Egypt were chosen out of the *priesthood*.

Verse 10. Thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen] Probably this district had been allotted to Joseph by the king of Egypt, else we can scarcely think he could have promised it so positively, without first obtaining Pharaoh’s consent. Goshen was the most easterly province of *Lower Egypt*, not far from the *Arabian Gulf*, lying next to Canaan, (for Jacob went directly thither when he came into Egypt,) from whence it is supposed to have been about fourscore miles distant, though *Hebron* was distant from the *Egyptian capital* about three hundred miles. At Goshen Jacob stayed till

Joseph visited him, ^{<0463>}**Genesis 46:28**. It is also called the *land of Rameses*, ^{<0471>}**Genesis 47:11**, from a city of that name, which was the metropolis of the country. Josephus, *Antiq.*, 1. ii., c. 4, makes *Heliopolis*, the city of Joseph's father-in-law, the place of the Israelites' residence. As **μvg** *geshem* signifies *rain* in Hebrew, St. Jerome and some others have supposed that **^vg** *Goshen* comes from the same root, and that the land in question was called thus because it had *rain*, which was not the case with Egypt in general; and as it was on the confines of the Arabian Gulf, it is very probable that it was *watered from heaven*, and it might be owing to this circumstance that it was peculiarly fertile, for it is stated to be the *best* of the land of Egypt. See ^{<0476>}**Genesis 47:6,11**. See also *Calmet* and *Dodd*.

Verse 12. That it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.] The Targum of *Jonathan ben Uzziel* renders the place thus:—"Your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my own mouth that speaketh with you, in the language of the house of the sanctuary." Undoubtedly Joseph laid considerable stress on his speaking with them in the *Hebrew tongue*, without the assistance of an *interpreter*, as in the case mentioned ^{<0423>}**Genesis 42:23**.

Verse 14. He fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck] Among the Asiatics *kissing the beard*, the *neck*, and the *shoulders*, is in use to the present day; and probably *falling on the neck* signifies no more than *kissing the neck* or *shoulders*, with the arms around.

Verse 20. Regard not your stuff] Literally, *Let not your eye spare your instruments* or *vessels*. **μkyl** *k keleychem*, a *general term*, in which may be included household furniture, agricultural utensils, or implements of any description. They were not to delay nor encumber themselves with articles which could be readily found in Egypt, and were not worth so long a carriage.

Verse 21. Joseph gave them wagons] **twl g[** *agaloth*, from **l g[** *agal*, which, though not used as a *verb* in the Hebrew Bible, evidently means to *turn round*, *roll round*, be *circular*, &c., and hence very properly applied to *wheel carriages*. It appears from this that such vehicles were very early in use, and that the road from Egypt to Canaan must have been very *open* and much *frequented*, else such carriages could not have passed by it.

Verse 22. Changes of raiment] It is a common custom with all the Asiatic sovereigns to give both *garments* and *money* to ambassadors and persons of distinction, whom they particularly wish to honour. Hence they keep in their wardrobes several hundred changes of raiment, ready made up for presents of this kind. That such were given by way of reward and honour, see ^{<071412>}**Judges 14:12,19;** ^{<061611>}**Revelation 6:11.** At the close of a feast the *Hindoos*, among other presents to the guests, commonly give *new garments*. A *Hindoo garment* is merely a piece of cloth, requiring no work of the tailor.-*Ward.*

Verse 23. Meat for his father by the way.] ^{^wzm} *mazon*, from ^{^z} *zan*, to *prepare, provide, &c.* Hence *prepared meat*, some made-up dish, *delicacies, confectionaries, &c.* As the word is used, ^{<141614>}**2 Chronicles 16:14**, for *aromatic* preparations, it may be restrained in its meaning to something of that kind here. In Asiatic countries they have several curious methods of preserving flesh by *potting*, by which it may be kept for any reasonable length of time sweet and wholesome. Some delicacy, similar to the savoury food which Isaac loved, may be here intended; and this was sent to Jacob in consideration of his age, and to testify the respect of his son. Of other kinds of meat he could need none, as he had large herds, and could kill a *lamb, kid, sheep, or goat*, whenever he pleased.

Verse 24. See that ye fall not out by the way.] This prudent caution was given by Joseph, to prevent his brethren from accusing each other for having *sold* him; and to prevent them from envying Benjamin, for the superior favour shown him by his brother. It is strange, but so it is, that children of the same parents are apt to envy each other, fall out, and contend; and therefore the exhortation in this verse must be always seasonable in a large family. But a rational, religious education will, under God, prevent every thing of this sort.

Verse 26. Jacob's heart fainted] Probably the good news so overpowered him as to cast him into a swoon. *He believed them not*-he thought it was *too good news to be true*; and though it occasioned his swooning, yet on his recovery he could not fully credit it. See a similar case, ^{<02441>}**Luke 24:41.**

Verse 27. When he saw the wagons-the spirit of Jacob-revived] The wagons were additional evidences of the truth of what he had heard from his sons; and the consequence was, that he was restored to fresh vigour, he

seemed as if he had gained *new life*, **yj tw vattechi**, and he lived; *revixit*, says the Vulgate, *he lived afresh*. The Septuagint translate the original word by **ανεζωπυρησε**, which signifies the *blowing and stirring up* of *almost extinguished embers* that had been buried under the ashes, which word St. Paul uses, **2 Timothy 1:6**, for *stirring up the gift of God*. The passage at once shows the debilitated state of the venerable patriarch, and the wonderful effect the news of Joseph's preservation and glory had upon his mind.

Verse 28. It is **enough; Joseph my son is yet alive**] It was not the state of *dignity* to which Joseph had arisen that particularly affected Jacob, it was the consideration that he was *still alive*. It was *this* that caused him to exclaim **br rab**; "*much! multiplied!* my son is yet alive! I will go and see him before I die." None can realize this scene; the words, the circumstances, all refer to indescribable feelings.

1. IN Joseph's conduct to his brethren there are several things for which it is difficult to account. It is strange, knowing how much his father loved him, that he never took an opportunity, many of which must have offered, to acquaint him that he was alive; and that self-interest did not dictate the propriety of this to him is at first view surprising, as his father would undoubtedly have paid his ransom, and restored him to liberty: but a little reflection will show that prudence dictated *secrecy*. His brethren, jealous and envious in the extreme, would soon have found out other methods of destroying his life, had they again got him into their power. Therefore for his personal safety, he chose rather to be a *bond-slave* in Egypt than to *risk his life* by returning home. On this ground it is evident that he could not with any safety have discovered the place of his residence.

2. His carriage to his brethren, previously to his making himself known, appears inexcusably *harsh*, if not *vindictive*; but when the *men* are considered, it will appear sufficiently evident that no other means would have been adequate to awaken their torpid consciences, and bring them to a due sense of their guilt. A desperate disease requires a desperate remedy. The event justified all that he did, and God appears to have been the director of the whole.

3. His conduct in requiring Benjamin to be as it were torn away from the bleeding heart of an aged, desolate father, in whose affection he himself had long lived, is the most difficult to be satisfactorily accounted for.

Unless the Spirit of prophecy had assured him that this experiment would terminate in the most *favourable manner*, his conduct in making it cannot well be vindicated. To such prophetic intimation this conduct has been attributed by learned men; and we may say that this consideration, if it does not *untie the knot*, at least *cuts* it. Perhaps it is best to say that in all these things Joseph acted as he was directed by a providence, under the influence of which he might have been led to do many things which he had not previously designed. The issue proves that the hand of God's wisdom and goodness directed, regulated, and governed every circumstance, and the result was glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and good will among men.

4. This chapter, which contains the unravelling of the plot, and wonderfully illustrates the mysteries of these particular providences, is one of the most interesting in the whole account: the speech of Joseph to his brethren, ^{<01450>}**Genesis 45:1-13**, is inferior only to that of *Judah* in the preceding chapter. He saw that his brethren were confounded at his presence, that they were struck with his present power, and that they keenly remembered and deeply deplored their own guilt. It was necessary to comfort them, lest their hearts should have been overwhelmed with overmuch sorrow. How delicate and finely wrought is the apology he makes for them! The whole heart of the affectionate brother is at once seen in it—*art* is confounded and swallowed up by nature—"Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves—it was not *you* that sent me hither, but *God*." What he says also concerning his *father* shows the warmest feelings of a benevolent and filial heart. Indeed, the whole chapter is a master-piece of composition; and it is the more impressive because it is evidently *a simple relation of facts just as they occurred*; for no attempt is made to heighten the effect by rhetorical colouring or philosophical reflections; it is all simple, sheer nature, from beginning to end. It is a history that has no fellow, crowded with incidents as probable as they are true; where every passion is called into action, where every one acts up to his own character, and where nothing is *outré* in time, or extravagant in degree. Had not the history of Joseph formed a part of the sacred Scriptures, it would have been published in all the living languages of man, and read throughout the universe! But it contains *the things of God*, and to all such the *carnal mind is enmity*.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 46

Jacob begins his journey to Egypt, comes to Beer-sheba, and offers sacrifices to God, 1. God appears to him in a vision, gives him gracious promises, and assures him of his protection, 2-4. He proceeds, with his family and their cattle, on his journey towards Egypt, 5-7. A genealogical enumeration of the seventy persons who went down to Egypt, 8, &c. The posterity of Jacob by LEAH. Reuben and his sons, 9. Simeon and his sons, 10. Levi and his sons, 11. Judah and his sons, 12. Issachar and his sons, 13. And Zebulun and his sons, 14. All the posterity of Jacob by LEAH, thirty and three, 15. The posterity of Jacob by ZILPAH. Gad and his sons, 16. Asher and his sons, 17. All the posterity of Jacob by ZILPAH, sixteen, 18. The posterity of Jacob by RACHEL. Joseph and his sons, 19, 20. Benjamin and his sons, 21. All the posterity of Jacob by RACHEL, fourteen, 22. The posterity of Jacob by BILHAH. Dan and his sons, 23. Naphtali and his sons, 24. All the posterity of Jacob by BILHAH, seven, 25. All the immediate descendants of Jacob by his four wives, threescore and six, 26; and all the descendants of the house of Jacob, seventy souls, 27. Judah is sent before to inform Joseph of his father's coming, 28. Joseph goes to Goshen to meet Jacob, 29. Their affecting interview, 30. Joseph proposes to return to Pharaoh, and inform him of the arrival of his family, 31, and of their occupation, as keepers of cattle, 32. Instructs them what to say when called before Pharaoh, and questioned by him, that they might be permitted to dwell unmolested in the land of Goshen, 33, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 46

Verse 1. And came to Beer-sheba] This place appears to be mentioned, not only because it was the way from *Hebron*, where Jacob resided, to Egypt, whither he was going, but because it was a *consecrated* place, a place where God had appeared to Abraham, ^{<012133>}**Genesis 21:33**, and to Isaac, ^{<012623>}**Genesis 26:23**, and where Jacob is encouraged to expect a manifestation of the same goodness: he chooses therefore to begin his journey with a visit to *God's house*; and as he was going into a strange land, he feels it right to *renew his covenant* with God by *sacrifice*. There is an old proverb which applies strongly to this case: "Prayers and provender never hinder any man's journey. He who would travel safely must take God with him.

Verse 3. Fear not to go down into Egypt] It appears that there had been some doubts in the patriarch's mind relative to the propriety of this

journey; he found, from the confession of his own sons, how little they were to be trusted. But every doubt is dispelled by this Divine manifestation. 1. He may go down confidently, no evil shall befall him. 2. Even in Egypt the covenant shall be fulfilled, God will make of him *there a great nation*. 3. God himself will accompany him on his journey, be with him in the strange land, and even bring back his bones to rest with those of his fathers. 4. He shall see Joseph, and this same beloved son shall be with him in his last hours, and do the last kind office for him. *Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes*. It is not likely that Jacob would have at all attempted to go down to Egypt, had he not received these assurances from God; and it is very likely that he offered his sacrifice merely to obtain this information. It was now a time of famine in Egypt, and God had forbidden his father Isaac to go down to Egypt when there was a famine there, ^{<0120>}**Genesis 26:1-3**; besides, he may have had some general intimation of the prophecy delivered to his grandfather Abraham, that his seed should be *afflicted* in Egypt, ^{<0151>}**Genesis 15:13,14**; and he also knew that Canaan, not Egypt, was to be the inheritance of his family, ^{<0120>}**Genesis 12:1, 6, 7**, &c. On all these accounts it was necessary to have the most explicit directions from God, before he should take such a journey.

Verse 7. All his seed brought he with him into Egypt.] When Jacob went down into Egypt he was in the *one hundred and thirtieth* year of his age, *two hundred and fifteen* years after the promise was made to Abraham, ^{<0120>}**Genesis 12:1-4**, in the year of the world 2298, and before Christ 1706.

Verse 8. These are the names of the children of Israel] It may be necessary to observe here, *First*, that several of these names are expressed differently elsewhere, *Jemuel* for *Nemuel*, *Jachin* for *Jarib*, *Gershon* for *Gershom*, &c.; compare ^{<0452>}**Numbers 26:12**; ^{<1304>}**1 Chronicles 4:24**. But it is no uncommon case for the same person to have different names, or the same name to be differently pronounced; **See Clarke on “^{<012518>}Genesis 25:18”**. *Secondly*, that it is probable that some names in this list are brought in by *prolepsis* or *anticipation*, as the persons were born (probably) during the *seventeen* years which Jacob sojourned in Egypt, see ^{<014612>}**Genesis 46:12**. *Thirdly*, that the families of some are entered more at large than others because of their peculiar respectability, as in the case of *Judah*, *Joseph*, and *Benjamin*; but see the tables under verse 20. **See Clarke at “^{<014620>}Genesis 46:20”**.

Verse 12. The sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.] It is not likely that Pharez was more than *ten* years of age when he came into Egypt, and if so he could not have had children; therefore it is necessary to consider *Hezron* and *Hamul* as being born during the *seventeen* years that Jacob sojourned in Egypt, **See Clarke on “^{<40468>}Genesis 46:8”**: and it appears necessary, for several reasons, to take these *seventeen* years into the account, as it is very probable that what is called *the going down into Egypt* includes the *seventeen* years which Jacob spent there.

Verse 20. Unto Joseph-were born Manasseh and Ephraim] There is a remarkable addition here in the Septuagint, which must be noticed: εγενοντο δε υιοι μανασση, ουσ ετεκεν αυτω η παλλακη η συρα, τον μαχιρ` μαχιρ δε εγεννησε τον γαλααδ. υιοι δε εφραιμ αδελφον μανασση, σουταλααμ και τααμ. υιοι δε σουταλααμ, εδεμ` *These were the sons of Manasseh whom his Syrian concubine bore unto him: Machir; and Machir begat Galaad. The sons of Ephraim, Manasseh's brother, were Sutalaam and Taam; and the sons of Sutalaam, Edem.* These add *five* persons to the list, and make out the number given by *Stephen*, ^{<44074>}**Acts 7:14**, which it seems he had taken from the text of the *Septuagint*, unless we could suppose that the text of *Stephen* had been *altered* to make it correspond to the *Septuagint*, of which there is not the slightest evidence from ancient MSS. or versions. The addition in the *Septuagint* is not found in either the Hebrew or the Samaritan at present; and some suppose that it was taken either from ^{<02629>}**Numbers 26:29,35**, or ^{<13074>}**1 Chronicles 7:14-20**, but in none of these places does the addition appear *as it stands* in the *Septuagint*, though some of the names are found interspersed. Various means have been proposed to find the *seventy* persons in the text, and to reconcile the Hebrew with the *Septuagint* and the New Testament.

A table given by *Scheuchzer*, extracted from the *Memoires de Trevoux*, gives the following general view:

The *twelve* sons of JACOB with their *children* and *grandchildren*.

Reuben and his *four* sons — 5

Simeon and his *six* sons — 7

Levi and his *three* sons — 4

Judah and his *seven* sons and grandsons — 8

Issachar and his *four* sons — 5

Zebulun and his *three* sons — 4
 Total sons of JACOB and LEAH — 33

Gad and his *seven* sons — 8
Asher and his *seven* sons and grandsons — 8
 Total sons of JACOB and ZILPAH — 16

Joseph and his *two* sons — 3
Benjamin and his *ten* sons — 11
 Total sons of JACOB and RACHEL — 14

Dan and his son — 2
Naphtali and his *four* sons — 5
 Total sons of JACOB and BILHAH — 7
 Total sons of *Jacob* and his *four wives* — 70

“To harmonize this with the *Septuagint* and St. *Stephen*, ^{<40714>}**Acts 7:14**, to the number sixty-six (all the souls that came out of Jacob’s loins, ^{<014626>}**Genesis 46:26**) add *nine* of the patriarchs’ wives, Judah’s wife being already dead in Canaan, (^{<013812>}**Genesis 38:12**.) Benjamin being supposed to be as yet unmarried, and the wife of Joseph being already in Egypt, and therefore out of the case: the number will amount to *seventy-five*, which is that found in the Acts.”-*Universal History*.

Dr. Hales’ method is more simple, and I think more satisfactory:

“Moses states that all the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt *which issued from his loins*, (except his sons wives,) were *sixty-six* souls, ^{<014626>}**Genesis 46:26**; and this number is thus collected:—

JACOB’S children, eleven sons and one daughter — 12

Reuben’s sons — 4
Simeon’s sons — 6
Levi’s sons — 3
Judah’s three sons and two *grandsons* — 5
Issachar’s sons — 4
Zebulun’s sons — 3
Gad’s sons — 7
Asher’s four sons, one daughter, and two grandsons 7
Dan’s son — 1
Naphtali’s sons — 4

Benjamin's sons — 10

—66

“If to these *sixty-six* children, and grandchildren, and great grandchildren, we add *Jacob* himself, *Joseph* and his *two sons*, the amount is *seventy*, the whole amount of Jacob’s family which settled in Egypt.

“In this statement the wives of Jacob’s sons, who formed part of the household, are omitted; but they amounted to *nine*, for of the *twelve* wives of the *twelve* sons of Jacob, Judah’s wife was dead, ^{<013812>}**Genesis 38:12**, and Simeon’s also, as we may collect from his youngest son *Shaul* by a Canannitess, ^{<014610>}**Genesis 46:10**, and Joseph’s wife was already in Egypt. These *nine* wives, therefore, added to the *sixty-six*, give *seventy-five* souls the whole amount of Jacob’s household that went down with him to Egypt; critically corresponding with the statement in the New Testament, that ‘Joseph sent for his father *Jacob and all his kindred*, amounting to *seventy-five souls*.’ The expression *all his kindred*, including the wives which were Joseph’s kindred, not only by *affinity*, but also by consanguinity, being probably of the families of *Esau*, *Ishmael*, or *Keturah*. Thus does the New Testament furnish an admirable comment on the Old.”—*Analysis*, vol. ii., p. 159.

It is necessary to observe that this statement, which appears on the whole the most consistent, supposes that *Judah* was married when about *fourteen* years of age, his son *Er* at the *same* age, *Pharez* at the *same*, *Asher* and his fourth son *Beriah* under *twenty*, *Benjamin* about *fifteen*, and *Joseph's* sons and grandsons about *twenty*. But this is not improbable, as the children of Israel must all have married at a very early age, to have produced in about *two hundred and fifteen* years no less than *six hundred thousand* persons above *twenty* years old, besides women and children.

Verse 28. He sent Judah before him unto Joseph] Judah was certainly a man of sense, and also an eloquent man; and of him Joseph must have had a very favourable opinion from the speech he delivered before him, ^{<014418>}**Genesis 44:18**, &c.; he was therefore chosen as the most proper person to go before and announce Jacob’s arrival to his son Joseph.

To direct his face unto Goshen] The land of Goshen is the same, according to the Septuagint, as the land of Rameses, and Goshen itself the same as Heroopolis, ‘**ἡρωων πολις** *Heroonpolis, the city of heroes*, a name by which it went in the days of the *Septuagint*, and which it still retained in the time of Josephus, for he makes use of the same term in speaking of this place. See Clarke on “~~6-014634~~ **Genesis 46:34**”.

Verse 29. And Joseph made ready his chariot] **wtbkrm** *mercabto*. In ~~01443~~ **Genesis 41:43**, we have the first mention of a chariot, and if the translation be correct, it is a proof that the arts were not in a rude state in Egypt even at this early time. When we find *wagons* used to transport *goods* from place to place, we need not wonder that these suggested the idea of forming *chariots* for carrying *persons*, and especially those of high rank and authority. *Necessity* produces arts, and *arts* and *science* produce not only an increase of the *conveniences* but also of the *refinements* and *luxuries* of life. It has been supposed that a *chariot* is not intended here; for as the word **hbkrm** *mercabah*, which we and most of the ancient versions translate *chariot*, comes from **bkr** *rachab, he rode*, saddling his horse may be all that is intended. But it is more likely to signify a chariot, as the verb **rsa** *asar*, which signifies to *bind, tie, or yoke*, is used; and not **vbj** *chabash*, which signifies to *saddle*.

Fell on his neck] See ~~014514~~ **Genesis 45:14**.

Verse 30. Now let me die, since I have seen thy face] Perhaps old *Simeon* had this place in view when, seeing the salvation of Israel, he said, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, &c.*, ~~01129~~ **Luke 2:29**.

Verse 34. Thy servants trade hath been about cattle] “The land of Goshen, called also the land of *Rameses*, lay east of the Nile, by which it was never overflowed, and was bounded by the mountains of the Thebaid on the south, by the Nile and Mediterranean on the west and north, and by the Red Sea and desert of Arabia on the east. It was the Heliopolitan nome or district, and its capital was called ON. Its proper name was *Geshen*, the country of *grass* or *pasturage*, or of the *shepherds*, in opposition to the rest of the land which was *sown* after having been overflowed by the Nile.” -*Bruce*. As this land was both fruitful and pleasant, Joseph wished to fix his family in that part of Egypt; hence he advises them to tell Pharaoh that their trade had been in *cattle* from their youth: and because every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians, hence he concluded that there would be

less difficulty to get them quiet settlement in *Goshen*, as they would then be separated from the Egyptians, and consequently have the free use of all their religious customs. This scheme succeeded, and the consequence was the preservation both of their religion and their lives, though some of their posterity did afterwards corrupt themselves; see ^{<3018>}**Ezekiel 20:8**;

^{<0163>}**Amos 5:26**. As it is well known that the Egyptians had *cattle* and *flocks* themselves, and that Pharaoh even requested that some of Joseph's brethren should *be made rulers over his cattle*, how could it be said, as in ^{<0163>}**Genesis 46:34**, *Every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians?*

Three reasons may be assigned for this: 1. Shepherds and feeders of cattle were usually a sort of lawless, free-booting banditti, frequently making inroads on villages, &c., carrying off cattle, and whatever spoils they could find. This might probably have been the case formerly, for it is well known it has often been the case since. On this account such persons must have been universally detested. 2. They must have abhorred *shepherds* if *Manetho's* account of the *hycsos* or *king-shepherds* can be credited.

Hordes of marauders under this name, from Arabia, Syria, and Ethiopia, (whose chief occupation, like the *Bedouin Arabs* of the present day, was to keep flocks,) made a powerful irruption into Egypt, which they subdued and ruled with great tyranny for 259 years. Now, though they had been expelled from that land some considerable time before this, yet their name, and all persons of a similar occupation, were execrated by the Egyptians, on account of the depredations and long-continued ravages they had committed in the country. 3. The last and probably the best reason why the Egyptians abhorred such shepherds as the Israelites were, was, they sacrificed *those very animals*, the ox particularly, and the SHEEP, which the Egyptians held sacred. Hence the Roman historian *Tacitus*, speaking of the Jews, says: "Caeso ARIETE velut in contumelia AMMONIS; Bos quoque immolatur, quem Ægyptii APIM colunt." "They sacrifice the *ram* in order to insult *Jupiter Ammon*, and they sacrifice the *ox*, which the Egyptians worship under the name of *Apis*." Though some contend that this idolatry was not as yet established in Egypt, and that the *king-shepherds* were either after the time of Joseph, or that *Manetho* by them intends the *Israelites* themselves; yet, as the arguments by which these conjectures are supported are not sufficient to overthrow those which are brought for the support of the contrary opinions, and as there was evidently an *established religion* and *priesthood* in Egypt before Joseph's time, (for we find the priests had a certain portion of the land of Egypt which was held so sacred that Joseph did not attempt to buy it in the time of the famine, when he

bought all the land which belonged to the people, ^{<014720>}**Genesis 47:20-22,**) and as that established priesthood was in all likelihood idolatrous, and as the worship of *Apis* under the form of an *ox* was one of the most ancient forms of worship in Egypt, we may rest tolerably certain that it was chiefly on this account that the shepherds, or those who fed on and sacrificed these objects of their worship, were an abomination to the Egyptians. *Calmet* has entered into this subject at large, and to his notes I must refer those readers who wish for farther information. **See Clarke on** ^{<014332>}**Genesis 43:32**".

ON the principal subject of this chapter, the going down of Jacob and his family into Egypt, Bishop Warburton, in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, makes the following judicious reflections: "The promise God made to Abraham, to give his posterity the land of Canaan, could not be performed till that family was grown strong enough to take and keep possession of it. In the meantime, therefore, they were necessitated to reside among idolaters, and to reside unmixed; but whoever examines their history will see that the Israelites had ever a violent propensity to join themselves to Gentile nations, and practise their manners. God therefore, in his infinite wisdom, brought them into Egypt, and kept them there during this period, the only place where they could remain for so long a time safe and unconfounded with the natives, the ancient Egyptians being by numerous institutions forbidden all fellowship with strangers, and bearing besides a particular aversion to the profession of the Israelites, who were shepherds. Thus the natural dispositions of the Israelites, which in Egypt occasioned their superstitions, and in consequence the necessity of a burdensome ritual, would in any other country have absorbed them into *Gentilism*, and confounded them with idolaters. From the Israelites going into Egypt arises a new occasion to adore the footsteps of Eternal Wisdom in his dispensations to his chosen people."

GENESIS

CHAPTER 47

Joseph informs Pharaoh that his father and brethren are arrived in Goshen, 1. He presents five of his brethren before the king, 2, who questions them concerning their occupation; they inform him that they are shepherds, and request permission to dwell in the land of Goshen, 3, 4. Pharaoh consents, and desires that some of the most active of them should be made rulers over his cattle, 5, 6. Joseph presents his father to Pharaoh, 7, who questions him concerning his age, 8, to which Jacob returns an affecting answer, and blesses Pharaoh, 9, 10. Joseph places his father and family in the land of Rameses, (Goshen), and furnishes them with provisions, 11, 12. The famine prevailing in the land, the Egyptians deliver up all their money to Joseph to get food, 13-15. The next year they bring their cattle, 16, 17. The third, their lands and their persons, 18-21. The land of the priests Joseph does not buy, as it was a royal grant to them from Pharaoh, 22. The people receive seed to sow the land on condition that they shall give a fifth part of the produce to the king, 23, 24. The people agree, and Joseph makes it a law all over Egypt, 25, 26. The Israelites multiply exceedingly, 27. Jacob, having lived seventeen years in Goshen, and being one hundred and forty-seven years old, 28, makes Joseph promise not to bury him in Egypt, but in Canaan, 29, 30. Joseph promises and confirms it with an oath, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 47

Verse 2. He took some of his brethren] There is something very strange in the original; literally translated it signifies “from the end or extremity (*hxqm miktseh*) of his brethren he took five men.” This has been understood *six* different ways. 1. Joseph took five of his brethren that came *first to hand-at random, without design or choice*. 2. Joseph took five of the *meanest-looking* of his brethren to present before Pharaoh, fearing if he had taken the *sightliest* that Pharaoh would detain them for his service, whereby their religion and morals might be corrupted. 3. Joseph took five of the *best made and finest-looking* of his brethren, and presented them before Pharaoh, wishing to impress his mind with a favourable opinion of the family which he had just now brought into Egypt, and to do himself honour. 4. Joseph took five of the *youngest* of his brethren. 5. He took five of the *eldest* of his brethren. 6. He took five from the *extremity* or end of his brethren, i.e., *some of the eldest and some of the youngest, viz.,* Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, and Benjamin.-*Rab. Solomon*. It is certain

that in ^{<0718D>}**Judges 18:2**, the word may be understood as implying *dignity, valour, excellence, and pre-eminence: And the children of Dan sent of their family FIVE men* **μtwxqm** *miktsotham, not from their coasts, but of the most eminent or excellent they had; and it is probable they might have had their eye on what Joseph did here when they made their choice, choosing the same number, five, and of their principal men, as did Joseph, because the mission was important, to go and search out the land. But the word may be understood simply as signifying some; out of the whole of his brethren he took only five men, &c.*

Verse 6. In the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell] So it appears that the land of Goshen was the *best of the land of Egypt*.

Men of activity] **lyj yvna** *anshey chayil, stout or robust men*-such as were capable of bearing fatigue, and of rendering their authority respectable.

Rulers over my cattle.] **hnqm** *mikneh* signifies not only *cattle*, but *possessions or property* of any kind; though most usually *cattle* are intended, because in ancient times they constituted the principal part of a man's property. The word may be taken here in a more extensive sense, and the circumstances of the case seem obviously to require it. If every *shepherd* was an abomination to the Egyptians, however we may understand or qualify the expression, is it to be supposed that Pharaoh should desire that the *brethren* of his *prime minister*, of his *chief favourite*, should be employed in some of the very meanest offices in the land? We may therefore safely understand Pharaoh as expressing his will, that the brethren of Joseph should be appointed as *overseers* or *superintendents* of his *domestic* concerns, while Joseph superintended those of the *state*.

Verse 7. Jacob blessed Pharaoh.] Saluted him on his entrance with *Peace be unto thee*, or some such expression of respect and good will. For the meaning of the term *to bless*, as applied to God and man, **See Clarke on** ^{<0002B>}**Genesis 2:3**".

Verse 9. The days of the years of my pilgrimage] **yrwgm** *megurai*, of my *sojourning* or *wandering*. Jacob had always lived a migratory or wandering life, in different parts of Canaan, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, scarcely ever at rest; and in the places where he lived longest, always exposed to the

fatigues of the field and the desert. Our word *pilgrim* comes from the French *pelerin* and *pelegrin*, which are corrupted from the Latin *peregrinus*, an *alien, stranger, or foreigner*, from the adverb *peregre, abroad, not at home*. The pilgrim was a person who took a journey, long or short, on some *religious account*, submitting during the time to many hardships and privations. A more appropriate term could not be conceived to express the *life of Jacob*, and the *motive* which induced him to live such a life. His journey to Padan-aram or Mesopotamia excepted, the principal part of his journeys were properly *pilgrimages*, undertaken in the course of God's providence *on a religious account*.

Have not attained unto the-life of my fathers] Jacob lived in the whole *one hundred and forty-seven years*; Isaac his father lived *one hundred and eighty*; and Abraham his grandfather, *one hundred and seventy-five*. These were *days of years* in comparison of the lives of the preceding patriarchs, some of whom lived nearly *ten centuries!*

Verse 14. Gathered up all the money] i.e., by selling corn out of the public stores to the people; and this he did till the money failed, ^{<014715>}**Genesis 47:15**, till all the money was exchanged for corn, and brought into Pharaoh's treasury. Besides the *fifth* part of the produce of the seven plentiful years, Joseph had bought additional corn with *Pharaoh's money* to lay up against the famine that was to prevail in the seven years of *dearth*; and it is very likely that this was sold out at the price for which it was bought, and the *fifth part*, which belonged to Pharaoh, sold out at the same price. And as money at that time could not be plentiful, the cash of the whole nation was thus exhausted as far as that had circulated among the common people.

Verse 16. Give your cattle] This was the wisest measure that could be adopted, both for the preservation of the *people* and of the *cattle* also. As the people had not grain for their own sustenance, consequently they could have none for their cattle; hence the cattle were in the most imminent danger of starving; and the people also were in equal danger, as they must have divided a portion of that bought for themselves with the cattle, which for the sake of tillage, &c., they wished of course to preserve till the seven years of famine should end. The cattle being bought by Joseph were supported at the royal expense, and very likely returned to the people at the end of the famine; for how else could they cultivate their ground,

transport their merchandise, &c., &c.? For this part of Joseph's conduct he certainly deserves high praise and no censure.

Verse 18. When that year was ended] The sixth year of the famine, *they came unto him the second year*, which was the *last* or *seventh* year of the famine, in which it was necessary to sow the land that there might be a crop the succeeding year; for Joseph, on whose prediction they *relied*, had foretold that the famine should continue only *seven years*, and consequently they expected the *eighth* year to be a fruitful year provided the land was *sowed*, without which, though the inundation of the land by the Nile might amount to the sixteen requisite cubits, there could be no crop.

Verse 19. Buy us and our land for bread] In times of famine in *Hindustan*, thousands of children have been sold to prevent their perishing. In the Burman empire the sale of *whole families* to discharge debts is very common.-*Ward's Customs*.

Verse 21. And as for the people, he removed them to cities] It is very likely that Joseph was influenced by no *political* motive in removing the people to the cities, but merely by a motive of *humanity* and *prudence*. As the corn was laid up in the cities he found it more convenient to bring them to the place where they might be conveniently fed; each being within the reach of an easy distribution. Thus then the *country* which could afford no sustenance was abandoned for the time being, that the people might be fed in those places where the provision was deposited.

Verse 22. The land of the priests bought he not] From this verse it is natural to infer that whatever the religion of Egypt was, it *was established by law* and supported by the *state*. Hence when Joseph bought all the lands of the Egyptians for Pharaoh, he bought not the land of the priests, for that was a *portion* assigned *them by Pharaoh*; and *they did eat*-did live on, that *portion*. This is the earliest account we have of an *established religion supported by the state*.

Verse 23. I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh] It fully appears that the kingdom of Egypt was previously to the time of Joseph a very limited monarchy. The king had his estates; the priests had their lands; and the common people their patrimony independently of both. The land of Rameses or Goshen appears to have been the king's land,
<0471> **Genesis 47:11.** The priests had their lands, which they did not sell to

Joseph, ^{<01472>}**Genesis 47:22, 26**; and that the people had lands independent of the crown, is evident from the purchases Joseph made, ^{<014719>}**Genesis 47:19, 20**; and we may conclude from those purchases that Pharaoh had no power to levy taxes upon his subjects to increase his own revenue until he had bought the original right which each individual had in his possessions. And when Joseph bought this for the king he raised the crown an ample revenue, though he restored the lands, by obliging each to pay *one fifth* of the product to the king, ^{<014724>}**Genesis 47:24**. And it is worthy of remark that the people of Egypt well understood the distinction between *subjects* and *servants*; for when they came to sell their land, they offered to sell *themselves* also, and said: *Buy us and our land, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh*, ^{<014719>}**Genesis 47:19**.

Diodorus Siculus, lib. i., gives the same account of the ancient constitution of Egypt. "The land," says he, "was divided into *three* parts: 1. *One* belonged to the PRIESTS, with which they provided all sacrifices, and maintained all the ministers of religion. 2. A *second* part was the KING'S, to support his court and family, and to supply expenses for wars if they should happen. Hence there were no *taxes*, the king having so ample an estate. 3. The *remainder* of the land belonged to the SUBJECTS, who appear (from the account of Diodorus) to have been all soldiers, a kind of standing militia, liable, at the king's expense, to serve in all wars for the preservation of the state." This was a constitution something like the *British*; the government appears to have been *mixed*, and the monarchy properly *limited*, till Joseph, by buying the land of the people, made the king in some sort despotic. But it does not appear that any improper use was made of this, as in much later times we find it still a comparatively limited monarchy.

Verse 24. Ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh] This is precisely the case in *Hindustan*; the king has the *fifth part* of all the crops.

Verse 26. And Joseph made it a law] That the people should hold their land from the king, and give him the *fifth part* of the produce as a yearly tax. Beyond this it appears the king had no farther demands. The whole of this conduct of Joseph has been as strongly *censured* by some as *applauded* by others. It is natural for men to run into extremes in attacking or defending any position. Sober and judicious men will consider *what* Joseph did by *Divine appointment* as a prophet of God, and what he did merely as a *statesman* from the circumstances of the case, the complexion

of the times, and the character of the people over whom he presided. When this is dispassionately done, we shall see much reason to adore *God*, applaud the *man*, and perhaps in some cases censure the *minister*. Joseph is never held up to our view as *an unerring* prophet of God. He was an honoured instrument in the hands of God of saving two nations from utter ruin, and especially of preserving that family from which the *Messiah* was to spring, and of perpetuating the true religion among them. In this character he is represented in the sacred pages. His conduct as the *prime minister* of Pharaoh was powerfully indicative of a deep and consummate politician, who had high notions of prerogative, which led him to use every prudent means to aggrandize his master, and at the same time to do what he judged *best on the whole* for the people he governed. See the conclusion of the 50th chapter. See Clarke on “⁻⁰¹⁵⁰⁵Genesis 50:26”.

Verse 29. Put-thy hand under my thigh] See Clarke on “⁻⁰¹²⁴⁰Genesis 24:2”.

Verse 30. I will lie with my fathers] As God had promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his posterity, Jacob considered it as a consecrated place, under the particular superintendence and blessing of God: and as Sarah, Abraham, and Isaac were interred near to Hebron, he in all probability wished to lie, not only in the same place, but in the same grave; and it is not likely that he would have been solicitous about this, had he not considered that promised land as being a *type of the rest that remains for the people of God*, and a *pledge of the inheritance among the saints in light*.

Verse 31. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.] Jacob was now both old and feeble, and we may suppose him reclined on his couch when Joseph came; that he afterwards sat up erect (see ⁻⁰¹⁴⁸⁰Genesis 48:2) while conversing with his son, and receiving his oath and promise; and that when this was finished he *bowed himself upon the bed's head*-exhausted with the conversation, he again reclined himself on his bed as before. This seems to be the simple meaning, which the text unconnected with any religious system or prejudice, naturally proposes. But because **hj v** *shachah*, signifies not only to *bow* but to *worship*, because acts of religious worship were performed by *bowing* or *prostration*, and because **hcm** *mittah*, a *bed*, by the change of the *points*, only becomes *matteh*, a *staff*, in which sense the Septuagint took it, translating the original words thus: **και προσεκυνησεν ισραηλ επι το ακρον ρης ραβδου αυτου**, and *Israel*

worshipped upon the top of his staff, which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, ^{<8112>}**Hebrews 11:21**, quotes *literatim*; therefore some have supposed that Jacob certainly had a *carved image* on the head or top of his staff, to which he paid a species of adoration; or that he bowed himself to the staff or sceptre of Joseph, thus fulfilling the prophetic import of his son's dreams! The sense of the *Hebrew text* is given above. If the reader prefers the sense of the *Septuagint* and the Epistle to the Hebrews, the meaning is, that Jacob, through feebleness, supported himself with a staff, and that, when he got the requisite assurance from Joseph that his dead body should be carried to Canaan, leaning on his staff he bowed his head in adoration to God, who had supported him all his life long, and hitherto fulfilled all his promises.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 48

Joseph, hearing that his father was near death, took his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, and went to Goshen, to visit him, 1. Jacob strengthens himself to receive them, 2. Gives Joseph an account of God's appearing to him at Luz, and repeating the promise, 3, 4. Adopts Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons, 5, 6. Mentions the death of Rachel at Ephrath, 7. He blesses Ephraim and Manasseh, preferring the former, who was the younger, to his elder brother, 8-17. Joseph, supposing his father had mistaken in giving the right of primogeniture to the youngest, endeavours to correct him, 18. Jacob shows that he did it designedly, prophecies much good concerning both; but sets Ephraim the youngest before Manasseh, 19, 20. Jacob speaks of his death, and predicts the return of his posterity from Egypt, 21. And gives Joseph a portion above his brethren, which he had taken from the Amorites, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 48

Verse 1. One told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick] He was ill before, and Joseph knew it; but it appears that a messenger had been now despatched to inform Joseph that his father was apparently at the point of death.

Verse 2. Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed.] He had been confined to his bed before, (see ^{<014731>}Genesis 47:31,) and now, hearing that Joseph was come to see him, he made what efforts his little remaining strength would admit, to sit up in bed to receive his son. This verse proves that a *bed*, not a *staff*, is intended in the preceding chapter, ^{<014731>}Genesis 47:31.

Verse 3. God Almighty] *ydv l a El Shaddai, the all-sufficient God, the Outpouder and Dispenser of mercies,* (see ^{<011701>}Genesis 17:1,) *appeared to me at Luz,* afterwards called *Beth-El*; see ^{<012813>}Genesis 28:13; 35:6, 9.

Verse 5. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh-are mine] I now adopt them into my own family, and they shall have their place among my twelve sons, and be treated in every respect as those, and have an equal interest in all the spiritual and temporal blessings of the covenant.

Verse 7. Rachel died by me, &c.] Rachel was the wife of Jacob's choice, and the object of his unvarying affection; he loved her in life-he loves her in

death: many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. A match of a man's own making when guided by reason and religion, will necessarily be a happy one. When fathers and mothers make matches for their children, which are dictated by motives, not of affection, but merely of convenience, worldly gain, &c., &c., such matches are generally wretched; it is *Leah* in the place of *Rachel* to the end of life's pilgrimage.

Verse 8. Who are these?] At ⁻⁰¹⁻⁴⁸¹⁰⁻**Genesis 48:10** it is said, that Jacob's eyes were dim for age, that he *could not see*-could not discern any object unless it were near him; therefore, though he saw Ephraim and Manasseh, yet he could not *distinguish* them till they were brought nigh unto him.

Verse 11. I had not thought to see thy face] There is much delicacy and much tenderness in these expressions. He feels himself now amply recompensed for his long grief and trouble on account of the supposed death of Joseph, in seeing not only himself but his two sons, whom God, by an especial act of favour, is about to add to the number of his own. Thus we find that as Reuben and Simeon were heads of two distinct tribes in Israel, so were Ephraim and Manasseh; because Jacob, in a sort of sacramental way, had adopted them with equal privileges to those of his own sons.

Verse 12. Joseph-bowed himself with his face to the earth.] This act of Joseph has been extravagantly extolled by Dr. *Delaney* and others. "When I consider him on his knees to God," says Dr. *Delaney*, "I regard him as a poor *mortal* in the discharge of his *duty* to his CREATOR. When I behold him bowing before *Pharaoh*, I consider him in the *dutiful posture of a subject to his prince*. But when I see him *bending to the earth* before a *poor, old, blind, decrepit father*, I behold him with admiration and delight. How doth that humiliation exalt him!" This is insufferable! For it in effect says that it is a wondrous condescension in a young man, who, in the course of God's providence, with scarcely any efforts of his own, was raised to affluence and worldly grandeur, to show respect to his *father!* And that respect was the more *gratuitous* and *condescending*, because that father was *poor, old, blind, and decrepit!* The maxim of this most exceptionable flight of admiration is, that "children who have risen to affluence are not *obliged* to reverence their parents when reduced in their circumstances, and brought down by the weight of years and infirmities to the sides of the grave; and should they acknowledge and reverence them, it would be a mark of singular goodness, and be highly meritorious." Should

positions of this kind pass without *reprehension*? I trow not. By the law of God and nature Joseph was as much bound to pay his dying father this *filial* respect, as he was to *revere* his *king*, or to *worship* his *God*. As to myself, I must freely confess that I see nothing *peculiarly amiable* in this part of Joseph's conduct; he simply acquitted himself of a *duty* which God, nature, decency, and common sense, imperiously demanded of him, and all such in his circumstances, to discharge. To the present day children in the east, next to *God*, pay the deepest reverence to their *parents*. Besides, before *whom* was Joseph bowing? Not merely his *father*, but a most eminent PATRIARCH; one highly distinguished by the Lord, and one of the *three* of whom the Supreme Being speaks in the most favourable and affectionate manner; the *three* who received and transmitted the *true faith*, and kept unbroken the Divine covenant; I AM *the GOD of ABRAHAM, the GOD of ISAAC, and the GOD of JACOB*. He has never said, I am the GOD of JOSEPH. And if we compare the *father* and the *son* as *men*, we shall find that the latter was exceeded by the former in almost endless degrees. Joseph owed his advancement and his eminence to what some would call *good fortune*, and what *we* know to have been the *especial providence of God* working in his behalf, wholly *independent* of his own industry, &c., every event of that providence issuing in his favour. Jacob owed his own support and preservation, and the support and preservation of his numerous family, under God, to the continual exercise of the vast powers of a strong and vigorous mind, to which the providence of God seemed *ever in opposition*; because God chose to try to the uttermost the great gifts which he had bestowed. If therefore the most humble and abject *inferior* should reverence dignity and eminence raised to no common height, so should *Joseph* bow down his face to the earth before JACOB.

Besides, Joseph, in thus reverencing his father, only followed the customs of the Egyptians among whom he lived, who, according to Herodotus, (*Euterpe*, c. 80.) were particularly remarkable for the reverence they paid to old age. "For if a young person meet his senior, he instantly turns aside to make way for him; if an aged person enter an apartment, the youth always rise from their seats;" and Mr. *Savary* observes that the reverence mentioned by Herodotus is yet paid to old age on every occasion in Egypt. In Mohammedan countries the children sit as if dumb in the presence of their parents, never attempting to speak unless spoken to. Among the ancient Romans it was considered a crime worthy of death not to rise up in

the presence of an aged person, and acting a contrary part was deemed an awful mark of the deep degeneracy of the times. Thus the satirist:—

**Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piamdum,
Si Juvenis VETULO non assurrexerat; et si
Barbato cuicumque puer.
JUV. Sat. xiii., v. 54.**

**And had not men the hoary heads revered,
Or boys paid reverence when a man appear'd.
Both must have died.
DRYDEN.**

Indeed, though Dr. Delaney is much struck with what he thinks to be great and meritorious condescension and humility on the part of Joseph; yet we find the thing itself, the deepest reverence to parents and old age, practised by all the civilized nations in the world, not as a matter of meritorious courtesy, but as a point of rational and absolute duty.

Verse 14. Israel stretched out his right hand, &c.] Laying hands on the head was always used among the Jews in giving blessings, designating men to any office, and in the consecration of solemn sacrifices. This is the first time we find it mentioned; but we often read of it afterwards. See ^{<02718>}**Numbers 27:18, 23;** ^{<05309>}**Deuteronomy 34:9;** ^{<01913>}**Matthew 19:13, 15;** ^{<04016>}**Acts 6:6;** ^{<04014>}**1 Timothy 4:14.** Jacob laid his right hand on the head of the younger, which we are told he did *wittingly*—well knowing what he was about, *for* (or *although*) *Manasseh was the first-born*, knowing by the Spirit of prophecy that Ephraim's posterity would be more powerful than that of Manasseh. It is observable how God from the beginning has preferred the younger to the elder, as *Abel* before *Cain*; *Shem* before *Japheth*; *Isaac* before *Ishmael*; *Jacob* before *Esau*; *Judah* and *Joseph* before *Reuben*; *Ephraim* before *Manasseh*; *Moses* before *Aaron*; and *David* before his *brethren*. “This is to be resolved entirely into the wise and secret counsel of God, so far as it regards temporal blessings and national privileges, as the apostle tells us, ^{<05911>}**Romans 9:11;** See **Clarke on** ^{<012523>}**Genesis 25:23**”. But this preference has no concern with God's conferring a greater measure of his love and approbation on one person more than another; compare ^{<01007>}**Genesis 4:7**, with ^{<081104>}**Hebrews 11:4**, and you will see that a difference in moral character was the sole cause why God preferred Abel to Cain.”—*Dodd*. The grace that converts the soul certainly comes from the mere mercy of God, without any merit on man's

part; and a sufficiency of this is offered to *every man*, ^{<5021>}**Titus 2:11,12**. But it is not less certain that God *loves those best* who are *most faithful* to this grace.

Verse 15. He blessed Joseph] The father first, and then the sons afterwards. And this is an additional proof to what has been adduced under ^{<04812>}**Genesis 48:12**, of Jacob's *superiority*; for the *less* is always blessed of the *greater*.

The God which fed me all my life long] Jacob is now standing on the verge of eternity, with his faith strong in God. He sees his life to be a series of mercies; and as he had been affectionately attentive, provident, and kind to his most helpless child, so has God been unto him; he has fed him all his life long; he plainly perceives that he owes every morsel of food which he has received to the mere mercy and kindness of God.

Verse 16. The Angel which redeemed me from all evil] **I agh Éal mh hammalac haggoel.** The Messenger, the Redeemer or *Kinsman*; for so **I ag goel** signifies; for this term, in the law of Moses, is applied to that person whose right it is, from his being nearest *akin*, to redeem or purchase back a forfeited inheritance. But of whom does Jacob speak? We have often seen, in the preceding chapters, an angel of God appearing to the patriarchs; (see particularly ^{<01607>}**Genesis 16:7**, and the note there; **See Clarke at “^{<01607>}Genesis 16:7”**) and we have full proof that this was no *created* angel, but the Messenger of the Divine Council, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who then was the angel that *redeemed* Jacob, and whom he invoked to bless *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*? Is it not JESUS? He alone can be called *Goel*, the *redeeming Kinsman*; for he alone took part of our flesh and blood that the *right of redemption* might be *his*; and that the forfeited possession of the favour and image of God might be *redeemed, brought back, and restored* to all those who believe in his name. To have invoked any *other angel* or *messenger* in such a business would have been *impiety*. Angels bless not; to **GOD alone** this prerogative belongs. With what confidence may a truly religious father use these words in behalf of his children: “**JESUS, the CHRIST, who hath redeemed me, bless the lads, redeem them also, and save them unto eternal life!**”

Let my name be named on them] “Let them be ever accounted as a part of my own family; let them be true *Israelites*-persons who shall prevail with God as I have done; and *the name of Abraham*-being partakers of his

faith; and the *name of Isaac*-let them be as remarkable for submissive obedience as he was. Let the virtues of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob be accumulated in them, and invariably displayed by them!" These are the very words of adoption; and by the *imposition of hands*, the *invocation of the Redeemer*, and the solemn *blessing* pronounced, the adoption was completed. From this moment Ephraim and Manasseh had the same rights and privileges as Jacob's sons, which as the sons of *Joseph* they could never have possessed.

And let them grow into a multitude] *brl wgdym veyidgu larob; Let them increase like fishes into a multitude.* FISH are the most prolific of all animals; see the instances produced on **See Clarke on "Genesis 1:20"**. This prophetic blessing was verified in a most remarkable manner; see **Numbers 26:34, 37; Deuteronomy 33:17; Joshua 17:17**. At one time the tribe of Ephraim amounted to 40,500 effective men, and that of Manasseh to 52,700, amounting in the whole to 93,200.

Verse 18. Joseph said-Not so, my father] Joseph supposed that his father had made a mistake in laying his right hand on the head of the youngest, because the *right hand* was considered as the most *noble*, and the instrument of conveying the highest dignities, and thus it has ever been considered among all nations, though the reason of it is not particularly obvious. Even in the heavens the *right hand of God* is the place of the *most exalted dignity*. It has been observed that Joseph spoke here as he was moved by *natural affection*, and that Jacob acted as he was influenced by the *Holy Spirit*.

Verse 20. In thee shall Israel bless] That is, in future generations the Israelites shall take their form of wishing prosperity to any nation or family from the circumstance of the good which it shall be known that God has done to Ephraim and Manasseh: *May God make thee as fruitful as Ephraim, and multiply thee as Manasseh!* So, to their daughters when married, the Jewish women are accustomed to say, *God make thee as Sarah and Rebekah!* The forms are still in use.

Verse 21. Behold, I die] With what composure is this most awful word expressed! Surely of Jacob it might be now said, "He turns his sight undaunted on the tomb;" for though it is not said that he *was full of days*, as were Abraham and Isaac, yet he is perfectly willing to bid adieu to earthly things, and lay his body in the grave. Could any person act as the

patriarchs did in their last moments, who had no hopes of *eternal life*, no belief in the *immortality of the soul*? Impossible! With such a conviction of the being of God, with such proofs of his tenderness and regard, with such experience of his providential and miraculous interference in their behalf, could they suppose that they were only *creatures of a day*, and that God had wasted so much care, attention, providence, grace, and goodness, on creatures who were to be ultimately like the beasts that perish? The supposition that they could have no correct notion of the immortality of the soul is as dishonourable to God as to themselves. But what shall we think of Christians who have formed this hypothesis into a *system* to prove what? Why, that the patriarchs lived and died in the dark! That either the soul has no immortality, or that God has not thought proper to reveal it. Away with such an opinion! It cannot be said to merit serious refutation.

Verse 22. Moreover I have given to thee one portion] dj a μkv

shechem achad, one shechem or one *shoulder*. We have already seen the transactions between Jacob and his family on one part, and *Shechem* and the sons of *Hamor* on the other. See ^{<013318>}**Genesis 33:18, 19**, and ^{<013401>}**Genesis 34:1-31**. As he uses the word *shechem* here, I think it likely that he alludes to the purchase of the field or parcel of ground mentioned ^{<013318>}**Genesis 33:18, 19**. It has been supposed that this parcel of ground, which Jacob bought from *Shechem*, had been taken from him by the Amorites, and that he afterwards had recovered it *by his sword and by his bow*, i.e., *by force of arms*. Shechem appears to have fallen to the lot of Joseph's sons; (see ^{<016170>}**Joshua 17:1**, and ^{<016107>}**Joshua 20:7**;) and in our Lord's time there was a parcel of ground near to *Sychar* or *Shechem* which was still considered as that portion which Jacob gave to his son Joseph, ^{<010416>}**John 4:5**; and on the whole it was probably the *same* that Jacob bought for a *hundred pieces of money*, ^{<013318>}**Genesis 33:18,19**. But how it could be said that *he took this out of the hand of the Amorite with his sword and his bow*, we cannot tell. Many attempts have been made to explain this abstruse verse, but they have all hitherto been fruitless. Jacob's words were no doubt perfectly well understood by Joseph, and probably alluded to some transaction that is not now on record; and it is much safer for us to confess our ignorance, than to hazard conjecture after conjecture on a subject of which we can know nothing certainly.

1. ON filial respect to aged and destitute parents we have already had occasion to speak; see ^{<014811>}**Genesis 48:11**. The duty of children to their parents only ceases when the parents are laid in their graves, and this duty

is the next in order and importance to the duty we owe to God. No circumstances can alter its nature or lessen its importance; *Honour thy father and thy mother* is the sovereign, everlasting command of God. While the relations of *parent* and *child* exist, this commandment will be in full force.

2. The *Redeeming Angel*, the *Messenger of the covenant*, in his preserving and saving influence, is invoked by dying Jacob to be the protector and Saviour of Ephraim and Manasseh, ^{816} **Genesis 48:16**. With what advantage and effect can a dying parent recommend the Lord Jesus to his children, who can testify with his last breath that this Jesus has redeemed *him* from *all evil*! Reader, canst thou call Christ *thy Redeemer*? Hast thou, through him, recovered the forfeited inheritance? Or dost thou expect redemption *from all evil* by any other means? Through *him*, and *him alone*, God will redeem thee from all thy sins; and as thou knowest not what a *moment* may bring forth, thou hast not a moment to lose. Thou hast sinned, and there is no name given under heaven among men whereby thou canst be saved but *Jesus Christ*. Acquaint thyself now with him, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee.

3. We find that the patriarchs ever held the promised land in the most sacred point of view. It was *God's gift* to them; it was confirmed by a *covenant* that spoke of and referred to better things. We believe that this land typified the *rest* which remains for the people of God, and can we be indifferent to the excellence of this *rest*! A patriarch could not die in peace, however distant from this land, without an assurance that his bones should be laid in it. How can *we* live, how can we *die* comfortably, without the assurance that our lives are hid with Christ in God, and that we shall dwell in his presence for ever? There remains a rest for the people of God, and only for the people of God; for those alone who love, serve, reverence, and obey him, in his Son Jesus Christ, shall ever enjoy it.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 49

Jacob, about to die, calls his sons together that he may bless them, or give prophetic declarations concerning their posterity, 1, 2. Prophetic declaration concerning Reuben, 3, 4. Concerning Simeon and Levi, 57; concerning Judah, 8-12; concerning Zebulun, 13; concerning Issachar, 14, 15; concerning Dan, 16-18; concerning Gad, 19; concerning Asher, 20; concerning Naphtali, 21; concerning Joseph, 22-26; concerning Benjamin, 27. Summary concerning the twelve tribes, 28. Jacob gives directions concerning his being buried in the cave of Machpelah, 29-32. Jacob dies, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 49

Verse 1. That **which shall befall you in the last days.**] It is evident from this, and indeed from the whole complexion of these important prophecies, that the twelve sons of Jacob had very little concern in them, *personally* considered, as they were to be fulfilled in the last days, i.e., in times remote from that period, and consequently to their *posterity*, and not to *themselves*, or to their *immediate families*. The whole of these prophetic declarations, from ^{OLD}Genesis 49:2-27 inclusive, is delivered in strongly *figurative* language, and in the poetic form, which, in every translation, should be preserved as nearly as possible, rendering the version line for line with the original. This order I shall pursue in the succeeding notes, always proposing the verse first, in as literal a translation as possible, line for line with the Hebrew after the *hemistich* form, from which the sense will more readily appear; but to the Hebrew text and the common version the reader is ultimately referred.

**2. Come together and hear, O sons of Jacob!
And hearken unto Israel your father.**

Bishop Newton has justly observed that Jacob had received a double blessing, *spiritual* and *temporal*; the promise of being *progenitor of the Messiah*, and the promise of the *land of Canaan*. The promised land he might *divide* among his children as he pleased, but the other must be confined to one of his sons; he therefore assigns to each son a portion in the land of Canaan, but limits the descent of the blessed seed to the tribe of *Judah*. Some have put themselves to a great deal of trouble and learned labour to show that it was a general opinion of the ancients that the soul, a

short time previous to its departure from the body, becomes endued with a certain measure of the *prophetic gift* or *foresight*; and that this was probably the case with Jacob. But it would be derogatory to the dignity of the prophecies delivered in this chapter, to suppose that they came by any other means than *direct inspiration*, as to their main matter, though certain circumstances appear to be left to the patriarch himself, in which he might express his own feelings both as a *father* and as a judge. This is strikingly evident, 1. In the case of *Reuben*, from whom he had received the grossest insult, however the passage relative to him may be understood; and, 2. In the case of *Joseph*, the tenderly *beloved son* of his most *beloved wife Rachel*, in the prophecy concerning whom he gives full vent to all those tender and affectionate emotions which, as a *father* and a *husband*, do him endless credit.

3. *Reuben, my first-born art thou!*
My might, and the prime of my strength,
Excelling in eminence, and excelling in power:

4. *Pouring out like the waters:-thou shalt not excel,*
For thou wentest up to the bed of thy father,—
Then thou didst defile: to my couch he went up!

Verse 3. Reuben as the *first-born* had a right to a double portion of all that the father had; see ^{<16217>}**Deuteronomy 21:17**.

The *eminence* or dignity mentioned here may refer to the *priesthood*; the *power*, to the *regal government* or *kingdom*. In this sense it has been understood by all the ancient Targumists. The Targum of Onkelos paraphrases it thus: “*Thou shouldst have received three portions, the birthright, the priesthood, and the kingdom:*” and to this the Targums of *Jonathan ben Uzziel* and *Jerusalem* add: “*But because thou hast sinned, the birthright is given to Joseph, the kingdom to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi.*” That the birthright was given to the sons of *Joseph* we have the fullest proof from ^{<13701>}**1 Chronicles 5:1**.

Verse 4. Pouring out like the waters] This is an obscure sentence because *unfinished*. It evidently relates to the defilement of his father’s couch; and the word **zj p** *pachaz*, here translated *pouring out*, and in our Version *unstable*, has a *bad* meaning in other places of the Scripture, being applied to *dissolute, debauched, and licentious* conduct. See ^{<17004>}**Judges 9:4; Zep 3:4;** ^{<24234>}**Jeremiah 23:14, 32; 29:23.**

Thou shalt not excel] This tribe never rose to any eminence in Israel; was not so numerous by one third as either Judah, Joseph, or Dan, when Moses took the sum of them in the wilderness, ^{<00121>}**Numbers 1:21**; and was among the *first* that were carried into captivity, ^{<1326>}**1 Chronicles 5:26**.

Then thou didst defile] Another unfinished sentence, similar to the former, and upon the same subject, passing over a transaction covertly, which delicacy forbade Jacob to enlarge on. For the crime of Reuben, **See Clarke on “^{<01322>}Genesis 35:22”**.

5. Simeon and Levi, brethren:

They have accomplished their fraudulent purposes.

6. Into their secret council my soul did not come;

In their confederacy my honour was not united:

For in their anger they slew a man, (cya ish, a noble),

And in their pleasure they murdered a prince.

7. Cursed was their anger, for it was fierce!

And their excessive wrath, for it was inflexible!

I will divide them out in Jacob,

And I will disperse them in Israel.

Verse 5. Simeon and Levi are brethren] Not only springing from the same parents, but they have the same kind or disposition, *head-strong, deceitful, vindictive, and cruel*.

They have accomplished, &c.] Our margin has it, *Their swords are weapons of violence*, i.e., Their swords, which they should have used in defence of their persons or the honourable protection of their families, they have employed in the base and dastardly murder of an innocent people.

The *Septuagint* gives a different turn to this line from our translation, and confirms the translation given above: **συνετελεσαν αδικια εξαίρεσεως αυτων`** *They have accomplished the iniquity of their purpose*; with which the *Samaritan Version* agrees. In the *Samaritan text* we read [Samaritan] *calu, they have accomplished*, instead of the Hebrew **yl k keley**, *weapons or instruments*, which reading most critics prefer: and as to **phytrkm mecherotheyhem**, translated above *their fraudulent purposes*, and which our translation on almost no authority renders *their habitations*, it must either come from the *Æthiopic rkm macar*, *he counselled, devised stratagems, &c.*, (see *Castel*,) or from the *Arabic* [Arabic] *macara*, *he*

deceived, practised deceit, plotted, &c., which is nearly of the same import. This gives not only a *consistent* but evidently the *true* sense.

Verse 6. Into their secret council, &c.] Jacob here exculpates himself from all participation in the guilt of Simeon and Levi in the murder of the Shechemites. He most solemnly declares that he knew nothing of the *confederacy* by which it was *executed*, nor of the *secret council* in which it was *plotted*.

If it should be said that the words **abt tabo** and **dj t techad** should be translated in the *future tense* or in the *imperative*, as in our translation, I shall not contend; though it is well known that the *preterite* is often used for the *future* in Hebrew, and vice versa. Taken thus, the words mark the strong detestation which this holy man's soul felt for the villany of his sons: "My soul *shall not come* into their secret council. My honour *shall not be united* to their confederacy.

For in their anger they slew a man] **vya ish**, a noble, an *honourable* man, viz., *Shechem*.

And in their pleasure] This marks the highest degree of wickedness and settled malice, they were *delighted* with their deed. A similar spirit Saul of Tarsus possessed previously to his conversion; speaking of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, St. Luke says, ^{<4001>}**Acts 8:1:** **σαυλος δε ην συνευδοκων τη αναηρεσει αυτου** *And Saul was gladly consenting to his death.* He was with the others *highly delighted* with it; and thus the prediction of our Lord was fulfilled, ^{<310>}**John 16:2:** *Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.* And it is represented as the highest pitch of profligacy and wickedness, not only to sin, but to *delight in it*; see ^{<5013>}**Romans 1:32.** As the original word **~w[r ratson** signifies, in general, *pleasure, benevolence, delight, &c.*, it should neither be translated *self-will* nor *wilfulness*, as some have done, but simply as above; and the reasons appear sufficiently obvious. *They murdered a prince-Hamor*, the father of *Shechem*. Instead of **rww shor**, which we have translated *a wall*, and others an *ox*, I read **rc sar**, a prince, which makes a consistent sense; (see Kennicott's first Dissertation, p. 56, &c. ;) as there is no evidence whatever that Simeon and Levi either *dug down a wall* or *houghed the oxen*, as some have translated the passage; (see the *margin*;) on the contrary, the text, ^{<01328>}**Genesis 34:28, 29**, proves that they had

taken for their own use the *sheep, oxen, asses, all their wealth, their wives, and their little ones.*

Verse 7. Cursed was their anger] The first motions of their violence *were savage; and their excessive or overflowing wrath, hrb[ebrah, for it was inflexible*-neither the supplications of the males, nor the entreaties, tears, cries, and shrieks of the helpless females, could deter them from their *murderous purpose*; for this, ^{<014915>} **Genesis 49:5**, they are said to have *accomplished.*

I will divide them out, μql j a achallekem, I will make them into lots, giving a portion of them to one tribe, and a portion to another; but they shall never attain to any political consequence. This appears to have been literally fulfilled. *Levi* had no inheritance except forty-eight cities, scattered through different parts of the land of Canaan: and as to the tribe of *Simeon*, it is generally believed among the Jews that they became *schoolmasters* to the other tribes; and when they entered Canaan they had only a small portion, a few towns and villages in the worst part of Judah's lot, ^{<06901>} **Joshua 19:1**, which afterwards finding too little, they formed different colonies in districts which they conquered from the *Idumeans* and *Amalekites*, ^{<1308>} **1 Chronicles 4:39**, &c. Thus these two tribes were not only *separated from each other*, but even *divided from themselves*, according to this prediction of Jacob.

*8. Judah! thou! Thy brethren shall praise thee.
Thy hand, in the neck of thine enemies:
The sons of thy father shall bow themselves to thee.*

*9. A lion's whelp is Judah:
From the prey, my son, thou hast ascended,
He couched, lying down like a strong lion
And like a lioness; who shall arouse him?*

*10. From Judah the sceptre shall not depart,
Nor a teacher from his offspring,
Until that SHILOH shall come,
And to him shall be assembled the peoples.*

*11. Binding his colt to the vine,
And to the choice vine the foals of his ass,
He washed his garments in wine,
His clothes in the blood of the grape.*

*12. With wine shall his eyes be red,
And his teeth shall be white with milk.*

Verse 8. Thy brethren shall praise thee.] As the name *Judah* signifies *praise*, Jacob takes occasion from its meaning to show that this tribe should be so eminent and glorious, that the rest of the tribes should *praise* it; that is, they should acknowledge its superior dignity, as in its privileges it should be distinguished beyond all the others. On the prophecy relative to Judah, Dr. *Hales* has several judicious remarks, and has left very little to be farther desired on the subject. Every reader will be glad to meet with them here.

“The prophecy begins with his name JUDAH, signifying the *praise of the Lord*, which was given to him at his birth by his mother *Leah*, ^{<01225>}**Genesis 29:35**. It then describes the warlike character of this tribe, to which, by the Divine appointment, was assigned the *first lot* of the promised land, which was conquered accordingly by the pious and heroic *Caleb*; the first who *laid hands on the necks of his enemies*, and routed and subdued them, ^{<05411>}**Joshua 14:11; 15:1;** ^{<07010>}**Judges 1:1, 2;** and led the way for their total subjugation under *David*; who, in allusion to this prediction, *praises God*, and says: Thou hast given me the *necks* of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me, ^{<19184>}**Psalm 18:40**. In the different stages of its strength, this tribe is compared to a *lion’s whelp*, to a *full grown lion*, and to a *nursing lioness*, the fiercest of all. Hence a *lion* was the standard of Judah; compare ^{<04003>}**Numbers 2:3,** ^{<30110>}**Ezekiel 1:10**. The city of David, where he reposed himself after his conquests, secure in the terror of his name, ^{<13417>}**1 Chronicles 14:17**, was called *Ariel*, the *lion of God*, ^{<23201>}**Isaiah 29:1;** and our Lord himself, his most illustrious descendant, *the Lion of the tribe of Judah*, ^{<06005>}**Revelation 5:5**.

“The duration of the power of this famous tribe is next determined: ‘the sceptre of dominion,’ as it is understood ^{<17004>}**Esther 8:4;** ^{<23415>}**Isaiah 14:5,** &c., or its *civil government*, was not to cease or depart from Judah until the birth or coming of SHILOH, signifying the *Apostle*, as Christ is styled, ^{<30010>}**Hebrews 3:1;** nor was the native lawgiver, or *expounder of the law*, *teacher*, or *scribe*, intimating their ecclesiastical polity, to cease, until Shiloh should have a congregation of peoples, or religious followers, attached to him. And how accurately was this fulfilled in both these respects!

“1. Shortly before the birth of Christ a decree was issued by Augustus Cæsar that all the land of Judea and Galilee should be *enrolled*, or a registry of persons taken, in which Christ was included, ^{<4101>}**Luke 2:1-7**; whence Julian the apostate unwittingly objected to his *title* of CHRIST or KING, that he was born a subject of Cæsar!’ About eleven years after Judea was made a Roman province, attached to Syria on the deposal and banishment of *Archelaus*, the son of *Herod the Great*, for maladministration; and an assessment of properties or *taxing* was carried into effect by *Cyrenius*, then governor of Syria, the same who before, as the emperor’s procurator, had made the enrolment, ^{<4102>}**Luke 2:2; Ac 5:37**; and thenceforth Judea was governed by a Roman deputy, and the judicial power of life and death taken away from the Jews, ^{<4181>}**John 18:31**.

“2. Their ecclesiastical polity ceased with the destruction of their city and temple by the Romans, A. D. 70; at which time the Gospel had been preached through the known world by the apostles, ‘his witnesses in *Jerusalem*, and in all *Judea*, and in *Samaria*, and unto the *uttermost parts* of the earth;’ ^{<4108>}**Acts 2:8; Ro 10:18**.

“Our Lord’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem, before his crucifixion, ‘riding on an *ass*, even a *colt* the *foal* of an ass,’ which by his direction his disciples brought to him for this purpose, ‘Go into the village over against you, and presently ye shall find an *ass tied*, and a *colt* with her; *loose* them, and bring them to me,’ ^{<4210>}**Matthew 21:2-5**, remarkably fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah, (^{<3800>}**Zechariah 9:9**) is no less a fulfillment of this prophecy of *Shiloh*, ‘binding or tying his *foal* to the *vine*, even his *ass*’s *colt* to the *choice vine*.’ In ancient times to ride upon *white asses* or *ass-colts* was the privilege of persons of high rank, *princes*, *judges*, and *prophets*, ^{<07610>}**Judges 5:10; 10:4**; ^{<0222>}**Numbers 22:22**. And as the children of Israel were symbolized by the *vine*, ^{<19808>}**Psalms 80:8**; ^{<28101>}**Hosea 10:1**, and the men of Judah by ‘a (choice) *vine of Sorek*,’ in the original, both here and in the beautiful allegory of Isaiah, ^{<23101>}**Isaiah 5:1-7**, adopted by Jeremiah, ^{<24121>}**Jeremiah 2:21**, and by our Lord, ^{<42133>}**Matthew 21:33**, who styled himself the *true vine*, ^{<43151>}**John 15:1**; so the union of both these images signified our Lord’s assumption, as the promised *Shiloh*, of the dignity of *the king of the Jews*, not in a temporal but in a spiritual sense, as he declared to Pilate, ^{<43136>}**John 18:36**, as a prelude to his second coming in glory ‘to restore again the kingdom to *Israel*.’

“The *vengeance* to be then inflicted on all the enemies of his Church, or congregation of faithful *Christians*, is expressed by the symbolical imagery of ‘washing his garments in *wine*, and his clothes in the *blood of grapes*;’ which to understand literally, would be incongruous and unusual any where, while it aptly represents his garments *crimsoned* in the blood of his foes, and their immense slaughter; and imagery frequently adopted in the *prophetic* scriptures.

“The strength and wholesomeness of Shiloh’s doctrine are next represented by having ‘his eyes red with *wine*, and his teeth white with *milk*.’ And thus the evangelical prophet, in similar strains, invites the world to embrace the GOSPEL:—

*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters,
And he that hath no money; come, buy and eat:
Yea, come, buy wine and milk,
Without money and without price.*

⌞2350⌟ *Isaiah 55:1.*

“On the last day of the feast of *tabernacles* it was customary among the Jews for the people to bring water from the fountain of *Siloah* or *Siloam*, which they poured on the altar, singing the words of Isaiah, ⌞2313⌟ **Isaiah 12:3**: *With joy shall ye draw water from the fountain of salvation*; which the Targum interprets, ‘With joy shall ye receive a new doctrine from the ELECT of the JUST ONE;’ and the feast itself was also called Hosannah, *Save, we beseech thee*. And Isaiah has also described the apostasy of the Jews from their tutelary God IMMANUEL, under the corresponding imagery of their ‘rejecting the gently-flowing *waters* of *Siloah*,’ ⌞2306⌟ **Isaiah 8:6-8**.

“Hence our Lord, on the last day of the feast, significantly invited the Jews to come unto him as the true and living Fountain of waters, ⌞2423⌟ **Jeremiah 2:13**. ‘If any man thirst, let him come to ME and drink;’ ⌞4075⌟ **John 7:37**. He also compared his doctrine to *new wine*, which required to be put into *new bottles*, made of skins strong enough to contain it, ⌞4097⌟ **Matthew 9:17**; while the Gospel is repeatedly represented as affording *milk for babes*, or the first principles of the oracles of God for *novices* in the faith, as well as strong meat [and strong wine] for *masters in Christ* or *adepts*, ⌞4031⌟ **Matthew 13:11; Heb 5:12-14**.

“And our Lord’s most significant miracle was wrought at this fountain, when he gave sight to a man forty years old, who had been blind from his

birth, by sending him, after he had anointed his eyes with moistened clay, to wash in the pool of *Siloam*, which is the Greek pronunciation of the Hebrew **hl c** *Siloah* or *Siloh*, ^{<23806>}**Isaiah 8:6**, where the *Septuagint* version reads **σιλωαμ**, signifying, according to the evangelist, **απεσταλμενος**, *sent forth*, and consequently derived from **j l v** *shalach*, *to send*, ^{<8307>}**John 9:7**. Our Lord thus assuming to himself his two leading titles of MESSIAH, signifying *anointed*, and SHILOH, *sent forth* or *delegated* from God; as he had done before at the opening of his mission: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath *anointed* me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath *sent me forth* (**απεσταλκε**) to heal the broken-hearted,’ &c.; ^{<8048>}**Luke 4:18**.

“And in the course of it he declared, I was *not sent forth* (**απεσταλην**) but unto the *lost sheep* of the house of *Israel*, ^{<4054>}**Matthew 15:24**, by a two-fold reference to his character in *Jacob’s* prophecy of SHILOH and SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL, ^{<04910>}**Genesis 49:10-24**. ‘This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou *sentest forth*,’ (**απεστειλας**), to instruct and save mankind, ^{<8178>}**John 17:3**; and he thus distinguishes his own superior *mission* from his *commission* to his apostles: ‘As THE FATHER hath sent ME, (**απεσταλκε με**), so I send you,’ **πεμπω υμας**, ^{<4321>}**John 20:21**. Whence St. Paul expressly styles Jesus Christ ‘the *Apostle* (ο **αποστολος**) and *High Priest* of our profession,’ ^{<8001>}**Hebrews 3:1**; and by an elaborate argument shows the superiority of his *mission* above that of Moses, and of his priesthood above that of Aaron, in the sequel of the epistle. His priesthood was foretold by David to be a *royal priesthood*, after the order of *Melchizedek*, ^{<9804>}**Psalms 110:4**. But where shall we find his mission or apostleship foretold, except in *Jacob’s* prophecy of *Shiloh*? which was evidently so understood by Moses when God offered to *send* him as his ambassador to Pharaoh, and he declined at first the arduous mission: ‘O my Lord, send I pray thee by the hand of *Him whom thou wilt send*,’ or by the promised *Shiloh*, ^{<00810>}**Exodus 3:10; 4:13**; by whom in his last blessing to the Israelites, parallel to that of *Jacob*, he prayed that ‘God would bring back Judah to his people,’ from captivity, ^{<6337>}**Deuteronomy 33:7**.

“Here then we find the true meaning and derivation of the much disputed term *Shiloh* in this prophecy of *Jacob*, which is fortunately preserved by the *Vulgate*, rendering *qui mittendus est*, *he that is to be sent*, and also by a

rabbinical comment on ^{<16217>}**Deuteronomy 22:7**: ‘If you keep this precept, you hasten the coming of the *Messiah*, who is called SENT.’

“This important prophecy concerning Judah intimates, 1. The warlike character and conquests of this tribe; 2. The cessation of their civil and religious polity at the first coming of *Shiloh*; 3. His meek and lowly inauguration at that time, as spiritual *King of the Jews*, riding on an *ass* like the ancient *judges* and *prophets*; 4. His second coming as a warrior to trample on all his foes; and, 5. To save and instruct his faithful people.”—*Hales’ Anal.*, vol. ii., p. 167, &c.

Verse 10. From Judah the sceptre shall not depart] The Jews have a quibble on the word **cbv** *shebet*, which we translate *sceptre*; they say it signifies a *staff* or *rod*, and that the meaning of it is, that “*afflictions* shall not depart from the Jews till the *Messiah* comes;” that they are still under affliction and therefore the *Messiah* is not come. This is a miserable *shift* to save a *lost cause*. Their chief Targumist, *Onkelos*, understood and translated the word nearly as we do; and the same meaning is adopted by the *Jerusalem Targum*, and by all the ancient versions, the Arabic excepted, which has [Arabic] *kazeeb*, a rod; but in a very ancient MS. of the Pentateuch in my own possession the word [Arabic] *sebet* is used, which signifies a *tribe*. Judah shall continue a distinct *tribe* till the *Messiah* shall come; and it did so; and after his coming it was confounded with the others, so that all *distinction* has been ever since lost.

Nor a teacher from his offspring] I am sufficiently aware that the *literal* meaning of the original **wyl gr ^ybm** *mibbeyn raglaiv* is *from between his feet*, and I am as fully satisfied that it should never be *so translated*; *from between the feet* and *out of the thigh* simply mean *progeny*, *natural offspring*, for reasons which surely need not be mentioned. The Targum of *Jonathan ben Uzziel*, and the *Jerusalem Targum*, apply the whole of this prophecy, in a variety of very minute particulars, to the *Messiah*, and give no kind of countenance to the fictions of the modern Jews.

*13. At the haven of the seas shall Zebulun dwell,
And he shall be a haven for ships.
And his border shall extend unto Sidon.*

Verse 13. Zebulun’s lot or portion in the division of the Promised Land extended from the Mediterranean Sea on the west, to the lake of Gennesareth on the east; see his division, ^{<161910>}**Joshua 19:10**, &c. The

Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases the passage thus: “Zebulun shall be on the coasts of the sea, and he shall rule over the *havens*; he shall subdue the provinces of the sea with his, ships, and his border shall extend unto Sidon.

**14. Issachar is a strong ass
Couching between two burdens.**

**15. And he saw the resting place that it was good,
And the land that it was pleasant;
And he inclined his shoulder to the load,
And he became a servant unto tribute.**

Verse 14. Issachar is a strong ass] מרג רמג *chamor garem* is properly a *strong-limbed ass*; *couching between two burdens*-bearing patiently, as most understand it, the fatigues of *agriculture*, and submitting to *exorbitant taxes* rather than exert themselves to drive out the old inhabitants.

The *two burdens* literally mean the *two sacks* or *panniers*, one on each side of the animal's body; and *couching down between* these refers to the well-known propensity of the ass, whenever wearied or overloaded, to lie down even with its burden on its back.

Verse 15. He saw that rest] The *inland portion* that was assigned to him between the other tribes. *He inclined his shoulder to the load*; the Chaldee paraphrast gives this a widely different turn to that given it by most commentators: “He saw his portion that it was good, and the land that it was fruitful; and he shall subdue the provinces of the people, and drive out their inhabitants, and those who are left shall be his servants, and his tributaries.” Grotius understands it nearly in the same way. The *pusillanimity* which is generally attributed to this tribe certainly does not agree with the view in which they are exhibited in Scripture. In the song of Deborah this tribe is praised for the *powerful assistance* which it then afforded, ^{<0705>}**Judges 5:15**. And in ^{<1370>}**1 Chronicles 7:1-5**, they are expressly said to have been *valiant men of might in all their families, and in all their generations*; i.e., through every period of their history. It appears they were a laborious, hardy, valiant tribe, patient in *labour* and invincible in *war*; bearing both these burdens with great constancy whenever it was necessary. When *Tola* of this tribe judged Israel, the land had rest twenty-three years, ^{<0700>}**Judges 10:1**.

*16. Dan shall judge his people,
As one of the tribes of Israel.*

*17. Dan shall be a serpent on the way,
A cerastes upon the track,
Biting the heels of the horse,
And his rider shall fall backwards.*

Verse 16. Dan shall judge] Dan, whose name signifies *judgment*, was the eldest of Jacob's sons by Bilhah, Rachel's maid, and he is here promised an equal rule with those tribes that sprang from either *Leah* or *Rachel*, the legal wives of Jacob.

Some Jewish and some Christian writers understand this prophecy of *Samson*, who sprang from this tribe, and *judged*, or as the word might be translated *avenged*, the people of Israel twenty years. See ^{<0713>}**Judges 13:2; 15:20.**

Verse 17. Dan shall be a serpent] The original word is **vj n** *nachash*, and we have seen in **Clarke's note** "^{<0100>}**Genesis 3:1**" that this has a great variety of significations. It is probable that a *serpent* is here intended, but of what kind we know not; yet as the principal reference in the text is to *guile, cunning, &c.*, the same creature may be intended as in "**Clarke's note** "^{<0100>}**Genesis 3:1**".

A cerastes upon the track] The word **ἠσφηφον** *shephiphon*, which is nowhere else to be found in the Bible, is thus translated by the *Vulgate*, and *Bochart* approves of the translation. The *cerastes* has its name from two little *horns* upon its head, and is remarkable for the property here ascribed to the *shephiphon*. The word **j ra** *orach*, which we translate *path*, signifies the *track* or *rut* made in the ground by the wheel of a *cart, wagon, &c.* And the description that *Nicander* gives of this serpent in his *Theriaca* perfectly agrees with what is here said of the *shephiphon*.

εν δ αμαθοισιν
η και αματροξησησι παρα στιβον ενδυκες ανει.
v. 262.

It lies under the sand, or in some cart rut by the way.

It is intimated that this tribe should gain the principal part of its conquests more by *cunning* and *stratagem*, than by *valour*; and this is seen

particularly in their conquest of *Laish*, Judges xviii., and even in some of the transactions of *Samson*, such as burning the corn of the *Philistines*, and at last pulling down their temple, and destroying three thousand at one time, see ^{<07163>}**Judges 16:26-30.**

18. For thy salvation have I waited, O Lord!

This is a remarkable ejaculation, and seems to stand perfectly unconnected with all that went before and all that follows; though it is probable that certain prophetic views which Jacob now had, and which he does not explain, gave rise to it; and by this he at once expressed both his *faith* and *hope* in God. Both Jewish and Christian commentators have endeavoured to find out the connection in which these words existed in the mind of the patriarch. The Targum of Jonathan expresses the whole thus: “When Jacob saw Gideon the son of Joash, and Samson the son of Manoah, which were to be saviours in a future age, he said: I do not wait for the salvation of Gideon, I do not expect the salvation of Samson, because their salvation is a temporal salvation; but I wait for and expect thy salvation, O Lord, because thy salvation is eternal.” And the Jerusalem Targum much to the same purpose: “Our father Jacob said: Wait not, my soul, for the redemption of Gideon the son of Joash which is *temporal*, nor the redemption of Samson which is a created salvation; but for the salvation which thou hast said by THY WORD should come to thy people the children of Israel: my soul waits for this thy salvation.” Indeed these Targums understand almost the whole of these prophecies of the Messiah, and especially what is said about *Judah*, every word of which they refer to him. Thus the *ancient Jews* convict the *moderns* of both false interpretations and vain expectations. As the tribe of Dan was the first that appears to have been seduced from the true worship of God, (see ^{<071830>}**Judges 18:30,**) some have thought that Jacob refers particularly to this, and sees the end of the general apostasy only in the redemption by Jesus Christ, considering the *nachash* above as the *seducer*, and the *Messiah* the promised *seed*.

***19. Gad, an army shall attack him,
And he shall attack in return.***

This is one of the most obscure prophecies in the whole chapter; and no two interpreters agree in the translation of the original words, which exhibit a most singular *alliteration*:—

wndwgy dwdg dg gad gedud yegudennu;
 bq[dgy awhw vehu yagud akeb.

The prophecy seems to refer generally to the frequent disturbances to which this tribe should be exposed, and their hostile, warlike disposition, that would always lead them to repel every aggression. It is likely that the prophecy had an especial fulfillment when this tribe, in conjunction with that of Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh, got a great victory over the Hagarites, taking captive *one hundred thousand men, two thousand asses, fifty thousand camels, and two hundred and fifty thousand sheep*; see ^{<13518>} **1 Chronicles 5:18-22**. Dr. Durell and others translate the last word bq[*akeb, rear*—"He shall invade their rear;" which contains *almost no meaning*, as it only seems to state that though the army that invaded Gad should be successful, yet the *Gadites* would harass their rear as they returned: but this could never be a subject sufficient consequence for a *prophecy*. The word by[*ekeb* is frequently used as a *particle*, signifying *in consequence, because of, on account of*. After the *Gadites* had obtained the victory above mentioned, they continued to possess the land of their enemies till they were carried away captive. The Chaldee paraphrasts apply this to the *Gadites* going armed over Jordan before their brethren, discomfiting their enemies, and *returning back* with much *spoil*. See ^{<16412>} **Joshua 4:12, 13**, and ^{<16221>} **Joshua 22:1-2, 8**.

*20. From Asher his bread shall be fat,
 And he shall produce royal dainties.*

This refers to the great fertility of the lot that fell to Asher, and which appears to have corresponded with the *name*, which signifies *happy or blessed*. His great *prosperity* is described by Moses in this figurative way: "Let Asher be *blessed* with children, let him be *acceptable* to his brethren, and let him *dip his foot in oil*;" ^{<16324>} **Deuteronomy 33:24**.

*21. Naphtali is a spreading oak,
 Producing beautiful branches.*

This is *Bochart's* translation; and perhaps no man who understands the genius of the Hebrew language will attempt to dispute its propriety; it is as *literal* as it is *correct*. Our own translation scarcely gives any sense. The fruitfulness of this tribe in children may be here intended. From his four sons *Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem*, which he took down into Egypt, ^{<14624>} **Genesis 46:24**, in the course of two hundred and fifteen years there

sprang of effective men 53,400: but as great increase in this way was not an *uncommon* case in the descendants of Jacob, this may refer particularly to the *fruitfulness of their soil*, and the especial providential care and blessing of the Almighty; to which indeed Moses seems particularly to refer, ^{<1532>}**Deuteronomy 33:23**: *O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord*. So that he may be represented under the notion of a *tree planted in a rich soil*, growing to a prodigious size, extending its branches in all directions, and becoming a *shade for men and cattle*, and a *harbour for the fowls of heaven*.

*22. The son of a fruitful (vine) is Joseph;
The son of a fruitful (vine) by the fountain:
The daughters (branches) shoot over the wall.*

*23. They sorely afflicted him and contended with him;
The chief archers had him in hatred.*

*24. But his bow remained in strength,
And the arms of his hands were made strong
By the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob:
By the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.*

*25. By the God of thy father, for he helped thee;
And God All-sufficient, he blessed thee,
The blessing of the heavens from above,
And the blessings lying in the deep beneath,
The blessings of the breasts and of the womb*

*26. The blessings of thy father have prevailed
Over the blessings of the eternal mountains,
And the desirable things of the everlasting hills.
These shall be on the head of Joseph,
And on his crown who was separated from his brethren.*

Verse 22. The sum of a fruitful vine] This appears to me to refer to Jacob himself, who was blessed with such a numerous posterity that in two hundred and fifteen years after this his own descendants amounted to upwards of 600,000 effective men; and the figures here are intended to point out the continual growth and increase of his posterity. *Jacob was a fruitful tree* planted by a fountain, which because it was *good* would yield *good fruit*; and because it was planted near a *fountain*, from being continually watered, would be *perpetually fruitful*. The same is used and

applied to Jacob, ^{<0328>}**Deuteronomy 33:28**: *The FOUNTAIN of JACOB shall be upon a land of corn, and wine, &c.*

The daughters, twnb banoth, put here for **branches, shoot over or run upon the wall.**] Alluding probably to the case of the *vine*, which requires to be supported by a wall, trees, &c. Some commentators have understood this literally, and have applied it to the Egyptian women, who were so struck with the beauty of Joseph as to get upon walls, the tops of houses, &c., to see him as he passed by. This is agreeable to the view taken of the subject by the *Koran*. See Clarke on “^{<0306>}**Genesis 39:6**”.

Verse 23. The chief archers] $\mu\psi\chi\jmath$ $\gamma\iota$ [**b** *baaley chitstsim*, the *masters of arrows*-Joseph’s brethren, who either used such weapons, while feeding their flocks in the deserts, for the protection of themselves and cattle, or for the purpose of *hunting*; and who probably excelled in archery. It may however refer to the *bitter speeches* and *harsh words* that they spoke to and of him, for *they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him*, ^{<0374>}**Genesis 37:4**. Thus they sorely afflicted him, and were incessantly scolding or finding fault.

Verse 24. But his bow remained in strength] The more he was persecuted, either by his brethren or in Egypt, the more resplendent his uprightness and virtues shone: and *the arms* his *extended power and influence, of his hands plans, designs, and particular operations* of his *prudence, judgment, discretion, &c.*, were all rendered successful by the *hand*-the powerful succour and protection, *of the Mighty One of Jacob* that God who blessed and protected all the counsels and plans of Jacob, and protected and increased him also when he was in a strange land, and often under the power of those who sought opportunities to oppress and defraud him.

By the name of the Shepherd; the Rock of Israel] *Jehovah*, and *El-Elohey Israel*; see ^{<0333>}**Genesis 33:20**. This appears to me to refer to the subject of the *thirty-second* chapter, where Jacob wrestled with God, had God’s *name* revealed to him, and his own name *changed* from *Jacob* to *Israel*, in consequence of which he built an altar, and dedicated it to God, who had appeared to him under the name of *Elohey-Israel*, the *strong God of Israel*; which circumstance led him to use the term *Rock*, which, as an emblem of *power*, is frequently given to God in the sacred writings, and may here refer to the *stone* which Jacob set up. It is very probable that the

word *shepherd* is intended to apply to our *blessed Lord*, who is the Shepherd of Israel, the good Shepherd, ^{<43101>}**John 10:11-17**; and who, beyond all controversy, was the person with whom Jacob wrestled. See Clarke on ^{<-01167>}**Genesis 16:7** and ^{<-01322>}**Genesis 32:24**”.

Verse 25. The God of thy father] How frequently God is called the *God of Jacob* none needs be told who reads the Bible.

God All-sufficient] Instead of *ydv ta* ETH *Shaddai*, THE *Almighty* or *All-sufficient*; I read *yl v l a* EL *Shaddai*, GOD *All-sufficient*; which is the reading of the *Samaritan*, *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*, and of three reputable MSS. In the collections of *Kennicott* and *Deuteronomy Rossi*. The copies used by those ancient versions had evidently *l a* EL, *God*, and not *ta eth*, THE, a mistake produced in later times. On the word *ydv l a* *El Shaddai*, See Clarke on ^{<-01170>}**Genesis 17:1**”.

The blessing of the heavens from above] A generally pure, clear, serene sky, frequently dropping down fertilizing showers and dews, so as to make a very fruitful soil and salubrious atmosphere.

Blessings lying in the deep beneath] Whatever riches could be gained from the sea or rivers, from *mines* and *minerals* in the bowels of the earth, and from abundant *springs* in different parts of his inheritance. Our translation of this line is excessively obscure: *Blessings of the deep that lieth under*. What is it that lies *under the deep*: By connecting *tkrb* *bircoth*, *blessings*, with *txbr* *roboeth*, *lying*, all ambiguity is avoided, and the text speaks a plain and consistent sense.

The blessings of the breasts and of the womb.] A numerous offspring, and an abundance of cattle. The progeny of Joseph, by Ephraim and Manasseh, amounted at the first *census* or enumeration (Num. i.) to 75,900 men, which exceeded the sum of any one tribe; *Judah*, the greatest of the others, amounting to no more than 74,600. Indeed, Ephraim and Manasseh had multiplied so greatly in the days of Joshua, that a common *lot* was not sufficient for them. See their complaint, ^{<05714>}**Joshua 17:14**.

Verse 26. The blessing of thy father, &c.] The blessings which thy father now prays for and pronounces are neither *temporal* nor *transitory*; they shall exceed in their *duration* the *eternal mountains*, and in their *value* and *spiritual* nature all the *conveniences*, *comforts*, and *delicacies* which the

everlasting hills can produce. They shall last when the heavens and the earth are no more, and shall extend throughout eternity. They are the blessings which shall be communicated to the world by means of the Messiah.

The Jerusalem Targum paraphrases the place thus: “The blessing of this father shall be added unto the blessings wherewith thy fathers Abraham and Isaac, who are likened to *mountains*, have blessed thee; and they shall exceed the blessings of the *four mothers*, Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, who are likened to the *hills*: all these blessings shall be a crown of magnificence on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was a prince and governor in the land of Egypt.”

***27. Benjamin is a ravenous wolf: In the morning
he shall devour the prey, And in the evening
he shall divide the spoil.***

This tribe is very fitly compared to a ravenous *wolf*, because of the rude courage and ferocity which they have invariably displayed, particularly in their war with the other tribes, in which they killed more men than the whole of their own numbers amounted to.

“This last tribe,” says Dr. Hales, “is compared to a *wolf* for its ferocious and martial disposition, such as was evinced by their contests with the other tribes, in which, after two victories, they were almost exterminated, ^{<072018>}**Judges 20:18-48.**” Its union with the tribe of Judah seems to be intimated in their joint conquests, expressed nearly in the same terms: “Judah went up from the prey;” “Benjamin devoured the prey.” Moses in his parallel prophecy, ^{<06312>}**Deuteronomy 33:12**, confirms this by signifying that the *sanctuary* should be fixed in his lot, and that he should continue as long as the existence of the temple itself:—

***THE BELOVED OF THE LORD shall dwell with him in safety,
And shall cover him all the day long,
And shall dwell between his shoulders.***

^{<06312>}**Deuteronomy 33:12.**

In the morning, &c.] These expressions have been variously understood. The sense given above is that in which the principal interpreters agree; but *Houbigant* protests against the prophecy signifying the *continuance* of this tribe, as the words, “in the *morning* devouring the prey,” and “in the

evening dividing the spoil,” are supposed to imply; “because,” he observes, “after the return from the Babylonish captivity, this tribe is no more mentioned.” But this may be accounted for from the circumstance of its being *associated* with that of *Judah*, (see ^{<1122>}**1 Kings 12:21-24**,) after which it is scarcely ever mentioned but in that union. Being thus absorbed in the tribe of Judah, it continued from the *morning* till the *evening* of the Jewish dispensation, and consequently till the Lion of the tribe of Judah was seen in the wilderness of Israel.

In the morning, according to Mr. Ainsworth, “signifies the *first times*; for Ehud of Benjamin was the *second* judge that saved the Israelites from the hands of the Moabites, ^{<7815>}**Judges 3:15**, &c. Saul of Benjamin was the *first king* of Israel; he and his son were great warriors, making a prey of many enemies, ^{<9106>}**1 Samuel 11:6, 7, 11; 14:13, 15, 47, 48**. And the *evening*, the *latter times*; for Mordecai and Esther of Benjamin delivered the Jews from a great destruction, and slew their enemies, ^{<7807>}**Esther 8:7, 9, 11; 9:5, 6, 15, 16**.”

Verse 28. Every one according to his blessing] That is, guided by the unerring Spirit of prophecy, Jacob now foretold to each of his sons all the important events which should take place during their successive generations, and the predominant characteristic of each tribe; and, at the same time, made some comparatively obscure references to the advent of the Messiah, and the redemption of the world by him.

Verse 29. Bury me with my fathers, &c.] From this it appears that the cave at Machpelah was a *common burying-place for Hebrews of distinction*; and indeed the first *public burying-place* mentioned in history. From ^{<0461>}**Genesis 49:31** we find that Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah, had been already deposited there, and among them Jacob wished to have his bones laid; and he left his dying charge with his children to bury him in this place, and this they conscientiously performed. See ^{<0503>}**Genesis 50:13**.

Verse 33. He gathered up his feet into the bed] It is very probable that while delivering these prophetic blessings Jacob sat upon the side of his bed, leaning upon his staff; and having finished, he lifted up his feet into the bed, stretched himself upon it, and *expired*!

And was gathered unto his people.] The testimony that this place bears to the immortality of the soul, and to its existence *separate* from the body,

should not be lightly regarded. In the same moment in which Jacob is said to have *gathered up his feet into the bed*, and to have expired, it is added, *and was gathered unto his people*. It is certain that his body was not *then gathered to his people*, nor till *seven* weeks after; and it is not likely that a circumstance, so distant in point both of time and place, would have been thus *anticipated*, and associated with facts that took place in *that moment*. I cannot help therefore considering this an additional evidence for the *immateriality of the soul*, and that it was intended by the Holy Spirit to convey this grand and consolatory sentiment, that when a holy man ceases to live among his fellows, his soul becomes an inhabitant of another world, and is joined to the spirits of just men made perfect.

1. IT has been conjectured (See Clarke “~~01570~~Genesis 37:9”) that the eleven stars that bowed down to Joseph might probably refer to the *signs of the Zodiac*, which were very anciently known in Egypt, and are supposed to have had their origin in *Chaldea*. On this supposition Joseph’s eleven brethren answered to *eleven* of these signs, and himself to the *twelfth*. General Vallancy has endeavoured, in his *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, vol. vi., part. ii., p. 343, to trace out the analogy between the twelve sons of Jacob and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, which Dr. Hales (*Analysis*, vol. ii., p. 165) has altered a little, and placed in a form in which it becomes more generally applicable. As this scheme is curious, many readers who may not have the opportunity of consulting the above works will be pleased to find it here. That there is an allusion to the *twelve signs* of the Zodiac, and probably to their ancient *asterisms*, may be readily credited; but how far the peculiar characteristics of the sons of Jacob were expressed by the *animals* in the Zodiac, is a widely different question.

1. RUBEN-“Unstable (rather *pouring out*) as *waters*”-the sign AQUARIUS, represented as a *man pouring out waters from an urn*.
2. SIMEON and LEVI-“*The united brethren*” the sign GEMINI or the *Twins*.
3. JUDAH-“The strong *lion*”-the sign LEO.
4. ASHER-“*His bread shall be fat*”-the sign VIRGO or the *Virgin*, generally represented as holding a *full ear of corn*.
5. ISSACHAR-“A strong *ass*” or *ox*, both used in husbandry-the sign TAURUS or the *Bull*.

6. and 7. DAN—"A serpent biting the horse's heels"—Scorpio, the *Scorpion*. On the celestial sphere the Scorpion is actually represented as *biting the heel of the horse* of the archer *Sagittarius*; and *Chelae*, "his claws," originally occupied the space of *Libra*.

8. JOSEPH—"His *bow* remained in strength"—the sign SAGITTARIUS, the *archer* or *bowman*; commonly represented, even on the *Asiatic Zodiacs*, with his *bow bent*, and the *arrow drawn up to the head*—the bow in *full strength*.

9. NAPHTALI—by a play on his name, **h l c** *taleh*, the *ram*—the sign ARIES, according to the rabbins.

10. ZEBULUN—"A haven for ships"—denoted by CANCER, the *crab*.

11. GAD—"A troop or army"—reversed, *dag*, a *fish*—the sign PISCES.

12. BENJAMIN—"A ravening wolf"—CAPRICORN, which on the Egyptian sphere was represented by a *goat* led by *Pan*, with a *wolf's* head.

What likelihood the reader may see in all this, I cannot pretend to say; but that the *twelve signs* were at that time known in Egypt and Chaldea, there can be little doubt.

2. We have now seen the life of Jacob brought to a close; and have carefully traced it through all its various fortunes, as the facts presented themselves in the preceding chapters. Isaac his father was what might properly be called a *good man*; but in strength of mind he appears to have fallen far short of his father Abraham, and his son Jacob. Having left the management of his domestic concerns to Rebekah his wife, who was an artful and comparatively irreligious woman, the education of his sons was either neglected or perverted. The unhappy influence which the precepts and example of his mother had on the mind of her son we have seen and deplored. Through the mercy of God Jacob outlived the *shady* part of his own character, and his last days were his brightest and his best. He had many troubles and difficulties in life, under which an inferior mind must have necessarily sunk; but being a worker together with the providence of God, his difficulties only served in general to whet his invention, and draw out the immense resources of his own mind. He had to do with an avaricious, procrastinating relative, as destitute of *humanity* as he was of *justice*. Let this plead something in his excuse. He certainly did *outwit* his

father-in-law; and yet, probably, had no more than the just recompense of his faithful services in the successful issue of all his devices. From the time in which God favoured him with that wonderful manifestation of grace at *Peniel*, ^{<013224>} **Genesis 32:24-30**, he became a *new man*. He had frequent discoveries of God *before*, to encourage him in journeys, secular affairs, &c.; but none in which the *heart-changing* power of Divine grace was so abundantly revealed. Happy he whose last days are his best! We can scarcely conceive a scene more noble or dignified than that exhibited at the deathbed of Jacob. This great man was now *one hundred and forty-seven* years of age; though his body, by the waste of time, was greatly enfeebled, yet with a mind in perfect vigour, and a hope full of immortality, he calls his numerous family together, all of them in their utmost state of prosperity, and gives them his last counsels, and his dying blessing. His declarations show that the secret of the Lord was with him, and that his candle shone bright upon his tabernacle. Having finished his work, with perfect possession of all his faculties, and being determined that while he was able to *help himself* none should be called in to assist, (which was one of the grand characteristics of his life,) he, with that dignity which became a great man and a man of God stretched himself upon his bed, and rather appears to have *conquered* death than to have *suffered* it. Who, seeing the end of this illustrious patriarch, can help exclaiming, There is none like the God of Jeshurun! Let Jacob's God be my God! Let *me* die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his! Reader, God is still the *same*: and though he may not make thee as *great* as was Jacob, yet he is ready to make thee as *good*; and, whatever thy past life may have been, to crown thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies, that thy end also may be *peace*.

GENESIS

CHAPTER 50

Joseph bewails the death of his father, and commands the physicians to embalm him, 1, 2. The Egyptians mourn for him seventy days, 3. Joseph begs permission from Pharaoh to accompany his father's corpse to Canaan, 4, 5. Pharaoh consents, 6. Pharaoh's domestics and elders, the elders of Egypt, Joseph and his brethren, with chariots, horsemen, &c., form the funeral procession, 7-9. They come to the threshing-floor of Atad, and mourn there seven days, 10. The Canaanites call the place Abel-Mizraim, 11. They bury Jacob in the cove of Machpelah, 12, 13. Joseph returns to Egypt, 14. His brethren, fearing his displeasure, send messengers to him to entreat his forgiveness of past wrongs, 15-17. They follow, and prostrate themselves before him, and offer to be his servants, 18. Joseph receives them affectionately, and assures them and theirs of his care and protection, 19-21. Joseph and his brethren dwell in Egypt, and he sees the third generation of his children, 22, 23. Being about to die, he prophesies the return of the children of Israel from Egypt, 24, and causes them to swear that they will carry his bones to Canaan, 25. Joseph dies, aged one hundred and ten years; is embalmed, and put in a coffin in Egypt, 26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 50

Verse 1. Joseph fell upon his father's face] Though this act appears to be suspended by the unnatural division of this verse from the preceding chapter, yet we may rest assured it was the *immediate* consequence of Jacob's death.

Verse 2. The physicians] uyapr *ropheim*, the *healers*, those whose business it was to *heal* or restore the body from sickness by the administration of proper *medicines*; and when death took place, to *heal* or preserve it from dissolution by *embalming*, and thus give it a sort of *immortality* or *everlasting duration*. The original word cnj *chanat*, which we translate *to embalm*, has undoubtedly the same meaning with the Arabic [Arabic] *hanata*, which also signifies *to embalm*, or to preserve from putrefaction by the application of spices, &c., and hence [Arabic] *hantat*, an *embalmer*. The word is used to express the *reddening* of leather; and probably the ideal meaning may be something analogous to our *tanning*, which consists in *removing the moisture*, and *closing up the pores* so as to render them impervious to wet. This probably is the grand principle in

embalming; and whatever effects this, will preserve *flesh* as perfectly as *skin*. Who can doubt that a human *muscle*, undergoing the same process of *tanning* as the *hide* of an *ox*, would not become equally *incorruptible*? I have seen a part of the muscle of a human thigh, that, having come into contact with some *tanning matter*, either in the coffin or in the grave, was in a state of perfect *soundness*, when the rest of the body had been long reduced to earth; and it exhibited the appearance of a thick piece of *well tanned leather*.

In the art of embalming, the Egyptians excelled all nations in the world; with them it was a *common practice*. Instances of the perfection to which they carried this art may be seen in the numerous *mummies*, as they are called, which are found in different European cabinets, and which have been all brought from *Egypt*. This people not only embalmed *men* and *women*, and thus kept the bodies of their beloved relatives from the empire of corruption, but they embalmed useful *animals* also. I have seen the body of the *Ibris* thus preserved; and though the work had been done for *some thousands of years*, the very *feathers* were in complete preservation, and the *colour* of the plumage discernible. The account of this curious process, the articles used, and the manner of applying them, I subjoin from *Herodotus* and *Diodorus Siculus*, as also the manner of their mournings and funeral solemnities, which are highly illustrative of the subjects in this chapter.

“When any man of quality dies,” says Herodotus, “all the *women* of that family besmear their heads and faces with dirt; then, leaving the body at home, they go lamenting up and down the city with all their relations; their apparel being girt about them, and their breasts left naked. On the other hand the *men*, having likewise their clothes girt about them, beat themselves. These things being done, they carry the dead body to be *embalmed*; for which there are certain persons appointed who profess this *art*. These, when the body is brought to them, show to those that bring it certain models of dead persons in wood, according to any of which the deceased may be painted. *One* of these they say is accurately made like to one whom, in such a matter, I do not think lawful to name; **του ουκ οσιον ποιουμαι το ουνομα επι τοιουτω πρηγματι ονομαζειν**; (probably *Osiris*, one of the principal gods of Egypt, is here intended;) then they show a *second* inferior to it, and of an easier price; and next a *third*, cheaper than the former, and of a very small value; which being seen, they ask them after which model the deceased shall be represented. When they

have agreed upon the *price* they depart; and those with whom the dead corpse is left proceed to *embalm* it after the following manner: First of all, they with a crooked iron draw the brain out of the head through the nostrils; next, with a sharp *Æthiopic stone* they cut up that part of the *abdomen* called the *ilia*, and that way draw out all the bowels, which, having cleansed and washed with palm wine, they again rinse and wash with wine perfumed with pounded odours: then filling up the belly with pure *myrrh* and *cassia* grossly powdered, and all other odours except *frankincense*, they sew it up again. Having so done, they *salt* it up close with *nitre* *seventy days*, for longer they may not salt it. After this number of days are over they wash the corpse again, and then roll it up with fine linen, all besmeared with a sort of *gum*, commonly used by the *Egyptians* instead of glue. Then is the body restored to its relations, who prepare a wooden coffin for it in the shape and likeness of a man, and then put the *embalmed* body into it, and thus enclosed, place it in a repository in the house, setting it upright against the wall. After this manner they, with great expense, preserve their dead; whereas those who to avoid too great a charge desire a *mediocrity*, thus *embalm* them: they neither cut the belly nor pluck out the entrails, but fill it with clysters of oil of *cedar* injected up the *anus*, and then salt it the aforesaid number of days. On the last of these they press out the *cedar* clyster by the same way they had injected it, which has such virtue and efficacy that it brings out along with it the bowels wasted, and the nitre consumes the flesh, leaving only the skin and bones: having thus done, they restore the dead body to the relations, doing nothing more. The *third* way of *embalming* is for those of yet meaner circumstances; they with lotions wash the belly, then dry it up with salt for *seventy* days, and afterwards deliver it to be carried away. Nevertheless, beautiful women and ladies of quality were not delivered to be *embalmed* till three or four days after they had been dead;” for which Herodotus assigns a sufficient reason, however degrading to human nature: **τουτο δε ποιουσιν ουτω τουδε εινεκα, ινα μη σφι οι ταριχευται μισγωνται τησι γυναιξι, λαμβθηναι γαρ τινα φασι μισγομενον νεκρω προσφατω γυναικος, κατειπαι δε τον ομοτεχνον.** [The original should not be put into a plainer language; the abomination to which it refers being too gross.] “But if any stranger or *Egyptian* was either killed by a crocodile or drowned in the river, the city where he was cast up was to *embalm* and bury him honourably in the sacred monuments, whom no one, no, not a relation or friend, but the priests of the *Nile* only, might

touch; because they buried one who was something more than a dead man.” -HEROD. Euterpe, p. 120, ed. *Gale*.

Diodorus Siculus relates the funeral ceremonies of the *Egyptians* more distinctly and clearly, and with some very remarkable additional circumstances. “When any one among the *Egyptians* dies,” says he, “all his relations and friends, putting dirt upon their heads, go lamenting about the city, till such time as the body shall be buried: in the meantime, they abstain from baths and wine, and all kinds of delicate meats; neither do they, during that time, wear any costly apparel. The manner of their burials is *threefold*: one very costly, a second sort less chargeable, and a third very mean. In the first, *they say*, there is spent a talent of silver; in the second, twenty *minae*; but in the last there is very little expense. ‘Those who have the care of ordering the body are such as have been taught that art by their ancestors. These, showing each kind of burial, ask them after what manner they will have the body prepared. When they have agreed upon the manner, they deliver the body to such as are usually appointed for this office. First, he who has the name of *scribe*, laying it upon the ground, marks about the flank on the left side how much is to be cut away; then he who is called *παρασχιστης*, *paraschistes*, the *cutter* or *dissector*, with an *Æthiopic stone*, cuts away as much of the flesh as the law commands, and presently runs away as fast as he can; those who are present, pursuing him, cast stones at him, and curse him, hereby turning all the execrations which they imagine due to his office upon him. For whosoever offers violence, wounds, or does any kind of injury to a body of the same nature with himself, they think him worthy of hatred: but those who are *ταριχευται*, *taricheutæ*, the *embalmers*, they esteem worthy of honour and respect; for they are familiar with their priests, and go into the temples as holy men, without any prohibition. As soon as they come to embalm the dissected body, one of them thrusts his hand through the wound into the *abdomen*, and draws forth all the bowels but the heart and kidneys, which another washes and cleanses with wine made of palms and aromatic odours. Lastly, having washed the body, they anoint it with oil of cedar and other things for about thirty days, and afterwards with myrrh, cinnamon, and other such like matters, which have not only a power to preserve it a long time, but also give it a sweet smell; after which they deliver it to the kindred in such manner that every member remains whole and entire, and no part of it changed, but the beauty and shape of the face seem just as they were before; and the person may be known, even the eyebrows and eyelids

remaining as they were at first. By this means many of the *Egyptians*, keeping the dead bodies of their ancestors in magnificent houses, so perfectly see the true visage and countenance of those that died many ages before they themselves were born, that in viewing the proportions of every one of them, and the lineaments of their faces, they take as much delight as if they were still living among them. Moreover, the friends and nearest relations of the deceased, for the greater pomp of the solemnity, acquaint the judges and the rest of their friends with the time prefixed for the funeral or day of sepulture, declaring that such a one (calling the dead by his name) is such a day to pass the lake; at which time above forty judges appear, and sit together in a semicircle, in a place prepared on the hither side of the lake, where a ship, provided beforehand by such as have the care of the business, is haled up to the shore, and steered by a pilot whom the *Egyptians* in their language called *Charon*. Hence they say *Orpheus*, upon seeing this ceremony while he was in *Egypt*, invented the fable of hell, partly imitating therein the people of *Egypt*, and partly adding somewhat of his own. The ship being thus brought to the lake side, before the coffin is put on board every one is at liberty by the law to accuse the dead of what he thinks him guilty. If any one proves he was a bad man, the judges give sentence that the body shall be deprived of sepulture; but in case the informer be convicted of false accusation, then he is severely punished. If no accuser appear, or the information prove false, then all the kindred of the deceased leave off mourning, and begin to set forth his praises, yet say nothing of his birth, (as the custom is among the *Greeks*,) because the *Egyptians* all think themselves equally noble; but they recount how the deceased was educated from his youth and brought up to man's estate, exalting his *piety* towards the *gods*, and *justice* towards *men*, his *chastity*, and other virtues wherein he excelled; and lastly pray and call upon the infernal deities (τους κάτω θεους, the gods below) to receive him into the societies of the *just*. The common people take this from the others, and consequently all is said in his praise by a loud shout, setting forth likewise his virtues in the highest strains of commendation, as one that is to live for ever with the infernal gods. Then those that have tombs of their own inter the corpse in places appointed for that purpose; and they that have none rear up the body in its coffin against some strong wall of their house. But such as are denied sepulture on account of some crime or debt, are laid up at home *without coffins*; yet when it shall afterwards happen that any of their posterity grows rich, he commonly pays off the deceased person's debts, and gets his crimes absolved, and so buries him honourably; for the

Egyptians are wont to boast of their parents and ancestors that were honourably buried. It is a custom likewise among them to *pawn* the dead bodies of their parents to their creditors; but then those that do not redeem them fall under the greatest disgrace imaginable, and are denied burial themselves at their deaths.”-*Diod. Sic. Biblioth.*, lib. i., cap. 91-93., edit. Bipont. See also the *Necrokedia*, or *Art of Embalming*, by *Greenhill*, 4to., p. 241, who endeavoured in vain to recommend and restore the art But he could not give his countrymen *Egyptian manners*; for a dead carcass is to the British an object of horror, and scarcely any, except a *surgeon* or an *undertaker*, cares to touch it.

Verse 3. Forty days] The body it appears required this number of days to complete the process of embalming; afterwards it lay in *natron* thirty days more, making in the whole seventy days, according to the preceding accounts, during which the mourning was continued.

Verse 4. Speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh.] But why did not Joseph apply himself? Because he was now in his *mourning habits*, and in such none must appear in the presence of the eastern monarchs. See ~~LORD~~ **Esther 4:2.**

Verse 7. The elders of his house] Persons who, by reason of their age, had acquired *much experience*; and who on this account were deemed the best qualified to conduct the affairs of the king’s household. Similar to these were the [Anglo-Saxon] *Eldermen*, or *Aldermen*, among our Saxon ancestors, who were *senators* and *peers* of the realm.

The funeral procession of Jacob must have been truly grand. *Joseph, his brethren* and their *descendants*, the *servants of Pharaoh*, the *elders of his house*, and *all the elders*-all the principal men, *of the land of Egypt, with chariots and horsemen*, must have appeared a *very great company* indeed. We have seen **LORDS**, for their *greater honour*, buried at *the public expense*; and all the male branches of the *royal family*, as well as the most eminent *men* of the nation, join in the funeral procession, as in the case of the late *Lord Nelson*; but what was all this in comparison of the funeral solemnity now before us? *Here was no conqueror, no mighty man of valour, no person of proud descent*; here was only a *plain man*, who had dwelt almost *all his life long in tents*, without any other *subjects* than his *cattle*, and whose kingdom was *not of this world*. Behold this man honoured by a *national mourning*, and by a *national funeral*! It may be said indeed that “all this was done out of respect to Joseph.” Be it so; *why*

was *Joseph thus* respected? Was it because he had *conquered nations*, had made his sword drunk with blood, had triumphed over the enemies of Egypt? NO! But because he had *saved men alive*; because he was the *king's faithful servant*, the *rich man's counsellor*, and the *poor man's friend*. He was a national blessing; and the nation mourns in his affliction, and unites to do *him* honour.

Verse 10. The threshing-floor of Atad] As **dca** *atad* signifies a *bramble* or *thorn*, it has been understood by the Arabic, not as a *man's* name, but as the name of a *place*; but all the other *versions* and the *Targums* consider it as the name of a *man*. Threshing-floors were always in a field, in the open air; and *Atad* was probably what we would call a *great farmer* or *chief* of some *clan* or *tribe* in that place. Jerome supposed the place to have been about *two leagues from Jericho*; but we have no certain information on this point. The funeral procession stopped here, probably as affording *pasturage* to their cattle while they observed the *seven days' mourning* which terminated the funeral solemnities, after which nothing remained but the interment of the corpse. The mourning of the ancient Hebrews was usually of *seven days' continuance*, ^{<04919>}**Numbers 19:19**; ^{<08113>}**1 Samuel 31:13**; though on certain occasions it was extended to *thirty days*, ^{<04919>}**Numbers 20:29**; ^{<05213>}**Deuteronomy 21:13; 34:8**, but *never longer*. The seventy days' mourning mentioned above was that of the Egyptians, and was rendered necessary by the long process of *embalming*, which obliged them to keep the body out of the grave for *seventy days*, as we learn both from *Herodotus* and *Diodorus*. *Seven days* by the order of God a man was to mourn for his dead, because during that time he was considered as *unclean*; but when those were finished he was to purify himself, and consider the mourning as *ended*; ^{<04911>}**Numbers 19:11,19**. Thus God gave *seven days*, in some cases *thirty*, to mourn in: man, ever in his own estimation wiser than the word of God, has *added eleven whole months* to the term, which nature itself pronounces to be absurd, because it is incapable of supporting grief for such a time; and thus mourning is now, except in the first seven or thirty days, a mere solemn *ill-conducted FARCE*, a *grave mimicry*, a *vain show*, that convicts itself of its own *hypocrisy*. Who will rise up on the side of God and common sense, and restore becoming sorrow on the death of a relative to decency of garb and moderation in its continuance? Suppose the near relatives of the deceased were to be allowed seven days of seclusion from society, for the purpose of meditating on death and eternity, and after this to appear in a mourning

habit for thirty days; every important end would be accomplished, and hypocrisy, the too common attendant of man, be banished, especially from that part of his life in which deep sincerity is not less becoming than in the most solemn act of his religious intercourse with God.

In a kind of politico-religious institution formed by his late majesty Ferdinand IV., king of Naples and the Sicilies, I find the following rational institute relative to this point: "There shall be no mourning among you but only on the death of a *father, mother, husband, or wife*. To render to these the last duties of affection, *children, wives, and husbands* only shall be permitted to wear a *sign or emblem* of grief: a man may wear a *crape* tied round his *right arm*; a woman, a *black handkerchief* around her *neck*; and this in both cases for only two months at the most." Is there a purpose which religion, reason, or decency can demand that would not be answered by such *external mourning* as this? Only such relatives as the above, brothers and sisters being included, can mourn; all others make only a part of the dumb hypocritical *show*.

Verse 12. And his sons did unto him] This and the thirteenth verse have been supposed by Mr. *Locke* and others to belong to the conclusion of the preceding chapter, in which connection they certainly read more consistently than they do here.

Verse 15. Saw that their father was dead] This at once argues both a *sense of guilt* in their own consciences, and a *want of confidence* in their brother. They might have supposed that hitherto he had forbore to punish them merely on their father's account; but now that he was dead, and Joseph having them completely in his power, they imagined that he would take vengeance on them for their former conduct towards him.

Thus conscience records criminality; and, by giving birth to continual fears and doubtfulness, destroys all peace of mind, security, and confidence. On this subject an elegant poet has spoken with his usual point and discernment:—

*Exemplo quodcumque malo committitur, ipsi
Displicet auctori. Prima est haec ultio, quod se
Judice nemo nocens absolvitur, improba quamvis
Gratia fallaci Prætoris vicerit urna.
JUV. Sat. xiii. 1, &c.*

Happily paraphrased by Mr. *Dryden*:—

*He that commits a fault shall quickly find
The pressing guilt lies heavy on his mind.
Though bribes, or favour shall assert his cause,
Pronounce him guiltless, and elude the laws,
None quits himself; his own impartial thought
Will damn, and conscience will record the fault.
This, first, the wicked feels.*

We have seen this in the preceding history often exemplified in the case of Joseph's brethren.

Verse 16. Thy father did command] Whether he did or not we cannot tell. Some think they had feigned this story, but that is not so likely. Jacob might have had suspicions too, and might have thought that the best way to prevent evil was to humble themselves before their brother, and get a fresh assurance of his forgiveness.

Verse 17. The servants of the God of thy father.] These words were wonderfully well chosen, and spoken in the most forcible manner to Joseph's *piety* and *filial* affection. No wonder then that *he wept when they spake to him*.

Verse 19. Am I in the place of God?] These words may be understood either as a question, or an *affirmative proposition*. How should I take any farther notice of your transgression? I have passed it by, the matter lies now between God and you. Or, in the order of Divine providence I am now in God's place; he has furnished me with means, and made me a distributor of his bounty; I will therefore not only nourish you, but also your little ones, ^{<01521>}**Genesis 50:21**: and therefore he spake comfortably unto them, as in ^{<01458>}**Genesis 45:8**, telling them that he attributed the whole business to the *particular providence of God* rather than to any *ill will* or *malice* in them, and that, in permitting him to be brought into Egypt, God had graciously saved their lives, the life of their father, the lives of the people of Canaan, and of the Egyptians: as therefore God had honoured him by making him vicegerent in the dispensations of his especial bounty towards so many people, it was impossible he should be displeased with the *means* by which this was brought about.

Verse 22. Joseph dwelt in Egypt] Continued in Egypt after his return from Canaan till his death; *he, and his father's house*-all the *descendants*

of Israel, till the *exodus* or departure under the direction of Moses and Aaron, which was one hundred and forty-four years after.

Verse 23. Were brought up upon Joseph's knees.] They were educated by him, or under his direction; his sons and their children continuing to acknowledge him as *patriarch*, or head of the family, as long as he lived.

Verse 24. Joseph said-I die] That is, I am dying; *and God will surely visit you*-he will yet again give you, in the time when it shall be essentially necessary, the most signal proof of his unbounded love towards the seed of Jacob.

And bring you out of this land] Though ye have here every thing that can render life comfortable, yet this is not the *typical land*, the *land given by covenant*, the land which represents the *rest* that remains for the people of God.

Verse 25. Ye shall carry up my bones] That I may finally rest with my ancestors in the land which God gave to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and which is a *pledge* as it is a *type* of the *kingdom of Heaven*. Thus says the author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, ^{<8112>}**Hebrews 11:22:** “By FAITH Joseph, when he died, (τελευτων, when *dying*,) made mention of the departure (εξοδου, of the EXODUS) of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. From this it is evident that Joseph considered all these things as *typical*, and by this very commandment expressed his faith in the immortality of the soul, and the general resurrection of the dead. This oath, by which Joseph then bound his brethren, their posterity considered as binding on themselves; and Moses took care, when he departed from Egypt, to carry up Joseph's body with him, ^{<12139>}**Exodus 13:19;** which was afterwards buried in *Shechem*, ^{<1342>}**Joshua 24:32**, the very *portion* which Jacob had purchased from the Amorites, and which he gave to his son Joseph, ^{<14822>}**Genesis 48:22; Ac 7:16.** See the reason for this command as given by Chrysostom, vol. ii., p. 695, sec. D.E.

Verse 26. Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old] $\mu\upsilon\mu\nu\ \rho\sigma[\ \psi$ *ham ḥ ben meah vaeser shanim*; literally, *the son of a hundred and ten years*. Here the *period* of time he lived is *personified*, all the years of which it was composed being represented as a *nurse* or *father*, feeding, nourishing, and supporting him to the end. This figure, which is termed by rhetoricians *prosopepœia*, is very frequent in Scripture; and by this *virtues*,

vices, forms, attributes, and qualities, with every part of *inanimate nature*, are represented as endowed with *reason* and *speech*, and performing all the actions of *intelligent* beings.

They embalmed him] See Clarke on “^{<01512>}Genesis 50:2”. The same precautions were taken to preserve his body as to preserve that of his father Jacob; and this was particularly necessary in his case, ‘because his body was to be carried to Canaan a hundred and forty-four years after; which was the duration of the Israelites’ bondage after the death of Joseph.

And he was put in a coffin in Egypt.] On this subject I shall subjoin some useful remarks from *Harmer’s Observations*, which several have borrowed without acknowledgment. I quoted my own edition of this Work, vol. iii., p. 69, &c. Lond. 1808.

“There were some methods of *honouring the dead* which demand our attention; the being put into a *coffin* has been in particular considered as a mark of distinction.

“With *us* the poorest people have their *coffins*; if the *relations* cannot afford them, the *parish* is at the expense. In the east, on the contrary, they are *not* always used, even in our times. The ancient Jews probably buried their dead in the same manner: neither was the body of our Lord put in a *coffin*, nor that of *Elisha*, whose bones were *touched* by the corpse that was let down a little after into his sepulchre, ^{<01321>}2 Kings 13:21. That *coffins* were anciently used in Egypt, all agree; and antique coffins of *stone* and of *sycamore* wood are still to be seen in that country, not to mention those said to be made of a sort of *pasteboard*, formed by folding and gluing cloth together a great number of times, curiously plastered, and then painted with hieroglyphics.

“As it was an ancient Egyptian custom, and was not used in the neighbouring countries, on these accounts the sacred historian was doubtless led to observe of Joseph that he was not only *embalmed*, but was also put in a *coffin*, both being practices almost peculiar to the Egyptians.

“Mr. *Maillet* conjectures that *all* were not inclosed in *coffins* which were laid in the Egyptian repositories of the dead, but that it was an honour appropriated to persons of distinction; for after having given an account of several *niches* which are found in those chambers of death, he adds: ‘But it must not be imagined that the bodies deposited in these gloomy apartments were all inclosed in *chests*, and placed in niches. The greater part were

simply *embalmed* and swathed, after which they laid them one by the side of the other, without any ceremony. Some were even put into these tombs *without any embalming* at all, or with such a slight one that there remains nothing of them in the linen in which they were wrapped but the bones, and these half rotten. It is probable that each considerable family had one of these burial-places to themselves; that the *niches* were designed for the bodies of the heads of the family; and that those of their domestics and slaves had no other care taken of them than merely laying them in the ground after being slightly embalmed, and sometimes even without that; which was probably all that was done to heads of families of less distinction.' -*Lett.* 7, p. 281. The same author gives an account of a mode of burial anciently practised in that country, which has been but recently discovered: it consisted in placing the bodies, after they were swathed up, on a layer of charcoal, and covering them with a mat, under a bed of sand seven or eight feet deep.

“Hence it seems evident that *coffins* were not *universally* used in Egypt, and were only used for persons of eminence and distinction. It is also reasonable to believe that in times so remote as those of Joseph they might have been much less common than afterwards, and that consequently Joseph’s being put in a coffin in Egypt might be mentioned with a design to express the *great honours* the Egyptians did him in death, as well as in life; being treated after the most sumptuous manner, *embalmed*, and put *into a coffin*.”

It is no objection to this account that the widow of Nain’s son is represented as carried forth to be buried in a *σπορος* or *bier*; for the present inhabitants of the Levant, who are well known to lay their dead in the earth *uninclosed*, carry them frequently out to burial in a kind of *coffin*, which is not deposited in the grave, the body being *taken out of it*, and placed in the grave in a reclining posture. It is probable that the coffins used at Nain were of the same kind, being intended for no other purpose but to carry the body to the place of interment, the body itself being buried without them.

It is very probable that the chief difference was not in being *with* or *without* a coffin, but in the *expensiveness* of the coffin itself; some of the Egyptian coffins being made of granite, and covered all over with hieroglyphics, the cutting of which must have been done at a prodigious expense, both of time and money; the stone being so hard that we have no tools by which we can make any impression on it. Two of these are now in the British

Museum, that appear to have belonged to some of the *nobles* of Egypt. They are dug out of the solid stone, and adorned with almost innumerable hieroglyphics. One of these, vulgarly called Alexander's tomb, is ten feet three inches and a quarter long, ten inches thick in the sides, in breadth at top five feet three inches and a half, in breadth at bottom four feet two inches and a half, and three feet ten in depth, and weighs about ten tons. In such a coffin I suppose the body of Joseph was deposited; and such a one could not have been made and transported to Canaan at an expense that any private individual could bear. It was with incredible labour and at an extraordinary expense that the coffin in question was removed the distance of but a few miles, from the ship that brought it from Egypt, to its present residence in the British Museum. Judge, then, at what an expense such a coffin must have been digged, engraved, and transported over the desert from Egypt to Canaan, a distance of three hundred miles! We need not be surprised to hear of carriages and horsemen, a very great company, when such a coffin was to be carried so far, with a suitable company to attend it.

Joseph's life was the *shortest* of all the patriarchs, for which Bishop Patrick gives a sound *physical* reason—he was the son of his father's *old age*. It appears from Archbishop Usher's Chronology that Joseph governed Egypt under four kings, *Mephramuthosis*, *Thmosis*, *Amenophis*, and *Orus*. His government, we know, lasted *eighty years*; for when he stood before Pharaoh he was *thirty* years of age, ^{<01446>} **Genesis 41:46**, and he died when he was *one hundred and ten*.

On the *character* and *conduct* of Joseph many remarks have already been made in the preceding notes. On the subject of his *piety* there can be but one opinion. It was truly exemplary, and certainly was tried in cases in which few instances occur of *persevering fidelity*. His high sense of the holiness of God, the strong claims of justice, and the rights of hospitality and gratitude, led him, in the instance of the solicitations of his master's wife, to act a part which, though absolutely just and proper, can never be sufficiently praised. Heathen authors boast of some persons of such singular constancy; but the intelligent reader will recollect that these relations stand in general in their *fabulous histories*, and are destitute of those characteristics which truth essentially requires; such, I mean, as the story of *Hippolytus* and *Phædra*, *Bellerophon* and *Antea* or *Sthenobæa*, *Peleus* and *Astydamia*, and others of this complexion, which appear to be marred pictures, taken from this highly finished original which the inspired writer has fairly drawn from life.

His *fidelity* to his master is not less evident, and God's approbation of his conduct is strongly marked; for he caused whatsoever he did to prosper, whether a slave in the house of his master, a prisoner in the dungeon, or a prime minister by the throne, which is a full proof that his ways pleased him; and this is more clearly seen in the providential deliverances by which he was favoured.

On the *political conduct* of Joseph there are conflicting opinions. On the one hand it is asserted that "he found the Egyptians a *free people*, and that he availed himself of a most afflicting providence of God to reduce them all to a *state of slavery*, destroyed their political consequence, and made their king despotic." In all these respects his political measures have been strongly vindicated, not only as being directed by God, but as being *obviously* the best, every thing considered, for the safety, honour, and welfare of his sovereign and the kingdom. It is true he bought the lands of the people for the king, but he *farmed them* to the original occupiers again, at the moderate and fixed crown rent of *one-fifth part* of the produce.

"Thus did he provide for the *liberty and independence of the people*, while he strengthened the *authority of the king* by making him sole proprietor of the lands. And to secure the people from farther exaction, Joseph made it a law over all the land of Egypt, that Pharaoh (i.e. the king) should have only the fifth part; which law subsisted to the time of Moses, ^{<014721>}**Genesis 47:21-26**. By this wise regulation," continues Dr. Hales, "the people had four-fifths of the produce of the lands for their own use, and were exempted from any farther taxes, the king being bound to support his civil and military establishment out of the crown rents." By the original constitution of Egypt established by *Menes*, and *Thoth* or *Hermes* his prime minister, the lands were divided into *three portions*, between the *king*, the *priests*, and the *military*, each party being bound to support its respective establishment by the *produce*. See the quotations from Diodorus Siculus, in the note on ^{<014723>}**Genesis 47:23**. See Clarke "^{<014723>}**Genesis 47:23**". It is certain, therefore, that the constitution of Egypt was considerably altered by Joseph, and there can be no doubt that much additional power was, by this alteration, vested in the hands of the king; but as we do not find that any improper use was made of this power, we may rest assured that it was so *qualified* and *restricted* by wholesome *regulations*, though they are not here particularized, as completely to prevent all *abuse* of the regal power, and all tyrannical usurpation of popular rights. That the people were nothing but slaves to the *king*, the *military*, and the *priests* before, appears

from the account given by Diodorus; each of the three estates probably allowing them a certain portion of land for their own use, while cultivating the rest for the use and emolument of their masters. Matters, however, became more *regular* under the administration of Joseph; and it is perhaps not too much to say, that, previously to this, Egypt was without a fixed regular constitution, and that it was not the least of the blessings that it owed to the wisdom and prudence of Joseph, that he reduced it to a *regular form of government*, giving the people such an interest in the safety of the state as was well calculated to insure their exertions to defend the nation, and render the *constitution* fixed and permanent.

It is well known that *Justin*, one of the Roman historians, has made particular and indeed honourable mention of *Joseph's* administration in Egypt, in the account he gives of Jewish affairs, lib. 36. cap. 2. How the relation may have stood in *Trogus Pompeius*, from whose voluminous works in forty-four books or volumes Justin abridged his history, we cannot tell, as the work of Trogus is irrecoverably lost; but it is evident that the account was taken in the main from the Mosaic history, and it is written with as much candour as can be expected from a *prejudiced* and *unprincipled heathen*.

Minimus ætate inter fratres Joseph fruit, &c. “Joseph was the youngest of his brethren, who, being envious of his excellent endowments, stole him and privately sold him to a company of foreign merchants, by whom he was carried into Egypt; where, having diligently cultivated *magic arts*, he became, in a short time, a prime favourite with the king himself. For he was the most sagacious of men in explaining prodigies; and he was the first who constructed the science of *interpreting dreams*. Nor was there any thing relative to laws human or Divine with which he seemed unacquainted; for he predicted a failure of the crops many years before it took place; and the inhabitants of Egypt must have been famished had not the king, through his counsel, made an edict to preserve the fruits for several years. And his experiments were so powerful, that the responses appear to have been given, not by man, but by God.” *Tantaque experimenta ejus fuerunt, ut non ab homine, sed a Deo, responsa dari viderentur.* I believe Justin refers here in the word *experimenta*, to his figment of *magical incantations* eliciting *oracular answers*. Others have translated the words: “So *excellent were his regulations* that they seemed rather to be *oracular responses*, not given by *man*, but by God.”

I have already compared Joseph with his father Jacob, **See Clarke on “⁴⁰⁴⁸¹²Genesis 48:12”**, and shall make no apology for having given the latter a most decided superiority. Joseph was great; but his greatness came through the interposition of especial providences. Jacob was great, *mentally* and *practically* great, under the *ordinary* workings of Providence; and, towards the close of his life, not less distinguished for piety towards God than his son Joseph was in the holiest period of his life.

THUS terminates the Book of GENESIS, the most ancient record in the world; including the history of two grand subjects, CREATION and PROVIDENCE, of each of which it gives a summary, but astonishingly minute, and detailed account. From *this book* almost all the ancient philosophers, astronomers, chronologists, and historians have taken their respective *data*; and all the modern improvements and accurate discoveries in different arts and sciences have only served to confirm the facts detailed by Moses; and to show that all the ancient writers on these subjects have *approached* to or *receded* from TRUTH and the *phenomena* of nature, in proportion as they have *followed* the *Mosaic history*.

In this book the CREATIVE POWER and ENERGY of GOD are first introduced to the reader’s notice, and the mind is overwhelmed with those grand creative acts by which the *universe* was brought into being. When this account is completed, and the introduction of SIN, and its awful consequences in the destruction of the earth by a *flood*, noticed, then the Almighty Creator is next introduced as the RESTORER and PRESERVER of the world; and thus the history of *Providence* commences: a history in which the mind of man is alternately delighted and confounded with the infinitely varied plans of *wisdom* and *mercy* in preserving the human species, counteracting the evil propensities of men and devils by means of *gracious influences* conveyed through *religious institutions*, planting and watering the seeds of righteousness which himself had sowed in the hearts of men, and leading forward and maturing the grand purposes of his *grace* in the final salvation of the *human race*.

After giving a minutely detailed account of the *peopling of the earth*, ascertaining and settling the bounds of the different nations of mankind, the sacred writer proceeds with the history of *one family* only; but he chooses that one through which, as from an ever-during fountain, the streams of justice, grace, goodness, wisdom, and truth, should emanate. Here we see a pure well of living water, springing up into eternal life, restrained in its

particular influence to one people till, in the fulness of time, the fountain should be opened in the house of David for sin and for uncleanness in general, and the earth filled with the knowledge and salvation of God; thus by means of one family, as extensive a view of the economy of providence and grace is afforded as it is possible for the human mind to comprehend.

In this *epitome* how wonderful do the workings of Providence appear! An astonishing concatenated train of *stupendous* and *minute* events is laid before us; and every transaction is so distinctly marked as everywhere to exhibit the *finger*, the *hand*, or the *arm* of God! But did God lavish his providential cares and attention on this one family, exclusive of the rest of his intelligent offspring? No: for the same superintendence, providential direction, and influence, would be equally seen in all the concerns of human life, in the preservation of individuals, the rise and fall of kingdoms and states, and in all the mighty REVOLUTIONS, *natural*, *moral*, and *political*, in the universe, were God, as in the preceding instances, to give us the *detailed* history; but what was done in the family of Abraham, was done in behalf of the whole human race. This specimen is intended to show us that God *does work*, and that against him and the operations of his hand, no *might*, no *counsel*, no *cunning* of men or devils, can prevail; that he who walks uprightly walks securely; and that all things work together for good to them who love God; that none is so *ignorant*, *low*, or *lost*, that God cannot *instruct*, *raise up*, and *save*. In a word, he shows himself by this history to be the invariable *friend of mankind*, embracing every opportunity to do them good, and, to speak after the manner of men, rejoicing in the frequent recurrence of such opportunities; that every man, considering the subject, may be led to exclaim in behalf of all his fellows, BEHOLD HOW HE LOVETH THEM!

On the character of Moses as a HISTORIAN and PHILOSOPHER (for in his *legislative* character he does not yet appear) much might be said, did the nature of this work admit. But as *brevity* has been everywhere studied, and minute details rarely admitted, and only where absolutely necessary, the candid reader will excuse any deficiencies of this kind which he may have already noticed.

Of the *accuracy* and *impartiality* of Moses as a *historian*, many examples are given in the course of the notes, with such observations and reflections as the subjects themselves suggested; and the succeeding books will afford many opportunities for farther remarks on these topics.

The character of Moses as a *philosopher* and *chronologist*, has undergone the severest scrutiny. A class of philosophers, professedly infidels, have assailed the Mosaic account of the formation of the universe, and that of the general deluge, with such repeated attacks as sufficiently prove that, in their apprehension, the pillars of their system must be shaken into ruin if those accounts could not be proved to be false. *Traditions*, supporting accounts different from those in the sacred history, have been borrowed from the most barbarous as well as the most civilized nations, in order to bear on this argument. These, backed by various geologic observations made in extensive travels, experiments on the formation of different *strata* or beds of earth, either by inundations or volcanic eruption, have been all condensed into one apparently strong but strange argument, intended to overthrow the Mosaic account of the creation. The argument may be stated thus: "The account given by Moses of the time when God commenced his creative acts is *too recent*; for, according to his Genesis, *six thousand* years have not yet elapsed since the formation of the universe; whereas a variety of phenomena prove that the earth itself must have existed, if not from eternity, yet at least *fourteen* if not *twenty thousand* years." This I call a *strange* argument, because it is well known that all the ancient nations in the world, the *Jews* excepted, have, to secure their honour and respectability, assigned to themselves a *duration* of the most improbable *length*; and have multiplied *months*, *weeks*, and even *days*, into *years*, in order to support their pretensions to the most remote antiquity. The *millions* of years which have been assumed by the *Chinese* and the *Hindoos* have been ridiculed for their manifest absurdity, even by those philosophers who have brought the *contrary charge* against the Mosaic account. So notorious are the pretensions to remote ancestry and remote eras, in every *false* and *fabricated system* of family pedigree and national antiquity, as to produce doubt at the very first view of their subjects, and to cause the impartial inquirer after truth to take every step with the extreme of caution, knowing that in going over such accounts he everywhere treads on a kind of enchanted ground.

When in the midst of these a writer is found who, without saying a word of the systems of other nations, professes to give a simple account of the creation and peopling of the earth, and to show the very conspicuous part that his own people acted among the various nations of the world, and who assigns to the earth and to its inhabitants a duration comparatively but as of *yesterday*, he comes forward with such a variety of claims to be heard,

read, and considered, as no other writer can pretend to. And as he departs from the universal custom of all writers on similar subjects, in assigning a comparatively recent date, not only to his own nation, but to the universe itself, he must have been actuated by motives essentially *different* from those which have governed all other ancient historians and chronologists.

The generally acknowledged extravagance and absurdity of all the chronological systems of ancient times, the great simplicity and harmony of that of Moses, its facts evidently borrowed by others, though disgraced by the fables they have intermixed with them, and the very late invention of arts and sciences, all tend to prove, at the very first view, that the Mosaic account, which assigns the shortest duration to the earth, is the most ancient and the most likely to be true. But all this reasoning has been supposed to be annihilated by an argument brought against the Mosaic account of the creation by Mr. Patrick Brydone, F.R.S., drawn from the evidence of different eruptions of Mount Ætna. The reader may find this in his "Tour through Sicily and Malta," letter vii., where, speaking of his acquaintance with the *Canonico Recupero* at Catania, who was then employed on writing a natural history of Mount Ætna, he says: "Near to a vault which is now *thirty* feet below ground, and has probably been a burying-place, there is a draw-well where there are several strata of *lavas*, (i.e., the liquid matter formed of stones, &c., which is discharged from the mountain in its eruptions,) with earth to a considerable thickness over each stratum. *Recupero* has made use of this as an argument to prove the great antiquity of the eruptions of this mountain. For if it requires *two thousand* years and upwards to form but a scanty soil on the surface of a *lava*, there must have been more than that space of time between each of the eruptions which have formed these strata. But what shall we say of a pit they sunk near to *Jaci*, of a great depth? They pierced through *seven* distinct *lavas*, one under the other, the surfaces of which were parallel, and most of them covered with a *thick bed of rich earth*. Now, says he, the eruption which formed the lowest of these *lavas*, if we may be allowed to reason from analogy, must have flowed from the mountain at least *fourteen thousand* years ago! *Recupero* tells me, he is exceedingly embarrassed by these discoveries, in writing the history of the mountain; that Moses hangs like a dead weight upon him, and blunts all his zeal for inquiry, for that he *really has not the conscience to make his mountain so young as that prophet makes the world*.

“The bishop, who is strenuously orthodox, (for it is an excellent see,) has already warned him to be upon his guard; and not to pretend to be a better natural historian than Moses, nor to presume to urge any thing that may in the smallest degree be deemed contradictory to *his* sacred authority.”

Though Mr. Brydone produces this as a sneer against revelation, bishops, and orthodoxy, yet the sequel will prove that it was good advice, and that the bishop was much better instructed than either *Recupero* or *Brydone*, and that it would have been much to their credit had they taken his advice.

I have given, however, this argument at length; and even in the insidious dress of Mr. Brydone, whose faith in Divine revelation appears to have been upon a par with that of *Signior Recupero*, both being built nearly on the same foundation; to show from the answer how slight the strongest arguments are, produced from insulated facts by prejudice and partiality, when brought to the test of sober, candid, philosophical investigation, aided by an increased knowledge of the phenomena of nature. “In answer to this argument,” says Bishop Watson, (Letters to Gibbon,) “It might be urged that the time necessary for converting *lavas* into fertile fields must be very different, according to the different consistencies of the *lavas*, and their different situations with respect to *elevation* and *depression*, or their being exposed to *winds*, *rains*, and other circumstances; as for instance, the *quantity of ashes* deposited over them, after they had cooled, &c., &c., just as the time in which heaps of *iron slag*, which resembles lava, are covered with verdure, is different at different furnaces, according to the nature of the *slag* and situation of the furnace; and something of this kind is deducible from the account of the canon (Recupero) himself, since the *crevices* in the strata are often full of rich good soil, and have pretty large trees growing upon them. But should not all this be thought sufficient to remove the objection, I will produce the canon an *analogy* in opposition to his analogy, and which is grounded on more certain facts.

“Ætna and Vesuvius resemble each other in the causes which produce their eruptions, in the nature of their *lavas*, and in the time necessary to mellow them into soil fit for vegetation; or, if there be any slight difference in this respect, it is probably not greater than what subsists between different lavas of the same mountain. This being admitted, which no philosopher will deny, the canon’s (Recupero’s) analogy will prove just nothing at all if we can produce an instance of *seven* different *lavas*, with *interjacent strata of vegetable earth*, which have flowed from Mount Vesuvius within the

space, not of *fourteen thousand*, but of somewhat less than *one thousand seven hundred* years; for then, according to our analogy, *a stratum of lava may be covered with vegetable soil in about two hundred and fifty years*, instead of requiring *two thousand* for that purpose.

“The eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed *Herculaneum* and *Pompeii*, is rendered still more famous by the death of *Pliny*, recorded by his nephew in his letter to *Tacitus*. This event happened A. D. 79; but we are informed by unquestionable authority, (*Remarks on the nature of the soil of Naples and its vicinity*, by Sir William Hamilton, *Philos. Transact.*, vol. lxi., p. 7.) that the matter which covers the ancient town of *Herculaneum* is not the produce of *one* eruption only, for there are evident marks that the matter of *six* eruptions has taken its course over that which lies immediately over the town, and was the cause of its destruction. The strata are either of *lava* or burnt matter with *veins of good soil between them*. You perceive,” says the bishop, “with what ease a *little attention* and *increase of knowledge* may remove a great difficulty; but had we been able to say nothing in explanation of this phenomenon, we should not have acted a very rational part in making our *ignorance* the *foundation of our infidelity*, or suffering a minute philosopher to rob us of our religion.” In this, as well as in all other cases, the foundation stands sure, being deeply and legibly impressed with God’s seal. See also Dr. *Greaves’s* Lectures on the Pentateuch.

There is a very sensible paper written by *Don Joseph Giæni* (The *Chevalier Giæni* was an inhabitant of the first region of *Ætna*.) on the eruption of *Ætna* in 1781; in which, among many other valuable observations, I find the following note: “I was obliged to traverse the current of lava made by the eruption of 1766, the most *ancient* of any that took this direction, viz., *Bronte*. I saw several streams of lava which had *crossed* others, and which afforded me evident proofs of the fallacy of the conclusions of those who seek to estimate the period of the formation of the beds of lava from the *change* they have undergone. Some *lava* of *earlier* date than others *still resist the weather*, and present a *vitreous* and *unaltered surface*, while the *lava* of *later date* already begin to be covered with vegetation.” -See Pinkerton on Rock, vol. ii., p. 395.

On the *geology* and *astronomy* of the book of Genesis, much has been written, both by the enemies and friends of revelation; but as Moses has said but very little on these subjects, and nothing in a *systematic* way, it is unfair to invent a system pretendedly collected out of his words, and thus

make him accountable for what he never wrote. There are systems of this kind, the preconceived fictions of their authors, for which they have sought support and credit by tortured meanings extracted from a few *Hebrew roots*, and then dignified them with the title of *The Mosaic System of the Universe*. This has afforded infidelity a handle which it has been careful to turn to its own advantage. On the first chapter of Genesis, I have given a general view of the solar system, without pretending that I had found it there. I have also ventured to apply the comparatively recent doctrine of *caloric* to the Mosaic account of the creation of *light* previous to the formation of the *sun*, and have supported it with such arguments as appeared to me to render it at least probable: but I have not pledged Moses to any of my explanations, being fully convinced that it was necessarily foreign from his design to enter into philosophic *details* of any kind, as it was his grand object, as has been already remarked, to give a history of CREATION and PROVIDENCE in the most *abridged* form of which it was capable. And who, in so few words, ever spoke so much? By *Creation* I mean the production of every being, animate and inanimate, material and intellectual. And by *Providence*, not only the preservation and government of all being, but also the various and extraordinary provisions made by Divine justice and mercy for the comfort and final salvation of man. These subjects I have endeavoured to trace out through every chapter of this book, and to exhibit them in such a manner as appeared to me the best calculated to promote *glory to GOD in the highest, and upon earth PEACE AND GOOD WILL AMONG MEN*.

Observations on the Jewish manner of DIVIDING and READING the LAW and the PROPHETS.

The ancient Jews divided the whole law of Moses into *fifty-four* sections, which they read in their synagogues in the course of the *fifty-two* Sabbaths in the year, joining *two* of the shortest twice together, that the whole might be finished in one year's space; but in their *intercalated* years, in which they added a *month*, they had *fifty-four* Sabbaths, and then they had a section for each Sabbath: and it was to meet the exigency of the *intercalated* years that they divided the law into fifty-four sections at first. When Antiochus Epiphanes forbade the Jews on pain of death to read their law, they divided the *prophets* into the same number of sections, and read *them* in their synagogues in place of the *law*; and when, under the Asmoneans, they recovered their liberty, and with it the free exercise of their religion, though the reading of the law was resumed, they continued

the use of the *prophetic sections*, reading them conjointly with those in the law. To this *first division* and mode of reading the law there is a reference, ^{<4152>}**Acts 15:21**: *For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him*, being READ IN THE SYNAGOGUES EVERY SABBATH DAY. To the second division and *conjoint* reading of the law and the prophets we also find a reference, ^{<44315>}**Acts 13:15**; *And after the reading of the LAW AND THE PROPHETS, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, &c.* And that the *prophets* were read in this way in our Lord's *time*, we have a proof, ^{<40416>}**Luke 4:16**, &c., where, *going into the synagogue to read on the Sabbath day, as was his custom, there was delivered unto him the book of the Prophet Isaiah*: and it appears that the *prophetical section* for that Sabbath was taken from the sixty-first chapter of his prophecies.

Of these *sections* the book of Genesis contains twelve:

The FIRST, called **tyvrb** *bereshith*, begins ^{<01010>}**Genesis 1:1**, and ends ^{<01008>}**Genesis 6:8**.

The SECOND, called **j n** *Noach*, begins ^{<01009>}**Genesis 6:9**, and ends ^{<01113>}**Genesis 11:32**.

The THIRD, called **Ë I Ë I** *lech lecha*, begins ^{<01201>}**Genesis 12:1**, and ends ^{<01180>}**Genesis 18:1**.

The FOURTH, called **aryw** *vaiyera*, begins ^{<01180>}**Genesis 18:1**, and ends ^{<01224>}**Genesis 22:24**.

The FIFTH, called **hrc yyj** *chaiyey Sarah*, begins ^{<01230>}**Genesis 23:1**, and ends ^{<012518>}**Genesis 25:18**.

The SIXTH, called **t dl wt** *toledoth*, begins ^{<012519>}**Genesis 25:19**, and ends ^{<01209>}**Genesis 28:9**.

The SEVENTH, called **axyw** *vaiyetse*, begins ^{<012810>}**Genesis 28:10**, and ends ^{<01320>}**Genesis 32:3**.

The EIGHTH, called **j l vyw** *vaiyishlach*, begins ^{<013304>}**Genesis 32:4**, and ends ^{<01364>}**Genesis 36:43**.

The NINTH, called **bvyw** *vaiysheb*, begins ^{<013701>}**Genesis 37:1**, and ends ^{<01402>}**Genesis 40:23**.

The TENTH, called **xqm** *mikkets*, begins ^{<01401>}**Genesis 41:1**, and ends ^{<01417>}**Genesis 14:17**.

The ELEVENTH, called **vgyw** *vaiyiggash*, begins ^{<01418>}**Genesis 44:18**, and ends ^{<01477>}**Genesis 47:27**.

The TWELFTH, called **yj yw** *vayechi*, begins ^{<01478>}**Genesis 47:28**, and ends ^{<01516>}**Genesis 50:26**.

These sections have their *technical* names, from the words with which they commence; and are marked in the Hebrew Bibles with three **ppp** *pe*'s, which are an abbreviation for **hvrp** *parashah*, a *section* or *division*; and sometimes with three **sss** *samech*'s, which are an abbreviation for the word **rds** *seder*, or **ards** *sidra*, an *order*, a full and absolute division. The former are generally called **twyvrp** *parashioth*, *distinctions*, *divisions*, *sections*; the latter **pyrds** *sedarim*, *orders*, *arrangements*; as it is supposed that the sense is more full and complete in *these* than in the *parashioth*. See the Tables, &c., at the end of the Book of Deuteronomy, where all these matters, and others connected with them, are considered in great detail.

MASORETIC Notes on the Book of GENESIS.

At the end of all the books in the Hebrew Bible, the *Masoretes* have affixed certain *notes*, ascertaining the *number* of *greater* and *smaller sections*, *chapters*, *verses*, and *letters*. These they deemed of the greatest importance, in order to preserve the integrity of their law, and the purity of their prophets. And to this end they not only numbered every verse, word, and letter, but even went so far as to ascertain how often *each letter* of the *alphabet* occurred in the *whole Bible*! Thus sacredly did they watch over their records in order to prevent every species of corruption.

The *sum* of all the VERSES in *Bereshith* (Genesis) is 1534. And the memorial sign of this sum is **dl** *Ēa-aleph a* signifying 1000; *final caph* **Ē** 500; *lamed* **l** 30, and *daleth* **d** 4.=1534.

The *middle* verse of Genesis is the fortieth of chap. xxvii.: *By thy sword shalt thou live*.

The PARASHIOTH, or greater sections; are twelve. The symbol of which is the word **hz** *zeh*, THIS, ^{<10315>}**Exodus 3:15**: *And THIS is my memorial to all generations*. Where *zain* **z** stands for 7, and *he* **h**, for 5.=12.

The SEDARIM, or *orders*, (see above) are forty-three. The symbol of which is the word **µg** *gam*. ^{<10273>}**Genesis 27:33**: *YEA (µg gam) and he shall be blessed*. Where *gimel* **g** stands for 3, and *mem* **m** for 40.=43.

The PERAKIM, or modern division of chapters, are fifty; the symbol of which is **Ēl** *lecha*, ^{<23312>}**Isaiah 33:2**: *We have waited FOR THEE*. Where *lamed* **l** stands for 30, and *caph* **Ē** for 20.=50.

The *open sections* are 43, the *close sections* 48, total 91: the numerical sign of which is **ax** *tse*, GET THEE OUT, ^{<12108>}**Exodus 11:8**, where *tsaddi* **x** stands for 90, and *aleph* **a** for 1.=91.

The *number of letters* is about 52,740; but this last is more a matter of conjecture and *computation* than of *certainty*, and on it no dependence can safely be placed, it being a mere multiplication by *twelve*, the number of sections, of 4395, the known number of letters in the last or *twelfth* section of the book. On this subject see Buxtorf's *Tiberias*, p. 181.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

OF THE PRINCIPAL TRANSACTIONS RELATED IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS, ACCORDING TO THE COMPILATION OF ARCHBISHOP USHER, WHICH IS CHIEFLY FOLLOWED IN THE PRECEDING NOTES; SHOWING IN WHAT YEAR OF THE WORLD, AND WHAT YEAR BEFORE CHRIST, EACH EVENT HAPPENED.

THE reader will observe, from the chronological notes in the margin of the preceding work, that in a few instances I have departed from the Usherian computation, for which he will find my reasons in the notes.

THIS table I have considerably enlarged by inserting the Edomitish kings and dukes, and a few other transactions of profane history contemporary with the facts mentioned by Moses, by which the reader will have a synopsis or general view of all the transactions of the first two thousand four hundred years of the world, which stand upon any authentic records.

THE first year of the world, answering to the 710th year of the Julian period, and supposed to be 4004 before the vulgar era of the birth of Christ.

| A.M. | | B.C. |
|------|---|------|
| 1 | <p>First day's work: Creation of the heavens and earth; of light, with the distinction of day and night, ^{<0101>}Genesis 1:1-5.</p> <p>Second day: Creation of the firmament, and separation of the superior and inferior waters, ^{<0106>}Genesis 1:6-8.</p> <p>Third day: The earth drained, the seas, lakes, &c., formed; trees, plants, and vegetables produced, ^{<0109>}Genesis 1:9-13.</p> <p>Fourth day: The sun, moon, planets, and stars produced, ^{<0114>}Genesis 1:14-19.</p> <p>Fifth day: All kinds of fowls and fishes created, ^{<0123>}Genesis 1:20-23.</p> <p>Sixth day: Beasts wild and tame, reptiles, insects, and man, ^{<0124>}Genesis 1:24-28.</p> <p>Seventh day: Set apart and hallowed to be a Sabbath, or</p> | 4004 |

day of rest for ever, ^{<01002>}Genesis 2:2, 3.

Tenth day: The first woman sins, leads her husband into the transgression, is called Eve, ^{<01003>}Genesis 3:1-20.

They are both expelled from Paradise, ^{<01032>}Genesis 3:22-24.

N. B. This opinion, though rendered respectable by great names, is very doubtful, and should be received with very great caution. I think it wholly inadmissible; and though I insert it as the generally received opinion, yet judge it best to form no guesses and indulge no conjectures on such an obscure point.

| | | |
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| 2 | | 4002 |
| 129 | Cain and Abel born, ^{<01004>} Genesis 4:1, 2. | 3875 |
| 130 | Abel killed by his brother Cain, ^{<01008>} Genesis 4:8. | 3874 |
| 235 | Birth of Seth, ^{<01025>} Genesis 4:25. | 3769 |
| 325 | Enos son of Seth born, ^{<01026>} Genesis 4:26. Hence followed the distinction between the descendants of Cain and those of Seth; the former being called <i>sons of men</i> , the latter <i>sons of God</i> , ^{<01030>} Genesis 6:1-4. | 3679 |
| 395 | Birth of Cainan, son of Enos, ^{<01039>} Genesis 5:9. | 3609 |
| 460 | of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan, ^{<010512>} Genesis 5:12. | 3544 |
| 622 | of Jared, son of Mahalaleel, ^{<010515>} Genesis 5:15. | 3382 |
| 687 | of Enoch, son of Jared, ^{<010518>} Genesis 5:18. | 3317 |
| 874 | Birth of Methuselah, son of Enoch, ^{<010521>} Genesis 5:21. | 3130 |
| 930 | of Lamech, son of Methuselah, ^{<010525>} Genesis 5:25. | 3074 |
| 987 | Death of Adam, aged 930 years, ^{<010615>} Genesis 5:5. | 3017 |

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| 1042 | Enoch is translated in the 365 th year of his age, <010524>Genesis 5:24. | 2962 |
| 1056 | Seth dies, aged 912 years, <010508>Genesis 5:8. | 2948 |
| 1140 | Birth of Noah, son of Lamech, <010529>Genesis 5:29. | 2864 |
| 1235 | Enos dies, aged 905 years, <010511>Genesis 5:11. | 2769 |
| 1290 | Cainan dies, aged 910 years, <010514>Genesis 5:14. | 2714 |
| 1422 | Mahalaleel dies, aged 895 years, <010517>Genesis 5:17. | 2562 |
| 1536 | Jared dies, aged 962 years, <010520>Genesis 5:20. | 2468 |
| 1556 | God commissions Noah to preach repentance to the guilty world, and to announce the deluge. He commands him also to build an ark for the safety of himself and his family. This commission was given 120 years before the flood came, <010520>1 Peter 3:20; <010525>2 Peter 2:5; <010517>Genesis 6:17. | 2448 |
| 1558 | Birth of Japheth, son of Noah, <010532>Genesis 5:32, | 2446 |
| 1560 | compared with <010521>Genesis 10:21. of Shem. | 2444 |
| 1651 | of Ham. | 2353 |
| 1656 | Death of Lamech, aged 777 years, <010531>Genesis 5:31. | 2348 |
| — | of Methuselah, aged 969 years, <010527>Genesis 5:27. | — |
| — | The <i>general</i> DELUGE, Genesis 7. | — |
| — | Noah, his family, and the animals to be preserved, enter the ark the 17th day of the 2d month of this year, <010511>Genesis 7:11. The rain commences, and continues 40 days and nights, and the waters continue without decreasing 150 days; they afterwards begin to abate, and the ark rests on Mount Ararat, <010508>Genesis 8:4. | — |

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| — | Noah sends out a raven, ^{<01087>} Genesis 8:7. | — |
| 1657 | Seven days after he sends out a dove, which returns the same day; after seven days he sends out the dove a second time, which returns no more, ^{<01088>} Genesis 8:8-12. | 2347 |
| 1658 | Noah, his family, &c., leave the ark. He offers sacrifices to God, Genesis 8. and 9. | 2346 |
| 1693 | Birth of Arphaxad, son of Shem, ^{<01110>} Genesis 11:10, 11. | 2311 |
| 1723 | of Salah, son of Arphaxad, ^{<01112>} Genesis 11:12. | 2231 |
| 1757 | of Eber, son of Salah, ^{<01114>} Genesis 11:14. | 2247 |
| — | of Peleg, son of Eber, ^{<01116>} Genesis 11:16. | — |
| 1771 | Building of the Tower of Babel, ^{<01110>} Genesis 11:1-9. | 2233 |
| 1787 | About this time Babylon was built by the command of Nimrod. | 2217 |
| 1816 | Birth of Reu, son of Peleg, ^{<01118>} Genesis 11:18. | 2188 |
| 1819 | Commencement of the regal government of Egypt, from Mizraim, son of Ham. Egypt continued an independent kingdom from this time to the reign of Cambyses, king of Persia, which was a period of 1663 years, according to Constantinus Manasses. | 2185 |
| 1849 | Birth of Serug, son of Reu ^{<01120>} Genesis 11:20 | 2155 |
| 1878 | of Nahor, son of Serug, ^{<01122>} Genesis 11:22. | 2126 |
| 1915 | of Terah, son of Nahor, ^{<01124>} Genesis 11:24. | 2089 |
| 1948 | About this time, Ægialeus founds the kingdom of Sicyon, according to Eusebius. | 2056 |

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| 1996 | Birth of Nahor and Haran, sons of Terah, ^{<01126>} Genesis 11:26. | 2008 |
| 1997 | Peleg dies, aged 239 years, ^{<01119>} Genesis 11:19. | 2007 |
| 2006 | Nahor dies, aged 148 years, ^{<01125>} Genesis 11:25. | 1998 |
| 2008 | Noah dies, aged 950 years, 350 years after the flood, ^{<01129>} Genesis 11:29. | 1996 |
| 2018 | Birth of ABRAM, son of Terah, ^{<01126>} Genesis 11:26. | 1986 |
| 2026 | of SARAI, wife of Abram. | 1978 |
| 2049 | Reu dies, ^{<01121>} Genesis 11:21. | 1955 |
| 2079 | Serug dies, ^{<01123>} Genesis 11:23. | 1925 |
| 2083 | Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, subdues the kings of the <i>Pentapolis</i> , Sodom, Gomorrah, &c., to whom they continued in subjection 12 years, ^{<01404>} Genesis 14:4. | 1921 |
| — | The calling of Abram out of UR of the Chaldees, where the family had been addicted to idolatry, ^{<03412>} Joshua 24:2. He comes to Haran in Mesopotamia, with Lot his nephew, Sarai his wife, and his father Terah, who dies at Haran, aged 205 years, ^{<01131>} Genesis 11:31, 32. | — |
| 2084 | Abram comes to Canaan, when 75 years of age, ^{<04404>} Genesis 41:4. From this period the 430 years of the sojourning of the Israelites, mentioned Exod. 12:40, 41, is generally dated. | 1920 |
| 2086 | Abram goes into Egypt because of the famine, ^{<01210>} Genesis 12:10; causes Sarai to pass for his sister. Pharaoh (<i>Apophis</i>) takes her to his house; but soon restores her, finding her to be Abram's wife, ver. 14-20. | 1918 |
| | Abram and Lot, having returned to the land of Canaan, separate; Lot goes to Sodom, and Abram to the valley of | |

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| 2090 | Mamre, near to Hebron, Genesis 13. | 1914 |
| 2091 | The kings of the <i>Pentapolis</i> revolt from Chedorlaomer, <01404> Genesis 14:4. | 1913 |
| 2093 | Chedorlaomer and his allies make war with the kings of the <i>Pentapolis</i> ; Lot is taken captive; Abram with his allies pursues Chedorlaomer, defeats him and the confederate kings, delivers Lot and the other captives, and is blessed by Melchizedek, king of Salem, Genesis 14. | 1911 |
| — | God promises Abram a numerous posterity, <01501> Genesis 15:1. | — |
| 2094 | About this time Bela, the first king of the Edomites, began to reign, <01362> Genesis 36:32. | 1910 |
| — | Sarai gives Hagar to Abram, <01402> Genesis 16:2. | — |
| 2096 | Of her Ishmael is born, <01615> Genesis 16:15, Abram being then 86 years old. | 1908 |
| 2107 | Arphaxad dies, 403 years after the birth of Salah, <01113> Genesis 11:13. | 1897 |
| — | God makes a covenant with Abram; gives him the promise of a son; changes his name into <i>Abraham</i> , and Sarai's into <i>Sarah</i> , and enjoins circumcision, <01701> Genesis 17:1, 5, 6, &c. Abraham entertains three angels on their way to destroy Sodom, &c., 18. He intercedes for the inhabitants; but as <i>ten</i> righteous persons not be found in those cities, they are destroyed, <01923> Genesis 19:23. Lot is delivered and for his sake Zoar is preserved, ver. 19, &c. | — |
| 2108 | Abram retires to Beer-sheba, afterwards sojourns at Gerar. Abimelech, king of Gerar, takes Sarah, in order to make her his wife, but is obliged to restore her. 20. | 1896 |
| — | Isaac is born, <02102> Genesis 21:2, 3. | — |
| 2110 | Moab and Ben-ammi, the sons of Lot, born, <01957> Genesis | 1894 |

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| 2118 | 19:37, 38. Abraham sends away Ishmael, ^{<012113>} Genesis 21:13, 14. | 1886 |
| 2126 | Abimelech and Phichol his chief captain make an agreement with Abraham, and surrender the well of Beer-sheba for seven ewe lambs, ^{<012122>} Genesis 21:22, &c. | 1878 |
| 2135 | Salah dies 403 years after the birth of Eber, ^{<011115>} Genesis 11:15. | 1869 |
| 2141 | About this time Jobab, the second king of the Edomites, began to reign, ^{<013633>} Genesis 36:33. | 1863 |
| 2145 | Abraham is called to sacrifice his son Isaac, Genesis 22. | 1859 |
| 2148 | Sarah dies, aged 127 years, ^{<012301>} Genesis 23:1. | 1856 |
| 2154 | Abraham sends Eliezer to Mesopotamia to get a wife for his son Isaac, Genesis 34. | 1850 |
| 2158 | About this time Abraham marries Keturah, ^{<012501>} Genesis 25:1. | 1846 |
| 2168 | Shem, son of Noah, dies 500 years after the birth of Arphaxed, ^{<011111>} Genesis 11:11. | 1836 |
| 2177 | Birth of Jacob and Esau, Isaac their father being 60 years old, ^{<011502>} Genesis 15:22, &c. | 1827 |
| 2183 | About this time Husham, the third king of the Edomites, began to reign, ^{<013634>} Genesis 36:34. | 1821 |
| 2187 | Abraham dies, aged 175 years, ^{<012307>} Genesis 25:7,8. | 1817 |
| 2200 | Eber dies, 430 years after the birth of Peleg, ^{<011117>} Genesis 11:17. | 1804 |
| 2208 | God appears to Isaac, and gives him glorious promises, 26:4. He stays at Gerar during the famine, ^{<012306>} Genesis 26:6. | 1796 |
| 2219 | Esau marries two Canaanitish women, ^{<012634>} Genesis 26:34. | 1785 |

— About this time Hadad, the fourth king of the Edomites, began to reign, ~~<01365>~~Genesis 36:35. —

2225 *Deluge of Ogyges in Greece, 1020 years before the first Olympiad.* 1779

— Jacob by subtlety obtains Esau's blessing, 17. He goes to Haran, and engages to serve Laban seven years for Rachel, 28., 29. —

2231 Esau marries Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, ~~<01280>~~Genesis 28:9. 1773

2232 Ishmael dies, aged 137 years, ~~<01257>~~Genesis 25:17. 1772

2233 Jacob espouses Rachel seven years after his engagement with Laban: Leah is put in the place of her sister; but seven days after he receives Rachel, 29. 1771

2234 Reuben is born, ~~<01292>~~Genesis 29:32. 1770

2235 Simeon is born, ~~<01293>~~Genesis 29:33. 1769

2236 Levi is born, ~~<01294>~~Genesis 29:34. 1768

2237 Judah is born, ~~<01295>~~Genesis 29:35. 1767

2239 Dan is born, ~~<01305>~~Genesis 30:5, 6. 1765

2240 Naphtali is born, ~~<01307>~~Genesis 30:7, 8. 1764

2242 Gad is born, ~~<01300>~~Genesis 20:10, 11. 1762

— Asher is born, ~~<01302>~~Genesis 30:12, 13. —

2247 *Evechous begins to reign over the Chaldeans 224 years before the Arabs reigned in that country (Julius Africanus.) Usher supposes him to have been the same with Belus, who was afterwards worshipped by the Chaldeans.* 1757

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| 2249 | Issachar is born, <01317> Genesis 31:17, 18. | 1755 |
| 2250 | Zebulun is born, <01309> Genesis 30:19, 20. | 1754 |
| 2259 | Dinah is born, <01321> Genesis 30:21. | 1745 |
| 2261 | Joseph is born, <01323> Genesis 30:23, 24. | 1743 |
| 2265 | About this time Samlah, the fifth king of the Edomites, began to reign, <01336> Genesis 36:36. | 1739 |
| | Jacob and his family, unknown to Laban, set out for Canaan. Laban, hearing of his departure, pursues him; after seven days he comes up with him at the mountains of Gilead; they make a covenant, and gather a heap of stones, and set up a pillar as a memorial of the transaction, 31. | — |
| — | Jacob wrestles with an Angel, and has his name changed to that of Israel, <01324> Genesis 32:24-29. | — |
| — | Esau meets Jacob, <01304> Genesis 33:4. | — |
| 2266 | Jacob arrives in Canaan, and settles among the Shechemites, <01338> Genesis 33:18. | 1738 |
| — | Benjamin born, and Rachel dies immediately after his birth, <01358> Genesis 35:18. | — |
| 2276 | Dinah defiled by Shechem, and the subsequent murder of the Shechemites by Simeon and Levi, 34. | 1728 |
| 2278 | Joseph, aged seventeen years, falling under the displeasure of his brothers, they conspire to take away his life, but afterwards change their minds, and sell him for a slave to some Ishmaelite 38, who bring him to Egypt and sell him to Potiphar, 37. | 1726 |
| | Pharez and Zarah, the twin-sons of Judah, born about this | |

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| 2285 | time, ^{<01327>} Genesis 38:27-30. | 1719 |
| 2288 | Joseph, through the false accusation of his mistress, is cast into prison, where, about two years after, he interprets the dreams of the chief butler and the chief baker, 39., 40. | 1716 |
| 2289 | Isaac dies, aged 180 years, ^{<01328>} Genesis 35:28. | 1715 |
| — | Joseph interprets the two-prophetic dreams of Pharaoh, Genesis 41. | — |
| 2290 | Commencement of the seven years of plenty. | 1714 |
| 2292 | About this time was born Manasseh, Joseph's first-born. | 1712 |
| 2296 | About this time was born Ephraim, Joseph's second son. | 1708 |
| 2297 | <i>Commencement of the seven years of famine.</i> | 1707 |
| 2298 | Jacob sends his sons to Egypt to buy corn, ^{<01420>} Genesis 42:1, &c. | 1706 |
| — | He sends them a second time, and with them his son Benjamin, ^{<01431>} Genesis 43:11. | — |
| 2300 | Joseph makes himself known to his brethren, sends for his father, and allots him and his household the land of Goshen to dwell in; Jacob being then 130 years old, 45., 46. | 1704 |
| 2301 | Joseph sells corn to the Egyptians, and brings all the money in Egypt into the king's treasury, ^{<01474>} Genesis 47:14. | 1703 |
| 2302 | He buys all the cattle, ^{<01476>} Genesis 47:16. | 1702 |
| 2303 | All the Egyptians give themselves up to be Pharaoh's servants, in order to get corn to preserve their lives and sow their ground, ^{<01478>} Genesis 47:18, &c. | 1701 |
| — | <i>The seven years of famine ended.</i> | — |

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| 2315 | About this time Saul, the sixth king of the Edomites, began to reign, <01337> Genesis 36:37. | 1689 |
| 2345 | Jacob, having blessed his sons and the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, dies, aged 147 years. He is embalmed and carried into Canaan, and buried in the cave of Machpelah, <04901> Genesis 49:1. | 1659 |
| 2369 | About this time Baal-hanan, the seventh of king the Edomites, began to reign, <01338> Genesis 36:38. | 1635 |
| 2387 | Joseph dies, aged 110, having governed Egypt fourscore years. | 1617 |
| 2429 | About this time Hadar or Hadad, the eighth and last king of the Edomites, began to reign, <01339> Genesis 36:39. | 1575 |
| 2471 | About this time the regal government of the Edomites is abolished, and the first aristocracy of dukes begins, <013615> Genesis 36:15, 16. | 1533 |
| 2474 | About this time the second aristocracy of Edomitish dukes begins, <013640> Genesis 36:40-43. | 1530 |
| 2494 | Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, born forty years before he was sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan. | 1510 |
| | <i>Ramasses Miamun</i> died in the 67th year of his reign, under whom, and his son <i>Amenophis</i> , who succeeded him, the children of Israel endured the cruel bondage and oppression mentioned in Exodus 1. | |

Finished the correction of this Part, April 6th, 1827.-A. CLARKE.