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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON
1 KINGS

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 FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS,

OTHERWISE CALLED THE THIRD BOOK OF THE KINGS

IN the most correct and ancient editions of the Hebrew Bible, the two books of Kings make but *one*, with sometimes a little break, the first book beginning with ^{<10240>}**2 Samuel 22:40**. Some of the ancient fathers seem to have begun the First Book of Kings at the death of David, ^{<110212>}**1 Kings 2:12**. The more modern copies of the Hebrew Bible have the same division as ours; but in the time of the Masoretes they certainly made but one book; as both, like the books of Samuel, are included under one enumeration of sections, verses, &c., in the Masora.

The *titles* to these books have been various, though it appears from Origen that they had their name from their first words, **dwd Èl mhw vehammelech David**, “and King David;” as *Genesis* had its name from **tyvarb bereshith**, “in the beginning.” The *Septuagint* simply term it **βασιλειων**, *of reigns*, or kingdoms; of which it calls Samuel the *first* and *second*, and these two the *third* and *fourth*. The *Vulgate* has *Liber Regum tertius; secundum Hebræos, Liber Malachim*: “The Third Book of Kings; but, according to the Hebrews, the First Book of Malachim.” The *Syriac* has, “Here follows the Book of the Kings who flourished among this ancient people; and in this is also exhibited the history of the prophets who flourished in their times.” The *Arabic* has the following title: “In the name of the most merciful and compassionate God; the Book of Solomon, the son of David the prophet, whose benedictions be upon us.-Amen.”

The author of these books is unknown: that they are a *compilation* out of public and private records, as the books of Samuel are, there is little doubt; but by whom this compilation was made nowhere appears. Some have attributed it to Isaiah and to Jeremiah, because there are several chapters in both these prophets which are similar to some found in the first and second books of Kings; compare 2 Kings 18., 19., and 20., with Isaiah 36., 37., 38., and 39.; and ^{<122418>}**2 Kings 24:18; 25:1**, &c., with ^{<24530>}**Jeremiah 52:1**, &c. But rather than allow those prophets to be the authors or compilers of these books, some very learned men have judged that the chapters in question have been taken from the books of Kings in after times, and inserted in those prophets. It is worthy of remark that the fifty-second

chapter found in Jeremiah is marked so as to intimate that *it is not the composition of that prophet*; for at the end of chap. li. we find these words, *Thus far are the words of Jeremiah*; intimating that the following chapter is not *his*.

But the most common opinion is, that *Ezra* was the author, or rather the compiler of the history found in these books. Allowing only the existence of ancient documents from which it was compiled, it appears,

1. That it is the work of one person; as is sufficiently evident from the uniformity of the style, and the connection of events.
2. That this person had ancient documents from which he compiled, and which he often only abridged, is evident from his own words, *The rest of the acts of such and such a prince, are they not written in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, or of Israel*, which occur frequently.
3. These books were written during or after the Babylonish captivity, as at the end of the second book that event is particularly described. The author states also, ^{<12172>}**2 Kings 17:23**, that Israel was, in his time, in captivity in Assyria, according to the declaration of God by his prophets.
4. That the writer was not *contemporary* with the facts which he relates, is evident from the reflections he makes on the facts that he found in the memoirs which he consulted. See ^{<12176>}**2 Kings 17:6-24**.
5. There is every reason to believe that the author was a *priest* or a *prophet*; he studies less to describe acts of heroism, successful battles, conquests, political address, &c., than what regards the temple, religion, religious ceremonies, festivals, the worship of God, the piety of princes, the fidelity of the prophets, the punishment of crimes, the manifestation of God's anger against the wicked, and his kindness to the righteous. He appears everywhere strongly attached to the house of David; he treats of the kings of Israel only accidentally; his principal object seems to be the kingdom of Judah, and the matters which concern it.

Now, all this agrees well with the supposition that *Ezra* was the compiler of these books. He was not only a *priest*, a zealous servant of God, and a reformer of the corruptions which had crept into the Divine worship, but is universally allowed by the Jews to have been the collector and compiler of the whole sacred code, and author of the arrangement of the different books which constitute the Old Testament. If some things be found in these

books of Kings which do not agree to his time, they may be easily accounted for on his often taking the facts as he found them in the documents which he consults, without any kind of alteration; and this is so far a proof of his great sincerity and scrupulous exactness.

The First Book of Kings contains the history of *one hundred and nineteen* years, from A.M. 2989 to A.M. 3108. It contains a great variety of interesting particulars, the chief of which are the following: The death of David; the reign of Solomon; the building and dedication of the temple; the building of Solomon's palace; an account of his great wisdom; his magnificence, and his fall; the division of Israel and Judah under Rehoboam; the idolatry of the ten tribes over whom Jeroboam became king. It states how Judah, Benjamin, and Levi attached themselves to the house of David; how Rehoboam was attacked by Shishak, king of Egypt, who pillaged the temple; how Baasha destroyed the house of Jeroboam, and seized on the government of Israel; how Jehu predicted the ruin of Baasha; how Ahab married the impious Jezebel, and persecuted the prophets of the Lord. It relates the acts of Elijah; the destruction of the prophets of Baal; the cruel death of Naboth; the death of Ahab; the good reign of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah; and the wicked reign of Ahaziah, king of Israel, &c. See *Calmet's* preface to the first and second books of Kings.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS

- Year from the Creation, according to the English Bible, 2989.
- Year before the Incarnation, 1015.
- Year from the destruction of Troy, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 170.
- Year before the first Olympiad, 239.
- Year before the building of Rome, 262.
- Year of the Julian Period, 3699.
- Year of the Dionysian Period, 507.
- Cycle of the Sun, 3.
- Cycle of the Moon, 13.
- Year of Acastus, the second perpetual archon of the Athenians, 31.
- Pyritiades was king over the Assyrians about this time, according to Scaliger, Langius, and Strauchius. He was the *thirty-seventh* monarch, (including Belus,) according to Africanus, and the *thirty-third* according to Eusebius.
- Year of Alba Silvius, the sixth king of the Latins, 15.
- Year of David, king of the Hebrews, 40.

CHAPTER 1

David, grown old, is, by the advice of his physicians, cherished by Abishag the Shunammite, 1-4. Adonijah conspires with Joab and Abiathar to seize on the government, 5-10. Nathan and Bathsheba communicate these tidings to the aged king, 11-27. David immediately pronounces Solomon his successor, and causes Zadok and Nathan to proclaim and anoint him king, 28-40. Adonijah and his friends hear of it, are afraid, and flee away, Adonijah laying hold on the horns of the altar, from which he refuses to go till Solomon shall promise him his life; this he does, and banishes him to his own house, 41-53.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. Now King David was old] He was probably now about *sixty-nine* years of age. He was *thirty* years old when he began to reign, reigned *forty*, and died in the *seventieth* year of his age, ^{<0050>} **2 Samuel 5:4,**

and ^{<11021>}**1 Kings 2:11**; and the transactions mentioned here are supposed to have taken place about a year before his death.

But he gat no heat.] Sixty-nine was not an advanced age; but David had been exhausted with various fatigues, and especially by family afflictions, so that he was much older in constitution than he was in years. Besides he seems to have laboured under some wasting maladies, to which there is frequent reference in the Psalms.

Verse 2. Let there be sought-a young virgin] This was the best remedy which in his state could be prescribed. His nearly exhausted frame would infallibly absorb from her young and healthy body an additional portion of animal heat, and consequently trim and revive the flame of animal life. This is properly, as I have elsewhere expressed it, Friar Bacon's secret for the cure of old age.

Verse 4. The king knew her not.] The maxim of Bacon in his enigmatical cure is, "Take all you can from the medicine, but give nothing to it; if you give any thing, it increases the disease and hastens death." I have seen this abundantly verified; but it is a subject on which it would be improper to dilate except in a medical work. An extract from Friar Bacon's *Cure of Old Age* may be found at the end of the chapter. See Clarke "^{<11053>}**1 Kings 1:53**".

Verse 5. Adonijah the son of Haggith] Who this woman was we know not; Adonijah was evidently David's eldest son now living, and one of whom his father was particularly fond; see ^{<11006>}**1 Kings 1:6**.

Prepared him chariots and horsemen] He copied the conduct of his brother Absalom in every respect. See ^{<10150>}**2 Samuel 15:1**.

Verse 7. And he conferred with Joab] Joab well knew, if *he made the new king*, he would necessarily be continued in the command of the army, and so govern him.

Verse 8. And Nathan] Some suppose that he was the preceptor of Solomon.

Verse 9. Slew sheep and oven] Making a royal feast, in reference to his inauguration. As he had Abiathar the *priest* with him, no doubt these animals were offered *sacrificially*, and then the guests fed on the flesh of the victims. He had not only a splendid feast, but a great sacrifice; and he

gave by this a popular colour to his pretensions, by affecting to receive his authority from *God*.

Verse 11. Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign] He was now considered as being legally appointed to the regal office, and no doubt was about to begin to perform its functions.

Verse 12. Save thine own life, and the life of thy son] Nathan took for granted that Adonijah would put both Bath-sheba and Solomon to death as state criminals, if he got established on the throne. O cursed lust of rule! a father will destroy his son, a son depose his father, and a brother murder a brother, in order to obtain a crown! At this time the monarchy of Israel was *unsettled*; no man knew who was to succeed to the crown, and the minds of the people were as unsettled as the succession. I have examined both systems, and find that, with all its alleged disadvantages, *hereditary monarchy* has a high balance of evidence in its favour beyond that which is *elective*, and is every way more safe for the state and more secure for the subject.

Verse 13. Go and get thee in unto King David] He knew that this woman had a sovereign influence over the king. If Bath-sheba was a source of pleasure to David, must she not also have been a source of pain to him? For could he ever forget the guilty manner in which he acquired her?

Didst not thou-swear] It is very likely that David made such an oath, and that was known only to Bath-sheba and Nathan. It is nowhere else mentioned.

Verse 20. That thou shouldest tell-who shall sit on the throne] This was a monarchy neither *hereditary* nor *elective*; the king simply *named his successor*. This obtained less or more, anciently, in most countries.

Verse 21. Shall be counted offenders.] When Adonijah and his party shall find that I and my son have had this promise from thee by oath, he will slay us both.

Verse 28. Call me Bath-sheba.] She had gone out when Nathan came in, and he retired when she was re-admitted. Each had a separate audience, but to Nathan the king did not express any will.

Verse 33. Take with you the servants of your lord] By these we may understand the *kings guards*, the *guards of the city*, the *Cherethites* and

Pelethites, who were under the command of Benaiah; and in short, all the disposable force that was at hand.

Solomon-to ride upon mine own mule] No subject could use any thing that belonged to the prince, without forfeiting his life. As David offered Solomon to ride on his own mule, this was full evidence that he had appointed him his successor.

Verse 34. Blow ye with the trumpet] After he has been anointed, make proclamation that he is king.

Verse 36. Sit upon my throne] The matter of conducting a business of this kind seems to have been this: 1. The king elect was *placed on the mule of his predecessor*, and caused to *ride abroad* to one of the public wells, or to a river where there was the greatest concourse of people, that they might see who he was that was appointed. Solomon was here taken to the river *Gihon*, in order to be anointed; the continual stream or constantly running fountain, denoting the perpetuity of the kingdom. 2. The *priest* and the *prophet* anointed him in the name of the Lord; and thereby signified that he should be endued with all the kingly virtues; that he should reign *by, under, and for* the Lord. 3. The *trumpet* was then to be *blown*, and solemn proclamation made, that he was anointed king. 4. He was then brought and solemnly *placed on the throne*, to signify that he had now assumed the reins of government, and was about to administer justice and judgement to the people.

Verse 37. Make his throne greater than the throne of-David.] A wish of this kind a *king* will suffer in behalf of his *son*, but it is never in ordinary cases considered a *compliment* to say, "I hope this child will make a better man than his father," because it seems to insinuate some reflections on his father's conduct or character. Many foolish people deal in such compliments, and they may rest assured, for the reasons given above, that they are far from being either welcome or agreeable.

Claudian, in his panegyric *Deuteronomy Quarto Consulatu Honorii Augusti*, ver. 428, has words something similar to those of Benaiah, when he describes a father, worn out with toils and difficulties, committing the reins of government to the hands of his son:—

*Adspice, completur votum: jam natus adæquat
Te meritis; et, quod magis est optabile, vincit.*

“Behold, thy desire is accomplished. Even now thy son equals thee in worth; and what is still more desirable, surpasses thee.”

Verse 39. Zadok-took a horn of oil] *Pottery and glass* were little in use in those times; and *horns* were frequently used to hold *oil* and *wine*. The oil used here was the *holy anointing oil*, which was laid up in the tabernacle, and which was used for the anointing of both *priests* and *kings*.

Verse 40. The people piped with pipes] They danced, sang, and played on what instruments of music they possessed.

The earth rent] We use a similar expression in precisely the same sense: They *rent the air* with their cries.

Verse 43. Jonathan answered] He was properly a *messenger* about the court; we have met with him and Ahimaaz before, ^{<101536>}**2 Samuel 15:36**. He had now been an *observer*, if not a *spy*, on all that was doing, and relates the transactions to Adonijah, in the very order in which they took place.

1. David has nominated Solomon his successor.
2. Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, have been appointed to set him on the king's mule.
3. They have taken him to Gihon, and anointed him there.
4. They have brought him up to Jerusalem and placed him on the throne of the kingdom.

Verse 47. Moreover, the king's servants came] The king himself was at this time confined to his own house, and probably to his bed, and could not possibly see these ceremonies; therefore his confidential servants came and told him. We know not how Jonathan, in so short a time, possessed himself of so much information.

Verse 50. Adonijah feared] He knew he had usurped the kingdom, and had not his father's consent; and, as he finds now that Solomon is appointed by David, he knows well that the people will immediately respect that appointment, and that his case is hopeless; he therefore took sanctuary, and, fleeing to the tabernacle, laid hold on one of the horns of the altar, as if appealing to the protection of God against the violence of men. The altar was a privileged place, and it was deemed sacrilege to molest a man who had taken refuge there. See ^{<10028>}**1 Kings 2:28**.

Verse 52. If he will show himself a worthy man] If, from henceforth, he behave well, show himself to be contented, and not endeavour to make partisans, or stir up insurrections among the people, he shall be safe; *but if wickedness be found in him-if he act at all contrary to this-he shall die*; his blood shall be upon him.

Verse 53. Go to thine house.] Intimating that he should have no place about the king's person, nor under the government. Adonijah must have seen that he stood continually on his good behaviour.

Friar Bacon's method of restoring and strengthening the Natural Heat

“I have read many volumes of the wise: I find few things in physic which restore the *natural heat*, weakened by dissolution of the innate moisture, or increase of a foreign one.

“But certain wise men have *tacitly* made mention of some medicine, which is likened to that which *goes out of the mine of the noble animal*. They affirm that in it there is a *force* and *virtue* which restores and increases the *natural heat*. As to its disposition, they say it is like *youth* itself, and contains an equal and temperate complexion.

“And the signs of a temperate complexion in men are when their colour is made up of *white* and *red*, when the hair is *yellow*, inclined to redness and curling.

“This *medicine* indeed is like *to such a complexion*, for it is of a temperate heat: its flame is temperate and sweet, and grateful to the smell. When it departs from this temperature, it departs so far from its virtue and goodness.

“This medicine therefore *temperately heats*, because it is temperately hot; it therefore *heals* because it is *whole*. When it is *sick*, it makes a man *sick*; when it is distempered, it breeds distempers, and changes the body to its own disposition, because of the similitude it has with the body.

“For the infirmity of a *brute* animal rarely passes into a *man*, but into another animal of the *same kind*; but the infirmity of *man* passes into *man*; and so does *health*, because of *likeness*.

“This thing is seldom found; and although sometimes it be found, yet it *cannot commodiously be had of all men*.

“Now, when this thing is *like to youth*, that is, of temperate complexion, it has good operations; if its temperature be better, it produces better effects: sometimes it is even in the *highest degree of its perfection*, and then it operates best; and then there is that property whereof we have spoken before.

“This differs from other medicines and nutriments, which heat and moisten after a certain temperate manner, and are good for old men. For other medicines principally heat and moisten the body; and, secondarily, they strengthen the native heat, and after that refresh the body, by moistening and heating it. For it brings back this heat in old men, who have it but weakly and deficient, to a certain stronger and more vehement power.

“If a *plaster* be made hereof, and applied to the *stomach*, it will help very much, for it will refresh the stomach itself, and excite an appetite; it will very much *recreate an old man*, and change *him to a kind of youth*; and will make complexions, by what means soever depraved or corrupted, better. But it is to be observed, that *Venus* doth weaken and diminish the power and virtue of this thing!

“And it is very likely that the son of the prince, in his second canon of the *Operations of Simple Medicines* spoke of this thing, where he saith, that there is a certain medicine, concealed by wise men, lest the *incontinent* should offend their Creator. There is such a *heat* in this thing, as is in young men of sound complexion; and if I durst declare the properties of this heat, this most hidden secret should presently be revealed. For this heat doth help the palsical, it restores and preserves the wasted strength of the native heat, and causeth it to flourish in all the members, and gently revives the aged.

“But the simple medicine which restores the *native heat*, when wasted and weakened, is that which is likened to the complexion of a healthy young man.”

All this covered and enigmatical description is intended simply to point out that very medicine recommended by the Jewish physicians to restore and invigorate the dying king. I could show the bearing of every sentence, but I

must leave something to the good sense of my readers. By attending to the words in *italics*, the sense will be more easily discovered. **See Clarke's note on "^{<08046>}Ruth 4:16"**.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 2

David leaves his dying charge with Solomon, relative to his own personal conduct, 1-4; to Joab, 5, 6; to Barzillai, 7; to Shimei, 8, 9. He dies, and Solomon is established in the kingdom, 10-12. Adonijah requests to have Abishag to wife, and is put to death by Solomon, 13-25. Abiathar the priest is banished to his estate at Anathoth, 26, 27. Joab, fearing for his life, flees to the horns of the altar, and is slain there by Benaiah, 28-34. Benaiah is made captain of the host in his stead, 35. Shimei is ordered to confine himself to Jerusalem, and never leave it on pain of death, 36-38. After three years he follows some of his runaway servants to Gath, and thereby forfeits his life, 39, 40. Solomon sends for him, upbraids him, and commands him to be slain by Benaiah, 41-46.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 2. I go the way of all the earth] I am dying. All the inhabitants of the earth must come to the dust. In *life*, some follow one occupation, some another; but all must, sooner or later, come to the *grave*. Death is no respecter of persons; he visits the palace of the king as well as the cottage of the peasant.

*Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres.
HOR. Odar. lib. i., od. iv., ver. 13.*

*“With equal pace, impartial fate
Knocks at the palace as the cottage gate.”
FRANCIS.*

—————*Sed omnes una manet nox,
Et calcanda semel via lethi.
Ib. od. xxviii., ver. 15.*

*“One dreary night for all mankind remains,
And once we all must tread the shadowy plains.”
Ibid.*

There is no respect to *age* or *youth* more than to *station* or external *circumstance*:—

*Mixta senum ac juvenum densantur funera: nullum
Saeva caput Proserpina fugit.
Ib. od. xxviii., ver. 19.*

*Thus age and youth promiscuous crowd the tomb;
No mortal head can shun the impending doom.”
Ibid.*

And it is not merely *man* that is subjected to this necessity; all that have in them the *breath of life* must lose it; *it is the way of all the earth*, both of *men* and inferior *animals*.

—————*Terrestria quando
Mortales animas vivunt sortita, neque ulla est
Aut parvo aut magno lethi fuga.
Vive memor quam sis ævi brevis.
HOR. Sat. l. ii., s. vi., ver. 93.*

“All that tread the earth are subject to mortality; neither *great* nor *small* can avoid death. Live therefore conscious that your time is short.”

It is painful to the pride of the great and mighty that, however decorated their tombs may be, they must undergo the same *dissolution* and *corruption* with the vulgar dead; for the grave is the house appointed for all living: man is born to die.

Omnium idem exitus est, sed et idem domicilium.

“For all have the *same end*, and are huddled together in the same narrow house.”

Here emperors, kings, statesmen, *warriors*, *heroes*, and *butchers* of all kinds, with peasants and beggars, meet; however various their routes, they terminate in the same point. This and all other kindred sentiments on the subject are well expressed in that excellent little poem of Mr. Blair, entitled THE GRAVE, which opens with the following lines:—

*While some affect the sun, and some the shade;
Some flee the city, some the hermitage;
Their aims as various as the roads they take
In journeying through life; the task be mine
To paint the gloomy horrors of the tomb,
The appointed place of rendezvous, where all
These travellers meet.*

Show thyself a man] Act like a *rational being*, and not like a *brute*; and remember, that he acts most like a *man* who is most devoted to his GOD.

Verse 3. Keep the charge of the Lord] Keep what God has given thee to keep.

1. *Walk in his ways.* Not in thine own, nor in the ways of a wicked, perishing world.
2. *Keep his statutes.* Consider all his appointments to be holy, just, and good; receive them as such, and conscientiously observe them.
3. *Keep his commandments.* Whatever he has bidden thee to do, perform; what he has forbidden thee to do, omit.
4. *Keep his judgments.* What he has *determined* to be right, is essentially and inherently right; what he has determined to be wrong or evil, is inherently and essentially so. A thing is not good because God has commanded it; a thing is not evil because he has forbidden it. He has commanded the *good*, because it is in its own nature *good* and *useful*; he has forbidden the *evil*, because it is in its own nature *bad* and *hurtful*. Keep therefore his judgments.
5. **Keep his testimonies.** Bear witness to all to which he has borne witness. His testimonies are true; there is no deceit or falsity in them. His testimonies refer also to future good things and good times; they are the signifiers of coming blessedness: as such, respect them.

That thou mayest prosper] If thou hast God's approbation, thou wilt have God's blessing. If thy ways please him, he will not withhold from thee any manner of thing that is good.

Verse 4. That the Lord may continue his word] The prosperity which God has promised to grant to my family will depend on their faithfulness to the good they receive; if they live to God, they shall sit for ever on the

throne of Israel. But alas! they did not; and God's justice cut off the entail made by his mercy.

Verse 5. Thou knowest-what Joab-did to me] He did every thing bad and dishonourable in itself, in the murder of Abner and Amasa, and indeed in the death of the profligate Absalom.

Shed the blood of war-upon his girdle-and in his shoes] He stabbed them while he pretended to *embrace* them, so that their blood gushed out on his girdle, and fell into his shoes! This was a most abominable aggravation of his crimes.

Verse 6. Let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.] It would have been an insult to justice not to have taken the life of Joab. David was culpable in delaying it so long; but probably the circumstances of his government would not admit of his doing it sooner. According to the law of God, Joab, having murdered Abner and Amasa, should die. And had not David commanded Solomon to perform this act of justice, he could not have died in the approbation of his Maker.

Verse 7. But show kindness unto the sons of Barzillai] See Clarke's notes on "^{<10193>}2 Samuel 19:31", &c.

Verse 8. Thou hast with thee Shimei] See on ^{<10165>}2 Samuel 16:5, &c., and the notes on ^{<10193>}2 Samuel 19:18-23.

Verse 9. Hold him not guiltless] Do not consider him as an innocent man, though I have sworn to him that I would not put him to death by the sword; yet as thou art a wise man, and knowest how to treat such persons, treat him as he deserves; only as I have sworn to him, and he is an aged man, let him not die a violent death; bring *not* down his hoary head to the grave with blood. So Solomon understood David, and so I think David should be understood; for the negative particle *al lo*, in the former clause, *hold him NOT guiltless*, should be repeated in this latter clause, though not expressed, *his hoary head bring thou NOT down*; instances of which frequently occur in the Hebrew Bible. See Dr. *Kennicott's* note at the end of this chapter. See Clarke "^{<10246>}1 Kings 2:46".

Verse 10. David slept with his fathers] His life was a life of remarkable providences, of much piety, and of great public usefulness. In general he lived well, and it is most evident that he died well; and as a king, a general, a poet, a father, and a friend, he has had few *equals*, and no *superior*, from

his own time to the present day. But I shall reserve a more particular consideration of his character till I come to the book of Psalms, in which that character, with all its lights and shades, is exhibited by his own masterly hand. And it is from this composition alone that we can know David, and the maxims by which he was governed in public and private life.

Was buried in the city of David.] And Solomon, says Josephus, deposited immense treasures with him, in the grave, where they continued unmolested for *thirteen hundred years*, till Hyrcanus, the high priest, being besieged by Antiochus, opened the sepulchre, and took thence *three thousand* talents, part of which he gave to Antiochus, to raise the siege. It is added that, many years afterwards, Herod the Great ransacked this tomb and got considerable riches. Little credit is due to this account, though we know that was customary in ancient times to deposit with the more illustrious dead, gold, silver, and precious stones. That the tomb of David existed in the days of the *apostles*, we learn from ~~4123~~ **Acts 2:29**, where St. Peter, addressing the Jews, says, *Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David; that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day*. St. Jerome speaks of it as existing in his time, and modern travellers pretend that it is still in existence. But both monks and Mohammedans have long united to impose on Christian pilgrims; and there is scarcely any dependence to be placed on any of their relations; absurdity and self-contradiction are their principal characteristics.

Verse 15. Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine] It certainly was his by the right of *primogeniture*, and it was his by the *voice of the people*, and the consent of the *high priest*. But there was a right paramount to all these, the *right of God*; it was his kingdom; the kings were his *lieutenants*, and he had a right to give the crown to whomsoever he pleased, and he was pleased to give it to Solomon.

Verse 17. That he give me Abishag-to wife.] He cheerfully gives up all right to the kingdom, and only desires to have this young woman, who, though she had been his father's wife or concubine, was still in a state of virginity. Some think that Joab and Abiathar had advised Adonijah to make this application, not doubting, if he got Abishag, that the popular tide would again turn in his favour, and that Solomon, whom they did not like, might soon be deposed; and that it was on this account that Solomon was so severe. But there is little evidence to support these conjectures. It does not appear that Adonijah by desiring to have Abishag had any thought of

the kingdom, or of maintaining any right to it, though Solomon appears to have understood him in this sense. But without farther evidence, this was a flimsy pretext to imbrue his hands in a brother's blood. The fable of the *wolf and lamb* is here very applicable, and the old English proverb not less so: *It is an easy thing to find a staff to beat a dog with.* We readily find an excuse for whatever we are determined to do. He who attempts to varnish over this conduct of Solomon by either *state necessity* or a *Divine command*, is an enemy, in my mind, to the cause of God and truth. See on ^{<1025>}**1 Kings 2:25.**

Verse 25. Solomon sent-Benaiah-and he fell upon him that he died.] Benaiah seems to have been the public state executioner, and yet he was generalissimo of all the forces. See him employed in a similar work, ^{<1024>}**1 Kings 2:34, 46.** I suppose him to have been such another general as *Suwarrow*, butcher-general of the Turks and Poles to the late Empress Catharine of Russia: like mistress, like man. But they have long since been called to an impartial tribunal.

That this was an act of cruelty towards Adonijah, needs no proof. He is suspected, condemned, and slain, without a hearing. *Calmet* vindicates all this by various assumptions, and lays down a doctrine that is calculated for the meridian of *Fez* or *Morocco*; hear him: Un prince, dans ses jugemens, ne peut pas toujours suivre les regles de la plus parfaite morale; la politique, et le bien de l'etat, obligent souvent a des choses opposees aux conseils de l'evangile; "A prince in his judgments cannot always follow the rules of the most perfect morality; policy and the good of the state often require things to be done which are contrary to the counsels of the Gospel." What a diabolic maxim is this! And is this indeed the way that *French kings* ruled and ministers decreed judgment? Then we need not wonder at a revolution in that state, nor of the scourge that desolated the land. O England! magnify God for your *constitution*, your *constitutional king*, and the *laws* according to which he reigns.

Verse 27. So Solomon thrust out Abiathar] This was for having taken part before with Adonijah, but by it a remarkable prophecy was fulfilled; see ^{<00213>}**1 Samuel 2:13-35**, and the notes there. God had told Eli that the priesthood should depart from his house; Abiathar was the last of the descendants of *Ithamar*, of which family was Eli the high priest. Zadok, who was made priest in the stead of Abiathar, was of the family of Eliezer; and by this change the priesthood reverted to its ancient channel. Abiathar

deserved this degradation; he supported Adonijah in his unnatural assumption of the royal dignity, even during the life of his father. This was the head and front of his offending.

Verse 28. Tidings came to Joab] He heard that Adonijah had been slain and Abiathar banished, and probably he had heard of David's dying charge to Solomon. Fearing therefore for his personal safety, he takes refuge at the tabernacle, as claiming Divine protection, and desiring to have his case decided by God alone; or perhaps a spark of remorse is now kindled; and, knowing that he must die, he wishes to die in the house of God, as it were under the shadow, that he might receive the mercy of the Almighty.

Verse 30. Nay; but I will die here.] The altars were so sacred among all the people, that, in general, even the vilest wretch found safety, if he once reached the altar. This led to many abuses, and the perversion of public justice; and at last it became a maxim that the guilty should be punished, should they even have taken refuge at the altars. God decreed that the presumptuous murderer who had taken refuge at the altar should be dragged thence, and put to death; see ^{<2214>}**Exodus 21:14**. The heathens had the same kind of ordinance; hence *Euripides*:—

Εγω γαρ οστις μη δικαιος ων ανηρ
 Βωμον προσιζει, τον νομον χαιρειν εων,
 Προς την δικην αγοιμ̄ αν, αυ τρεσας θεους,
 Κακον γαρ ανδρα χρη κακως πασχειν αιει.

EURIPID. *Frag.* 42. Edit. *Musg.*

“If an unrighteous man, availing himself of the law, should claim the protection of the altar, I would drag him to justice, nor fear the wrath of the gods; for it is necessary that every wicked man should suffer for his crimes.”

Verse 34. So Benaiah-went up-and slew him] It appears he slew him at the very altar. Joab must have been both old and infirm at this time, and now he bleeds for *Abner*, he bleeds for *Amasa*, and he bleeds for *Uriah*. The two former he murdered; of the blood of the latter he was not innocent; yet he had done the state much service, and they knew it. But he was a murderer, and vengeance would not suffer such to live.

Verse 36. Build thee a house] Thus he gave him the whole city for a prison, and this certainly could have reduced him to no hardships.

Verse 37. Thy blood shall be upon thine own head.] Thou knowest what to expect; if thou disobey my orders thou shalt certainly be slain, and then thou shalt be considered as a *self-murderer*; thou alone shalt be answerable for thy own death. Solomon knew that Shimei was a seditious man, and he chose to keep him under his own eye; for such a man at large, in favourable circumstances, might do much evil. His bitter revilings of David were a sufficient proof.

Verse 40. And Shimei-went to Gath] It is astonishing that with his eyes wide open he would thus run into the jaws of death.

Verse 45. King Solomon shall be blessed] He seems to think that, while such bad men remained unpunished, the nation could not prosper; that it was an act of justice which God required him to perform, in order to the establishment and perpetuity of his throne.

Verse 46. And the kingdom was established] He had neither foes within nor without. He was either dreaded or loved universally. His own subjects were affectionately bound to him, and the surrounding nations did not think proper to make him their enemy.

As there are serious doubts relative to the dying charge of David as it relates to *Shimei*, most believing that, in opposition to his own oath, David desired that Solomon should put him to death; I shall here insert Dr. *Kennicott's* criticism on this part of the text:—

“*David* is here represented in our *English* version as finishing his life with giving a command to Solomon to kill *Shimei*, and to kill him on account of that very crime for which, as *David* here says, he had sworn to him by the Lord he would not put him to death. The behaviour thus imputed to the king and prophet, and which would be justly censurable if true, should be examined very carefully as to the ground it stands upon; and when the passage is duly considered, I presume it will appear highly probable that an injury has been here done to this illustrious character. The point to which I now beg the reader's attention is this: That it is not uncommon in the Hebrew language to omit the negative in a second part of the sentence, and to consider it as repeated, when it has been once expressed, and is followed by the connecting particle. And thus on ²³¹²²**Isaiah 13:22** the late learned annotator says: ‘The *negative* is repeated or referred to by the conjunction *vau*, as in many other places.’ So

also ^{<22304>}**Isaiah 23:4**. The necessity of so very considerable an alteration as inserting the particle NOT, may be here confirmed by some other instances. ^{<19016>}**Psalm 1:5**: *The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, NOR* (the Hebrew is AND, signifying *and not*) *sinner in the congregation of the righteous.* ^{<19018>}**Psalm 9:18**: *The needy shall not always be forgotten,* (and then the negative, understood as repeated by the conjunction, now dropped,) *the expectation of the poor shall* (NOT) *perish for ever.* ^{<193801>}**Psalm 38:1**: *O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath; NEITHER* (AND, for *and not*) *chasten me in thy hot displeasure.* ^{<19735>}**Psalm 75:5**: *Lift not up your horn on high,* (and then the negative, understood as repeated by the conjunction, now dropped,) *speak* (NOT) *with a stiff neck.* ^{<18412>}**Proverbs 24:12**, (our version is this:) *Doth not he, that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth the soul, doth* (NOT) *he know it? and shall* (NOT) *he render to every man according to his works? And* ^{<18118>}**Proverbs 30:3**: *I neither learned wisdom, NOR* (AND, for *and not*) *have the knowledge of the holy.* If then there are in fact many such instances, the question is, Whether the *negative* here, expressed in the former part of David's command, may not be understood as to be repeated in the latter part; and if this *may* be, a strong reason will be added why it *should* be, so interpreted. The passage will run thus: 'Behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, who cursed me-but I swore to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the sword. Now, therefore, hold him NOT guiltless, (for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him,) but bring NOT down his hoar head to the grave with blood.' Now if the language itself will admit of this construction, the sense thus given to the sentence derives a very strong support from the context. For how did Solomon understand this charge? Did he kill Shimei in consequence of it? Certainly he did not; for after he had immediately commanded Joab to be slain, in obedience to his father, he sends for Shimei, and knowing that Shimei ought to be well watched, confines him to a particular spot in Jerusalem for the remainder of his life; ^{<110236>}**1 Kings 2:36-42**. See also ^{<182317>}**Job 23:17; 30:20; 31:20.**"

This is the best mode of interpreting this text.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 3

Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter, 1, 2. He serves God, and offers a thousand burnt-offerings upon one altar, at Gibeon, 3, 4. God appears to him in a dream at Gibeon; and asks what he shall give him, 5. He asks wisdom; with which God is well pleased, and promises to give him not only that, but also riches and honour; and, if obedient, long life, 6-14. He comes back to Jerusalem; and offers burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and makes a feast for his servants, 15. His judgment between the two harlots, 16-27. He rises in the esteem of the people, 28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh] This was no doubt a *political* measure in order to strengthen his kingdom, and on the same ground he continued his alliance with the king of Tyre; and these were among the most powerful of his neighbours. But should political considerations prevail over express laws of God? God had strictly forbidden his people to form alliances with heathenish women, lest they should lead their hearts away from him into idolatry. Let us hear the law: *Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son; for they will turn away thy son from following me, &c.* ^{<123416>} **Exodus 34:16;** ^{<16078>} **Deuteronomy 7:3, 4.** Now Solomon acted in direct *opposition* to these laws; and perhaps in this alliance were sown those seeds of apostasy from God and goodness in which he so long lived, and in which he so awfully died.

Those who are, at all hazards, his determinate apologists, assume, 1. That Pharaoh's daughter must have been a *proselyte to the Jewish religion*, else Solomon would not have married her. 2. That God was not displeased with this match. 3. That the book of *Canticles*, which is supposed to have been his *epithalamium*, would not have found a place in the sacred canon had the spouse, whom it all along celebrates, been at that time an idolatress. 4. That it is certain we nowhere in Scripture find Solomon blamed for this match. See *Dodd*.

Now to all this I answer, 1. We have no evidence that the daughter of Pharaoh was a proselyte, no more than that her father was a true believer. It is no more likely that he sought a proselyte here than that he sought them among the Moabites, Hittites, &c., from whom he took many wives. 2. If God's law be positively against such matches, he could not possibly be pleased with this breach of it in Solomon; but his law is positively against them, therefore he was not pleased. 3. That the book of Canticles being found in the sacred canon is, according to some critics, neither a proof that the marriage pleased God, nor that the book was written by Divine inspiration; much less that it celebrates the love between Christ and his Church, or is at all profitable for doctrine, for reproof, or for edification in righteousness. 4. That Solomon is most expressly reprov'd in Scripture for this very match, is to me very evident from the following passages: DID NOT SOLOMON, *king of Israel*, SIN *by these things? Yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin;* ^{<16135>}**Nehemiah 13:26**. Now it is certain that Pharaoh's daughter was an *outlandish woman*; and although it be not expressly said that Pharaoh's daughter is *here* intended, yet there is all reasonable evidence that she is included; and, indeed, the words seem to intimate that *she is especially referred to*. In ^{<11013>}**1 Kings 3:3** it is said, *Solomon LOVED THE LORD, walking in the statutes of David*; and Nehemiah says, *Did not Solomon, king of Israel, SIN BY THESE THINGS, who WAS BELOVED OF HIS GOD*; referring, most probably, to this early part of Solomon's history. But supposing that this is not sufficient evidence that this match is *spoken against in Scripture*, let us turn to ^{<11101>}**1 Kings 11:1, 2**, of this book, where the cause of Solomon's apostasy is assigned; and there we read, *But King Solomon loved many STRANGE WOMEN, TOGETHER WITH THE DAUGHTER OF PHARAOH, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites: of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in unto them; neither shall they come in unto you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods:* SOLOMON CLAVE UNTO THESE IN LOVE. Here the marriage with Pharaoh's daughter is classed most positively with the most exceptionable of his matrimonial and concubinal alliances: as it no doubt had its predisposing share in an apostacy the most unprecedented and disgraceful.

Should I even be singular, I cannot help thinking that the reign of Solomon began rather *inauspiciously*: even a brother's blood must be shed to cause

him to sit securely on his throne, and a most reprehensible alliance, the forerunner of many others of a similar nature, was formed for the same purpose. But we must ever be careful to distinguish between what God has commanded to be done, and what was done through the vile passions and foolish jealousies of men. Solomon had many advantages, and no man ever made a worse use of them.

Verse 2. The people sacrificed in high places] Could there be any sin in this, or was it unlawful till after the temple was built? for prophets, judges, the kings which preceded Solomon, and Solomon himself, sacrificed on high places, such as Gibeon, Gilgal, Shiloh, Hebron, Kirjath-jearim, &c. But after the temple was erected, it was sinful to offer sacrifices in any other place; yet here it is introduced as being morally wrong, and it is introduced, ^{<100B>}**1 Kings 3:3**, as being an exceptionable trait in the character of Solomon. The explanation appears to be this: as the *ark* and *tabernacle* were still in being, it was not right to offer sacrifices but where they were; and wherever they were, whether on a high place or a plain, there sacrifices might be lawfully offered, previously to the building of the temple. And the tabernacle was now at Gibeon, ^{<400B>}**2 Chronicles 1:3**. Possibly the *high places* may be like those among the Hindoos, large *raised-up terraces*, on which they place their gods when they bathe, anoint, and worship them. Juggernaut and Krishnu have large terraces or *high places*, on which they are annually exhibited. But there was no idol in the above case.

Verse 5. The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream] This was the night after he had offered the sacrifices, (see ^{<400B>}**2 Chronicles 1:7**.) and probably after he had earnestly prayed for wisdom; see **Wisdom 7:7**: *Wherefore I prayed, and understanding was given me: I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me*. If this were the case, the dream might have been the *consequence* of his earnest prayer for wisdom: the images of those things which occupy the mind during the day are most likely to recur during the night; and this, indeed, is the origin of the greater part of our dreams. But this appears to have been *supernatural*.

Gregory Nyssen, speaking of different kinds of dreams, observes that our organs and brain are not unlike a musical instrument; while the strings of such instruments have their proper degree of tension, they give, when touched, a harmonious sound, but as soon as they are relaxed or screwed down, they give no sound at all. During our waking hours, our senses,

touched by our reason, produce the most harmonious concert; but as soon as we are asleep, the instrument is no longer capable of emitting any sound, unless it happen that the remembrance of what passed during the day returns and presents itself to the mind while we are asleep, and so forms a dream; just as the strings of an instrument continue to emit feeble sounds for some time after the musician has ceased to strike them.-See GREG. NYSS. *Deuteronomy opificio hominis*, cap. xii., p. 77. *Oper.* vol. i., edit. *Morell.*, Par. 1638.

This may account, in some measure, for common dreams: but even suppose we should not allow that Solomon had been the day before earnestly requesting the gift of wisdom from God, yet we might grant that such a dream as this might be produced by the immediate influence of God upon the soul. And if Solomon received his wisdom by immediate inspiration from heaven, this was the kind of dream that he had; a dream by which that wisdom was actually communicated. But probably we need not carry this matter so much into miracle: God might be the author of his extraordinary *wisdom*, as he was the author of his extraordinary *riches*. Some say, “He lay down as ignorant as other men, and yet arose in the morning wiser than all the children of men.” I think this is as credible as that he lay down with a scanty revenue, and in the morning, when he arose, found his treasury full. In short, God’s especial blessing brought him riches through the medium of his own care and industry; as the inspiration of the Almighty gave him understanding, while *he gave his heart to seek and search out by his wisdom, concerning all things under the sun,*
^{<2011>}**Ecclesiastes 1:13.** God gave him the seeds of an extraordinary understanding, and, by much study and research, they grew up under the Divine blessing, and produced a plentiful harvest; but, alas! they did not continue to grow.

Verse 7. I know not how to go out or come in.] I am just like an infant learning to walk alone, and can neither go out nor come in without help.

Verse 9. Give-an understanding heart to judge thy people] He did not ask wisdom in general, but the true science of government. This wisdom he sought, and this wisdom he obtained.

Verse 12. I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart] I have given thee a capacious mind, one capable of knowing much: make a proper use of thy powers, under the direction of my Spirit, and thou shalt excel in wisdom all that have gone before thee; neither after thee shall any arise like

unto thee. But, *query*, Was not all this *conditional*? If he should walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and commandments, ^{<K&B>}1 Kings 3:14. Was it not to depend upon his proper use of initiatory inspirations? Did he ever receive *all* this wisdom? Did not his unfaithfulness prevent the fulfilment of the Divine purpose? Instead of being the *wisest* of men, did he not become more *brutish* than any man? Did he not even lose the *knowledge of his Creator*, and worship the abominations of the Moabites, Zidonians, &c., &c.! And was not such idolatry a proof of the *grossest stupidity*? How few proofs does his life give that the gracious purpose of God was fulfilled in him! He received *much*; but he would have received *much more*, had he been faithful to the grace given. No character in the sacred writings disappoints us more than the character of Solomon.

None like thee before thee] That is, no king, either in Israel or among the nations, as the following verse explains.

Verse 16. Then came there two women-harlots] The word *ywnz zonoth*, which we here, and in some other places, improperly translate *harlots*, is by the Chaldee (the best judge in this case) rendered *ˆyqdnwp pundekayan, tavern-keepers*. (See on ^{<K&B>}Joshua 2:1.) If these had been *harlots*, it is not likely they would have dared to appear before Solomon; and if they had been common women, it is not likely they would have had children; nor is it likely that such persons would have been permitted under the reign of David. Though there is no mention of their *husbands*, it is probable they might have been at this time in other parts, following their necessary occupations; and the settling the present business could not have been delayed till their return; the appeal to justice must be made immediately.

Verse 25. Divide the living child in two] This was apparently a very strange decision, and such as nothing could vindicate had it been carried into execution; but Solomon saw that the only way to find out the real mother was by the *affection* and *tenderness* which she would necessarily show to her offspring. He plainly saw that the real mother would rather relinquish her claim to her child than see it hewn in pieces before her eyes, while it was probable the pretender would see this with indifference. He therefore orders such a mode of trial as would put the maternal affection of the real mother to the utmost proof; the plan was tried, and it succeeded. This was a proof of his sound judgment, penetration, and acquaintance with human nature; but surely it is not produced as a proof of extraordinary

and supernatural wisdom. We have several similar decisions even among heathens.

Suetonius, in his life of the Emperor Claudius, cap. xv., whom he celebrates for his wonderful sagacity and penetration on some particular occasions, tells us, that this emperor discovered a woman to be the mother of a certain young man, whom she refused to acknowledge as her son, by commanding her to marry him, the proofs being doubtful on both sides; for, rather than commit this incest, she confessed the truth. His words are: *Feminam, non agnoscentem filium suum, dubia utrinque argumentorum fide, ad confessionem compulit, indicto matrimonio juvenis.*

Ariopharnes, king of Thrace, being appointed to decide between three young men, who each professed to be the son of the deceased king of the Cimmerians, and claimed the crown in consequence, found out the real son by commanding each to shoot an arrow into the body of the dead king: two of them did this without hesitation, the third refused, and was therefore judged by Ariopharnes to be the real son of the deceased. *Grotius*, on this place, quotes this relation from *Diodorus Siculus*; I quote this on his authority, but have not been able to find the place in Diodorus. This is a parallel case to that in the text; a covert appeal was made to the principle of *affection*; and the truth was discovered, as in the case of the mother of the living child.

Verse 28. They feared the king] This decision proved that they could not impose upon him; and they were afraid to do those things which might bring them before his judgment-seat.

They saw that the wisdom of God was in him] They perceived that he was taught of God, judged impartially, and could not be deceived. What was done to the other woman we are not told; justice certainly required that she should be punished for her lies and fraud.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 4

An account of Solomon's chief officers, 1-6. Names of the twelve officers that were over twelve districts, to provide victuals for the king's household monthly, 7-19. Judah and Israel are very populous; and Solomon reigns over many provinces, 20, 21. The daily provision for his family, 22, 23. The extent and peace of his dominions, 24, 25. His horses, chariots, and dromedaries; with the provision made for them, 26-28. His wisdom and understanding, 29-31. The number of his proverbs and songs; and his knowledge in natural history, 32, 33. People from all nations come to hear his wisdom, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 2. These were the princes which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok the priest.] These were his *great, chief, or principal* men. None of them were *princes* in the common acceptation of the word.

Verse 3. Elihoreph and Ahiah-scribes] *Secretaries* to the king.

Jehoshaphat-recorder] *Historiographer* to the king, who chronicled the affairs of the kingdom. He was in this office under David see ~~<102B>~~ **2 Samuel 20:24.**

Verse 5. Azariah-was over the officers] He had the *superintendence* of the twelve officers mentioned below; see ~~<10407>~~ **1 Kings 4:7.**

Zabud-was principal officer] Perhaps what we call *premier, or prime minister.*

The king's friend] His chief *favourite*-his *confidant.*

Verse 6. Ahishar was over the household] the king's *chamberlain.*

Adoniram-was over the tribute.] What we call *chancellor* of the *exchequer.* He received and brought into the treasury all the proceeds of *taxes* and *tributes.* He was in this office under David; see ~~<102B>~~ **2 Samuel 20:24.**

Verse 7. Twelve officers] The business of these twelve officers was to provide daily, each for a month, those provisions which were consumed in

the king's household; see ^{<1042>} **1 Kings 4:22, 23**. And the task for such a daily provision was not an easy one.

Verse 13. Threescore great cities with walls and brazen bars] These were fortified cities: their gates and bars covered with plates of brass. Such were the gates in Priam's palace:—

*Ipse inter primos correpta dura bipenni
Limina perrumpit, POSTES que a cardine vellit
ÆRATOS.*

VIRG. Æn., lib. ii. ver. 479.

*Fierce Pyrrhus in the front, with forceful sway,
Plied the huge axe, and hew'd the beams away;
The solid timbers from the portal tore,
And rent from every hinge the BRAZEN door.
PITT.*

Verse 20. Eating and drinking, and making merry.] They were very comfortable, very rich, very merry, and very corrupt. And this full feeding and dissipation led to a total corruption of manners.

Verse 21. Solomon reigned over all kingdoms] The meaning of this verse appears to be, that Solomon reigned over all the provinces from the river Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, even to the frontiers of Egypt. The Euphrates was on the *east* of Solomon's dominions; the Philistines were *westward* on the Mediterranean sea; and Egypt was on the *south*. Solomon had, therefore, as tributaries, the kingdoms of *Syria, Damascus, Moab, and Ammon*, which lay between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean. See *Calmet*. Thus he appears to have possessed all the land that God covenanted with Abraham to give to his posterity.

Verse 22. Solomon's provision for one day:—

Of fine flour — 30 — measures, or *cors*.

Of meal — 60 — ditto.

Stall-fed oxen — 10

Ditto from the pasture — 20

Sheep — 100; — with harts, roebucks, fallow deer, and fat fowls.

The **rk** *cor* was the same as the *homer*, and contained nearly *seventy-six gallons*, wine measure, according to Bishop Cumberland.

Sheep] $\hat{a}x$ *tson*, comprehending both sheep and goats.

Harts] l *yam meaiyal*, the deer.

Roebucks] ybx *tsebi*, the gazal, antelope, or wild goat.

Fallow deer] $rwmj$ *y yachmur*, the buffalo. See the notes on
^{<51215>}**Deuteronomy 12:15; 14:5.**

Fatted fowl.] $\mu y s w b a \mu y r b r b$ *barburim abusim*, I suppose, means all the *wild fowls in season* during each month. Michaelis derives $\mu y r b r b$ *barburim* from arb *bara*, which in Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, signifies a *field*, a *desert*; all that is *without* the cities and habitations of men: hence arb twj *cheyvath bara*, wild beasts, ^{<71238>}**Daniel 2:38**, rb rwt *tor bar*, wild bull; and therefore *barburim* may signify creatures living in the *fields*, *woods*, and *deserts*, which are taken by *hunting*, and opposed to those which are *domesticated*; and, consequently, may include *beasts* as well as *fowls*. Many have translated the word *capons*; but, query, was any such thing known among the ancient Jews? Solomon's table, therefore, was spread with all the *necessaries* and *delicacies* which the *house* or the *field* could afford.

But how immense must the number of men have been who were fed daily at the palace of the Israelitish king! *Vilalpandus* computes the number to be not less than *forty-eight thousand, six hundred*; and *Calvisius* makes, by estimation from the consumption of food, *fifty-four thousand*! These must have included all his guards, each of whom received a *ration* from the king's store.

Verse 25. Every man under his vine] They were no longer obliged to dwell in *fortified* cities for fear of their enemies; they spread themselves over all the country, which they everywhere cultivated; and had always the privilege of eating the fruits of their own labours. This is the meaning of the phrase.

Verse 26. Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses-and twelve thousand horsemen.] In ^{<4025>}**2 Chronicles 9:25**, instead of *forty thousand stalls*, we read *four thousand*; and even this number might be quite sufficient to hold horses for *twelve thousand* horsemen; for *stalls* and *stables* may be here synonymous. In ^{<11026>}**1 Kings 10:26** it is said he had

one thousand four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; and this is the reading in ^{<4014>}2 Chronicles 1:14. In ^{<4025>}2 Chronicles 9:25, already quoted, instead of forty thousand stalls for horses, the Septuagint has τεσσαρες χιλιαδες θηλειαι ιπποι, four thousand mares; and in this place the whole verse is omitted both by the Syriac and Arabic. In the Targum of Rabbi Joseph on this book we have ham [bra arba meah, four hundred, instead of the four thousand in Chronicles, and the forty thousand in the text. From this collation of parallel places we may rest satisfied that there is a corruption in the numbers somewhere; and as a sort of medium, we may take for the whole four thousand stalls, one thousand four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

Verse 28. And dromedaries] The word *vk̄r* *rechesh*, which we translate thus, is rendered *beasts*, or *beasts of burden*, by the *Vulgate*; *mares* by the *Syriac* and *Arabic*; *chariots* by the *Septuagint*; and *race-horses* by the *Chaldee*. The original word seems to signify a very *swift* kind of *horse*, and *race-horse* or *post-horse* is probably its true meaning. To communicate with so many distant provinces, Solomon had need of many animals of this kind.

Verse 29. God gave Solomon wisdom, &c.] He gave him a capacious mind, and furnished him with extraordinary assistance to cultivate it.

Even as the sand that is on the sea-shore.] Lord *Bacon* observes on this: “As the sand on the sea-shore encloses a great body of waters, so Solomon’s mind contained an ocean of knowledge.” This is a happy and correct illustration.

Verse 30. The children of the east country] That is the Chaldeans, Persians, and Arabians, who, with the Egyptians, were famed for wisdom and knowledge through all the world.

Verse 31. He was wiser than all men] He was wiser than any of those who were most celebrated in his time, among whom were the four after mentioned, viz., *Ethan*, *Heman*, *Chalcol*, and *Darda*. *Ethan* was probably the same as is mentioned in some of the *Psalms*, particularly ^{<1980>}**Psalms 89:1**, title; and among the singers in ^{<1364>}**1 Chronicles 6:42**. There is a *Heman* mentioned in the title to ^{<1980>}**Psalms 88:1**. In ^{<1316>}**1 Chronicles 2:6** we have all the four names, but they are probably not the same persons, for they are there said to be the *sons of Zerah*, and he flourished long before Solomon’s time.

Some suppose that **l wj m ynb** *beney machol* should be rendered *masters of dancing* or *music*, as **l wj m machol** signifies not only a *dance* or *choir*, but also an instrument of *music* of the *pipe* kind. Perhaps a reference is here made to Solomon's skill in *music* and *poetry*, as he is compared to persons who appear to have been eminent *poets* and *musicians*.

Verse 32. He spake three thousand proverbs] The book of Proverbs, attributed to Solomon, contain only about *nine hundred* or *nine hundred and twenty-three* distinct proverbs; and if we grant with some that the first *nine chapters* are not the work of Solomon, then all that can be attributed to him is only about *six hundred and fifty*.

Of all his *one thousand and five songs* or *poems* we have only *one*, the book of Canticles, remaining, unless we include ^{<1370>}**Psalm 127:1-5**, *Except the Lord build the house, &c.*, which in the title is said to be *by* or *for* him, though it appears more properly to be a psalm of *direction*, left him by his father David, relative to the building of the temple.

Verse 33. He spake of trees-beasts-fowl-creeping things, and of fishes.] This is a complete system of natural history, as far as relates to the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and the first intimation we have of any thing of the kind: Solomon was probably the first *natural historian* in the world.

O, how must the heart of Tournefort, Ray, Linne, Buffon, Cuvier, Swammerdam, Blosch, and other naturalists, be wrung, to know that these works of Solomon are all and for ever lost! What light should we have thrown on the animal and vegetable kingdoms, had these works been preserved! But the providence of God has not thought fit to preserve them, and succeeding naturalists are left to invent the system which he probably left perfect. If there be any remains of his wisdom, they must be sought among the orientals, among whom his character is well known, and rates as high as it does with either Jews or Christians. I shall give some extracts from their works relative to Solomon when I come to consider his character at the end of ^{<11143>}**1 Kings 11:43**.

Verse 34. There came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon] We learn from 1 Kings 10, that the queen of Sheba was one of those visitants, and perhaps the most remarkable, as we have the particulars of her visit, but not of the others.

It is astonishing that of a person so renowned for wisdom, so little should be left to prove the truth of a fact of which all the civilized nations of the world have heard, and of which scarcely any man has ever doubted. The people that came from all kings of the earth were probably ambassadors, who came to form and maintain friendship between their sovereigns and the Israelitish king. We cannot understand the place as speaking of people who, either through an idle or laudable curiosity, came to see and converse with Solomon; to give free access to such people would ill comport with the maintenance of his dignity.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 5

Hiram, king of Tyre, sends to congratulate Solomon on his accession to the kingdom, 1. Solomon consults him on building a temple for the Lord, and requests his assistance, 2-6. Hiram is pleased and specifies the assistance which he will afford, 7-9. He sends cedars and fir trees, 10. The return made by Solomon, 11. They form a league, 12. Solomon makes a levy of men in Israel to prepare wood and stones, 13-18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. Hiram king of Tyre] It must have been at the beginning of Solomon's reign that these ambassadors were sent; and some suppose that the Hiram mentioned here is different from him who was the friend of David; but there seems no very solid reason for this supposition. As Hiram had intimate alliance with David, and built his palace, ^{<10051>}**2 Samuel 5:11**, he wished to maintain the same good understanding with his son, of whose wisdom he had no doubt heard the most advantageous accounts; and he loved the son because he always loved the father, *for Hiram was ever a lover of David.*

Verse 2. Solomon sent to Hiram] Made an interchange of ambassadors and friendly greetings. Josephus tells us that the correspondence between Hiram and Solomon was preserved in the archives of the Tyrians even in his time. But this, like many other assertions of the same author, is worthy of little credit.

Verse 4. There is neither adversary] ^{^cc ^y} [*eyn satan, there is no satan*-no opposer, nor any kind of evil; all is peace and quiet, both without and within. God has given me this quiet that I may build his temple. *Deus nobis haec otia fecit.*

Verse 5. A house unto the name of the Lord] The name of God is God himself. I purpose to build a house to that infinite and eternal Being called *Jehovah.*

Verse 6. Any that can skill to hew timber] An obsolete and barbarous expression for *any that know how to cut timber.* They had neither *sawyers, carpenters, joiners,* nor *builders* among them, equal to the Sidonians.

Sidon was a part of the territories of Hiram, and its inhabitants appear to have been the most expert workmen. It requires more skill to *fell* and prepare timber than is generally supposed. *Vitruvius* gives some rules relative to this, lib. ii., cap. 9, the sum of which is this: 1. Trees should be felled in autumn, or in the winter, and in the wane of the moon; for in this season the trees recover their vigour and solidity, which was dispersed among their leaves, and exhausted by their fruit, in spring and summer; they will then be free from a certain moisture, very apt to engender worms and rot them, which in autumn and winter is consumed and dried up. 2. Trees should not be cut down *at once*; they should be cut carefully round towards the pith, that the sap may drop down and distil away, and thus left till thoroughly dry, and then cut down entirely. 3. When fully dried, a tree should not be exposed to the south sun, high winds, and rain; and should be smeared over with cow-dung to prevent its splitting. 4. It should never be drawn through the dew, but be removed in the afternoon. 5. It is not fit for floors, doors, or windows, till it has been felled three years. Perhaps these directions attended to, would prevent the dry rot. And we see from them that there is considerable skill required to *hew timber*, and in this the Sidonians excelled. We do every thing in a hurry, and our building is good for nothing.

Verse 7. Blessed be the Lord this day] From this, and indeed from every part of Hiram's conduct, it is evident that he was a worshipper of the true God; unless, as was the case with many of the heathens, he supposed that every country had its own god, and every god his own country, and he thanked the God of Israel that he had given so wise a prince to govern those whom he considered his friends and allies: but the first opinion seems to be the most correct.

Verse 9. Shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea] As the river *Adonis* was in the vicinity of the forest of Lebanon, and emptied itself into the Mediterranean sea, near *Biblos*, Hiram could transport the timber all squared, and not only cut to scantling, but cut so as to occupy the place it was intended for in the building, without any farther need of axe or saw. It might be readily sent down the coast on rafts and landed at *Joppa*, or *Jamnia*, just opposite to Jerusalem, at the distance of about *twenty-five* miles. See ^{<14026>}**2 Chronicles 2:16**. The carriage could not be great, as the timber was all fitted for the building where it was hewn down. The materials had only to be put together when they arrived at Jerusalem. See ^{<10037>}**1 Kings 6:7**.

Verse 11. And Solomon gave Hiram, &c.] The information in this verse of the annual stipend paid to Hiram, is *deficient*, and must be supplied out of ^{<4010>}**2 Chronicles 2:10**. Here *twenty thousand* measures of wheat, and *twenty* measures of pure oil, is all that is promised: there, *twenty thousand* measures of beaten wheat, *twenty thousand* measures of barley, *twenty thousand* baths of wine, and *twenty thousand* baths of oil, is the stipulation; unless we suppose the first to be for Hiram's own family, the latter for his workmen. Instead of *twenty* measures of oil, the Syriac, Arabic, and Septuagint, have *twenty thousand* measures, as in Chronicles. In 2 Chron., instead of *cors* of oil, it is *baths*. The *bath* was a measure much less than the *cor*.

Verse 13. The levy was thirty thousand men.] We find from the following verse that only *ten* thousand were employed at once, and those only for one month at a time; and having rested two months, they again resumed their labour. These were the persons over whom Adoniram was superintendent, and were all Israelites.

Verse 15. Threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens] These were all *strangers*, or *proselytes*, dwelling among the Israelites; as we learn from the parallel place, ^{<4017>}**2 Chronicles 2:17, 18**.

Verse 16. Besides-three thousand and three hundred which ruled over the people] In the parallel place, ^{<4018>}**2 Chronicles 2:18**, it is *three thousand six hundred*. The Septuagint has here the same number.

Verse 17. Great stones] Stones of very large dimensions.

Costly stones] Stones that cost much labour and time to cut them out of the rock.

Hewed stones] Everywhere squared and polished.

Verse 18. And the stone-squarers] Instead of *stone-squarers* the *margin* very properly reads *Giblites*, ϣyl bgh *haggiblim*; and refers to ^{<4019>}**Ezekiel 27:9**, where we find the inhabitants of *Gebal* celebrated for their knowledge in *ship-building*. Some suppose that these *Giblites* were the inhabitants of *Biblos*, at the foot of Mount Libanus, northward of Sidon, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea; famous for its wines; and now called *Gaeta*. Both *Ptolemy* and *Stephanus Byzantinus* speak of a town called *Gebala*, to the east of Tyre: but this was different from *Gebal*, or *Biblos*. It seems more natural to understand this of a *people* than of

stone-squarers, though most of the versions have adopted this idea which we follow in the text.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 6

In the four hundred and eightieth year from the exodus, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, and in the second month, he laid the foundations of the temple; the length sixty cubits, the breadth twenty, and the height thirty cubits; besides the porch, which was twenty cubits in length, and ten cubits in height, 1-3. A description of its different external parts, 4-10. God's promise to Solomon, 11-13. Description of its internal parts and contents, 14-36. Temple finished in the eighth month of the eleventh year of Solomon's reign, being seven years in building, 37, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. In the four hundred and eightieth year] The *Septuagint* has the *four hundred and fortieth* year. It need scarcely be noticed, that among chronologists there is a great difference of opinion concerning this epocha. *Glycas* has 330 years; *Melchior Canus*, 590 years; *Josephus*, 592 years; *Sulpicius Severus*, 588; *Clemens Alexandrinus*, 570; *Cedrenus*, 672; *Codomanus*, 598; *Vossius* and *Capellus*, 580; *Serarius*, 680; *Nicholas Abraham*, 527; *Mæstlinus*, 592; *Petavius* and *Valtherus*, 520. Here are more than a dozen different opinions; and after all, that in the common Hebrew text is as likely to be the true one as any of the others.

The month Zif] This answers to a part of our April and May; and was the second month of the *sacred year*, but the eighth month of the civil year. Before the time of Solomon, the Jews do not appear to have had any *names* for their months, but mentioned them in the order of their consecutive occurrence, *first* month, *second* month, *third* month, &c. In this chapter we find *Zif* and *Bul*; and in ^{<1082>}**1 Kings 8:2**, we find another, *Ethanim*; and these are supposed to be borrowed from the Chaldeans; and consequently this book was written after the Babylonish captivity. Before this time we find only the word *Abib* mentioned as the name of a month, ^{<12134>}**Exodus 13:4**. Whether there were any others at that time, or whether *Abib* was really intended as the *name* of a month, we cannot absolutely say. The present names of the Hebrew months are:-*Tisri*, answering to a part of *September* and *October*, *Marchesvan*, *Cisleu*, *Tebeth*, *Shebat*, *Adar*, *Nisan*, *Ijar*, *Sivan*, *Tamuz*, *Ab*, and *Elul*.

Verse 2. The length thereof was threescore cubits] A cubit, according to Bishop Cumberland, is 21 inches, and 888 decimals, or 1 foot, 9 inches, and 888 decimals.

(Yds. — Ft. — Inch.)

According to this, the length, 60 cubits, was — 36 — 1 — 5.28

The breadth, 20 cubits, was — 12 — 0 — 5.76

The height, 30 cubits, was 18 — 0 — 8.64

This constituted what was called the *temple* or *house*, the *house of God*, &c. But, besides this, there were *courts* and *colonnades*, where the people might assemble to perform their devotions and assist at the sacrifices, without being exposed to the open air. The court surrounded the temple, or holy place, into which the priests alone entered. Sometimes the whole of the building is called the *temple*; at other times that, the measurement of which is given above. But as no proper account can be given of such a building in *notes*; and as there is a great variety of opinion concerning the temple, its structure, ornaments, &c., as mentioned in the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, in *Ezekiel*, and by *Josephus*; and as modern writers, such as *Vilalpandus*, Dr. *Lightfoot*, and Dr. *Prideaux*, professing to be guided by the same principles, have produced very different buildings; I think it best to hazard nothing on the subject, but give that description at the end of the chapter which Calmet with great pains and industry has collected: at the same time, pledging myself to no particular *form* or *appearance*, as I find I cannot give any thing as the *likeness of Solomon's temple* which I could say, either in honour or conscience, bears any affinity to it. For other particulars I must refer the reader to the three large volumes of *Vilalpandus*, Dr. *Lightfoot's Works*, and to the *Connections of Dr. Prideaux*.

Verse 4. Windows of narrow lights.] The *Vulgate* says, *fenestras obliquas*, oblique windows; but what sort of windows could such be?

The Hebrew is $\mu\text{ymca } \mu\text{ypqv } \text{ynwl } \text{j}$ *challoney shekuphim atumim*, windows to look through, which shut. Probably latticed windows: windows through which a person within could see well; but a person without, nothing. *Windows*, says the Targum, *which were open within and shut without*. Does he mean *windows with shutters*; or, are we to understand, with the Arabic, windows opening wide within, and narrow on the outside; such as we still see in ancient castles? This sense our *margin* expresses. We

hear nothing of *glass* or any other *diaphanous* substance. Windows, perhaps originally *windore*, a *door* to let the *wind* in, in order to *ventilate* the building, and through which external objects might be discerned.

Verse 7. The house-was built of stone] It appears that every *stone* was hewn and squared, and its place in the building *ascertained*, before it came to Jerusalem: the *timbers* were fitted in like manner. This greatly lessened the trouble and expense of carriage. On this account, that all was prepared at Mount Lebanon, *there was neither hammer, axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the building*; nothing except mallets to drive the tenons into the mortises, and drive in the pins to fasten them, was necessary: therefore there was no noise. But *why* is this so particularly marked? Is it not because the temple was a type of the kingdom of God; and the souls of men are to be prepared *here* for *that* place of blessedness? *There*, there is no preaching, exhortations, repentance, ears, cries, nor prayers; the stones must be all squared and fitted here for their place in the New Jerusalem, and, being *living stones*, must be built up a holy temple for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Verse 9. Covered the house with beams and boards of cedar.] The Eastern custom is very different from ours: we *ceil* with *plaster*, and make our *floors* of *wood*; they make their *floors* of *plaster* or *painted tiles*, and make their *ceilings* of *wood*. But it may not be improper to observe that, in ancient times, our buildings were somewhat similar. Westminster Hall is a proof of this.

Verse 11. The word of the Lord came to Solomon] Some think that this is the same revelation as that mentioned ^{<1092>}1 Kings 9:2, &c., which took place *after* the dedication of the temple: but to me it appears different; it was a word to encourage him *while* building; to warn him against apostasy, and to assure him of God's continued protection of him and his family, if they continued faithful to the grace which God had given.

Verse 15. The walls of the ceiling] See Clarke's note on "^{<1099>}1 Kings 6:9".

Verse 19. The oracle he prepared] See the description of the temple at the end of this chapter. See Clarke "^{<1068>}1 Kings 6:38".

Verse 22. The whole house he overlaid with gold] It is impossible to calculate this expense, or the quantity of gold employed in this sacred building.

Verse 26. The height of the one cherub was ten cubits] Concerning the cherubs, their form, &c., see Clarke's note on "^{<102518>}Exodus 25:18". The height of each cherub was about *eighteen feet and three inches*.

Verse 36. Three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar beams.] Does not this intimate that there were three courses of stone, and then one course of timber all through this wall? Three strata of stone and one stratum of timber, and so on. If so, could such a building be very durable? This is also referred to in the succeeding chapter, ^{<110711>}1 Kings 7:11; and as both the temple and Solomon's house were built in the same manner, we may suppose that this was the ordinary way in which the better sort of buildings were constructed. Calmet thinks that to this mode of building the prophet alludes, ^{<80211>}Habakkuk 2:11: *The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it*. But it should be observed that this was in the *inner court*, and therefore the timber was not exposed to the weather. The *outer court* does not appear to have been built stratum super stratum of stone and wood.

Verse 38. In the eleventh year-was the house finished] It is rather strange that this house required *seven* years and about six months to put all the stones and the timbers in their places, for we have already seen that they were all prepared before they came to Jerusalem; but the ornamenting, gilding, or overlaying with gold, making the carved work, cherubim, trees, flowers, &c., must have consumed a considerable time. The month *Bul* answers to a part of our *October* and *November*, as *Zif*, in which it was begun, answers to a part of *April* and *May*.

The *dedication* did not take place till the following year, the twelfth of Solomon, because then, according to Archbishop Usher, the jubilee happened.

So was he seven years in building it.] Properly seven years and six months; but the Scripture generally expresses things in *round numbers*.

DIANA'S temple at Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the world. It is said that almost all Asia was employed in the building of it for about *two hundred* years; but it was certainly more extensive than the temple at

Jerusalem, for it may be justly questioned, notwithstanding the profusion of gold, silver, precious stones, &c., employed in the temple of Solomon, whether it cost any thing like the money expended on the temple of Diana.

Pliny informs us, *Hist. Nat.*, lib. xxxvi., cap. 12, that, in order to build one of the pyramids in Egypt, no less than *three hundred and sixty thousand* men were employed for the space of *twenty years*. But neither was the temple any such work as this. We may also observe that the temple was never intended to hold a vast concourse of people; it was only for the service of the Lord, and the priests were those alone who were employed in it. The courts, chambers, and other apartments, were far more extensive than the temple itself; it was never designed to be a place to worship *in*, but a place to worship *at*. There God was known to have a peculiar residence, and before him the tribes came, and the priests were a sort of mediators between him and the people. In short, the *temple* was to the *Jews* in the *promised land* what the *tabernacle* was to the *Hebrews* in the *wilderness*; the place where God's honour dwelt, and whither the people flocked to pay their adoration.

“Solomon laid the foundation of the temple in the year of the world 2992, before *Christ* 1008, before the vulgar era, 1012; and it was finished in the year of the world 3000, and dedicated in 3001, before *Christ* 999, before the vulgar era 1003; ^{<1000>}**1 Kings 8:1** &c.; ^{<1400>}**2 Chronicles 5:1; 7:1; 8:1** &c. The place that was pitched on for erecting this magnificent structure was on the side of Mount *Sion* called *Moriah*. Its entrance or frontispiece stood towards the east, and the most holy or most retired part was towards the west. The author of the first book of *Kings*, and of the second of *Chronicles* has chiefly made it his business to describe the *temple* properly so called, that is the sanctuary, the sanctum, and the apartments belonging to them, as also the vessels, the implements, and the ornaments of the temple, without giving any description scarcely of the courts and open areas, which, however, made a principal part of the grandeur of this august edifice.

“But *Ezekiel* has supplied this defect by the exact plan he has delineated of these necessary parts. Indeed it must be owned that the temple as described by *Ezekiel* was never restored after the captivity of *Babylon*, according to the model and the mensuration that this prophet has given of it. But as the measures he sets down for the sanctum and the sanctuary are, within a small matter, the same as those of the temple of Solomon; and as this

prophet, who was himself a priest, had seen the first temple; it is to be supposed that the description he gives us of the temple of *Jerusalem* is the same as that of the temple of Solomon.

“The ground-plot upon which the temple was built was a square of six hundred cubits, or twenty-five thousand royal feet; ^{<360>}**Ezekiel 45:1** &c. This space was encompassed with a wall of the height of six cubits, and of the same breadth. Beyond this wall was the court of the *Gentiles*, being fifty cubits wide. After this was seen a great wall, which encompassed the whole court of the children of *Israel*. This wall was a square of five hundred cubits. The court of *Israel* was a hundred cubits square, and was encompassed all round with magnificent galleries supported by two or three rows of pillars. It had four gates or entrances; one to the east, another to the west, a third to the north, and the fourth to the south. They were all of the same form and largeness, and each had an ascent of seven steps. The court was paved with marble of divers colours, and had no covering; but the people in case of need could retire under the galleries that were all round about. These apartments were to lodge the priests in, and to lay up such things as were necessary for the use of the temple. There were but three ways to come in, to the east, to the north, and to the south, and they went to it by an ascent of eight steps. Before, and over against the gate of the court of the priests, in the court of *Israel*, was erected a throne for the king, being a magnificent alcove, where the king seated himself when he came into the temple. Within the court of the priests, and over against the same eastern gate, was the altar of burnt-offerings, of twelve cubits square, according to ^{<3616>}**Ezekiel 43:16**, or of ten cubits high and twenty broad, according to ^{<4001>}**2 Chronicles 4:1**. They went up to it by stairs on the eastern side.

“Beyond this, and to the west of the altar of burnt-offerings was the temple, properly so called, that is to say, the sanctuary, the *sanctum*, and the *porch of entrance*. The porch was twenty cubits wide and six cubits deep. Its gate was fourteen cubits wide. The sanctum was forty cubits wide and twenty deep. There stood the golden candlestick, the table of shew-bread, and the golden altar, upon which the incense was offered. The sanctuary was a square of twenty cubits. There was nothing in the sanctuary but the ark of the covenant, which included the tables of the law. The high priest entered here but once a year, and none but himself was allowed to enter. *Solomon* had embellished the inside of this holy place with palm trees in relief, and cherubim of wood covered with plates of

gold, and in general the whole sanctuary was adorned, and as it were overlaid, with plates of gold.

“Round the sanctum and sanctuary were three stories of chambers, to the number of thirty-three. *Ezekiel* makes them but four cubits wide; but the first book of Kings, ^{<1006>}**1 Kings 6:6**, allows five cubits to the first story, six to the second, and seven to the third.

“Since the consecration or dedication of the temple by Solomon in the year of the world 3001, this edifice has suffered many revolutions, which it is proper to take notice of here.

“In the year of the world 3033, before Christ 967, before the vulgar era 971, *Shishak*, king of Egypt, having declared war with Rehoboam, king of Judah, took Jerusalem, and carried away the treasures of the temple; ^{<11425>}**1 Kings 14:25, 26**; ^{<41301>}**2 Chronicles 12:1-9**.

“In 3146, *Jehoash*, king of *Judah*, got silver together to go upon the repairs of the temple; they began to work upon it in earnest in 3148, before Christ 852, before the vulgar era 856; ^{<12134>}**2 Kings 12:4, 5**, and ^{<14207>}**2 Chronicles 24:7-9**, &c.

“*Ahaz* king of Judah having called to his assistance *Tiglath-pileser* king of Assyria, against the kings of Israel and *Damascus*, who were at war with him, robbed the temple of the Lord of its riches to give away to this strange king, ^{<14221>}**2 Chronicles 28:21, 22**, &c., in the year of the world 3264, before Christ 736, before the vulgar era 740, and not contented with this, he profaned this holy place by setting up there an altar like one he had seen at Damascus, and taking away the brazen altar that Solomon had made; ^{<121610>}**2 Kings 16:10-12**, &c. He also took away the brazen sea from off the brazen oxen that supported it, and the brazen basins from their pedestals, and the king’s throne or oratory, which was of brass. These he took away to prevent their being carried away by the king of *Assyria*. Nor did he stop here, but carried his wickedness so far as to sacrifice to strange gods, and to erect profane altars in all the corners of the streets of Jerusalem; ^{<14224>}**2 Chronicles 28:24, 25**. He pillaged the temple of the Lord, broke the sacred vessels, and, lastly, shut up the house of God. This happened in the year of the world 3264, before Christ 736, before the vulgar era 740, to his death, which happened in 3278, before Christ 722, before the vulgar era 726.

“*Hezekiah*, the son and successor of *Ahaz*, opened again and repaired the gates of the temple which his father had shut up and robbed of their ornaments; ^{<14208>}**2 Chronicles 29:3, 4, &c.**, in the year of the world 3278, before Christ 722, before the vulgar era 726. He restored the worship of the Lord and the sacrifices, and made new sacred vessels in the place of those that *Ahaz* had destroyed. But in the fourteenth year of his reign, ^{<121815>}**2 Kings 18:15, 16**, in the year of the world 3291, before Christ 709, before the vulgar era 713, *Sennacherib*, king of *Assyria*, coming with an army into the land of *Judah*, *Hezekiah* was forced to take all the riches of the temple, and even the plates of gold that he himself had put upon the gates of the temple, and give them to the king of *Assyria*. But when *Sennacherib* was gone back into his own country, there is no doubt that *Hezekiah* restored all these things to their first condition.

“*Manasseh*, son and successor of *Hezekiah*, profaned the temple of the Lord, by setting up altars to all the host of heaven, even in the courts of the house of the Lord; ^{<122104>}**2 Kings 21:4-7**; ^{<143316>}**2 Chronicles 33:5-7**; in the year of the world 3306, and the following years. He set up *idols* there, and worshipped them. God delivered him into the hands of the king of *Babylon*, who loaded him with chains, and carried him away beyond the *Euphrates*; ^{<143311>}**2 Chronicles 33:11, 12, &c.**; in the year of the world 3328, before Christ 672, before the vulgar era 676. There he acknowledged and repented of his sins; and being sent back to his own dominions, he redressed the profanations he had made of the temple of the Lord, by taking away the idols, destroying the profane altars, and restoring the altar of burnt-offering, upon which he offered his sacrifices.

“*Josiah*, king of *Judah*, laboured with all his might in repairing the edifices of the temple, (^{<122104>}**2 Kings 22:4-6, &c.**; ^{<143408>}**2 Chronicles 34:8-10**; in the year of the world 3380, before Christ 620, before the vulgar era 624,) which had been either neglected or demolished by the kings of *Judah*, his predecessors. He also commanded the priests and Levites to replace the ark of the Lord in the sanctuary, in its appointed place; and ordered that it should not any more be removed from place to place as it had been during the reigns of the wicked kings, his predecessors, ^{<143518>}**2 Chronicles 35:3**.

“*Nebuchadnezzar* took away a part of the sacred vessels of the temple of the Lord, and placed them in the temple of his god at *Babylon*, under the reign of *Jehoiakim*, king of *Judah*; ^{<143616>}**2 Chronicles 36:6, 7**, in the year of the world 3398, before Christ 602, before the vulgar era 606. He also

carried away others under the reign of Jehoiachin, ^{<48610>}**2 Chronicles 36:10**; in the year of the world 3405, before Christ 595, before the vulgar era 599. Lastly, he took the city of Jerusalem, and entirely destroyed the temple, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the year of the world 3416, before Christ 584, before the vulgar era 588; ^{<122701>}**2 Kings 25:1-3**, &c.; ^{<143618>}**2 Chronicles 36:18, 19**.

“The temple continued buried in its ruins for the space of fifty-two years, till the first year of *Cyrus* at Babylon, in the year of the world 3468, before Christ 532, before the vulgar era 536. Then *Cyrus* gave permission to the Jews to return to Jerusalem, and there to rebuild the temple of the Lord, ^{<150101>}**Ezra 1:1-3**, &c. The following year they laid the foundation of the second temple; but they had hardly been at work upon it one year, when either *Cyrus* or his officers, being gained over by the enemies of the Jews, forbade them to go on with their work; ^{<150405>}**Ezra 4:5**; in the year of the world 3470, before Christ 530, before the vulgar era 534. After the death of *Cyrus* and *Cambyses*, they were again forbidden by the magian, who reigned after *Cambyses*, and whom the Scripture calls by the name of *Artaxerxes*; ^{<150407>}**Ezra 4:7, 17, 18**, &c.; in the year of the world 3483, before Christ 517, before the vulgar era 521. Lastly, these prohibitions being superseded, under the reign of *Darius*, son of *Hystaspes*, (^{<151801>}**Ezra 5:1; 6:14**; ^{<370101>}**Haggai 1:1**, &c.; in the year of the world 3485, before Christ 515, before the vulgar era 519,) the temple was finished and dedicated four years after, in the year of the world 3489, before Christ 511, before the vulgar era 515, twenty years after the return from the captivity.

“This temple was profaned by order of *Antiochus Epiphanes* in the year of the world 3837. The ordinary sacrifices were discontinued therein, and the idol of *Jupiter Olympus* was set up upon the altar. It continued in this condition for three years; then *Judas Maccabeus* purified it, and restored the sacrifice and the worship of the Lord, **1 Mac. iv. 36**; in the year of the world 8840, before Christ 160, before the vulgar era 164.

“Herod the Great undertook to rebuild the whole temple of Jerusalem anew, in the eighteenth year of his reign, and in the year of the world 3986; *Joseph.*, *Antiq.*, lib. xv., cap. 14. He began to lay the foundation of it in the year of the world 3987, forty-six years before the first passover of *Jesus Christ*, as the Jews observe to him by saying, *Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?* ^{<41121>}**John 2:20**. This is not saying that *Herod* had employed six and forty years in building

it; for *Josephus* assures us that he finished it in nine years and a half; *Joseph.*, *Antiq.*, lib. xv., cap. 14. But, after the time of this prince, they all continued to make some new addition to it; and the same *Josephus* tells us that they went on working upon it, even to the beginning of the Jewish war; *Joseph.*, *Antiq.*, lib. xx., cap. 8.

“This temple, built by *Herod*, did not subsist more than seventy-seven years, being destroyed in the year of the world 4073, of Christ 73, of the vulgar era 69. It was begun by *Herod* in 3987, finished in 3996, burnt and destroyed by the Romans in 4073.

“This temple of *Herod* was very different from that of *Solomon*, and from that which was rebuilt by *Zerubbabel* after the captivity. This is the description that *Josephus* has left us of it, who himself had seen it:—

“The temple, properly so called, was built sixty cubits high, and as many broad; but there were two sides of front, like two arms or shoulderings, which advanced twenty cubits on each side, which gave in the whole front a hundred cubits wide, as well as in height. The stones made use of in this building were white and hard, twenty-five cubits long, eight in height, and twelve in width; *Joseph.*, *de Bell.*, lib. vi., p. 917.

“The front of this magnificent building resembled that of a royal palace. The two extremes of each face were lower than the middle, which middle was so exalted that those who were over against the temple, or that approached towards it at a distance, might see it, though they were many furlongs from it. The gates were almost of the same height as the temple; and on the top of the gates were veils or tapestry of several colours, embellished with purple flowers. On the two sides of the doors were two pillars, the cornices of which were adorned with the branches of a golden vine, which hung down with their grapes and clusters, and were so well imitated, that art did not at all yield to nature. *Herod* made very large and very high galleries about the temple, which were suitable to the magnificence of the rest of the building, and exceeded in beauty and sumptuousness all of the kind that had been seen before.

“The temple was built upon a very irregular mountain, and at first there was hardly place enough on the top of it for the site of the temple and altar. The rest of it was steep and sloping; *Joseph.*, *de Bell.*, lib. vi., p. 915, *εκφιδ.*; *Antiq.*, lib. xv., c. 14. But when King *Solomon* built it, he raised a wall towards the east, to support the earth on that side; and after this side

was filled up, he then built one of the porticoes or galleries. At that time this face only was cased with stone, but in succeeding times, the people endeavouring to enlarge this space, and the top of the mountain being much extended, they broke down the wall which was on the north side, and enclosed another space as large as that which the whole circumference of the temple contained at first. So that at last, against all hope and expectation, this work was carried so far that the whole mountain was surrounded by a treble wall. But, for the completing of this great work whole ages were no more than sufficient; and all the sacred treasures were applied to this use, that the devotion of the people had brought to the temple from all the provinces of the world. In some places these walls were above three hundred cubits high, and the stones used in these walls were some forty cubits long. They were fastened together by iron cramps and lead, to be able to resist the injuries of time. The platform on which the temple was built was a furlong square, or one hundred and twenty-five paces." Thus far *Calmet* and *Josephus*.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 7

Solomon builds his own house, and completes it in thirteen years, 1. He builds another called the house of the forest of Lebanon; and a house for Pharaoh's daughter, 2-12. He brings Hiram, a coppersmith, out of Tyre, who makes much curious work for the temple, 13-20. He makes the two pillars Jachin and Boaz, 21, 22. The molten sea, and the twelve oxen that bare it, 23-26. And ten brazen bases, and the ten lavers with pots, shovels, and basons, all of which he cast in the plain of Jordan, 27-46. The quantity of brass too great to be weighed; and the vessels of the temple were all of pure gold, 47-50. Solomon brings into the house the silver and gold which his father had dedicated, 51.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. Building his own house] This house is said to have been situated in Jerusalem, and probably was, what some call it, his *winter's* residence. It is called the *king's house*, ^{<10910>}**1 Kings 9:10**.

Verse 2. The house of the forest of Lebanon] It was not built in Lebanon, but is thought to have been on Mount Sion. And why it was called *the house of the forest of Lebanon* does not appear; probably it was because it was built *almost entirely* of materials brought from that place. See the following verses.

Verse 7. A porch for the throne] One porch appears to have been devoted to the purposes of administering judgment, which Solomon did in person.

Verse 8. A house for Pharaoh's daughter] This appears to have been a *third house*; probably the whole *three* made but *one building*, and were in the same place, but distinguished from each other; the first as Solomon's palace, the second as a house of judgment, a court-house; the third, the *harem*, or apartments for the women.

Verse 13. Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre.] This was not the Tyrian king, mentioned before, but a very intelligent coppersmith, of Jewish extraction by his mother's side, who was probably married to a Tyrian. In ^{<140214>}**2 Chronicles 2:14**, this woman is said to be *of the daughters of Dan*, but here *of the tribe of Naphtali*. The king of Tyre, who gives the

account as we have it in Chronicles, might have made the mistake, and confounded the two tribes; or she might have been of *Naphtali* by her *father*, and of *Dan* by her *mother*, and so be indifferently called *of the tribe of Naphtali* or *of the daughters of Dan*. This appears to be the best solution of the difficulty. The versions and MSS. give no help here.

Verse 15. He cast two pillars-eighteen cubits high] That is, about thirty feet in English measure.

A line of twelve cubits] In circumference. It would be difficult even now to procure a founder who could cast such massive pillars, whether solid or hollow.

Verse 21. The right pillar-Jachin] That is, *He shall establish. The left pillar-Boaz*, that is, *in strength*. These were no doubt emblematical; for notwithstanding their *names*, they seem to have supported no part of the building.

Verse 27. He made ten bases] That is, *pedestals*, for the *ten lavers* to rest on.

Verse 38. Then made he ten lavers] These were set on the ten *bases* or *pedestals*, and were to hold water for the use of the priests in their sacred office, particularly to wash the victims that were to be offered as a burnt-offering, as we learn from ^{<1406>}**2 Chronicles 4:6**; but the *brazen sea* was for the priests to wash in. The whole was a building of vast art, labour, and expense.

Verse 40. So Hiram made an end] It is truly surprising, that in so short a time *one* artist could design and execute works of such magnitude, taste, and variety, however numerous his assistants might be. The mere building of the house was a matter of little difficulty in comparison of these internal works.

Verse 46. Cast them, in the clay ground] In this place he found that particular kind of *clay* that was proper for his purpose. Some suppose that the place where Hiram had his foundry was on the *other* side, some on *this* side, of Jordan. Calmet supposes that it was near *Bethshan*.

Verse 51. Solomon brought in the things] It has been a question whether Solomon, in the structure of the temple, used any of the gold and silver which David had provided? And here it seems answered in the negative; for

after the house was finished, with all its utensils and ornaments, with its immense profusion of gold, it is here said that *Solomon brought in the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, which David his father had dedicated*. It appears therefore that Solomon had employed four years to make preparation for the work before it was begun. During the whole time of the building, he was no doubt still appropriating a part of the public revenue for this purpose; and the provision made by his father he placed *among the treasures of the house*; but the temple was truly Solomon's, as he had provided all its materials, and borne every expense.

As the temple was built in some measure on the model of the tabernacle, and dedicated to the same use, I wish to refer the reader to the description of the former, in Exod. 25-27, and 35-39, and the notes there.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 8

Solomon assembles the elders of Israel, and brings up the ark, and the holy vessels, and the tabernacle, out of the city of David, and places them in the temple; on which account a vast number of sheep and oxen are sacrificed, 1-8. There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, 9. The cloud of God's glory fills the house, 10, 11. Solomon blesses the people, 12-21. His dedicatory prayer, 22-53. Afterwards he blesses and exhorts the people, 54-61. They offer a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand oxen, and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep, 62, 63. He hallows the middle of the court for offerings; as the brazen altar which was before the Lord was too little, 64. He holds the feast of the dedication for seven days; and for other seven days, the feast of tabernacles; and on the eighth day blesses the people, and sends them away joyful, 65, 66.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. Then Solomon assembled] It has already been observed that Solomon deferred the dedication of the temple to the following year after it was finished, because that year, according to Archbishop Usher, was a *jubilee*. "This," he observes, "was the *ninth* jubilee, opening the fourth *millenary* of the world, or A.M. 3001, wherein Solomon with great magnificence celebrated the dedication of the temple seven days, and the feast of tabernacles other seven days; and the celebration of the eighth day of tabernacles being finished, upon the twenty-third day of the seventh month the people were dismissed every man to his home. The eighth day of the seventh month, viz., the thirtieth of our October, being *Friday*, was the first of the seven days of dedication; on the *tenth* day, Saturday, November 1, was the fast of expiation or atonement held; whereon, according to the Levitical law, the jubilee was proclaimed by sound of trumpet. The fifteenth day, *Friday*, November 6, was the feast of tabernacles; the twenty-second, November 13, being also *Friday*, was the feast of tabernacles, which was always very solemnly kept, ^{<14070>}**2 Chronicles 7:9**; ^{<18236>}**Leviticus 23:36**; ^{<43737>}**John 7:37**; and the day following, November 14, being our *Saturday*, when the Sabbath was ended, the people returned home.

"In the *thirteenth* year after the temple was built, Solomon made an end also of building his own house, having spent full twenty years

upon both of them; seven and a half upon the temple, and thirteen or twelve and a half upon his own.”-*Usher’s Annals*, sub. A.M. 3001.

Verse 2. At the feast in the month Ethanim] The feast of tabernacles, which was celebrated in the *seventh* month of what is called the *ecclesiastical year*.

Verse 4. They brought up-the tabernacle] It is generally agreed that there were now *two* tabernacles at Gibeon, and the other in the city of David, which one David had constructed as a temporary residence for the ark, in the event of a temple being built. Which of these tabernacles was brought into the temple at this time, is not well known; some think *both* were brought in, in order to prevent the danger of idolatry. I should rather suppose that the tabernacle from Gibeon was brought in, and that the temporary one erected by David was demolished.

Verse 8. And there they are unto this day.] This proves that the book was written before the destruction of the first temple, but how long before we cannot tell.

Verse 9. Save the two tables of stone] See Clarke’s notes on “**Heb 9:4**”.

Verse 10. When the priests were come out] That is, after having carried the ark into the holy of holies, before any sacred service had yet commenced.

Verse 11. The glory of the Lord had filled the house] The cloud, the symbol of the Divine glory and presence, appears to have filled not only the holy of holies, but the whole temple, court and all, and to have become evident to the people; and by this Solomon knew that God had honoured the place with his presence, and taken it for his habitation in reference to the people of Israel.

Verse 12. The Lord said-he would dwell] It was under the appearance of a cloud that God showed himself present with Israel in the wilderness; see ^{<12149>}**Exodus 14:19, 20**. And at the dedication of the tabernacle in the wilderness, God manifested himself in the same way that he did here at the dedication of the temple; see ^{<12148>}**Exodus 40:34, 35**.

Verse 13. I have surely built thee a house] He was now fully convinced that the thing pleased God, and that he had taken this place for his settled habitation.

Verse 14. Blessed all the congregation] Though this blessing is not particularly stated, yet we may suppose that it was such as the high priest pronounced upon the people: “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee! The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee! The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!” (see ^{<040234>} **Numbers 6:24-26**.) for Solomon seems now to be acting the part of the high priest. But he may have in view more particularly the conduct of *Moses*, who, when he had seen that the people had done all the work of the tabernacle, as the Lord had commanded them, he blessed them, ^{<023943>} **Exodus 39:43**; and the conduct of his father David, who, when the ark had been brought into the city of David, and the burnt-offerings and peace-offerings completed, blessed the people in the name of the Lord, ^{<10618>} **2 Samuel 6:18**.

Verse 16. Since the day, &c.] Mention is here made, says Dr. Kennicott, of some *one place* and some *one person* preferred before all others; and the preference is that of *Jerusalem* to other *places*, and of *David* to other *men*. In consequence of this remark, we shall see the necessity of correcting this passage by its parallel in ^{<14016>} **2 Chronicles 6:5, 6**, where the thirteen Hebrew words now lost in Kings are happily preserved. Let us compare the passages:—

K. *Since to day that I brought forth my people*

C. Since the day that I brought forth my people

K. *Israel out of Egypt, I chose no CITY*

C. out of the land of Egypt, I chose no CITY

K. *out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house,*

C. among all the tribes of Israel to build a house in,

K. *that my name might be therein; * * **

C. that my name might be there; neither chose I

K. * * * * * C. any MAN to be a ruler over my people Israel:

K. * * * * * C. but I have chosen JERUSALEM, that my name

K. * * * *but I chose David to be*

C. might be there; and have chosen DAVID to be

K. *over my people Israel.*

C. over my people Israel.

I would just observe here, that I do not think these *thirteen words* ever made a part of Kings, and consequently, are not *lost* from it; nor do they exist here in any of the versions; but their being found in Chronicles helps to complete the sense.

Verse 21. Wherein is the covenant of the Lord] As it is said, ^{<1108B>}**1 Kings 8:9**, that *there was nothing in the ark but the two tables of stone*, consequently these are called *the Covenant*, i.e., a *sign* of the covenant; as our Lord calls the *cup* the *new covenant in his blood*, that is, the *sign* of the new covenant: for *This is my body* implies, *This is the sign or emblem of my body*.

Verse 22. Stood] He ascended the *brazen scaffold*, five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and then *kneeled down upon his knees*, with his hands spread up to heaven, and offered up the following prayer: see ^{<1108A>}**1 Kings 8:54**, and ^{<1451Z>}**2 Chronicles 5:12, 13**.

And spread forth his hands toward heaven] This was a usual custom in all nations: in prayer the *hands were stretched out to heaven*, as if to invite and receive assistance from thence; while, humbly *kneeling* on their knees, they seemed acknowledge at once their *dependence* and *unworthiness*. On this subject I have spoken elsewhere. In the Scriptures we meet with several examples of the kind: *Hear my voice-when I LIFT UP MY HANDS toward thy holy oracle*; ^{<1920D>}**Psalm 28:2**. *LIFT UP YOUR HANDS in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord*; ^{<19D41Z>}**Psalm 134:2**. *Let my prayer be set forth-and the LIFTING UP OF MY HANDS as the evening sacrifice*; ^{<19E10Z>}**Psalm 141:2**. And see ^{<5118B>}**1 Timothy 2:8**, &c.

In heathen writers examples are not less frequent:

*SUSTULIT exutas vinclis ad sidera PALMAS.
Vos æterni ignes, et non violabile vestrum
Testor numen, ait.
VIRG. Æn. lib. ii., ver. 153.*

*Ye lamps of heaven, he said, and LIFTED HIGH
HIS HANDS, now free; thou venerable sky,
Inviolable powers!*

And that they *kneeled* down when supplicating I have also proved. Of this too the Scriptures afford abundant evidence, as do also the *heathen* writers. I need add but one word:—

*Et GENBIUS PRONIS supplex, similisque roganti,
Circumfert tacitos, tanquam sun brachia, vultus.
OVID, Met. lib. iii., f. 3, ver. 240.*

Indeed, so universal were these forms in praying, that one of the heathens has said, "All men, in praying, lift up their hands to heaven."

Verse 24. Who has kept with thy servant David] This is in reference to ^{<40713>}**2 Samuel 7:13**, where God promises to David that Solomon shall build a house for the name of the Lord. The temple being now completed, this promise was literally fulfilled.

Verse 27. But will God indeed dwell on the earth?] This expression is full of astonishment, veneration, and delight. He is struck with the immensity, dignity, and grandeur of the Divine Being, but especially at his *condescension* to dwell with men: and though he sees, by his filling the place, that he has come now to make his abode with them, yet he cannot help asking the question, How can such a God dwell in such a place, and with such creatures?

Behold, the heaven] The words are all in the *plural* number in the Hebrew: *ymvw μymvh μymvh hashshamayim, ushemey hashshamayim*; "the heavens, and the heavens of heavens." What do these words imply? That there are *systems*, and *systems of systems*, each possessing its *sun*, its *primary* and *secondary planets*, all extending beyond each other in unlimited space, in the same regular and graduated order which we find to prevail in what we call our *solar system*; which probably, in its thousands of millions of miles in diameter, is, to some others, no more than the area of the lunar orbit to that of the Georgium Sidus. When God, his manifold wisdom, his creative energy, and that *space* which is unlimited, are considered, it is no hyperbole to say that, although the earth has been created nearly *six thousand* years ago, suns, the centres of systems, may have been created at so immense a distance that their light has not yet reached our earth, though travelling at the rate of *one hundred and ninety thousand* miles every second, or upwards of a *million* times swifter than the motion of a cannon ball! This may be said to be inconceivable; but what is even all this to the vast immensity of space! Had God created a system like ours in every six days since the foundation of the world, and kept every seventh as a Sabbath; and though there might have been by this time [A.M. 5823 *ineunte*, A.D. 1819, *ineunte*] *three hundred and three thousand five hundred and seventy-five* mundane systems, they would

occupy but a *speck* in the inconceivable immensity of *space*. Reader, all this and millions more is demonstrably possible; and if so, what must God be—*illud inexprimibile*—who i-n-h-a-b-i-t-e-t-h E-t-e-r-n-i-t-y!

Verse 29. My name shall be there] I will there show forth my power and my glory by enlightening, quickening, pardoning, sanctifying, and saving all my sincere worshippers.

Verse 30. Toward this place] Both tabernacle and temple were types of our Lord Jesus, or of *God manifested in the flesh*; and he was and is the Mediator between God and man. All prayer, to be acceptable, and to be entitled to a hearing, must go to God *through Him*. The *human nature* of Christ is the temple in which *dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*; therefore with propriety all prayer must be offered to God through Him. “If they pray toward this place, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place; and when thou hearest, forgive.” This appears to me to be the true sense and doctrine of this verse.

Verse 31. If any man trespass against his neighbour] Solomon puts here *seven cases*, in all of which the mercy and intervention of God would be indispensably requisite; and he earnestly bespeaks that mercy and intervention on condition that the people pray towards that holy place, and with a feeling heart make earnest supplication.

The FIRST case is one of *doubtfulness*; where a man has sustained an injury, and charges it on a suspected person, though not able to bring direct evidence of the fact, the accused is permitted to come before the altar of God, and purge himself by his personal oath. Solomon prays that God may not permit a false oath to be taken, but that he will discover the truth, so that the wicked shall be condemned, and the righteous justified.

Verse 33. When thy people Israel be smitten down, &c.] The SECOND case. When their enemies make inroads upon them, and defeat them in battle, and lead them into captivity, because God, being displeased with their transgressions, has delivered them up; then if they shall turn again, confess the name of God, which they had in effect denied, by either neglecting his worship, or becoming *idolatrous*; and pray and make supplication; *then*, says Solomon, *hear thou in heaven—and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers*.

Verse 35. When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain] The THIRD case. When, because of their sin, and their ceasing to *walk in the good way* in which they should have walked, God refuses to send the *early* and *latter rain*, so that the appointed weeks of harvest come in vain, as there is no crop: then, if they pray and confess their sin, hear thou in heaven, &c.

Verse 37. If there be in the land famine-pestilence] The FOURTH case includes several kinds of evils: 1. *Famine*; a scarcity or total want of bread, necessarily springing from the preceding cause, *drought*. 2. *Pestilence*; any general and contagious disease. 3. *Blasting*; any thing by which the crops are injured, so that the ear is never matured; but instead of wholesome grain, there is a *black offensive dust*. 4. *Mildew*; any thing that vitiates or corrodes the texture of the stalk, destroys the flowers and blossoms, or causes the young shaped fruits to fall off their stems. 5. *Locust*, a well known curse in the East, a species of *grasshopper* that multiplies by *millions*, and covers the face of the earth for many miles square, destroying every green thing; leaving neither herb nor grass upon the earth, nor leaf nor bark upon the trees. 6. *Caterpillar*; the locust in its young or *nympha* state. The *former* refers to *locusts* brought by winds *from other countries* and settling *on* the land; the latter, to the young *locusts* bred in the land. 7. *An enemy*, having *attacked* their *defenced cities*, the keys and barriers of the land. 8. Any other kind of *plague*; that which affects the *surface* of the body; blotch, blain, leprosy, ophthalmia, &c. 9. *Sickness*; whatever impaired the strength, or affected the intestines, disturbing or destroying their natural functions. All such cases were to be brought before the Lord, the persons *having a deep sense* of the wickedness which induced God thus to afflict, or permit them to be afflicted: for only those who knew the *plague of their own hearts*, (~~1088~~ **1 Kings 8:38**), the deep-rooted moral corruption of their nature, and the destructive nature and sinfulness of sin, were likely to pray in such a manner as to induce God to hear and forgive.

Verse 41. Moreover, concerning a stranger] The FIFTH case relates to heathens coming from other countries with the design to become proselytes to the true religion; that they might be received, blessed, and protected as the true Israelites, that the name of Jehovah might be known over the face of the earth.

Verse 44. If thy people go out to battle] The SIXTH case refers to wars undertaken by Divine appointment: *whithersoever thou shalt send them*; for in no other wars could they expect the blessing and concurrence of the

Lord; in none other could the God of truth and justice *maintain their cause*. There were such wars under the Mosaic dispensation, there are none such under the Christian dispensation: nor can there be any; for the Son of man is come, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Except mere *defensive war*, all others are diabolic; and, *query*, if there were no *provocations*, would there be any *attacks*, and consequently any need of *defensive wars*?

Verse 46. **If they sin against thee]** This SEVENTH case must refer to some general defection from truth, to some species of false worship, idolatry, or corruption of the truth and ordinances of the Most High; as for it they are here stated to be *delivered into the hands of their enemies* and *carried away captive*, which was the general punishment for idolatry, and what is called, ^{<10847>}**1 Kings 8:47**, *acting perversely and committing wickedness*.

In ^{<10846>}**1 Kings 8:46** we read, *If they sin against thee, for there is no man that sinneth not*. On this verse we may observe that the second clause, as it is here translated, renders the *supposition* in the first clause entirely nugatory; for if there be *no man that sinneth not*, it is useless to say, *IF they sin*; but this contradiction is taken away by reference to the original, **Ēl wacj y yk ki yechetu lach**, which should be translated *IF they shall sin against thee, or should they sin against thee*; **acj y al rva µda ^ya yk ki ein Adam asher lo yecheta**, for there is no man that **MAY** not sin; i.e., there is no man *impeccable*, none *infallible*, none that is not *liable* to transgress. This is the true meaning of the phrase in various parts of the Bible, and so our translators have understood the original: for even in the thirty-first verse of this chapter they have translated **acj y yecheta**, *IF a man TRESPASS*; which certainly implies he *might* or *might not* do it; and in this way they have translated the same word, *IF a soul SIN*, in ^{<10801>}**Leviticus 5:1; 6:2**; ^{<1025>}**1 Samuel 2:25**; ^{<4072>}**2 Chronicles 6:22**, and in several other places. The truth is, the Hebrew has no mood to express words in the *permissive* or *optative* way, but to express this sense it uses the *future* tense of the conjugation *kal*.

This text has been a wonderful strong hold for all who believe that there is no redemption from sin in this life, that no man can live without committing sin, and that we cannot be entirely freed from it till we die. 1. The text speaks no such doctrine: it only speaks of the possibility of every man sinning, and this must be true of a state of *probation*. 2. There is not

another text in the Divine records that is more to the purpose than this. 3. The doctrine is flatly in opposition to the design of the Gospel; for Jesus came to save his people from their sins, and to destroy the works of the devil. 4. It is a dangerous and destructive doctrine,; and should be blotted out of every Christian's creed. There are too many who are seeking to excuse their crimes by all means in their power; and we need not embody their excuses in a creed, to complete their deception, by stating that their sins are *unavoidable*.

Verse 50. And give them compassion before them who carried them captive] He does not pray that they may be delivered out of that captivity, but that their enemies may use them well; and that they may, as formerly, be kept a separate and distinct people.

Verse 55. He stood, and blessed all the congregation] This blessing is contained in ^{<1085>}**1 Kings 8:57, 58.**

Verse 59. And let these my words] This and the following verse is a sort of supplement to the prayer which ended ^{<1083>}**1 Kings 8:53**; but there is an important addition to this prayer in the parallel place, ^{<14064>}**2 Chronicles 6:41, 42**: "Now therefore arise, O LORD God, into thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. O LORD God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant."

Verse 61. Let your heart therefore be perfect] Be sincere in your faith, be irrefragable in your conduct.

Verse 63. Two and twenty thousand oxen] This was the whole amount of the victims that had been offered during the *fourteen days*; i.e., the *seven* days of the *dedication*, and the *seven* days of the *feast of tabernacles*. In what way could they dispose of the *blood* of so many victims?

Verse 64. Did the king hallow the middle of the court] The great altar of burnt-offerings was not sufficient for the number of sacrifices which were then made; therefore the middle of the court was set apart, and an altar erected there for the same purpose.

Verse 65. From-Hamath] Supposed to be *Antioch* of Syria; *unto the river of Egypt*-to the *Rhinocorura*; the former being on the *north*, the latter on the *south*: i.e., from one extremity of the land to the other.

Verse 66. They blessed the king] Wished him all spiritual and temporal happiness. They were contented with their king, at peace among themselves, and happy in their God; so that they returned to their houses magnifying their God for all his bounty to them, their country, and their king. How happy must these people have been, and how prosperous, had their king continued to walk uprightly before God! But alas! the king fell, and the nation followed his example.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 9

The Lord appears a second time to Solomon, and assures him that he had heard his prayer; and that he would establish his worship for ever in that temple, and him and his successors on the throne of Israel, provided he and they would keep his statutes and judgments, 1-5; but if they should transgress and forsake the Lord, then they should be cast off, the temple itself abandoned, and their enemies permitted to prevail over them, 6-9. Solomon having finished the temple and the king's house, about which he was employed twenty years, and having received assistance from Hiram king of Tyre, he gave him in return twenty cities in Galilee, with which he was not pleased, 10-14. Solomon's levies, buildings, and the persons employed, 15-23. Pharaoh's daughter comes to the city of David, 24. He sacrifices thrice a year at the temple, 25. Solomon's navy, and the gold they brought from Ophir, 26-28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 2. The Lord appeared to Solomon] The design of this appearance, which was in a dream, as that was at Gibeon, was to assure Solomon that God had accepted his service, and had taken that house for his dwelling-place, and would continue it, and establish him and his descendants upon the throne of Israel for ever, provided they served him with an upright heart; but, on the contrary, if they forsook him, he would abandon both them and his temple.

Verse 7. A proverb and a by-word among all people] And so they are to the present; the *unbelieving Jews*, the *stubborn, stiff-necked Jews*, are words still in common use. They forsook the Lord, rejected his Christ, and are cast off, their temple destroyed, and they scattered over the face of the earth.

Verse 9. Have taken hold upon other gods] When an indigent person claims the protection of a superior, he casts himself down before him, and *lays hold of his feet*; and this expression is frequently used when there is no prostration: *I have taken hold of thy feet*. When a person is called into the presence of the *Burman* monarch, he is said to go to the *golden foot*.-WARD'S *Customs*.

Verse 10. At the end of twenty years] He employed seven years and a half in building the temple, and twelve years and a half in building the king's house; see ^{<1070>}**1 Kings 7:1**; ^{<1480>}**2 Chronicles 8:1**.

Verse 11. Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities] It is very likely that Solomon did not give those cities to Hiram so that they should be annexed to his Tyrian dominions, but rather gave him the produce of them till the money was paid which he had advanced to Solomon for his buildings. It appears however that either Hiram did not accept them, or that having received the produce till he was paid, he then restored them to Solomon; for in the parallel place, ^{<1480>}**2 Chronicles 8:2**, it is said, *The cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there*. Some think that they were *heathen cities* which Solomon had conquered, and therefore had a right to give them if he pleased, as they were not any part of the land given by promise to the Israelites.

Verse 13. Called them the land of Cabul] Whether this epithet was given to this land by Hiram as a mark of disapprobation, or what is its proper meaning, the learned are not agreed. That there was a country of this name in the promised land in the time of Joshua, is evident enough from ^{<61927>}**Joshua 19:27**, as it was one part of the boundary of the tribe of Asher; hence some interpret the word *border* or *boundary*, and so, the *Septuagint* understood it, for they have translated the Hebrew word **οπιον**, which signifies the same. The margin gives another meaning.

Verse 14. Sixscore talents of gold.] This was the sum which Hiram had lent, and in order to pay this Solomon had laid a tax upon his people, as we afterward learn. The whole is very darkly expressed.

Verse 15. This is the reason of the levy] That is, in order to pay Hiram the sixscore talents of gold which he had borrowed from him (Hiram not being willing to take the Galilean cities mentioned above; or, having taken them, soon restored them again) he was obliged to lay a tax upon the people; and that this was a grievous and oppressive tax we learn from ^{<1120>}**1 Kings 12:1-4**, where the elders of Israel came to Rehoboam, complaining of their heavy state of taxation, and entreating that their yoke might be made lighter.

And Millo] This is supposed to have been a deep valley between Mount Sion and what was called the city of Jebus, which Solomon filled up, and it

was built on, and became a sort of fortified place, and a place for public assemblies.-See *Calmet*.

Verse 16. Pharaoh-had gone up, and taken Gezer] This city Joshua had taken from the Canaanites, ^{<6103>}**Joshua 10:33; 12:12**, and it was divided by lot to the tribe of Ephraim, and was intended to be one of the Levitical cities; but it appears that the Canaanites had retaken it, and kept possession till the days of *Solomon*, when his father-in-law, Pharaoh king of Egypt, retook it, and gave it to Solomon in dowry with his daughter.

Verse 18. And Tadmor in the wilderness] This is almost universally allowed to be the same with the celebrated *Palmyra*, the ruins of which remain to the present day, and give us the highest idea of Solomon's splendour and magnificence. *Palmyra* stood upon a fertile plain surrounded by a barren desert, having the river Euphrates on the east. The ruins are well described by Messrs. *Dawkes* and *Wood*, of which they give fine representations. They are also well described in the ancient part of the *Universal History*, vol. i., p. 367-70. The description concludes thus: "The world never saw a more glorious city; the pride, it is likely, of ancient times, and the reproach of our own; a city not more remarkable for the state of her buildings and unwontedness of her situation than for the extraordinary *personages* who once flourished there, among whom the renowned *Zenobia* and the incomparable *Longinus* must for ever be remembered with admiration and regret."

Verse 19. And all the cities of store] Though, by the multitude and splendour of his buildings, Solomon must have added greatly to the magnificence of his reign; yet, however plenteous silver and gold were in his times, his subjects must have been greatly oppressed with the taxation necessary to defray such a vast public expenditure.

Verse 21. A tribute of bond-service] He made them do the most laborious part of the public works, the Israelites being generally exempt. When *Sesostris*, king of Egypt, returned from his wars, he caused temples to be built in all the cities of Egypt, but did not employ one *Egyptian* in the work, having built the whole by the hands of the *captives* which he had taken in his wars. Hence he caused this inscription to be placed upon each temple:—

Ουδεις εγχωριος εις αυτα μεμοχθηκε.

*No native has laboured in these.
Diodor. Sic. Bibl., lib. i., c. 56.*

It appears that Solomon might with propriety have placed a similar inscription on most of his works.

Verse 25. Three times in a year did Solomon offer] These three times were: 1. The *passover*. 2. The feast of *pentecost*. 3. The feast of *tabernacles*.

Verse 26. A navy of ships] Literally, *yana oni, a ship*: in the parallel place, ^{<140817>}**2 Chronicles 8:17**, it is said that Hiram sent him *twyna oniyoth, ships*; but it does not appear that Solomon in this case built more than one ship, and this was manned principally by the Tyrians.

Verse 28. And they came to Ophir] No man knows certainly, to this day, where this *Ophir* was situated. There were two places of this name; one somewhere in India, beyond the Ganges, and another in Arabia, near the country of the Sabæans, mentioned by Job, ^{<18223>}**Job 22:24**: *Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust; and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.* And ^{<182816>}**Job 28:16**: *It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.* Calmet places this country at the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris.

But there are several reasons to prove that this was not the Ophir of the Bible, which it seems was so situated as to require a voyage of *three years* long to go out, load, and return. Mr. *Bruce* has discussed this subject at great length; see his *Travels*, vol. ii., chap. iv., p. 354, &c. He endeavours to prove that *Ezion-geber* is situated on the Elanitic branch of the Arabian Gulf or Red Sea. 2. That *Tharshish* is Moka, near to Melinda, in the Indian Ocean, in about *three* degrees south latitude. 3. That *Ophir* lies somewhere in the land of *Sofala*, or in the vicinity of the *Zimbeze* river, opposite the island of Madagascar, where there have been gold and silver mines in great abundance from the remotest antiquity. And he proves, 4. That no vessel could perform this voyage *in less than THREE years*, because of the *monsoons*; that more time *need not* be employed, and that this is the precise time mentioned in ^{<11002>}**1 Kings 10:22**. 5. That this is the country of the queen of *Sheba*, or *Sabia*, or *Azeba*, who on her visit to Solomon, brought him *one hundred and twenty* talents of gold, and of spices and

precious stones great store, ~~<11010>~~ **1 Kings 10:10**. And that gold, ivory, silver, &c., are the natural productions of this country. To illustrate and prove his positions he has given a map on a large scale, “showing the track of Solomon’s fleet in their three years’ voyage from the Elanitic Gulf to Ophir and Tharshish;” to which, and his description, I must refer the reader.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 10

The queen of Sheba visits Solomon, and brings rich presents; and tries him by hard questions, which he readily solves, 1-3. She expresses great surprise at his wisdom, his buildings, his court, &c.; and praises God for placing him on the Jewish throne, 4-9. She gives him rich presents, 10. What the navy of Hiram brought from Ophir, 11, 12. The queen of Sheba returns, 13. Solomon's annual revenue, 14, 15. He makes two hundred targets and three hundred shields of gold, 16, 17. His magnificent ivory throne, 18-20. His drinking vessels all of gold, 21. What the navy of Tharshish brought every three years to Solomon, 22. His great riches, numerous chariots, and horsemen, 23-27. He brings chariots and horses out of Egypt, 28, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. When the queen of Sheba heard] As our Lord calls her *queen of the south*, (^{<40124>}**Matthew 12:42**), it is likely the name should be written *Saba*, *Azab*, or *Azaba*, all of which signify the *south*. She is called *Balkis* by the Arabians, but by the Abyssinians *Maqueda*. See the account at the end of this chapter. See Clarke "^{<41102>}**1 Kings 10:29**".

With hard questions.] *twdyj b bechidoth*; *Septuagint*, *εν αινιγμασι*, *riddles*. *With parables and riddles*, says the *Arabic*.

Verse 2. She came to Jerusalem with-spices, &c.] Those who contend that she was *queen* of the Sabæans, a people of Arabia Felix, towards the southern extremity of the Red Sea, find several proofs of their opinion: 1. That the Sabæans abounded in riches and spices.

India mittit ebur, molles sua thura Sabæi

*"India furnishes ivory, and the effeminate
Sabæans their frankincense."*

VIRG. Geor. i., ver. 57.

And again:—

*Divisæ arboribus patriæ: sola India nigrum
Fert ebum; solis est thurea virga Sabæis.*

Geor. ii., ver. 116.

*All sorts of trees their several countries know:
Black ebon only will in India grow;
And odorous frankincense on the Sabæan bough.*
DRYDEN.

———*Ubi templum illi centumque Sabæo
Thure calent aræ.*

*Where to her fame a hundred altars rise,
And pour Sabæan odours to the skies.*

PLINY (*Hist. Nat.* lib. xii., c. 17) observes, *Non alia ligni genera in usu sunt quam odorata; cibosque Sabæi coquunt thuris ligno; alii myrrhæ.* “The *Sabæans* use odorous wood only, and even use the *incense tree* and *myrrh* to cook their victuals.”

2. All ancient authors speak, not only of their *odoriferous woods*, but of their rich *gold and silver mines*, and of their *precious stones*. See *Pliny*, *Hist. Nat.* lib. xxxvii., c. 6, &c.

3. It is also well known that the *Sabæans* had *queens* for their sovereigns, and not *kings*. So *Claudian*, in *Eutrop.* lib. i.

———*Medis levibusque Sabæis
Imperat hic sexus, reginarumque sub armis
Barbariæ pars magna jacet.*

By this is meant, says Mr. Bruce, the country between the tropic and mountains of Abyssinia, the country of shepherds, from *berber*, a shepherd. And he contends that these *Sabæans* were a distinct *people* from the *Ethiopians* and the *Arabs*, and that SABA was a distinct *state*.

Verse 3. Solomon told her all her questions] Riddles, problems, fables, apologues, &c., formed the principal part of the wisdom of the East; indeed they use and delight in them to the present day. See the case of Samson and his friends, ^{<071412>}**Judges 14:12, 14**, and the notes there.

Verse 4. Had seen all Solomon’s wisdom] By the answers which he gave to her subtle questions.

And the house that he had built] Most probably his own house.

Verse 5. The meat of his table] The immense supply of all kinds of food daily necessary for the many thousands which were fed at and from his table. See ^{<11042>}**1 Kings 4:22, 23**, and the notes there.

And the sitting of his servants] The various orders and distinctions of his officers.

The attendance of his ministers] See the account of these and their attendance, ^{<1001>}1 Kings 4:1, &c.

And their apparel] The peculiarity of their robes, and their splendour and costliness.

And his cup-bearers] The original *wyqvm mashkaiv* may as well be applied to his *beverage*, or to his *drinking utensils*, as to his *cup-bearers*.

And his ascent by which he went up] It seems very strange that the *steps* to the temple should be such a separate matter of astonishment. The original is *hwhy tyb hl [y rca wtl [w* which all the versions have translated, *And the holocausts which he offered in the house of the Lord*. The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*, all express this sense: so does the *German* translation of Luther, from which, in this place, we have most pitifully departed: *And seine Brandopfer, die er in dem Hause des Herrn opferte*; “And his burnt-offering which he offered in the house of the Lord.”

There was no more spirit in her.] She was overpowered with astonishment; she fainted. I have seen precisely the same effect produced; a lady who was herself an artist, viewing some exquisitely finished oriental paintings, was so struck with astonishment that she twice nearly fainted, and was obliged to leave the room. What happened to the queen of Sheba is a natural and not an uncommon effect which will be produced in a delicate sensible mind at the sight of rare and extraordinary productions of art.

Of the profusion of Solomon’s sacrifices we have already had proof, ^{<1063>}1 Kings 8:63; 9:25.

Verse 8. Happy are thy men] All these are very natural expressions from a person in her state of mind.

Verse 10. A hundred and twenty talents of gold] The worth of these one hundred and twenty talents of gold, according to Mr. Reynolds, is equal to £843,905. 10s. 4 3/4d. of our British sterling. But the *spices* and *precious stones* might have been yet of more value. After this verse the 13th should be read, which is here most evidently misplaced; and then the account of

the queen of Sheba will be concluded, and that of Solomon's revenue will stand without interruption.

Verse 11. Great plenty of almug trees] In the parallel place, ^{<140910>}2 **Chronicles 9:10, 11**, these are called *almug trees*, the μ *mem* and the g *gimel* being transposed; probably the latter is the more correct orthography. What the *almug trees* were we do not exactly know. The *Vulgate* calls it *ligna thyina*, the *thya* or *lignum vitæ* wood; and Mr. Parkhurst thinks that the original $\mu\gamma\mu\omega\gamma\iota$ *a* *algumim*, comes from l *a* *al*, *not*, and μg *gem*, *to fill*; because the *lignum vitæ* is of so close a texture that it can imbibe no water, and cannot be affected by wet weather. The *Septuagint* translate it $\xi\upsilon\lambda\alpha$ $\pi\upsilon\kappa\iota\nu\alpha$, *pine timber*; the *Syriac* [*Syriac*] *kaise dakisotho*, probably *cypress wood*, or what the translators render *ligna brasilica*; the *Arabic* translates *coloured wood*, and subjoins a paraphrase, *for that wood was by nature painted with various colours*. Perhaps the *Arabic* comes nearest the truth; *wood shaded* of different colours, such as the *rose wood* and such like, which are brought to us from various parts of the *East Indies*. The whole passage as it stands in the *Arabic* is this: "And the ships of *Hiram* brought gold from the land of *Hind*, (*India*,) and they carried also much *coloured wood*, (but this wood is *naturally painted of various colours*,) and very precious jewels. And *Solomon* put some of that same *painted wood* which was brought to him in the house of the *Lord*, and in his own house; and with it he adorned them." And for inlaying and veneering nothing can be finer than this wood.

Verse 13. All her desire whatsoever she asked] Some imagine she desired progeny from the wise king of *Israel*; and all the traditions concerning her state that she had a son by *Solomon* called *Menilek*, who was brought up at the *Israelitish* court, succeeded his mother in the kingdom of *Saba*, and introduced among his subjects the *Jewish* religion. See at the end of the chapter. See *Clarke* "^{<111029>}1 **Kings 10:29**".

Verse 14. The weight of gold-was six hundred threescore and six talents] This would amount in our money to £4,683,675 12s. 8 1/2d. sterling. This seems to be what he got annually of *bullion*; but independently of this, he had *tribute* of all the kings of *Arabia*, duties from merchantmen, and the traffic of *spice* merchants; see ^{<111025>}1 **Kings 10:25**.

Verse 16. Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold] I have already conjectured that the *hnx tsinnah* might resemble the Highland targe or target, with a dagger projecting from the UMBO or centre.

Verse 17. He made three hundred shields] The *gm magen* was a large shield by which the whole body was protected.

Mr. Reynolds computes that the *two hundred targets*, on each of which were employed *three hundred* shekels of gold, were worth £28,131 16s. 9 1/2d.

And the *three hundred shields*, in forming each of which *three pounds of gold* were employed, were worth £210,976 7s. 7d.

Verse 19. The throne was round behind: and there were stays on either side] This description seems to indicate that the throne was in the form of one of our ancient *round-topped, two-armed* chairs. This throne or chair of state was raised on a platform, the ascent to which consisted of six steps. What we call *stays* is in the Hebrew *tdy yadoth, hands*, which serves to confirm the conjecture above.

Verse 22. A navy of Tharshish] For probable conjectures concerning this place, and the *three years' voyage*, see at the end of this and the preceding chapter. See Clarke “^{<1102>}1 Kings 10:29”; “^{<11028>}1 Kings 9:28”.

Apes] *μυρρ* *kophim*; probably a species of *monkey* rather than *ape*.

Verse 23. Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches] Mr. Reynolds, stating the yearly tribute of Solomon, 666 talents of gold, at about four times as much as his father left him, hence reckons that he had £4,909,371 8s. 8d. each year, £94,410 19s. 9 1/4d. per week, £13,487 5s. 8d. per day, taking each *day, week, and year*, one with another.

Verse 25. They brought every man his present] This means *tribute*; and it shows us of what sort that tribute was, viz., *vessels of gold and silver*, probably *ingots*; *garments* of very rich stuffs; *armour*, for little of this kind was ever made in Judea; *spices*, which doubtless sold well in that country; *horses*, which were very rare; and *mules*, the most *necessary* animal for all the purposes of life.

Verse 26. He had a thousand and four hundred chariots] See Clarke's note on “^{<11026>}1 Kings 4:26”.

Verse 27. Made silver-as stones] He destroyed its value by making it so exceedingly plenty.

As the sycamore trees] He planted many cedars, and doubtless had much cedar wood imported; so that it became as common as the *sycamore trees*, which appear to have grown there in great abundance. This is considered to be a tree that partakes of the nature of the *fig tree*, and of the *mulberry*. Of the former it has the *fruit*, and of the latter the *leaves*; that is, the fruit had a considerable resemblance to the fig, and the *leaf* to that of the *mulberry tree*: hence its name *sycamore*, from the Greek **συκον**, a fig, and **μορεα**, a *mulberry tree*.

Verse 28. Horses brought out of Egypt] It is thought that the first people who used horses in *war* were the Egyptians; and it is well known that the nations who knew the use of this creature in battle had greatly the advantage of those who did not. God had absolutely prohibited horses to be imported or used; but in many things Solomon paid little attention to the Divine command.

And linen yarn] The original word, **hwqm mikveh**, is hard to be understood, if it be not indeed a *corruption*.

The versions are all puzzled with it: the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* make it a proper name: “And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and from *Coa*, or *Tekoa*.” Some think it signifies a *tribute*, thus *Bochart*: “They brought horses to Solomon out of Egypt; and as to the tribute, the farmers of this prince received it at a price.” They farmed the tribute, gave so much annually for it, taking the different kinds to themselves, and giving a round sum for the whole.

Some suppose that **MIKVEH** signifies the *string* or *cord* by which one horse’s head is tied to the tail of another; and that the meaning is, Solomon brought *droves* of horses, thus tied, out of Egypt.

Rabbi Solomon Jarchi, in his comment on the parallel place, ⁻¹⁴⁰¹⁴⁻**2**

Chronicles 1:14, says that **hwqm mikveh** signifies a collection or drove of horses, or what the Germans call **stutte**, a *stud*. He observes on that place, “That he has heard that there was a company of merchants in Egypt, who bought horses from the Egyptians at a certain price, on condition that no person should be permitted to bring a horse out of Egypt but through them.”

Houbigant supposes the place to be *corrupt*, and that for **hwqm mikveh** we should read **hbkrm mercabah**, *chariots*: “And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and chariots; and the king’s merchants received the chariots at a price: and a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for *six hundred shekels of silver*,” &c. This makes a very good and consistent sense; but none of the versions acknowledged it, nor is there any various reading here in any of the MSS. yet collated.

If we understand it of *thread*, it may refer to the *byssus* or *fine flax* for which Egypt was famous; but I do not see on what authority we translate it *linen thread*. *Bochart’s* opinion appears to me the most probable, as the text now stands; but the *charge* contended for by *Houbigant* makes the text far more simple and intelligible.

Verse 29. A chariot came up-for six hundred shekels] This was the ordinary price of a *chariot*, as a *hundred and fifty shekels* were for a *horse*.

Kings of the Hittites] These must have been the remains of the original inhabitants of Canaan, who had gone to some other country, probably Syria, and formed themselves into a principality there. It seems that neither horses nor chariots came out of Egypt but by means of Solomon’s servants.

MR. BRUCE’S ACCOUNT OF SOLOMON’S VOYAGE TO OPHIR

“We are not to wonder, if the prodigious hurry and flow of business, and the immensely valuable transactions they had with each other, had greatly familiarized the Tyrians and Jews with their correspondents, the Cushites and shepherds, on the coast of Africa. This had gone so far as, very naturally, to create a desire in the queen of Azab, the sovereign of that country, to go herself and see the application of the immense treasures that had been exported from her country for a series of years, and the prince who so magnificently employed them. There can be no doubt of this expedition; as Pagan, Arab, Moor, Abyssinian, and all the countries around, vouch for it nearly in the terms of Scripture.

“Her name, the Arabs say, was Belkis; the Abyssinians, Maqueda. Our Saviour calls her queen of the south, without mentioning any other name, but gives his sanction to the truth of the voyage. ‘The queen of the south (or Saba, or Azab) shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the

wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here.’ No other particulars, however, are mentioned about her in Scripture; and it is not probable that our Saviour would have said she came from the uttermost parts of the earth, if she had been an Arab, and had near *fifty degrees* of the continent behind her. But when we consider that the boundaries of the known land, to the southward, were at that time Raptum or Prassum, as we have just seen, these, being the uttermost parts of the known earth, were, with great propriety, so styled by our Saviour; and of these she was undoubtedly sovereign. The gold, the myrrh, cassia, and frankincense were all the produce of her own country.

“Whether she was a Jewess or a pagan is uncertain. Sabaism was the religion of all the East; it was the constant attendant and stumbling block of the Jews: but considering the multitude of that people then trading from Jerusalem, and the long time it continued, it is not improbable she was a Jewess. ‘And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions,’ ^{<1100>} **1 Kings 10:1**; ^{<400>} **2 Chronicles 9:1**. Our Saviour moreover speaks of her with praise, pointing her out as an example to the Jews. And in her thanksgiving before Solomon, she alludes to God’s blessing on the seed of Israel for ever, which is by no means the language of a pagan, but of a person skilled in the ancient history of this nation.

“She likewise appears to have been a person of learning, and of that sort of learning which was then almost peculiar to Palestine, not to Ethiopia; for we know that one of the reasons of her coming was to examine whether Solomon was really the learned man he was said to be. She came to try him in allegories or parables, in which Nathan had instructed him.

“The annals of the Abyssinians, being very full upon this point, have taken a middle opinion, and by no means an improbable one. They say she was a pagan when she left Azab, but, being full of admiration at Solomon’s works, she was converted to Judaism in Jerusalem, and bore him a son whom he called Menilek, and who was their first king.

“The Abyssinians, both Jews and Christians, believe the forty-fifth Psalm to be a prophecy of the queen’s voyage to Jerusalem; that she was attended by a daughter of Hiram’s from Tyre to Jerusalem; and that the last part of it contains a declaration of her having a son by Solomon, who was to be a king over a nation of the Gentiles.

“To Saba or Azab, then, she returned with her son Menilek; whom, after keeping him some years, she sent back to his father to be instructed. Solomon did not neglect his charge; and he was anointed and crowned king of Ethiopia in the temple of Jerusalem, and at his inauguration took the name of David. After this he returned to Azab, and brought with him a colony of Jews, among whom were many doctors of the law of Moses, particularly one of each tribe, to make judges of in his kingdom; from whom the present *umbares*, or supreme judges (three of whom always attended the king) are said and believed to be descended. With these came also Azarias, the son of Zadok the priest, and brought with him a Hebrew transcript of the law, which was delivered into his custody, as he bore the title of *nebret*, or high priest; and this charge, though the book itself was burnt with the church of Axum in the Moorish war of Adel, is still continued, as it is said, in the lineage of Azarias, who are *nebrets*, or keepers of the church of Axum, at this day. All Abyssinia was thereupon converted, and the government of the church and state modelled according to what was then in use at Jerusalem.

“By the last act of the queen of Saba’s reign, she settled the mode of succession in her country for the future. *First*, she enacted, that the crown should be hereditary in the family of Solomon for ever. *Secondly*, that, after her, no woman should be capable of wearing that crown, or being queen; but that it should descend to the heir male, however distant, in exclusion of all heirs female, however near; and that these two articles should be considered as the fundamental laws of the kingdom, never to be altered or abolished. And, lastly, that the heirs male of the royal house should always be sent prisoners to a high mountain, where they were to continue till their death, or till the succession should open to them.

“The queen of Saba having made these laws irrevocable by all her posterity, died after a long reign of forty years, in 986 before Christ, placing her son Menilek upon the throne, whose posterity, the annals of Abyssinia would teach us to believe, have ever since reigned. So far, indeed, we must bear witness to them that this is no new doctrine, but has been steadfastly and uniformly maintained from their earliest account of time; first, when Jews, then in later days, after they had embraced Christianity. We may farther add, that the testimony of all the neighbouring nations is with them on this subject, whether friends or enemies. They only differ in the name of the queen, or in giving her two names.

“I shall therefore now give a list of their kings of the race of Solomon, descended from the queen of Saba, whose device is a lion passant, proper, upon a field gules; and their motto, *Mo Anbasa am Nizilet Solomon am Negade Juda*; which signifies ‘The lion of the race of Solomon and tribe of Judah hath overcome.’

*List of the kings of Abyssinia, from Maqueda,
Queen of Saba, to the Nativity*

Reigned	yrs.	Reigned	yrs.
Menilek, or David I	4	Katzina	9
Hendedya, or Zagdur	1	Wazeha	1
Awida	11	Hazer	2
Ausyi	3	Kalas	6
Sawe	31	Solaya	16
Gesaya	15	Falaya	26
Katar	15	Aglebu	3
Mouta	20	Asisena	1
Bahas	9	Brus	29
Kawida	2	Mohesa	1
Kanaza	10	Bazen	16

Bruce's Travels, vol. ii., p. 395.

Mr. Bruce justly finds fault with this table as being *defective*; several kings must necessarily have been lost out of this list. It is probably a late invention, the genealogical tables having been lost or destroyed; and no wonder when we consider the numerous predatory wars in which the people of Abyssinia have been frequently engaged.

I need scarcely add that the very learned *Samuel Bochart* has endeavoured to prove by arguments not to be despised, that the Scripture *Ophir* is the island *Taprobanes* or *Serendib*, now called *Ceylon*. With any other opinions on this subject I think it unnecessary to trouble the reader. That the voyage which Mr. Bruce describes would take up three years, I think he has satisfactorily proved; but on other points and resemblances many readers will doubtless hesitate, while some may suppose his theory is the most plausible of any yet offered to the public on this very obscure subject.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 11

Solomon's attachment to strange women, and consequent idolatry, 1, 2. Number of his wives and concubines, 3. In his old age they turn away his heart from God, 4. He builds temples to idols, burns incense and sacrifices to them, 5-8. The Lord is angry with him, and threatens to deprive him of the kingdom, but will leave one tribe for David's sake, 9-13. The Lord stirs up Hadad, the Edomite, to be his enemy; the history of this man, 14-22. He stirs another adversary against him, Rezon the son of Eliadah. He and Hadad plague Israel, 23-25. Jeroboam also becomes his enemy, and the reason why, 26-28. Ahijah the prophet meets Jeroboam, and promises, in the name of the Lord, that God will rend Israel from the family of Solomon, and give him ten tribes, 29-39. Solomon, hearing of this, seeks to put Jeroboam to death, who escapes to Egypt, where he continues till the death of Solomon, 40. Solomon dies, after having reigned over Israel forty years; and his son Rehoboam reigns in his stead, 41-43.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. Many strange women] That is, idolaters; *together with the daughter of Pharaoh*: she was also one of those strange women and an idolater. But many think she became a proselyte to the Jewish religion; of this there is no evidence.

Verse 3. He had seven hundred wives, princesses] How he could get so many of the blood royal from the different surrounding nations, is astonishing; but probably the daughters of *noblemen, generals, &c.*, may be included.

And three hundred concubines] These were *wives of the second rank*, who were taken according to the usages of those times; but their offspring could not inherit. Sarah was to Abraham what these *seven hundred princesses* were to Solomon; and the *three hundred concubines* stood in the same relation to the Israelitish king as *Hagar* and *Keturah* did to the patriarch.

Here then are *one thousand wives* to form this great bad man's *harem*! Was it possible that such a person could have any piety to God, who was absorbed by such a number of women? We scarcely allow a man to have the fear of God who has a *second wife* or *mistress*; in what state then must

the man be who has *one thousand* of them? We may endeavour to excuse all this by saying, "It was a custom in the East to have a multitude of women, and that there were many of those whom Solomon probably never saw," &c., &c. But was there any of them whom he *might not have seen*? Was it for reasons of state, or merely court splendour, that he had so many? How then is it said that *he loved many strange women*?-that *he clave to them in love*? And did he not give them the utmost proofs of his attachment when he not only *tolerated* their iniquitous worship in the land, but *built temples* to their idols, and more, *burnt incense* to them *himself*? As we should not condemn what God justifies, so we should not justify what God condemns. He went after *Ashtaroth*, the impure *Venus* of the *Sidonians*; after *Milcom*, the *abomination of the Ammonites*; after *Chemosh*, the *abomination of the Moabites*; and after the murderous *Molech*, the *abomination of the children of Ammon*. He seems to have gone as far in iniquity as it was possible.

Verse 7. The hill that is before Jerusalem] This was the *Mount of Olives*.

Verse 9. The Lord was angry with Solomon] Had not this man's delinquency been strongly marked by the Divine disapprobation, it would have had a fatal effect on the morals of mankind. Vice is *vice*, no matter who commits it. And God is as much displeased with sin in Solomon as he can be with it in the most profligate, *uneducated* wretch. And although God sees the same sin in precisely the *same degree of moral turpitude* as to the *act itself*, yet there may be *circumstances* which greatly aggravate the offense, and subject the offender to greater punishment. Solomon was wise; he knew better; his understanding showed him the vanity as well as the wickedness of idolatry. God had *appeared unto him twice*, and thus given him the most direct proof of his being and of his providence. The *promises* of God had been *fulfilled to him* in the most remarkable manner, and in such a way as to prove that they came by a Divine counsel, and not by any kind of *casualty*. All these were *aggravations* of Solomon's crimes, as to their demerit; for the same crime has, in every case, the same degree of moral turpitude in the sight of God; but circumstances may so aggravate, as to require the *offender* to be more grievously *punished*; so the punishment may be legally *increased* where the crime is the same. Solomon deserved more punishment for his worship of *Ashtaroth* than any of the *Sidonians* did, though they performed precisely the same acts. The

Sidonians had never known the true God; Solomon had been fully acquainted with him.

Verse 11. Forasmuch as this is done of thee] Was not this another warning from the Lord? And might not Solomon have yet recovered himself? Was there not mercy in this message which he might have sought and found?

Verse 13. Will give one tribe-for David my servant's sake] The line of the *Messiah* must be preserved. The *prevailing lion* must come out of the tribe of Judah: not only the tribe must be preserved, but the *regal line* and the *regal right*. All this must be done for the *true David's* sake: and this was undoubtedly what God had in view by thus miraculously preserving the tribe of Judah and the royal line, in the midst of so general a defection.

And for Jerusalem's sake] As *David* was a type of the *Messiah*, so was *Jerusalem* a type of the *true Church*: therefore the OLD *Jerusalem* must be preserved in the hands of the tribe of Judah, till the *true David* should establish the NEW *Jerusalem* in the same land, and in the same city. And what a series of providences did it require to do all these things!

Verse 14. The Lord stirred up an adversary] A *satan*, [^]CC. When he sent to Hiram to assist him in building the temple of the Lord, he could say, *There was no satan*, see ^{<1064>}**1 Kings 5:4**; and all his kingdom was in peace and security, *-every than dwelt under his vine, and under his fig tree*, ^{<1025>}**1 Kings 4:25**: but now that he had turned away from God, three *satans* rise up against him at once, *Hadad*, *Rezon*, and *Jeroboam*.

Verse 15. Was gone up to bury the slain] The slain Edomites; for Joab had in the course of six months exterminated all the males, except Hadad and his servants, who escaped to Egypt. Instead of *bury the slain*, the Targum has to *take the spoils of the slain*.

Verse 17. Hadad being yet a little child.] [^]cq r [n *naar katan*, a little boy; one who was apprehensive of his danger, and could, with his father's servants, make his escape: not an infant.

Verse 18. These arose out of Midian] They at first retired to Midian, which lay to the southwest of the Dead Sea. Not supposing themselves in safety there, they went afterwards to *Paran* in the south of Idumea, and getting a number of persons to join them in Paran, they went straight to Egypt, where we find Hadad became a favourite with Pharaoh, who gave

him his sister-in-law to wife; and incorporated him and his family with his own.

Verse 22. Let me go in any wise.] It does not appear that he avowed his real intention to Pharaoh; for at this time there must have been peace between Israel and Egypt, Solomon having married the daughter of Pharaoh.

Verse 23. Rezon the son of Eliadah] Thus God fulfilled his threatening by the prophet Nathan: *If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men;* ^{<1074>}**2 Samuel 7:14.**

Verse 24. And reigned in Damascus.] Rezon was one of the captains of Hadadezer, whom David defeated. It seems that at this time Rezon escaped with his men; and; having lived, as is supposed, some time by plunder, he seized on Damascus, and reigned there till David took Damascus, when he subdued Syria, and drove out Rezon. But after Solomon's defection from God, Rezon, finding that God had departed from Israel, recovered Damascus; and joining with Hadad, harassed Solomon during the remaining part of his reign. But some think that Hadad and Rezon were the same person.

Verse 26. Jeroboam the son of Nebat] From the context we learn that Jeroboam while a young man was employed by Solomon to superintend the improvements and buildings at *Millo*, and had so distinguished himself there by his industry and good conduct as to attract general notice, and to induce Solomon to set him over all the labourers employed in that work, belonging to the tribes of *Ephraim and Manasseh*, called here the *house of Joseph*. At first it appears that Solomon employed none of the *Israelites* in any *drudgery*; but it is likely that, as he grew profane, he grew tyrannical and oppressive: and at the works of *Millo* he changed his conduct; and there, in all probability, were the seeds of disaffection sown. And Jeroboam, being a clever and enterprising man, knew well how to avail himself of the general discontent.

Verse 29. When Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem] On what errand he was going out of Jerusalem, we know not.

Ahijah the Shilonite] He was one of those who wrote the history of the reign of Solomon, as we find from ^{<1099>}**2 Chronicles 9:29**, and it is

supposed that it was by him God spake twice to Solomon; and particularly delivered the message which we find in this chapter, ^{<small>1 Kings 11:11-13.</small>}

Verse 31. Take thee ten pieces] The *garment* was the symbol of the *kingdom of Israel*; the *twelve pieces* the symbol of the *twelve tribes*; the *ten pieces* given to Jeroboam, of the *ten tribes* which should be given to him, and afterwards form the *kingdom of Israel*, ruling in Samaria, to distinguish it from the *kingdom of Judah*, ruling in Jerusalem.

Verse 36. That David my servant may have a light alway] That his posterity may never fail, and the regal line never become extinct. This, as we have already seen, was in reference to the Messiah. He was not only *David's light*, but he was a *light to enlighten the Gentiles*.

Verse 37. According to all that thy soul desireth] It appears from this that Jeroboam had affected the kingdom, and was seeking for an opportunity to seize on the government. God now tells him, by his prophet, *what he shall have*, and *what he shall not have*, in order to prevent him from attempting to seize on the whole kingdom, to the prejudice of the spiritual seed of David.

Verse 38. And build thee a sure house] He would have continued his posterity on the throne of Israel, had he not by his wickedness forfeited the promises of God, and thrown himself out of the protection of the Most High.

Verse 39. But not for ever.] They shall be in affliction and distress till the Messiah come, who shall sit on the throne of David to order it and establish it in judgment and justice for ever. Jarchi says, on this verse, "When the Messiah comes, the kingdom shall be restored to the house of David."

Verse 40. Sought-to kill Jeroboam.] He thought by this means to prevent the punishment due to his crimes.

Unto Shishak king of Egypt] This is the first time we meet with the *proper name* of an Egyptian king, *Pharaoh* being the common name for all the sovereigns of that country. Some suppose that this *Shishak* was the *Sesostris* so renowned for his wars and his conquests. But it is likely that this king lived long before Solomon's time.

Verse 41. The book of the acts of Solomon?] These acts were written by Nathan the prophet, Ahijah the Shilonite, and Iddo the seer; as we learn from ^{<14023>}**2 Chronicles 9:29**. Probably from these were the Books of Kings and Chronicles composed; but the original documents are long since lost.

Verse 42. Solomon reigned forty years.] Josephus says *fourscore years*, which is sufficiently absurd. Calmet supposes him to have been *eighteen* years old when he came to the throne, and that he died A.M. 3029, aged *fifty-eight* years; and, when we consider the excess in which he lived, and the criminal passions which he must have indulged among his thousand wives, and their idolatrous and impure worship, this life was as long as could be reasonably expected.

Verse 43. Solomon slept with his fathers] He died in almost the flower of his age, and, it appears unregretted. His government was no blessing to Israel; and laid, by its exactions and oppressions, the foundation of that schism which was so fatal to the unhappy people of Israel and Judah, and was the most powerful procuring cause of the miseries which have fallen upon the Jewish people from that time until now.

I. It may now be necessary to give a more distinct outline of the character of this king.

1. In his infancy and youth he had the high honour of being peculiarly *loved by the Lord*; and he had a *name* given him by the express authority of God himself, which to himself and others must ever call to remembrance this peculiar favour of the Most High.

There is little doubt that he was a most amiable youth, and his whole conduct appeared to justify the high expectations that were formed of him.

2. He ascended the Israelitish throne at a time the most favourable for the cultivation of those arts so necessary to the comfort and improvement of life. Among all the surrounding nations Israel had not one open enemy; *there was neither adversary, nor evil occurrent*, ^{<10894>}**1 Kings 5:4**. He had *rest on every side*, and from the universal and profound *peace* which he enjoyed, the very important name *Jedidiah*, “beloved of the Lord” which was given him by Divine authority was changed to that of Solomon, *the Peaceable*, ^{<101234>}**2 Samuel 12:24, 25**, which at once indicated the state of the country, and the character of his own mild, pacific mind.

3. To the dying charge of his pious father relative to the building a temple for the Lord, he paid the most punctual attention. He was fond of *architecture*, as we may learn from the account that is given of his numerous buildings and improvements; and yet it does not appear that he at all excelled in architectural knowledge. Hiram, the amiable king of Tyre, and his excellent workmen, were the grand directors and executors of the whole. By his public buildings he doubtless rendered Jerusalem highly respectable; but his *passion* for such works was not on the whole an advantage to his subjects, as it obliged him to have recourse to a burdensome system of taxation, which at first oppressed and exasperated his people, and ultimately led to the fatal separation of Israel and Judah.

4. That he improved the *trade* and *commerce* of his country is sufficiently evident: by his public buildings vast multitudes were employed; and knowledge in the most beneficial arts must have been greatly increased, and the spirit of *industry* highly cultivated.

Commerce does not appear to have been much regarded, if even known, in Israel, previously to the days of Solomon. The most celebrated maritime power then in the world was that of the Tyrians. With great address and prudence he availed himself of their experience and commercial knowledge, sent his ships in company with theirs to make long and dangerous but lucrative voyages, and, by getting their sailors aboard of his own vessels, gained possession of their nautical skill, and also a knowledge of those safe ports in which they harboured, and of the rich countries with which they traded. His friendly alliance with the king of Tyre was a source of advantage to Israel, and might have been much more so had it been prudently managed. But after the time of Solomon we find it scarcely mentioned, and therefore it does not appear that the Jews continued to follow a track which had been so successfully opened to them; their endless contentions, and the ruinous wars of the two kingdoms, paralyzed all their commercial exertions: till at length all the maritime skill which they had acquired from the expert and industrious Tyrians, dwindled down to the puny art of managing a few boats on the internal lakes of their own country. Had it not been for the destructive feuds that reigned between the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, that country might have become one of the best and richest maritime powers of either Asia or Europe. Their situation was grand and commanding, but their execrable jealousies deprived them of its advantages, exposed them to the aggressions of their enemies, and finally brought them to ruin.

5. I have intimated that Solomon was truly *pious* in his youth; of this there can be no doubt; it was on this account that the *Lord loved him*, and his zeal in the cause of true religion, and high respect for the honour of God, are strong indications of such a frame of mind. Had we no other proof of this than his *prayer for wisdom*, and his *prayer* at the *dedication* of the *temple*, it would put the matter for ever beyond dispute, independently of the direct testimonies we have from God himself on the subject. He loved the *worship* and *ordinances* of *God*, and was a pattern to his subjects of the strictest attention to religious duties. He even exceeded the requisitions of the *law* in the multitude of his sacrifices, and was a careful observer of those annual festivals so necessary to preserve the memory of the principal facts of the Israelitish history, and those miraculous interventions of God in the behalf of that people.

6. There can be no doubt that Solomon possessed the *knowledge* of *governing well*; of the importance of this knowledge he was duly aware, and this was the *wisdom* that he so particularly sought from God. "I am," said he, "but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in; and thy servant is in the midst of a great people that cannot be counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an *understanding heart to judge thy people*, and that I may *discern between good and bad*; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing;" ^{<HCB>} **1 Kings 3:8-10**. This *wisdom* he did receive from God; and he is here a pattern to all kings, who, as they are the vicegerents of the Lord, should earnestly seek that wisdom which is from above, that they may be able to know how to govern the people intrusted to their care; because, in every civil government, there are a multitude of things on which a king may be called to decide, concerning which neither the laws, nor the commonly received political maxims by which, in particular cases, the conduct of a governor is to be regulated, can give any specific direction.

7. But the wisdom of Solomon was not confined to the art of government, he appears to have possessed a *universal knowledge*. The sages of the East were particularly distinguished by their accurate *knowledge of human nature*, from which they derived innumerable maxims for the regulation of man in every part of his moral conduct, and in all the relations in which he could possibly be placed. Hence their vast profusion of *maxims, proverbs, instructive fables, apologues, enigmas, &c.*; great collections of which still remain locked up in the languages of Asia, particularly the *Sanscrit*,

Arabic, and *Persian*; besides those which, by the industry of learned men, have been translated and published in the languages of Europe. Much of this kind appears in the books of *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus* in the *Apocrypha*, and in the very excellent collections of *D'Herbelot*, *Visdelou*, and *Galand*, in the *Bibliothèque Orientale*. That Solomon possessed this wisdom in a very high degree, the book of *Proverbs* bears ample testimony, leaving *Ecclesiastes* for the present out of the consideration.

8. As a *poet*, Solomon stands deservedly high, though of his *one thousand and five poems* not one, except the book of *Canticles*, remains. This ode alone, taken in a *literary* point of view, is sufficient to raise any man to a high degree of poetic fame. It is a most interesting drama, where what *Racine* terms the *genie createur*, the creative genius, every where appears; in which the imagery, which is always borrowed from nature, is impressive and sublime; the characters accurately distinguished and defined, the strongest passion, in its purest and most vigorous workings, elegantly portrayed; and in which allusions the most delicate, to transactions of the tenderest complexion, while sufficiently described to make them intelligible, are nevertheless hidden from the eye of the gross vulgar by a tissue as light as a gossamer covering. Such is the nature of this inimitable ode, which, had it not been perverted by weak but well designing men to purposes to which it can never legitimately apply, would have ranked with the highest productions of the *Epithalamian* kind that ever came from the pen of man. But alas! for this exquisite poem, its true sense has been perverted; it has been *forced* to speak a language that was never intended, a language far from being honourable to the *cause* which it was brought to support, and subversive of the unity and simplicity of the ode itself. By a forced mode of interpretation it has been hackneyed to death, and allegorized to destruction. It is now little read, owing to the injudicious manner in which it has been interpreted.

It was scarcely to be expected that the son of such a father should not, independently of inspiration, have caught a portion of the pure *poetic fire*. Though the spirit of poetry, strictly speaking, is not transmissible by ordinary generation, yet most celebrated poets have had poetical parents; but in many cases the talent has degenerated into that of *music*, and the *spirit of poetry* in the *sire* has become a mere musical instrument in the hands of the *son*. This however was not the case with the son of David, for though vastly inferior to his father in this gift, he had nevertheless the spirit and powers of a first-rate *poet*.

9. His knowledge in *natural history* must have been very extensive; it is said, “He spake of *trees*, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall. He spake also of *beasts*, of *fowls*, of *reptiles*, and of *fishes*;” ^{<10>}**1 Kings 4:33**. All this knowledge has perished; his countrymen, the prophets excepted, were without *taste*, and took no pains to preserve what they did not relish. A man of such mental power and comprehension under the direction of Divine light must have spoken of things as they are. His doctrine therefore of *generation* and *corruption*, of *nutrition*, *vegetation*, *production*, *aliments*, *tribes*, *classes*, *families*, and *habits*, relative to the different subjects in *botany*, *zoology*, *ornithology*, *entomology*, and *ichthyology*, which are all evidently referred to here, must have been at once correct, instructive, and delightful. I have already lamented the labour it has cost our *Rays*, *Tourneforts*, *Linnes*, *Buffons*, *Willoughbys*, *Swammerdams*, and *Bloschs*, to regain those sciences which possibly were possessed in their highest degree by the Israelitish king, and which, alas! are all lost, except a few traces in the book of Ecclesiastes, if that work can be traced to so remote an age as that of Solomon.

10. As a *moral philosopher* the author of the book of *Ecclesiastes* occupies no mean rank. At present we may consider this work as a production of Solomon, though this is disputed, and the question shall be considered in its proper place. This book contains such a fund of wisdom, applied to the *regulation of life*, and all referred to the proper end, that it most deservedly occupies a high place in Biblical ethics, and deserves the closest attention of every reader.

11. The proofs of Solomon’s vast wisdom, as brought into *practical* effect, lie in a very small compass, because his history in the Bible is short, his own writings in general lost, and the annals of his reign, as compiled by Nathan the prophet, Ahijah the Shilonite, and Iddo the seer, long since perished. The decision between the two harlots is almost the only instance.

Of his interesting interview with the *queen of Sheba*, and the discussions into which they entered, we have only the *fact* stated, without the least detail of particulars. Those who have read the *Concessus of Harari*, or the *Heetopadesa*, of *Veeshnoo Sarma*, will regret that the conversations of the wisest of men, with probably the most intelligent of women, should have been lost to the world, which may be reasonably concluded to have been as far superior to the excellent works above referred to, as they are beyond the *maxims* of *Rochefoucault*, and the *sayings* of *Madame Maintenon*.

12. The wisdom of the East has ever been celebrated; and if we may believe their own best writers, much of what they possess has been derived from Solomon. Encomiums of his wisdom are everywhere to be met with in the Asiatic writers; and his name is famous in every part of the East. Most of the oriental historians, poets, and philosophers, mention *Soliman ben Daoud*, "Solomon the son of David." They relate that he ascended the throne of Israel at the death of his father, when he was only *twelve* years of age, and that God subjected to his government, not only *men*, but good and evil *spirits*, the *fowls* of the air, and the *winds* of heaven. They agree with the sacred writers in stating that he employed *seven years* in building the temple at Jerusalem.

Solomon's *seal*, and Solomon's *ring*, are highly celebrated by them, and to these they attribute a great variety of magical effects. They state that without his ring he had not the science of government; and having once lost it, he did not remount his throne for forty days, as being destitute of that wisdom without which he could not decide according to truth and equity. But these things are probably spoken *allegorically* by their oldest writers. Of the *throne* of this prince they speak in terms of the most profound admiration. I have met with the most minute description of its magnificence, its ivory, gold, and jewels, and an estimate of its cost in lacs of rupees! According to those writers it had 12,000 seats of gold on the right hand for patriarchs and prophets, and as many on the left for the doctors of the law, who assisted him in the distribution of justice.

In various parts of the *Koran* Solomon is spoken of in terms of the highest respect, and is represented as a true believer; though, through the envy of demons, magic and sorcery were attributed to him. Mohammed speaks of this in the second surat of his *Koran*. The story, in sum, is this: The devils, by God's permission, having tempted Solomon without success, made use of the following stratagem to blast his reputation: they wrote several books of magic, and hid them under his throne; and, after his death, told the chief men that if they wished to know by what means Solomon had obtained absolute dominion over *men*, *genii*, and the *winds*, they should dig under his throne. This they did, and found the aforesaid books full of impious superstitions. The better sort would not learn these incantations; but the common people did, and published them as the genuine works of Solomon. From this imputation the *Koran* justifies him, by saying, *Solomon was not an unbeliever*, surat 2. From the wonder-working *signet* and *ring* of the Asiatics came the *Clavicle* of Solomon, so celebrated among the Jewish

rabbins, and the Christian occult philosophers; for such things found in Cornelius Agrippa, and such like writers, are not late inventions, but have descended from a very remote antiquity, as the Koran and the various commentators on it sufficiently prove. See *Calmet* and *Sale*.

The oriental traditions concerning this prince have been embodied in the *Soliman Nameh of Ferdusi*, in Persian, and in the *Soliman Nameh of Uscobi*, in Turkish. D'Herbelot mentions one of these histories in Persian verse, containing 1571 couplets.

Indeed, the traditions concerning the wonderful knowledge of Solomon, which abound so much in the East, are at least an indirect proof that many things relative to this prince have been preserved among them which are not mentioned in our sacred books, but which they have blended so miserably with fables that it is impossible now to distinguish the precious from the vile.

Works attributed to Solomon have existed in different ages, from his time till the present. *Eusebius* states that Hezekiah, finding the Jews putting too much confidence in the books of Solomon, relative to *cures* and *different occult arts*, ordered them to be suppressed. *Josephus* positively says that Solomon did compose *books of charms to cure diseases*, and *conjurations to expel demons*, Antiq., lib. viii., cap. 2. He states farther, that a Jew named Eliezar cured several demoniacs in the presence of Vespasian, by reciting the charms which had been invented by Solomon. *R. D. Kimchi* speaks of a book of Solomon entitled *The Cure of Diseases*, which *Genebrard* supposes to be the same work of which *Josephus* speaks. And *Origen* speaks of conjurations which were used by the Jews in his time, and which they professed to derive from the books of Solomon.

There are still extant books of this kind attributed to Solomon, such as *The Enchantments*, *The Clavicle*, *The Ring*, *The Hygromantia*, *The New Moons*, and *The Shadows of Ideas*; but these, as they now stand, are the inventions of quacks and impostors, and entitled to no regard. If there were any books containing the wisdom of Solomon, they are either irrecoverably lost, or exist in mutilated fragments among the Asiatic sages; and are disfigured by being connected with improbable tales, and pretended *mantras* or *charms*.

II. Hitherto we have looked only at the bright side of Solomon's character: we must now take a much less satisfactory view of this singular man; one

in whom every thing great, glorious, wise, and holy, and every thing little, mean, foolish and impious, predominated by turns. He forsook the God of his mercies in a great variety of ways.

1. Whatever may be thought of the step in a political point of view, he most assuredly went out of the way of God's providence, and acted contrary to his law, in making *affinity with Pharaoh's daughter*. The sacred writers frequently refer to this; and it is never mentioned with *approbation*: it is rather associated with circumstances that place it in a reprehensible point of view. She was doubtless an *idolater*; and the question of her becoming a *proselyte* is far from being satisfactorily settled. I believe she was the first means of drawing off his heart from the true God.

2. His expensive buildings obliging him to have recourse to a system of oppressive taxation, was another flaw in his character. Though with great zeal and honourable industry, and at great expense, he built a temple for the Lord, which he completed in seven years, yet the expense here was little in comparison of what was incurred by *his own house*, called the *house of the forest of Lebanon*, in which he spent incredible sums, and consumed nearly *thirteen* years; almost twice the time employed in building the temple at Jerusalem. This would have had no evil operation provided he had not been obliged to impose heavy taxes on his subjects, which produced an almost universal disaffection. Add to this, he had a most expensive household; *one thousand* women, part wives, part mistresses, would require immense riches to support their pomp and gratify their ambition. The people therefore justly complained of an establishment which, notwithstanding the riches brought into the country, must be both odious and oppressive.

3. He began his reign by an inauspicious act, the death of his brother Adonijah. This was a sin against God and nature: and no art of man can ever wash out its guilt. If *state policy* required it, which is very questionable, what had that to do with the *feelings of humanity*, and the *love of God*? On no pretence whatever is Solomon justified in this act.

4. His inordinate love of women. He had no doubt formed matrimonial alliances with all kingdoms and neighbouring states, by taking their *sisters* and *daughters* to be his wives, to the fearful amount of no less than *seven hundred*! Politicians may endeavour to justify these acts by asserting, that in the Asiatic countries they were matters of a sound policy, rather than an

argument of the prevalence of an irregular and unbridled passion. Let this stand for its value; but what can such apologists say for the additional *three hundred concubines*, for the taking of whom no such necessity can be pleaded? But even allowing that state policy might require such extensive alliances, what are we to say to the flagrant breaches of a most positive law of God? Most solemnly and most authoritatively had he said that his people should not give their daughters to the heathen, nor take the daughters of the heathen to be their wives; lest they should turn their hearts away from serving the Lord. In the face of this most positive declaration, Solomon took wives of the most idolatrous of the surrounding nations; who succeeded, according to what was foretold in turning his heart away from God.

5. He became an idolater. He worshipped “Ashtaroth, the Venus of the Sidonians; Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites; Chemosh, the abomination of the Moabites; and Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.” He did more: he built a temple to each of these; “and to all the gods of all his strange wives which burned incense, and sacrificed unto their gods,” ^{<11106>} **1 Kings 11:5-8.**

6. By this time we may suppose that the light of God had entirely departed from his mind. He who knew so well the true God, now served him not; or, if he did, it was in conjunction with those idols, thus bringing the Supreme Being on a level with demons, or the figments of impure hearts and disordered fancies. We need not wonder at the tale of the mighty Samson betraying his life’s secret in the lap of Delilah; or of the unconquerable Hercules handling the distaff among the maids of Omphale, queen of Lydia; when we see the son of David, the once well-beloved of the Lord, the wisest of human beings, for the love of his *millenary* of wives and concubines, erecting temples to devils, and burning incense to them that were no gods; not considering that an idol is nothing in the world. To what an indescribable state of blindness and fatuity must this man have been brought, before he could have been capable of such acts as these! O Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou fallen!

7. I have already hinted that Solomon’s oppressive taxation laid the foundation of that discontent which shortly after his death produced the separation of Israel and Judah; also the long and ruinous wars which drenched these states in blood: and this was doubtless the cause that ten-twelfths of the Jewish people became idolaters; which crime was

punished, by the just judgments of God, by the Babylonish captivity, which lasted seventy years; and by the carrying away of the ten Israelitish tribes by the Assyrians, who are lost from the map of the universe, and no longer numbered among the children of men!

8. What greatly aggravates the whole of this most dismal tale is, that this strange defection from God, truth, reason, and common sense, was persisted in to his old age; or that in his old age, meaning undoubtedly his latter days, his wives turned away his heart from God. But his idolatry must have been of *many years*' standing; he meddled with it in his connection with the princes of Egypt; each of his idolatrous wives in succession increased the propensity: to chastise him for this very idolatry the Lord stirred up an adversary unto him, *Hadad*, the Edomite, and *Rezon*, the son of Eliadah, who was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, ^{<11114>} **1 Kings 11:14-25**, which surely intimates that this idolatry was not the sin merely of his *old age*; as to chastise him for it Rezon was an adversary to Israel all his days. And as Solomon reigned forty years, we may fairly presume that a principal part of that time was spent in idolatrous practices.

9. This dismal account has a more dismal close still; for, in the same place in which we are informed of his *apostasy*, we are informed of his *death*, without the slightest intimation that he ever repented and turned to God. It is true that what is wanting in *fact* is supplied by *conjecture*; for it is firmly believed that "he did repent, and wrote the *book of Ecclesiastes* after his conversion, which is a decided proof of his repentance." I am sorry I cannot strengthen this opinion; of which I find not the shadow of a proof.

1. The book of Ecclesiastes, though it speaks much of the vanity of the creatures, yet speaks little or nothing of the *vanity* or *sin of idolatry*. 2. It is not the *language* of a man who was recovering from a state of the most awful backsliding. Is there any direct *confession of sin* in it? Is there any thing in it like the *penitential confessions* of his father, or like the *lamentations* of Jeremiah? Is there any where to be heard in it the *sighing of a broken heart*, or strong crying and tears to deprecate the justice and implore the mercy of a deeply offended God? Does it any where exhibit the language of a *penitent*, or expressions suitable to the state and circumstances of this supposed penitent king of Israel? Excellent as it is in its kind, is it any thing more than a valuable collection of experimental ethics, relative to the *emptiness of the creature*, and the folly of earthly pursuits and worldly anxieties? 3. Nor is it even past doubt that Solomon

wrote this book: it certainly does in several places bear evidences of times posterior to those of Solomon. Eminent scholars have discerned a deterioration in the *style* from the pure classical Hebrew, with an admixture of exotic terms that did not exist in the Hebrew language previously to the Babylonish captivity. But supposing that they are mistaken here, I still contend that it is not the language of a penitent soul. 4. It has been supposed, that, as Solomon was a *type* of Christ, it is not likely that he has finally perished. To this I answer, (1.) I know not that Solomon was a type of Christ. The reference to ^{<2187>}**Song of Solomon 3:7; 8:11, 12**, is to me no proof whatever of the point. (2.) Were it even otherwise, this would be no proof of his repentance, when the Scriptures are silent on the subject. The *brazen serpent* was a type of Christ, ^{<3314>}**John 3:14**, and was held in great veneration for a considerable time among the Jews; but when it became an *incitement to idolatry*, it was called *nehushtan*, a *brazen trifle*, taken down, and destroyed; ^{<1284>}**2 Kings 18:4**. Typical persons and typical things may perish as well as others; the antitype alone will infallibly remain. 5. Finally, there seems every evidence that he died in his sins. His crimes were greatly aggravated: he forsook the Lord, who had appeared to him twice; his wives turned away his heart in his old age: there is not a single testimony in the Old or New Testament that intimates he died in a safe state. That awful denunciation of Divine justice stands point blank in the way of all contrary suppositions: "If thou forsake the Lord, he will cast thee off for ever," ^{<1389>}**1 Chronicles 28:9**. He did forsake the Lord; and he forsook him in his very last days; and there is no evidence that he ever again clave to him. *Ergo*,

Reader, let him that standeth take heed lest he fall; not only foully but finally. Certainly, unconditional final perseverance will find little support in the case of Solomon. He was once most incontrovertibly in grace. He lost that grace and sinned most grievously against God. He was found in this state in his old age. He died, as far as the Scripture informs us, without repentance. Even the doubtfulness in which the bare letter of the Scripture leaves the eternal state of this man, is a blast of lightning to the syren song of "Once in grace, and still in grace;" "Once a child, and a child for ever."

I shall close these observations with the account given by Abul Farage, an Arabic writer of the thirteenth century, in his work entitled *The History of the Dynasties*, p. 55. "But in this Solomon transgressed, because towards the end of his life he took other women of foreign nations besides the daughter of Pharaoh; nations with whom God had forbidden the children of

Israel to form matrimonial alliances; but leaning towards their gods, he worshipped their idols. In the *thirty-fourth* year of his reign he built a house for idols in the mount which is opposite to Jerusalem; and the length of it was one hundred cubits, its breadth fifty, and its height thirty. He made also for himself golden shields, and a brazen sea, supported on the horns of brazen oxen. God reproved him for his infidelity, and gave him for punishment in this world that he took away from his son the greater part of the kingdom. Moreover, the duration of his reign was *forty* years; [Arabic] *and he died without repentance*, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father David.”

For other particulars relative to the different transactions of this reign, the reader is referred to the *notes* in the order of their occurrence; and to those treatises which have been written on the probability that Solomon *did* or *did not* repent of his idolatry: and also to the notes on *Ecclesiastes*, where the subject will be again reviewed.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 12

The people go to Shechem to make Rehoboam king, and send for Jeroboam out of Egypt, who with the heads of the tribes, requests relief from the heavy burdens laid on them by Solomon, 1-4. He requires three days to consider their petition, 5. He rejects the counsel of the elders, who served his father, and follows that of young men, and returns the people a provoking answer, 6-15. The people therefore renounce the family of David, stone to death Adoram, who came to receive their tribute, and make Jeroboam king; none cleaving to Rehoboam but the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, 16-20. Rehoboam comes to Jerusalem, and assembles all the fighting men of Judah and Benjamin, and finds the number to be one hundred and eighty thousand; and with these he purposes to reduce the men of Israel to his allegiance, but is forbidden by the Prophet Shemaiah, 21-24. Jeroboam builds Shechem in Mount Ephraim and Penuel, 25. And lest the people should be drawn away from their allegiance to him by going up to Jerusalem to worship, he makes two golden calves, and sets them up, one in Dan, the other in Beth-el, and the people worship them, 26-30. He makes priests of the lowest of the people, and establishes the fifteenth day of the eighth month as a feast to his new gods; makes offerings, and burns incense, 31-33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. Rehoboam went to Shechem] Rehoboam was probably the only son of Solomon; for although he had a *thousand wives*, he had not the blessing of a numerous offspring; and although he was the wisest of men himself, his son was a poor, unprincipled fool. Had Solomon kept himself within reasonable bounds in matrimonial affairs, he would probably have had more children; and such as would have had common sense enough to discern the delicacy of their situation, and rule according to reason and religion.

Verse 4. The grievous service-and-heavy yoke] They seem here to complain of two things-excessively laborious service, and a heavy taxation. At first it is supposed Solomon employed no Israelite in drudgery: afterwards, when he forsook the God of compassion, he seems to have used them as *slaves*, and to have revived the Egyptian bondage.

Verse 7. If thou wilt be a servant unto this people] This is a constitutional idea of a king: he is the *servant*, but not the *slave* of his

people; every regal act of a just king is an act of *service* to the state. The king is not only the *fountain of law and justice*; but as he has the appointment of all *officers and judges*, consequently he is the *executor of the laws*; and all justice is administered in his name. Properly speaking, a good and constitutional king is the servant of his people; and in being such he is their father and their king.

They will be thy servants for ever.] The way to insure the obedience of the people is to hold the reins of empire with a steady and impartial hand; let the people see that the king *lives for them*, and not for *himself*; and they will obey, love, and defend him. The state is maintained on the part of the ruler and the ruled by mutual acts of service and benevolence. A good king has no self-interest; and such a king will ever have obedient and loving subjects. The haughty, proud tyrant will have a *suspicious and jealous* people, hourly ripening for *revolt*. The king is made for the people, not the people for the king. Let every *potentate* wisely consider this; and let every *subject* know that the heaviest cares rest on the heart, and the heaviest responsibility rests on the head, of the king. Let them therefore, under his government, fashion themselves as obedient children; acknowledge him their head; and duly consider *whose authority he has*; that they may love, honour and obey him. Happy are the people who have such a king; safe is the king who has such a people.

Verse 10. And the young men that were grown up with him] It was a custom in different countries to educate with the heir to the throne young noblemen of nearly the same age. This, as Calmet observes, answered two great and important ends:-1. It excited the prince to emulation; that he might, as far as possible, surpass in all manly exercises, and in all acts of prudence and virtue, those whom one day he was to surpass in the elevation and dignity of his station. 2. That he might acquire a correct knowledge of the disposition and views of those who were likely to be, under him, the highest officers of the state; and consequently, know the better how to trust and employ them. The old counsellors Rehoboam did not know; with the young nobility he had been familiar.

My little finger shall be thicker] A proverbial mode of expression: “My little *finger* is thicker than my father’s *thigh*.” As much as the *thigh* surpasses the *little finger* in thickness, so much does my power exceed that of my father; and the use that I shall make of it, to employ and tax you, shall be in proportion.

Verse 11. Chastise you with scorpions] Should you rebel, or become disaffected, my father's *whip* shall be a *scorpion* in my hand. His was *chastisement*, mine shall be *punishment*. St. Isidore, and after him Calmet and others, assert that the scorpion was a sort of severe whip, the lashes of which were armed with iron points, that sunk into and tore the flesh. We know that the *scorpion* was a military engine among the Romans for *shooting arrows*, which, being poisoned, were likened to the scorpion's sting, and the wound it inflicted.

Verse 15. The cause was from the Lord] God left him to himself, and did not incline his heart to follow the counsel of the wise men. This is making the best of our present version; but if we come to inquire into the meaning of the CAUSE of all this confusion and anarchy, we shall find it was Rehoboam's *folly*, *cruelty*, and *despotic tyranny*: and was *this* from the Lord? But does the text speak this bad doctrine? No: it says **hbs** *sibbah*, *the REVOLUTION*, *was from the Lord*. This is consistent with all the declarations which went before. God stirred up the people to revolt from a man who had neither skill nor humanity to govern them. We had such a **hbs** *revolution* in these nations in 1688; and, thank God, we have never since needed another. None of our ancient translations understood the word as our present version does: they have it either *the TURNING AWAY was from the Lord*, or *it was the Lord's ORDINANCE*; viz., that they should turn away from this foolish king.

Verse 16. So Israel departed unto their tents] That is, the ten tribes withdrew their allegiance from Rehoboam; only Judah and Benjamin, frequently reckoned one tribe, remaining with him.

Verse 18. King Rehoboam sent Adoram] As this was the person who was superintendent over the *tribute*, he was probably sent to collect the ordinary taxes; but the people, indignant at the *master* who had given them such a brutish answer, stoned the *servant* to death. The sending of Adoram to collect the taxes, when the public mind was in such a state of fermentation, was another proof of Rehoboam's folly and incapacity to govern.

Verse 20. Made him king over all Israel] What is called Israel here, was ten-twelfths of the whole nation; and had they a right to call another person to the throne? They had not,-they had neither *legal* nor *constitutional right*. Jeroboam was not of the blood royal; he had no affinity to the

kingdom. Nothing could justify this act, but the just judgment of God. God thus punished a disobedient and gainsaying people; and especially Solomon's family, whose sins against the Lord were of no ordinary magnitude.

Verse 24. For this thing is from me.] That is, the *separation* of the ten tribes from the house of David.

They-returned to depart] This was great deference, both in Rehoboam and his officers, to relinquish, at the demand of the prophet, a war which they thought they had good grounds to undertake. *The remnant of the people* heard the Divine command gratefully, for the mass of mankind are averse from war. No nations would ever rise up against each other, were they not instigated to it or compelled by the rulers.

Verse 27. And they shall kill me] He found he had little cause to trust this fickle people; though they had declared for him it was more from *caprice, desire of change, and novelty*, than from any regular and praiseworthy principle.

Verse 28. Made two calves of gold] He invented a political religion, instituted feasts in his own times different from those appointed by the Lord, gave the people certain objects of devotion, and pretended to think it would be both inconvenient and oppressive to them to have to go up to Jerusalem to worship. This was not the last time that religion was made a state engine to serve political purposes. It is strange that in pointing out his calves to the people, he should use the same words that Aaron used when he made the golden calf in the wilderness, when they must have heard what terrible judgments fell upon their forefathers for this idolatry.

Verse 29. One in Beth-el, and the other-in Dan.] One at the *southern* and the other at the *northern* extremity of the land. Solomon's idolatry had prepared the people for Jeroboam's abominations!

Verse 31. A house of high places] A temple of temples; he had many *high places* in the land, and to imitate the temple at Jerusalem, he made one chief over all the rest, where he established a priesthood of his own ordination. Probably a place of *separate appointment*, where *different idols* were set up and worshipped; so it was a sort of *pantheon*.

Made priests of the lowest of the people] He took the people indifferently as they came, and made them priests, till he had enough,

without troubling himself whether they were of the family of Aaron or the house of Levi, or not. Any priests would do well enough for such gods. But those whom he took seem to have been worthless, good-for-nothing fellows, who had neither piety nor good sense. Probably the *sons of Levi* had grace enough to refuse to sanction this new priesthood and idolatrous worship.

Verse 32. Ordained a feast] The Jews held their *feast of tabernacles* on the fifteenth day of the seventh month; Jeroboam, who would meet the prejudices of the people as far as he could, appointed a similar feast on the fifteenth of the *eighth* month; thus appearing to hold the thing while he subverted the ordinance.

Verse 33. He offered upon the altar] Jeroboam probably performed the functions of high priest himself, that he might in his own person condense the civil and ecclesiastical power.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 13

A man of God prophesies against Jeroboam's altar, and foretells the destruction of that altar, and of its idolatrous priests by Josiah; and gives Jeroboam a sign that the prophecy should be accomplished, 1-3. Jeroboam is enraged, and orders the man of God to be seized; and stretching out his hand for this purpose, his arm dries up, 4. The altar is rent, and the ashes poured out, according to the sign given by the man of God; and at his intercession Jeroboam's arm is restored, 5, 6. Jeroboam wishes to engage him in his service, but he refuses, and tells him that he was ordered by God not even to eat or drink in that place; and he accordingly departs, 7-10. An old prophet that dwelt at Beth-el, hearing of this, rides after the man of God; deceives him; brings him back to his house, and persuades him to eat and drink, 11-19. While he is eating, the word of the Lord comes to the old prophet, and he foretells the death of the man of God; who departing is met by a lion, and slain, 20-25. On hearing this, the old prophet goes to the place, finds the carcass, brings it home, burns it, and mourns over it, charging his sons to bury him, when dead, in the same grave, 26-32. Notwithstanding these warnings, Jeroboam continues in his idolatry, 33, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. There came a man of God] Who this was we know not. The *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* call him a prophet. The *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* follow the Hebrew, **מַיְהִי אֱלֹהִים** means a Divine person, one wholly devoted to God's service. Some have thought it was Shemaiah, others Joel, and others Iddo. It could not have been the latter, for he wrote the acts of Jeroboam, ^{<1009>}**2 Chronicles 9:29**, and the prophet was killed before he returned home; but conjecture is idle on such a subject.

Jeroboam stood by the altar] Like gods, like priest; he made himself high priest, and he took of the lowest of the people, and made them priests of the high places; they proved themselves to be *fools* by worshipping *calves*.

Verse 2. He cried against the altar] He denounced the destruction of this idolatrous system.

A child shall be born-Josiah by name] This is one of the most remarkable and most singular prophecies in the Old Testament. It here

most circumstantially foretells a fact which took place *three hundred and forty* years after the prediction; a fact which was attested by the two nations. The *Jews*, in whose behalf this prophecy was delivered, would guard it most sacredly; and it was the interest of the *Israelites*, against whom it was levelled, to impugn its authenticity and expose its falsehood, had this been possible. This prediction not only showed the *knowledge* of God, but his *power*. He gave, as it were, this warning to idolatry, that it might be on its guard, and defend itself against this Josiah whenever a person of that name should be found sitting on the throne of David; and no doubt it was on the alert, and took all prudent measures for its own defence; but all in vain, for Josiah, in the *eighteenth* year of his reign, literally accomplished this prophecy, as we may read, ^{<12315>}**2 Kings 23:15-20**. And from this latter place we find that the prophecy had *three* permanent testimonials of its truth. 1. The house of Israel; 2. The house of Judah; and, 3. The tomb of the prophet who delivered this prophecy, who, being slain by a lion, was brought back and buried at Beth-el, the *superscription* on whose tomb remained till the day on which Josiah destroyed that altar, and burnt dead men's bones upon it. See above, verses 16-18. {^{<12316>}**2 Kings 23:16-18**}

Verse 3. And he gave a sign] A miracle to prove that the prophecy should be fulfilled in its season.

Verse 4. Lay hold on him.] No doubt, stretching out his own hand at the same time, through rage, pride, and haste, to execute his own orders.

And his hand dried up] The whole arm became suddenly rigid; the nerves no longer communicated their influence, and the muscles ceased to obey the dictates of the will.

Verse 5. The altar was also rent] It split or clave of its own accord; and, as the split parts would decline at the top from the line of their perpendicular, so the ashes and coals would fall off, or be poured out.

Verse 6. Entreat-the face of the Lord thy God] The *face* of God is his *favour*, as we see in many parts of the sacred writings. He says, *thy God*; for Jeroboam knew that he was not *his God*, for he was now in the very act of acknowledging other gods, and had no portion in the God of Jacob.

And the king's hand was restored] Both miracles were wrought to show the truth of the Jewish religion, and to convince this bold innovator of his

wickedness, and to reclaim him from the folly and ruinous tendency of his idolatry.

Verse 7. Come home with me-and I will give thee a reward.] Come and be one of my priests, and I will give thee a proper salary.

Verse 9. For so it was charged me-Eat no bread, &c.] That is, Have no kind of communication with those idolaters. He was charged also not to return by the way that he came; probably lest the account of what was done should have reached the ears of any of the people through whom he *had passed*, and he suffer inconveniences on the account, either by persecution from the idolaters, or from curious people delaying him, in order to cause him to give an account of the transactions which took place at Beth-el. This is a reason why he should not return by the same way; but what *the* reason of this part of the charge was, if not the above, is not easy to see.

Verse 11. An old prophet] Probably once a prophet of the Lord, who had fallen from his steadfastness, and yet not so deeply as to lose the knowledge of the true God, and join with Jeroboam in his idolatries. We find he was not at the king's sacrifice, though his sons were there; and perhaps even they were there, not as idolaters, but as spectators of what was done.

Verse 14. And went after the man of God] I can hardly think that this was with any evil design. His sons had given him such an account of the prediction, the power, and influence of this prophet, that he wished to have a particular acquaintance with him, in order that he might get farther information relative to the solemn import of the prophecy which he had denounced against the idolatry at Beth-el. This good man could not have been an object of the old prophet's malevolence.

Verse 18. An angel spake unto me] That *he lied unto him* is here expressly asserted, and is amply proved by the event. But why should he deceive him? The simple principle of curiosity to know all about this prediction, and the strange facts which had taken place, of which he had heard at second hand by means of his sons, was sufficient to induce such a person to get the intelligence he wished by any means. We may add to this, that, as he found the man of God sitting under an oak, probably *faint* with *fatigue* and *fasting*, for he had had no refreshment, his *humanity* might have led him to practise this deception, in order to persuade him to take

some refreshment. Having fallen from God, as I have supposed, ^{<1131>}**1 Kings 13:11**, his own tenderness of conscience was gone; and he would not scruple to do a *moral evil*, if even a *temporal good* could come of it. Again, is it not possible that the old prophet was himself *deceived*? for, though he *lied unto him*, it is possible that he was not conscious of his lie, for Satan, as *an angel of light*, might have deceived him in order to lead him to deceive the other. He does not say, as the man of God did, *It was said to me by the word of the Lord*; no: but, *An angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord*. And I think it very likely that an angel did appear to him on the occasion; an *angel of darkness and idolatry*, in the garb of *an angel of light*, who wished to use him as an instrument to bring discredit on the awful transactions which had lately taken place, and to destroy him who had foretold the destruction of his power and influence.

Verse 19. So he went back with him] He permitted himself to be imposed on; he might have thought, as he had accomplished every purpose for which God sent him, and had actually begun to return by another way, God, who had given him the charge, had authority to say, “As thy purpose was to obey every injunction, even to the letter, I now permit thee to go with this old prophet, and take some refreshment.” Now God might as well have dispensed with this part of the injunction, as he did in the case of Abraham: *Take thy son Isaac, thy only son, whom thou lovest-and offer him for a burnt-offering*; but, when he saw his perfect readiness, he dispensed with the *actual offering*, and accepted a ram in his stead. Thus much may be said in vindication of the man of God: but if this be so, why should he be punished with *death*, for doing what he had *reason and precedent* to believe might be the will of God? I answer: He should not have taken a step back, till he had remission of the clause from the same authority which gave him the general message. He should have had it from the *word of the Lord to himself*, in both cases, as Abraham had; and not taken an apparent contradiction of what was before delivered unto him, from the mouth of a *stranger*, who only professed to have it from *an angel*, who pretended to speak unto him *by the word of the Lord*. In this, and in this alone, lay the *sinfulness* of the act of the man of God, who came out of Judah.

Verse 20. The word of the Lord came unto the prophet that brought him back] “A great clamour,” says Dr. *Kennicott*, “has been raised against this part of the history, on account of God’s denouncing sentence on the *true prophet* by the mouth of the *false prophet*: but if we examine with

attention the original words here, they will be found to signify either *he who brought him back*; or, *whom he had brought back*; for the very same words, **wbyvh rva** *asher heshibo*, occur again in ^{<01132>}**1 Kings 13:23**, where they are now translated, *whom he had brought back*; and where they cannot be translated otherwise. This being the case, we are at liberty to consider the word of the Lord as delivered to the *true* prophet thus brought back; and then the sentence is pronounced by GOD himself, calling to him out of heaven, as in ^{<01221>}**Genesis 22:11**. And that this doom was thus pronounced by *God*, not by the false prophet, we are assured in ^{<11335>}**1 Kings 13:26**: ‘The Lord hath delivered him unto the lion, according to the word of the *Lord* which HE spake unto him.’ *Josephus* expressly asserts that the sentence was declared by God to the *true* prophet.” The *Arabic* asserts the same.

Verse 21. And he] That is, according to the above interpretation, *the voice of God* from heaven addressing the man of God, the old prophet having nothing to do in this business.

Verse 22. Thy carcass shall not come] This intimated to him that he was to *die an untimely death*, but probably did not *specify* by what means.

Verse 24. A lion met him-and slew him] By permitting himself to be seduced by the old prophet, when he should have acted only on the expressly declared counsel of God, he committed *the sin unto death*; that is, such a sin as God will punish with the death of the body, while he extends mercy to the soul. See my notes on ^{<01516>}**1 John 5:16, 17**.

From the instance here related, we see, as in various other cases, that often *judgment begins at the house of God*. The true prophet, for receiving that as a revelation from God which was opposed to the revelation which himself had received, and which was confirmed by so many miracles, is slain by a lion, and his body deprived of the burial of his fathers; while the wicked king, and the old fallen prophet, are both permitted to live! If this was *severity* to the man of God, it was *mercy* to the others, neither of whom was prepared to meet his judge. Here we may well say, “If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

Verse 28. The lion had not eaten the carcass, nor torn the ass.] All here was preternatural. The lion, though he had killed the man, does not devour him; the ass stands quietly by, not fearing the lion; and the lion does not

attempt to tear the ass: both stand as guardians of the fallen prophet. How evident is the hand of God in all!

Verse 30. Alas, my brothers] This lamentation is very simple, very short, and very pathetic. Perhaps the old prophet said it as much in reference to *himself*, who had been the cause of his untimely death, as in reference to the man of God, whose corpse he now committed to the tomb. But the words may be no more than the *burden* of each line of the lamentation which was used on this occasion. See instances of this among the Asiatics in **Clarke's note on "^{24218}Jeremiah 22:18"**.

Verse 31. Lay my bones beside his bones] This argues a strong conviction in the mind of the old prophet, that the deceased was a good and holy man of God; and he is willing to have place with him in the general resurrection.

Verse 32. In the cities of Samaria] It is most certain that Samaria, or as it is called in Hebrew *Shomeron*, was not built at this time. We are expressly told that Omri, king of Israel, founded this city on the hill which he bought for two talents of silver, from a person of the name of *Shemer*, after whom he called the city Samaria or *Shomeron*; (see ^{11164}**1 Kings 16:24**;) and this was fifty years after the death of Jeroboam. How then could the old prophet speak of *Samaria*, not then in existence, unless he did it by the spirit of prophecy, calling things that are not as though they were; as the man of God called Josiah by name *three hundred years* before he was born? Some suppose that the historian adds these words because Samaria existed in *his time*, and he well knew that it did not exist in the time of the old prophet; for himself, in the sixteenth chapter, gives us the account of its foundation by Omri. After all, it is possible that God might have given this revelation to the old prophet; and thus by anticipation which is the language of prophecy, spoke of Samaria as then existing. This is the solution of *Houbigant*, and is thought sound by many good critics.

Verse 33. Jeroboam returned not from his evil way] There is something exceedingly obstinate and perverse, as well as blinding and infatuating, in idolatry. The prediction lately delivered at Beth-el, and the miracles wrought in confirmation of it, were surely sufficient to have affected and alarmed any heart, not wholly and incorrigibly hardened; and yet they had no effect on Jeroboam!

Made-the lowest of the people priests] So hardy was this bad man in his idolatry that he did not even attempt to form any thing according to the model of God's true worship: he would have nothing like God and truth. In his *calves*, or rather *oxen*, he copied the manner of Egypt; and in the formation of his priesthood, he seems to have gone aside from all models. Amongst the worst of heathens, the priesthood was filled with respectable men; but Jeroboam took of the lowest of the people, and put them in that office.

Whosoever would, he consecrated him] He made no discrimination: any vagabond that offered was accepted even of those who had no character, who were too idle to work, and too stupid to learn.

Verse 34. And this thing became sin] These abominations were too glaring, and too insulting to the Divine Majesty, to be permitted to last; therefore his house was cut off, and destroyed from the face of the earth.

A HOLY priesthood, a righteous ministry, is a blessing to any state, because it has a most powerful effect on the *morals* of the community; inducing order, sobriety, and habits of industry, among the people: on the contrary, the profligacy of the clergy, and false principles of religion, are the most likely to unsettle a kingdom, and to bring about destructive revolutions in the state. This is the principle on which all national establishments of religion were originally formed. The state thought proper to secure a permanency of religion, that religion might secure the safety of the state; because it was supposed from the general aversion of men from good, that, if left to themselves, they would have no religion at all. Where the religion of the country is pure, founded solely on the oracles of God, it deserves the utmost sanction of the state, as well as the attention of every individual. A Christian state has surely authority to enact, *The Christian religion is and shall be the religion of this land*; and, prejudice apart, should not the laws provide for the permanence of this system? Is the form of Christianity likely to be preserved in times of general profligacy, if the laws do not secure its permanence? What would our nation have been if we had not had a version of the sacred writings established by the authority of the laws: and a form of sound words for general devotion established by the same authority? Whatever the reader may do the writer thanks God for the religious establishment of his country. For *abuses* in *church* or *state*, he is the last to contend.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 14

Abijah, son of Jeroboam, falls sick, 1. Jeroboam sends his wife disguised to Ahijah the prophet, and with her a present, to inquire concerning his son, 2-4. Ahijah discovers her by a Divine intimation and delivers to her a heavy message concerning the destruction of Jeroboam's house, and the death of her son, 5-16. The child dies, according to the prediction of Ahijah, 17. Jeroboam's reign and death, 18-20. Rehoboam's bad reign, and the apostasy of Judah, 21-24. Shishak, king of Egypt, invades Judea, spoils the temple, and takes away the golden shields made by Solomon; instead of which Rehoboam makes others of brass, 25-28. Rehoboam's reign and death, 29-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. Abijah-fell sick] This was but a prelude to the miseries which fell on the house of Jeroboam; but it was another merciful warning, intended to turn him from his idolatry and wickedness.

Verse 3. Ten loaves] Probably common or household bread.

Cracknels] *μυδqn nikkuddim*, spotted, or perforated bread; thin cakes, pierced through with many holes, the same as is called *Jews' bread* to the present day, and used by them at the passover. It was customary to give presents to all great personages; and no person consulted a prophet without bringing something in his hand.

Verse 5. Feign herself to be another woman.] It would have been discreditable to Jeroboam's calves, if it had been known that he had consulted a prophet of Jehovah.

Verse 8. And rent the kingdom away from the house of David] That is, *permitted* it to be rent, because of the folly and insolence of Rehoboam.

Verse 10. Him that pisseth against the wall] Every *male*. The phrase should be thus rendered wherever it occurs.

Verse 11. Shall the dogs eat] They shall not have an honourable burial: and shall not come into the sepulchres of their fathers.

Verse 13. In him there is found some good thing] Far be it from God to destroy the righteous with the wicked; God respects even a *little good*, because it is a seed from himself. The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed.

Verse 15. For the Lord shall smite Israel] See this prophecy fulfilled, ^{<11528>} **1 Kings 15:28-30**, when Baasha destroyed all the house and posterity of Jeroboam.

Verse 19. The rest of the acts of Jeroboam-are written in the-chronicles] For some important particulars relative to this reign, see ^{<41301>} **2 Chronicles 13:1-20**.

Verse 24. There were also sodomites in the land] μυυδσ *kedeshim*, consecrated persons; persons who had devoted themselves, in practices of the greatest impurity, to the service of the most impure idols.

Verse 26. He took away the treasures] All the treasures which Solomon had amassed, both in the temple and in his own houses; a booty the most immense ever acquired in one place.

All the shields of gold which Solomon had made.] These were *three hundred* in number, and were all made of beaten gold. See a computation of their value in **Clarke's note on** ^{<11017>} **1 Kings 10:17**".

Verse 28. The guard bare them] The guard probably were just *three hundred*, answering to the number of the shields.

Verse 31. Naamah an Ammonitess.] He was born of a heathen mother, and begotten of an apostate father. From such an impure fountain could sweet water possibly spring?

Abijam his son reigned in his stead.] Though righteousness cannot be propagated, because it is supernatural, yet unrighteousness may, for that is a genuine offspring of nature. Abijam was the wicked son of an apostate father and heathenish mother. Grace may be grafted on a crab stock; but let none do evil that good may come of it. A bad stock will produce bad fruit.

Dr. *Kennicott* observes that the name of this king of Judah is now expressed *three* ways: here and in four other places it is *Abijam* or *Abim*; in two others it is *Abihu*, but in *eleven* other places it is *Abiah*, as it is expressed by St. Matthew, ^{<40107>} **Matthew 1:7**; Ροβοαμ εγεννησε τον

ABIA; and this is the reading of *thirteen* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS., and of *thirteen* respectable editions of the Hebrew Bible. The *Syriac* is the same. The *Septuagint* in the London Polyglot has **Αβιου**, *Abihu*; but in the *Complutensian* and *Antwerp* Polyglots, it is **Αβια**, *Abiah*. Though the common printed *Vulgate* has *Abiam*, yet the *Editio Princeps* of the *Vulgate*, some MSS., and the text in the *Complutensian* and *Antwerp* Polyglots, have *Abia*; which without doubt is the reading that should in all cases be followed.

The rabbins say, and particularly *Rab. Sol. Jarchi*, that the Shishak mentioned in this chapter is Pharaoh Necho, and that he invaded Israel in order to get the ivory throne of his son-in-law Solomon, which he had always coveted; and this throne he carried away. It appears however that he spoiled the temple, the king's palace, &c., and in short took every thing away without resistance which he chose to carry off. It is very likely that this had a good effect on Rehoboam; it probably caused him to frequent the temple, ^{<11428>} **1 Kings 14:28**, which it is likely he had before neglected. This history is more particularly told in 2 Chron. 12, to which the reader will do well to refer; and as to Rehoboam, though so much positive iniquity is not laid to his charge as to his father, yet little can be said for his piety; the idolatry introduced by Solomon does not appear to have been lessened in the days of Rehoboam.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 15

Abijam's wicked reign, and death, 1-8. Asa succeeds him in the kingdom of Judah, and rules well, 9-15. He makes a league with the king of Syria against Baasha king of Israel, who is obliged to desist in his attempts against Judah, 16-22. He is diseased in his feet and dies, and is succeeded by his son Jehoshaphat, 23-25. Nadab, son of Jeroboam, reigns over Israel; but is slain by Baasha, who reigns in his stead, 26-28. Baasha destroys all the house of Jeroboam, according to the prediction of Ahijah, 29, 30. Baasha continues the idolatry of Jeroboam, 31-34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. Reigns Abijam over Judah.] Of this son of Rehoboam, of his brethren, and of Rehoboam's family in general, see 2 Chron. xii., where many particulars are added.

Verse 3. His heart was not perfect] He was an idolater, or did not support the worship of the true God. This appears to be the general meaning of *the heart not being perfect with God*.

Verse 4. The Lord-give him a lamp] That is, a son to succeed him; see ~~<1113>~~ **1 Kings 11:36**.

Verse 5. Save only in the matter of Uriah] Properly speaking, this is the only flagrant fault or crime in the life of David. It was a horrible offense, or rather a *whole system of offenses*. See the notes on 2 Sam. xi., and xii.

Verse 6. There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam] This was mentioned in the preceding chapter, ~~<1143>~~ **1 Kings 14:30**, and it can mean no more than this: there was a *continual spirit of hostility* kept up between the two kingdoms, and no doubt frequent *skirmishing* between bordering parties; but it never broke out into *open war*, for this was particularly forbidden. See ~~<1124>~~ **1 Kings 12:24**. Hostility did exist, and no doubt frequent skirmishes; but *open war* and *pitched battles* there were none.

But why is this circumstance *repeated*, and the history of Abijam interrupted by the repetition? There is some reason to believe that *Rehoboam* is not the true reading, and that it should be *Abijam*: "Now there was war between *Abijam* and Jeroboam all the days of his life." And

this is the reading of *fourteen* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. The *Syriac* has *Abia the son of Rehoboam*; the *Arabic* has *Abijam*. In the *Septuagint* the whole verse is omitted in the London Polyglot, but it is extant in those of *Complutum* and *Antwerp*. Some copies of the *Targum* have *Abijam* also, and the *Editio Princeps* of the *Vulgate* has *Abia*. This is doubtless the true reading, as we know there was a very memorable war between Abia and Jeroboam; see it particularly described ^{<413B>} **2 Chronicles 13:3**, &c.

Verse 10. His mother's name] Our translators thought that *grandmother* was likely to be *the meaning*, and therefore have put it in the *margin*.

The daughter of Abishalom.] She is called, says *Calmet*, the *daughter of Absalom*, according to the custom of the Scriptures, which give the name of *daughter* indifferently to the *niece*, the *grand-daughter*, and *great grand-daughter*.

Verse 12. The sodomites] מַיְבֻדָּקִים *hakkedeshim*; literally, *the holy* or *consecrated ones*. See on ^{<114B>} **1 Kings 14:24**.

Verse 13. She had made an idol in a grove] The original word, תַּלְמִיתִים *miphletseth*, is variously understood. I shall give its different views in the versions:—

“Besides, he removed his mother Maacha from being chief in the sacred rites of Priapus, and in his grove which she had consecrated.”-VULGATE.

“And Ana, [other copies Maacha,] he removed from being governess, because she had made an assembly in her grove.”-SEPTUAGINT.

“Moreover, he deprived Maacha, his mother, of her own magnificence, because she had celebrated a solemnity to her own worship.”-SYRIAC.

“And even Maacha, his mother, he removed from the kingdom, because she had made an idol in a grove.”-CHALDEE.

“Besides, he removed Maacha, his mother, from her kingdom, because she had made a high tree into an idol.”-ARABIC.

“Also he removed Maacha, his mother, from the kingdom, because she had made a horrible statue; and our rabbins say that it was called *txl pm miphletseth*, because *atwnxyl ayl pm maphli leysanutha*, it *produced wonderful ridicule*; for she made it *ad instar membri virilis*, and she used it daily.”-RABBI SOLOMON JARCHI.

From the whole, it is pretty evident that the image was a mere *Priapus*, or something of the same nature, and that Maachah had an assembly in the grove where this image was set up, and doubtless worshipped it with the most impure rites. What the Roman *Priapus* was I need not tell the learned reader; and as to the unlearned, it would not profit him to know. *Maachah* was most likely another *Messalina*; and Asa probably did for his *mother* what Claudius did for his *wife*.

Verse 14. The high places were not removed] He was not able to make a thorough *reformation*; this was reserved for his son Jehoshaphat.

Asa’s heart was perfect] He worshipped the true God, and zealously promoted his service; see on ^{<1115B>} **1 Kings 15:3**. And even the *high places* which he did not remove were probably those where the true God alone was worshipped; for that there were such high places the preceding history amply proves, and Jarchi intimates that these were places which individuals had erected for the worship of Jehovah.

Verse 15. Which his father had dedicated] On what account he and his father dedicated the things mentioned below, we know not; but it appears that Asa thought himself bound by the vow of his father.

Verse 16. There was war] That is, there was continual enmity; see on ^{<1115G>} **1 Kings 15:6**. But there was no open war till the *thirty-sixth* year of Asa, when Baasha, king of Israel, began to build Ramah, that he might prevent all communication between Israel and Judah; see ^{<141519>} **2 Chronicles 15:19; 16:1**. But this does not agree with what is said here, ^{<1116B>} **1 Kings 16:8, 9**, that Elah, the son and successor of Baasha, was killed by Zimri, in the *twenty-sixth* year of the reign of Asa. Chronologers endeavour to reconcile this by saying that the years should be reckoned, not from the beginning of the reign of Asa, but from the separation of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. It is most certain that Baasha could not make war upon Asa in the *thirty-sixth* year of his reign, when it is evident from this chapter that he was dead in the *twenty-sixth* year of that king. We must either

adopt the mode of solution given by chronologists, or grant that there is a mistake in some of the numbers; most likely in the parallel places in Chronicles, but which we have no direct means of correcting. But the reader may compare ^{<141401>}**2 Chronicles 14:1**, with ^{<141510>}**2 Chronicles 15:10, 19; 16:1**.

Verse 17. And Baasha-built Ramah] As the word signifies a *high place*, what is here termed *Ramah* was probably a *hill*, (commanding a *defile* through which lay the principal road to Jerusalem,) which Baasha fortified in order to prevent all intercourse with the kingdom of Judah, lest his subjects should cleave to the house of David. Ramah was about *two* leagues northward of Jerusalem.

Verse 18. Asa took all the silver] Shishak, king of Egypt, had not taken the whole, or there had been some treasures brought in since that time.

Ben-hadad] This was the grandson of Rezon, called here Hezion, who founded the kingdom of Damascus. See ^{<111123>}**1 Kings 11:23, 24**; and *Calmet*.

Verse 19. There is a league between me and thee] Or, Let there be a league between me and thee; as there was between my father and thy father. There was no reason why Asa should have emptied his treasures at this time to procure the aid of the Syrian king; as it does not appear that there was any danger which himself could not have turned aside. He probably wished to destroy the kingdom of Israel; and to effect this purpose, even robbed the house of the Lord.

Verse 20. Ijon, and Dan, &c.] He appears to have attacked and taken those towns which constituted the principal strength of the kingdom of Israel.

Verse 21. Dwelt in Tirzah.] This seems to have been the *royal city*; see ^{<111533>}**1 Kings 15:33**, and ^{<111417>}**1 Kings 14:17**; and in this Baasha was probably obliged to shut himself up.

Verse 22. None was exempted] Every man was obliged to go and help to dismantle the fortress at Ramah which Baasha had built. This was a general *levee en masse* of the people: every one was obliged to lend a helping hand, as the state was then supposed to be in danger, and all exemptions necessarily ceased. This is a maxim of civil policy, *Ubi adversus hostem*

muniendi sent limites, omnis immunitas cessat: “Where the boundaries are to be fortified against an enemy, then all exemptions cease.”

Verse 23. And the cities which he built] Such as *Geba* and *Mizpah*, which he built out of the spoils of Ramah.

He was diseased in his feet.] Probably he had a strong rheumatic affection, or the *gout*. This took place in the *thirty-ninth* year of his reign, *three years* before his death; and it is said that he sought to physicians rather than to the Lord, ^{<44612>}**2 Chronicles 16:12, 13.**

Verse 24. Asa slept with his fathers] Of his splendid and costly funeral we read ^{<13164>}**1 Chronicles 16:14.**

Verse 25. Nadab-began to reign over Israel] He began his reign in the *second* year of the reign of Asa, and reigned *two* years.

Verse 27. Smote him at Gabbethon] This was a city in the tribe of Dan, and generally in the possession of the Philistines.

Verse 29. He smote all the house of Jeroboam] This was according to Ahijah’s prophetic declaration; see ^{<11440>}**1 Kings 14:10, 14.** Thus God made use of one wicked man to destroy another.

Verse 32. There was war] See on ^{<111516>}**1 Kings 15:16.**

Verse 34. Walked in the way of Jeroboam] The *entail* of iniquity cannot be cut off but by a thorough *conversion* of the soul to God; and of this, these bad kings seem to have had no adequate notion. The wicked followed the steps of the wicked, and became still more wicked; sin gathers strength by *exercise* and *age*.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 16

Jehu the prophet denounces the destruction of Baasha, 1-7. Zimri conspires against him, and slays him and his family, and reigns seven days, 8-15. The people make Omri king, and besiege Zimri in Tirzah; who, finding no way to escape, sets fire to his palace, and consumes himself in it, 16-20. The people are divided, half following Tibni, and half Omri; the latter faction overcomes the former, Tibni is slain, and Omri reigns alone, 21-23. He founds Samaria, 24. His bad character and death, 25-28. Ahab reigns in his stead; marries Jezebel, restores idolatry, and exceeds his predecessors in wickedness, 29-33. Hiel the Beth-elite rebuilds Jericho, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. Then the word of the Lord came to Jehu] Of this prophet we know nothing but from this circumstance. It appears from ^{<41637>}2

Chronicles 16:7-10, that his father *Hanani* was also a prophet, and suffered imprisonment in consequence of the faithful discharge of his ministry to Asa.

Verse 2. Made thee prince over my people] That is, in the course of my providence, I *suffered* thee to become king; for it is impossible that God should make a rebel, a traitor, and a murderer, king over *his* people, or over any people. God is ever represented in Scripture as *doing* those things which, in the course of his providence, he *permits* to be done.

Verse 7. And because he killed him.] This the Vulgate understands of *Jehu the prophet*, put to death by Baasha: *Obadiah hanc causam occidit eum, hoc est. Jehu filium Hanani prophetam*; “On this account he killed him, that is, Jehu the prophet, the son of Hanani.” Some think *Baasha* is intended, others *Jeroboam*, and others *Nadab* the son of Jeroboam. This last is the sentiment of *Rab. Sol. Jarchi*, and of some good critics. The order is here confused; and the *seventh* verse should probably be placed between the 4th and 5th.

Verse 9. Captain of half his chariots] It is probable that Zimri, and some other who is not here named, were commanders of the cavalry.

Verse 11. He slew all the house of Baasha] He endeavoured to exterminate his race, and blot out his memory; and the Jews say, when such a matter is determined, they not only destroy the house of the person himself, *but the five neighbouring houses*, that the memory of such a person may perish from the earth.

Verse 13. For all the sins of Baasha] We see why it was that God permitted such judgments to fall on this family. Baasha was a grievous offender, and so also was his son Elah; and they caused the people to sin; and they provoked God to anger by their idolatries.

Verse 15. The people were encamped against Gibbethon] It appears that, at this time, the Israelites had war with the Philistines, and were now besieging Gibbethon, one of their cities. This army, hearing that Zimri had rebelled and killed Elah, made Omri, their general, king, who immediately raised the siege of Gibbethon, and went to attack Zimri in the royal city of Tirzah; who, finding his affairs desperate, chose rather to consume himself in his palace than to fall into the hands of his enemies.

Verse 21. Divided into two parts] Why this division took place we cannot tell; the people appear to have been for Tibni, the *army* for Omri; and the latter prevailed.

Verse 23. In the thirty and first year of Asa] There must be a mistake here in the number *thirty-one*; for, in ver. 10 and 15, {^{<1160>}**1 Kings 16:10, 15**} it is said that Zimri slew his master, and began to reign in the *twenty-seventh year of Asa*; and as Zimri reigned only *seven days*, and Omri *immediately* succeeded him, this could not be in the *thirty-first*, but in the *twenty-seventh year of Asa*, as related above. *Rab. Sol. Jarchi* reconciles the two places thus: “The division of the kingdom between Tibni and Omri began in the *twenty-seventh* year of Asa; this division lasted *five years*, during which Omri had but a *share* of the kingdom. Tibni dying, Omri came into the possession of the *whole* kingdom, which he held *seven years*; this was in the *thirty-first* year of Asa. *Seven years* he reigned *alone*; *five years* he reigned over *part* of Israel; *twelve years* in the whole. The two dates, the *twenty-seventh* and *thirty-first* of Asa, answering, the first to the beginning of the division, the second to the sole reign of Omri.” *Jarchi* quotes *Sedar Olam* for this solution.

Verse 24. He bought the hill Samaria of Shemer] This should be read, “He bought the hill of Shomeron from Shomer, and called it Shomeron,

(i.e., Little Shomer,) after the name of Shomer, owner of the hill.” At first the kings of Israel dwelt at Shechem, and then at Tirzah; but this place having suffered much in the civil broils, and the place having been burnt down by Zimri, Omri purposed to found a new city, to which he might transfer the seat of government. He fixed on a hill that belonged to a person of the name of *Shomer*; and bought it from him for *two talents of silver*, about £707 3s. 9d. Though this was a large sum in those days, yet we cannot suppose that the hill was very large which was purchased for so little; and probably no other building upon it than Shomer’s house, if indeed he had one there. *Shomeron*, or, as it is corruptly written, *Samaria*, is situated in the midst of the tribe of Ephraim, not very far from the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and about midway between Dan and Beer-sheba: thus Samaria became the capital of the ten tribes, the metropolis of the kingdom of Israel, and the residence of its kings. The kings of Israel adorned and fortified it; Ahab built a *house of ivory* in it, ^{<11229>}**1 Kings 22:39**; the kings of Syria had *magazines* or *storehouses* in it, for the purpose of commerce; see ^{<11234>}**1 Kings 20:34**. And it appears to have been a place of considerable importance and great strength.

Samaria endured several sieges; Ben-hadad king of Syria, besieged it twice, ^{<11201>}**1 Kings 20:1**, &c.; and it cost Shalmaneser a siege of three years to reduce it, ^{<12176>}**2 Kings 17:6**, &c. After the death of Alexander the Great, it became the property of the kings of Egypt; but Antiochus the Great took it from the Egyptians; and it continued in the possession of the kings of Syria till the Asmoneans took and razed it to the very foundation. *Gabinus*, pro-consul of Syria, partially rebuilt it, and called it *Gabiniana*. Herod the Great restored it to its ancient splendour, and placed in it a colony of *six thousand* men, and gave it the name of *Sebaste*, in honour of *Augustus*. It is now a place of little consequence.

Verse 25. Did worse than all-before him] Omri was, 1. An idolater in principle; 2. An idolater in practice; 3. He led the people to idolatry by *precept* and *example*; and, which was that in which he *did worse* than all before him, 4. He made *statutes* in favour of idolatry, and obliged the people by law to commit it. See ^{<33616>}**Micah 6:16**, where this seems to be intended: *For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab*.

Verse 31. He took to wife Jezebel] This was the head and chief of his offending; he took to wife, not only a *heathen*, but one whose hostility to

the true religion was well known, and carried to the utmost extent. 1. She was the idolatrous daughter of an idolatrous king; 2. She practised it openly; 3. She not only countenanced it in others, but protected it, and gave its partisans honours and rewards; 4. She used every means to persecute the true religion; 5. She was hideously cruel, and put to death the prophets and priests of God; 6. And all this she did with the most zealous perseverance and relentless cruelty.

Notwithstanding Ahab had built a temple, and made an altar for Baal, and set up the worship of *Asherah*, the Sidonian *Venus*, which we, ^{<1163>}**1 Kings 16:33**, have transformed into *a grove*; yet so well known was the hostility of Jezebel to all good, that his marrying her was esteemed the highest pitch of vice, and an act the most provoking to God, and destructive to the prosperity of the kingdom.

Verse 33. Ahab made a grove] *hrva* *Asherah*, *Astarte*, or *Venus*; what the *Syriac* calls an *idol*, and the *Arabic*, a *tall tree*; probably meaning, by the last, an image of *Priapus*, the obscene keeper of groves, orchards, and gardens.

Verse 34. Did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho] I wish the reader to refer to my note on ^{<1165>}**Joshua 6:26**, for a general view of this subject. I shall add a few observations. Joshua's curse is well known: "Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born; and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it," ^{<1165>}**Joshua 6:26**. This is the curse, but the meaning of its terms is not very obvious. Let us see how this is to be understood from the manner in which it was accomplished.

"In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho; he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub; according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun." This prediction was delivered upwards of *five hundred* years before the event; and though it was most circumstantially fulfilled, yet we know not the precise meaning of some of the terms used in the original execration, and in this place, where its fulfillment is mentioned. There are *three* opinions on the words, *lay the foundation in his first-born, and set up the gates in his youngest son*.

1. It is thought that when he laid the foundation of the city, his eldest son, the hope of his family, died by the hand and judgment of God, and that all

his children died in succession; so that when the doors were ready to be hung, his youngest and last child died, and thus, instead of securing himself a name, his whole family became extinct.

2. These expressions signify only *great delay* in the building; that he who should undertake it should *spend nearly his whole life* in it; all the time in which he was capable of procreating children; in a word, that if a man laid the foundation when his first-born came into the world, his youngest and last son should be born before the walls should be in readiness to admit the gates to be set up in them; and that the expression is of the proverbial kind, intimating *greatly protracted labour*, occasioned by *multitudinous hinderances and delays*.

3. That he who rebuilt this city should, in laying the foundation, *slay* or *sacrifice* his firstborn, in order to consecrate it, and secure the assistance of the objects of his idolatrous worship; and should slay his youngest at the completion of the work, as a gratitude-offering for the assistance received. This latter opinion seems to be countenanced by the *Chaldee*, which represents Hiel as *slaying* his first-born Abiram, and his youngest son *Segub*.

But who was *Hiel the Beth-elite*? The *Chaldee* calls him *Hiel* of *Beth-mome*, or the *Beth-momite*; the *Vulgate*, Hiel of *Beth-el*; the *Septuagint*, Hiel the *Baithelite*; the *Syriac* represents *Ahab* as the builder: "Also in his days did Ahab build Jericho, the place of execration;" the *Arabic*, "Also in his days did Hiel build the house of idols-to wit, Jericho." The MSS. give us no help. None of these versions, the *Chaldee* excepted, intimates that the children were either *slain* or *died*; which circumstance seems to strengthen the opinion, that the passage is to be understood of *delays* and *hinderances*. Add to this, Why should the innocent children of Hiel suffer for their father's presumption? And is it likely that, if Hiel lost his first-born when he laid the foundation, he would have proceeded under this evidence of the Divine displeasure, and at the risk of losing his whole family? Which of these opinions is the right one, or whether any of them be correct, is more than I can pretend to state. A curse seems to rest still upon Jericho: it is not yet blotted out of the map of Palestine, but it is reduced to a miserable village, consisting of about *thirty* wretched cottages, and the governor's *dilapidated castle*; nor is there any *ruin* there to indicate its former splendour.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 17

Elijah's message to Ahab concerning the three years' drought, 1. He is commanded to go to the brook Cherith; where he is fed by ravens, 2-7. He afterwards goes to a widow's house at Zarephath, and miraculously multiplies her meal and oil, 8-16. Her son dies, and Elijah restores him to life, 17-24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. Elijah the Tishbite] The history of this great man is introduced very abruptly; his origin is enveloped in perfect obscurity. He is here said to be a *Tishbite*. Tishbeh, says Calmet, is a city beyond Jordan, in the tribe of Gad, and in the land of Gilead. Who was his father, or from what tribe he sprang, is not intimated; he seems to have been the prophet of *Israel* peculiarly, as we never find him prophesying in *Judah*. A number of apocryphal writers have trifled at large about his parentage, miraculous birth, of his continual celibacy, his academy of the prophets, &c., &c., all equally worthy of credit. One opinion, which at first view appears strange, bears more resemblance to truth than any of the above, viz., that he had no earthly parentage known to any man; that he was an angel of God, united for a time to a human body, in order to call men back to perfect purity, both in doctrine and manners, from which they had totally swerved. His Hebrew name, which we have corrupted into *Elijah* and *Elias*, is **whyl a Alihu**, or, according to the vowel points, *Eliyahu*; and signifies *he is my God*. Does this give countenance to the supposition that this great personage was a manifestation in the flesh of the Supreme Being? He could not be the Messiah; for we find him with Moses on the mount of transfiguration with Christ. The conjecture that he was an *angel* seems countenanced by the manner of his departure from this world; yet, in ^{<30517>}**James 5:17**, he is said to be a man **ομοιοπαθης**, *of like passions*, or rather *with real human propensities*: this, however, is irreconcilable with the conjecture.

There shall not be dew nor rain these years] In order to remove the abruptness of this address, R. S. Jarchi dreams thus:-“Elijah and Ahab went to comfort Hiel in his grief, concerning his sons. And Ahab said to Elijah, Is it possible that the curse of Joshua, the son of Nun, who was only the

servant of Moses, should be fulfilled; and the curse of Moses, our teacher, not be fulfilled; who said, ^{<6116>}**Deuteronomy 11:16, 17:** *If ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them, then the Lord's wrath shall be kindled against you; and he will shut up the heaven that there be no rain?* Now all the Israelites serve other gods, and yet the rain is not withheld. Then Elijah said unto Ahab, *As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.*" This same mode of connecting this and the preceding chapter, is followed by the Jerusalem and Babylonish Talmuds, Sedar Olam, Abarbanel, &c.

Verse 3. Hide thyself by the brook Cherith] This brook, and the valley through which it ran, are supposed to have been on the western side of Jordan, and not far from Samaria. Others suppose it to have been on the eastern side, because the prophet is commanded to go *eastward*, ^{<117B>}**1 Kings 17:3.** It was necessary, after such a declaration to this wicked and idolatrous king, that he should immediately hide himself; as, on the first drought, Ahab would undoubtedly seek his life. But what a proof was this of the power of God, and the vanity of idols! As God's prophet prayed, so there was rain or drought; and all the gods of Israel could not reverse it! Was not this sufficient to have converted all Israel?

Verse 4. I have commanded the ravens to feed thee] Thou shalt not lack the necessaries of life; thou shalt be supplied by an especial providence. See more on this subject at the end of the chapter. See Clarke ^{<1174>}**1 Kings 17:24**".

Verse 6. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh] The *Septuagint*, in the Codex Vaticanus, and some ancient *fathers*, read the passage thus: -**και οι κορακες εφερον αυτω αρτους το πρωι, και κρεα το δειλης**, *And the crows brought him bread in the morning, and flesh in the evening*: but all the other versions agree with the Hebrew text. This is the first account we have of flesh-meat breakfasts and flesh-meat suppers; and as this was the food appointed by the Lord for the sustenance of the prophet, we may naturally conjecture that it was the food of the people at large.

Verse 7. The brook dried up] Because there had been no rain in the land for some time, God having sent this drought as a testimony against the idolatry of the people: see ^{<6116>}**Deuteronomy 11:16, 17.**

Verse 9. Get thee to Zarephath] This was a town between Tyre and Sidon, but nearer to the latter, and is therefore called in the text *Zarephath* which belongeth to *Sidon*; or, as the *Vulgate* and other versions express it, *Sarepta of the Sidonians*. Sarepta is the name by which it goes in the New Testament; but its present name is *Sarphan*. Mr. Maundrell, who visited it, describes it as consisting of a few houses only on the tops of the mountains; but supposes that it anciently stood in the plain below, where there are still ruins of a considerable extent.

Verse 12. A handful of meal in a barrel] The word *dk cad* is to be understood as implying an *earthen jar*; not a *wooden vessel*, or *barrel* of any kind. In the East they preserve their corn and meal in such vessels; without which precaution the insects would destroy them. Travellers in Asiatic countries abound with observations of this kind.

The word *cruse*, *tj px tsappachath*, says Jarchi, signifies what in our tongue is expressed by *bouteille*, a bottle. Jarchi was a French rabbin.

Verse 13. But make me thereof a little cake first] This was certainly putting the widow's faith to an extraordinary trial: to take and give to a stranger, of whom she knew nothing, the small pittance requisite to keep her child from perishing, was too much to be expected.

Verse 16. The barrel of meal wasted not] She continued to take out of her jar and out of her bottle the quantity of *meal* and *oil* requisite for the consumption of her household; and without carefully estimating what was left, she went with confidence each time for a supply, and was never disappointed. This miracle was very like that wrought by Jesus at the marriage at Cana in Galilee: as the servants drew the water out of the pots, they found it turned into wine; and thus they continued to draw *wine* from the *water-pots* till the guests had been sufficiently supplied.

Verse 17. There was no breath left in him] He ceased to breathe and died.

Verse 18. To call my sin to remembrance] She seems to be now conscious of some secret sin, which she had either forgotten, or too carelessly passed over; and to punish this she supposes the life of her son was taken away. It is mostly in times of adversity that we duly consider our moral state; outward afflictions often bring deep searchings of heart.

Verse 21. Stretched himself upon the child three times] It is supposed that he did this in order to communicate some *natural warmth* to the body of the child, in order to dispose it to receive the departed spirit. *Elisha*, his disciple, did the same in order to restore the dead child of the Shunammite, ~~12034~~ **2 Kings 4:34**. And St. Paul appears to have stretched himself on Eutychus in order to restore him to life, ~~4400~~ **Acts 20:10**.

Let this child's soul come into him again] Surely this means no more than the *breath*. Though the word **vpn** *nephesh* may sometimes signify the *life*, yet does not this imply that the spirit must take possession of the body in order to produce and maintain the flame of animal life? The expressions here are singular: *Let his soul*, **vpn** *nephesh*, *come into him*, **wbrq l** [*al kirbo*, *into the midst of him*.

Verse 22. And the soul] **vpn** *nephesh*, *of the child came into him again*, **wbrq l** [*al kirbo*, *into the midst of him*; and he revived, **j yw** *vaiyechi*, *and he became alive*. Did he not become alive from the circumstance of the immaterial principle coming again into him?

Although **j w** *ruach* is sometimes put for the *breath*, yet **vpn** generally means the immortal spirit, and where it seems to refer to *animal life* alone, it is only such a life as is the immediate and necessary effect of the presence of the immortal spirit.

The words and mode of expression here appear to me a strong proof, not only of the existence of an immortal and immaterial spirit in man, but also that that spirit can and does exist in a separate state from the body. It is here represented as being *in the midst* of the child, like a *spring* in the centre of a machine, which gives motion to every part, and without which the whole would stand still.

Verse 24. The word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.] Three grand effects were produced by this temporary affliction: 1. The woman was led to examine her heart, and try her ways; 2. The power of God became highly manifest in the resurrection of the child; 3. She was convinced that the word of the Lord was truth, and that not one syllable of it could fall to the ground. Through a little suffering all this good was obtained.

THE subject in the fourth verse of this chapter deserves a more particular consideration.

I have commanded the ravens to feed thee.-It is contended that if we consider **µybr** [*orebim* to signify *ravens*, we shall find any interpretation on this ground to be clogged with difficulties. I need mention but a few. The *raven* is an unclean bird, *And these ye shall have in abomination among the fowls-every raven after his kind;* ^{<B1113>} **Leviticus 11:13-15**; that is, every *species* of this *genus* shall be considered by you *unclean* and *abominable*. Is it therefore likely that God would employ this most unclean bird to feed his prophet? Besides, where could the ravens get any *flesh* that was not *unclean*? *Carrion* is their food; and would God send any thing of this kind to his prophet? Again: If the flesh was *clean* which God sent, *where* could ravens get it? Here must be at least three miracles: *one* to bring from some *table* the flesh to the ravens; *another*, to induce the ravenous bird to give it up; and the *third*, to conquer its timidity towards man, so that it could come to the prophet without fear. Now, although God might employ a fowl that would naturally strive to prey on the flesh, and oblige it, contrary to its nature, to give it up; yet it is by no means likely that he would employ a bird that his *own law* had pronounced *abominable*. Again, he could not have employed this means without working a *variety* of *miracles* at the same time, in order to accomplish *one simple end*; and this is never God's method: his plan is ever to accomplish the greatest purposes by the simplest means.

The original word *orebim* has been considered by some as meaning *merchants*, persons occasionally trading through that country, whom God directed, by inspiration, to supply the prophet with food. To get a constant supply from such hands in an extraordinary way was *miracle enough*; it showed the superintendence of God, and that the hearts of all men are in his hands.

But in answer to this it is said, that the "original word never signifies merchants; and that the learned *Bochart* has proved this." I have carefully read over cap. 13, part. ii., lib. 2, of the *Hierozoicon* of this author, where he discusses this subject; and think that he has never succeeded less than in his attempt to prove that *ravens* are meant in this passage. He allows that the Tyrian merchants are described by this periphrasis, **Ébr** [**m ybr** [, *the occupiers of thy merchandise,* ^{<A272>} **Ezekiel 27:27**; and asserts that **µybr** [*orebim*, *per se*, *mercatores nusquam significat*, "by itself, never signifies merchants." Now, with perfect deference to so great an authority, I assert that **ybr** [*oreby*, the contracted form of **µybr** [*orebim*, does signify

merchants, both in ^{<2709>}Ezekiel 27:9 and ^{<2727>}Ezekiel 27:27, and that **br [m** *maarab* signifies a place for merchandise, the market-place or bazaar, in ^{<2709>}Ezekiel 27:9, 13, 17, 19; as also the goods sold in such places, ^{<2733>}Ezekiel 27:33; and therefore that **µybr [** for aught proved to the contrary, signify *merchants* in the text.

As to Bochart's objection, that, the prophet being ordered to go to the brook Cherith, that he might lie hid, and the place of his retreat not be known, if any traders or merchants supplied his wants, they would most likely discover where he was, &c., I think there is no weight in it; for the men might be as well bound by the secret inspiration of God not to discover the place of his retreat, as they were to supply his wants; besides, they might have been of the number of *those seven thousand men who had not bowed their knees to the image of Baal*, and consequently would not inform Ahab and Jezebel of their prophet's hiding place.

Some have supposed that the original means *Arabians*; but Bochart contends that there were no Arabians in that district: this is certainly more than he or any other man can prove. Colonies of Arabs, and hordes and families of the same people, have been widely scattered over different places for the purpose of temporal sojournment and trade; for they were a wandering people, and often to be found in different districts remote enough from the place of their birth. But, letting this pass merely for what it is worth, and feeling as I do the weight of the objections that may be brought against the supposition of *ravens* being the agents employed to feed the prophet, I would observe that there was a town or city of the name of *Orbo*, that was not far from the place where Elijah was commanded to hide himself. In *Bereshith Rabba*, a rabbinical comment on Genesis, we have these words **wbr [hmvw ^avtyb µwj tb ayh ry[ir hi bithchom Beithshean, veshemo Orbo**; "There is a town in the vicinity of Beth-shan, (Scythopolis,) and its name is Orbo." We may add to this from St. Jerome, *Orbim, accolæ villæ in finibus Arabum, Eliæ dederunt alimenta*; "The Orbim, inhabitants of a town in the confines of the Arabs, gave nourishment to Elijah." Now, I consider Jerome's testimony to be of great worth, because he spent several years in the holy land, that he might acquire the most correct notion possible of the language and geography of the country, as well as of the customs and habits of the people, in order to his translating the sacred writings, and explaining them. Had there not been such a place in his time, he could not have written as above: and although

in this place the common printed editions of the *Vulgate* have *corvi*, “crows or ravens;” yet in ^{<142116>}**2 Chronicles 21:16**, St. Jerome translates the same word *pybr* [, “the Arabians;” and the same in ^{<160407>}**Nehemiah 4:7**; it is therefore most likely that the inhabitants of *Oreb* or *Orbo*, as mentioned above, furnished the aliment by which the prophet was sustained; and that they did this being specially moved thereto by the Spirit of the Lord. Add to all these testimonies that of the Arabic version, which considers the words as meaning a people, [Arabic] *Orabim*, and not ravens or fowls of any kind. In such a case this version is high authority.

It is contended that those who think the *miracle* is lost if the *ravens* be not admitted, are bound to show, 1. With what propriety the raven, an unclean animal, could be employed? 2. Why the *dove*, or some such clean creature, was not preferred? 3. How the ravens could get properly *dressed* flesh to bring to the prophet? 4. From whose table it was taken; and by what means? 5. Whether it be consistent with the wisdom of God, and his general conduct, to work a *tissue* of miracles where *one* was sufficient? 6. And whether it be not best, in all cases of this kind, to adopt that mode of interpretation which is most simple; the wisdom, goodness, and providence of God being as equally apparent as in those cases where a multitude of miracles are resorted to in order to solve difficulties?

I KINGS

CHAPTER 18

Elijah is commanded by the Lord to show himself to Ahab, 1, 2. Ahab, and Obadiah his steward, search the land to find provender for the cattle, 3-6. Obadiah meets Elijah, who commands him to inform Ahab that he is ready to present himself before him, 7-15. Elijah and Ahab meet, 16-18. Elijah proposes that the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal should be gathered together at Mount Carmel; that they should offer a sacrifice to their god, and he to Jehovah; and the God who should send down fire to consume the sacrifice should be acknowledged as the true God, 19-24. The proposal is accepted, and the priests of Baal call in vain upon their god through the whole day, 25-29. Elijah offers his sacrifice, prays to Gods and fire comes down from heaven and consumes it; whereupon the people acknowledge Jehovah to be the true God, and slay all the prophets of Baal, 30-40. Elijah promises Ahab that there shall be immediate rain; it comes accordingly, and Ahab and Elijah come to Jezreel, 41-46.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. After many days-in the third year] We learn from our Lord, ^{<4025>}**Luke 4:25**, that the drought which brought on the famine in Israel lasted *three years and six months*. St. James, ^{<5017>}**James 5:17**, gives it the same duration. Probably Elijah spent six months at the brook Cherith, and three years with the widow at *Sarepta*.

I will send rain upon the earth.] The word **hmdah** *haadamah* should be translated *the ground* or *the land*, as it is probable that this drought did not extend beyond the land of Judea.

Verse 3. Obadiah feared the Lord greatly] He was a sincere and zealous worshipper of the true God, and his conduct towards the persecuted prophets was the full proof both of his *piety* and *humanity*.

Verse 4. Fed them with bread and water.] By these are signified the necessaries of life, of whatsoever kind.

Verse 5. Unto all fountains of water] All marshy or well-watered districts, where grass was most likely to be preserved.

Verse 10. There is no nation or kingdom] He had sent through all his own states and to the neighbouring governments to find out the prophet, as he knew, from his own declaration, that both rain and drought were to be the effect of his prayers. Had he found him, he no doubt intended to oblige him to procure rain, or punish him for having brought on this drought.

He took an oath] Ahab must have had considerable power and authority among the neighbouring nations to require and exact this, and Elijah must have kept himself very secret to have shunned such an extensive and minute search.

Verse 12. The Spirit of the Lord shall carry thee] Obadiah supposed that the Spirit of the Lord had carried him to some strange country during the three years and a half of the drought; and as he had reason to think that Ahab would slay Elijah if he found him, and that the God of the prophet would not suffer his servant to fall into such murderous hands, he took for granted that as soon as he should come into danger, so soon would the Spirit of the Lord carry him away, or direct him to some hiding place.

Verse 13. When Jezebel slew the prophets] This persecution was probably during the dearth, for as this bad woman would attribute the public calamity to Elijah, not being able to find him, she would naturally wreak her vengeance on the prophets of Jehovah who were within her reach.

Verse 18. I have not troubled Israel] Here the *cause* of the dearth is placed on its true ground: the king and the people had forsaken the true God, and God *shut up the heavens that there was no rain*. Elijah was only the minister whom God used to dispense this judgment.

Verse 19. Gather to me all Israel] The heads of tribes and families; the rulers of the people.

The prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty-the prophets of the groves four hundred] The king and queen had different religious establishments; the king and his servants worshipped Baal, the supreme lord and master of the world, the sun. For this establishment *four hundred and fifty* priests were maintained. The queen and her women worshipped *hrva* *Asherah*, *Astarte*, or *Venus*; and for this establishment *four hundred* priests were maintained. These latter were in high honour; they ate at Jezebel's table; they made a part of her household. It appears that those

eight hundred and fifty priests were the domestic chaplains of the king and queen, and probably not all the priests that belonged to the rites of Baal and Asherah in the land; and yet from the following verse we learn that Ahab had sent to all the children of Israel to collect these prophets; but Jezebel had certainly *four hundred* of them in her own house who were not at the assembly mentioned here. Those of Baal might have a more extensive jurisdiction than those of Asherah, the latter being constantly resident in Samaria.

Verse 21. How long halt ye between two opinions?] Literally, “How long hop ye about upon two boughs?” This is a metaphor taken from birds hopping about from bough to bough, not knowing on which to settle. Perhaps the idea of *limping* through *lameness* should not be overlooked. They were *halt*, they could not walk uprightly; they dreaded Jehovah, and therefore could not totally abandon him; they feared the king and queen, and therefore thought they *must* embrace the religion of the state. Their conscience forbade them to do the former; their fear of man persuaded them to do the latter, but in neither were they heartily engaged; and at this juncture their minds seemed in equipoise, and they were waiting for a favourable opportunity to make their decision. Such an opportunity now, through the mercy of God, presented itself.

Verse 22. I only, remain a prophet of the Lord] That is, I am the only prophet of God *present*, and can have but the influence of *an individual*; while the prophets of Baal are *four hundred and fifty* men! It appears that the queen’s prophets, amounting to *four hundred*, were not at this great assembly; and these are they whom we meet with ^{<1236>}**1 Kings 22:6**, and whom the king consulted relative to the battle at Ramoth-gilead.

Verse 24. The God that answereth by fire] Elijah gave them every advantage when he granted that the God who answered by *fire* should be acknowledged as the true God; for as the Baal who was worshipped here was incontestably *Apollo*, or the sun, he was therefore the *god of fire*, and had only to work in *his own element*.

Verse 25. For ye are many] And therefore shall have the preference, and the advantage of being first in your application to the deity.

Verse 26. From morning even until noon] It seems that the priests of Baal employed the whole day in their desperate rites. The time is divided into two periods: 1. *From morning until noon*; this was employed in

preparing and offering the sacrifice, and in earnest supplication for the celestial fire. Still there was no answer, and at *noon* Elijah began to mock and ridicule them, and this excited them to commence anew. And, 2. They continued *from noon till the time of offering the evening sacrifice*, dancing up and down, cutting themselves with knives, mingling their own blood with their sacrifice, praying, supplicating, and acting in the most frantic manner.

And they leaped upon the altar] Perhaps it will be more correct to read with the margin, *they leaped up and down at the altar*; they danced round it with strange and hideous cries and gesticulations, tossing their heads to and fro, with a great variety of bodily contortions.

A heathen priest, a high priest of Budhoo, has been just showing me the manner in which they dance and jump up and down, and from side to side, twisting their bodies in all manner of ways, when making their offerings to their demon gods; a person all the while beating furiously on a tom-tom, or drum, to excite and sustain those frantic attitudes; at the same time imploring the succour of their god, frequently in some such language as this: “O loving brother devil, hear me, and receive my offering!” To perform these sacrificial attitudes they have persons who are taught to practice them from their earliest years, according to directions laid down in religious books; and to make the joints and body pliant, much anointing of the parts and mechanical management are used; and they have masters, whose business it is to teach these attitudes and contortions according to the rules laid down in those books. It seems therefore that this was a very general practice of idolatry, as indeed are the others mentioned in this chapter.

Verse 27. At noon-Elijah mocked them] Had not Elijah been conscious of the Divine protection, he certainly would not have used such freedom of speech while encompassed by his enemies.

Cry aloud] Make a great noise; oblige him by your *vociferations* to attend to your suit.

For he is a god] *awh pyhl a yk ki Elohim hu, he is the supreme God*, you worship him as such, he must needs be such, and no doubt jealous of his own honour and the credit of his votaries! A strong irony.

He is talking] He may be giving audience to some others; let him know that he has other worshippers, and must not give too much of his attention to one. Perhaps the word **j yC siach** should be interpreted as in the margin, *he meditateth*; he is in a profound revery; he is making some god-like projects; he is considering how he may best keep up his credit in the nation. Shout! let him know that all is now at stake.

He is pursuing] He may be taking his pleasure in hunting, and may continue to pursue the game in heaven, till he have lost all his credit and reverence on earth.

The original words, **wl gyc sig lo**, are variously translated; *He is in a hotel, in diversorio*, VULGATE. *Perhaps he is delivering oracles*, **μη ποτε χρηματιζει αυτος**, SEPTUAGINT. Or, he is on some special business. Therefore, cry aloud!

He is in a journey] He has left his audience chamber, and is making some excursions; call aloud to bring him back, as his all is at stake.

Peradventure he sleepeth] Rab. S. Jarchi gives this the most degrading meaning; I will give it in Latin, because it is too coarse to be put in English; *Fortassis ad locum secretum abiit, ut ventrem ibi exomeret*; “Perhaps he is gone to the ——.” This certainly reduces Baal to the lowest degree of contempt, and with it the ridicule and sarcasm are complete.

Among Asiatic idolaters their gods have different functions to fulfil, and require *sleep* and *rest*. *Vishnoo* sleeps four months in the year. *Budhoo* is represented in his temple as sleep, though his eyes are open. *Vayoo* manages the winds; *Varoona*, the waters; *Indra*, the clouds, &c.; and according to many fables in the *Pooranas*, the gods are often *out on journeys*, expeditions, &c.

Verse 28. They cried aloud] The poor fools acted as they were bidden.

And cut themselves after their manner] This was done according to the *rites* of that barbarous religion; if the blood of the bullock would not move him they thought their *own blood* might; and with it they smeared themselves and their sacrifice. This was not only the custom of the idolatrous Israelites, but of the Syrians, Persians, Greeks, Indians, and in short of all the heathen world.

Verse 29. They prophesied] They made incessant *prayer* and *supplication*; a farther proof that *to pray* or *supplicate* is the proper ideal meaning of the word *abn naba*, which we constantly translate *to prophesy*, when even all the circumstances of the time and place are against such a meaning. See what is said on the case of *Saul among the prophets*, in **Clarke's note on "^{9105}1 Samuel 10:5"**.

Verse 30. He repaired the altar of the Lord] There had been an altar of Jehovah in that place, called, even among the heathens, *the altar of Carmel*, probably built in the time of the judges, or, as the rabbins imagine, by *Saul*. *Tacitus* and *Suetonius* mention an altar on Mount Carmel, which *Vespasian* went to consult; there was no temple nor statue, but simply an altar that was respectable for its antiquity. "Est Judæam inter Syriamque *Carmelus*; ita vocant montem Deumque: nec simulachrum Deo, aut templum situm tradidere majores: *aram* tantum, et reverentiam."-TACIT. *Hist. lib. ii., c. 78*. A priest named *Basilides* officiated at that altar, and assured *Vespasian* that all his projects would be crowned with success.

Suetonius speaks to this purpose: "Apud Judæam *Carmeli* Dei oraculum consulentem ita confirmavere sortes, ut quicquid cogitaret voveretque animo quamlibet magnum, id esse proventurum pollicerentur." SUET. in *Vespas. cap. 5*. The mount, the absence of a temple, no image, but a simple altar, very ancient, and which was held in reverence on account of the true answers which had been given there, prove that this was originally the altar of Jehovah: though in the time of *Vespasian* it seems to have been occupied by a heathen priest, and devoted to lying vanities.

Verse 31. Took twelve stones] He did this to show that all the twelve tribes of Israel should be joined in the worship of Jehovah.

Verse 32. He made a trench] This was to detain the water that might fall down from the altar when the barrels should be poured upon it, ^{1185} **1 Kings 18:35**.

Verse 33. Fill four barrels] This was done to prevent any kind of suspicion that there was *fire concealed under the altar*. An ancient writer under the name of *Chrysostom*, quoted by *Calmet*, says that he had seen under the altars of the heathens, holes dug in the earth with funnels proceeding from them, and communicating with openings on the tops of the altars. In the former the priests concealed fire, which, communicating through the funnels with the holes, set fire to the wood and consumed the

sacrifice; and thus the simple people were led to believe that the sacrifice was consumed by a miraculous fire. Elijah showed that no such knavery could be practiced in the present case. Had there been a *concealed fire* under the altar, as in the case mentioned above, the water that was thrown on the altar must have extinguished it most effectually. This very precaution has for ever put this miracle beyond the reach of suspicion.

Verse 36. Lord God of Abraham] He thus addressed the Supreme Being, that they might know when the answer was given, that it was the *same* God whom the patriarchs and their fathers worshipped, and thus have *their hearts turned back again* to the true religion of their ancestors.

Verse 38. Then the fire of the Lord fell] It did not *burst out* from the altar; this might still, notwithstanding the water, have afforded some ground for suspicion that fire had been concealed, after the manner of the heathens, under the altar.

Pindar's account of the Rhodians' settling is the isle of Rhodes, and their first sacrifice there, bears a near affinity to the account here given: *the shower of gold* descending on the sacrifice *offered up without fire*, to show the approbation of their god, is little more than a *poetic* account of the above transactions.

Καιτοι γαρ αιθουσας εχοντες
 Σπερμι ανεβαν φλογος ου
 Τευξαν δ απυροις ιεροις
 Αλσος εν ακροπολει, κεινοισι μεν ξαν-
 Θαν αγαγων νεφελαι,
 Πολυν υσε χρυσον

Pind. Olymp. Od. 7, ver. 86.

*The Rhodians, mindful of their sire's behest,
 Straight in the citadel an altar reared;
 But with imperfect rites the Power addressed,
 And without fire their sacrifice prepared;
 Yet Jove, approving, o'er the assembly spread
 A yellow cloud, that dropped with golden dews.*

WEST.

Consumed the burnt-sacrifice] The process of this consumption is very remarkable, and all calculated to remove the possibility of a suspicion that there was any concealed fire. 1. The fire *came down* from heaven. 2. The

pieces of the sacrifice were first consumed. 3. The *wood next*, to show that it was not even by *means of the wood* that the flesh was burned. 4. The *twelve stones* were also consumed, to show that it was no *common fire*, but one whose agency nothing could resist. 5. The *dust*, the *earth* of which the altar was constructed, was burned up. 6. The *water* that was in the trench was, by the action of this fire, entirely evaporated. 7. The action of this fire was in every case *downward*, contrary to the nature of all earthly and material fire. Nothing can be more simple and artless than this description, yet how amazingly full and satisfactory is the whole account!

Verse 39. Fell on their faces] Struck with awe and reverence at the sight of this incontestable miracle.

And they said] We should translate the words thus: JEHOVAH, *He is the God!* JEHOVAH, *He is the God!* Baal is not the God; Jehovah alone is the God of Israel.

As our term *Lord* is very equivocal, we should every where insert the original word *hwby*, which we should write *Yeve* or *Yeheveh*, or *Yahvah* or *Yehueh*, or, according to the points, *Yehovah*.

Verse 40. Let not one of them escape.] They had committed the highest crime against the state and the people by introducing idolatry, and bringing down God's judgments upon the land; therefore their lives were forfeited to that law which had ordered every idolater to be slain. It seems also that Ahab, who was present, consented to this act of impartial justice.

Verse 41. Get thee up, eat and drink] It appears most evidently that Ahab and the prophet were now on good terms, and this is a farther evidence that the slaying of the false prophets was by the king's consent.

Verse 42. Put his face between his knees] He kneeled down, and then bowed his head to the earth, so that, while his face was between his knees, his forehead touched the ground.

Verse 43. Look toward the sea.] From the top of Mount Carmel the Mediterranean Sea was full in view.

Verse 44. There ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand.] *vya ākk kechaph ish, like the hollow of a man's hand.* In the form of the hand bent, the concave side downmost. I have witnessed a resemblance of this kind at sea previously to a violent storm, a little cloud

the size of a man's hand first appearing, and this increasing in size and density every moment, till at last it covered the whole heavens, and then burst forth with incredible fury.

Mr. Bruce mentions a similar appearance in Abyssinia:—"Every morning, in Abyssinia, is clear, and the sun shines. About nine a *small cloud, not above four hundred feet broad*, appears in the east, whirling violently round, as if upon an axis; but arrived near the zenith, it first abates its motion, then loses its form, and extends itself greatly, and seems to call up vapours from all opposite quarters. These clouds, having attained nearly the same height, rush against each other with great violence, and put me always in mind of Elijah foretelling rain on Mount Carmel."-*Travels*, vol. v., page 336, edit. 1806.

Verse 46. Ran before Ahab] Many think that Elijah ran before the king in order *to do him honour*; and much learned labour has been spent on this passage in order to show that Elijah had put himself at the head of a company of chanters who ran before the king reciting his praises, or the praises of God; a custom which still exists in Arabian countries! I believe all these entirely mistake the writer's meaning: Ahab yoked his chariot, and made all speed to Jezreel. The hand of the Lord, or, as the *Targum* says, the *spirit of strength*, came upon Elijah, and he girded up his loins, that is, tucked up his long garments in his girdle, and ran; and notwithstanding the advantage the king had by means of his chariot, the prophet reached Jezreel before him. There is no intimation here that he ran before the horses' heads. All this was intended to show that he was under the peculiar influence and inspiration of the Almighty, that the king might respect and fear him, and not do or permit to be done to him any kind of outrage.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 19

Ahab tells Jezebel what Elijah had done; she is enraged, and threatens to take away his life, 1, 2. He leaves Jezreel, and comes to Beer-sheba, and thence to the wilderness, where he is fed and encouraged by an angel, 3-9. His complaint and the vision by which God instructs him, 10-14. He is sent to Damascus, in order to anoint Hazael king over Syria, and Jehu king over Israel, 15-18. He meets with Elisha, who becomes his servant, 19-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. Ahab told Jezebel] Probably with no evil design against Elijah.

Verse 2. So let the gods do] If I do not slay thee, let the gods slay me with the most ignominious death.

Verse 3. He arose, and went for his life] He saw it was best to give place to this storm, and go to a place of safety. He probably thought that the miracle at Carmel would have been the means of effecting the conversion of the whole court and of the country, but, finding himself mistaken, he is greatly discouraged.

To Beer-sheba] This being at the most southern extremity of the promised land, and under the jurisdiction of the king of Judah, he might suppose himself in a place of safety.

Left his servant there.] Being alone, he would be the more unlikely to be discovered; besides, he did not wish to risk the life of his servant.

Verse 4. A day's journey into the wilderness] Probably in his way to Mount Horeb. See ^{<11908>} **1 Kings 19:8.**

Juniper tree] A tree that afforded him a shade from the scorching sun.

It is enough] I have lived long enough! I can do no more good among this people; let me now end my days.

Verse 5. As he lay and slept] Excessive anguish of mind frequently induces sleep, as well as great fatigue of body.

An angel touched him] He needed refreshment, and God sent an angel to bring him what was necessary.

Verse 6. A cake baked on the coals] All this seems to have been *supernaturally* provided.

Verse 7. The journey is too great for thee.] From Beer-sheba to Horeb was about *one hundred and fifty* miles.

Verse 8. Forty days and forty nights] So he fasted just the same time as Moses did at Horeb, and as Christ did in the wilderness.

Verse 9. He came thither unto a cave] Conjectured by some to be the same cave in which God put Moses that he might give him a glimpse of his glory. See ^{<12332>}**Exodus 33:22.**

What doest thou here, Elijah?] Is this a reproach for having fled from the face of Jezebel, through what some call *unbelieving fears*, that God would abandon him to her rage?

Verse 10. I have been very jealous for the Lord] The picture which he draws here of apostate Israel is very affecting:—

1. **They have forsaken thy covenant]** They have now cleaved to and worshipped other gods.
2. **Thrown down thine altars]** Endeavoured, as much as they possibly could, to abolish thy worship, and destroy its remembrance from the land.
3. **And slain thy prophets]** That there might be none to reprove their iniquity, or teach the truth; so that the restoration of the true worship might be impossible.
4. **I only, am left]** They have succeeded in destroying all the rest of the prophets, and they are determined not to rest till they slay me.

Verse 11. Stand upon the mount before the Lord.] God was now treating Elijah nearly in the same way that he treated Moses; and it is not unlikely that Elijah was now standing on the same place where Moses stood, when God revealed himself to him in the giving of the law. See ^{<12190>}**Exodus 19:9, 16.**

The Lord passed by] It appears that the *passing by* of the Lord occasioned the *strong wind*, the *earthquake*, and the *fire*; but in none of

these was God to make a discovery of himself unto the prophet; yet these, in some sort, prepared his way, and prepared Elijah to hear the *still small voice*. The apparatus, indicating the presence of the Divine Majesty, is nearly the same as that employed to minister the law to Moses; and many have supposed that God intended these things to be understood thus: that God intended to display himself to mankind not in *judgment*, but in *mercy*; and that as the *wind*, the *earthquake*, and the *fire*, were only the forerunners of the *still small voice*, which proclaimed the benignity of the Father of spirits; so the *law*, and all its *terrors*, were only intended to introduce that mild spirit of the Gospel of Jesus, proclaiming glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will unto men. Others think that all this was merely *natural*; and that a real earthquake, and its accompaniments, are described. 1. Previously to earthquakes the atmosphere becomes greatly disturbed, mighty winds and tempests taking place. 2. This is followed by the actual agitation of the earth. 3. In this agitation *fire* frequently escapes, or a burning *lava* is poured out, often accompanied with *thunder* and *lightning*. 4. After these the air becomes serene, the thunder ceases to roll, the forked lightnings no longer play, and nothing remains but a *gentle breeze*. However correct all this may be, it seems most probably evident that what took place at this time was out of the ordinary course of nature; and although the things, as mentioned here, may often be the accompaniments of an earthquake that has nothing supernatural in it; yet here, though every thing is produced in its *natural order*, yet the exciting cause of the whole is *supernatural*. Thus the Chaldee understands the whole passage: “And behold the Lord was revealed; and before him was a host of the angels of the wind, tearing the mountains, and breaking the rocks before the Lord, but the Majesty (*Shechinah*) of the Lord was not in the host of the angels of the wind. And after the host of the angels of the wind, there was a host of the angels of commotion; but the Majesty of the Lord was not in the host of the angels of commotion. And after the host of the angels of commotion, a fire; but the Majesty of the Lord was not in the host of the angels of fire. And after the host of the angels of fire, a voice singing in silence,” &c.; that is, a sound with which no other sound was mingled. Perhaps the whole of this is intended to give an emblematical representation of the various displays of Divine providence and grace.

Verse 13. Wrapped his face in his mantle] This he did to signify his *respect*; so Moses hid his face, for he dared not to look upon God

Exodus 3:6. *Covering the face* was a token of respect among the Asiatics, as *uncovering the head* is among the Europeans.

Verse 15. To the wilderness of Damascus] He does not desire him to take a road by which he might be likely to meet Jezebel, or any other of his enemies.

Anoint Hazael] For what reason the Lord was about to make all these *revolutions*, we are told in ^{<11917>}**1 Kings 19:17.** God was about to bring his judgments upon the land, and especially on the house of Ahab. This he exterminated by means of Jehu; and Jehu himself was a scourge of the Lord to the people. Hazael also grievously afflicted Israel; see the accomplishment of these purposes, 2 Kings viii., and ix.

Verse 16. Elisha-shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.] Jarchi gives a strange turn to these words: “Thy prophecy (or execution of the prophetic office) does not please me, because thou art the constant accuser of my children.” With all their abominations, this rabbin would have us to believe that those vile idolaters and murderers were still the *beloved children of God!* And why? Because God had made a *covenant* with their fathers; therefore said the ancient as well as the modern *siren song*: “Once in the covenant, always in the covenant; once a son, and a son for ever.” And yet we have here the testimony of God’s own prophet, and the testimony of their history, that they had *forsaken the covenant*, and consequently renounced all their interest in it.

Verse 17. Shall Elisha slay.] We do not find that Elisha either used the sword, or commissioned it to be used, though he delivered solemn prophecies against this disobedient people: and this is probably the sense in which this should be understood, as Elisha was prophet before Hazael was king, and Hazael was king before Jehu; and the heavy famine which he brought on the land took place before the reign either of Jehu or Hazael. The meaning of the prophecy may be this: Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, shall be the ministers of my vengeance against this disobedient and rebellious people. The *order of time*, here, is not to be regarded.

Verse 18. Seven thousand in Israel] That is, *many* thousands; for *seven* is a number of perfection, as we have often seen: so, *The barren has borne seven*-has had a *numerous* off-spring; *Gold seven times purified*-purified till *all the dross is perfectly separated* from it. The court and multitudes of

the people had gone after Baal; but perhaps the majority of the common people still worshipped in secret the God of their fathers.

Every mouth which hath not kissed him.] Idolaters often *kissed their hand* in honour of their idols; and hence the origin of *adoration-bringing the hand to the mouth* after touching the idol, if it were within reach; and if not, kissing the right hand in token of respect and subjection. The word is compounded of *ad, to*, and *os, oris, the mouth*. *Dextera manu deum contingentes, ori admovebant*: “Touching the god with their right hand, they applied it to their mouth.” So *kissing the hand*, and *adoration*, mean the same thing—thus Pliny, *Inter adorandum, dexteram ad osculum referimus, totum corpus circumagimus*: Nat. Hist. lib. xxviii., cap. 2.—“In the act of adoration we kiss the right hand, and turn about the whole body.” Cicero mentions a statue of Hercules, the chin and lips of which were considerably *worn* by the frequent kissing of his worshippers: *Ut rictus ejus, et mentum paulo sit attritius, quod in precibus et gratulationibus, non solum id venerari, sed etiam osculari solent.*—Orat. in VERREM.

I have seen several instances of this, especially in the paintings of old saints: the lips and mouth of beautiful paintings literally worn away by the unmerciful *osculations* of devotees.

Verse 19. Twelve yoke of oxen] Elisha must have had a considerable estate, when he kept *twelve* yoke of oxen to till the ground. If, therefore, he obeyed the prophetic call, he did it to considerable secular loss.

He with the twelfth] Every owner of an inheritance among the Hebrews, and indeed among the *ancients* in general, was a principal *agent* in its cultivation.

Cast his mantle upon him] Either this was a *ceremony* used in a call to the prophetic office, or it indicated that he was called to be the *servant* of the prophet. The *mantle*, or *pallium*, was the peculiar garb of the prophet, as we may learn from **Zecariah 13:4**; and this was probably made of *skin dressed with the hair on*. See also ^{<13108>}**2 Kings 1:8**. It is likely, therefore, that Elijah threw his mantle on Elisha to signify to him that he was called to the prophetic office. See more on this subject below.

Verse 20. Let me-kiss my father and my mother] Elisha fully understood that he was called by this ceremony to the prophetic office: and

it is evident that he conferred not with flesh and blood, but resolved, immediately resolved, to obey; only he wished to bid farewell to his relatives. See below.

What have I done to thee?] Thy call is not from *me*, but from God: to *him*, not to *me*, art thou accountable for thy use or abuse of it.

Verse 21. He returned back] He went home to his house; probably he yet lived with his parents, for it appears he was a single man: and *he slew a yoke of the oxen*-he made a feast for his household, having boiled the flesh of the oxen with his agricultural implements, probably in token that he had *abandoned* secular life: then, having bidden them an affectionate farewell, he arose, went after Elijah, who probably still awaited his coming in the field or its vicinity, and ministered unto him.

ON the call of Elisha, I may make a few remarks.

1. Elijah is commanded, ^{<11916>} **1 Kings 19:16**, to *anoint* Elisha prophet in his room. Though it is generally believed that *kings, priests, and prophets*, were inaugurated into their respective offices by the right of *unction*, and this I have elsewhere supposed; yet this is the only instance on record where a prophet is commanded to be *anointed*; and even this case is problematical, for it does not appear that Elijah did *anoint* Elisha. Nothing is mentioned in his call to the prophetic office, but the casting the mantle of Elijah upon him; wherefore it is probable that the word *anoint*, here signifies no more than the *call to the office*, accompanied by the *simple rite* of having the prophet's *mantle thrown over his shoulders*.

2. A call to the ministerial office, though it completely sever from all secular occupations, yet never supersedes the duties of filial affection. Though Elisha must leave his oxen, and become a prophet to Israel: yet he may first go home, eat and drink with his parents and relatives, and bid them an affectionate farewell.

3. We do not find any attempt on the part of his parents to hinder him from obeying the Divine call: they had too much respect for the authority of God, and they left their son to the dictates of his conscience. Wo to those parents who strive, for filthy lucre's sake, to prevent their sons from embracing a call to preach Jesus to their perishing countrymen, or to the heathen, because they see that the life of a true evangelist is a life of comparative poverty, and they had rather he should *gain money* than *save souls*.

4. The *cloak*, we have already observed, was the prophet's peculiar habit; it was probably in imitation of this that the Greek philosophers wore a sort of *mantle*, that distinguished them from the common people; and by which they were at once as easily known as certain academical characters are by their *gowns* and *square caps*. The *pallium* was as common among the *Greeks* as the *toga* was among the *Romans*. Each of these was so peculiar to those nations, that *Palliatius* is used to signify a *Greek*, as *Togatus* is to signify a *Roman*.

5. Was it from this act of Elijah, conveying the prophetic office and its authority to Elisha by throwing his mantle upon him, that the popes of Rome borrowed the ceremony of collating an archbishop to the spiritualities and temporalities of his *see*, and investing him with plenary sacerdotal authority, by sending him what is well known in ecclesiastical history by the name *pallium*, *pall*, or *cloak*? I think this is likely; for as we learn from **Zecariah 13:4**, and ~~120108~~ **2 Kings 1:8**, that this *mantle* was a *rough* or *hairy garment*, so we learn from *Durandus* that the *pallium* or *pall* was made of *white wool*, after the following manner:—

The nuns of St. *Agnes*, annually on the festival of their patroness, offer two *white lambs* on the altar of their church, during the time they sing *Agnus Dei*, in a solemn mass; which lambs are afterwards taken by two of the canons of the Lateran church, and by them given to the pope's sub-deacons, who send them to pasture till shearing time; and then they are shorn, and the *pall* is made of their wool, mixed with other white wool. The *pall* is then carried to the Lateran church, and there placed on the high altar by the deacons, on the bodies of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*; and, after a usual watching or vigil, it is carried away in the night, and delivered to the sub-deacons, who lay it up safely. Now, because it was taken from the body of St. Peter, it signifies the plenitude of ecclesiastical power: and, therefore, the popes assume it as their prerogative, being the professed successors of this apostle, to invest other prelates with it. This was at first confined to *Rome*, but afterwards it was sent to popish prelates in different parts of the world.

6. It seems, from the place in Zechariah, quoted above, that this *rough cloak* or *garment* became the covering of *hypocrites* and *deceivers*; and that persons assumed the *prophetic dress* without the *prophetic call*, and God threatens to *unmask* them. We know that this became general in the popish Church in the beginning of the 16th century; and God stripped those

false prophets of their false and wicked pretensions, and exposed them to the people. Many of them profited by this exposure, and became reformed; and the whole community became at least more *cautious*. The Romish Church should be thankful to the Reformation for the moral purity which is now found in it; for, had not its vices, and usurpations, and super-scandalous sales of indulgences, been thus checked, the whole fabric had by this time been probably dissolved. Should it carry its reformation still farther, it would have a more legitimate pretension to the title of *apostolic*. Let them compare their *ritual* with the Bible and common sense, and they will find cause to lop many cumbrous and rotten branches from a good tree.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 20

Ben-hadad, king of Syria, and thirty-two kings, besiege Samaria, 1. He sends an insulting message to Ahab; and insists on pillaging the whole city, 2-7. The elders of Israel counsel the king not to submit to such shameful conditions, 8. He sends a refusal to Ben-hadad; who, being enraged, vows revenge, 9-12. A prophet comes to Ahab, and promises him victory, and gives him directions how he should order the battle, 13-19. The Syrians are discomfited, and Ben-hadad scarcely escapes, 20, 21. The prophet warns Ahab to be on his guard, for the Syrians would return next year, 22. The counsellors of the king of Syria instruct him how he may successfully invade Israel, 23-25. He leads an immense army to Aphek, to fight with Ahab, 26, 27. A man of God encourages Ahab, who attacks the Syrians, and kills one hundred thousand of them, 28, 29. They retreat to Aphek, where twenty-seven thousand of them are slain by a casualty, 30. Ben-hadad and his courtiers, being closely besieged in Aphek, and unable to escape, surrender themselves with sackcloth on their loins, and halters on their heads; the king of Israel receives them in a friendly manner, and makes a covenant with Ben-hadad, 31-34. A prophet, by a symbolical action, shows him the impolicy of his conduct in permitting Ben-hadad to escape, and predicts his death and the slaughter of Israel, 35-43.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. Ben-hadad] Several MSS., and some early printed editions, have *Ben-hadar*, or *the son of Hadar*, as the Septuagint. He is supposed to be the same whom Asa stirred up against the king of Israel, ^{<11518>}**1 Kings 15:18**; or, as others, his *son* or *grandson*.

Thirty and two kings] Tributary chieftains of Syria and the adjacent countries. In former times every town and city had its independent chieftain. Both the *Septuagint* and *Josephus* place this war after the history of *Naboth*.

Verse 4. I am thine, and all that I have.] He probably hoped by this humiliation to soften this barbarous king, and perhaps to get better conditions.

Verse 6. Whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes] It is not easy to discern in what this *second* requisition differed from the *first*; for surely his *silver*, *gold*, *wives*, and *children*, were among his *most pleasant* or *desirable*

things. *Jarchi* supposes that it was the *book of the law of the Lord* which Ben-hadad meant, and of which he intended to deprive Israel. It is however evident that Ben-hadad meant to *sack the whole city*, and after having taken the *royal treasures* and the *wives* and *children* of the king, to deliver up the whole to be *pillaged* by his soldiers.

Verse 8. Hearken not unto him] The elders had every thing at stake, and they chose rather to make a desperate defense than tamely to yield to such degrading and ruinous conditions.

Verse 10. If the dust of Samaria shall suffice] This is variously understood. *Jonathan* translates thus: “If the dust of Shomeron shall be sufficient for the soles of the feet of the people that shall accompany me;” i.e., I shall bring such an army that there will scarcely be room for them to stand in Samaria and its vicinity.

Verse 11. Let not him that girdeth on] This was no doubt a proverbial mode of expression. *Jonathan* translates, “Tell him, Let not him who girds himself and goes down to the battle, boast as he who has conquered and returned from it.”

Verse 12. In the pavilions] This word comes from *papilio*, a *butterfly*, because tents, when pitched or spread out, resembled such animals; partly because of the mode of their *expansion*, and partly because of the manner in which they were *painted*.

Set yourselves in array.] The original word, *wmyc simu*, which we translate by this long periphrasis, is probably a military term for *Begin the attack*, *Invest the city*, *Every man to his post*, or some such like expression.

Verse 13. There came a prophet] Who this was we cannot tell; *Jarchi* says it was *Micaiah, son of Imlah*. It is strange that on such an occasion we hear nothing of *Elijah* or *Elisha*. Is it not possible that this was one of them disguised?

Verse 14. By the young men of the princes of the provinces.] These were probably some chosen persons out of the militia of different districts, raised by the *princes of the provinces*; the same as we would call *lord-lieutenants* of counties.

Verse 15. Two hundred and thirty-two] These were probably the king's *life* or *body guards*; not all the militia, but *two hundred and thirty* of them

who constituted the royal guard in Samaria. They were therefore the king's own regiment, and he is commanded by the prophet to put himself at their head.

Seven thousand.] How low must the state of Israel have been at this time! These *Jarchi* thinks were the seven thousand who had not *bowed the knee to Baal*.

Verse 18. Take them alive.] He was confident of victory. Do not slay them; bring them to me, they may give us some useful information.

Verse 20. The Syrians fled] They were doubtless panic-struck.

Verse 23. Their gods are gods of the hills] It is very likely that the small Israelitish army availed itself of the *heights* and *uneven* ground, that they might fight with greater advantage against the Syrian *cavalry*, for Ben-hadad came up against Samaria *with horses and chariots*, ^{<1200>}**1 Kings 20:1**. These therefore must be soon thrown into confusion when charging in such circumstances; indeed, the *chariots* must be nearly useless.

Let us fight against them in the plain] There our horses and chariots will all be able to bear on the enemy, and there their gods, whose influence is confined to the hills, will not be able to help them. It was a general belief in the heathen world that each *district* had its tutelary and protecting deity, who could do nothing out of his own sphere.

Verse 24. Take the kings away] These were not acquainted with military affairs, or they had not competent skill. Put experienced *captains* in their place, and fight not but on the plains, and you will be sure of victory.

Verse 26. Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek] There were several towns of this name; see the notes on ^{<6128>}**Joshua 12:18**. It is supposed that the town mentioned here was situated in Libanus, upon the river *Adonis*, between *Heliopolis* and *Biblos*.

Verse 28. Because the Syrians have said] God resents their blasphemy, and is determined to punish it. They shall now be discomfited in such a way as to show that God's power is every where, and that the multitude of a host is nothing against him.

Verse 29. Slew a hundred thousand footmen in one day.] This number is enormous; but the MSS. and versions give no various reading.

Verse 30. A wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand] From the first view of this text it would appear that when the Syrians fled to Aphek, and shut themselves within the walls, the Israelites immediately brought all hands, and sapped the walls, in consequence of which a large portion fell, and buried *twenty-seven thousand* men. But perhaps the hand of God was more immediately in this disaster; probably a *burning wind* is meant. See at the end of the chapter. See Clarke “^{<110B>}1 Kings 20:43”.

Came into the city, into an inner chamber.] However the passage above may be understood, the city was now, in effect, taken; and Ben-hadad either betook himself with his few followers to the citadel or to some secret hiding-place, where he held the council with his servants immediately mentioned.

Verse 31. Put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads] Let us show ourselves humbled in the deepest manner, and let us put ropes about our necks, and go submitting to his mercy, and deprecating his wrath. The citizens of Calais are reported to have acted nearly in the same way when they surrendered their city to Edward III., king of England, in 1346. See at the end. See Clarke “^{<110B>}1 Kings 20:43”.

Verse 32. Thy servant Ben-hadad] See the vicissitude of human affairs! A little before he was the haughtiest of all tyrants, and Ahab calls him his *lord*; now, so much is he humbled, that he will be glad to be reputed Ahab’s *slave*!

Verse 33. Did hastily catch it] They were watching to see if any kind word should be spoken by him, from which they might draw a favourable omen; and when they heard him use the word *brother*, it gave them much encouragement.

Verse 34. Thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus] It appears that it was customary for foreigners to have a place assigned to them, particularly in maritime towns, where they might deposit and vend their merchandise. This was the very origin of European settlements in Asiatic countries: “The people gave an *inch* to those strangers; and in consequence they took an *ell*.” Under the pretense of strengthening the place where they kept their wares, to prevent depredations, they built forts, and soon gave laws to their entertainers. In vain did the natives wish them away; they had got power, and would retain it; and at last subjected these countries to their own dominion.

It was customary also, in the time of the crusades, to give those nations which were engaged in them *streets, churches, and post dues*, in those places which they assisted to conquer. The Genoese and Venetians had each a street in *Accon*, or *St. Jean d’Acre*, in which they had their own jurisdiction; with oven, mill, bagnio, weights, and measures.-See *William of Tyre*, and *Harmer’s Observations*.

He made a covenant with him] According to the words recited above, putting him under no kind of disabilities whatsoever.

Verse 35. In the word of the Lord] By the word or command of the Lord; that is, God has commanded thee to smite me. Refusing to do it, this man forfeited his life, as we are informed in the next verse.

By this emblematical action he intended to inform Ahab that, as the man forfeited his life who refused to smite him when he had the Lord’s command to do it; so he (Ahab) had forfeited his life, because he did not smite Ben-hadad when he had him in his power.

Verse 36. A lion found him, and slew him.] This seems a hard measure, but there was ample reason for it. This person was also one of the sons of the prophets, and he knew that God frequently delivered his counsels in this way, and should have immediately obeyed; for the smiting could have had no evil in it when God commanded it, and it could be no outrage or injury to his fellow when he himself required him to do it.

Verse 38. Disguised himself with ashes upon his face.] It does not immediately appear how putting *ashes* upon his face could disguise him. Instead of *rpa apher, dust*, Houbigant conjectures that it should be *dpa aphad, a fillet or bandage*. It is only the *corner* of the last letter which makes the difference; for the *d daleth* and *r resh* are nearly the same, only the *shoulder* of the former is *square*, the latter *round*. That *bandage*, not *dust*, was the *original* reading, seems pretty evident from its remains in two of the oldest versions, the *Septuagint* and the *Chaldee*; the former has *και κατεδησατο εν τελαμωνι τους οφθαλμους αυτου*, “And he bound his eyes with a fillet.” The latter has *yhwyny[ayrp[mb Ēyrkw ukerich bemaaphira einohi*; “And he covered his eyes with a cloth.” The MSS. of *Kennicott* and *Deuteronomy Rossi* contain no various reading here; but *bandage* is undoubtedly the true one. However, in the way of

mortification, both the *Jews* and *Hindoos* put ashes upon their *heads* and *faces*, and make themselves sufficiently disgusting.

Verse 39. Keep this man] The drift of this is at once seen; but Ahab, not knowing it, was led to pass sentence on himself.

Verse 41. Took the ashes away] He took the bandage from off his eyes: see on ^{<1218>}**1 Kings 20:38**. It was no doubt of thin cloth, through which he could see, while it served for a sufficient disguise.

Verse 42. Thy life shall go for his life] This was fulfilled at the battle of Ramoth-gilead, where he was slain by the Syrians; see ^{<1224>}**1 Kings 22:34, 35**.

Verse 43. Heavy and displeased] Heavy or afflicted, because of these dreadful tidings; and displeased with the prophet for having announced them. Had he been displeased with himself, and humbled his soul before God, even those judgments, so circumstantially foretold, might have been averted.

1. WE have already seen, in ^{<1230>}**1 Kings 20:30**, that according to our text, *twenty-seven thousand* men were slain by the falling of a wall. Serious doubts are entertained concerning the legitimacy of this rendering. I have, in the note, given the conjecture concerning sapping the foundation of the wall, and thus overthrowing them that were upon it. If instead of **hmwj chomah**, a wall, we read **hmwj confusion** or *disorder*, then the destruction of the *twenty-seven thousand* men may appear to have been occasioned by the *disorganized* state into which they fell; of which their enemies taking advantage, they might destroy the whole with ease.

But **hmwj chomah**, a wall, becomes, as Dr. *Kennicott* has observed, a very different word when written without the *w vau*, **hmj** which signifies *heat*; sometimes the *sun*, *vehement heat*, or the *heat of the noon-day sun*; and also the name of a *wind*, from its suffocating, *parching* quality.

The same noun, from **mj y yacham**, Dr. Castel explains by *excandescencia*, *furor*, *venenum*; *burning*, *rage*, *poison*. These renderings, says Dr. *Kennicott*, all concur to establish the sense of a *burning wind*, eminently blasting and destructive. I shall give a few instances from the Scripture:-

We read in ^{<1872>}**Job 27:21**: *The east wind carrieth him away*; where the word **μυdq kadim** is **καυσων**, *burning*, in the *Septuagint*; and in the *Vulgate*, *ventus urens, a burning wind*. In ^{<2692>}**Ezekiel 19:12**: *She was plucked up **hmj b** she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit; her strong rods were withered, and the fire consumed them*. Hosea (^{<2815>}**Hosea 13:15**) mentions the desolation brought by *an east wind, the wind of the Lord*. What in ^{<3049>}**Amos 4:9** is, *I have smitten you with blasting*, in the *Vulgate* is, *in vento vehemente*, “with a vehement wind;” and in the *Syriac*, *with a hot wind*.

Let us apply these to the history: when Ben-hadad, king of Syria, was besieging Samaria the second time, the Israelites slew of the Syrians *one hundred thousand* footmen in one day; and it follows, that when the rest of the army fled to Aphek, *twenty-seven thousand* of the men that were left were suddenly destroyed by **hmwj h hachomah**, or **hmj h hachamah**, *a burning wind*. That such is the true interpretation, will appear more clearly if we compare the destruction of Ben-hadad’s army with that of Sennacherib, whose sentence is that God would send upon him a BLAST, **j wr ruach**, *a wind*; doubtless such a wind as would be suddenly destructive. The event is said to be that in the night *one hundred and eighty-five thousand* Assyrians were smitten by the angel of the Lord, ^{<1297>}**2 Kings 19:7, 35**. The connection of this sentence with the execution of it is given by the psalmist, who says, ^{<1944>}**Psalm 104:4**: *God maketh his angels **twj r ruchoth**, winds; or, maketh the winds his angels, i.e., messengers for the performance of his will*. In a note on ^{<19106>}**Psalm 11:6**, Professor Michaelis has these words: *Ventus Zilgaphoth, pestilens eurus est, orientalibus notissimus, qui obvia quævis necat*; “The wind Zilgaphoth is a pestilent east wind, well known to the Asiatics, which suddenly kills those who are exposed to it.” *Thevenot* mentions such a wind in 1658, that in one night suffocated *twenty thousand* men. And the *Samiel* he mentions as having, in 1665, suffocated *four thousand* persons. “Upon the whole, I conclude,” says the doctor, “that as *Thevenot* has mentioned *two* great multitudes destroyed by this *burning wind*, so has holy Scripture recorded the destruction of *two* much greater multitudes by a similar cause; and therefore we should translate the words thus: *But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and THE BURNING WIND fell upon the twenty and seven thousand of the men that were left*.”

2. On the case of Ben-hadad and his servants coming out to Ahab with *sackcloth on their loins and ropes about their necks*, ^{<123B>}**1 Kings 20:31**, I have referred to that of the six citizens of Calais, in the time of Edward III. I shall give this affecting account from Sir *John Froissart*, who lived in that time, and relates the story circumstantially, and with that simplicity and detail that give it every appearance of truth. He is the only writer, of all his contemporaries, who gives the relation; and as it is not only illustrative of the text in question, but also very curious and affecting, I will give it in his own words; only observing that, King Edward having closely invested the city in 1346, and the king of France having made many useless attempts to raise the siege, at last withdrew his army, and left it to its fate. "Then," says *Froissart*, chap. cxliv., "after the departure of the king of France with his army, the Calesians saw clearly that all hopes of succour were at an end; which occasioned them so much sorrow and distress that the hardiest could scarcely support it. They entreated therefore, most earnestly, the lord *Johns de Vienne*, their governor, to mount upon the battlements, and make a sign that he wished to hold a parley.

"The king of England, upon hearing this, sent to him Sir *Walter Manny* and Lord *Basset*. When they were come near, the lord de Vienne said to them: 'Dear gentlemen, you, who are very valiant knights, know that the king of France, whose subjects we are, has sent us hither to defend this town and castle from all harm and damage. This we have done to the best of our abilities; all hopes of help have now left us, so that we are most exceedingly straitened; and if the gallant king, your lord, have not pity upon us, we must perish with hunger. I therefore entreat that you would beg of him to have compassion upon us, and to have the goodness to allow us to depart in the state we are in; and that he will be satisfied with having possession of the town and castle, with all that is within them, as he will find therein riches enough to content him.' To this Sir *Walter Manny* replied: 'John, we are not ignorant of what the king our lord's intentions are, for he has told them to us; know then, that it is not his pleasure that you should get off so, for he is resolved that you surrender yourselves wholly to his will, to allow those whom he pleases their ransom, or to be put to death; for the Calesians have done him so much mischief, and have, by their obstinate defense, cost him so many lives, and so much money, that he is mightily enraged.'

"The lord de Vienne answered: 'These conditions are too hard for us; we are but a small number of knights and squires, who have loyally served our

lord and master, as you would have done, and have suffered much ill and disquiet: but we will endure more than any men ever did in a similar situation, before we consent that the smallest boy in the town should fare worse than the best. I therefore once more entreat you, out of compassion, to return to the king of England, and beg of him to have pity on us; he will, I trust, grant you this favour; for I have such an opinion of his gallantry as to hope that, through God's mercy, he will alter his mind.'

"The two lords returned to the king and related what had passed. The king said: 'He had no intention of complying with the request, but should insist that they surrendered themselves unconditionally to his will.' Sir Walter replied: 'My lord, ye may be to blame in this, as you will set us a very bad example; for if you order us to go to any of your castles, we shall not obey you so cheerfully if you put these people to death, for they will retaliate upon us in a similar case.'

"Many barons who were present supported this opinion; upon which the king replied: 'Gentlemen, I am not so obstinate as to hold my opinion alone against you all. Sir Walter, you will inform the governor of Calais, that the only grace he is to expect from me is, that six of the principal citizens of Calais march out of the town with bare heads and feet, *with ropes round their necks*, and the keys of the town and castle in their hands. These six persons shall be at my absolute disposal, and the remainder of the inhabitants pardoned.'

"Sir Walter returned to the lord de Vienne, who was waiting for him on the battlements, and told him all that he had been able to gain from the king. 'I beg of you,' replied the governor, 'that you would be so good as to remain here a little, whilst I go and relate all that has passed to the townsmen; for, as they have desired me to undertake this it is but proper that they should know the result of it.'

"He went to the market place, and caused the bell to be rung; upon which all the inhabitants, men and women, assembled in the town-hall. He then related to them what he had said, and the answers he had received, and that he could not obtain any conditions more favourable; to which they must give a short and immediate answer.

"This information caused the greatest lamentations and despair, so that the hardest heart would have had compassion on them; even the lord de Vienne wept bitterly.

“After a short time the most wealthy citizen of the town, by name *Eustace de St. Pierre*, rose up and said: ‘Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be a very great pity to suffer so many people to die through famine, if any means could be found to prevent it; and it would be highly meritorious in the eyes of our Saviour, if such misery could be averted. I have such faith and trust in finding grace before God, if I die to save my townsmen, that I name myself as first of the six.’

“When Eustace had done speaking, they all rose up and almost worshipped him: many cast themselves at his feet with tears and groans. Another citizen, very rich and respected, rose up and said, ‘He would be the *second* to his companion *Eustace*,’ his name was *John Daire*. After him *James Wisant*, who was very rich in merchandise and lands, offered himself as companion to his two cousins, as did *Peter Wisant*, his brother. Two others then named themselves, which completed the number demanded by the king of England. The lord John de Vienne then mounted a small hackney, for it was with difficulty he could walk, (he had been wounded in the siege,) and conducted them to the gate. There was the greatest sorrow and lamentation over all the town; and in such manner were they attended to the gate, which the governor ordered to be opened and then shut upon him and the six citizens, whom he led to the barriers, and said to Sir Walter Manny, who was there waiting for him, ‘I deliver up to you, as governor of Calais, with the consent of the inhabitants, these six citizens; and I swear to you that they were, and are at this day, the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants of Calais. I beg of you, gentle sir, that you would have the goodness to beseech the king that they may not be put to death.’ ‘I cannot answer for what the king will do with them,’ replied Sir Walter; ‘but you may depend that I will do all in my power to save them.’

“The barriers were opened, when these six citizens advanced towards the pavilion of the king, and the lord de Vienne re-entered the town.

“When Sir Walter Manny had presented these six citizens to the king, they fell upon their knees, and with uplifted hands said: ‘Most gallant king, see before you six citizens of Calais, who have been capital merchants, and who bring you the keys of the castle and of the town. We surrender ourselves to your absolute will and pleasure, in order to save the remainder of the inhabitants of Calais, who have suffered much distress and misery. Condescend, therefore, out of your nobleness of mind, to have mercy and

compassion upon us.’ All the barons knights, and squires, that were assembled there in great numbers, wept at this sight.

“The king eyed them with angry looks, (for he hated much the people of Calais, for the great losses he had formerly suffered from them at sea,) and ordered their heads to be stricken off. All present entreated the king that he would be more merciful to them, but he would not listen to them. Then Sir Walter Manny said: ‘Ah, gentle king, let me beseech you to restrain your anger; you have the reputation of great nobleness of soul, do not therefore tarnish it by such an act as this, nor allow any one to speak in a disgraceful manner of you. In this instance all the world will say you have acted cruelly, if you put to death six such respectable persons, who of their own free will have surrendered themselves to your mercy, in order to save their fellow citizens.’ Upon this the king gave a wink, saying, *Be it so*, and ordered the headsman to be sent for; for that the Calesians had done him so much damage, it was proper they should suffer for it.

“The queen of England, who was at that time very big with child, fell on her knees, and with tears said: ‘Ah, gentle sir, since I have crossed the sea with great danger to see you, I have never asked you one favour; now I most humbly ask as a gift, for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary, and for your love to me, that you will be merciful to these six men.’ The king looked at her for some time in silence, and then said: ‘Ah, lady, I wish you had been any where else than here; you have entreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you; I therefore give them to you, to do as you please with them.’

“The queen conducted the six citizens to her apartments, and had the halters taken from round their necks, new clothed, and served them with a plentiful dinner; she then presented each with nobles, and had them escorted out of the camp in safety.”

This is the whole of this affecting account, which is mentioned by no other writer, and has been thought a proper subject for the pen of the poet, the pencil of the painter, and the burin of the engraver; and which has seldom been fairly represented in the accounts we have of it from our historians. The translation I have borrowed from the accurate edition of Froissart, by Mr. Johns, of Hafod; and to his work, vol. i., p. 367, I must refer for objections to the authenticity of some of the facts stated by the French historian. We see in *Eustace de St. Pierre* and his five companions the portrait of genuine patriotism.-a principle, almost as rare in the world as

the Egyptian phoenix, which leads its possessors to devote their property and consecrate their lives to the public weal; widely different from that spurious birth which is deep in the cry of *My country!* while it has nothing in view but its places, pensions, and profits. Away with it!

I KINGS

CHAPTER 21

Ahab covets the vineyard of Naboth, and wishes to have it either by purchase or exchange, 1, 2. Naboth refuses to alienate it on any account, because it was his inheritance from his fathers, 3. Ahab becomes disconsolate, takes to his bed, and refuses to eat, 4. Jezebel, finding out the cause, promises to give him the vineyard, 5-7. She writes to the nobles of Jezreel to proclaim a fast, to accuse Naboth of blasphemy, carry him out, and stone him to death; which is accordingly done, 8-14. She then tells Ahab to go and take possession of the vineyard; he goes, and is met by Elijah, who denounces on him the heaviest judgments, 15-24. Ahab's abominable character, 25, 26. He humbles himself; and God promises not to bring the threatened public calamities in his days, but in the days of his son, 27-29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. After these things] This and the twentieth chapter are transposed in the *Septuagint*; this preceding the account of the Syrian war with Ben-hadad. *Josephus* gives the history in the same order.

Verse 2. Give me thy vineyard] The request of Ahab seems at first view fair and honourable. Naboth's vineyard was nigh to the palace of Ahab, and he wished to add it to his own for a *kitchen garden*, or perhaps a *grass-plot*, *qry ḡ gan yarak*; and he offers to give him either a better vineyard for it, or to give him its worth in money. Naboth rejects the proposal with horror: *The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to thee*. No man could *finally alienate* any part of the parental inheritance; it might be sold or mortgaged till the *jubilee*, but at that time it must revert to its original owner, if not redeemed before; for this God had particularly enjoined ^{<R2514>} **Leviticus 25:14-17, 25-28**: therefore Naboth properly said, ^{<12103>} **1 Kings 21:3**, *The Lord forbid it me, to give the inheritance of my fathers*. Ahab most evidently wished him to *alienate* it *finally*, and this is what God's law had expressly forbidden; therefore he could not, consistently with his duty to God, indulge Ahab; and it was high iniquity in Ahab to tempt him to do it; and to covet it showed the depravity of Ahab's soul. But we see farther that, despotic as those kings were, they dared not seize on the inheritance of any man. This would have been a flagrant breach of the *law* and *constitution* of the

country; and this indeed would have been inconsistent with the character which they sustained, viz., the *Lord's vicegerents*. The Jewish kings had no authority either to *alter* the old laws, or to *make new ones*. “The Hindoos,” says Mr. Ward, “are as strongly attached to their *homesteads* as the Jews were. Though the heads of the family be employed in a distant part of the country, and though the *homesteads* may be almost in ruins, they cling still to the *family inheritance* with a fondness bordering on superstition.”

Verse 4. He laid him down upon his bed] Poor soul! he was lord over ten-twelfths of the land, and became miserable because he could not get a poor man's vineyard added to all that he possessed! It is a true saying, “That soul in which God dwells not, has no happiness: and he who has God has a satisfying portion.” Every privation and cross makes an unholy soul unhappy; and privations and crosses it must ever meet with, therefore:—

“Where'er it goes is hell; itself is hell!”

Verse 7. Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel?] Naboth, not Ahab, is king. If *he* have authority to *refuse*, and *thou* have no power to *take*, he is the greater man of the two. This is the vital language of *despotism* and *tyranny*.

Verse 8. She wrote letters in Ahab's name] She counterfeited his authority by his own consent; and he lent his signet to stamp that authority.

Verse 9. Proclaim a fast] Intimate that there is some great calamity coming upon the nation, because of some evil tolerated in it.

Set Naboth on high] Bring him to a public trial.

Verse 10. Set two men] For life could not be attained but on the evidence of two witnesses at least.

Sons of Belial] Men who will not scruple to tell lies and take a false oath.

Thou didst blaspheme God and the king.] Thou art an *atheist* and a *rebel*. Thou hast spoken words injurious to the perfections and nature of God; and thou hast spoken words against the crown and dignity of the king. The words literally are, *Naboth hath BLESSED God and the king*; or, as Parkhurst contends, “Thou hast blessed the false gods and Molech,”

Ël mw pyhl a tkrb And though Jezebel was herself an abominable idolatress; yet, as the law of Moses still continued in force, she seems to

have been wicked enough to have destroyed Naboth, upon the false accusation of *blessing the heathen Aleim* and *Molech*, which subjected him to death by ^{<051216>}**Deuteronomy 12:6; 17:2-7**. The first meaning appears the most simple.

Many think that the word **Ērb** *barach* signifies both to *bless* and *curse*; and so it is interpreted in most Lexicons: it is passing strange that out of the same word proceedeth *blessing* and *cursing*; and to give such opposite and self-destructive meanings to any word is very dangerous. Parkhurst denies that it ever has the meaning of *cursing*, and examines all the texts where it is said to occur with this meaning; and shows that *blessing*, not *cursing*, is to be understood in all those places: see him under **Ērb**, sec. vi.

Verse 13. And stoned him with stones] As they pretended to find him guilty of treason against God and the king, it is likely they destroyed the whole of his *family*; and then the king seized on his grounds as confiscated, or as *escheated* to the king, without any heir at law. That his *family* was destroyed appears strongly intimated, ^{<131926>}**2 Kings 9:26**; *Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, AND THE BLOOD OF HIS SONS, saith the Lord.*

Verse 15. Arise, take possession] By what *rites* or in what *forms* this was done, we do not know.

Verse 18. Go down to meet Ahab] This was the next day after the murder, as we learn from the above quotation, ^{<131926>}**2 Kings 9:26**.

Verse 19. In the place where dogs licked, &c.] It is in vain to look for a *literal fulfillment* of this prediction. Thus it would have been fulfilled, but the humiliation of Ahab induced the merciful God to say, *I will not bring the evil in his days, but in the days of his son*, ^{<12129>}**1 Kings 21:29**. Now dogs did lick the blood of Ahab; but it was at the pool of Samaria, where his chariot and his armour were washed, after he had received his death wound at Ramoth-gilead; but some think this was the place where Naboth was stoned: see ^{<12238>}**1 Kings 22:38**. And how literally the prediction concerning *his son* was fulfilled, see ^{<131925>}**2 Kings 9:25**, where we find that the body of Jehoram his son, just then slain by an arrow that had passed through his heart, was thrown *into the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite*; and there, doubtless, the dogs licked his blood, if they did not even devour his body. There is a similar idea of the propriety of

punishment overtaking the culprit in the place where he had committed the crime, expressed by *Orestes* to *Ægisthus*, *SOPH. Elect.* 1495.

----Χωρει δ ενθαπερ κατεκτανες
 Πατερα τον αμον, ως εν ταυτω θανης.

——— *Go where thou slew'st my father,
 That in the self-same place thou too may'st die.*

Verse 20. Thou hast sold thyself to work evil] See a similar form of speech, ^{<45714>}**Romans 7:14.** Thou hast totally abandoned thyself to the service of sin. Satan is become thy *absolute master*, and thou his *undivided slave*.

Verse 23. The dogs shall eat Jezebel] This was most literally fulfilled; see ^{<13986>}**2 Kings 9:36.** The carcasses of poor *Hindoos*, and of persons who have received public punishment, are thrown into the *rivers*, and floating to the side, are devoured by *dogs*, *vultures*, and *crows*.

Verse 25. Did sell himself to work wickedness] He hired himself to the devil for this very purpose, that he might *work* wickedness. This was to be his *employment*, and at this he *laboured*.

In the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.] A good wife is from the Lord; a bad wife is from the devil: Jezebel was of this kind; and she has had many successors.

Verse 27. He rent his clothes] He was penetrated with sorrow, and that evidently unfeigned.

Put sackcloth upon his flesh] He humbled himself before God and man.

And fasted] He afflicted his body for his soul's benefit.

Lay in sackcloth] Gave the fullest proof that his repentance was real.

And went softly.] *Walked barefooted*; so the *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*. The *Vulgate* has *demisso capite*, "with his head hanging down." *Houbigant* translates *went groaning*. *Jarchi* says that the word *ca at*, used here, signifies *to be unshod*. This is its most likely sense. All these things prove that Ahab's repentance was genuine; and God's approbation of it puts it out of doubt. The *slow* and *measured pace* which always accompanies deep and reflective sorrow is also alluded to by *Æschylus*, where the

Chorus are thus shortly addressed on the defeat of Xerxes.-ÆSCH. *Pers.* 1073.

Γοασθ̄ αβροβαται

“With light and noiseless step lament.”

Verse 29. Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself] He did abase himself; he did *truly repent him of his sins*, and it was such a repentance as was genuine in the *sight of God: He humbleth himself* BEFORE ME.

The *penitent* heart ever meets the *merciful* eye of God; repentance is highly esteemed by the Father of compassion, even where it is comparatively shallow and short-lived. Any measure of godly sorrow has a proportionate measure of God’s regard; where it is deep and lasting, the heart of God is set upon it. He that mourns shall be comforted; thus hath God spoken, and though repentance for our past sins can *purchase* no favour, yet without it God will not grant us his salvation.

I KINGS

CHAPTER 22

Jehoshaphat King of Judah, and Ahab King of Israel, unite against the Syrians, in order to recover Ramoth-gilead, 1-4. They inquire of false prophets, who promise them success. Micaiah, a true prophet, foretells the disasters of the war, 5-17. A lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets persuades Ahab to go up against Ramoth, 18-29. The confederate armies are routed, and the king of Israel slain, 30-36. Death and burial of Ahab, 37-40. Character of Jehoshaphat, 41-47. He makes a fleet in order to go to Ophir for gold, which is wrecked at Ezion-geber, 48. His death, 49. He is succeeded by his son Jehoram, 50. Ahaziah succeeds his father Ahab, and reigns wickedly, 51, 52.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. Three years without war] That is, from the time that Ahab made the covenant with Ben-hadad, mentioned ^{<1234>} **1 Kings 20:34**. And probably in that treaty it was stipulated that Ramoth-gilead should be restored to Israel; which not being done, Ahab formed a confederacy with Judah, and determined to take it by force.

Verse 4. Wilt thou go with me] We find that there was a good understanding between Jehoshaphat and Ahab, which no doubt was the consequence of a matrimonial alliance between the son of the former, Jehoram, and the daughter of the latter, Athaliah; see ^{<1480>} **2 Chronicles 18:1**; ^{<12818>} **2 Kings 8:18**. This coalition did not please God, and Jehoshaphat is severely reprov'd for it by Jehu the seer, ^{<1490>} **2 Chronicles 19:1-3**.

Verse 6. About four hundred men] These were probably the *prophets of Asherah* or *Venus*, maintained by Jezebel, who were not present at the contention on Mount Carmel. See ^{<11819>} **1 Kings 18:19**, &c.

Verse 8. Micaiah the son of Imlah] The Jews suppose that it was this prophet who reprov'd Ahab for dismissing Ben-hadad, ^{<1235>} **1 Kings 20:35**, &c. And that it was because of the judgments with which he had threatened him, that Ahab hated him: *I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.*

Verse 9. The king of Israel called an officer] *syrS saris*, literally a *eunuch*; probably a foreigner, for it was not lawful to disgrace an Israelite by reducing him to such a state.

Verse 11. Zedekiah-made him horns of iron] This was in imitation of that sort of prophecy which instructed by significative actions. This was frequent among the prophets of the Lord.

Verse 13. The words of the prophets declare good] What notion could these men have of *prophecy*, when they supposed it was in the power of the prophet to model the prediction as he pleased, and have the result accordingly?

Verse 15. Go, and prosper] This was a strong *irony*; as if he had said, All your prophets have predicted success; you wish me to speak as they speak: *Go, and prosper; for the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king.* These were the precise words of the false prophets, (see ^{<1226>}**1 Kings 22:6, 12,**) and were spoken by Micaiah in such a tone and manner as at once showed to Ahab that he did not believe them; hence the king *adjures* him, ^{<1226>}**1 Kings 22:16,** that he *would speak to him nothing but truth*; and on this the prophet immediately relates to him the prophetic vision which pointed out the disasters which ensued.

It is worthy of remark that this prophecy of the king's prophets is couched in the same *ambiguous terms* by which the false prophets in the heathen world endeavoured to maintain their credit, while they deluded their votaries. The reader will observe that the word *it* is not in the original: *The Lord will deliver IT into the hand of the king*; and the words are so artfully constructed that they may be interpreted *for* or *against*; so that, be the event whatever it might, the *juggling prophet* could save his credit by saying he meant what had happened. Thus then the prophecy might have been understood: *The Lord will deliver (Ramoth-gilead) into the king's (Ahab's) hand*; or, *The Lord will deliver (Israel) into the king's hand*; i.e., into the hand of the *king of Syria*. And Micaiah repeats these words of uncertainty in order to *ridicule* them and expose their fallacy.

The following oracles among the heathens were of this same *dubious* nature, in order that the priests' credit might be saved, let the event turn out as it might. Thus the Delphic oracle spoke to Cræsus words which are capable of a double meaning, and which he understood to his own destruction:—

Cræsus, Halym penetrans, magnam subvertet opum vim,

Which says, in effect:—

“If you march against Cyrus, he will either overthrow *you*, or you will overthrow *him*.”

He trusted in the *latter*, the *former* took place. He was deluded, and yet the oracle maintained its credit. So in the following:—

*Aio te, Æacida, Romanos vincere posse
Ibis redibis nunquam in bello peribis.*

Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, understood by this that he should conquer the Romans, against whom he was then making war; but the oracle could be thus translated: “The Romans shall overcome thee.” He trusted in the former, made unsuccessful war, and was overcome; and yet the juggling priest saved his credit. The latter line is capable of two *opposite* meanings:—

“Thou shalt go, thou shalt return, thou shalt never perish in war.”

Or,

“Thou shalt go, thou shalt never return, thou shalt perish in war.”

When prophecies and oracles were not delivered in this dubious way, they were generally couched in such intricate and dark terms that the assistance of the oracle was necessary to explain the oracle, and then it was *ignotum per ignotius*, a dark saying paraphrased by one yet more obscure.

Verse 17. These have no master] Here the prophet foretells the defeat of Israel, and the death of the king; they were as *sheep* that had not a *shepherd*, people that had no *master*, the political *shepherd* and *master* (Ahab) shall fall in battle.

Verse 19. I saw the Lord sitting on his throne] This is a mere parable, and only tells in figurative language, what was in the womb of providence, the events which were shortly to take place, the agents employed in them, and the permission on the part of God for these agents to act. Micaiah did not choose to say before this angry and impious king, “Thy prophets are all liars; and the devil, the father of lies, dwells in them;” but he represents the whole by this parable, and says the same truths in language as forcible, but less offensive.

Verse 22. Go forth, and do so.] This is no more than, “God has *permitted* the spirit of lying to influence the whole of thy prophets; and he now, by my mouth, apprises thee of this, that thou mayest not go and fall at Ramoth-gilead.” Never was a man more circumstantially and fairly warned; he had counsels from the *God of truth*, and counsels from the *spirit of falsity*; he obstinately forsook the *former* and followed the *latter*. He was shown by this parable how every thing was going on, and that all was under the control and direction of God, and that still it was possible for him to make that God his friend whom by his continual transgressions he had made his enemy; but he would not: his blood was therefore upon his *own head*.

Verse 23. The Lord hath put a lying spirit] He hath *permitted* or *suffered* a lying spirit to influence thy prophets. Is it requisite again to remind the reader that the Scriptures repeatedly represent God as *doing* what, in the course of his providence, he only *permits* or *suffers* to be done? Nothing can be done in heaven, in earth, or hell, but either by his immediate *energy* or *permission*. This is the reason why the Scripture speaks as above.

Verse 24. Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me] This is an expression of as great insolence as the act was of brutal aggression. “Did the Spirit of the Lord, who rests solely upon me, condescend to inspire thee? Was it at this ear [where he smote him] that it entered, in order to hold communion with thee?” Josephus tells an idle rabbinical tale about this business, which is as unworthy of repetition as it is of credit. See his *Antiq. of the Jews*, book viii., c. 10.

Verse 25. When thou shalt go into an inner chamber] It is probable that this refers to some Divine judgment which fell upon this deceiver. Hearing of the tragical result of the battle, he no doubt went into a secret place to hide himself from the resentment of Jezebel, and the Israelitish courtiers, and *there* it is probable he perished; but *how*, *when*, or *where*, is not mentioned.

Verse 27. Feed him with bread of affliction.] Deprive him of all the *conveniencies* and *comforts* of life; treat him *severely*; just keep him alive, that he may see my triumph.

Verse 30. I will disguise myself] Probably he had heard of the orders given by Ben-hadad to his thirty-two captains, *to fight with the king of*

Israel only; that is, to make their most powerful attack where he commanded, in order to take him prisoner, that he might lead him captive whose captive he formerly was; and therefore he *disguised* himself that he might not be known.

But put thou on thy robes.] What is meant by this? He could not mean, “Appear as the king of Judah, for they will not molest thee, as the matter of contention lies between them and me;” this is *Jarchi’s* turn. For if Jehoshaphat aided Ahab, is it to be supposed that the Syrians would spare him in battle? A general in the civil wars of England, when he had brought his army in sight of their foes, thus addressed them: “Yonder are your enemies; if you do not kill *them*, they will kill *you*.” So it might be said in the case of Jehoshaphat and the Syrians.

The *Septuagint* gives the clause a different and more intelligible turn: “I will cover (conceal) myself, and enter into the battle; **και συ ενδυσαι τον ιματισμον μου**, *but put thou on MY robes*.” And does it not appear that he did put on Ahab’s robes? And was it not this that caused the Syrians to mistake him for the king of Israel? ^{<1123>}**1 Kings 22:32.**

Verse 34. Drew a bow at a venture] It is supposed that he shot, as the archers in general did, not aiming at any person in particular.

The word **wmtl** *lethummo*, which we translate *in his simplicity*, has been variously understood; *in his integrity*, *his uprightness*; *in his perfection*; i.e., to the utmost of his *skill* and *strength*. This is most probably the meaning; and may imply both *aim* and *power*, having his *butt full in view*. In cases where the archers wished to do the greatest execution, they bent their bows, and pulled till the subtending string drew back the *arrow up to its head*. This they could not do *always*, because it required their whole strength; and they could not put forth their utmost effort each time and continue to discharge many shots. Our old national ballad of the *Chevy-chace* mentions the slaying of Sir Hugh Montgomery, who had slain Earl Percy, in nearly the same way that Ahab appears to have been shot:—

*“And thus did both these nobles die,
Whose courage none could stain:
An English archer then perceived
His noble lord was slain,*

*Who had a bow bent in his hand
Made of a trusty tree;
An arrow, of a cloth-yard long,
Up to the head drew he;*

*Against Sir Hugh Montgomery then
So right his shaft he set,
The gray goose wing that was thereon
In his heart's blood was wet."*

Between the joints of the harness] “Between the *cuirass* and the lower part of the *helmet*,” and then the arrow must pass *through the neck*, just above the *breast*: or “between the *cuirass* and the *cuissarts*,” and then the arrow must pass through the *abdomen*, or just where the armour of the *thighs* joins to that which covers the *breast* and *belly*.

The *Vulgate* has *Inter pulmonem et stomachum*; “Between the lungs and the stomach;” consequently, in the region of the heart.

Verse 35. The king was stayed up] He did not wish his misfortune should be known, lest his troops should be discouraged.

Verse 36. Every man to his city] It appears that the Israelites and Jews maintained the fight the whole of the day; but when at evening the king died, and this was known, there was a proclamation made, probably with the consent of both Syrians and Israelites, that the war was over. Ahab being dead, his subjects did not choose to contend for Ramoth-gilead; so the Israelites went to their own *cities*, and the Syrians to their own *country*.

Verse 38. The dogs licked up his blood] Some of the rabbins think that this was in the *very place* where Naboth was stoned; see on ^{<1219>}**1 Kings 21:19**. The *Septuagint* translates this verse strangely: “And the swine and the dogs licked his blood, and the whores bathed themselves in his blood, according to the word of the Lord.” It is certain that the Hebrew words, **wxj r twnz** *hazzonoth rachatsu*, “washed his armour,” might be translated as the *Septuagint* have done; “*and the whores* (or public women) *washed*,” &c. And so the rabbins seem to have understood the words; but then they suppose that Jezebel had made him *two images of prostitutes*, which he had with him in the chariot. It is not worth inquiring into the *use* for which they say these images were made. See *Kimchi* and *Jarchi*.

Verse 39. Ivory house] A royal palace which he built in Samaria, decorated with *ivory*, and hence called the *ivory house*. Amos the prophet speaks against this luxury, ^{<31B15>}**Amos 3:15**.

Verse 43. The high places were not taken away] In ^{<44706>}**2 Chronicles 17:6**, it is expressly said, that he *did take away the high places*. Allowing that the text is right in 2 Chron., the two places may be easily reconciled. There were *two kinds of high places* in the land: 1. Those used for *idolatrous* purposes. 2. Those that were *consecrated to God*, and were used before the temple was built. The former he did take away; the latter he did not. But some think the parallel place in ^{<44706>}**2 Chronicles 17:6** is corrupted, and that, instead of *rysh dw[w veod hesir*, “and moreover he took away,” we should read, *rysh al w velo hesir*, “and he did NOT take away.”

Verse 46. The remnant of the sodomites] *vdqh* of the consecrated persons; or it may rather apply here to the *system* of pollution, effeminacy, and debauch. He destroyed the thing itself; the abominations of Priapus, and the rites of Venus, Baal, and Ashtaroth. No more of that impure worship was to be found in Judea.

Verse 47. There was no king in Edom] It is plain that the compiler of this book lived after the days of Jehoshaphat, in whose time the Edomites revolted; see ^{<11K2>}**2 Kings 8:22**. David had conquered the Edomites, and they continued to be governed by *deputies*, appointed by the kings of Judah, till they recovered their liberty, as above. This note is introduced by the writer to account for Jehoshaphat’s building ships at *Ezion-geber*, which was in the *territory* of the *Edomites*, and which showed them to be at that time under the Jewish yoke.

Verse 48. Ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold] In the parallel place (^{<44706>}**2 Chronicles 20:36**) it is said that Jehoshaphat joined himself to Ahaziah, *to make ships to go to Tharshish; and they made the ships in Ezion-geber*. Concerning these places, and the voyage thither, see the notes on ^{<11026>}**1 Kings 9:26-28; 10:11, 22**. Some translate, instead of ships of *Tharshish*, ships of *burden*. See *Houbigant*, who expresses himself doubtful as to the meaning of the word.

Verse 49. But Jehoshaphat would not.] It appears from the above cited place in Chronicles that Jehoshaphat did join in making and sending ships

to Tharshish, and it is possible that what is here said is spoken of a *second* expedition, in which Jehoshaphat *would not* join Ahaziah. But instead of **hba al w velo abah**, “he would not,” perhaps we should read **hba wl w velo abah**, “he consented to him;” two words pronounced exactly in the same way, and differing but in *one letter*, viz., an **a aleph** for a **w vau**. This reading, however, is not supported by any MS. or version; but the emendation seems just; for there are several places in these historical books in which there are mistakes of transcribers which nothing but violent criticism can restore, and to this it is dangerous to resort, but in cases of the last necessity. Critics have recommended the 48th and 49th verses to be read thus: “Jehoshaphat had built ships of burden at Ezion-geber, to go to Ophir for gold. 49. And Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, had said to Jehoshaphat, Let my servants, I pray thee, go with thy servants in the ships: to which Jehoshaphat consented. But the ships went not thither; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.” This is *Houbigant’s* translation, who contends that “the words of the 48th verse, *but they went not*, should be placed at the end of the 49th verse, for who can believe that the sacred writer should first relate that *the ships were broken*, and then that Ahaziah requested of Jehoshaphat that his servants might embark with the servants of Jehoshaphat?” This bold critic, who understood the Hebrew language better than any man in Europe, has, by happy conjectures, since verified by the testimony of MSS., removed the blots of many careless transcribers from the sacred volume.